TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES 
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT 
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF 
HEALTH OFFICERS, LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS 
LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT ELIGIBILITY STAFF 

FROM: KEVIN M. MCGUIRE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 
JILL SPECTOR, ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DHMH/OES 

RE: TEMPORARY INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS 

PROGRAM AFFECTED: ALL PROGRAMS 

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS 

SUMMARY 

A provision of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 allows states to increase unemployment compensation (UC) by $25 per week. The federal legislation specifically excludes counting this income for medical assistance programs but does not address the other programs. According to guidance from the Food and Nutrition Service we must count this income for the Food Supplement Program (FSP). 

The first week for which the additional compensation can be paid is February 28, 2009. Some states have already begun paying the extra amount. Maryland will begin paying the extra amount in the near future. Some people will get back payments, which we will treat according to nonrecurring lump sum policy for the FSP.

ACTION REQUIRED 

Count the $25/week increase for: 
- The Food Supplement Program (FSP)

Exclude the income for: 
- Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) 
- All Medical Assistance Programs
NOTE for the Food Supplement Program:

Simplified reporters do not have to report this increase in UC until recertification or interim change unless the increase puts the household over 130 percent of the Federal Poverty Limit (FPL).

CARES ACTION REQUIRED

To count the additional $25/week unemployment as income for the FSP and exclude it for the other programs enter the income as OF – Other Countable Food Stamps only.

Example: A customer received $300 of unemployment insurance benefits bi-weekly and now receives $350 due to ARRA. Code the original $300 bi-weekly amount as UC (unemployment compensation) with a frequency code of BW (bi-weekly) and code the additional $50 as OF (other countable food stamps only) with a frequency code of BW.

CARES Reminder: On the UINC screen in CARES the following coding options are available:

OA - OTHER COUNTABLE CASH ASSISTANCE ONLY
MU - OTHER COUNTABLE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE ONLY
OF - OTHER COUNTABLE FOOD STAMPS ONLY
OC - OTHER COUNTABLE - ALL PROGRAMS
ON - OTHER NON-COUNTABLE - ALL PROGRAMS

INQUIRIES:

Please direct FSP policy questions to Rick McClendon at 410-767-7307. For TCA and RCA questions contact Marilyn Lorenzo at 410-767-7333. For MA policy questions, contact the DHMH Division of Eligibility Policy and MCHP at 410-767-1463 or 1-800-492-5231 (select option 2 and request extension 1463).

cc: FIA Management Staff
    Constituent Services
    DHR Help Desk