

IBM Cúram Social Program Management  
Version 7.0.0

*Cúram Income Support Food  
Assistance Program Guide*



**Note**

Before using this information and the product it supports, read the information in "Notices" on page 35

**Edition**

This edition applies to IBM Cúram Social Program Management v7.0.0 and to all subsequent releases unless otherwise indicated in new editions.

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# Cúram Income Support Food Assistance Program Guide

Cúram Income Support Food Assistance provides eligibility determination for households that are based on financial and non-financial factors. Captured evidence is assessed against a set of business rules to determine whether the household is eligible for food assistance.

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## Introduction

### Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to provide an overview of the Cúram Income Support Food Assistance Program. This guide contains details of rules used in assessment for eligibility and entitlement's for Food Assistance.

This guide is intended as a reference manual for business analysts, and does not contain any technical information regarding how the rules are run or how to administer the rules.

### Audience

This guide is intended for anyone interested in learning about the rules used in the Cúram Income Support Food Assistance Program. It is expected that it will be read mainly by business analysts working within a social enterprise organization.

### Prerequisites

Before reading this guide, it would be useful to have a basic knowledge of the product. It is assumed that you are familiar with the basic concepts of Social Enterprise Management.

### Introduction

The Food Assistance program is an assistance program that provides food to low and no income households. Benefits are distributed using cards or coupons which can be used to purchase food for human consumption. These stamps can be used to purchase any prepackaged edible foods regardless of nutritional value.

Cúram Income Support Food Assistance provides eligibility determination for households based on financial and non-financial factors. The information required to determine program eligibility is captured as evidence. This evidence is assessed against a set of business rules to determine whether or not the household is eligible for Food Assistance.

Food Assistance eligibility is determined based on a number of factors:

- Non Financial Rules which include Citizenship, SSN and Residency.  
The Non Financial rules are used to determine if a household member satisfies the non financial requirements of the state before proceeding with program eligibility.
- Assistance Unit Determination which include household composition, household determination and head of household.

The Assistance Unit Determination rules are used to determine who should be included, excluded or not included in the assistance unit for Food Stamps coverage.

- **Program Rules**

The Program Rules determine if a household member satisfies program requirements. If these rules are not satisfied the household member or their household could be determined to be ineligible for food assistance.

- **Financial Rules** which include income, resources, deductions, expenses and benefit calculations.

The Financial Rules determine the household's total resources and total income less expenses and deductions. The rules compare the household's resource and income total to the limits imposed by the state to see if the household is eligible based on their financials. The rules also determine the benefit amount the household is entitled to.

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## **Non Financial Requirements**

### **Non Financial Requirements**

The rules specify the non financial requirements that a household member must satisfy before they can meet further requirements for Food Assistance. Non financial requirements include the rules for Citizenship, Residency and Social Security Numbers.

#### **Citizenship & Alienage**

##### **Citizenship:**

1. Individual must be a United States Citizen OR
2. Individual must be a US Non Citizen National OR
3. An American Indian born in Canada OR
4. Hmong and other Highland Lao tribal peoples who have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence OR
5. An individual who is the spouse of a Hmong or Highland Laotian OR
6. An individual who is a surviving spouse (who has not remarried) of a Hmong or Highland Laotian OR
7. An unmarried dependent child or surviving child (under the age of 18) of a Hmong or Highland Laotian OR
8. An unmarried dependent child or surviving child (under the age of 22) of a Hmong or Highland Laotian ,and the child is a full-time student OR
9. Victims of a severe form of trafficking OR
10. Individual must be an Eligible Alien

##### **Eligible Alien:**

- An eligible alien is an individual who is BOTH classified as a:
  - Qualified Alien AND
  - Meets the Qualified Alien Eligibility Criteria to be eligible for Food Assistance.

##### **Qualified Alien:**

1. An alien who is lawfully admitted for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act OR
2. An alien who is granted asylum OR

3. An alien who is admitted as a refugee OR
4. An alien who is paroled into the United States for a period of at least one year OR
5. An alien whose deportation is being withheld OR
6. An alien who is granted conditional entry OR
7. An alien granted status as a Cuban and Haitian entrant OR
8. An alien admitted as an Amerasian immigrant OR
9. An alien who has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty who meets the following conditions:
  - a. The battered alien must be battered by their U.S. Citizen or LPR alien spouse or parent AND
  - b. If a parent is the battered alien, any child who lives with them is also a battered alien OR If a child is the battered alien, the parent who lives with them is also a battered alien as long as the parent did not actively participate in the battery AND
  - c. The alien must not currently be residing in the same household as the individual responsible for the battery or extreme cruelty AND
  - d. There must be a substantial connection between the battery or extreme cruelty suffered by the alien (or the alien's child or parent) and the need for Food Assistance benefits

**Qualified Alien Eligibility Criteria:** A qualified alien must meet the following conditions to be eligible for Food Assistance:

1. An individual who on August 22, 1996, was lawfully residing in the U.S., and is now under 18 years of age OR
2. Effective October 1, 2003, an individual who is under 18 years of age OR
3. Individual who has resided in the U.S. as a qualified for five years OR
4. An individual who is a lawful permanent resident with 40 qualifying quarters of Social Security coverage OR
5. An alien who is admitted as a refugee OR
6. An alien who is granted asylum OR
7. An alien whose deportation is being withheld OR
8. An alien granted status as a Cuban and Haitian entrant OR
9. An alien admitted as an Amerasian immigrant OR
10. An individual who on August 22, 1996, was lawfully residing in the U.S., and is now receiving benefits or assistance for blindness or disability OR
11. Effective October 1, 2002, an individual who is receiving benefits or assistance for blindness or disability OR
12. An individual who on August 22, 1996, was lawfully residing in the U.S., and was born on or before August 22, 1931 OR
13. A qualified alien who is a veteran with an honorable discharge from the Armed Forces of the United States OR
14. A qualified alien lawfully residing in the State who is on active duty in the United States military OR
15. A qualified alien who is the spouse of honorably discharged veteran OR
16. A qualified alien who is a surviving spouse (who has not remarried) of an honorably discharged veteran OR
17. A qualified alien who is the spouse of an individual on active duty in the United States military OR

18. A qualified alien who is the spouse of an individual who died in active military, naval or air service provided the spouse has not remarried OR
19. Child of a veteran/deceased veteran of the U.S. military, honorably discharged who have met the minimum active duty service requirements providing the child is under the age of 18 OR
20. Child of a veteran/deceased veteran of the U.S. military, honorably discharged who have met the minimum active duty service requirements providing the child is under the age of 22 and a full-time student OR
21. Child of individual on active duty in the Armed Forces of the U.S. (other than for training) or who died on active duty and the individual is an unmarried dependent who is under the age of 18 OR
22. Child of individual on active duty in the Armed Forces of the U.S. (other than for training) or who died on active duty and the individual is an unmarried dependent who is under the age of 22 and a full-time student

### **Social Security Number**

1. An individual must provide a Social Security Number OR
2. An individual must apply for a Social Security Number if they do not have one and provide the number once it has been assigned

#### **Newborn Exception:**

- For newborns, household's must provide and SSN or proof of application at the next certification or 6 months whichever is later.

### **Residency**

The following are the residency rules:

#### **State Residence:**

- A household shall live in the state in which it files an application for participation.
- All household members are alive. An individual cannot receive benefits if they are deceased.

#### **Concurrent Benefits:**

- No individual may participate as a member of more than one household or, in more than one county or state in any one month unless the individual is a resident of a shelter for battered women and children.

#### **Concurrent Benefit Exception**

- An individual is a resident of a shelter for battered women and children and is a member of a household containing the person who abused him or her.

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## **Assistance Unit Determination**

### **Introduction**

The Food Assistance program rules determine all the potentially eligible assistance units in the household. The adult household members must designate a head of household for Food Assistance. The case worker records the selected head of household for the household for Food Assistance. The assistance units are then formed around the head of household specified for Food Assistance and includes all individuals based on the mandatory household member rules and exceptions.

Additional assistance units are formed when rules determine that separate assistance units may be formed that do not include the head of household specified.

