



311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number: # 19-16

Effective Date: April 1, 2019

Issuance Date: March 19, 2019

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

FROM: NETSANET KIBRET, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 

**RE: 2019 DECREASE IN FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM UTILITY
ALLOWANCES**

**PROGRAM AFFECTED: SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
(SNAP)**

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

Summary

The Family Investment Administration (FIA) annually reviews the utility and telephone allowances to determine if they should increase, decrease, or remain the same. The standard and limited utility allowances will decrease for calendar year 2019; 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 April 1, 2019:

- The Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) will **decrease** from \$420 to **\$404** (-\$16) per month.
- The Limited Utility Allowance (LUA) will **decrease** from \$257 to **\$247** (-\$10) per month.
- The telephone allowance **will remain** \$40.

The new allowances will migrate into CARES on April 1, 2019.

Attachment

SNAP/FSP Manual Section 600, page 1

Inquiries

For policy-related questions, please complete the [FIA Policy Information Request Form](#) found on Knowledge Base as shown in the screenshot below.

The screenshot displays the DHS Knowledge Base website. The navigation menu on the left includes 'Family Investment Administration', 'Action Transmittals', 'Ad Hoc Reporting Information', 'Contact us with your FIA Program Eligibility Policy Question', 'FIA Database Search', 'FIA Training on The Hub', 'Forms', 'Manuals', 'Medical Assistance Information', 'National Directory of State Contacts', 'Office of Home Energy Programs', 'Plans', and 'Policy And Training Alerts'. The 'Contact us with your FIA Program Eligibility Policy Question' link is circled in red. The main content area features a 'FIA Policy Information Request' form with a text area and an 'Email address' field. The 'Email address' field is also circled in red. The right sidebar contains contact information for Carrie A. Durham, JD and Candice A. Roberts, FIA Executive Assistant.

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

cc: DHS Executive Staff
FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services
DHS Help Desk

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION	SNAP/FSP MANUAL	
STANDARDS FOR INCOME AND DEDUCTIONS	Section 600	Page 1

600.1 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.

600.2 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 \$15.

600.3 DEDUCTION STANDARDS

Standard Deduction	
Household size up to and including 3 people-----	\$160
Household of 4-----	\$170
Household size of 5-----	\$199
Household size of 6 or more-----	\$228
Excess Shelter Deduction-----up to	\$535
Homeless Household Shelter Allowance-----	\$143
Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) -----	\$404
Limited Utility Allowance (LUA) -----	\$247
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.