

Shelter and Utility Expenses

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Background

States are required to maintain a payment error rate (active QC errors) under 6%. We have recently seen our rate above that level, resulting in a corrective action. This project seeks to help reduce that error rate. In addition, changes are sought to collect better expense information on cases. Also, we need to offer the homeless shelter deduction to eligible assistance groups.

Project Vision

The project will help better capture shelter and utility expenses for income maintenance programs in order to increase program integrity and lower quality control error rates.

Outcomes and Goals

- Add functionality to support shelter and utility expenses.
- Meet requirement to offer homeless shelter deduction for FoodShare when applicable.
- Collect accurate shelter and utility expenses for individuals and households.
- Reduce active QC error rate and number of errors resulting from shelter and utilities.

Shelter and Utility Expenses

Policy Changes

Verification Policy

There is no change in shelter or utility verification policy. These items should continue to only be verified if questionable.

Functionality has been added to CWW to allow for the verification of shelter and utility expenses to become mandatory. However, this functionality will not be available at this implementation.

Homeless Shelter Deduction

The 2018 Farm Bill added a FoodShare requirement for states to give qualifying assistance groups a homeless shelter expense deduction in place of the excess shelter expense deduction. Prior to this farm bill, the deduction was a state option from which Wisconsin opted out.

Homeless Shelter Deduction

The deduction will be updated annually at mass change as the dollar amount is linked to inflation. For FFY2020 (10/1/2019-9/30/2020), the amount of the deduction will be \$152.06.

The deduction should also be accounted for when FoodShare overpayment claims are calculated. Workers will need to keep the potential for the expense as a factor when calculating the correct benefit amount during each month of the claim (before/after implementation).

Air Conditioning Surcharge

Prior to Operations Memo 19-01, air conditioning surcharges were not a FoodShare utility expense. After clarification from FNS, it is now an allowable expense. The expense is budgeted as an electric expense so would contribute towards the Electric Utility Allowance (EUA) and Limited Utility Allowance (LUA) as such. If both an electric expense and air conditioning expense are budgeted, only one will be counted towards the LUA.

FoodShare Priority Service

As noted on the previous slide, the air conditioning surcharge will be factored into eligibility as either the EUA or LUA, depending on other utility expenses budgeted. The expense will be included in the priority service determination, accordingly.

Overpayment Claim Calculation

When calculating FoodShare overpayments, workers will need to be generally aware of homeless shelter expense and should factor it into applicable claim calculations, accordingly.

The expense would only be potentially relevant for benefit months beginning with October 2019.

CWW Future Enhancements

2020 Changes

- Expense Gatepost page
- Possible Clarifying questions
- Possibility of additional questions for shelter/utility pages

Health Care Policy Changes

There are no changes to health care policy. The additional shelter and utility expenses for renters insurance and the air conditioning surcharge will be counted for relevant Medicaid program eligibility. The homeless expense deduction is for FoodShare only.

Shelter and Utility Expenses


System Changes

Address and Phone Changes

Enhancements have been made to the General Case Info page so that any change made in the Household Address section of the page will schedule the Expense Gatepost page.

Address and Phone Changes

Household Address Find Matching Cases

* County of Residence:  Populate with office address (for homeless Primary Persons)

13 - DANE COUNTY

Number	Unit	Direction	*St / Rural Rt / Box Number	Suffix	Quadrant	Apt
1819		<input type="button" value="v"/> <input type="button" value="list"/>	ABERG	AVE - AVENUE <input type="button" value="v"/> <input type="button" value="list"/>	<input type="button" value="v"/> <input type="button" value="list"/>	

Additional Address Info

*City *State *ZIP -

Phone

W-2 Geographical Area Override W-2 Geographical Area

*Address Verification

Post Office Suggested Address Verification

0

Address and Phone Changes

Shelter

Does anyone in your household incur shelter costs? OR

Does an institutionalized individual intending to return home incur shelter costs for maintaining a home or apartment?

▪ RT - Rent or Lot Rent?	<input type="text" value="Y - Yes"/>	▪ MO - Mortgage?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
▪ PT - Property Tax?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	▪ HI - Homeowners Insurance?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
▪ ML - Mobile Home Loan Payments?	<input type="text" value="Y - Yes"/>	▪ SA - Special Assessments?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
▪ RI - Renters Insurance?	<input type="text" value="Y - Yes"/>		

Utility

Does anyone in your household incur utility costs? OR

Does an institutionalized individual intending to return home incur utility costs for maintaining a home or apartment?