- Household composition rules are used to form the assistance unit and determine the household members that are included in the unit
- Household determination rules determine the household members that are not included or excluded from the assistance unit.
- Head of household determination rules determine the head of household for assistance unit's formed separate to the head of household specified for Food Assistance.
- Expedited Food Assistance rules determine if the household is eligible for expedited Food Assistance.
- Categorically Eligible Food Assistance rules determine if the household is eligible for categorical Food Assistance.

## Household Composition

The household composition rule group determines the mandatory and optional household members in an assistance unit.

If a household member is determined to be mandatory, the member is included in the assistance unit. If a household member is determined to be optional, the member can be included in the assistance unit, but doesn't have to be. An assistance unit can be formed with and without the optional household member.

### Eligible Household Members

The Food Assistance assistance unit is composed of one of the following individuals or groups of individuals living in the household. Their income and resources are counted and they are included in the household size:

1. An individual living alone OR
2. An individual living with others, but customarily purchases food and prepares meals separately OR
3. A group of individuals who live together and customarily purchase food and meals together for home consumption OR
4. A homeless person or group of homeless people who purchase food OR
5. An individual or group of individuals residing in an exempt Institution

**Homelessness:** An individual is considered to be homeless if they satisfy one of the following conditions:

1. Individual lacks a fixed and regular nighttime address OR
2. Individual has a primary nighttime that is a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations OR
3. Individual has a primary nighttime address that is an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized OR
4. Individual has a primary nighttime address that is a temporary accommodation in the residence of another individual for no longer than 90 days OR
5. Individual has a primary nighttime address that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation.

**Institution:**

- Individuals who are residents of an institution are ineligible for Food Stamp benefits unless exempt.

### **Exempt Residents of Institutions**

1. Individual who are residents of federally subsidized housing for the elderly OR
2. Individuals who are narcotic addicts or alcoholics and reside at a facility for the purpose of treatment OR
3. The children of individuals who are narcotic or alcoholics and reside at the same treatment facility OR
4. Individuals who are disabled or blind and are residents of group living arrangements OR
5. Residents of Shelters for Battered Women and Children OR
6. Individuals who are residents of public or private non profit shelters for homeless persons

### **Household Member Exceptions**

Individuals who live with others must be considered as customarily purchasing food and preparing meals with others even if they do not so. They are included in the same assistance unit if they meet the following criteria:

1. Spouses who live together regardless of whether they purchase and prepare meals together OR
2. Children under 18 years of age other than a foster child, who live with and are under parental control of a household member other than his or her parents OR
3. Persons under 22 years of age who are living with their natural, adoptive parent(s) or step-parent(s).

### **Optional Household Members**

Unless specifically required to be a Food Assistance assistance unit member as defined in Household Member Exceptions, the following household members, who live in the home, can optionally be included in the assistance unit for Food Assistance. If they are included their income and resources are counted and they are included in the household size:

1. Boarders OR
2. Foster Care individuals placed in the home of relatives or others by a federal, Stat, or local governmental foster care program can be included in the Food Assistance assistance unit at the household's request OR
3. Live-in Attendants who purchase food and prepare their meals with the household

**Boarder:** An individual is considered to be a boarder if they satisfy one of the following conditions:

1. An individual or groups of individuals residing with others (excluding residents of a commercial boarding house) and paying reasonable compensation for lodging and meals must be considered boarders OR
2. An individual or groups of individuals residing with others (excluding residents of a commercial boarding house) and paying less than a reasonable amount for board must not be considered a boarder but must be considered, along with a spouse or children living with him or her, as a member of the household providing the board.

### **Reasonable Compensation**

- For Individuals whose board arrangement is for more than two meals per day, 'reasonable compensation' must be an amount that equals or exceeds the maximum food stamp allotment for the appropriate size of the boarder household OR
- For Individuals whose board arrangement is for two meals or less per day, 'reasonable compensation' must be an amount that equals or exceeds two thirds of the maximum food stamp allotment for the appropriate size of the boarder household.

## **Household Composition Special Circumstances**

This rule group determines if an individual is elderly and disabled. If an individual is determined to be elderly and disabled and satisfies the Disabled and Elderly Exception, the elderly and disabled individual may form an assistance unit separate to other household members with whom they purchase and prepare food. If the elderly and disabled individual has a spouse they are also included in the assistance unit. The elderly disabled individual and their spouse may choose to receive assistance as part of the assistance unit with whom they purchase and prepare meals, or as part of their own separate assistance unit.

### **Elderly/Disabled Living with Others**

1. An individual 60 years of age or older living with others who is unable to purchase and prepare meals because of a permanent disability together with his or her spouse(if living there) AND
2. The Disabled and Elderly Exception is satisfied AND
  - The elderly and disabled individual and spouse can participate as a separate household OR
  - The elderly and disabled individual and spouse can choose to be included along with the other household members with whom they purchase and prepare food OR
3. The Disabled and Elderly Exception is not satisfied AND
  - The elderly and disabled individual and spouse must be included along with the other household members with whom they purchase and prepare food

### **Disabled and Elderly Exception:**

- The gross income of the other household members with whom the individual resides (excluding the income of the elderly disabled individual and his/her spouse) does not exceed 165% of the poverty level

**Disability:** An individual is considered to be disabled if they satisfy any one of the following conditions:

1. Individual receives supplemental security income OR
2. Individual receives disability or blindness payments from social security OR
3. Individual receives federally or State administered supplemental benefits OR
4. Individual receives Federal, State or local public disability retirement pension because of a permanent disability OR
5. Individual receives or is entitled to receive payments from the Veteran's Administration for a 100 percent total disability OR
6. Individual is a veteran and considered by the Veteran's Administration to need regular aid and attendance or permanently housebound OR
7. Individual is a surviving spouse of a veteran and considered in need of aid and attendance or permanently housebound and incapable of self-support OR

8. Individual is a surviving spouse of a veteran and considered by the VA to be entitled to compensation under title 38 and has a disability considered permanent under section 221(i) of the SSA OR
9. Individual is a surviving child of a veteran and considered by the VA to be entitled to compensation under title 38 and has a disability considered permanent under section 221(i) of the SSA OR
10. Individual receives a disability annuity payment from Railroad Retirement and was determined disabled under Title XVI of the Social Security Act OR
11. Individual is a recipient of interim assistance benefits OR
12. Individual is a recipient of disability related medical assistance under title XIX of the Social Security Act OR
13. Individual is a recipient of disability-based State general assistance benefits.

### **Separate Food Assistance Unit**

Unless specifically required to be a Food Stamp assistance unit member as defined in Household Member Exceptions, the following household members, if otherwise eligible, can receive Food Assistance as a separate Food Assistance assistance unit. Their income and resources are counted and they are included in the household size for the separate Food Assistance assistance unit.

- Live-in Attendants who do not purchase food and prepare their meals with the household OR
- Roomers to whom the household furnishes lodgings for compensation but not meals

## **Household Determination**

This rule group determines if there are any non household members, excluded household members or individuals whose income/resources will be later deemed to a household member. None of these individuals will be included in the assistance unit.

### **Non Household Members**

The following household members, who live in the home, are not considered household members in determining the household members eligibility or benefit amount. Their income and resources are not counted and they are not included in the household size:

1. Individuals sharing living quarters with the household but do not purchase food and prepare meals with them OR
2. Live-in Attendants who do not purchase food and prepare meals with the household OR
3. Roomers to whom the household furnishes lodging for compensation but not meals OR
4. Ineligible students OR
5. Boarders who are residents of a commercial boarding house OR
6. Individuals who are residents of an institution that is not exempt OR
7. Individuals who are the spouses of narcotic addicts or alcoholics who reside at the same treatment facility.

#### **Student:**

- Individual enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher education is ineligible for Food Assistance unless s/he satisfies a student exemption.

