Flexible Fund for Family Services
TANF Allocation Plan for State Fiscal Year 2008-2009
FFFS Plan Instructions

Introduction

A file was developed in Microsoft Excel© that allows for the completion of the Flexible Fund for Family Services (FFFS) Plan. The file is macro driven to check for data entry of program information, to permit navigation between various pages of the application package, and to automatically transfer allocation data from a single source to different plan reports. This increases the efficiency of the plan process, eliminates the need for repetitive data entry, and reduces the potential for error.

Please note that in addition to the Flexible Fund 2008-2009 Plan application in Excel, districts that allocate funds to TANF Services (lines 1a. and/or 1b.) or TANF Employment Services (lines 2a. and/or 2b.) must also complete the required program descriptions in TRACS 2. Plans will not be approved without this information in TRACS 2.

As mentioned above, the allocation file is macro driven. With the exception of the Main Menu, the macro buttons are located in the upper left or upper right hand corner of each screen. If the buttons are not visible, scroll to the left or the right of the screen to locate them.

The file contains several edits throughout which assist in ensuring the information in the plan is correct. These edits appear as pop up dialog boxes if any of the information entered does not comply with FFFS requirements. See the last page of these instructions to review a list of errors that may be encountered. The macros are most efficient if the plan is completed as indicated in these instructions. To avoid errors that invalidate these macros, please adhere to the following:

- **DO NOT copy and paste cells.**
- **DO NOT cut and paste cells.**
- **DO NOT insert rows.**
- **DO NOT delete rows.**

Also, please return to the Main Menu prior to saving the file. This will ensure the Main Menu will be displayed the next time the file is opened.

Getting Started

1. Copy the file named *FFFS 2008-2009 Plan app.xls* to the folder where the file is to be saved. Before submitting the final version of the plan to be reviewed, it is suggested that the file be saved as <u>County name</u> – *FFFS Plan 2007-2008 app* – <u>submission date</u>.xls. This will ensure the plans remain separate once received at the agencies.

2. In Microsoft Excel©, open the file named *FFFS Plan 2008-2009 Plan app.xls*.
   a. If the below error message or a similar message regarding macro security is displayed, the macro security settings need to be adjusted. Click *OK* to continue.
      - Note: If neither security dialog box is displayed, it is likely the security level is set to Low. This is acceptable and the macros will still run successfully.
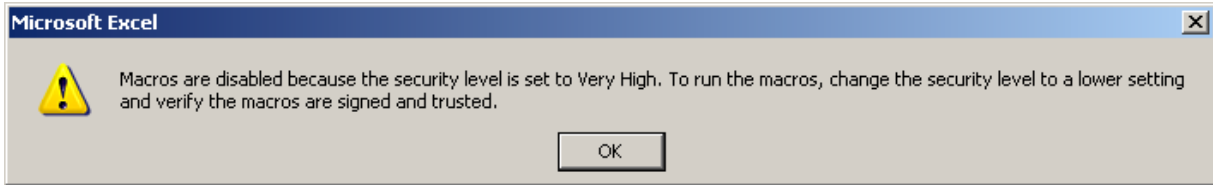
b. From the Main Toolbar in Excel©, click on *Tools→ Macro → Security*. The following dialog box will be displayed.

