STATE OF WISCONSIN
Department of Health Services
Division of Medicaid Services

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DMS Operations Memo 25-13

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

Affected Programs:
- ☐ BadgerCare Plus
- ☒ FoodShare
- ☐ Medicaid
- ☐ SeniorCare
- ☐ Caretaker Supplement
- ☐ FoodShareEmployment and Training

From: Jonelle Brom, Bureau Director
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Division of Medicaid Services

FoodShare Cost of Living Adjustments

CROSS REFERENCE

- Operations Memo 24-18
- FoodShare Wisconsin Handbook, Section 8.1 Tables, Section 4.3.3.8 Self-employment Expenses: Self-employed Child Care Provider, Section 4.4.1.7 Disregarded Assets, and Section 8.1.3 Deductions
- 7 C.F.R. § 273.9(d)

EFFECTIVE DATE

October 1, 2025

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) 2026. FFY 2026 is October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026.

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 uses the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) to calculate maximum allotments for FoodShare. Based on this year's TFP, FoodShare maximum allotment amounts will increase. States are required to adjust allotments on October 1 of each year based on the Food and Nutrition Act. 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 2026

Effective for October 1, 2025, eligibility determinations for FoodShare will apply the FFY 2026 COLA amounts, standard utility allowances, and self-employed child care provider meal deductions. Members will receive a Notice of Decision if the COLA results in a change of benefits, effective October 1, 2025.

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.

TABLE 1: FOODSHARE INCOME LIMIT AND ALLOTMENT AMOUNTS

Monthly Income Limit and Allotment Amounts for FFY 2026					
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	$2,610	$2,152	$1,696	$1,305	$298
2	$3,526	$2,909	$2,292	$1,763	$546
3	$4,442	$3,665	$2,888	$2,221	$785
4	$5,360	$4,421	$3,483	$2,680	$994
5	$6,276	$5,177	$4,079	$3,138	$1,183
6	$7,192	$5,934	$4,675	$3,596	$1,421
7	$8,110	$6,690	$5,271	$4,055	$1,571
8	$9,026	$7,446	$5,867	$4,513	$1,789
9	$9,944	$8,203	$6,463	$4,972	$2,007
10	$10,862	$8,960	$7,059	$5,431	$2,225
Additional Member	$918	$757	$596	$459	$218

MINIMUM ALLOTMENT

The minimum monthly FoodShare allotment for a categorically eligible food unit that includes one or two people is $24.

MAXIMUM EXCESS SHELTER DEDUCTION

The maximum excess shelter deduction is $744.

HOMELESS SHELTER DEDUCTION

The homeless shelter deduction is $199.

STANDARD DEDUCTION

The standard deduction is based on the size of an assistance group.

Table 2: FoodShare Standard Deduction for FFY 2026

Assistance Group Size	Standard Deduction Amount
1-2	$209
3	$209
4	$223
5	$261
6 or more	$299

STANDARD UTILITY ALLOWANCES

The Heating Standard Utility Allowance (HSUA) increases to $553. The Limited Utility Allowance (LUA) increases to $385. The Electric Utility Allowance (EUA) increases to $155. The Water and Sewer Allowance (WUA) increases to $106. The Cooking Fuel Utility Allowance (FUA) increases to $48. The Phone Utility Allowance (PUA) increases to $31. The Trash Utility Allowance (TUA) increases to $28. Standard utility allowances for FFY 2026 are listed below.

Table 3: FoodShare Standard Utility Allowances for FFY 2025

SUA Code	Amount	Type of Utility Allowance
HSUA	$553	Heating
LUA	$385	Non-heat electric with at least one other qualifying expense
EUA	$155	Electric Utility Allowance
WUA	$106	Water and Sewer
FUA	$48	Cooking Fuel
PUA	$31	Telephone
TUA	$28	Garbage and Trash

SELF-EMPLOYED CHILD CARE PROVIDER DEDUCTIONS

Self-employed child care providers deduct the cost of meals 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. Reported costs may not exceed allowable federal standard deductions based on the eligible tier.

Table 4: USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Federal Standard Deductions

Meals	Tier 1 (185% FPL households)	Tier 2 (all other households)
Breakfast	$1.70	$0.61
Lunch or supper	$3.22	$1.94
Supplement (snacks)	$0.96	$0.26

ASSET LIMIT

The asset limit for Elderly, Blind, or Disabled (EBD) food units with at least one EBD member, with gross monthly income over 200% of the FPL remains $4,500. The non-EBD food units subject to regular SNAP rules asset limit remains $3,000.

The lottery and gambling limit remains $4,500.

CONTACTS

DHS CARES Problem Resolution Team

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