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

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Subject: Recognition of Same-Sex Marriages

This bulletin is being sent to supervisors and other regional managers. Supervisors must share this information with all Texas Works staff. Please ensure 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 Texas Works Handbook (TWH) website at <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/handbooks/TexasWorks/>.

Recognition of Same-Sex Marriages

On June 26, 2015, the United States Supreme Court issued a decision concluding that the United States Constitution "does not permit" a state to bar same-sex couples from marriage on the same terms as opposite sex couples. The decision invalidated state law to the extent that law excludes same-sex couples from civil marriage on the same terms and conditions as opposite sex couples. The Court also concluded that a state has "no lawful basis" for refusing to recognize a lawful same-sex marriage performed in another state "on the ground of its same-sex character."

This decision requires HHSC to revise current eligibility policies and procedures for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Additional guidance will be provided for other programs in the future.

SNAP

New Policy

The policies that currently apply to opposite-sex marriages now apply to same-sex marriages. Spouses must be certified together on the same SNAP Eligibility Determination Group (EDG) even if they state that they purchase and prepare separately. In addition, continue to include all

household members in the same EDG who indicate that they purchase and prepare together, regardless of marriage status.

Automation

Changes to the Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) to support the new policy will be included in a future release. Staff will be notified at such time.

Staff must use the following Contingency Processing Method (CPM) found here [Same-Sex Marriage CPM](#) (#594992 TIERS Entries for Same-Sex Marriages) when processing eligibility determinations for households with same-sex spouses until notified of system changes.

In addition, when an individual reports his or her same-sex marriage using YourTexasBenefits.com, it will allow for the correct gender and relationship designation for same-sex couples. However, TIERS does not. Staff must use the provided CPM.

Effective Date

The new policy is effective as of the date of this bulletin for any application, renewal, or change disposed on or after the bulletin date for applications, renewals, or changes received on or after June 26, 2015.

If action has been taken on a same-sex marriage case prior to the release of this bulletin and the individual contacts HHSC, staff must reprocess the case, as appropriate.

Handbook

The Texas Works Handbook will be updated with the January 2016 revision.

Training

No training is required.