Select *Medium* to allow the use of macros.
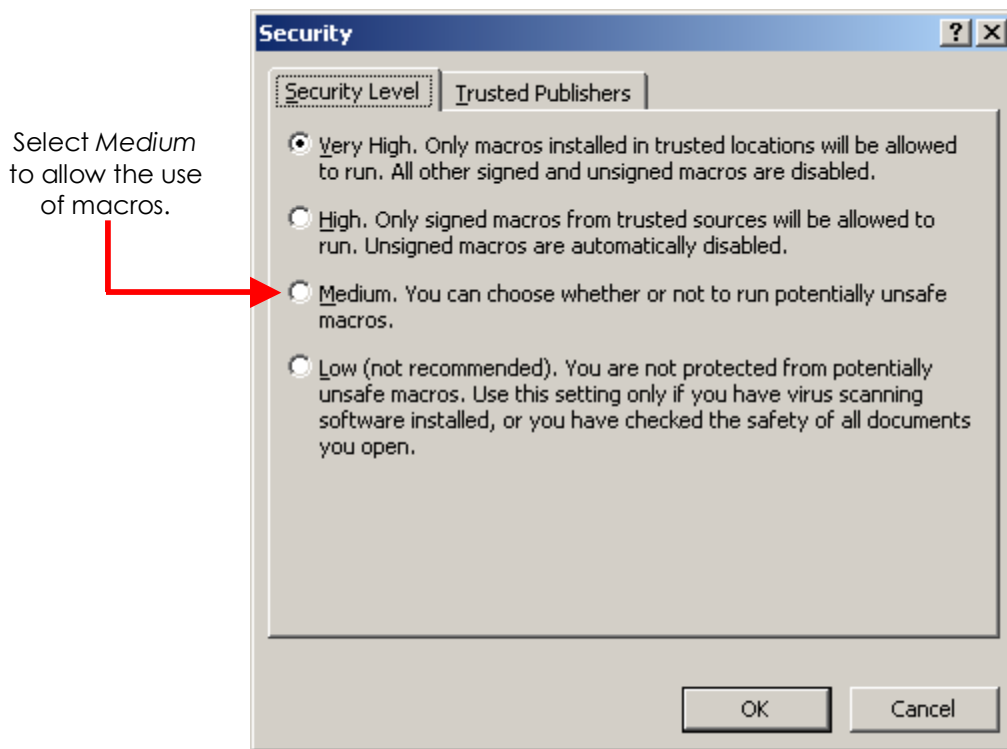
c. Choose the Medium button as indicated above and click *OK*. Exit Excel to save the updated security settings and reopen the FFFS plan. The below security warning will be displayed.