▪ GA - Gas(natural)?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	▪ EL - Electricity?	<input type="text" value="Y - Yes"/>
▪ PH - Phone?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	▪ LP - LP Gas?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
▪ WA - Water?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	▪ TR - Trash Removal?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
▪ FO - Fuel Oil / Kerosene?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	▪ SE - Sewer?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
▪ IN - Installation?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	▪ CO - Coal?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
▪ WS - Waste Water Treatment?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	▪ AC - A/C Surcharge?	<input type="text" value="Y - Yes"/>
▪ WD - Wood?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	▪ OT - Other?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>

Address and Phone Changes

Any changes in address and/or phone will lead to a change in existing expenses. When the Expense Gatepost page is scheduled, any existing shelter or utility expense details pages will also be visited via the driver.

This will also resolve the issue of the expenses not being scheduled during SMRF since any action taken to update the address/phone, will schedule the Expense gatepost page.

Renters Insurance and A/C Surcharge

These have been added as a shelter and utility expense.

Renters insurance is not an allowable expense for FoodShare so will only be counted for Medicaid. A/C surcharge will count for FoodShare and Medicaid. For FoodShare, it will be factored as an Electric Utility Allowance (EUA) and would count as an electric expense for the purposes of the Limited Utility Allowance (LUA).

Renters Insurance and A/C Surcharge

Shelter

Does anyone in your household incur shelter costs? OR

Does an institutionalized individual intending to return home incur shelter costs for maintaining a home or apartment?

* RT - Rent or Lot Rent?	<input type="text" value="Y - Yes"/>	* MO - Mortgage?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
* PT - Property Tax?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	* HI - Homeowners Insurance?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
* ML - Mobile Home Loan Payments?	<input type="text" value="Y - Yes"/>	* SA - Special Assessments?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
* RI - Renters Insurance?	<input type="text" value="Y - Yes"/>		

Utility

Does anyone in your household incur utility costs? OR

Does an institutionalized individual intending to return home incur utility costs for maintaining a home or apartment?

* GA - Gas(natural)?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	* EL - Electricity?	<input type="text" value="Y - Yes"/>
* PH - Phone?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	* LP - LP Gas?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
* WA - Water?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	* TR - Trash Removal?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
* FO - Fuel Oil / Kerosene?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	* SE - Sewer?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
* IN - Installation?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	* CO - Coal?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>
* WS - Waste Water Treatment?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	* AC - A/C Surcharge?	<input type="text" value="Y - Yes"/>
* WD - Wood?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>	* OT - Other?	<input type="text" value="N - No"/>

A/C Surcharge and Renters Insurance

Utility Costs

Cancel Reset

Effective Period		
* Begin Month:	<input type="text" value="10"/> / <input type="text" value="2019"/>	End Month: <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>
Delete Reason:		Last Updated:
<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="v"/> <input type="button" value="list"/>		
Expense Information		
* Payor:	<input type="text"/>	Sequence: <input type="text" value="0"/>
* Utility Type:	<input type="text" value="AC - A/C SURCHARGE"/>	
* Used for Heating?	<input type="text" value="No"/>	* Billed for Expense? <input type="text" value="Yes"/>
* Obligation Amount:	\$ <input type="text" value="25"/> . <input type="text"/>	* Verification: <input type="text" value="NQ - NOT QUESTIONABLE"/>

Shelter Costs

Cancel Reset

Effective Period		
* Begin Month:	<input type="text" value="08"/> / <input type="text" value="2019"/>	End Month: <input type="text" value="MM"/> / <input type="text" value="YYYY"/>
Delete Reason:		Last Updated:
<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="v"/> <input type="button" value="list"/>		
Expense Information		
* Payor:	<input type="text"/>	Sequence: <input type="text" value="0"/>
* Shelter Type:	<input type="text" value="RI - RENTERS INSURANCE"/>	
Does your household get housing or rent assistance? <input type="text"/>		
Obligation Amount:	\$ <input type="text" value="0"/> . <input type="text" value="75"/>	Verification: <input type="text" value="NQ - NOT QUESTIONABLE"/>
* Contribution Amount Unknown?	<input type="text" value="No"/>	

Homeless Shelter Expense

The homeless shelter expense deduction requires all food unit members to be homeless. It will be factored into the FoodShare budget based on an allowable shelter expense for at least one assistance group member. The “Excess Shelter/Utility Costs” amount will be compared to the Homeless Shelter Deduction amount. Whichever amount is greater will be used in the FoodShare budget.

