STATE OF VERMONT
AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES

DCF

Department for Children and Families

BULLETIN NO.: 18-04

FROM: Sean Brown, Deputy Commissioner
Economic Services Division

DATE: 4/24/18

SUBJECT: Reach Up/Reach Up Services Procedures

CHANGES ADOPTED EFFECTIVE May 8, 2018

INSTRUCTIONS

_X_ Maintain Manual - See instructions below.
___ Proposed Regulation - Retain bulletin and attachments until you receive Manual Maintenance Bulletin: _____
___ Information or Instructions - Retain until____________________

MANUAL REFERENCE(S):

P-2201	P-2231	P-2354	TOC (P-2300)
P-2349	P-2347	TOC (P-2200)	

The purpose of this bulletin is to remove outdated Reach Up procedures. The Reach Up Table of Contents has also been updated to reflect these changes. The bulletin also updates information in the following procedures: Transferring Case Management Files Between Districts, Case Management for Post-60-Month Cases, and Support Services.

Manual Maintenance

Vertical lines in the left margin indicate significant changes.
Dotted lines in the left margin indicate changes in formatting rather than content.

Reach Up/Reach Up Service Procedures

Remove		Insert	
P-2200TOC	(17-04)	P-2200TOC	(18-04)
P-2300TOC	(18-02)	P-2300TOC	(18-04)
P-2201G-I	(96-30)	Nothing	
P-2201J	(97-3)	Nothing	
P-2231AB	(86-20)	Nothing	
P-2231C	(82-9)	Nothing	
P-2347A	(18-02)	P-2347A	(18-04)

Remove (con't)		**Insert (con't)**	
P-2349	(15-36)	P-2349A pgs. 1-3	(18-04)
Nothing		P-2349B pgs. 1-2	(18-04)
Nothing		P-2349C	(18-04)
Nothing		P-2349D pgs.1-2	(18-04)
P-2354	(17-22)	P-2354	(18-04)

P-2201 – P-2270 Reach Up Procedures

P-2201 – P-2270 Reach Up Procedures

P-2347 Support Services

A. General Procedure

Support Services are intended to help individuals accept or maintain paid employment; or participate in other Reach Up activities such as orientation, assessment, appointments, and activities that help the participant reach an employment goal.

1. Support Services may be provided to Reach First, Reach Up, Reach Ahead, and Post-Secondary Education participants.

    a. Participant's may also be eligible if their Reach First, Reach Up or Post-Secondary Education benefits close due to income from unsubsidized employment. (Code 99)

    b. Participant's applying for Reach Up may receive support services to attend orientation. Support Service would include transportation (example: Ready to Go) or transitional childcare.

    c. Participant's that have received 60 months of Reach Up benefits may receive support services during their two pending weeks.

2. The type of activity the individual is participating in determines which specific support service(s) may be available to the individual. Activities include paid employment, Reach Up Orientation, Reach Up Pending two Weeks, Reach Up assessment, and participation in Family Development Plan (FDP) activities.

    a. The Reach Up Case Manager and the participant will determine if support services are needed.

    b. The Reach Up Case Manager and the participant should explore all other resources before using support services. If there are no other resources, the case manager refers to the support service matrix for support services amounts and guidelines.

    c. The Reach Up Case Manager will document support service in case notes.

        i. Case note will include the support service, the amount, and date issued.

3. Reach Up Case Managers have two days to issue a support service check after receiving a bill or request for payment from a partner, local business, or participant.

P-2349 Case Management Procedures for Post-60-Month Cases

A. Pending Reach Up application for those who have received 60 months of countable, cumulative assistance – How to proceed from the initial case management meeting

1. Scheduling individual case management assessment.

   Within three days of the face-to face eligibility interview, the district schedules an individual case management assessment either by phone or in person, according to district procedures.

