

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



August 28, 2002

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 02-62

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL FOOD STAMP COORDINATORS**REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL**

- State Law Change
 Federal Law or Regulation
 Change
 Court Order
 Clarification Requested by
 One or More Counties
 Initiated by CDSS

SUBJECT: FOOD STAMP INFORMATION ON COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENTS (COLAs): MAXIMUM FOOD STAMP ALLOTMENTS, STANDARD DEDUCTION, SHELTER DEDUCTION, HOMELESS HOUSEHOLD SHELTER ALLOWANCE, STANDARD UTILITY ALLOWANCE (SUA), INCOME ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS, AND FOOD STAMP TABLES OF COUPON ISSUANCE – EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2002

REFERENCE:

The Food Stamp Act of 1977 (as amended) requires annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) to the Program's allotments, eligibility standards, and certain deductions. This letter transmits final information on the COLAs for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2003.

Maximum Allotment

Food Stamp allotments are adjusted by the United States Department of Agriculture every October 1 to take into account changes in the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) in accordance with Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) Section 63-1101. As a result of an increase in the cost of the TFP and requirements of the Food Stamp Act, maximum allotments for FFY 2003 have changed as shown below.

Household Size:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	Each Additional Person
	\$139	\$256	\$366	\$465	\$553	\$663	\$733	\$838	+105

Standard Deduction, Shelter Deduction, and Homeless Household Shelter Allowance

The homeless household shelter allowance and the standard deduction for households of four and under in ATTACHMENT I will remain the same as FFY 2002. However, the standard deduction for households of five and six and the shelter deduction have been changed.

- Standard Deductions for FFY 2003:

Household Size	Standard Deductions
1 to 4 persons	\$134
5 persons	\$147
6 or more persons	\$168

- Shelter Deduction: \$367
- Homeless Household Shelter Allowance: \$143 (unchanged)

Standard Utility Allowance (SUA)

As a result of the percent change in the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers, and in accordance with MPP Section 63-502.363(d), there is no change to the SUA. **The SUA amount will continue to be \$206 for FFY 2003.**

Income Eligibility Standards

The income eligibility standards have changed and the new amounts must be applied to allotments for October, which are based on August information for retrospectively budgeted cases. Eligibility standards are in ATTACHMENT I, which contain charts of the "Net and Gross Monthly Income Eligibility Standards" and the "Gross Monthly Income Eligibility Standards for Households Where Elderly/Disabled Are a Separate Household."

Tables of Coupon Issuance

ATTACHMENT II is a set of tables of coupon issuance. These tables must be used for all cases when calculating allotments for October 2002. The tables are bracketed to identify food stamp allotment amounts that apply only to categorically eligible (CE) households. Please note that there are no CE bracketed amounts for a household of three because the food stamp allotment amounts end before the maximum net monthly income limit of \$1252 for a household of three is reached.

Stuffer Notice

ATTACHMENT III is a copy of the FS 11 (ENG/SP), the general mass change notice. County Welfare Departments (CWDs) shall use this notice to inform all households of new food stamp benefits and deductions in accordance with MPP Section 63-504.39. CWDs shall mail a copy of this notice to all households along with the October allotment. This notice informs clients about changes in food stamp allotments and the SUA deduction amount. Those CWDs that do not mail a copy of this notice to all households shall utilize the news media or post this information in certification offices, issuance locations or other sites frequented by certified households. If any other change is to be effective with the retroactive

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allotment, the Food Stamp Notice of Change (DFA 377.4) must be used to provide individual notice to the household.

Prior to duplication, CWDs must ensure that the FS 11 notice contains the county specific address that clients should use to send written state hearing requests.

Translations

For camera-ready copies of English and Spanish forms, please call the Forms Management Unit (FMU) at (916) 657-1907 or CALNET at 437-1907. CWDs may obtain these forms from the Department's web page at <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov>, or obtain copies by contacting the FMU.

Your Forms Coordinator now receives all translations as soon as they become available if your county is on the Language Translation Services (LTS) mailing list. All translated messages in Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Cambodian versions of forms will follow shortly. Call LTS at (916) 657-3429 if your county does not receive the Russian and Chinese translations.

Retroactive Benefits

If the CWD is unable to complete the necessary programming to reflect the appropriate changes in the October allotments, lost benefits must be restored retroactive to October 1, 2002. Restoration of retroactive benefits must be completed as soon as it is administratively feasible, but no later than the December 2002 allotment issuance date.

NOTE: If retroactive benefits are paid, the CWD must specify on the FS 11 the method of retroactivity, for example, inclusion with the November allotment, special issuance, etc.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Rosemary Akhidenor, Analyst, Food Stamp Bureau, Policy Implementation Unit, at (916) 654-2116.

Sincerely,

Original document signed by

BRUCE WAGSTAFF
Deputy Director
Welfare to Work Division

Attachments