VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Benefit Programs
Economic Assistance and Employment Unit (TANF/VIEW)

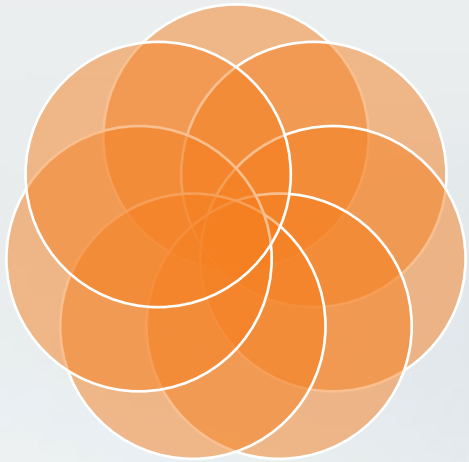
Deep Sea Diving for Guidance – Q&A Panel

BPRO Conference Fall 2026

Hosted By:

Leesha Morales

Shea McCracken

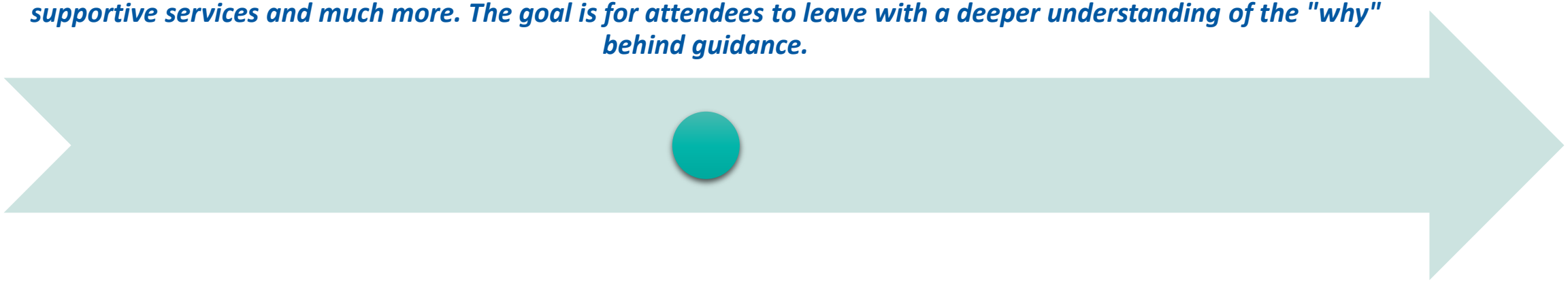


Katie Muska

Regina Arnold

Workshop Description

Does your historical knowledge of TANF and/or VIEW need to be refreshed or do you want to learn more about all the guidance changes as a result of our program's participation in the TANF FRA Pilot? If so, joining TANF and VIEW experts in this engaging question and answer panel discussion will be enlightening This session will have some common questions the program has received scattered throughout and will then transition into an open Q&A forums Participants will get clarity on current eligibility requirements, work-related mandates, and available supportive services and much more. The goal is for attendees to leave with a deeper understanding of the "why" behind guidance.



TANF and VIEW Guidance Changes - Resulting from Participation in the TANF FRA Pilot

Participation Requirements – 901.1

Question: Is an individual required to participate in VIEW if they are approved for the application month only and denied for ongoing TANF?

Answer: Individuals who are approved for specific months during the application period but denied for ongoing TANF eligibility are not eligible to participate in VIEW. The referral in the ESP Queue must be closed.

Participation Requirements – 901.1

Question: Can a 19-year-old caretaker opt-out of VIEW participation based on being enrolled in high school?

Answer: No. The option to opt-in or out of VIEW participation does not apply to 19-year-olds. Only individuals at least 18, but no more than 19 years of age, who are enrolled in elementary or secondary school, including vocational or technical school programs that are parents or needy non-parent caretakers will be given the option to opt-in or out of VIEW participation after receiving an explanation of the VIEW program at the Initial Assessment Interview. The vocational or technical school must be equivalent to secondary school.

Exemption Criteria – 901.2

Question: Is a Medical Evaluation valid if it is completed and signed by a licensed clinical social worker?

Answer: Yes, the definition of a medical professional was updated to included psychologists and licensed clinical social workers.

