



DATE: May 18, 2021

OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM #21-05-01

SUBJECT: Emergency Monthly Payments Due to Coronavirus (COVID-19) to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Households

TO: Executive Directors

FROM: Inez Titus
Director
Bureau of Operations

PURPOSE

To inform County Assistance Offices (CAOs) of a change in the amount of Emergency Allotments (EA) issued to SNAP households. This policy is effective with May 2021 EA issuances and will remain in effect until the state-issued disaster declaration or the federal public health emergency ends, whichever is sooner.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

On March 18, 2020, H.R. 6201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, Pub.L. 116-127 was signed into law. Under this authorization, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has approved the Department of Human Service's (DHS's) request to provide emergency allotments due to COVID-19 to address temporary food needs to households and bring these households up to the maximum benefit. Emergency allotments continue to be issued for eligible households on a monthly basis.

Previous guidance only permitted EA issuances to bring the household up to the maximum for their household size and did not establish a minimum allotment. Households receiving the maximum were not eligible to receive an EA. Per updated Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) guidance issued on April 1, 2021, beginning in May 2021, the EA should be the amount needed to bring the household up to the maximum benefit for the household size or \$95, whichever is greater. Under this new policy, households who had not been receiving EA payments and those whose EA payments

were less than \$95 per month will receive increased benefits. EA payments will not change for households who had been receiving EA benefits of \$95 or more per month.

The EA calculation continues to be the difference between the SNAP household's standard benefit amount and the maximum benefit amount for a household that size; except that now all households will receive a minimum EA of at least \$95.

- Those households currently receiving \$95 or more will continue to receive that same amount—no change in EA for these households.
- Those households currently receiving the maximum SNAP benefit amount for their household size will now receive an EA of \$95 per month.
- Those households with a calculated EA amount less than \$95 will receive an EA totaling \$95 per month.

DHS will continue to issue Emergency Allotments on the second TANF payment day of each month. Because these payments are One-Time Issuances (OTI), if the second TANF payment day falls on a Monday, the household will receive their EA on the Saturday before. For example, households whose second TANF payment day falls on May 24, 2021, will receive their EA benefit on May 22, 2021.

DHS will issue EA cleanup issuances for each month during the first week of the second month after the original EA month. For example, May 2021 cleanup EAs will be issued during the first week of July 2021. This allows for 30 days after the month ends for any SNAP applications to be processed.

EAs will continue to be issued centrally. No action is need on the part of the CAO and CAOs should not issue any EAs.

NEXT STEPS

1. Share and review this information with appropriate staff members.
2. Direct questions regarding this Operations Memorandum to your Area Manager.
3. This Operations Memorandum is in effect until further notice.