

Policy Clarifications

Submitted: 11/16/17

Agency: CAOs

Subject: 2018 Long Term Care (LTC) Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) Mass Change

Question: Will there be a 2018 COLA increase affecting LTC budgets effective January 1, 2018?

Response By: Division of Health Services

Date: 12/01/17

Yes, the COLA for Social Security benefits affecting LTC budgets will run on January 7, 2018. The values updated due to the COLA are effective January 1, 2018. The COLA increase for recipients of Retirement, Survivor's or Disability Insurance (RSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Railroad Retirement Tier One benefits will be 2.0 percent. The increase for Railroad Retirement Tier Two benefits will be 0.7 percent. The increases will cause the following changes:

	2017	2018	State Supplement
SSI Benefit			
Individual	\$ 757.10	\$ 772.10	\$ 22.10
Couple	\$1,136.30	\$1,158.30	\$ 33.30
Domiciliary Care			
Individual	\$1,169.30	\$1,184.30	\$434.30
Couple	\$2,050.40	\$2,072.40	\$947.40
Personal Care Home			
Individual	\$1,174.30	\$1,189.30	\$439.30
Couple	\$2,060.40	\$2,082.40	\$957.40

Automated batches will process the increases in income for individuals on LTC facility cases with income codes 12 (RSDI) and 14 (SSI). If a case is not eligible for automation, an alert will post to the caseworker's Work Load Dashboard with the reason the case was an exception from automation.

Reference table updates will be made in eCIS to reflect the following changes:

The Non-Money Payment SSI-related Special Gross Monthly Income limit, which applies to applicants and recipients of LTC or Home and Community-Based Services is:

2017	2018
\$2,205.00	\$2,250.00

The Home Maintenance Deduction is:

2017	2018
\$757.10	\$772.10

The Monthly Personal Needs Allowances (PNA) will remain the same for the LTC Facility, but will change for the Domiciliary Care Home:

	2017	2018
LTC Facility	\$ 45.00	\$ 45.00
Domiciliary Care Home	\$190.30	\$195.30

Around 72 percent of enrollees in Medicare Part B will pay a premium of \$134.00 effective January 1, 2018. The remainder of beneficiaries, who are subject to the “Hold Harmless” provision and whose COLA increase is not enough to cover the full Medicare B premium, will pay less than \$134.00 for Medicare B. Additionally, the state will continue to pay a Medicare Part B premium of \$134.00 for individuals eligible for buy-in (program status codes 66 and 80). Because the Medicare B premiums may vary based on gross income and when the individual was enrolled, Data Exchange information must be reviewed carefully.

	2017	2018
Medicare Part B Premium	\$134.00	\$134.00

Updated values for the Minimum and Maximum Protected Shares, the Maximum Monthly Maintenance Needs Allowance, the Average Daily and Monthly Private Pay Rates, the excess home equity limit, and the Personal Care Home PNA will be provided in an Operations Memorandum to be published in the near future.

This policy clarification will be obsolete once this information is incorporated into the handbook.