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To: Eligibility Services – Regional Directors
    Program Managers
    Eligibility Services Supervisors
    Regional Attorneys
    Hearings Officers

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Subject: Data Broker Update- Phase I

1. Data Broker Reports- TIERS and the Stand-Alone Portal
2. Residence Verification
3. Real Property Value Verification
4. Vehicle Verification
5. Asset Verification

Bulletins are sent to supervisors and other regional managers. Supervisors must share this information with all eligibility staff. Please ensure that copies are provided to staff that do not have access to e-mail. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures. Active bulletins are posted on the following websites:


Background

Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) uses data broker services to provide financial and other information to assist HHSC staff in determining eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
HHSC has a new data broker services vendor and has made certain modifications related to data broker services. The implementation of the new data broker services vendor aims to be a seamless transition for staff. Additional communications may be released based on the status of the transition.

1. Data Broker Reports- TIERS and the Stand-Alone Portal

Policy Update

Changes were made to both the data broker reports accessed through the Texas Integrated Eligibility System (TIERS) and the reports accessed through the data broker stand-alone portal.

**TIERS Data Broker Reports**

- Historical reports:
  - There is no impact to data broker historical reports accessed through TIERS.

- Combined reports:
  - There are formatting changes to the combined data broker report in TIERS; and
  - Property information will not be displayed on this report.

**Stand-Alone Portal Data Broker Reports**

- Data broker stand-alone portal location:
  - The web portal location has changed.
  - Staff that currently have access to data broker either via TIERS or Stand-Alone Portal will have access to the new web portal address.
    - The new web portal address that staff must use is: [https://portal.pcgtxdatabroker.com/](https://portal.pcgtxdatabroker.com/)

- Historical reports unavailable:
  - Data broker historical reports are unavailable through the data broker stand-alone portal until the *system stand-alone report* is updated.

- Combined reports and inquiries:
  - Staff can only access a combined data broker report and have the ability to query The Work Number (TWN) in the updated stand-alone portal;
  - Any other individual inquiries for specific data elements are not allowed until the *system stand-alone report* is updated.

**Note:** Future releases will include updates to the system stand-alone report.

Contact the TIERS Help Desk for problems with data broker reports: [Tiersapplicationsupport@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:Tiersapplicationsupport@hhsc.state.tx.us).
2. Residence Verification

Current Policy

Medicaid and CHIP Administrative Renewals

The administrative renewal process explained in TWH B-122.4.1, Automated Renewal Process, gathers information from an individual's existing case and from electronic data sources (ELDS) to determine whether they continue to remain potentially eligible for medical programs.

During the automated renewal process, TIERS checks for the required verification by program. Residency is checked for Parents and Caretaker Relatives Medicaid (TP 08) and Former Foster Care Children (TA 82), using Texas Department of Public Safety information.

New Policy

TP 08 and TA 82

Within the data broker service, a new ELDS, LexisNexis Residency, will be used to verify residence for the administrative renewal process.

3. Real Property Value Verification

Current Policy

TANF, SNAP, Children on TP 32 and TP 56, and MEPD

The equity value of an individual's ownership or part ownership in real property, other than an excluded home, may be a countable resource. HHSC must determine ownership, current fair market value, and the equity value of real property for individuals applying for HHSC benefits.

The data broker report contains information regarding real property owned in Texas according to the address provided by the individual and entered on the Combined Report Search screen. The Combined Report provides information on ownership of the property at the address entered regardless of who owns the property. If an individual owns other property in Texas, the report lists the property only if the individual receives the tax bill at the address entered.

Information on this data broker report is taken directly from taxing authorities and can be used as a verification source.

New Policy

TANF, SNAP, Children on TP 32 and TP 56, and MEPD

Real property information will not be displayed in the data broker services. Staff must use other valid verification sources for real property listed in:

- TWH, A-1251, Verification Sources; and
- MEPDH, Appendix XVI, Documentation and Verification Guide.
Automation

The Property Value section in the data broker report will not be displayed.

4. Vehicle Verification

Current Policy

*TANF, SNAP, Children on TP 32 and TP 56, and MEPD*

Staff must count resources, including the value of vehicles, for individuals applying for certain HHSC benefits. The equity value of non-excluded vehicles is a countable resource.

The electronic data source (ELDS) for vehicle ownership is determined via data broker services by using the Texas Department of Transportation information.

The fair market value (FMV) of licensed vehicles is determined using the average wholesale value listed in the Vehicles Registered at Address Report from data broker services. Data broker services pulls vehicle value information from the National Auto Research (NAR) Black Book which is updated bi-annually.

The data broker report lists the average wholesale value of the vehicle and can be used as verification to determine the countable value of the vehicle.

For other acceptable methods of verification for vehicles refer to:

- *TWH, A-1251,* Verification Sources; and
- *MEPDH, F-4221,* Automobile.

New Policy

*TANF, SNAP, Children on TP 32 and TP 56, and MEPD*

The National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) is the new electronic data source (ELDS) via data broker services that will be used to determine the current fair market value of vehicles owned by the individual applying for certain HHSC benefits.

The ELDS for vehicle ownership is determined via data broker services will now use the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

Automation

NADA will be used as the ELDS to determine value of vehicle property for applicants of TANF, SNAP, Children on TP 32 and TP 56, and MEPD.

In order to document NADA as the verification source used to verify vehicle value in TIERS, staff select Data Broker System from the Verification drop-down menu for Vehicle Value under the Resources section (Figure 1).
5. Asset Verification

Current Policy

**MEPD**

Asset Verification System (AVS) is used to request and display an individual's financial assets at application, renewal and request for program transfer when the individual meets all other eligibility requirements (**MEPD Bulletin #16-05**).

New Policy

**MEPD**

A new electronic data source (ELDS), Accuity Asset Verification, will be used for AVS to determine the financial assets for applicants and recipients during a renewal and a request for program transfers who meet all other eligibility requirements for MEPD benefits.

There is no change in policy for the treatment of information returned from AVS.

Automation

Within TIERS, staff may experience a longer delay when requesting AVS information. There is now a 15 second timeout instead of 30 seconds. Once AVS has timed out, a message will be appear informing staff:

"The information requested cannot be retrieved at this time. Please allow at least 7 minutes and then try your request again."
Although AVS has timed out, a response may have been received by the system and will be stored for 30 days. If staff make a new AVS request after the 15 second timeout and at least 7 minutes or made an additional request within 30 days of the initial request, the system will display the stored AVS response.

Staff can make a new AVS request if no response was provided or if the stored response is older than 30 days.

**Effective Date**

All policy changes are effective February 21, 2017.

**Handbook**

*TWH* updates are scheduled for the January 2018 revisions.

*MEPDH* updates are scheduled for the December 2017 revisions.

**Training**

Training is not required.