



Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number #04-07

Effective Date: October 1, 2003

Issuance Date: September 16, 2003

**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS/CASE MANAGERS**

FROM: KEVIN M. MCGUIRE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**RE: FOOD STAMP AND TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE MASS
CHANGES - OCTOBER 2003**

PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD STAMPS AND TCA

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF POLICY, RESEARCH AND SYSTEMS

SUMMARY:

Each August, the United States Department of Agriculture publishes a new Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) on which food stamp program allotments are based as well as net and gross monthly income standards. The maximum food stamp allotments, standard deductions and excess shelter deduction also increase. The homeless shelter allowance is unchanged.

TCA grants will also increase effective October 1, 2003. The Welfare Innovation Act of 1996 requires that the total of Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) and Food Stamps be at least 61 percent of the established Minimum Living Level. This year, as part of cost containment, the General Assembly has required that any resultant increase in the TCA grant be no more than 1%.

ACTION REQUIRED:

The mass change will run September 6, 2003.

I. TCA

Apply the increased payment amounts effective October 1, 2003. Use the new payment amounts for financial eligibility decisions made in September for October grants. This includes interim changes, recertification and recoupment cases.

II. FOOD STAMPS

Customer notices for increases or decreases will be generated at the time of the mass change. Food stamp benefit and new recoupment amounts do not require

action by the case manager. The only exceptions are recoupment cases where the payment plan source is grant reduction (GR) or court order (CO). These cases must be updated manually. A report identifying these cases will be distributed.

CHANGES EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2003

- The Food Stamp Program excess shelter deduction increases to **\$378**.
- The standard deduction changed to a variable amount based on household size :
 - HH 1-4 \$134
 - HH 5 \$149
 - HH 6+ \$171
- The homeless shelter allowance will **remain at \$143**. Households in which all members are homeless but are not receiving free shelter are entitled to the standard homeless shelter allowance of \$143. Allow actual shelter expenses, instead of the homeless shelter allowance, if the actual shelter costs would be higher under the excess shelter calculation.
- The changes to the income standards include the following revisions which are effective October 1, 2003:

	Maximum Gross Monthly Income* 130% of Poverty	Maximum Net Monthly Income* 100% Of Poverty	Monthly Income Elderly/Disabled Separate HH* 165% of Poverty	Maximum Allotment Thrifty Food Plan
HH Size	Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D
1	\$ 973	\$ 749	\$1,235	\$ 141
2	1,313	1,010	1,667	259
3	1,654	1,272	2,099	371
4	1,994	1,534	2,530	471
5	2,334	1,795	2,962	560
6	2,674	2,057	3,394	672
7	3,014	2,319	3,826	743
8	3,354	2,580	4,257	849
Each Additional Member +	341	+262	+432	+106

* Maximum gross and net monthly income figures are not used for computing the food stamp allotment. They are included as a reference for determining the household's eligibility.

- Revised food stamp manual pages are attached. Please replace previous manual pages with these attachments.

We will post the entire Basis of Issuance tables on the FIPNET.

PAYMENT ACCURACY

There should be little or no payment accuracy impact as a result of this change. However, local departments utilizing manual FS calculation work sheets are reminded to make adjustments for the new standard deductions for calculations effective October 1, 2003.

ACTION DUE:

The new standards and benefits are effective October 1, 2003.

INQUIRIES:

Please direct Food Stamp policy inquiries or requests for an electronic copy of the Basis of Issuance Tables to Marilyn Lorenzo at 410-767-7333 or Kay Finegan at 410-767-7939. Direct TCA policy questions to Gretchen Simpson at 410-767-7937.

