

Revised - Policy Clarification

Cash Assistance- All- PCA-19921-150

Medical Assistance- All - PMA-19921-350

Food Stamps- All - PFS-19921-550

LIHEAP- All - PLA-19921-650

Submitted: 8/25/2020

Agency: CAOs

Subject: Counting Hazard Pay for All Programs during the coronavirus (COVID-19) Emergency

Question: Client called to report that current earnings of \$13.06 per hour are increasing due to receiving an extra \$3.00 per hour hazard pay. Should this income be counted toward benefits if it is expected to continue?

Response by: Policy Clarification Unit

Date: 10/16/2020

Yes. For Cash Assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Medical Assistance (MA) and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, the temporary hazard pay for essential workers during the COVID-19 emergency would be counted as earned income while being received. The hazard pay can be given as an hourly rate adjustment, a flat recurring amount, or a one-time payment. **If the hazard pay is received as a one-time payment, lump sum policy should be applied.**

For MA, **MA coverage should not be reduced or terminated during the emergency period to remain in compliance with existing guidance in OPS Memo 20-03-03.** ~~individuals should be maintained at the same benefit level throughout the emergency period despite increases in income to remain in compliance with existing guidance in OPS Memo 20-03-03.~~