### **Student Exemptions**

1. Individual aged 17 or younger or aged 50 or older OR
2. Individual is physically or mentally unfit OR
3. Individual receives Cash Assistance under Title IV of the social Security Act OR
4. Individual is responsible for the care of a dependent household member under the age of 6 OR
5. Individual is responsible for the care of a dependent household member aged 6-12 and the State agency has determined that adequate child care is not available to enable the student to attend class and comply with the work requirements OR
6. Individual is a single parent enrolled in an institution of higher education on a full-time basis and is responsible for the care of a dependent child who has reached the age of 6 under age 12 OR
7. If no natural, adoptive or stepparent is in the same food stamp household as the dependent child between 6 and 12, another full-time student in the same household may qualify for eligible student status if he or she has parental control over the child and is not living with his or her spouse OR
8. Individual is enrolled as a result of participation in the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills program under Title IV of the Social Security Act or its successor program OR
9. Individual is employed for a minimum of 20 hours per week and is paid for such employment OR
10. Individual is self-employed for a minimum of 20 hours per week and receiving weekly earnings at least equal to the Federal minimum wage multiplied by 20 hours OR
11. Individual is participating in a State or federally financed work study program during the regular school year and the work study must be approved for the school term and must be approved at the time of application for Food Assistance OR
12. Individual is participating in an on-the-job training program OR
13. Individual is placed in an institution of higher education through the Workforce Investment Act(WIA), formerly known as Job Training Partnership (JTPA) OR
14. Individual is placed in an institution of higher education through an employment and training program under FS/Cash Assistance E&T under FS Act OR
15. Individual is placed in an institution of higher education through an employment and training program for low-income households that is operated by a State or local government where one or more of the components of such program is least equivalent to an acceptable food stamp employment and training program component as specified OR
16. Individual is placed in an institution of higher education through a program under section 236 of the Trade Act.

### **Ineligible Household Members**

The following household members, who live in the home, are not eligible for Food Assistance however their resources are counted in full. A pro rata share of their income is counted. They are not included in the household size:

1. Individual who failed to apply for an Social Security Number OR
2. Individual who does not satisfy the citizenship and alienage rules OR

3. Individual who does not meet the residency requirements OR
4. Individuals sanctioned for failure to cooperate with child support enforcement agencies OR
5. ABAWD individuals who have exceeded the eligibility time limit.

**Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents:** Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) are participants of the Food Assistance program who satisfies all the following conditions:

- Are age 18 or over or under age 50
- Reside in the household with no children under age 18
- Are considered physically or mentally fit for employment
- Are not pregnant
- Are not receiving SSI benefit
- Are not exempt from Food Assistance Work Requirements

Anyone not meeting these ABAWD determination requirements is considered non-ABAWD.

Legislation requires that unless an exemption applies, the adult household members who are categorized as ABAWD individuals must meet work requirements otherwise they may only receive Food Assistance benefits for a maximum of 3 countable months in a 36 month period. When calculating the total months of food assistance received by a household member, it is necessary to total the months received in other state(s) with the months received in the current state for the 36 month period. Partial months do not count as a countable month and the individual is considered non-ABAWD during partial month .

ABAWD functionality is configured using a system property - "curam.isproduct.cgiss.abawd.applicable" in the administration application. The 36 month state wide fixed clock period is configured using the CER ruleset. All ABAWD members' clocks stop and start on the same date.

ABAWD rules determine when a month of assistance received in the current state should be counted toward the ABAWD time limit. A countable month is one in which the ABAWD individual receives Food Assistance for the full benefit month while not fulfilling an exemption.

#### **ABAWD Work Requirements**

An ABAWD individual is meeting the work requirements if the individual works for 80 hours in a calendar month. ABAWD work requirements are calculated using the Employment Working Hours page. Two pages are available: the Employment Working Hours page and a dynamic evidence page which does not contains a Monday validation and has no end date attribute. ABAWD work requirements are calculated as follows:

- Hours per week/7 days in week = daily hours
- Number of days worked in the calendar month/daily hours = hours worked in the month.

For example, evidence is entered as 20 hours/week. This is 2.86 hours per day (20/7 days). Employment working hours start on the 7th of the month. There are 31 days in the calendar month. 25 days employment in the month:  $2.857 * 25 = 71.5$  hours in the month.

- On the Dynamic Evidence page, hours are calculated from the start date to the end date of the employment.

### **Regain eligibility and 3 additional months**

After a member uses the three countable months, the member can regain eligibility if the member meets the 80 hours in 30 days requirement. The eligibility start date is the date the regain is met even if it the 30 days is met before the application date.

Once a member has met a regain of eligibility, individuals may receive up to 3 additional months of food assistance benefits if the individual stops meeting the work requirement. The 3 month extension is only granted once in a 36 month period. Once the extension has been started, it will continue until the 3 month period is finished.

### **ABAWD Exemption**

An ABAWD individual is exempted from ABAWD Time Limit rules if the individual has an exemption with a reason of Inadequate Transportation, Homeless, or Health issues. The individual will get food assistance benefits during the exemption period as long as the individual satisfies food assistance eligibility.

### **ABAWD Time Limit**

An ABAWD individual is meeting the ABAWD time limit if the individual is receiving three countable months, or if the individual is meeting ABAWD work requirement (Refer ABAWD Work Requirements), if the individual is having ABAWD exemption, or if the individual is receiving three additional months.

### **ABAWD Waivers**

A waiver from supporting ABAWD eligibility is granted to a state when the economy in the state is poor. The state can be on a waiver till the economy improves. A state can go on more than one waiver period depending on the performance of the economy. States can have waivers from ABAWD processing for any period of time (typical length is one year).

During waiver period, only ABAWD determination rules are run to determine if the individuals in the state are ABAWD or not. The individuals do not have to meet ABAWD time limit rules (countable months, additional months etc) to become eligible for food assistance. All individuals will get food assistance benefits during the waiver period as long as they satisfy food assistance eligibility.

### **Disqualified Household Members**

Eligibility for Food Assistance requires that an individual is not a member of another household during the same period and the household are not subject to any sanctions. Once a sanction is imposed on an individual, it may have various impacts on a household member or household's eligibility or a reduction of the benefit amount.

The following household members, who live in the home, are not eligible for Food Assistance however their income and resources are counted in full and they are not included in the household size:

**Note:** The following rules apply to both application and reassessment

1. Individual who participated as a member of more than 1 household/project area in any month OR
2. Individual disqualified because they have been found guilty of committing an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) OR

3. Individuals sanctioned for using Food Assistance in the sale of a controlled substance OR
4. Individuals sanctioned for providing fraudulent information OR
5. Individuals sanctioned for trafficking Food Assistance OR
6. Individuals sanctioned for selling firearms OR
7. Individual is sanctioned for non compliance with the food stamp work requirements OR
8. Individual is sanctioned for voluntary quit OR
9. Individuals sanctioned for violating a condition of federal or state probation or parole OR
10. Individual has a sanction for being a fleeing felon OR
11. Individuals sanctioned because of a drug related felony conviction OR
12. Individual has failed or refused to register for work

**Note:** The following rules apply only on application

1. Individual found guilty of using food stamps in the sale of a controlled substance OR
2. Individual found guilty of trafficking food stamps to the value of \$500 or more OR
3. Individual has failed the voluntary quit rules OR
4. Individual has an intentional program violation OR
5. Individual has been convicted of a felony committed after 23rd August 1996 involving illegal drugs OR
6. Individual has been convicted of having made a fraudulent representation or statement OR
7. Individual is a fleeing felon OR
8. Individual is on parole and violating Parole conditions OR
9. Individual has been convicted of selling firearms

**Work Requirements:**

- Household member must satisfy the work provisions unless exempt or have a valid non participation reason.

**Work Provision Rules on Application and Reassessment**

1. Household member must register for work or be registered by the State agency AND
2. Household member must pass employment offer rules.

**Work Provision Rules on Application**

1. Household member is Work-Eligible and is not registered for work, or does not have a non participation reason, member is considered Eligible for FA pending Work Registration, provided they meet all other conditions of FA program eligibility.