2. Applicant does not show for the first meeting with the case manager.

   a. If the applicant does not call and does not show up leave the application as pending for 30 days. Participant has to complete their requirements by 30 days after date of application or longer if processing date is extended due to department delay or good cause.

      i. If participant does not complete their requirements within 30 days after the date of application send email to district management team for application to be denied. CATN.

   b. If the applicant calls ahead to reschedule, reschedule the meeting for as soon as administratively possible as long as 30 days have not passed from the date of application, and let participant know that if they have not completed their requirements by 30 days after date of application—or longer if processing date is extended due to department delay or good cause— (give them date) their application will be denied.

3. Applicant is able to work.

   a. Create FDP with countable activities in ACCESS and print for applicant to sign.

   b. Determine what support services are needed in order to be able to participate. Applicants are eligible for all support services including transportation and childcare. Reminder - Authorize childcare for one year.

   c. The applicant must meet their work requirement for two full consecutive weeks completed by the 30th day after the date of application (unless processing date is extended due to department delay or good cause):

      - Excused absences are not allowed during this period. The participant is expected to make up any missed hours.

P-2349 Case Management Procedures for Post-60-Month Cases

A. Pending Reach Up application for those who have received 60 months of countable, cumulative assistance – How to proceed from the initial case management meeting (Continued)

- Holiday hours are allowed if the holiday falls on a regularly scheduled work day for the participant.
- The two weeks can start at any time after they apply if they can complete their two weeks by the 30th day after the date of application (unless processing date is extended due to department delay or good cause).
- The two weeks are not prorated and must be full weeks (example: Wednesday to Tuesday).

d. After two consecutive weeks of meeting the work requirement, the case manager sends an email to district management team that the application can be approved. Enter CATN.

e. If two weeks of participation has not been completed by the 30th day after the date of application (unless processing date is extended due to department delay or good cause), the application must be denied. Send an email to district management team. Enter CATN.

NOTE: If there is a delay caused by the department in processing the application/ scheduling meetings or by the applicant with good cause, the deadline for completing the two weeks may be extended beyond the 30th day.

4. Applicant requests a deferment or case manager determines one is needed (see P-2344 C)

a. Create FDP in ACCESS and print for participant to sign.

b. If the appropriate verification is received grant the deferment right away. The case manager sends an email to district management team that the benefits can be granted. Enter CATN.

i. For a Young Child Deferment once the participant completes the Deferment Request the deferment and benefits can be granted.

P-2349 Case Management Procedures for Post-60-Month Cases

A. Pending Reach Up application for those who have received 60 months of countable, cumulative assistance – How to proceed from the initial case management meeting (Continued)

c. If verification is needed enter as activity on FDP: "provide verification to determine eligibility for a deferment within 10 days of initial case management meeting."

d. Send self TODO for date deferment paperwork is due and schedule a meeting with the applicant for that date.

e. If the verification is received, the case manager sends an email to district management team that the benefits can be granted. Enter CATN.

f. If the verification comes back and the deferment is denied the applicant should be encouraged to meet their work requirement (modified or not) for the remainder of the two weeks.

g. If verification has not been received by the 30th day after the date of application (unless processing date is extended due to department delay or good cause), the grant must be denied. Send an email to district management team that the application must be denied for not complying with requirements. Enter CATN.

P-2349 Case Management Procedures for Post-60-Month Cases (Continued)

B. Ongoing case management for active Reach Up Participant who has received the 60 months of countable, cumulative assistance

1. 60-month appointment.

   a. Case managers send participants a 60-month appointment letter in their 58 month. If a case closes and reopens, and there is any question if the letter went out, send it again.

      i. The letter can be sent through a macro in ACCESS or the Reach Up Time Limits letter.

   b. Case managers review case and ensure that non-deferred participants are engaged in a countable activities and deferred participants are addressing the reason for their deferment.

   c. Revise and have participant sign new FDP if necessary.