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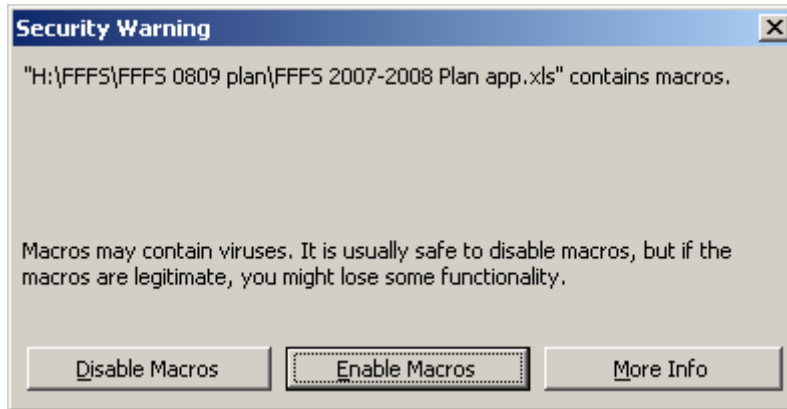
> d. Click *Enable Macros* and the Flexible Fund for Family Services Plan Main Menu will be displayed.
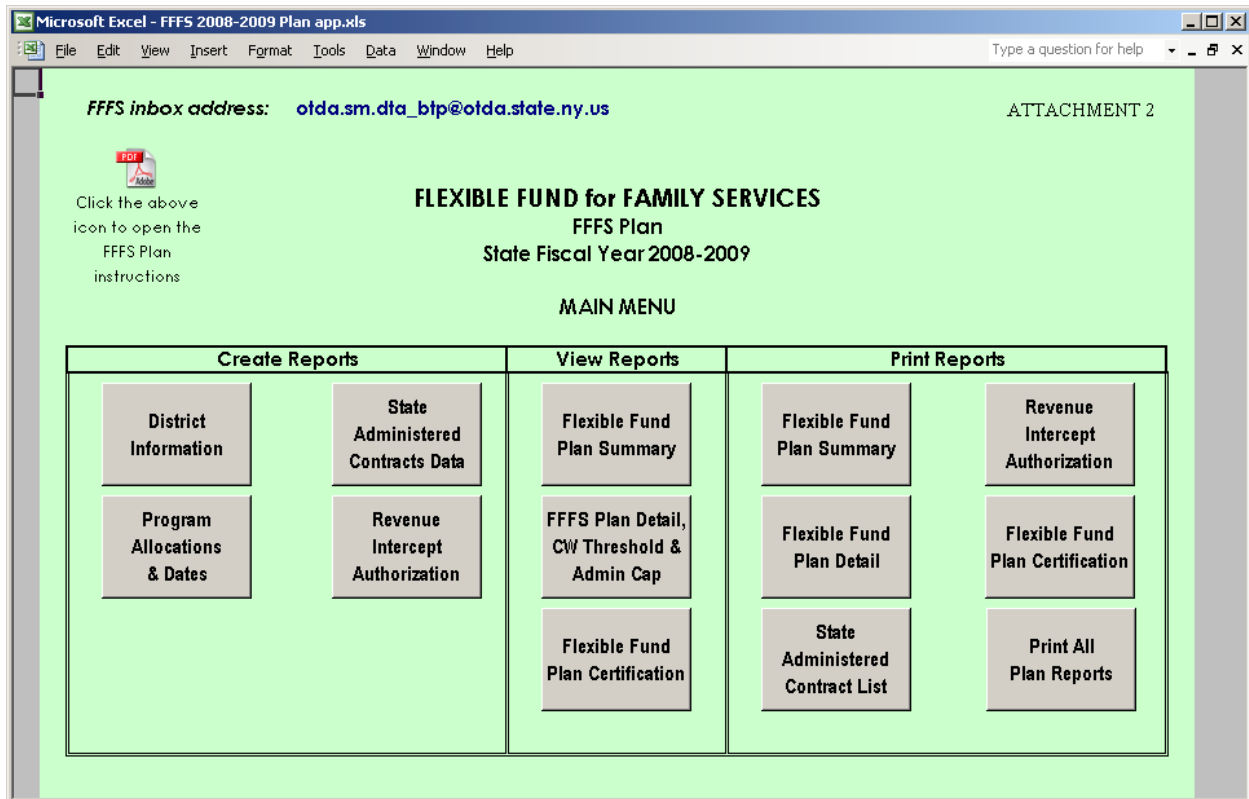
- Note: A link to the instructions for how to use the FFFS 2008-2009 Plan application has been included on the Main Menu. Click the PDF icon to open the instructions.

- Note: The Flexible Fund Plan for 2008-2009 has a light green background on its pages. If the Main Menu that is displayed is light yellow, the 2007-2008 plan is open.

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Districts must use the light green plan for 2008-09. Revisions for 2007-2008 must use the light yellow plan. The file for 2007-2008 can be found in 07-ADM-04 at <u>2007 Policy Directives</u> on the OTDA website (press CTRL and click on the underlined link to be directed to the ADM).

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Entering the District Information

1. From the Main Menu, click the button labeled "District Information". The District Information Data Page is displayed. Required information is entered in the white fields. Attempting to enter data in fields that are not white will result in a protected cell error message. Use the Tab key to navigate between the fields that are required.

2. The following information must be entered prior to submitting the plan for approval.
   a. District – select the district name from the drop down list.
   b. FFFS Allocation – enter the district allocation amount as indicated in Attachment 1 of the ADM.
   c. SY Transfer In – enter the amount of Summer Youth funding to be transferred to FFFS, if any.
   d. Submission Date – enter the date the plan is being e-mailed for approval. If the plan is being resubmitted because it was originally rejected or if the district was asked to amend and resubmit its plan, enter the date the corrected plan is being e-mailed.
      - Note: the Submission Date also serves as the Commissioner's signature date on the plan Certification.
   e. Submission Type – select the type of plan being submitted. The choices are as follows:
      - Funding & Dates: for original plans or for revised plans changing both allocations and program periods
      - Dates only: for plans changing only program periods (revised plans only)