**Work Registration Exemptions**

The following individuals are not work eligible:

1. Individual is complying with Cash Assistance Work Registration and does not have a Cash Assistance sanction
2. Individual under 16 years of age OR

3. Individual is aged 16 or 17 and not the head of household OR
4. Individual is aged 16 or 17, head of household and in school at least half time OR
5. Individual aged 60 or older OR
6. Disabled persons and persons who are physically and mentally incapable of engaging in gainful employment OR
7. Household member is responsible for the care of an incapacitated person OR
8. Household member is responsible for the care of a dependent child under six OR
9. Individual earning weekly income equivalent to the federal minimum hourly wage multiplied by 30 hours OR
10. Individual employed or self-employed and working at least 30 hours per week OR
11. Individuals residing in certain areas of Alaska who are engaged in subsistence hunting and/or fishing an average of at least 30 hours weekly OR
12. Individuals who are Migrant and seasonal farmworkers OR
13. Individuals who are applying for SSI and Food Assistance OR
14. Individual in receipt of Unemployment Compensation or Unemployment Insurance Benefit OR
15. Drug addicts or alcoholics who regularly participate as residents or non residents in a drug or alcohol treatment and rehab program OR
16. Student enrolled at least half time in any recognised school, training program or institution of higher education.

### **Work Non Participation Reasons**

Work Non-participation reasons for a household member for failing or refusing to participate in the work requirements:

1. Individuals who are applying for SSI and Food Assistance OR
2. Household Emergency OR
3. There is lack of adequate childcare for children who have reached age 6 years but are less than 12 years of age OR
4. Illness of another household member requiring the presence of the employed household member OR
5. Illness of the employed household member OR
6. Transportation is unavailable OR
7. Individual has Lack of Education and Work Skills OR
8. Individual resides in remote area OR
9. Individual is a victim of domestic violence OR
10. Individual is temporarily disabled

*Employment Offer Rules:*

1. Household member has not received an offer of employment OR
2. Household Member must accept a bona fide offer of suitable employment unless good cause exists for employment refusal or employment suitability

### **Good Cause from Employment Refusal**

Good cause reasons for a household member refusing an offer of Employment:

- Employment does not materialize or results in employment of less than 30 hours a week OR
- Employment results in weekly earnings of less than federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours

### **Good Cause Employment Suitability**

Good cause reasons for a household member refusing an offer of suitable employment:

1. The wage offered is less than the highest of the State Minimum Wage OR Federal Minimum Wage OR 80% of the Federal Minimum Wage if neither Federal or State is applicable OR
2. The employment offered is on a piece rate basis and the hourly yield is likely to be less than the highest of the State Minimum Wage OR Federal Minimum Wage OR 80% of the Federal Minimum Wage if neither the Federal or State is applicable OR
3. Individual is required to join a legitimate labour organization OR
4. Individual is required to resign from or refrain from joining any legitimate labour organization OR
5. The work offered is at a site subject to a strike or lockout at the time of the offer OR
6. The degree of risk to health and safety is unreasonable OR
7. Individual is physically/mentally unfit to perform the employment OR
8. Employment offered within the first 30 days is not in the individual's major field of experience OR
9. Employment is considered unsuitable if the distance to the place of employment prohibits walking and neither public nor private transportation is available to transport the member to the job site OR
10. The distance from the member's home to the place of employment is unreasonable considering the expected wage and the time and cost of commuting OR
11. The working hours or nature of the employment interferes with the member's religious observances, convictions or beliefs.

### **Voluntary Quit:**

- Individual must not voluntarily quit a job or reduce work effort unless good cause exists.

### **Exception**

- A government employee dismissed because of participation in a strike against the government is considered to have voluntarily quit.

### **Reduced Work Effort Determination**

- Individual who reduces his or her work effort voluntarily without good cause and, after the reduction, is working less than 30 hours per week.

### **Good Cause for Voluntary Quit**

Good cause for voluntary quit exists when:

1. Individual who quit at least 60 days prior to date of application OR
2. Individual who reduced work effort and is earning weekly income equivalent to the federal minimum hourly wage multiplied by 30 hours OR

3. Individuals who voluntary quit employment which was less than 30hrs/week or weekly earnings less than FMW times 30 OR
4. Individual satisfies a Work Registration Exemption or Good Cause for failure to Comply with Work Requirements OR
5. Individual gets a job, comparable to the job just quit OR
6. Individual resigns from a job at the demand of an employer OR
7. Individual terminates self employment business OR
8. Discrimination by an employer based on age, race, sex, color, handicap, religious beliefs, national origin or political beliefs OR
9. Leaving a job in connection with patterns of employment in which workers frequently move from one employer to another OR
10. Resignation by persons under 60 which are recognised by the employer as retirement OR
11. Work demands or conditions that render continuous employment unreasonable OR
12. Acceptance of employment by the individual, that requires the individual to leave other employment OR
13. Enrollment of at least half time in any recognized school, training program, institute of higher education or acceptance of employment which require the household to relocate and requires other employed household members to leave their employment OR
14. Changes in employment status resulting from an employer initiated reduction in hours of employment.

### **Penalties for Voluntary Quit Sanctions**

The following penalties are imposed depending on the level of Voluntary Quit Sanction imposed on an individual:

1. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for 1 month if no previous sanction exists for this, for this member.
2. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for 3 months if a previous Level 1 Voluntary Quit Sanction exists for this member.
3. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for 6 months if a previous Level 2 (or higher) Voluntary Quit Sanction exists for this member.

### **Household Disqualification**

The whole household is ineligible under any of the following conditions:

**Note:** The following rules apply to both application and reassessment

1. An individual in the household has failed the striker rules OR
2. An Individual in the household has failed the invalid resource transfer rules.

**Striker:** Households containing striker(s) are ineligible for Food Assistance unless:

1. Individual satisfies an exemption OR
2. Individual satisfies the striker exception

### **Striker Exemptions**

The following individuals are not considered strikers and are therefore eligible for Food Assistance:

1. Employees unable to work as a result of striking employees OR

2. Employees who are not part of the bargaining unit on strike who do not want to cross the picket line due to fear of personal injury or death OR
3. Employee affected by a lock out OR
4. Employees who go on strike that are exempt from work requirements the day prior to the strike, other than those exempt because they are employed.

### **Striker Exception**

1. Household was eligible for benefits the day before the strike began

**Invalid Resource Transfer:** If a household member performs an invalid resource transfer the entire household is ineligible for assistance for a period of time. Members may not apply for assistance until the period of ineligibility has expired. If they apply prior to the expiry of the period of ineligibility they are determined ineligible.

The following rules determine if a resource transfer is invalid and how the period of ineligibility is calculated.

For resources transferred by any household member in the 3 months prior to application or any time during the certification period:

1. Determine if the resource is countable or excluded.
2. For countable resources, determine if a Invalid Resource Transfer Exception applies.
3. For transfers that are not allowed, determine the uncompensated value for each transfer.
4. Total the uncompensated values for all the resources transferred (that are not allowed).
5. Calculate total household countable resources.
6. Add the total of uncompensated values as determined in step 4 to the total household countable resources as determined in step 5.
7. Compare total resources determined in step 6 to the Resource Limit. A period of ineligibility applies when total resources is greater than the resource limit.

### **Invalid Resource Transfer Exceptions**

Eligibility for Food Assistance will not be affected by the following transfers:

- Resources which are transferred between members of the same household (including ineligible aliens or disqualified person whose resources are being considered available to the household).
- Resources which are transferred for reasons other than qualifying or attempting to qualify for Food Assistance benefits between members of the same household (including ineligible aliens or disqualified person whose resources are being considered available to the household).

### **Calculate Period of Ineligibility**

The Period of ineligibility is calculated as follows:

1. Determine the value of the total resources
2. Subtract these total resources from the resource limit and use this value to determine the number of months of ineligibility from the period of ineligibility chart below

## Period of ineligibility

The following period of ineligibility is imposed if an individual has made an invalid resource transfer:

- The household is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for (n) number of months.

Table 1. Period of Ineligibility

Resource Transfer Value Exceeding Resource Limit	Number of Months Ineligible
Up to the value of \$249.99	1 Month
Between the Values \$250 and \$999.99	3 Months
Between the Values \$1000 and \$2999.99	6 Months
Between the Values \$3000 and \$4999.99	9 Months
A Value of \$5000 or over	12 Months

## Deemed Members of Financial Unit

If the household member falls into the following category, there may be deemed members in the financial unit:

### Sponsored Alien:

1. The household member is an Alien AND
2. Income and resources of an alien sponsor and the sponsor's spouse, if s/he lives with the sponsor, are deemed to an alien who is included in the assistance unit.

