

DATE: February 5, 2021

OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM #21-02-02

SUBJECT: Reverse Referral Form (PA 1951)

TO: County Assistance Offices (CAOs)
Executive Directors

FROM: Inez Titus
Director,
Bureau of Operations

PURPOSE

To inform CAOs of the policy and process surrounding reverse referrals and self-initiated employment and training (E&T) participation requests and further explain the use of form PA 1951.

BACKGROUND

Cash assistance and SNAP recipients are currently referred to contracted employment and training programs when they are assessed by a caseworker upon the receipt of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Prior to OPS 17-06-02 there was no defined process for a contracted program to request a referral for individuals who receive TANF, RCA, and/or SNAP, but were not yet enrolled in any contracted program. Such recipients could only be directly referred to contracted programs by the CAO. In OPS 17-06-02, a basic process was established to allow contracted programs to request a “reverse referral” for such recipients who were already participating or wished to participate in their program. This policy ensures that there is “no wrong door” for recipients seeking E&T services to fulfill their career and employment goals.

NOTE: Per Supplemental Handbook 730.41, a refugee who is a full-time student in higher education as an undergraduate or post-graduate is ineligible for RCA *unless* they are a professional in need of professional, refresher training or other recertification services to qualify to practice their profession in the US. The training must be part of their Agreement of Mutual Responsibility (AMR), under one year in duration, and specifically intended to assist the refugee in becoming

relicensed in their profession and, if completed, can realistically expect to result in relicensing.

DISCUSSION

The goal of the [Attachment 1: PA 1951](#) is to assist recipients not yet enrolled in E&T who approach a contracted program requesting to participate in the RESET or SNAP E&T program and receive Special Allowances (SPALs) for which they may be eligible to support the activity. The reverse referral request is submitted to the CAO by the contracted program on behalf of the recipient.

The PA 1951 will give the local CAO caseworkers the information necessary to determine if the recipient is eligible for a referral to a specific contracted program and ensure the service is appropriate and allowable.

Within 15 calendar days of receiving the PA 1951, the CAO will:

- Review the PA 1951 to determine whether the recipient is eligible to be enrolled in cash E&T via RESET or SNAP E&T;
 - NOTE:** For cash recipients, this includes a review for any exemptions or good cause to determine if the individual is mandatory or volunteer, and if there is any existing good cause for hours of participation.
- Complete and/or update an AMR or Employment Development Plan (EDP) and obtain the recipient's signature with the assistance of the E&T contractor;
- Discuss annual and lifetime SPAL limits to support the E&T activity;
- Determine if any SPALs are needed (such as childcare or transportation) to immediately support the E&T activity;
- **Return a completed copy of the PA 1951 to the recipient and the contracted program indicating whether the referral was approved or rejected;**
- Submit an electronic referral to the program via eCIS; and
- Narrate when the PA 1951 was received, the outcome, and all actions taken

A recipient does not need to provide a PA 1951 in order to be referred to an E&T program by the CAO. The recipient may contact the CAO directly to request to participate in cash or SNAP E&T, complete or update an AMR or EDP, and receive an electronic referral to an E&T program.

Within 15 calendar days of receiving a direct request from a recipient, whether verbally, electronically, or in person, who is interested in participating with an E&T contractor, the CAO will:

- Review whether the recipient is eligible to be enrolled in cash E&T via RESET or SNAP E&T;

NOTE: For cash recipients, this includes a review for any exemptions or good cause to determine if the individual is mandatory or volunteer, and if there is any existing good cause for hours of participation.

- Complete and/or update an AMR or EDP;
- Discuss annual and lifetime SPAL limits to support the E&T activity;
- Determine if any SPALs are needed immediately (such as childcare or transportation) to support the E&T activity;
- Notify the recipient of the decision;
- Submit an electronic referral to the program via eCIS; and
- Narrate how the request was received, action taken, and the outcome

The institution of the PA 1951 does not change the policy or process for completing the AMR or EDP and submitting an electronic referral via eCIS if the activity is approved. A face-to-face appointment is not required. The AMR or EDP may be updated by telephone, and/or with the assistance of a contracted provider. A copy, signed and initialed by the recipient, must be returned to the CAO by either the recipient or contractor. **If a signed copy is not received by the CAO within 10 calendar days of the date the EDP or AMR was sent to the recipient for signature, the CAO will reject the reverse referral.**

The electronic referral to a contracted program and SPALs to support the activity may not be processed until the signed and completed AMR or EDP is returned to the CAO.

A cash recipient, who is exempt or has good cause for RESET but is volunteering, can participate in E&T activities without becoming mandatory. These activities can be supported by SPALs. These volunteers are not subject to sanction for non-compliance for not fulfilling RESET participation requirements. See [CAH 135.5](#) Volunteering to Participate in RESET.

If the CAO determines the E&T referral is not appropriate, or if the individual and/or contractor does not return a completed AMR/EDP, the CAO must notify the recipient and the contracted program by returning a completed PA 1951 indicating that the reverse referral was rejected. The narrative must clearly explain why a referral is not appropriate. An example of an inappropriate referral would be a specified relative not eligible (NS) in a TANF record due to cost/fees/fines who is requesting to have their participation supported via RESET.

NEXT STEPS

1. Share this information memorandum with appropriate staff.

2. Questions regarding this form should be directed to your Area Manager.
3. Obsolete OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM #17-06-02

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1: [Attachment: Reverse Referral Form \(PA 1951\)](#)