

DATE: January 25, 2016

TO: Subscribers

SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION: Commissioners, Temporary Assistance Directors,
Accounting Supervisors, Fraud/Recovery Directors

FROM: Phyllis Morris, Deputy Commissioner
Center for Employment and Economic Supports

SUBJECT: Issues with Cognos Biennial Accounting Report

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

CONTACT PERSON: Program Questions: Temporary Assistance Bureau: 1-800-343-8859,
ext: 4-4344
Finance Questions: Dan Stuhlman: 518-474-7549 or
Dan.Stuhlman@oda.ny.gov
Technical Questions: E-mail:
its.sm.hs.eim.businessintelligence@its.ny.gov or Customer Care
Center: 1-800-697-1323 and ask to have an incident ticket opened and
assigned to: L2 OTDA COGNOS

The purpose of this General Information System (GIS) message is to advise Social Services Districts (SSDs) that OTDA has been recently notified of systems issues related to the "Biennial Accounting Report" in Cognos. SSDs were first advised of the availability of the "Biennial Accounting Report" in GIS release "GIS 15 TA/DC021: Availability of New Cognos Report: Biennial Accounting Report".

At this time, the following issues are known:

- For Paper Checks and Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Accounts:

If a payment is issued (identified by check date) prior to the "Biennial Accounting Period" identified by the user, but is cancelled in the Benefit Issuance Control System (BICS) DURING the "Biennial Accounting Period", the report is only picking up the cancelled payment. This reduces the total amount of payments issued during the "Biennial Accounting Period" and results in an incorrect balance in "Total Payments" in the "Summary for Case No" field.

For example: The "Biennial Accounting Period" is 01/01/2014 to 12/31/2015. A payment is issued for \$100 on 12/30/2013. On 01/31/2015, the payment is cancelled. The report is only reporting the cancellation. It is not reporting the initial payment as it was outside the "Biennial Accounting Period".

- For Paper Checks Only:

When a paper check is issued that has a total payment amount that is comprised of more than one payment type, the report is only picking up the dollar amount for one payment type and not all payment types and dollar amounts associated with the paper check.

For example: A paper check is issued for utility arrears of \$300 using payment type “60: Emergency Utility Payment to Prevent Shut-Off or Restore” and for electricity in the amount of \$50 using payment type “E7: Electricity”. The report is picking up only one of the payments (either \$300 or \$50) and not the total payments of \$350.

- Cancellations and Voids:

Cancellations and voids are showing as positive amounts in the detail, but are being correctly subtracted in the “Case Summary” figures.

- Recoveries:

The required recovery type edits are working intermittently. This is allowing excluded recoveries, such as Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) recoveries, to be listed as an acceptable Temporary Assistance (TA) recovery on the report.

In addition, Lottery Intercept recoveries that were posted as both a cash receipt and as a manual posting to an overpayment will be incorrectly listed twice.

We have been informed by SSD staff that although there are identified system limitations, they have found the report useful. Therefore, SSDs are advised to use the “Biennial Accounting Report” as deemed appropriate to support internal operations.

Systems staff continues to work on these issues and SSDs will be notified as changes are made.