## Head of Household Determination/Multiple Assistance Units

When determining eligibility for food assistance, the eligible unit must have a head of household. Program rules determine the assistance units that exist within the household.

The adult household members must designate a head of household for Food Assistance. The case worker records the designated head of household for the household for Food Assistance. The household's designated head of household is assigned to the assistance unit in which s/he is either an eligible member of the assistance unit or an excluded/non household member or an optionally excluded member. This assistance unit is the initial or primary assistance unit. The head of household can be end dated and a new head of household added.

### Determination of Valid Head of Households

1. System checks if unit contains eligible parent(s)/adult(s)
2. System checks if there are ineligible/disqualified parent(s)/adult(s)
3. System checks if unit contains children (the oldest child who satisfies household disqualification and work requirement rules)

## Expedited Food Assistance

A household's circumstance may be such that they require immediate food assistance, and thus the processing of their first month of assistance for food assistance is expedited. The first month of assistance is issued within 7 days rather than the normal 30 days. This is expedited food assistance. Households may be entitled to expedited food assistance if they have very little income, or housing or

utility expenses exceeding their income, or the household contains a migrant or seasonal farm worker who is in between jobs. Expedited food assistance rules and processing applies only to the first month of assistance. To remain eligible for food assistance, the household unit must pass all the food assistance eligibility rules.

Application summary evidence is used to determine potential eligibility for expedited services. When the interview between the caseworker and applicant is complete and all evidence has been entered for the household, an eligibility check is executed. This includes full program rules execution for programs selected by caseworker. An expedited icon is displayed in the context panel of the successful application.

### **Expedited Food Assistance Households**

The following households are eligible for Expedited Food Assistance:

1. Household has countable gross monthly income less than \$150 in the month of application and liquid resources that do not exceed \$100 OR
2. Destitute household with one or more migrant or seasonal farm workers provided liquid resources do not exceed \$100 OR
3. Household whose combined monthly gross income and liquid resources are less than the household's monthly rent or mortgage, and utilities (including entitlement to a Standard Utility Allowance (SUA))

#### **Destitute Household:**

1. Household received their only income for the month of application prior to the date of application from a terminated source OR
2. Household's only income for the month of application is from a new source and the household anticipates that no more than \$25 from this new source will be received by the 10th calendar day after the date of application OR
3. Income from a Terminated Source and a New Source.

## **Categorically Eligible Food Assistance**

Individuals who are in receipt of other benefits or assistance programs are determined to be automatically financially eligible for Food Assistance assistance, and therefore there is no resource or income eligibility determination for these individuals. The household members are also not required to meet the non financial rules which include the residency rules, sponsored alien rules and SSN rules. The household must meet all the other Food Assistance eligibility rules other than those specified.

### **Categorical Eligibility**

Categorically eligible Food Stamp households must meet all eligibility requirements except the following:

1. Resource Limit
2. Gross Income Limit
3. Net Income Limit
4. Residency Rules
5. Sponsored Alien Rules
6. SSN Rules

### **Categorically Eligible Household Definition**

Household is categorically eligible for Food Assistance, unless an exception applies, when all members (eligible and ineligible members) receive any of the following benefits:

1. Cash Assistance OR
2. Diversion Payments OR
3. SSI or State Supplementary Payments OR
4. General Assistance

### **Exceptions to Categorically Eligible Households**

Household that meets the categorical eligibility definition is not considered categorically eligible for food assistance when any of the following apply:

1. Entire household is institutionalized in a non-exempt facility OR
2. Entire household is disqualified for any reason OR
3. Household member is disqualified for an intentional program violation (IPV)  
OR
4. Household member is disqualified because of a drug-related felony conviction  
OR
5. Household is ineligible under the striker rules.

### **Non-Household Members, Ineligible Household Members, Disqualified Household Members**

- Non-household members are not included in a categorically eligible household.
- Ineligible household members are not included in a categorically eligible household except household members who have failed either the SSN rules or the residency as these rules are waived under the categorically eligibility rules.
- Disqualified household members are not included in a categorically eligible household.

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## **Alien Sponsor**

These rules specify the definition of an alien sponsor and sponsor deeming exceptions. The deeming rules for sponsors use these rules.

1. A person who signed an Affidavit of Support on behalf of an alien as a condition of the alien's entry or admission to the U.S. AND
2. The sponsor is not included in the assistance unit AND
3. The sponsor and/or the sponsor's spouse are financially responsible for the alien by deeming their income to the alien unless an exception is met AND
4. An alien may have more than one sponsor

## **Introduction**

These rules specify the definition of an alien sponsor and sponsor deeming exceptions. The deeming rules for sponsors use these rules.

1. A person who signed an Affidavit of Support on behalf of an alien as a condition of the alien's entry or admission to the U.S. AND
2. The sponsor is not included in the assistance unit AND
3. The sponsor and/or the sponsor's spouse are financially responsible for the alien by deeming their income to the alien unless an exception is met AND
4. An alien may have more than one sponsor

## **Sponsorship Deeming Exceptions**

The following aliens are not subject to the alien sponsor deeming rules and so do not deem the income/resources of a sponsor if the alien falls into any of the following categories:

1. The alien is a refugee OR
2. The alien is a parolee OR
3. The alien is an asylee OR
4. The alien is a Cuban entrant OR
5. The alien is a Haitian entrant OR
6. Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) who adjusted from refugee or asylee status OR
7. Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) who entered the country before December 19, 1997 OR
8. Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) who applied for a visa or adjusted their status before December 19, 1997 OR
9. Indigent Alien Exemption applies for 12 months from the month of determination OR
10. The sponsored alien becomes a naturalized citizen OR
11. The sponsored alien has worked, or can be credited with, 40 qualifying quarters OR
12. The alien's sponsor dies OR
13. The sponsored alien leaves the U.S. permanently OR
14. Sponsor signed an Affidavit of Support OR
15. Battered alien spouse, alien parent of a battered child, or child of a battered alien, are exempt from deeming for 12 months and the batterer must not be part of the household OR
16. The alien is a victim of severe forms of trafficking OR

### **Battered Alien - First 12 Months**

Do not deem income for the first 12 months for aliens who meet the following criteria:

- The battered alien must be battered by their U.S. citizen or LPR alien spouse or parent AND is a refugee AND
  - Either 1 or 2 below must apply
1. If a parent is the battered alien, any child who lives with them is also a battered alien OR
  2. If a child is the battered alien, the parent who lives with them is also a battered alien as long as the parent did not actively participate in the battery AND
  3. There is a substantial connection between the battery and the need for benefits AND
  4. The individual subject to such battery or cruelty does not live in the same household with the individual responsible for the cruelty AND

### **Battered Alien - After 12 Months**

After 12 months, the alien shall continue to be exempt from sponsor deeming if:

- The alien demonstrates that the battery or cruelty has been recognized in an order of a judge or administrative law judge AND
- The local department determines that the abuse continues to have a connection to the need for benefits

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# Food Assistance Calculations

## Introduction

This chapter summarizes the calculations for Food Assistance.

The resource rules specify a resource limit that the household's total countable resources cannot exceed. Total countable resources include resources deemed to the household. If the household's resources exceed the resource limit, the household is ineligible for benefits.

The income rules specify a gross income limit that the household's gross income cannot exceed. Gross income is countable unearned, earned and self employment income. Total countable income includes income deemed to the household. The income rules also specify a net income limit that the household's net income cannot exceed. Net income is gross income minus allowable deductions/expenses.

The benefit calculation, benefit reduction and initial month proration rules are applied to determine the benefit amount the assistance unit is entitled to.

## Resource Calculations

1. Countable resources must not exceed \$2000 for the household, except for household's including a member over the age 60 or over or disabled where countable resources must not exceed \$3000.

