

**Policy Clarification -
SNAP
PFS-18617-560**

Submitted: 8/28/2018

Agency: CAOs

Subject: Medical Deduction for Service Animal Expenses

Question:

We have a client who meets the elderly guidelines for SNAP and has allowable medical expenses that we are currently applying. However, the client is inquiring about expenses she incurs for her service dog. Policy at 560.42 Allowable Medical expenses lists purchase and maintenance of a seeing-eye dog or hearing dog, including costs for dog food and veterinarian expenses. Our client has Parkinson's disease and has a certified service dog called a walker dog thru Canine Partners for Life. The service dog enables her to keep her balance when walking/standing, etc. The service dog also does things such as open doors because client has disabilities in her hands, too.

Are we able to use the service dog's veterinarian expenses as medical expense for her SNAP benefits?

Response By: Division of Family Assistance

Date:08/29/2018

The example provided above is regarding an animal that performs tasks to serve the needs of the client. FNS provided clarification on Policy Memo 90-20 that it interprets 7 CFR 276.9(d)(3)(vii) to include the costs associated with an animal specifically trained to serve the needs of disabled program participants. Food and veterinarian expenses would be an eligible medical deduction. For more information, please review PFS-12619-560.