Guidance Citation: A medical professional is defined as a medical doctor, including psychiatrist, **psychologist, licensed clinical social worker** or doctor of osteopathy, or a licensed physician's assistant or nurse practitioner working under the auspices of a medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy.

Exemption Criteria – 901.2

Question: Can a caretaker meet the definition of caring for a disabled family member if they are employed and working from home/remotely while providing care.

Answer: No, **if the caregiver is employed, the caregiver will not be exempt for being needed to care for the disabled family member on a continuous, ongoing basis.**

Exemption Criteria – 901.2

Question: Does the circumstance of a disabled child enrolled in school automatically disqualify their caregiver from being exempt from VIEW participation?

Answer: No, even if the disabled family member is out of the home for part of the day, the caregiver may still meet the requirement if they must remain available, reachable, and responsible for essential care before, after, or between those periods.

Transitional Services – Check-Ins (1000.19)

Question: Are check-ins optional for participants during the transitional period?

Answer: Incremental check-ins are to be informal in nature but are not optional for the former participant, meaning they cannot opt-out from attempted contacts from the ESW. However, there is no penalty if the former participant chooses to not comply with the check-ins during the transitional period.

Transitional Services

Question: Is there is a definition for a “working client”, being that transitional supportive services are based on a client's employment status. Could the client be working one hour a week, or even a month, to receive transitional supportive services? Our understanding is that there are no minimum hour requirements for transitional services (except for VTP).

Answer: There is not a minimum hour requirement to be considered a working client for the receipt of transitional supportive services.

Transitional Period

Question: After the 12 months of transitional, are there any other requirements for the ESW's? Any additional check ins, follow ups or responsibilities?

Answer: No. The ESP enrollment must close when the transitional period limit is reached.

Pilot question

With the Pilot changes, can clients still request an exemption if they are full-time students?

Yes, this policy has not changed. However, the ESW should be the person explaining the VIEW program and availability of supportive services (to include incentives) if the client opts in to participating in VIEW.

Question:

With the new VIEW policy if a client closed in a sanction and they reapply a year later will they need to "cure" the sanction or do we assign them to a pathway if they are willing to participate and agree?

Response:

Yes, the sanction count must start over with each new VIEW enrollment in the 24-month period unless the TANF case closed in a fixed sanction period or if the fixed sanctioned period passed but compliance was not met. This includes at reapplication and when an individual becomes exempt from participation requirements and is subsequently referred to VIEW.

Participation Requirements and Cooperation – 901.5

Question: How long is the grace period when a client fails to complete the initial assessment?

Answer: Clients will have until the 10th day of the following month to complete the initial assessment interview and sign the APR allowing them to receive an additional payment cycle of TANF.

Transitional Services – (1000.19)

Question: If someone who is working less than 30 hours reaches their 24 months (not eligible for VTP), can we place them in Transitional Transportation to provide them with transportation and with transitional job retention incentives for twelve months?

Answer: Yes, if the former participant is employed, they may be eligible for transitional supportive services and transitional incentives. The ESP enrollment should remain open and the status should be changed to Transitional Transportation.

Open Forum

What would you like to know about TANF or VIEW guidance changes that were effective 10-01-2026?

Relationship Establishment

Relationship Verification- VIIS

Question: Can VIIS results serve as verification of relationship, because the mother's name is listed in the results, identifying her as the mother?

Response: No. The results from VIIS cannot be used to verify the relationship between the mother and child. Valid proof of relationship may not have been obtained from the practitioner or entering party, prior to inputting the information into the VIIS system.

Relationship Establishment

QUESTION

Can the Newborn Summary in VaCMS be used as permanent verification of newborn, added by Baby BOT, to establish maternal relationships?

ANSWER

Since the inception of Baby Bot in August 2023, the TANF program has allowed for the Newborn Summary screen to be used as permanent verification of age, citizenship, declaration of citizenship, and maternal relationship(s) for applicable newborns, with one exception. The TANF program will not accept a Newborn Summary screen as verification of age, citizenship, declaration of citizenship and maternal relationship(s) when the reporter entity is “worker”.

Questions

Please ask anything you would like clarity on.

All Things Child Support/DCSE

DCSE

Questions

1. A client wants to claim Good Cause for not cooperating with DCSE but they have an old court document to verify the history of abuse.