- Funding only: for plans changing only allocations (revised plans only)
  f. Contact Name – enter the name of the FFFS contact person at the district.
  g. Contact Phone and Extension – enter the phone number (and extension, if applicable) of the FFFS contact.
  h. Contact E-mail – enter the e-mail address of the district's FFFS contact person.
  i. Commissioner Name – enter the local district Commissioner. Entering the Commissioner's name will serve as agreement to the terms of the Certification once the plan is complete and submitted to OTDA.

3. Once all information has been entered, click the button labeled "Return to Main Menu" to continue. If any relevant information is missing, a pop up box will be displayed, indicating information is incomplete. Click the appropriate button in the pop up box to continue to the Main Menu or to complete the district information.

4. For subsequent amendments, clicking the button labeled "Reset submission information" will delete the Submission Date and Type. This information will need to be entered prior to submitting the amendment for review.

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Entering Program Allocations and Dates

1. From the Main Menu, click the button labeled "Program Allocations & Dates". The following pop up box will be displayed.
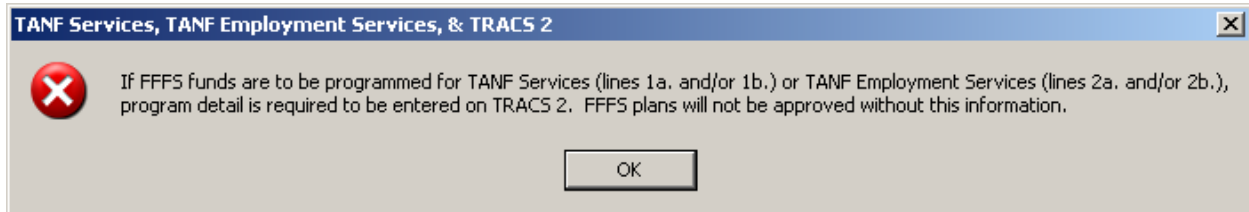
Beginning with the 2008-2009 fiscal year, program information must be entered into TRACS 2 for any funding programmed under TANF Services or TANF Employment Services. Without this information, the FFFS plan will not be approved.

2. After clicking *OK* in the TRACS 2 pop up box, the TANF Allocation Plan Data page will be displayed. Required information is entered in white cells. Attempting to enter data in fields that are not white will result in a protected cell error message. Use the Tab key to navigate around the required fields. This page can be printed by clicking the macro button labeled "Print this page" in the upper left hand corner.

3. Enter the gross and TANF amounts for the programs to be funded through FFFS. The allocations should be considered in the order most appropriate for to district circumstances. The Balance to Allocate is displayed in the upper right hand corner of the page.

   - Note: If funds are to be directed to state administered contracts, the information should be entered on the State Administered Contracts List. The total amount to be set aside for these programs or projects will be added to the TANF Allocation Data Plan and subsequent pages once the list is complete.

4. Enter the start date, followed by the end date, for the programs to be funded through FFFS. The dates must be entered as MM/DD/YY. However, the dates will be displayed as MM/YY. Note that the program dates for Additional Non-Residential Domestic Violence, programs under Child Welfare Other than Title XX Transfer (with the exception of PINS/Prevention/Detention Diversion Services), and programs under Title XX Below 200% are from October 2007 through September 2008 and cannot be amended. The Additional Child Care Transfer programs are from October 2007 through September 2008 or October 2008 through September 2009 and cannot be changed.

5. Once all information has been entered, click the button labeled "Return to Main Menu" to continue. If any relevant information is missing, a pop box will be displayed, indicating information is incomplete. Click the appropriate button in the pop up box to continue to the Main Menu or to complete the plan information.

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Entering the State Administered Contract List and Completing the Revenue Intercept Authorization

- Note: These sections need to be completed only if funds are allocated for projects or programs that are administered on the state level.

