

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
Division of Health Care Access and Accountability
1 W. Wilson St.
Madison WI 53703

To: FoodShare Wisconsin Handbook Users

From: Angela Dombrowicki, Director
Bureau of Enrollment Management

Re: **FS Handbook Release 09-01**

Release Date: 05/01/09

Effective Date: 05/01/09

EFFECTIVE DATE

The following policy additions or changes are effective 05/01/09, unless otherwise noted. **Bold text denotes new text. Text with a strike through it in the old policy section denotes deleted text.**

POLICY CLARIFICATIONS

1 General Program Requirements > 1.1 Introduction > 1.1.4 Eligibility Overview

New Text:

Dependent Care

If a food unit member pays for child care or care for an adult food unit member, s/he may receive a deduction for each dependent. The care must be necessary for the food unit member to **look for work**, work or go to school.

1 General Program Requirements > 1.2 Verification > 1.2.4 Financial Verification > 1.2.4.7 Shelter and Utility Expense Verification

Old Text:

~~Homeless individuals can claim shelter and utility deductions for temporary living situations, if the expenses are verified.~~

New Text:

Homeless individuals can claim shelter **and receive the HSUA deductions for temporary living situations, if the shelter expense is verified, and the household reasonably anticipates receiving an energy assistance payment.**

2 Applications and Reviews > 2.1 Applications > 2.1.1 Initial Certifications (Applications) > 2.1.1.4 Setting the Filing Date > 2.1.1.4.1 Verbal Requests For FoodShare Benefits

Old Text:

~~Local agencies that discourage or attempt to divert households from applying for W2 cash assistance must clarify that the disadvantages and requirements for applying for W2 cash assistance do not apply to FoodShare benefits. In this situation, the local agency shall also encourage the household to continue with the FS application.~~

New Text:

Local agencies **must not discourage households from applying for FS if their application or benefits for another program have been denied or terminated.** In this situation, the local agency shall encourage the household to continue with the FS application **process.**

3 Nonfinancial Requirements > 3.16.1 Work Requirements

This section on Work Requirements was entirely rewritten based on the information in Operations Memo 09-12.

4 Financial Requirements > 4.3 Income > 4.3.2 Earned

"2010 Census Enumerator Income" was added to the list of counted earned income.

Income> 4.3.2.1 Counted
Earned Income

4 Financial Requirements >
4.6 Deductions and
Expenses > 4.6.7 Shelter and
Utility Deduction> 4.6.7.1
Allowable Shelter Expenses

Old Text:

The shelter and utility deduction is determined by the food unit's reported and verified monthly expense obligation for the current residence for shelter.

Deduct shelter and utility obligation amounts (not actual amount paid) which exceed 50% of the food unit's net income after all other deductions are made. If shelter and utility obligation amounts (not actual amount paid) are less than 50% of the food unit's income, do not allow a deduction.

The shelter and utility deduction cannot exceed the shelter maximum unless the food unit includes an elderly, blind, or disabled individual. Food units that include elderly, blind, or disabled individuals have no shelter cap.

Private payments and loans

Sometimes a relative or friend who is not a food unit member will pay the food unit's shelter and/or utility costs directly to the provider or landlord on behalf of the food unit. In such cases, the eligibility worker should determine if the payment is a loan.

If the payment is a loan, it is excluded from income, and the expense is allowed in the shelter computation. If the payment is not a loan and a relative or friend makes the vendor payment, it must be excluded from income and the shelter and/or utility expense is not allowed as a deduction

4 Financial Requirements >
4.6 Deductions and
Expenses > 4.6.7 Shelter and
Utility Deduction>

This section was rewritten to reflect the change in the Standard Utility Allowance announced in Ops Memo 09-13.

New Text:

4.6.7.3 Standard Utility Allowances

Effective April 1, 2009, all FS Assistance Groups will receive the full heating standard utility allowance (HSUA) in the FoodShare budget. Wisconsin FoodShare has received approval from the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to expand eligibility for the HSUA to all FS households that anticipate receiving an energy assistance payment..

All FS households can reasonably anticipate that they will receive an annual energy assistance payment of at least \$1. At the end of each state fiscal year (most likely in June) DHS will implement a reconciliation tape match with the Department of Administration to determine which FS households did not already receive a WHEAP payment. Once this match is completed DHS will add a \$1 benefit (in lieu of a WHEAP payment) to the FS household's EBT card.

The actual date of the energy assistance payment is not important; anticipation of the payment is. Households receiving FS do not need to wait until they receive an energy assistance payment to be eligible for the HSUA, because they can anticipate receipt of either \$1 of energy assistance or a WHEAP payment.

Verification of receipt of WHEAP or obligation of a heating expense is no longer required to receive the HSUA. Verification of other utilities is also no longer required since the HSUA is the highest utility standard.

See 8.1.3 Deductions for the current amount.

4.6.7.6

New Text:

Homeless food units may be eligible for a shelter deduction using shelter

expenses if they incur monthly expenses for shelter and a standard utility allowance (4.6.7.3) if they reasonably anticipate receiving an energy assistance payment.

6 Ongoing Case Management > 6.2 Transfers > 6.2.1 Interagency Case Transfers

This section was renamed “Interagency Case Transfers” from “Case Transfers.”

7 Benefits > 7.1.1 Allotments > 7.1.1.4 Minimum Allotment for 1 or 2 Person Food Units

Old Text:

Categorically eligible food units that include 1 or 2 persons are eligible for a minimum \$14-allotment, except for the initial pro-rated benefit

New Text:

Categorically eligible food units that include 1 or 2 persons are eligible for a minimum \$16 allotment, except for the initial pro-rated benefit

8 Appendix > 8.1 Tables > 8.1.1 Income Limits

Effective 04/01/09

The monthly maximum allotments in table 8.1.1 were updated.

8 Appendix > 8.1 Tables > 8.1.2 Allotment by Monthly Net Income and FS Group Size

Effective 04/01/09

The current allotment table was updated.