



311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number: #21-16

Effective Date: January 1, 2021

Issuance Date: January 7, 2021

**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT,
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS, AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF
ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION DIVISION STAFF**

**FROM: LA SHERRA AYALA, ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DEBBIE RUPPERT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MDH/OES**

**RE: 2021 DECREASE IN THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM (SNAP) AND LONG-TERM CARE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE,
WAIVER MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (MA) UTILITY ALLOWANCES**

**PROGRAM AFFECTED: SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)
AND LONG-TERM CARE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE, WAIVER
MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (MA)**

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF OPERATIONS

Summary

The Family Investment Administration (FIA) annually reviews the utility and telephone allowances to determine if they should increase, decrease, or stay the same. The standard and limited utility allowances will decrease for calendar year 2021; the amounts are specified below. The telephone allowance will remain the same.

The decrease in the utility allowances is attributed to the change in FIA’s formula to calculate the utility allowances. The U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics discontinued the Consumer Price Index series that we relied on in the past, which resulted in a change in our calculation formula.

Action Required

Effective January 1, 2021:

- The Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) will **decrease** from \$392 to **\$388** (-\$16) per month.
- The Limited Utility Allowance (LUA) will **decrease** from \$240 to **\$238** (-\$2) per month.
- The telephone allowance **will remain** \$40.

The new allowances will migrate into CARES on January 1, 2021, for SNAP and Waiver Medical Assistance. The new allowances will also migrate into the Eligibility and Enrollment (E&E) system on January 1, 2021, for Long-Term Care Medical Assistance.

Attachment

SNAP Manual Section 600, page 1

Inquiries

Please direct system and procedural inquiries for MA-LTC applications to help.mdthink@maryland.gov. Please direct MA-LTC policy questions to the Maryland Department of Health, Office of Eligibility Services at 410-767-1463 or 1-800-492-5231 (select option 2, and request extension 1463).

Please direct policy questions to the Office of Statewide Policy Compliance and Customer Service Performance by completing the [FIA Policy Information Request Form](#) found on Knowledge Base as shown in the screenshot below.

The screenshot shows the DHS Knowledge Base website for Family Investment Administration. The header includes the DHS logo, navigation menus for Administrations, Tools, Resources, Links, and Local Offices, and a search bar. The main content area is titled 'Family Investment Administration' and contains a detailed description of the program, its goals, and contact information for Labelle Hillgrove, MSOL, Director of Statewide Policy Compliance and Customer Service Performance. Below the description are two data boxes showing FFY 2017 Job Placement Data: Statewide Annual Goal Total (13,021) and Statewide Annual Achieved Total (12,240). The right sidebar includes contact information for Candice A. Roberts, FIA Executive Assistant. The left sidebar lists various resources, with 'Contact us with your FIA Program Eligibility Policy Question' highlighted in red. A 'Tools' button is visible at the bottom right.

For CARES/systems questions, please contact fia.bsdm@maryland.gov.

- cc: DHS Executive and FIA Management Staff
- MDH Executive and OES Management Staff
- Constituent Services
- DHS Help Desk
- Office of Administrative Hearings

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Manual	
STANDARDS FOR INCOME AND DEDUCTIONS	Section 600	Page 1

1.1 Standards for Eligibility and Maximum Allotments

- A. The standards for the following appear in Section 600, page 2.
1. Column A - Maximum Gross Monthly Income Standards (130% of poverty)
 2. Column B - Maximum Net Monthly Income Standards (100% of poverty)
 3. Column C - Maximum Gross Income Standard for Elderly and Disabled Separate Household (165% of poverty)
 4. Column D - Thrifty Food Plan/Maximum Allotment
- B. Standards 1, 2, and 3 are used to determine household eligibility and not for computing allotments.

1.2 Formula Calculation

- A. Multiply the household's net monthly income by 30%.
- B. Round the product up to the next whole dollar if any cents result.
- C. Subtract the product from the maximum allotment amount for the household size found in Column D, Section 600.

NOTE: In an initial month, if the allotment is less than \$10, no benefit is issued. Except in an initial month, all eligible one and two person households must be issued the minimum allotment of \$16 (\$19 from 1/1/2021 to 6/30/2021).

1.3 Deduction Standards

Standard Deductions	
Household size up to and including 3 people-----	\$167
Household of 4-----	\$181
Household size of 5-----	\$212
Household size of 6 or more-----	\$243
Excess Shelter Deduction-----up to	\$586
Homeless Household Shelter Allowance-----	\$156.74
Standard Utility Allowance (SUA)-----	\$388
Limited Utility Allowance (LUA)-----	\$238
Telephone Standard-----	\$ 40

* The excess shelter deduction does not apply to households with an aged or disabled member. These households receive an uncapped shelter deduction.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION		SNAP MANUAL	
STANDARDS FOR INCOME AND DEDUCTIONS		Section 600	Page 2

1.4 Determining the SNAP Allotment

A. Determine a household's monthly SNAP allotment by using the Basis of Issuance Tables:

1. Calculate the household's net monthly income.
2. Compare the household's net monthly income to the maximum net monthly income standard shown in Column B below. Households that are not categorically eligible for SNAP benefits will have net monthly incomes that are lower than or equal to the amounts shown in Column B.
3. Find the allotment by reading in the Basis of Issuance Tables, down to the appropriate income and across to the appropriate household size.

NOTE: A household that is categorically eligible is entitled to any allotment shown in the appropriate column on the tables. Persons in household sizes of one or two and categorically eligible are eligible for a monthly benefit of \$16 (\$19 from 1/1/2021 to 6/30/2021), even if the tables do not show a benefit amount at their net income levels. (Please see Section 409 of the SNAP for information on the minimum state supplement to SNAP benefits for households with a member aged 62 and older.)

Effective October 1, 2020

Household Size	Maximum Gross Monthly Income* of 130% of Poverty	Maximum Net Monthly Income* 100% of Poverty	Monthly Income Elderly/Disabled Separate Household* 165% of Poverty	Maximum Allotment	Maximum Allotment January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021
1	\$1,383	\$1,064	\$1,755	\$204	\$234
2	\$1,868	\$1,437	\$2,371	\$374	\$430
3	\$2,353	\$1,810	\$2,987	\$535	\$616
4	\$2,839	\$2,184	\$3,603	\$680	\$782
5	\$3,324	\$2,557	\$4,219	\$807	\$929
6	\$3,809	\$2,930	\$4,835	\$969	\$1,114
7	\$4,295	\$3,304	\$5,451	\$1,071	\$1,232
8	\$4,780	\$3,677	\$6,067	\$1,224	\$1,408

Each additional member	\$486	\$374	\$616	\$153	\$176
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* Maximum gross and net monthly income figures are not used for computing the SNAP allotment. They are included as a reference for determining the household's eligibility.

Household Type	Maximum Amount
Households with at least one member who is age 60 or older or is disabled.	\$3,500
All other households	\$2,250

* The asset limit for elderly or disabled households also serves as the threshold for substantial lottery or gambling winnings.