



Department of Human Resources  
311 West Saratoga Street  
Baltimore MD 21201

## FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number: FIA/OPRS #99-20

Effective Date: January 1, 1999

Issuance Date: December 15, 1998

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

**FROM: ROBERT J. EVERHARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**RE: INCREASE IN THE UTILITY ALLOWANCES**

**PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD STAMP PROGRAM**

**ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF POLICY, RESEARCH AND SYSTEMS**

### SUMMARY

The utility allowances were last increased in October 1994. Periodically we reassess the amount of the utility standards based on the Consumer Price Index for fuel. This transmittal provides information about increases in the standard and limited utility allowances.

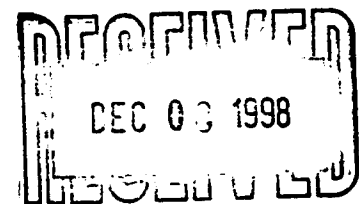
### OLD POLICY

The standard utility allowance (SUA) was \$183 and the limited utility allowance (LUA) was \$110.

### NEW POLICY

Effective January 1, 1999:

- The standard utility allowance increases to \$196
- The limited utility allowance increases to \$118



## ACTION REQUIRED

### CARES

For payment accuracy it is important to correctly code the SHEL screen and to check the accuracy of entries at application, interim change, and recertification.

To give a utility allowance (SUA or LUA), three fields must be filled correctly at the bottom of the SHEL screen.

To give SUA, you must enter:

- Y in the Util Std field
- N in the "Is heat in the rent?" field
- Y or N in the "Do you pay light/cooking?" field

Example shown below:

Subsidized Housing	V	Util Suppl	Util Std	Switch Date (MM YY)	Number HH Sharing	Primary Heat Source	Secondary Heat Source
			Y				
Rent Vendor							
Beg Date	End Date		Is heat in the rent?	N		Do you pay light/cooking?	Y

To give LUA, you must enter:

- Y in the Util Std field
- Y in the "Is heat in the rent?" field
- Y in the "Do you pay light/cooking?" field

Example shown below:

Subsidized Housing	V	Util Suppl	Util Std	Switch Date (MM YY)	Number HH Sharing	Primary Heat Source	Secondary Heat Source
			Y				
Rent Vendor							
Beg Date	End Date		Is heat in the rent?	Y		Do you pay light/cooking?	Y

When actual expenses are used as the shelter cost, enter an N in the Util Std field and enter the actual amount billed and the appropriate verification code in the Expense Type field.

Be sure to update the following fields:

- Number HH Sharing (prorates utility expenses for number of households BUT rent will have to be prorated off-line and then entered on CARES during those instances where more than one household is sharing the rent)
- Primary Heat Source (indicates the main heating source, i.e. gas, kerosene, etc.)
- Secondary Heat Source (indicates back-up heating source, if any)

Please place the attached manual page in the Food Stamp Manual.

**ACTION DUE**

This action is effective January 1, 1999.

**INQUIRIES**

Please direct policy questions to Kay Finegan at (410) 767-7939 and systems questions to the DHR System Support Center at (410) 767-7002 or (800) 347-1350.

cc: FIA Management Staff  
Constituent Services  
OIM Help Desk  
CIS Testing Facility

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>FOOD STAMP MANUAL</b>	
<b>STANDARDS FOR INCOME AND DEDUCTIONS</b>	Section 600	Page 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.

### FORMULA CALCULATION

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

### DEDUCTION STANDARDS

The following are the deduction standards per household unless otherwise noted:

Standard Deduction	_____	\$134
Excess Shelter Deduction*	_____	up to \$275
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 other dependent	_____	up to \$175
Standard Utility Allowance (SUA)	_____	\$196
Limited Utility Allowance (LUA)	_____	\$118
Telephone Standard	_____	\$ 20

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