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TO: Income Maintenance Supervisors
Income Maintenance Lead Workers
Income Maintenance Staff
W-2 Agencies
Workforce Development Boards
Job Center Leads and Managers
Training Staff
Child Care Coordinators

FROM: Janice Peters, Director
Bureau of Wisconsin Works
Division of Family Supports

DFS OPERATIONS MEMO

No: 07-64

DATE: 12/03/2007

FS	<input type="checkbox"/>	MA	<input type="checkbox"/>	SC	<input type="checkbox"/>
CTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	CC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	W-2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FSET	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA	<input type="checkbox"/>	CF	<input type="checkbox"/>
JAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	JC	<input type="checkbox"/>	RAP	<input type="checkbox"/>
WIA	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	EP	<input type="checkbox"/>	

PRIORITY: HIGH

SUBJECT: CARES Notice Re-Engineering Project – Participant Communication

CROSS REFERENCE: None

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the Client Assistance for Re-employment and Economic Support (CARES) system Notice Re-engineering project and to have workers begin informing participants of the impending change to the Wisconsin Works (W-2) and Child Care (CC) Notices of Eligibility.

BACKGROUND

In June 2006, both the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) began a project redesigning Income Maintenance (IM), W-2 and CC eligibility notices. This re-engineering project is based on input from customers, advocates and local W-2, CC and IM agency staff.

In January 2008, CARES will begin generating the newly redesigned notices. For W-2, this includes the Notices of Eligibility, whether they are denial or closure decisions or review completed notices. For CC, this includes initial or ongoing eligibility decisions and review/Six Month Reporting Forms (SMRF) notices.

Notices for all automated IM programs, including BadgerCare Plus, FoodShare, SSI Caretaker Supplement (CTS) and Medicaid will be impacted by Notice Re-engineering as well. More information on the IM programs will be communicated by DHFS.

The Notice Re-engineering project takes advantage of new web technology so that W-2 and CC Notices of Eligibility are easy to read and easy to understand. The new notices will communicate, in a manner participants understand, what is happening to their case and what they can do about it. This project is expected to reduce participant confusion and the number of calls to workers.

CARES/CWW Changes for Notice Re-engineering include:

- New software will be used to give the notices a cleaner and friendlier look and feel.
- The new Notices of Eligibility will be stored in the Electronic Case File (ECF) and will be managed and retrieved via CWW.
- Notices will be “rolled up”, to include multiple months of eligibility decisions, resulting in fewer notices being issued and less of a need for workers to suppress notices.
- Notices will only be issued when a true change in eligibility occurs, rather than at every confirmation of eligibility.
- Notices will be issued in English, Hmong and Spanish.
- W-2 and CC notices will no longer include information about IM programs. However, similar changes have been made to the notices for those programs. More information about these changes will be communicated by DHFS.

Letters, worker generated letters and forms will be addressed in future phases of the Notice Re-engineering project.

ACTION ITEM

While the notices have been designed for better readability, accuracy and understanding, they look so different that unless the participant is prepared for the change, participants may be confused. Based on discussions with W-2 participants, they have asked that the Department notify them of the change ahead of time. For that reason, W-2 agency staff must begin talking with applicants and participants about the impending changes to the Notices of Eligibility, particularly if the applicants have received W-2 services in the past and have been recipients of notices in the older format. Agencies must also have copies of the informational flyer available at their agency.

In addition, in early January 2008, DWD will be mailing the attached informational flyer alerting open, eligible participants to the change. The flyer will also be translated to Hmong and Spanish and sent to participants based on the language indicator identified in CARES.

The English, Hmong and Spanish versions are available on the [Wisconsin Works \(W-2\) Program Resource Page](#).

NEXT STEPS

DWD will be issuing another Operations Memo that will describe in detail the changes that have been made to the W-2 and CC Notices of Eligibility as well as changes made to CARES Worker Web (CWW) to support the notice changes.

With regard to training, agency training liaisons should watch for more detailed information in an upcoming *Training Times*.

CONTACTS

For W-2 Policy Related Questions: BW-2 Regional Office Staff

For CC Policy Related Questions: Child Care Help Desk

For CARES Processing Questions: W-2/CC Help Desk