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TO: **Income Maintenance Supervisors**
Income Maintenance Lead Workers
Income Maintenance Staff
W-2 Agencies
Workforce Development Boards
Job Center Leads and Managers
Training Staff
Child Care Coordinators

FROM: Amy Mendel-Clemens, Chief
Technical Assistance and Training Section
Bureau of Enrollment Management
Division of Health Care Access and Accountability

BEM/DFS OPERATIONS MEMO

No: 09-11

DATE: 3/6/2009

FS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BC+	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SC	<input type="checkbox"/>	CTS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	FSET	<input type="checkbox"/>
CC	<input type="checkbox"/>	W-2	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA	<input type="checkbox"/>
CF	<input type="checkbox"/>	JAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	JC	<input type="checkbox"/>
RAP	<input type="checkbox"/>	WIA	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
				EP	

PRIORITY: HIGH

SUBJECT: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

CROSS REFERENCE: FSHB 8.1.2 Allotment by Monthly Net Income and FS Group Size
FSHB 7.1.1.4 Minimum Allotment for 1 or 2 person Food Units
MEHB 15.3 Disregarded Income
BC+HB 16.2 Disregarded Income
CTS HB 3.2.1 Income

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 1, 2009

PURPOSE:

This memo announces changes resulting from the Economic Stimulus package, including specific information about the impact on FoodShare allotments, Medicaid/BadgerCare Plus and Caretaker Supplement (CTS) eligibility policy. We will announce other changes in policy that result from the Economic Stimulus law in future operations memos.

BACKGROUND

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 signed by President Obama on Feb 17, 2009 increases FoodShare (FS) benefits by raising the maximum allotment by 13.6%. The Act also contains provisions that will result in a one-time increase in other Federal benefits.

POLICY CHANGE

Passage of the Economic Stimulus package requires States to increase the maximum FS benefit allotments by 13.6% effective April 1, 2009. FS allotments will not increase in October, when annual changes in the FPL occur. The next increase to the maximum FS allotment may not occur until the year 2013. The minimum FS allotment has been raised to \$16.

All open FS households will receive notification of the increase in benefits due to passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act stimulus. A copy of the letter is attached.

The new maximum allotments are:

Household Size	Allotment Max
1	\$ 200
2	\$ 367
3	\$ 526
4	\$ 668
5	\$ 793
6	\$ 952
7	\$1,052
8	\$1,202
Each additional person	\$ 150

Provisions of the Act also include increases to other Federal benefits. The following table displays the type of increase by benefit and how the increase should be counted by program. Additional information about the payments is included in Attachment 2 to this memo.

Federal Benefit	Amount of Increase	Anticipated Effective Date of increase	FS	Health Care (MA, BC+, FPW)	Caretaker Supplement (CTS)
SSI, Veterans benefits, Rail Road Retirement	\$250	A one time payment should be received in May or June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disregard income in month of receipt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disregard income during month of receipt. When applicable, is also not counted as an asset in month of receipt or for nine months thereafter. 	Disregard income during month of receipt. When applicable, is also not counted as an asset in month of receipt or for nine months thereafter.
Low Income Tax Credits, such as Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Care Credit	Based on individual factors	2009 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disregarded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disregarded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disregarded

There will also be increases to unemployment benefits. The Department is still researching these changes and when they will occur. Future information will be communicated regarding those payments when it is known.

CARES

All cases will go through an update on 3/7/2009 or 3/14/2009 for April benefits. CARES tables TFEP - FS ELIGIBILITY PARAMETER and TFST - FS NEED STANDARD TABLE will be updated with 4/1/09 effective dates to allow the new minimum and maximum allotments, respectively.

CONTACTS

BEM CARES Information & Problem Resolution Center

Program Categories – FS – FoodShare, MA – Medicaid, BC+ – BadgerCare Plus, SC – Senior Care, CTS – Caretaker Supplement, CC – Child Care, W-2 – Wisconsin Works, FSET – Food Stamp Employment and Training, CF – Children First, EA – Emergency Assistance, JAL – Job Access Loan, JC - Job Center Programs, RAP – Refugee Assistance Program, WIA – Workforce Investment Act, Other EP – Other Employment Programs.

