Department of Human Resources 311 West Saratoga Street Baltimore MD 21201	**FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL**
Control Number: # 11-31	**Effective Date: UPON RECEIPT**
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TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF
REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT CENTER STAFF
HEALTH OFFICERS, LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS
LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT ELIGIBILITY STAFF

FROM: ROSEMARY MALONE, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DEBBIE RUPPERT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DHMH/OES

RE: ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES AND ASYLEES: PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE ELIGIBILITY

PROGRAM AFFECTED: TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE (TCA), REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE (RCA), REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (RMA), MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (MA), FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM (FSP)

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

SUMMARY

We recently received clarification from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) that, when a refugee or asylee assistance unit is found ineligible for TCA and "tag along" MA within their first eight months in the U.S. solely because their income exceeds the TCA income standard, they should then be tested for eligibility for Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) which, while time-limited, has a higher income threshold. In addition, they should be provided with a notice that they may be able to qualify for Refugee Transitional Cash Assistance (RTCA), a time-limited, privately-administered, monthly payment available only through the private resettlement agency that referred them to the LDSS/DHHS.

Refugees and asylees served by a resettlement center, meeting technical and financial eligibility, can receive services and financial assistance for up to eight months. RMA is limited to the first eight months that the refugee is in the U.S. and the first eight months after the asylee is granted status.

Refugees or Asylees Who Are Childless or without Children Living with Them

During their first 8 months in the U.S., refugees and asylees within the jurisdictions served by resettlement centers who are either childless or have no children with them are eligible for short-term refugee-specific transitional benefits known as Refugee

Transitional Cash Assistance (RTCA), paid through a Public-Private Partnership (see below) which they can access at the resettlement center appropriate to their jurisdiction.

Refugees or Asylees Who Have Children Living with Them
Refugees and asylees within the jurisdictions of the resettlement centers who have children are not initially eligible for RTCA, but are instead seen by the LDSS case managers, located within the resettlement centers, to apply for TCA, MA and FSP. Since it is generally childless adults who are not eligible for TCA, caseworkers have come to think of RTCA as available only to childless adults. However, recent clarification from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement affirms that refugee and asylee families with children, if determined to be financially ineligible for TCA, may be eligible for RTCA. These families should be referred back to the resettlement agency to be tested for RTCA eligibility.

Public Private Partnership (PPP)
The Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is a collaborative program between the Maryland Office of Refugees and Asylees (MORA), Baltimore City Community College, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Prince George's County Department of Social Services, the Ethiopian Community Development Council, the International Rescue Committee, Jewish Community Services (Baltimore), Jewish Social Services Agency (Rockville), Kurdish Human Rights Watch and Lutheran Social Services of the National Capitol Area. The PPP offers a total of eight months of case management, employment services and financial assistance through RTCA, to refugees and asylees who are not eligible for TCA. Refugees and asylees do not have to be employed to be referred to the PPP. The PPP determines the amount of assistance they will provide. They only have to be ineligible for TCA or Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) because of income.

The PPP serves refugees and asylees who reside in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties through the:

Suburban Washington Resettlement Center (SWRC)
8700 Georgia Avenue, Suite 500
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301-562-8585

Refugees and asylees in Baltimore City, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford and Howard Counties are served through the:

Baltimore Resettlement Center (BRC)
3516 Eastern Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21224
410-327-1885

ACTION DUE
During CARES screening (J), if the customer is coded as a refugee on the CIRC screen the Refugee Cash Assistance (RF) comes up. In some instances, one or more adults in a refugee family may have become employed or have another source of countable

income which makes them ineligible for TCA. When the RF is denied it trickles to G98 or G99.

- If the refugee or asylee family is determined to be ineligible for TCA/RCA, the LDSS case manager must test their income for FSP benefits and MA, including RMA. The RMA income level is 200 percent of poverty.

