



DATE: September 18, 2013

OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM #13-09-01
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SUBJECT: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Mass Grant Changes

TO: Executive Directors

FROM: Tom Strickler
Director
Bureau of Operations

PURPOSE

To release changes to SNAP that are effective **October 1, 2013** in the following areas:

- Limited Standard Utility Allowance Deduction
- Income Eligibility Standards
- Standard Deductions
- Standard Utility Allowance

Also to release changes to SNAP due to the end of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) that are effective **November 1, 2013** in the following areas:

- Maximum Thrifty Food Plan
- Minimum Benefit

NOTE: The November Tables are updated now. When processing SNAP budgets, the CAO will see different SNAP benefit amounts for October and then see a decrease for November's amount.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

The United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, has revised the income eligibility standards and the shelter and standard deductions. There are no changes to the Thrifty Food Plan, the minimum benefit, Heating SUA, Non-Heating SUA, Telephone allowance, or homeless shelter deduction. The Department of Public Welfare has updated the Limited Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) for October 2013.

The ARRA of 2009, also known as the Economic Stimulus Package, is set to end October 31, 2013. Due to the ending of ARRA, there will be additional changes to SNAP for November 1, 2013.

The following amounts must be used when computing October 2013 SNAP benefits:		
Limited SUA		\$ 55
Shelter Deduction		\$ 478
Standard Income deduction based on household size	1-3 persons	\$ 152
	4 persons	\$ 163
	5 persons	\$ 191
	6+ persons	\$ 219

There are no changes to SNAP in the following areas for October 2013:	
Minimum Benefit	\$ 16
Heating SUA	\$ 536
Non-Heating SUA	\$ 278
Telephone Allowance	\$ 33
Homeless Shelter Deduction	\$ 143

INCOME ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS OCTOBER 2013

Household Size	100% FPIGS	130% FPIGS	160% FPIGS	165% FPIGS	200% FPIGS	Maximum Thrifty Food Plan
1	\$958	\$1245	\$1533	\$1580	\$1916	\$200
2	\$1293	\$1681	\$2069	\$2133	\$2586	\$367
3	\$1628	\$2116	\$2605	\$2686	\$3256	\$526
4	\$1963	\$2552	\$3141	\$3239	\$3926	\$668
5	\$2298	\$2987	\$3677	\$3791	\$4596	\$793
6	\$2633	\$3423	\$4213	\$4344	\$5266	\$952
7	\$2968	\$3858	\$4749	\$4897	\$5936	\$1052
8	\$3303	\$4294	\$5285	\$5450	\$6606	\$1202
9	\$3638	\$4730	\$5821	\$6003	\$7276	\$1352
10	\$3973	\$5166	\$6357	\$6556	\$7946	\$1502
Each Additional Member	\$335	\$436	\$536	\$553	\$670	\$150

The revised values will be added to the Client Information System (CIS) Reference Table. Most households participating in SNAP as of the close of business on September 13, 2013 will have their SNAP allotments adjusted automatically through the Mass Change process. This change will be reflected in the October 2013 benefit issuance. CIS will automatically calculate the SNAP benefits for all openings after September 16, 2013 using the current figures for September and the new figures for October.

Client Notice

The system change will generate a Confirming Notice advising the household of the benefit change.

Pennsylvania Combined Application Project (PA CAP)

The Mass Grant Change for PA CAP budgets will occur during the regularly scheduled PA CAP run on September 24, 2013. The benefit levels will be as follows:

1. Households with income of \$732.10 and monthly shelter costs below \$196 will receive \$88 in benefits effective October 1, 2013.
2. Households with income of \$752.10 and monthly shelter costs below \$196 will receive \$79 in benefits effective October 1, 2013.
3. Households with income of \$732.10 and monthly shelter costs at or above \$196 will receive \$160 in benefits effective October 1, 2013.
4. Households with income of \$752.10 and monthly shelter costs at or above \$196 will receive \$151 in benefits effective October 1, 2013.

Case Alerts

The CAO worker will have approximately **seven** workdays in which to take appropriate action and clear the alerts listed below after the Mass Grant Change and before the deadline for the October benefits change for the first digit cases.

1. Cases with SNAP Budgets Deleted from Pending Workflow (PW) (old TSA) - #92.

Cases containing SNAP budgets that are in the PW at the time of the Mass change will be deleted from PW. The active SNAP budgets of these cases, as they exist in BENGEN, will be automatically updated during the Mass change to reflect the new SNAP values. An alert will automatically be set to

indicate that these cases were deleted from PW. The deleted cases will be identified by Case Alert No. 92, type BUAC, PW Activity Deleted by Batch.

