



311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number: # 19-02 (corrected)

Effective Date: October 1, 2018

Issuance Date: October 2, 2018

**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISOR AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF**

FROM: NETSANET KIBRET, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**RE: FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM (FSP) MASS CHANGES
OCTOBER 2018**

PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

SUMMARY

Action Transmittal 19-02 had an incorrect number for LUA. This version corrects that error. Please destroy the previous version.

Each August, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) publishes the updated standards for income and deductions for the next federal fiscal year (FFY). The deductions changed for FFY19. Effective October 1, 2018, standard deductions and excess shelter deduction for the Food Supplement Program (FSP) will increase.

The standard deduction for a household of one to three increases to **\$164**. The standard deduction increases to **\$174** for a household of four, **\$204** for a household of five and **\$234** for a household of six or more. The new FSP excess shelter deduction increases slightly to **\$552**. Lastly, the minimum monthly benefit remains \$15. CARES will automatically generate customer notices for increases at the time of the mass change in September 2018.

This Action Transmittal (AT) replaces AT 18-04.

ACTION REQUIRED

Attached are the updated income and standard deductions FSP manual pages reflecting the new standards effective October 1, 2018.

Reminder: The homeless shelter deduction remains at \$143. Households in which all members are homeless, but who do not receive free shelter, qualify for the standard homeless shelter deduction of \$143.

Use actual shelter expenses, rather than the homeless shelter deduction, if the actual shelter costs result in an excess shelter deduction that is higher than the \$143 homeless deduction.

Food supplement benefit recoupment amounts do not require action by case managers. The only exceptions are recoupment cases when the payment plan source is grant reduction (GR) or court order (CO). CARES generates a report identifying these cases. Case managers must then manually update those identified cases.

PAYMENT ACCURACY

The changes in income and standard deductions for FSP benefits will not affect payment accuracy.

INQUIRIES

Please direct FSP policy questions to fia.policy@maryland.gov and CARES questions to fia.bsdm@maryland.gov.

Attachments: Revised FSP Manual Section 600, pages 1 and 2

cc: DHS Executive Staff
Constituent Services
DHS Help Desk
FIA Management Staff

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|--|---|--------|
| DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION | FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM MANUAL | |
| STANDARDS FOR INCOME AND DEDUCTIONS | Section 600 | Page 1 |

600.1 STANDARDS FOR ELIGIBILITY AND MAXIMUM ALLOTMENTS

- A. The standards for the following appear in Section 600, page 2.
1. Column A - Maximum Gross Monthly Income Standards (130% of poverty)
 2. Column B - Maximum Net Monthly Income Standards (100% of poverty)
 3. Column C - Maximum Gross Income Standard for Elderly and Disabled Separate Household (165% of poverty)
 4. Column D - Thrifty Food Plan/Maximum Allotment
- B. Standards 1, 2, and 3 are used to determine household eligibility and not for computing allotments.

600.2 FORMULA CALCULATION

- A. Multiply the household's net monthly income by 30%.
- B. Round the product up to the next whole dollar if any cents result.
- C. Subtract the product from the maximum allotment amount for the household size found in Column D, Section 600.

NOTE: In an initial month, if the allotment is less than \$10, no benefit is issued. Except in an initial month, all eligible one and two person households must be issued the minimum allotment of \$15.

600.3 DEDUCTION STANDARDS

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|--|-------------|
| Standard Deductions | |
| Household size up to and including 3 people----- | \$164 |
| Household of 4----- | \$174 |
| Household size of 5----- | \$204 |
| Household size of 6 or more----- | \$234 |
| Excess Shelter Deduction----- | up to \$552 |
| Homeless Household Shelter Allowance----- | \$143 |
| Standard Utility Allowance (SUA)----- | \$420 |
| Limited Utility Allowance (LUA)----- | \$257 |
| Telephone Standard----- | \$40 |

* The excess shelter deduction does not apply to households with an aged or disabled member. These households receive an uncapped shelter deduction.

600.4 Determining the Food Supplement Program Allotment

A. Determine a household's monthly food supplement allotment by using the Basis of Issuance Tables:

1. Calculate the household's net monthly income.
2. Compare the household's net monthly income to the maximum net monthly income standard shown in Column B below. Households that are not categorically eligible for food supplement benefits will have net monthly incomes that are lower than or equal to the amounts shown in Column B.
3. Find the allotment by reading in the Basis of Issuance Tables, down to the appropriate income and across to the appropriate household size.

NOTE: A household that is categorically eligible is entitled to any allotment shown in the appropriate column on the tables. Persons in household sizes of one or two and categorically eligible are eligible for a monthly benefit of **\$15**, even if the tables do not show a benefit amount at their net income levels. (Please see Section 409 of the Food Supplement Program Manual for information on the minimum state supplement to FSP benefits for households with a member aged 62 and older.)

| Household Size | Col. A Maximum Gross Monthly Income* 130% of Poverty | Col. B Maximum Net Monthly Income* 100% of Poverty | Col. C Monthly Income Elderly/Disabled Separate Household* 165% of Poverty | Col. D Maximum Allotment |
|------------------------|--|--|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 | \$1316 | \$ 1012 | \$1670 | \$192 |
| 2 | 1784 | 1372 | 2264 | 353 |
| 3 | 2252 | 1732 | 2858 | 505 |
| 4 | 2720 | 2092 | 3452 | 642 |
| 5 | 3188 | 2452 | 4046 | 762 |
| 6 | 3656 | 2812 | 4640 | 914 |
| 7 | 4124 | 3172 | 5234 | 1011 |
| 8 | 4592 | 3532 | 5828 | 1155 |
| Each Additional Member | +468 | +360 | +594 | +144 |

* Maximum gross and net monthly income figures are not used for computing the food supplement allotment. They are included as a reference for determining the household's eligibility.