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OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE

: INFORMATIONAL LETTER :

TRANSMITTAL: 00 INF-6

DIVISION: Temporary Assistance

TO: Commissioners of
Social Services

DATE: March 13, 2000

SUBJECT: Verifying Relationship of the Caretaker Relative to
the Child

SUGGESTED

DISTRIBUTION: Temporary Assistance Staff
Staff Development Coordinators
CAP Coordinators

CONTACT PERSON: DTA Central Team at 1-800-343-8859, ext. 4-9344

ATTACHMENTS: NONE

FILING REFERENCES

| Previous ADMs/INFs | Releases Cancelled | Dept. Regs. | Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref. | Manual Ref. | Misc. Ref. |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|---|-------------|-------------|
| 97 ADM-20 | | :351.5 | :SSL | :PASB VIII- | :TANF State |
| 92 INF-9 | | :369.1(b) | :158.1(d) | :A-1 | :Plan |
| | | | :349 | | |
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OTDA-329EL (Rev. 11/98)

"providing temporary assistance for permanent change"

The purpose of this Informational Letter is to inform social services districts (SSD)s about the minimum documentation and verification necessary to establish relationship between the adult caretaker and the child on whose behalf the adult is making application for Temporary Assistance. The relationship requirement is still in place as a condition of categorical eligibility for Family Assistance (and non-cash SNA (FP). SSDs may use secondary kinds of documentation in the absence of primary documentation to establish relationship.

Special determinations for Public Assistance cases and verification of eligibility was discussed in 92 INF-9. The special situations discussed in that INF include, but are not limited to, families forced to leave their homes suddenly and who are unable to retrieve their belongings, or refugees or immigrants who do not have documentation or whose documentation will take a long time to secure. However, there are additional situations where the relationship of the caretaker to the child exists but cannot easily be established.

It is difficult to obtain more formal documentation of relationship when the caretaker is related to the child in the paternal line when the child has been born out of wedlock and paternity has not been established. Additionally, because the relationships that qualify for Family Assistance eligibility can be more distant than parent, grandparent, brother or sister, or aunt or uncle, documenting the relationship becomes more difficult as the relationship becomes more distant.

The relationship of the adult caretaker to the child is very often commonly known to neighbors and the community. It is reasonable to accept statements from these individuals or community groups who state their knowledge about the relationship.

In the absence of primary documentation of relationship, two forms of secondary documentation are acceptable. Secondary documentation can include:

School records: A statement from the school which states the relationship of the child to the caretaker as declared in school records.

Attestation: The signed application in which the caretaker states the relationship.

Signed statements: A signed statement from a leader of a religious community, or a person authorized to act on his or her behalf, attesting to the relationship as presented to the community by the adult caretaker relative. A signed statement from a landlord, a neighbor, a day care worker, a doctor, or a scout troop leader are additional examples of verification of relationship.

Districts should accept other forms of documentation that they find will establish relationship for the purpose of Family Assistance categorical eligibility. It is not necessary to place cases into Safety Net Assistance pending receipt of more formal kinds of documentation when the secondary documentation is present.

If the social services district finds the relationship questionable, additional documentation or verification is necessary.

This policy also applies to EAF categorical eligibility.

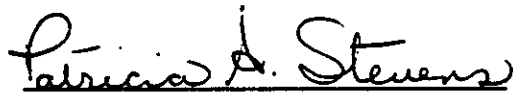
Medicaid Implications

Relationship of a child to a caretaker must be documented for Medicaid applicants/recipients. Generally, a signed application indicating relationship is the only verification required. When relationship is questionable, other verification is necessary. Documentation as described in this directive for Family Assistance is also acceptable for Medicaid purposes.

Eligibility of a child under the Medicaid category of Low Income Families does not require that the child live with a caretaker relative. Eligibility of a child under Medically Needy Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)-related category does require that the child live with a caretaker. Eligibility of a child who does not live with a caretaker or have a deprivation of parental support uses ADC-related budgeting methodology under the federal categorical group for all other children under age 21.

Additional Information

At the next printing, the Documentation/Verification Desk Aid (DSS-3666) and the Documentation Requirements form (DSS-2642) will be updated to reflect this information.



Patricia A. Stevens
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Temporary Assistance