2. Attendance and compliance.

   a. Non-deferred participants must be meeting their work requirement by the end of the first week of their 61st month.

   b. Collect and enter attendance sheets weekly--enter verified hours, holiday hours, and excused absence hours.

      i. Participants can bank hours within the same federal calendar month if approved by the case manager/work site supervisor beforehand.

   c. If at any time the work requirement is not being met case, determine good cause. Consult with Reach Up Supervisor:

      - If there is good cause, grant remains open.
      - If there is no good cause, case manager completes the 60 Countable Months-Closure/Break in Benefits Authorization (606CBA). After the Reach Up Supervisor signs the 606CBA, close the grant by changing the work participation code on the WORK panel to 83. Case manager enters CATN and name of Reach Up Supervisor consulted with. Enter case WARN with date range of two month break in benefits.
        - If case is closed (or due to close) close the grant by changing the work participation code on the WORK panel to 81.

P-2349 Case Management Procedures for Post-60-Month Cases

B. Ongoing case management for active Reach Up Participant who has received the 60 months of countable, cumulative assistance (Continued)

d. Participants who have received 60 countable cumulative months of assistance (both deferred and non-deferred) must comply with all other FDP requirements. If the participant is not complying with FDP requirements, determine good cause. Consult with Reach Up Supervisor:

- If there is good cause, grant remains open.
- If there is no good cause, case manager completes the 60 Countable Months-Closure/Break in Benefits Authorization (606CBA). After the Reach Up Supervisor signs the 606CBA, close the grant by changing the work participation code on the WORK panel to 83. Case manager enters CATN and name of Reach Up Supervisor consulted with. Enter case WARN with date range of two month break in benefits.

    - If case is closed (or due to close) close the grant by changing the work participation code on the WORK panel to 81.

3. Participant claims a deferment.

a. If at any time participant claims a deferment, case manager must verify deferment within 10 days.

i. The 10 days can be extended if the participant has good cause.

b. Case manager enters “verifying deferment” on FDP as a requirement.

c. If verification of deferment is not returned and there is no good cause, close grant by entering code 83 on WORK. CATN and put case WARN for date range of 2 month break in benefits.

d. If verification of deferment does not show that a deferment is needed, participant must begin meeting the work requirement as soon as administratively as possible. Revise FDP.

P-2349 <u>Case Management Procedures for Post-60-Month Cases</u> (Continued)

C. <u>Fair Hearings</u>

1. Completing the 113.

   If a participant who has closed due to not meeting post-60-month requirements requests a fair hearing, case manager is responsible for writing up Fair Hearing and submitting relevant documents according to current Fair Hearing process.

2. Participant requests continuing benefits before date of closure.

   a. Reach Up Supervisor enters participation code 77 on WORK C to remove penalty and enters CATN and case WARN.

   b. Reach Up Supervisor contacts district management team to re-open case and approve eligibility.

   c. Reach Up Supervisor informs participant that if the Human Services Board (HSB) rules in favor of the Department, they will be closed for two months.

   d. Case Manager continues to work with participant during the Fair Hearing process.

      i. If during a Fair Hearing process for a 60-month closure there is another instance of non-compliance**, <u>do not</u>** close the case.

      ii. Case manager should address the issue with the participant.

      iii. The Reach Up Supervisor contacts the participant and pulls together a team meeting to try to get things back on track, and perhaps address any un-addressed barriers that may be present.

   e. Reach Up Supervisor CATNs outcome of Fair Hearing or AOPS/District reversal.

   f. If HSB rules in favor of the Department:

      - The two-month break in benefits will start as soon as administratively possible after decision is given.

P-2349 Case Management Procedures for Post-60-Month Cases (Continued)

D. Adding a Second Parent

1. Second parent joins an active household that already has at least 60 countable cumulative months of assistance.

    a. Second parent does not need to meet the work requirement for two weeks or meet with a case manager prior to being added to grant.

    b. Schedule a meeting for family including second parent with case manager within three business days of reported change.

    c. Family should begin meeting new work requirement as administratively soon as possible.

    d. Follow procedures above (P-2349(B)) for ongoing eligibility and case management.

