**Section 117.92 Electronic Finger Imaging**

The Department will operate the electronic finger imaging system on a statewide basis. The system will be used in the administration of the Food Stamp Program and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. In addition, in the City of Chicago, the system will be used in the administration of the two General Assistance (GA) programs (the Family and Children Assistance program and the Transitional Assistance program).

a) Unless exempt, the Department will require the following persons to undergo electronic finger imaging:

1) All adult applicants for food stamps, TANF cash assistance, and City of Chicago General Assistance.

2) All adult recipients of food stamps, TANF cash assistance, and City of Chicago General Assistance, including:

A) second parents; in 2-parent cases and

B) minor grantees for TANF cash cases in which the minor parent is considered an adult; and

C) all payees for food stamps, TANF cash assistance, and City of Chicago General Assistance who do not receive cash and/or food stamp benefits in the case (this does not apply to protective payee cases for any category of assistance or representative payee for teens (RPT) TANF cash cases).

b) Exemptions From Finger Imaging

1) The Department will grant a person with both index fingers broken or bandaged a temporary exemption. To be granted the exemption, the person must provide documentation from a physician that verifies the medical condition. The documentation must state when the person can participate. The length of the exemption shall be based on the physician's statement. When the person's condition improves to the point where he or she can be finger imaged, the Department shall contact the person so that he or she can complete the process.

2) A person who is missing both hands or both index fingers will be granted a permanent exemption.

c) Cooperation With Finger Imaging Requirements

1) The failure or refusal of a person who is not medically exempt to comply with finger imaging requirements will result in ineligibility for cash assistance and/or food stamps for the entire Food Stamp, TANF or General Assistance unit.

2) In the event of a system failure or prolonged downtime, a person who agrees to be finger imaged shall be considered as having cooperated. The person shall be required to return to the local office, within a specified period of time, to complete the finger imaging process when the system is operational. If the individual does not return, within the specified period of time, he or she will be considered as not cooperating.

3) In no instance shall the issuance of benefits be delayed beyond the application time limits as specified in 89 Ill. Adm. Code 110.20 or 89 Ill. Adm. Code 121.2.

4) The Department shall provide material to all applicants and recipients that will explain the following information:

A) the finger imaging process;

B) the reason for the process;

C) the confidentiality of the information; and

D) the fact that cooperation with the finger imaging process is a condition of eligibility.

d) Intake

The local office will finger image a person when he or she applies for assistance. If the applicant fails or refuses to be finger imaged, the Department shall deny the cash assistance and/or the food stamp portion of his or her application.

e) Active Cases

The local office will finger image clients as listed in subsections (e)(1) through (4). If the client fails or refuses to be finger imaged, the Department shall discontinue cash and/or food stamp assistance.

1) The local office shall send a notice to adults in Food Stamp, TANF, and City of Chicago GA cases scheduled for a face-to-face redetermination advising them of the finger imaging requirement. The notice shall also advise the adult or adults that they will be scheduled for a finger imaging appointment at the completion of their redetermination interview.

2) The local office shall make every effort to accommodate clients when they must reschedule their finger imaging appointments. When a mandated client fails to appear for his or her scheduled appointment and does not call to reschedule, the local office shall send a notice to discontinue cash and/or food stamp assistance to the client for failure to comply with finger imaging requirements.

3) The Department's investigators shall advise the local office to take appropriate action to cancel cash assistance and Food Stamps if their investigation validates a match and finds no satisfactory reason for its concerns. Upon receipt of the information from the Department's investigators, the local office shall cancel cash assistance and food stamps.

4) Whenever a new adult is added to an active case, or there is a change in the payee, the local office shall inform the person of the finger imaging requirements. The local office shall schedule an appointment for the person to come into the office for finger imaging.

(Source: Added at 23 Ill. Reg. 12638, effective October 15, 1999)