The following are the steps to be undertaken when determining the total countable resources for Food Assistance:

### Resource Deeming

The individuals whose resources shall be deemed is determined as part of the household determination rules. The following happens for an individual whose resources shall be deemed:

- If the individual is a sponsor, carry out Sponsor to Alien Deeming

**Sponsor to Alien Deeming:** The sponsor definition and sponsor deeming exception rules for Income Deeming must be applied first when deeming resources

For each sponsor, determine the resources to be deemed to the Alien as follows:

- If the sponsor does not have a spouse living in the home:
  - Calculate countable resources for the sponsor and spouse(if spouse lives with sponsor) AND
  - Subtract \$1500 from the countable resources AND
  - Deem the remainder to the Alien.

Note: Countable and excluded resources are detailed in the Resource Rules chapter.

### Sponsor Definition

1. A person who signed an Affidavit of Support on behalf of an alien as a condition of the alien's entry or admission to the U.S. AND
2. The sponsor is not included in the assistance unit AND
3. The sponsor and/or the sponsor's spouse are financially responsible for the alien by deeming their income to the alien unless an exception is met AND
4. An alien may have more than one sponsor

*Sponsorship Deeming Exceptions:* The following aliens are not subject to the alien sponsor deeming rules and so do not deem the income/resources of a sponsor if the alien falls into any of the following categories:

1. The alien is a refugee OR
2. The alien is a parolee OR
3. The alien is an asylee OR
4. The alien is a Cuban/Haitian entrant OR
5. Indigent Alien Exemption applies for 12 months from the month of determination OR
6. Alien is sponsored by an organisation or group as opposed to an individual OR
7. The sponsored alien becomes a naturalized citizen OR
8. The sponsored alien has worked, or can be credited with, 40 qualifying quarters OR
9. The alien's sponsor dies OR
10. The sponsored alien leaves the U.S. permanently OR
11. Battered alien spouse, alien parent of a battered child, or child of a battered alien, are exempt from deeming for 12 months and the batterer must not be part of the household OR
12. The alien is a victim of severe forms of trafficking OR

#### **Battered Alien - First 12 Months**

Do not deem income for the first 12 months for Aliens who meet the following criteria:

- The battered alien must be battered by their U.S. citizen or LPR alien spouse or parent AND is a refugee AND
  - Either 1 or 2 below must apply
1. If a parent is the battered alien, any child who lives with them is also a battered alien OR
  2. If a child is the battered alien, the parent who lives with them is also a battered alien as long as the parent did not actively participate in the battery AND
  3. There is a substantial connection between the battery and the need for benefits AND
  4. The individual subject to such battery or cruelty does not live in the same household with the individual responsible for the cruelty AND

#### **Battered Alien - After 12 Months**

After 12 months, the alien shall continue to be exempt from sponsor deeming if:

- The alien demonstrates that the battery or cruelty has been recognized in an order of a judge or administrative law judge AND
- The local department determines that the abuse continues to have a connection to the need for benefits

#### **Total Countable Resources**

For every individual in the income/resource unit whose resources are counted, carry out the following steps:

1. Calculate individual's countable resources AND
2. Add total deemed resources, if any, to the individual's total countable resources to determine the total countable resources AND

3. Add individual's countable resources to other household member's countable resources to determine household's total countable resources

## **Income Calculations**

1. The household's monthly gross countable income is equal or less than 130% of the Federal Poverty Limit for the household size unless the household is exempt from the Gross Income Limit AND
2. The household's monthly net countable income is equal or less than 100% of the Federal Poverty Limit for the household size unless the household is exempt from the Net Income Limit

The following are the steps to be undertaken when determining the total countable gross and net income for Food Assistance:

### **Gross Income Calculations**

Using the financial unit previously determined in the household composition rules for Food Assistance, carry out the following steps for the gross income test.

### **Income Deeming**

For every sponsor in the financial unit whose income is deemed carry out the following steps:

1. Total the sponsor and sponsor's spouses(if living in the home) countable gross unearned income from all sources AND
2. Total the sponsor and sponsor's spouses(if living in the home) countable gross earned income from all sources including income from self employment AND
3. Carry out Sponsor to Alien Deeming

### **Sponsor to Alien Deeming**

The sponsor definition and sponsor deeming exception rules should be applied when deeming income - See Alien Sponsor chapter.

Carry out the following process if no Sponsorship Deeming exceptions apply.

1. For each sponsor, determine the amount of money to be deemed to the alien
2. From the Sponsor's and their live in spouse (if any) countable earned Income:
  - a. Deduct the Earned Income Deduction from the sponsor's and their live in spouse (if any) countable earned income AND
  - b. Add the gross countable unearned income for the sponsor's and their live in spouse (if any) AND
  - c. Subtract an amount equal to the monthly gross Food Assistance income eligibility limit for a household equal in size to the sponsor, the sponsor's spouse, and any other person who is claimed or could be claimed by the sponsor or the sponsor's spouse as a dependent for Federal income tax purposes AND
  - d. Subtract any additional amounts the sponsor actually pays to persons not living in the home, but who are, or could be, claimed as dependents for federal income tax purposes AND
  - e. The remaining amount, if any, is deemed as unearned income to the alien
  - f. Do not apply potential deemed amounts to sponsored alien children less than 18.

## **Pro-rated Income Gathering**

For every ineligible member in the income unit whose income is pro rated, carry out the following steps:

1. Calculate individual's countable gross unearned income from all sources AND
2. Divide the countable unearned income equally among all of the household members including the ineligible members AND
3. Count all but the ineligible member's pro-rata share as unearned income to the remaining household members.
4. Calculate the individual's countable gross earned income from all sources including income from self employment AND
5. Divide the countable earned income equally among all of the household members including the ineligible members AND
6. Count all but the ineligible member's pro-rata share as earned income to the remaining household members.

## **Gross Countable Income**

For every individual in the financial unit whose income is counted, carry out the following steps:

1. Calculate individual's countable gross unearned income from all sources AND
2. Add deemable income, if any, to the individual's unearned income AND
3. Add individual's countable gross unearned income to other household member's countable gross unearned income AND
4. Add the pro-rated unearned income of ineligible household members, if any, to the household's total gross unearned income AND
5. Calculate the individual's countable income from self employment AND
6. Add individual's countable income from self employment to other household members' countable self employment income AND
7. Offset any farming losses against total self employment income AND
8. Calculate the individual's countable gross earned income from all sources AND
9. Add individual's countable gross earned income excluding self employment to other household member's countable gross earned income excluding self employment income AND
10. Add household's self employment income to household's gross earned income to determine the household's total gross earned income AND
11. Add the pro-rated income of ineligible household members, if any, to the household's total gross earned income AND
12. Combine the household's total gross unearned income and the total gross earned income to determine the household's total gross income.

The household's monthly gross countable income is equal or less than 130% of the Federal Poverty Limit for the household size unless the household is exempt from the Gross Income Limit.

The household is exempt if:

- It meets the categorically eligible rules OR
- The household has at least one member age 60 or over
- The household has a disabled member

The exempt household must meet the net income limit only.

## **Net Income Calculations**

The household's monthly net countable income is equal or less than 100% of the Federal Poverty Limit for the household size unless the household is exempt from the Net Income Limit.

**Income Deductions:** For every individual in the income unit whose income is counted, deductions may be applied. Apply disregards in the following order for each employed/self employed individual in the household.

1. Subtract the Earned Income Deduction from the household's gross countable monthly earned income to determine the countable net monthly earned income.
2. Apply the following disregards to the remaining total income (i.e. Household's net monthly earned income after earned income deduction has been applied plus the household's total countable unearned income)
  - Offset any remaining farm self-employment losses against the total amount of earned and unearned income after the earned income deduction has been applied.
  - Subtract the Standard Deduction.
  - Subtract the allowable excess Medical Deduction for elderly or disabled household members.
  - Subtract allowable monthly Dependent Care expenses.
  - Subtract Child Support Expenses.
  - Subtract Shelter Expenses.
3. Shelter Expenses  
Deduct the appropriate shelter expenses for the household:
  - Homeless Shelter Deduction OR
  - Excess Shelter Deduction

### **Earned Income Deduction**

Deduct the 20% earned income deduction from the household's total countable gross earned income.