DHFS/DHCAA/BEM/MR

March 9, 2009

**State of Wisconsin****NOTICE TO HOUSEHOLDS WHO GET FOODSHARE BENEFITS**

Beginning April 2009, your FoodShare benefits may increase due to recent federal legislation (the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, also known as the Stimulus law). The amount of the increase will vary based on each household's circumstances. The increase is automatic and will remain in effect until further notice from the federal government.

Also, Wisconsin FoodShare rules now allow **all** FoodShare households to claim heating expenses as part of their shelter costs. **Starting with your April FoodShare allotment, heating expenses are deducted from your household income whether you claimed them or not.** If your household did not claim a heating expense in the past, your benefits may have increased. Households that were already claiming a heating expense will not get an increase as a result of this rule change.

Note: The notice enclosed with this letter shows any increase you will get starting in April. This amount also includes other changes in circumstances you may have reported which may cause an increase or decrease in your FoodShare amount.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO CONTACT YOUR WORKER OR TAKE ANY OTHER ACTION REGARDING THIS LETTER.

Vea el otro lado para el español.

9 Marzo 2009



State of Wisconsin

AVISO A LOS HOGARES QUE RECIBEN FOODSHARE

A partir de abril de 2009, sus beneficios de FoodShare podrían aumentar debido a la reciente legislación federal (ley de recuperación y reinversión americana de 2009, conocida también como el paquete de estímulo económico). La cantidad del aumento variará basado en las circunstancias de su hogar. El aumento es automático y permanecerá en efecto hasta un nuevo aviso del gobierno.

También las reglas de Wisconsin FoodShare ahora permiten que **todos** los hogares que reciben FoodShare incluyan gastos de calefacción como parte de sus gastos de vivienda. **A partir de abril, los gastos de calefacción han sido descontados del ingreso de su hogar ya sea que usted los haya reclamado o no.** Si su hogar no había reclamado un gasto de calefacción en el pasado, sus beneficios podrían aumentar. Los hogares que ya había reclamado gastos de calefacción no recibirán un aumento como resultado de este cambio de regla.

Nota: El aviso incluido en esta carta refleja cualquier aumento que usted recibirá comenzando en abril. Esta cantidad también incluye otros cambios en circunstancias que usted pudo haber reportado lo cual puede causar un aumento o una disminución de FoodShare.

USTED NO NECESITA COMUNICARSE CON SU TRABAJADOR NI TOMAR OTRAS MEDIDAS CON RESPECTO A ESTA CARTA.

See other side for English

Social Security Column

Received from Social Security Administration 2/27/09

ECONOMIC RECOVERY PAYMENTS COMING FOR PEOPLE WHO RECEIVE SOCIAL SECURITY AND SSI BENEFITS

The *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*, which the President signed into law in February, provides for a one-time payment of \$250 to people receiving Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

The one-time recovery payments will go out in May 2009 and all payments should be received by the end of May. In April, Social Security will send a letter with additional information to each person who is eligible for the one-time payment. The payments will be sent automatically, meaning no action is required on the part of the person receiving benefits. The economic recovery payments will be made separately from a person's regular monthly payments.

All adults who receive Social Security benefits, including disabled adult children (but not minor children) are eligible for \$250 payment. In addition, all persons who receive SSI payments, including minor children, are eligible for the payment. Anyone who receives benefits or who was eligible to receive benefits during any of the three months prior to enactment (November and December of 2008 and January 2009) will receive the one-time payment as long as the address of record is in one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, or the Northern Mariana Islands.

The payments will be made in the same way that regular monthly payments are made. People with direct deposit will receive their payments electronically. Those who receive paper checks will receive their payments in the mail. People who receive regular payments through the *Direct Express* debit card will receive their one-time payments through the card.

If someone receives both Social Security and SSI, only one payment of \$250 will be made. The economic recovery legislation also provides for a one-time payment to recipients of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) benefits. However, if you receive Social Security or SSI benefits and you also receive VA and/or RRB benefits, you will only receive one \$250 payment. The Social Security Administration will send you this payment.

To assist in processing the payments as efficiently as possible, please do not contact Social Security unless do not receive a payment by June 4, 2009. Information is available at www.socialsecurity.gov and will be updated regularly.

To learn more about the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*, visit www.recovery.gov.