If the refugee or asylee family meets technical eligibility, but not financial eligibility for TCA, the LDSS case manager:

- Refers the refugee or asylee family back to their caseworker at the appropriate resettlement center for potential assistance through the PPP Refugee Transitional Cash Assistance (RTCA) program.

- Gives the refugee or asylee family a referral reflecting that the family is not eligible for Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) due to family income, but may qualify for PPP Refugee Transitional Cash Assistance (RTCA).

- Completes the attached referral and gives to the refugee or asylee to take with them. (Keeps a copy of the referral in the LDSS case file.)

Refugees and Asylees not Served by a Refugee Resettlement Center
Those individuals and families who reside outside the jurisdiction of the resettlement centers should apply for benefits at the local Department of Social Services in the county where they reside. During his or her first eight months in the U.S., refugee and asylee families with children should first be tested for TCA, FSP and MA eligibility. If they are financially ineligible for TCA, eligibility for MA, including Refugee Medical Assistance and FSP should be determined. Categorical eligibility for RMA is up to 200 percent of the poverty level.

Example:
Refugee husband arrived in the U.S. 12 months ago and found employment. His wife and two children just arrived this month. The family applies for TCA.

The family is ineligible for TCA based on the husband's income. When the TCA application is denied, CARES will automatically determine eligibility for MA in another category. Next, the case manager determines eligibility for FSP.

The MA will sprout to be tested in F05, F99 and the P tracks. If they are eligible (income less than 200 percent of poverty), the MA will be certified for the wife and children for a period of up to eight months depending on the date of entry.

The case manager gives the family a referral to go back to the resettlement center for PPP RTCA services and potential financial assistance.

Example:
Refugee parent has been in the U.S. for 15 months. She is employed at Johns Hopkins Hospital making $12 per hour for 40 hours. Her husband and her three children are reunited with her in the U.S. The family applies for assistance.

The case manager tests the family for TCA eligibility (income levels are the same for RCA).

The customer does not have any expenses for child care.

The mother's net income, after allowable deductions are applied, exceeds the TCA grant for five and the family is not eligible for TCA.

The case manager denies the TCA. From the CARES CAFI screen, the case manager adds freeform text to the denial notice that says, "Please contact the refugee agency worker who helped you when you first came to the U.S. and give them this letter along with the referral form that is being mailed to you separately. You may be eligible for assistance under a special program called the Refugee Transitional Assistance Program that is provided by the Public-Private Partnership."

When the TCA application is denied, CARES will determine eligibility for F05 (Families and Children-FAC) MA. If the income is overscale for F05, the MA case will trickle to a F99 (Spend-down) and may sprout to MCHP categories for the children.

If the customer's CARES ALAS screens are coded that the customers are refugees or asylees, a G98 MA will sprout to be tested. If they are eligible, the husband and children will be certified for MA for up to eight months.

INQUIRIES:
Please direct Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) policy questions to Gretchen Simpson at 410-767-7937 or gsimpson@dhr.state.md.us, or Fatmata Khella at 410-767-7956 or fkhella@dhr.state.md.us. Food Supplement Program (FSP) questions should be directed to Rick McClendon at 410-767-7307 or rmcclend@dhr.state.md.us. Medical Assistance questions should be directed to the Division of Eligibility Policy at 410-767-1463 or 1-800-492-5231 (select option 2 and request extension 1463). CARES questions should be directed to Joyce Westbrook at 410-238-1299 or jwestbro@dhr.state.md.us .

ATTACHMENT

cc: DHR Executive Staff
FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services
DHR Help Desk
DHMH –DEUS

Notice to Voluntary Agency

TO: _____
Resettlement Center Case Manager's Name

FROM: _____
LDSS Case Manager's Name

RE: _____
Head of Household Name

Customer ID:_____

The family named above is served by your agency. They are not eligible for Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) due to family income, but may qualify for Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Refugee Transitional Cash Assistance (RTCA) as allowed in ORR regulations 45 CFR 400.51(a). Please assist them to apply for PPP RTCA. If you have questions, please contact Martin Ford at the Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees at 410-767-7192.