### **General Income Disregards**

The following deductions are applied to the remaining total income (household's net earned plus household's total countable unearned income).

- Standard Deduction
  - Allow a standard deduction for the applicable household size (Eligible members only).
- Excess Medical Deduction
  - Medical expense is incurred by household member who is elderly (60 or over) or disabled AND
  - Household member is an Eligible or Disqualified Household Member AND
  - Medical Expense is an allowable expense AND
  - Allow only the part of the expense that is not reimbursed AND
  - Deduct the portion of allowable monthly medical expenses that exceeds \$35 per household.
- Allowable Medical Expenses

- Medical and dental care including psychotherapy and rehabilitation services provided by a licensed practitioner authorized by Stat law or other qualified health professional OR
- Hospitalization or outpatient treatment, nursing care, and nursing home care including payments by the household for an individual who has a household member immediately prior to entering a hospital or nursing home provided by the State OR
- Prescription drugs when prescribed by a licensed practitioner authorized under State law and other over-counter medication (including insulin) when approved by a licensed practitioner or other qualified health professional; in addition, costs of medical supplies, sick-room equipment (including rental) or other prescribed equipment OR
- Health and hospitalization insurance policy premiums OR
- Medicare premiums related to coverage under Title XVIII of the Social Security Act; any cost-sharing or spend down expenses incurred by Medicaid recipients OR
- Dentures, hearing aids, and prosthetics OR
- Securing and maintaining a seeing eye or hearing dog including the cost of dog food and veterinarian bills OR
- Eye glasses prescribed by a physician skilled in eye disease or by an optometrist OR
- Reasonable cost of transportation and lodging to obtain medical treatment or services OR
- Maintaining an attendant, homemaker, home health aide, or child care services, housekeeper, necessary due to age, infirmity, or illness. OR
- Dependent Care Deduction
 

Deduct the monthly amount paid for the care of each child or other dependent in the household up to the maximum defined in the Dependent Care Chart if:

  - Child or other dependent is an eligible member of the assistance unit AND
  - The dependent care provider is not a household member AND
  - Actual cost of child care is not reimbursed AND
  - The care is necessary for employment OR
  - To attend training or pursue education which will help the individual prepare for employment AND
  - Apply pro-rating procedures if household member incurring the expense is an ineligible household member.
- Child Support Deduction
  - Deduct legally obligated child support payments paid by a household member to or for a non household member, including payments made to a third party on behalf of the non household member (vendor payments) AND
  - Apply pro-rating procedures if household member incurring the expense is an ineligible household member.
- Homeless Shelter Deduction
  - Households in which all members are homeless but are not receiving free shelter are entitled to the standard shelter allowance AND
  - Allow actual shelter expenses, instead of the homeless shelter allowance, if the actual shelter costs would result in a higher deduction under the excess shelter deduction calculation.
- Excess Shelter Deduction

- The excess shelter deduction is the monthly allowable shelter costs in excess of 50% of the Assistance Unit's income after the earned income, standard, medical, dependent care and child support deductions have been subtracted AND
- Do not allow more than the Maximum Excess Shelter Deduction Amount unless Elderly and Disabled Exception applies AND
- Apply pro-rating procedures if household member incurring the expense is an ineligible household member AND
- Apply Treatment of Shelter Expenses for Non-Household Members if any household member incurring the expense is a non-household member.
- Elderly Disabled Exception
  - Allow the full amount of the excess shelter expense as a deduction when at least one individual in the assistance unit is age 60 or over and or disabled.
- Allowable Shelter Expenses
  - Continuing charges for the shelter occupied by the household, including rent, mortgage, condo and association fees, or other continuing charges leading to the ownership of the shelter such as loan repayments for the purchase of a mobile home, including interest on such payments OR
  - Property taxes, State and local assessments, an insurance on the structure itself, but not separate costs for insuring furniture or personal belongings OR
  - Costs of repairing a home that was substantially damaged or destroyed due to a natural disaster, such as a fire or flood, as long as the expenses will not be reimbursed OR
  - Allowable Utility Costs OR

- Calculating Utility Costs

The following steps are followed to determine Utility Costs included in determining Shelter Deduction:

- Determine Eligibility for the Standard Utility Allowance (SUA).
- If eligible for SUA and State mandates the use of SUA's, use SUA.
- If eligible for SUA and it is not mandatory the use of SUA's, use higher of SUA or actual utility costs.
- If eligible for SUA and State mandates the use of Standard Utility Allowances uses the Standard Utility Allowance(SUA) otherwise use higher of SUA or actual utility costs.
- If eligible for SUA, determine actual utility costs.
- Use higher of SUA or actual utility costs when determining Shelter Deduction.
- If not eligible for the SUA, determine eligibility for the Limited Utility Allowance(LUA).
- If eligible for LUA and State mandates the use of SUA's, use LUA.
- If eligible for LUA and it is not mandatory to use SUA's, use higher of LUA or actual utility costs.
- If not eligible for LUA, determine eligibility for the Telephone Allowance.
- If eligible for Telephone Allowance and State mandates the use of SUA's use Telephone Allowance.
- If eligible for Telephone Allowance and it is not mandatory to use SUA's, use higher of Telephone Allowance or actual utility costs.
- If not eligible for Telephone Allowance, no utility expenses are used when determining the Shelter Deduction.

- Standard Utility Allowance (SUA)
 

To be eligible for the Standard Utility Allowances(SUA) the household must:

  - Incur a heating or cooling expense which is billed separate from rent or mortgage payments OR
  - Receive direct or indirect assistance under the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (LIHEAA) for applications before March 10, 2014 OR
  - Receive direct or indirect assistance under the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (LIHEAA) on or after March 10, 2014 and the total amount received for a 365 day period is \$20 or greater OR
  - Households that receive direct or indirect energy assistance that is excluded from income consideration (other than that provided under the LIHEAA) are entitled to a standard that includes heating or cooling only if the amount of the expense exceeds the amount of the assistance OR
  - Households that receive direct or indirect energy assistance that is counted as income and incur a heating or cooling expense are entitled to use a standard that includes heating or cooling costs.
- Limited Utility Allowance (LUA)
 

To be eligible for the LUA the household must incur 2 or more of the following non-heating/non-cooling utility expenses:

  - Electricity not used for heating or cooling
  - Cooking fuel
  - Telephone
  - Water
  - Sewage
  - Well and septic tank installation and maintenance
  - Garage or trash collection
- Telephone Allowance
  - If the only utility expense the household has is the telephone, including a mobile phone, the household is eligible for the telephone allowance.
- Allowable Utility Expenses
  - Heating and Cooling Expenses OR
  - Electricity OR
  - Cooking fuel OR
  - Water and sewage OR
  - Well and septic tank installation and maintenance OR
  - Garage or trash collection fees OR
  - All service fees required to provide for one telephone, including but not limited to, basic service fees, wire maintenance fees, subscriber line charges, relay center surcharges, 911 fees, and taxes OR
  - Fees charged by the utility provider for utility installation, excluding deposits.

#### **Pro-Rated Expenses**

- Pro-Rated Child Support Expenses
  - Divide the allowable child support expense, paid by an ineligible household member equally among all the household members including the ineligible household members AND
  - Count all but the ineligible members' pro-rata share as a child support deduction for the remaining household members.

- Pro-Rated Dependent Care Expenses
  - Divide the allowable dependent care paid by an ineligible household member equally among all the household members including the ineligible household members AND
  - Count all but the ineligible members' pro-rata share as a dependent care for the remaining household members.
- Pro-Rated Shelter Expenses using actual utility costs or no utility costs
  - Divide the allowable shelter expense paid by an ineligible household member equally among all the household members including the ineligible household members AND
  - Count all but the ineligible members' pro-rata share as a shelter deduction for the remaining embers.
- Pro-Rated Shelter Expenses using SUA, LUA or Telephone Allowance
  - Divide the allowable shelter expense, less the standard utility allowance amount, paid by an ineligible household member equally among all the household members including the ineligible household members AND
  - Count all but the ineligible members' pro-rata share as a shelter deduction for the remaining household members AND
  - Use full amount of SUA, LUA or Telephone allowance as already determined.
- Treatment of Shelter Expenses for Non-Household Members
  - Where the household shares shelter or Utility expenses with a non-household member, only the amount actually paid or billed to the Food Assistance household is deducted as an expense
    - Utility Exception
      - The appropriate utility standard must not be prorated.

