



Date: September 18, 2019

DMS Operations Memo 19-35

To: Income Maintenance Supervisors
Income Maintenance Lead Workers
Income Maintenance Staff

Affected Programs:	
<input type="checkbox"/> BadgerCare Plus	<input type="checkbox"/> Caretaker Supplement
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FoodShare	<input type="checkbox"/> FoodShare Employment and Training
<input type="checkbox"/> Medicaid	
<input type="checkbox"/> SeniorCare	

From: Rebecca McAtee, Bureau Director
Bureau of Enrollment Policy and Systems
Division of Medicaid Services

FoodShare Cost of Living Adjustments

CROSS REFERENCE

- Operations Memo [18-30](#)
- FoodShare Wisconsin Handbook, [Section 8.1 Tables](#), [Section 4.3.3.8 Self-employment Expenses: Self-employed Child Care Provider](#), [Section 4.4.1.4 Disregarded Assets](#), and [Section 8.1.3 Deductions](#)
- 7 C.F.R. § 273.9(d)

EFFECTIVE DATE

October 1, 2019

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Operations Memo is to announce the FoodShare Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA), new Standard Utility Allowance (SUA), and federal standard deductions for meals provided by self-employed child care providers for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2020. FFY 2020 is October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020.

BACKGROUND

Each year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service announces adjustments to FoodShare COLA (income limits for eligibility, maximum allotments, and deduction amounts), standard utility allowances, and self-employed child care provider meal deductions. The USDA calculates maximum allotments for FoodShare, and states are required to adjust allotments on October 1 of each year based on the Food and Nutrition Act. FoodShare minimum and maximum allotment amounts will increase this year. Changes to FoodShare benefits resulting from the annual

changes cannot be overturned in a fair hearing; however, members still have the right to request a fair hearing.

POLICY

FOODSHARE COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2020

Effective for October 1, 2019, eligibility determinations for FoodShare will apply the FFY 2020 COLA amounts, standard utility deductions, and self-employed child care provider meal deductions. CARES was updated on August 28, 2019 to reflect the new amounts. FoodShare redeterminations after August 28 that result in a change of benefits for October will cause a Notice of Decision to be sent to the member. The new amounts are listed in the tables below. These amounts will be added to [Section 8.1.1 Income Limits](#), [Section 8.1.2 Allotment for Monthly Net Income and FoodShare Group Size](#), and [Section 8.1.3 Deductions](#) of the FoodShare Wisconsin Handbook with the next handbook release.

INCOME LIMIT AND ALLOTMENT AMOUNTS

Monthly Income Limit and Allotment Amounts for FFY 2020					
Assistance Group Size	200% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) Gross Income Limit	165% FPL Gross Income Limit	130% FPL Gross Income Limit	100% FPL Net Income Limit	Maximum Allotment
1	\$2,082	\$1,718	\$1,354	\$ 1,041	\$194
2	\$2,820	\$2,326	\$1,832	\$ 1,410	\$355
3	\$3,556	\$2,933	\$2,311	\$ 1,778	\$509
4	\$4,292	\$3,541	\$2,790	\$2,146	\$646
5	\$5,030	\$4,149	\$3,269	\$2,515	\$768
6	\$5,766	\$4,757	\$3,748	\$2,883	\$921
7	\$6,502	\$5,364	\$4,227	\$3,251	\$1,018
8	\$7,240	\$5,972	\$4,705	\$3,620	\$1,164
9	\$7,978	\$6,580	\$5,184	\$3,989	\$1,310
10	\$8,716	\$7,188	\$5,663	\$4,358	\$1,456
11	\$9,454	\$7,796	\$6,142	\$4,727	\$1,602
12	\$10,192	\$8,404	\$6,621	\$5,096	\$1,748

MINIMUM ALLOTMENT

The minimum monthly FoodShare allotment for categorically eligible food units that include one or two people will increase to \$16.

MAXIMUM EXCESS SHELTER DEDUCTION

The maximum excess shelter deduction will increase to \$569.

STANDARD DEDUCTION

The standard deduction is based on the size of an assistance group. This year, the standard deduction will increase for all assistance groups.

Standard Deduction for FFY 2020	
Assistance Group Size	Standard Deduction Amount
1-3	\$167
4	\$178
5	\$209
6 or more	\$240

STANDARD UTILITY ALLOWANCES

The Phone Utility Allowance (PUA) will decrease to \$30. The Trash Utility Allowance (TUA) will decrease to \$22. The Cooking Fuel Utility Allowance (FUA) will remain the same. The amount of all other allowances will increase. Standard utility allowances for FFY 20 are listed in the following table.

SUAs for FFY 2020		
SUA Code	Amount	Type of Utility Allowance
HSUA	\$456	Heating
LUA	\$318	Non-heat electric with at least one other qualifying expense
EUA	\$141	Electric Utility Allowance
WUA	\$87	Water and Sewer
FUA	\$36	Cooking Fuel
PUA	\$30	Telephone
TUA	\$22	Garbage and Trash

Any cases with FoodShare eligibility run on or after August 29, 2019, will have the new SUA amounts applied, effective October 1, 2019.

SELF-EMPLOYED CHILD CARE PROVIDER DEDUCTIONS

Self-employed child care providers can deduct the cost of meals provided to enrolled children from the income earned by their child care business. They may report the actual cost of the meals, or they may use the federal standard deductions. The reported costs may not exceed allowable federal standard deductions based on the eligible tier. Tier 1 applies to households with income at or below 185 percent of the FPL income guidelines. Tier 2 applies to all other households.

Federal Standard Deductions		
Meals	Tier 1	Tier 2
Breakfast	\$1.33	\$0.48
Lunch or supper	\$2.49	\$1.50
Supplement (snacks)	\$0.74	\$0.20

ASSET LIMIT FOR FOODSHARE FOR THE ELDERLY BLIND, OR DISABLED

The asset limit applies to food units that include an elderly, blind, or disabled member with gross income over 200% of the FPL and with a net income that does not exceed 100% FPL. The asset limit will remain \$3,500.

CONTACTS

BEPS CARES Information and Problem Resolution Center

DHS/DMS/BEPS/JT