



Department of Human Resources
311 W. Saratoga St.
Baltimore, MD. 21201-3521

FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

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

J. Cook for K. Mahon
FROM: KEVIN MAHON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FIA

RE: PRORATION OF BENEFITS

PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

**ORIGINATING OFFICE: OPA/ DIVISION OF PROGRAM POLICY AND
REGULATION**

BACKGROUND

The Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act eliminated the proration of food stamp benefits at recertification. Federal welfare reform now requires proration after any break in certification. Action Transmittal OPA 95-05 is obsolete.

CURRENT POLICY

Food stamp benefits are not prorated at recertification unless the household is off the program for more than one month.

NEW POLICY

Proration of food stamps is required after any break in certification, except for migrant and seasonal farm workers.

Example: A household's food stamp case was terminated effective November 1. On November 6, the household reapplies. Benefits are prorated from the date of application.

REMINDERS:

The following policy has not changed:

- ▶ For migrant and seasonal farm workers, benefits are not prorated unless the household

was off the program for more than 30 days.

Example: A migrant applied for food stamps on November 8. It was verified that food stamp benefits were received in Florida in the month of October. November benefits are not prorated.

- ▶ At recertification, if the household submits an application prior to the end of its certification period and is found eligible for the first month following the end of the certification period, their benefits are not prorated.

Example: A household's certification period expired on September 30. An application for recertification was filed September 26. On October 20, eligibility for the new certification period was established. October benefits are not prorated.

- ▶ If an application for recertification is submitted after the certification period has expired, the benefits are prorated from the date of the new application

ACTION REQUIRED

AIMS

Follow normal issuance procedures for prorating initial month's benefits. When there is an exception to the initial month proration such as for a migrant or seasonal farm worker, complete the AAPB, entering "n" in data element 31 (issue initial OTO). The initial month's benefit will not be prorated. Issue an OTO for the initial month's benefit.

CARES

The work around for eliminating proration will no longer be necessary for most cases since CARES was never reprogrammed. When there is an exception to initial month proration, the current work around can be used.

Food Stamp Manual pages are attached.

ACTION DUE

The policy is effective October 1, 1996 for applicants at initial application and recertification.

INQUIRIES

Please direct questions to Kay Finegan at (410) 767-7939.

cc: FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services



REF: 7CFR	Section Title	Section	Page
	PRORATING INITIAL ALLOTMENT	412	1

412.1 PURPOSE: This section presents the procedure for determining initial month's benefit. This procedure applies to all households.

GENERAL INFORMATION: Benefits must be prorated so that they more closely correlate to the time of the household's need for food assistance.

412.2 o Definition of Initial Allotment

The initial month is defined as the first month for which an allotment is issued following any period during which the household was not certified for participation, except for migrant and seasonal farm workers.

For migrant and seasonal farm worker households, the initial month is the first month for which the household is certified for participation following any period of more than 30 days during which the household was not certified for participation.

NOTE: Since the amount of a household's initial month's benefit depends on the date the application is filed, care must be taken to assure that applications are provided on request, that the household's right to file that same day is explained, and the application is accepted the day it is filed.

If the household causes a delay beyond 30 days, in processing the application, the first allotment is prorated from the date the household took the necessary action. For example, the household files its application on November 9th, is interviewed on November 20th, but it does not provide the required verification until December 23rd. The household's benefits would be prorated from December 23rd because that was the date the household took the necessary action and December is the first month an allotment is issued.

412.3 o Determining Eligibility

A household's initial month's allotment is based on circumstances for the calendar month in which the application was filed. The eligibility worker must determine what the household's regular allotment would be and that figure is then prorated for the initial month. However, no allotment will be issued if the prorated amount is less than \$10. This applies to all households including one and two person households. For subsequent months in the certification period, one and two person households will continue to receive the minimum \$10 benefit.



REF: 7CFR	Section Title	Section	Page
	PRORATING INITIAL ALLOTMENT	412	2

GENERAL INFORMATION
 (cont'd)

412.3

- o **Determining Initial Allotment** Once the full allotment is determined, either of two methods can be used to determine the initial allotment.

- o The proration table provided in section 411 lists in the far left column amounts of full allotments. The line across the top of the table show days of the month. Where the line out from the household's full allotment crosses the column below the date of application is the household's initial allotment.

A formula can be used to calculate the initial month's benefits. The formula is:

$$\text{Full month's} \times \frac{(\text{31 minus date of application})}{30} \text{ benefits} = \text{Initial Month's Allotment}$$

NOTE: The use of "31" in the fraction assures that the date of application is included in the allotment. For example, for households applying on the first of the month: 31 minus 1 = 30, and so they will receive a full month's allotment.

412.4

- o **Rounding** If the formula is used, it may be necessary to round the resulting amount. Cents from 1 - 99 are rounded down. A household whose prorated allotment is 99c or less will receive no allotment in the initial month. Benefits of \$1, \$3 and \$5 are rounded to \$2, \$4, and \$6 respectively to allow use of current coupon book denominations.

412.5

- o **Prorating \$10 Minimum Benefit** Initial month's benefits are prorated to one and two person households currently guaranteed a \$10 minimum benefit for the regular allotment. If the prorated amount is less than \$10, no allotment will be issued.

412.6

- o **Expedited Service** Initial month benefits for expedited service household are prorated as they are for all other households.

Households eligible for expedited service applying after the 15th of a month, will be certified for