1. From the Main Menu, click the button labeled "State Administered Contracts Data". The State Administered Contracts List page will be displayed. Required information is entered in white cells. Attempting to enter information in fields that are not white will result in a protected cell error message. Use the Tab key to navigate around the required fields. To print the contract listing, return to the Main Menu and click the macro button labeled "State Administered Contract List" under the Print Reports section.

2. The following information must be entered for the funding to be set aside the programs or projects:
   a. Program – enter the program that is to be administered (e.g., EDGE, BRIDGE, etc.)
   b. Provider – enter the provider that is to be receiving FFFS funds
   c. TANF Allocation – enter the amount of FFFS funding to be received

    d. Start and End Dates – enter the start and end dates of the contract period in the format of MM/DD/YY.

3. Once all information has been entered, click the button labeled "Return to Main Menu" to continue. A pop up box will be displayed as a reminder to complete the Revenue Intercept Authorization. Click *OK* to continue to the Main Menu.

4. If funds are to be directed from the FFFS allocation to administer State contracts, the Revenue Intercept Authorization must be completed. From the Main Menu, click the button labeled "Revenue Intercept Authorization".

Microsoft Excel - FFFS 2008-2009 Plan app.xls

File   Edit   View   Insert   Format   Tools   Data   Window   Help   Type a question for help

Return to Main Menu

Click **Agree** to complete the Revenue Intercept Authorization   **Agree**

Click **Disagree** to remove information from the Authorization   **Disagree**

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REVENUE INTERCEPT AUTHORIZATION

This authorization is to notify the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) that _____ County requests to engage the services of New York State staff and/or supplement and existing State administered program/contract.

Listed below are the State administered contracts/programs we wish to support with funds from our combined TANF Allocation and the amount to be directed to each provider.

Program	Provider	Amount from TANF Allocation

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5. If the district agrees to the terms of the Authorization, click the button labeled "Agree" at the top of the page. All relevant information will be entered once this button is clicked. If the district does not agree with the Authorization, click the "Disagree" button; this will remove any information previously entered on the Revenue Intercept Authorization. However, clicking "Disagree" will not delete any funds entered on the State Administered Contracts List. If districts decide not to allocate funds to State Administered Contracts, any funds allocated must be removed on the State Administered Contracts List page.

6. Once finished, click the button labeled "Return to Main Menu" to continue. To print the Authorization, click the button labeled "Revenue Intercept Authorization" under the Print Reports section of the Main Menu.

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Viewing the Summary and Detail Plan Forms and the Plan Certification
1. From the Main Menu, click the button corresponding to the report to be viewed under the View Reports section. Please note that any changes to allocations or dates cannot be made on these pages. The reports that can be viewed contain the following information:
   a. Flexible Fund Plan Summary – this report rolls up allocations for program and administration into one total.
   b. Flexible Fund Plan Detail – this report maintains separate totals for program and administration totals and lists program dates. This report also computes the administration percentages and the Child Welfare Threshold. The Plan Detail report is the only place these figures are calculated and displayed.
   c. Flexible Fund Plan Certification – this Certification provides the terms of the FFFS allocation and agreement to these terms. It is not necessary to print, sign, and mail or fax the Certification. Completion of the document electronically is sufficient.

2. Once the review is complete, click the "Return to Main Menu" to continue.

Printing the Plan Reports
1. On the Main Menu, under the Print Reports section, there are six print options available – printing each report or page separately or printing all reports together. Click the appropriate macro button to print the needed report. It is not necessary to change the print settings as they have been incorporated into the Print macros and saved. It is also not necessary to print any reports and mail them to OTDA.

Submitting the Completed Plan
1. Once all information has been entered, reviewed, and free of errors, the completed FFFS plan can be submitted for agency review and approval. The FFFS inbox address is **otda.sm.dta_btp@otda.state.ny.us**. A hyperlink for the e-mail address can also be found on the Main menu of the FFFS Plan file.

