

Operations Memorandum - SNAP

OPS091201

12/1/2009

SUBJECT: Treatment of Increase in Unemployment Compensation Income for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Households
TO: Executive Directors
FROM: Joanne Glover, Director, Bureau of Operations

Purpose

To inform County Assistance Offices (CAOs) that the additional \$25 each week of unemployment compensation (UC) that resulted from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 is now exempt for SNAP.

This policy is effective immediately and affects SNAP benefits for the entire month of November 2009.

Background

Operations Memorandum 09-04-03, dated April 8, 2009, advised CAOs that the additional \$25 each week to individuals who are receiving state or federal UC benefits is exempt for all programs except SNAP. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) had issued guidance on March 18, 2009 stating that the \$25 weekly amount must be counted as income in determining eligibility and benefits.

On November 6, 2009 President Obama signed the Worker, Homeownership, and Business Assistance Act of 2009. Section 8 of the act requires that these \$25 weekly payments be excluded as income and resources for SNAP households. On November 19, 2009 FNS issued guidance advising that states must exclude the \$25 weekly amount when calculating eligibility and benefit amount for all months beginning with the entire month of November 2009 and any other month following November that included the \$25 weekly amount in the calculation.

Discussion

The following procedures apply to SNAP households:

- The additional \$25 weekly UC payment is disregarded for a SNAP eligibility determination at application, Semiannual Reporting review and at recertification. DO NOT enter this income into the Client Information System (CIS) for applicants.

- No verification of the \$25 payment is required. This payment is automatic for each week in which any UC payment is made.
- Current SNAP recipients receiving the additional \$25 weekly UC payment must have this additional UC income terminated in CIS for the next payment month that can be affected.
- For current SNAP households for which the \$25 weekly UC payment was used to determine eligibility and benefit amount for November 2009 or later, recalculate benefits without using this income and issue an underpayment.
- A file will be created and posted to the CAO database listing those SNAP households with the additional UC payment. CAOs must take action to terminate this income and issue any associated supplemental payment. A daily status will be issued to let CAOs know when the file is available.
- Clearly narrate all actions taken to comply with this act.

Next Steps

1. Review this information with your staff.
2. Direct questions to your Area Manager.
3. This Operations Memorandum will become obsolete when the information contained herein is incorporated into the SNAP handbook.