CAOs must reprocess all budgets (Cash, Medical Assistance, and SNAP) if cases were deleted from the PW.

REMINDER: It is very important that all cases are completed before the Mass Grant Change run on September 14, 2013, or all information will be lost and the CAO will have to re-enter all information for the case.

2. SNAP Budgets with an Active Override Record - #86

During the SNAP Mass change process, the system will check all SNAP budgets to determine if an active override exists. If an override exists, a case alert will be automatically set for the affected SNAP budget. The Mass change process will automatically recalculate the net income for the override budget, but will not change the existing override benefit amount.

Caseload management will create Case Alert No. 86, type MCEX, Override Exists, Review Due to Mass Change, for each override budget. Alert No. 86 will be created after the Mass change runs. It will have an immediate due date and must be worker-cleared. CAOs are to review these records and take appropriate action.

CAOs are to review identified records to determine the appropriateness of the override benefit amount.

3. SNAP Budgets that Fail Mass Change - #30

Budgets that fail the gross or net income tests and budgets with a person count of zero on CQFBNF will be posted to an alert No. 30, type MCEX. CAOs are to review these records and re-run eligibility.

4. SNAP Budgets Decrease - #101

Alert created to identify SNAP budgets that had a decrease as a result of the Mass Grant change. CAOs are to review the SNAP decrease for accuracy and take appropriate action.

REMINDER: SNAP budgets that were in suspension before the Mass Grant Change and reinstated after the change must be checked to verify that any benefits issued before October 1, 2013 were issued using the old SNAP values.

IMPORTANT: If the SNAP budget is not processed through the Mass Grant process and is alerted out, the CAO must re-run eligibility before deadline date. If the case is re-run after the deadline date, the CAO must review to determine if an OTI is needed for October's SNAP benefits.

NOVEMBER 2013 CHANGES

Household Size	Maximum Thrifty Food Plan
1	\$189
2	\$347
3	\$497
4	\$632
5	\$750
6	\$900
7	\$995
8	\$1,137
9	\$1,279
Each Additional Member	\$142

The Minimum Benefit amount: \$15

The revised values will be added to the CIS Reference Table. Most households participating in SNAP as of the close of business on October 12, 2013 will have their SNAP allotments adjusted automatically through the Mass Change process. This change will be reflected in the November 2013 benefit issuance. CIS will automatically calculate the SNAP benefits for all openings after October 14, 2013 using the current figures for October and the new figures for November.

Client Notice

The system change will generate a Confirming Notice advising the household of the benefit change. A new option has been created for the ARRA decrease.

400 - Option 6 SNAP MASS Change ARRA:

As of November 1, 2013, your SNAP benefits have changed due to the ending of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, also known as the Economic

Stimulus Package. Your SNAP benefits have changed because the federal government changed the SNAP benefit amounts. You qualify for SNAP benefits if your net income is lower than the SNAP limit.

This decrease in benefits may not be appealed unless you believe there has been a mistake in the way we calculated your benefit. If you do appeal, your SNAP benefits will continue at the lower amount.

7 CFR 273.12(e)

Pennsylvania Combined Application Project (PA CAP)

The Mass Grant Change for PA CAP budgets will occur during the regularly scheduled PA CAP run on October 29, 2013. The benefit levels will be as follows:

1. Households with income of \$732.10 and monthly shelter costs below \$196 will receive \$77 in benefits effective November 1, 2013.
2. Households with income of \$752.10 and monthly shelter costs below \$196 will receive \$68 in benefits effective November 1, 2013.
3. Households with income of \$732.10 and monthly shelter costs at or above \$196 will receive \$149 in benefits effective November 1, 2013.
4. Households with income of \$752.10 and monthly shelter costs at or above \$196 will receive \$139 in benefits effective November 1, 2013.

Case Alerts

The CAO worker will have approximately **seven** workdays in which to take appropriate action and clear the alerts listed below after the Mass Grant Change and before the deadline for the November benefits change for the first digit cases.

1. Override Exists Review ARRA Change - #031

Case alert created to identify an existing override in a SNAP budget. The CAO must re-run eligibility.

IMPORTANT: If a case is alerted out during the October Mass Grant Run, the CAO will need to re-run eligibility on the case before the deadline date to affect November's benefits. If the case is re-run after the deadline date, the CAO must review to determine if an overpayment occurred for November's SNAP benefits.

NEXT STEPS

1. Implement these changes effective October 1, 2013 and November 1, 2013.
2. Review case alerts and take appropriate action.
3. This Operations Memorandum will become obsolete when incorporated into the SNAP Handbook.