Resetting and Preparing the File for Plan Amendments
1. When a plan amendment is to be submitted, click on the button labeled "District Information". Once on the District Information Data Page, click the button labeled "Reset submission information". This will delete the submission date and type from the amendment. This step must be completed as it resets other information not seen by the user but it needed for an amended plan.

2. There are options available for clearing certain information from a completed plan. These functions can be used when preparing subsequent amendments to the FFFS plan. It is not necessary to use these macros to delete the information, but they may be helpful if several programmed amounts or dates are to be changed. Prior to clicking any of the reset buttons, be certain to save the FFFS file under a different name.

    a. Clear Gross Amounts – located on the TANF Allocation Plan Data page, this button will delete all gross amounts entered on the Plan Data page.

    b. Clear TANF Amounts – this button will clear all allocations entered under the TANF column and is located on the Plan Data page.

    c. Clear Program Dates – located on the TANF Allocation Plan Data page, this button will delete all program start and end dates on the page.

3. After any of these buttons are clicked, a confirmation box will be displayed. If the information is to be cleared, proceed by clicking Yes. If the information is to be retained, click No. Note that once Yes is clicked, the function cannot be reversed and the information cannot be recovered.

4. Once the information has been cleared (if opting to use these functions) or the file has been renamed, begin the plan amendment by selecting the Submission Date (if known) and Submission Type on the District Information page. Continue by following the instructions for entering allocations and program dates. If any amendments are made to the funding amounts for State Administered Contracts, be sure to make the corresponding adjustments to the Revenue Intercept Authorization.

5. If changes are to be made to the funding allocated to TANF Services Projects (lines 1a. and/or 1b.) or to TANF Employment Services Programs (lines 2a. and/or 2b.), appropriate changes must be made to program information in TRACS 2.

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Error Messages and Troubleshooting

The following table contains a list of errors that may be encountered when preparing the plan for the 2008-2009 Flexible Fund. The resolutions listed will assist in correcting the errors.

Error Message	Resolution
District information must be completed before the plan is submitted for approval. The plan will not be reviewed is any data is missing or incomplete. See the instructions for the required information. Do you want to enter the district information now?	A required data element regarding the district or allocation has not been entered. Ensure the following data is entered: district, allocation, SY transfer in (if applicable), submission date, submission type, contact information and Commissioner name.
The amount of TANF funds allocated cannot exceed the Gross amount of funds for the program.	The gross amount for the program was not entered or the TANF funds are greater than the gross amount. Enter the gross amount prior to entering the TANF allocation or reduce the amount of the TANF allocation.
Funding for [program name] cannot be programmed earlier than [date].	The start date for the program is earlier than the allowable start date. Refer to the FFFS Desk Guide included with the 2008-09 FFFS ADM for the allowable program periods.
The end date of the program cannot be prior to the start date of the program and cannot be entered before entering the start date.	The end date was entered as an earlier date than the start date or was entered without a start date. Check the start and end dates and correctly enter the dates in the format of MM/DD/YY.
The funds programmed under TANF exceed the total FFFS allocation entered, resulting in an over allocation of [amount indicated]. Do you want to correct this error now?	Funds beyond the FFFS allocation entered have been programmed. A negative balance to allocate cannot be submitted for review and approval. Review all allocations entered and reduce any as needed.

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Error Message	Resolution
The funds programmed under TANF do not equal the total FFFS allocation entered, resulting in a balance to allocate of [amount indicated]. Do you want to allocate these funds now?	A variance exists between the total allocation entered and the amount of funding programmed. No fix is necessary if the district elects to have funds in reserve.
The number of TANF allocations entered does not equal the number of program start dates entered. Do you want to correct this now?	An allocation has been entered without entering a corresponding start date or a start date has been entered without an allocation. Delete the funding or enter a start date for the program.
The number of program start dates entered does not equal the number or program end dates entered. Do you want to correct this now?	A program with an allocation is missing a start date or one with a start date is missing an end date. Review programs with allocations to ensure all have a valid program period with a start and an end date.