**Net Countable Income:**

- The adjusted income after all deductions have been applied to household's gross income is the household's net income.

The household's monthly net countable income is equal or less than 100% of the Federal Poverty Limit for the household size unless the household is exempt from the Net Income Limit.

## **Benefit Calculation**

The following are the steps to be undertaken when determining the household's benefit amount for Food Assistance:

1. Determine the maximum Food Assistance allotment for the household size by using the Food Stamp Allotment Chart
2. Multiply the household's net monthly income(as previously determined by the net income test) by 30%
3. Subtract the amount determined from step 2 from the Maximum Net Monthly Allotment determined in step 1.

The result is the net monthly allotment payable to the assistance unit.

Allow a minimum allotment of \$16 for a one or two person categorically eligible household if the net monthly allotment is less than \$16. For a one or two person household, if the net monthly allotment is less than \$16 but greater than zero, allow a \$16 minimum allotment.

## Initial Month Proration

The following are the steps to be undertaken when determining the household's benefit amount for Food Assistance for the initial month of eligibility:

1. A household's benefit for the initial month of certification will be based on the day of the month the household applies for benefits
2. Using the exact number of days in a month, household's will receive benefits prorated from the day of application to the end of the month.
3. After arriving at the prorated benefit amount round down to the nearest whole dollar.
4. No benefits are issued for initial month if the prorated allotment is less than \$10.00

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## Sanction Assessment

### Introduction

The sanctions assessment process runs on reassessment and determines if any eligible members of the unit have failed any of the following program rules.

- Child Support Enforcement
- Voluntary Quit
- Work Registration
- Intentional Program Violation
- Using Food Assistance in the Sale of Controlled Substance
- Drug Related Felony
- Fleeing Felon
- Parole Violation
- Trafficking Food Assistance

Sanctions may be imposed as a result of failure of any these program rules. The sanction assessment determines if individuals may be subject to a sanction and the penalty that should be imposed.

### Sanction Assessment

The sanction assessment process is separate to Food Assistance eligibility determination. The sanction assessment determines if an individual may be subject to a sanction, and the penalty that should be imposed. The sanctions are not created automatically. Caseworkers manually create the sanctions.

The sanction assessment information is highlighted to the caseworker if the individual(s) fails the sanction assessment. If a sanction assessment failure occurs the caseworker must decide what action should be taken. The caseworker may choose to sanction or override the sanction recommendation for the individual(s). The sanction assessment information displays the reason the individual(s) may be subject to a sanction and the appropriate penalty that should be imposed.

Individuals who are sanctioned are generally ineligible for assistance. In some circumstances a sanction imposed on an individual member of a household may make the entire household unit ineligible. In other circumstances a sanction may result in a reduction in benefit for the entire household unit.

The penalty which may be imposed as a result of failure of program requirements depends on a number of factors

- If previous sanctions have been imposed in respect of this requirement failure.
- The level of the sanction that was imposed previously.

Individuals may be subject to a sanction if they fail to comply with the following requirements and do not have good cause.

### **Using Food Assistance in the Sale of Controlled Substance**

- Individual must not have been found guilty of using Food Assistance in the sale of controlled substance.

#### **Penalties for Using Food Assistance in the Sale of Controlled Substance**

**Sanctions:** The following penalties are imposed depending on the level of Using Food Assistance in the Sale of Controlled Substance Sanction imposed on an individual:

1. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for 2 years if the Using Food Assistance in the Sale of Controlled Substance Sanction if no previous sanction exists for this, for this member.
2. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits permanently if the Using Food Assistance in the Sale of Controlled Substance Sanction if a previous sanction exists for this, for this member.

### **Intentional Program Violation**

- Individual must not be an Intentional Program Violator.

**Penalties for Intentional Program Violation Sanctions:** The following penalties are imposed depending on the level of Intentional Program Violation Sanction imposed on an individual:

1. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for 12 months if no previous sanction exists for this, for this member.
2. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for 24 months if a previous Level 1 Intentional Program Violation Sanction exists for this member.
3. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits permanently if a previous Level 2 (or higher) Intentional Program Violation Sanction exists for this member.

### **Work Requirements**

- Household member must satisfy the work provisions unless exempt or have a valid non participation reason. See “Work Requirements” on page 12 for full details of the Work Requirement rules.

**Penalties for Work Non Compliance Sanctions:** The following penalties are imposed depending on the level of Work Non Compliance Sanction imposed on an individual:

1. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for 1 month if no previous sanction exists for this, for this member.
2. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for 3 months if a previous Level 1 Work Non Compliance Sanction exists for this member.
3. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for 6 months if a previous Level 2 (or higher) Work Non Compliance Sanction exists for this member.

## **Voluntary Quit**

- An Individual must not voluntarily quit a job or reduce work effort unless good cause exists. See “Voluntary Quit” on page 14 for full details of the Voluntary Quit rules.

**Penalties for Voluntary Quit Sanctions:** The following penalties are imposed depending on the level of Voluntary Quit Sanction imposed on an individual:

1. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for 1 month if no previous sanction exists for this, for this member.
2. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for 3 months if a previous Level 1 Voluntary Quit Sanction exists for this member.
3. The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits for 6 months if a previous Level 2 (or higher) Voluntary Quit Sanction exists for this member.

## **Child Support Enforcement**

1. Individual must assign all rights to support, including child support and spousal support AND
2. Individual must cooperate with (CSED) to obtain support unless good cause exists

### **Good Cause Child Support Enforcement Non Compliance:**

1. Cooperation may result in physical or emotional harm to the child or caretaker relative OR
2. Legal proceedings for adoption of the child are pending before a court OR
3. The caretaker relative is currently being assisted by a public or licensed private social agency to resolve the issue for whether to keep the child or relinquish him for adoption OR
4. The child was conceived as a result of incest or rape

**Penalty for Child Support Enforcement Sanction:** The following penalty is imposed if an individual has a current Child Support Enforcement Sanction:

- The individual is ineligible for Food Stamp benefits if they have a Child Support Enforcement Sanction.

## **Drug Related Felony**

- An individual must not have been convicted of a felony committed after 23rd August 1996 involving illegal drugs.

**Penalty for Drug Related Felony Sanction:** The following penalty is imposed if an individual has a current Drug Related Felony Sanction:

- The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits if they have a Drug Related Felony Sanction.

## **Fleeing Felony**

- An individual must not be a fleeing felon.

**Penalty for Fleeing Felon Sanction:** The following penalty is imposed if an individual has a current Fleeing Felon Sanction:

- The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits if they have a Fleeing Felon Sanction.

## **Parole Violation**

- An individual must not be on parole and violating parole conditions.

**Penalty for Parole Violation Sanction:** The following penalty is imposed if an individual has a current Parole Violation Sanction:

- The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits if they have a Parole Violation Sanction.

### **Fraudulent Information**

- An individual must not have been convicted of having made a fraudulent representation or statement.

**Penalty for Fraudulent Information Sanction:** The following penalty is imposed if an individual has a current Fraudulent Information Sanction:

- The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits if they have a Fraudulent Information Sanction.

### **Sale of Firearms**

- An individual must not have been found guilty of the sale of firearms.

**Penalty for Trafficking Food Assistance Sanction:** The following penalty is imposed if an individual has a current Sale of Firearms Sanction:

- The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits if they have a Sale of Firearms Sanction.

### **Trafficking Food Assistance**

- An individual must not have been found guilty of trafficking Food Assistance to the value of \$500 or more.

**Penalty for Trafficking Food Assistance Sanction:** The following penalty is imposed if an individual has a current Trafficking Food Assistance Sanction:

- The individual is ineligible for Food Assistance benefits if they have a Trafficking Food Assistance Sanction.



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