Attachments:

- I. FIP Schedule
- II. Schedule R
- III. Food Stamp Manual Section 600 Pages 1 & 2

cc: DHR Executive Staff
FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services
DHR Help Desk
RESI

F I P S C H E D U L E**Monthly Allowable Amounts Paid**

Effective: October 1, 2003

A	B	C
Family Size	Allowable Payment	50 % Poverty Level
1	\$ 213	\$ 375
2	376	505
3	477	636
4	577	767
5	668	898
6	735	1,029
7	827	1,160
8	910	1,290
9	982	1,421
10	1,058	1,552
11	1,137	1,683
12	1,213	1,814
13	1,288	1,945
14	1,362	2,076
15	1,441	2,207
16	\$1,534	\$2,338
Each Person More Than 16	Add \$ 79	Add \$ 131

"50% Poverty Level" reflects Federal Poverty Levels effective April 1, 2003

SCHEDULE - R

Effective: January 1, 2003

A	B	C	D
Family Size	Allowable Payment	90 %	Available Recoupment
1	\$ 213	\$ 192	\$ 21
2	376	339	37
3	477	430	47
4	577	520	57
5	668	602	66
6	735	662	73
7	827	745	82
8	910	819	91
9	982	884	98
10	1,058	953	105
11	1,137	1,024	113
12	1,213	1,092	121
13	1,288	1,160	128
14	1,362	1,226	136
15	1,441	1,297	144
16	\$1,534	\$1,381	\$ 153
Each Person More Than 16	Add \$ 79	Calculate 90% of Col. - B	Calculate 10% of Col. - B

NOTE: When a family receiving Food Stamps is also subject to recoupment, a "double" adjustment applies to the determination of income to be used in the Food Stamp computation.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION	FOOD STAMP MANUAL	
STANDARDS FOR INCOME AND DEDUCTIONS	Section 600	Page 1

600.1 STANDARDS FOR ELIGIBILITY AND MAXIMUM ALLOTMENTS

- A. The standards for the following appear in Section 600, page 2.
1. Column A - Maximum Gross Monthly Income Standards (130% of poverty)
 2. Column B - Maximum Net Monthly Income Standards (100% of poverty)
 3. Column C - Maximum Gross Income Standard for Elderly and Disabled Separate Household (165% of poverty)
 4. Column D - Thrifty Food Plan/Maximum Allotment
- B. Standards 1, 2, and 3 are used to determine household eligibility and not for computing allotments.

600.2 FORMULA CALCULATION

- A. Multiply the household's net monthly income by 30%.
- B. Round the product up to the next whole dollar if any cents result.
- C. Subtract the product from the maximum allotment amount for the household size found in Column D, Section 600.

NOTE: In an initial month, if the allotment is less than \$10, no benefit is issued. Except in an initial month, all eligible one and two person households must be issued the minimum allotment of \$10.

600.3 DEDUCTION STANDARDS

Standard Deduction – effective 10/1/02	
Household size up to and including 4 people-----	\$134
Household size of 5-----	\$149
Household size of 6 or more-----	\$171
Excess Shelter Deduction-----	up to \$378
Homeless Household Shelter Allowance-----	\$143
Dependent Care (child or elderly or disabled adult)	
For each dependent child under age 2-----	up to \$200
For each dependent age 2 and over-----	up to \$175
Standard Utility Allowance (SUA)-----	\$224
Limited Utility Allowance (LUA)-----	\$135
Telephone Standard-----	\$ 26

- The excess shelter deduction does not apply to households with an aged or disabled member. These households receive an uncapped shelter deduction.

600.4 Determining the Food Stamp Allotment

- A. Determine a household's monthly food stamp allotment by using the Basis of Issuance Tables:
1. Calculate the household's net monthly income.
 2. Compare the household's net monthly income to the maximum net monthly income standard, Column B below. Households that are not categorically eligible for food stamps will have net monthly incomes that are lower than or equal to the amounts shown in Column B.
 3. Find the allotment by reading in the Basis of Issuance Tables, down to the appropriate income and across to the appropriate household size.

NOTE: A household that is categorically eligible is entitled to any allotment shown in the appropriate column on the tables. Persons in household sizes of one or two and categorically eligible are eligible for a benefit of \$10, even if the tables do not show a benefit amount at their net income levels.

	Maximum Gross Monthly Income* 130% of Poverty	Maximum Net Monthly Income* 100% Of Poverty	Monthly Income Elderly/Disabled Separate HH* 165% of Poverty	Maximum Allotment Thrifty Food Plan
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