2. Second parent joining the household has at least 60 countable cumulative months of assistance and is joining a house hold with less than 59 countable cumulative months of assistance.

    a. Second parent does not need to meet the work requirement for two weeks or meet with a case manager prior to being added to grant.

    b. Schedule a meeting for family including second parent with case manager within three business days of reported change.

    c. Family should begin meeting new work requirement as administratively soon as possible.

    d. Follow procedures above (P-2349(B)) for ongoing eligibility and case management.

3. Second parent joining the household has at least 60 countable cumulative months of assistance and is joining a house hold with less than 59 countable cumulative months of assistance where the current parent receiving Reach Up is sanctioned.

    a. Second parent does not need to meet the work requirement for two weeks or meet with a case manager prior to being added to grant.

P-2349 Case Management Procedures for Post-60-Month Cases

D. Adding a Second Parent (Continued)

b. Schedule a meeting for the family including second parent with case manager within three business days of reported change.

   i. This meeting could act as a sanction meeting for the sanction parent and as a 60+ month meeting for both parents.

   ii. The sanction should be lifted.

c. Family must meet the work requirement as administratively soon as possible. Either parent can choose to meet the work requirement.

d. Follow procedures above (P-2349(B)) for ongoing eligibility and case management.

P-2354 Transferring Case Management Files Between Districts

A. For cases in which the participant notifies the current case manager they are moving

1. As soon as it is known that the participant will be transferring to another district, the Reach Up Supervisor should notify the “receiving” district office.

    a. If a new case manager has been assigned, put the case in the case manager’s number in ACCESS.

        i. You can find a case managers worker number in ACCESS by going to NAME/D.

2. If the new case manager is not yet known, put the case in the Reach Up Supervisor’s number in ACCESS.

B. For cases in which the participant moves but does not notify the current case manager

1. The Reach Up Supervisor in the “receiving” district will need to request the file from the Reach Supervisor in the former office.

C. Before sending the file to the new district the Reach Up Case Manager’s responsibilities include:

1. The case file should be organized according to the RU CM file retention schedule.

    a. File should be purged. All documents that can be removed and shred should.

    b. All documents should be secured in the file.

2. All case notes should be printed and placed securely in the case file.

    a. The current case manager should write a brief summary in case notes before the file is transferred. The summary should include:

        i. current issues that need to be addressed (for example, there is a current conciliation resolution or sanction).

        ii. any other updates that the case manager would find helpful if they were about to begin working with the participant.

3. If the current case manager is able to meet with the participant prior to the participant moving, a new Family Development Plan should be created.

P-2354 Transferring Case Management Files Between Districts

C. Before sending the file to the new district the Reach Up Case Manager's responsibilities include: (Continued)

a. Example of activities to add to the update Family Development Plan are childcare, housing, attending meeting with their new case manager, etc.

4. All support services the current case manager has agreed to pay should be paid.

    a. Any conversations regarding support services should be clearly documented in case notes.

5. If the current case manager is able to, conciliations and sanctions should be resolved before the transfer is made.

    a. If the current case manager is not able to resolve the conciliation or sanction the process should be clearly documented in case notes.

        i. The new case manager and the participant should review the conciliation and sanction at their first meeting. The new case manager and participant can make the new plan to cure their conciliation or sanction if the current plan is no longer appropriate.

D. Before sending a file to the new district the Reach Up Supervisor's responsibilities include:

1. Reviewing the case file to ensure the file is in proper order.

2. Forward electronic case notes, Family Development Plan, and deferment paperwork to the receiving district RUS.

E. Sending a file to the new district

1. Files can be transferred at joint meetings or via Operations Directors.

2. Files cannot be sent via mail.

F. Receiving a file from the previous district

1. When the case file reaches the new district, the case must be logged into the incoming file log, including the name and SSN of the case and the date it was received.