



**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN SERVICES**
Department of Human Services
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

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

FROM: LA SHERRA AYALA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 
DEBBIE RUPPERT, MDH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 

RE: GUARANTEED BASIC INCOME (GBI) PILOT PROGRAM

**PROGRAM AFFECTED: TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE (TCA),
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM (SNAP), MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (MA),
TEMPORARY DISABILITY ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM (TDAP), OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY
PROGRAMS (OHEP)**

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

SUMMARY

Guaranteed Basic Income or GBI is a short-term unconditional monthly cash payment given directly to selected individuals, and is meant to supplement, rather than replace, the existing social safety net income. All GBI initiatives target low-income families, but there are no universal criteria for selecting participants.

This Action Transmittal (AT) discusses how to treat Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) when determining eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Cash Assistance Program, Temporary Disability Assistance Program, Medical Assistance; and Office of Home Energy Programs including but not limited to the Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP), and Gas Arrearage Retirement Assistance (GARA).

The State of Maryland is adopting a policy to exclude Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) for the purposes of determining eligibility, and benefit levels for the aforementioned programs. While there are varying authorities that allow Maryland to exclude GBI, the State will waive GBI pilots that promote economic self-sufficiency. In order for GBI payments to be excluded for DHS purposes, the payments themselves must be at least partially funded by private dollars regardless of the amount or the source of the private funds.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

SNAP

SNAP regulations at 7 CFR § 273.9(c)(19) allow States to exclude any types of income for SNAP purposes that the State agency does not consider when determining eligibility for the State's benefits for TANF cash assistance or eligibility for the State's Medicaid programs, as long as the State excludes the same amount of income. To meet this requirement, the State will exclude GBI income for SNAP and all other programs where permissible by law.

TCA

With authority under COMAR 07.03.03.13, the State has the flexibility in determining what income is excluded for TCA eligibility. Broadly, GBI programs align with TCA goals to promote economic self-sufficiency and support needy families and children. Therefore, the State will exclude GBI income for TCA.

TDAP

With authority under COMAR 07.03.05.10 GBI will be excluded from TDAP.

MA

We are not able to grant GBI exclusion for Medical Assistance programs at this time.

OHEP

COMAR 07.03.21.04 provides the Maryland Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) with the authority to determine countable income for eligibility determinations for its Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) benefit. Authority to determine countable income for the Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP) benefit comes from COMAR 07.03.22.04. Therefore, the State will exclude GBI income for OHEP programs.

GBI EXCLUSION REQUEST PROCESS

Any organization or organizations seeking to operate a GBI pilot must submit a letter to DHS requesting that the payments be exempted from consideration for the purpose of public assistance eligibility determination. The letter must include the following information:

- Name (s) of organizations funding the project
- Funding source (s)
- Target population
- Pilot objectives

- The amount to be issued to the participant per month
- Project period
- Maximum number of months an individual household will be on the program
- Description of how pilot participants will be selected
- A statement consenting to sharing the list of pilot participants with DHS

The letter may be submitted by email to the Family Investment Administration Executive Director.

Note: GBI will only be excluded from organizations approved by the Family Investment Administration Executive Director.

At this time, there are two approved GBI pilots in Maryland:

1. [The Baltimore Young Families Success Fund](#)
2. [Montgomery County's Guaranteed Income Pilot](#)

DHS is creating a webpage where all GBI pilots will be listed.

ACTIONS TAKEN:

- Local jurisdictions determining eligibility for safety-net programs must exclude GBI income for pilots that have been approved.
- Caseworkers may identify GBI income via:
 - GBI approval letter
 - Shared list of participants available to all local departments in coordination with the administering organization.
- A caseworker must confirm that the approval letter was issued by one of the approved GBI operators. This information will be found on the dedicated GBI webpage. If the letter is questionable, the caseworker may contact the GBI operator.
- A caseworker must ensure that the GBI income exclusion only applies to eligible program(s) (i.e., SNAP, TCA, TDAP, EUSP, MEAP, and GARA.).

GBI is NOT excludable income for MA at this time.

E&E System Instructions:

GBI income must be entered in E&E as **Unearned Income** under the **Income** menu option.

- From the **Left-Hand Navigation Menu**, click the **Income** menu option. Then, select the **Unearned Income** tab. Click the **+Add Unearned Income Amount** button to add case details.
- Select the **Unearned Income Type** as “Other” and the **Subtype** as “Other Non-Countable <insert program>” Click the **+Add Unearned Income Amount** to add the income amount. Then press **Save & Close** to save the details.

Note: System enhancements will be phased in during the implementation of the GBI Pilot

project (i.e., updating Benefit Application and Consumer Portal to include GBI unearned income).

UNEARNED INCOME

Brian James (30)

Unearned Income Type: Type ▾ Other

Payment Dates: Payment Start Date ▾

Subtype ▾

- Other Countable All Programs
- Other Countable Cash Assistance Only
- Other Countable Medical Assistance Only
- Other Countable SNAP Only
- Other Non Countable All Programs

Amount Start Date Amount End Date Amount Type Last Update Date

⊕ Add Unearned Income Amount

Discard Please add a new amount or end date an existing income record. If you do not want to make any updates, please discard to go back to the previous screen. Save & Close

REPORTS:

N/A

REFERENCES:

<https://www.bmorechildren.com/guaranteed-income>

<https://mocoboost.org/>

Updated TCA manual section 903.2 Unearned Income

Updated TDAP manual section 401 Income

INQUIRIES:

Please direct policy questions to FIA Policy by completing the FIA Policy Information Request Form found on Knowledge Base or via email at fia.policy@maryland.gov for Montgomery County only.

For systems questions, please email fia.bsdm@maryland.gov.

For MA policy questions: Direct Non-MAGI and MAGI policy questions to the Maryland Department of Health, Office of Eligibility Services at mdh.oesinquiries@maryland.gov.

cc: DHS Executive Staff
FIA Management Staff
MDH Executive Staff
Constituent Services
Office of Administrative Hearings