2. A client wants to claim Good Cause for not cooperating with DCSE but they have never reported the domestic violence so they do not have a document to support their claim.

What can I do?

Answers

Guidance now allows a more lenient approach to verifying Good Cause claims to protect our clients.

Clients may provide readily available documents to verify their claim. This includes expired/old verifications.

If a client does not have a formal document to substantiate their claim, client statement can be used as the best available verification.

Client safety comes first!

Miscellaneous Topics

EPPiCard/Way2Go Card Issues

On September 15, my client reported that she has not received her Way2Go Card. Her TANF case was approved on August 27. Can you check on this situation for me, please?

Since the regional consultants do not have access to the EPPiCard system and are unable to view nor update information in the EPPiC system, agencies may contact TANF Home Office staff directly for these types of issues.

You may send the scenario along with the case number to ask.tanfview@dss.virginia.gov

Please see Tidbit #4 from 2024 for instructions. Please follow the steps before sending the issue to ask.tanfview.

11. If you have performed your checks and balances as outlined and the customer still receives payments via check, send an email to ask.tanfview@dss.virginia.gov ***with the below information:***

- Case Number
- A brief summary of the issue at hand
- Confirmation that the physical and/or mailing addresses are correct in the VaCMS
- The client ID of the person who should receive the Way2Go/EPPICard
- Must send encrypted if the information includes Personally Identifying Information (PII)

Program: TANF #4 – 2024

Topic: Way2Go/EPPICard Best Practices

Question: *Why is my customer not receiving her TANF payment via Way2Go/EPPICard? I requested a debit card, but she continues to receive her payment via check.*

Response: *There are several reasons why a customer may not receive their TANF benefits via Way2Go/EPPICard. Below are some tips and best practices to ensure you have taken all the correct actions.*

Tips/Best Practices:

1. *Ensure addresses are correctly entered in the VaCMS.*
2. *Remember that individuals without a valid social security number cannot receive a Way2Go/EPPICard.*
3. *On the SNAP/TANF Case Level – Details screen, under the "TANF Benefit Recipient" field, ensure the correct individual is selected from the "Name" drop-down.*
4. *Children must never be selected on the screen noted in 3 above.*
5. *After certifying and authorizing an application/case, make sure to continue through the driver flow to the TANF Method of Issuance screen, and not just exit after the case has been certified and authorized.*
6. *On the TANF Method of Issuance screen, ensure the individual selected from the "Pay To" dropdown, matches the person selected on the SNAP/TANF Case Level - Details screen.*
7. *From the "Issuance Method" drop-down, ensure "EPPIC Card' is selected.*
8. *Ensure that you are hitting "Submit" before exiting this screen.*
9. *Ensure you confirm with the customer if he/she has a current Way2Go/EPPICard.*
10. *Keep in mind that if a card was issued in less than the past 5 years, and has a balance, a new card will not automatically be issued. This includes balances from TANF, child support and unemployment compensation. The customer will have to call 1-800-961-8423 to order a new card.*

EPPICard/Way2Go

Section 500

- The EW is to contact the TANF Home Office staff at ***ask.tanfview@dss.virginia***.gov when a debit card rejects and sends a payment by check.
- The cardholder will contact Way2Go customer Service at 1-800-961-8423 to report a lost/stolen card and obtain a replacement card or ***to report stolen benefits or suspected fraudulent activity.***

The Virginia Way2Go Card® Debit MasterCard® Card is issued by Comerica Bank pursuant to a license by MasterCard International Incorporated.

Virginia

Way2Go Card® Debit MasterCard®

Public Site: https://dss.virginia.gov/benefit/tanf/debit_card.cgi

QUESTION

Will a wet signature now be required on the APR?

RESPONSE

No, the current allowance to obtain a verbal signature when the assessment interview is conducted by a means other than in person remains in place.

Do we close ESP when the client becomes exempt due to mental and or physical disabilities? Also, do we close ESP when the customer has given birth?

When a client becomes exempt and is not going to opt to continue participating in VIEW, the ESP enrollment must be closed. The eligibility worker will also need to update the Program Request screen to remove the APR date and run eligibility. This will flip the case back to being a regular TANF case.

Open Forum –Time for Questions

"The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing." — *Albert Einstein*

What are you curious about?

Thank you for your attention!