ASPIRE Exemptions

1. SSDI recipients are no longer considered to be Work Eligible individuals. They are exempt from participation with ASPIRE.

   True - Effective Oct 2008, recipients of SSDI became exempt. However, ACES is still showing them as Mandatory. This is a known issue.
   No Manual Reference: Exempt per the Work Verification Plan for the State of Maine (9/08), III, 1

2. The spouse of an SSI recipient is exempt from participation with ASPIRE.

   False - The spouse of an SSI recipient is no longer automatically exempt from ASPIRE participation. However, if that spouse provides us with medical verification that he or she is needed at home to care for the disabled person, we can exempt him/her.
   Reference: TANF/PAS Policy Manual Ch II, Page 38

3. When a client has a child under five and the child is receiving SSI, the parent can be exempt from ASPIRE. The parent does not need to provide us with a doctor’s note.

   True - A parent who has a child under five receiving SSI can opt to be exempt from participation with ASPIRE without a doctor’s note. However, when the child reaches the age of five, we will need medical documentation to continue the exemption.
   No Manual Reference: Best Practice regarding under five. Work Verification Plan or the State of Maine (9/08), III, 1

4. If you want to make someone exempt from participation in ACES, just change the Mandatory link to Exempt.

   False - We must not “flip” statuses from Mandatory to Exempt. There is a procedure that Eligibility must follow that will force ACES to change the status prospectively. ACES will now display the reason for exemption as well as the status.
   No Manual Reference: ACES Best Practice

5. A client who is determined to be disabled by MRT is exempt from participation with ASPIRE.

   False - The TANF recipient who has been determined disabled by MRT is Mandatory for ASPIRE participation. There may be times when you are “unable to affect” that individual for medical reasons. But the client must meet with ASPIRE and complete a Family Contract Amendment.
   No Manual Reference: Best Practice
6. The spouse of an individual who has been determined disabled by MRT can be exempt from participation if he/she provides medical verification.

True - If the spouse is needed at home to care for the MRT individual, we can exempt that spouse for up to 6 months as long as we have medical verification. Again the correct procedure must be followed in ACES for the exemption to be recognized.
Reference: TANF/PaS Policy Manual Ch II, Page 38

7. When a client is approved for SSI or SSDI, we can retroactively exempt them from participation so that he/she do not count against us.

True - Federal rules allow us to exempt a person retroactively. This individual will be removed from the TANF participation count back to the SSI or SSDI income start date.
No Manual Reference: Reauthorization of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program; Final Rule (2/5/08) II, 2

8. A two parent household with one parent disabled can request the child under one exemption.

False - The child under one exemption can be used only by a single parent household.
References: TANF/PaS Policy Manual Ch II, Page 38 and ASPIRE TANF Program Rules, Section 3-1

9. If a sanctioned individual has a new baby, she can request to use the child under one exemption even if she has not finished serving her sanction.

True - If the parent requests to use the exemption for child under one, her sanction can be put on hold. When the child reaches its first birthday, the sanction resumes until the sanction is served or the client complies.
Reference: TANF/Pas Policy Manual Ch II, Page 38

10. If a parent is under the age of 20 and does not have a diploma or GED, he/she cannot use the child under one exemption.

True - A single parent under the age of 20 must have a GED or diploma to use the child under one exemption.
References: TANF/Pas Policy Manual Ch II, Page 38 and ASPIRE TANF Program Rules, Section 3-3