Homeless Shelter Expense

Net Income Test	
Gross Income:	\$ 645.00
Earned Income Deduction:	- 129.00
Standard Deduction:	- 164.00
Excess Medical Expenses:	- — <input type="checkbox"/>
Dependent Care Deduction:	- —
Support Payments:	- —
Adjusted Income:	\$ 352.00
Shelter Deduction:	- 124.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Net Adjusted Income:	\$ 228.00
Assistance Group Size:	2
Net Income Limit:	\$ 1,372.00 <input type="checkbox"/>

Shelter Costs:	\$ 300.00
Utility Standard:	+ —
Shelter / Utility Costs:	\$ 300.00
50% of Adjusted Income:	- 176.00
Excess Shelter / Utility Costs:	\$ 124.00

Shelter and Utility Expense

Notice Changes

Verification Checklist

The A/C surcharge and renters insurance should only be pended when questionable. Changes have been made to the VCL to reflect these expenses being pended for the expense itself (pend from Expenses gatepost page) and for the expense amount (pend from the Shelter or Utility costs pages).

Costs Page VCL Language

What?	Who?	Examples*	Program(s)	Due Date
RENTERS INSURANCE : Shelter costs	JOHN	Rent Receipt that shows the address; Mortgage Statement; or Lease.	Medicaid	May. 15, 2019
<p><i>*If you do not have any of the examples of proof listed, there are other things you can use. For a complete list of examples, go online to dhs.wi.gov/em/customerhelp or contact us.</i></p>				

What?	Who?	Examples*	Program(s)	Due Date
A/C SURCHARGE : Utility costs; Utility costs	JOHN	Utility Bill; or Statement from your landlord; or lease.	FoodShare; Medicaid	May. 15, 2019
<p><i>*If you do not have any of the examples of proof listed, there are other things you can use. For a complete list of examples, go online to dhs.wi.gov/em/customerhelp or contact us.</i></p>				

Gatepost Pend VCL Language

Answer the questions below for **Community Waivers** by **May. 15, 2019** :

➤ **Question 1:** Does anyone in your home have costs for renters insurance? **Yes** **No**

For each person:

- a. Tell us the name of the person who is responsible for paying the bill and how much the bill is each month.

Answer the questions below for **FoodShare** by **May. 15, 2019** :

➤ **Question 1:** Does anyone in your home pay utility expenses? **Yes** **No**

For each person, tell us:

- a. The name of the person who is responsible for paying the bill.
b. What utility the bill is for (for example, gas, electric, water, telephone).
c. If the utility is used for heat.

45 Day Renewal Notice

Minor tweaks were made to the language on the notice to better represent examples of proof that may be requested.

Shelter and Utility Expenses

ACCESS Changes

A/C Surcharge and Renters Insurance

Both of these expenses will now be options for entry at application, renewal, SMRF, and change reporting.

The ACCESS help text has been updated to reflect the addition of the two expenses.

Renters Insurance


Changes to the help text have also been made.

ACCESS Hello, Bruce | [Español](#)
Your Connection to Programs for Health, Nutrition, Child Care, and Employment

[Start](#) [Housing Bills](#) [Submit](#)

Housing Bills
Please check the box for all of the housing bills that each person is responsible for paying.

BRUCE 's Housing Bills

 BRUCE	<input type="checkbox"/> Homeowner's Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Home Loan
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mortgage	<input type="checkbox"/> Property Tax
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rent or Lot Rent	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Assessments
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Renters Insurance	

[Go to MyACCESS](#) [Back](#) [Next](#)

A/C Surcharge

Changes to the help text have also been made.

The screenshot shows the ACCESS system interface. At the top, there is a logo with a warning sign and the text 'SYSTEMS' and 'ACCESS'. Below the logo, it says 'Your Connection to Programs for Health, Nutrition, Child Care, and Employment'. On the right, there is a greeting 'Hello, Bruce | Español', a 'Print' button, and a 'Help' button. A progress bar indicates '85% Complete'. Below the progress bar, there is a list of navigation buttons: 'Start', 'People', 'Other Benefits', 'Liquid Assets', 'Other Assets', and 'Job Income'. The main content area is titled 'Utility Bills' and contains the instruction: 'Please check the box for all of the utility bills that each person is responsible for paying.' Below this, there is a section for 'Bruce's Utility Bills' with a person icon labeled 'Bruce'. The utility bills are listed in two columns:

Utility Bill	Selected
Electricity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Liquid Propane Gas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood for Heating	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trash Removal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sewer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other Utility	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phone or Cell Phone Service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Natural Gas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fuel Oil or Kerosene	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waste Water Treatment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Utility Installation	<input type="checkbox"/>
A/C Surcharge	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your tracking number: 5702006950

Shelter and Utility Expenses

Release Readiness

Important dates

New Worker Training Update – November 1, 2019

Operations memo – October 4, 2019

CARES Bulletin – October 14, 2019

Process Help - October 19 2019

QUESTIONS?