

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



June 2, 2006

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 06-14

**REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL**

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

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL FOOD STAMP COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: FOOD STAMP STANDARD UTILITY ALLOWANCE INCREASE  
EFFECTIVE AUGUST 1, 2006

The purpose of this letter is to transmit implementing instructions to County Welfare Departments (CWDs), regarding the new increased Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) effective August 1, 2006. The SUA will increase by 21.5 percent, from \$223 to \$271, and is to be treated as a county-initiated mid-quarter change for all cases for the month of August 2006 in accordance with Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) 63-509(h)(1)(F). If the CWD is unable to effect necessary programming changes to reflect the changes in the August allotments, lost benefits must be restored back to August 1, 2006. All retroactivity shall be completed as soon as is administratively feasible, but no later than with the issuance of the October 2006 allotment.

Federal rules require State agencies to review and adjust standard utility allowances annually, but allow flexibility to update the standards more than once per year. Due to rising energy costs, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has updated the SUA based on the most current percent change in the Fuel and Other Utilities Index of the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) occurring during the 12-month period ending with March 2006.

Please note that this letter effects an increase in the SUA using our annual 12-month cost period ending in March of each year. Therefore, this SUA increase will take the place of the annual cost-of-living change, ordinarily effective October 1 of this year, thus there will be no additional SUA adjustment on October 1, 2006.

**Stuffer Notice**

Enclosed is a copy of the TEMP 2193 (ENG/SP), a *temporary* mass change notice. County Welfare Departments (CWDs) are encouraged to mail a copy of this notice to all

Page Two

households in advance of August or along with the August allotment. Also included is the TEMP 2193A(ENG/SP), for retroactive notification to clients. These notices inform clients about the SUA deduction amount.

Prior to county duplication of the TEMP 2193 and TEMP 2193A, CWDs must ensure that these notices contain the county specific address for State hearing requests.

Those CWDs that do not mail a copy of these notices to all households shall utilize the news media or post this information in certification offices, issuance locations or other sites frequented by certified households in accordance with MPP 63-504.39. If any other change is to be effective with the retroactive allotment, the Food Stamp Notice of Change (DFA 377.4 QR or QR 377.4) shall be used to provide individual notice to the household.

**NOTE:** If retroactive benefits are paid, the CWD must specify on the TEMP 2193A (ENG/SP) the method of retroactivity, for example, inclusion with the September allotment, special issuance, etc.

#### Translations

For a camera ready copy of English, contact the Forms Management Unit at (916) 657-1907. If your office has internet access, you may obtain these forms from the CDSS web page at: [http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/On-lineFor\\_271.htm](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/On-lineFor_271.htm). When all translations are completed per Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) 21-115.2, including Spanish forms, they are posted on an ongoing basis on our web site. Copies of the translated forms and publications can be obtained at: [http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/FormsandPu\\_274.htm](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/FormsandPu_274.htm). For questions on translated materials, please contact Language Services at (916) 651-8876.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Jaime Aguirre at (916) 657-3418.

Sincerely,

**Original signed by**  
CHARR LEE METSKER  
Deputy Director  
Welfare to Work Division

Enclosures

# NOTICE TO ALL FOOD STAMP RECIPIENTS IMPORTANT — PLEASE READ

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved an increase to the Standard Utility Allowance (SUA), which may be used in figuring out your food stamp benefit. Effective August 1, 2006, the SUA amount will be raised from \$223.00 to \$271.00. Most families get more food stamps when a utility allowance increases unless there are other household changes that could lower benefits.

You will get a separate notice if your food stamps change for other reasons.

If you think we made a mistake in figuring your August food stamps due to the new SUA you may ask for a state hearing, ***within 90 days of when you got this letter*** by writing to:

or you may call toll free: 1-800-952-5253. If you are deaf and use TDD, call 1-800-952-8349. When you ask for a state hearing, you must tell us why you think we made a mistake. You can speak for yourself at the hearing or you can have a friend, attorney, or other person speak for you, but you must get these people to help you. You may ask for free legal aid at a legal aid office in your area.

# AVISO A TODAS LAS PERSONAS QUE RECIBEN ESTAMPILLAS PARA COMIDA IMPORTANTE — FAVOR DE LEER

El Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos (USDA) aprobó un aumento en la cantidad normal permitida para servicios públicos y municipales (esta cantidad se conoce como SUA por sus siglas en inglés). Es posible que la SUA se utilice en el cálculo de sus beneficios de estampillas para comida. A partir del 1º de agosto de 2006, la SUA aumentará de \$223.00 a \$271.00. La mayoría de las familias reciben más estampillas para comida cuando hay un aumento en la cantidad normal permitida para servicios públicos y municipales a menos que haya otros cambios en el grupo que pudieran reducir los beneficios.

Recibirá una notificación por separado si sus estampillas para comida cambian debido a otras razones.

Si cree que cometimos un error al calcular la cantidad de sus estampillas para comida correspondientes al mes de agosto debido a la nueva SUA, puede pedir una audiencia con el Estado ***antes de que pasen 90 días a partir de la fecha en que recibió esta carta***, escribiendo a:

o llamando gratuitamente al 1-800-952-5253. Si es sordo y usa un aparato de telecomunicaciones para las personas sordas (TDD), llame al 1-800-952-8349. Cuando pida una audiencia con el Estado, tiene que decirnos por qué cree que cometimos un error. Puede representarse a sí mismo en la audiencia o puede representarle un amigo, un abogado u otra persona, pero usted tiene que pedirle a esa persona que le ayude. Puede pedir asistencia legal gratuita en una oficina de asesoramiento legal (*legal aid*) en el área donde usted vive.

# NOTICE TO ALL FOOD STAMP RECIPIENTS IMPORTANT — PLEASE READ

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved an increase to the Standard Utility Allowance (SUA), which may be used in figuring out your food stamp benefit. Effective August 1, 2006, the SUA amount was raised from \$223.00 to \$271.00. Most families get more food stamps when a utility allowance increases unless there are other household changes that could lower benefits

You will get a separate notice if your food stamps change for other reasons.

If you think we made a mistake in figuring your August food stamps due to the new SUA you may ask for a state hearing, ***within 90 days of when you got this letter*** by writing to:

or you may call toll free: 1-800-952-5253. If you are deaf and use TDD, call 1-800-952-8349. When you ask for a state hearing, you must tell us why you think we made a mistake. You can speak for yourself at the hearing or you can have a friend, attorney, or other person speak for you, but you must get these people to help you. You may ask for free legal aid at a legal aid office in your area.

# AVISO A TODAS LAS PERSONAS QUE RECIBEN ESTAMPILLAS PARA COMIDA IMPORTANTE — FAVOR DE LEER

El Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos (USDA) aprobó un aumento en la cantidad normal permitida para servicios públicos y municipales (esta cantidad se conoce como SUA por sus siglas en inglés). Es posible que la SUA se utilice en el cálculo de sus beneficios de estampillas para comida. A partir del 1º de agosto de 2006, la SUA aumentó de \$223.00 a \$271.00. La mayoría de las familias reciben más estampillas para comida cuando hay un aumento en la cantidad normal permitida para servicios públicos y municipales a menos que haya otros cambios en el grupo que pudieran reducir los beneficios.

Recibirá una notificación por separado si sus estampillas para comida cambian debido a otras razones.

Si cree que cometimos un error al calcular la cantidad de sus estampillas para comida correspondientes al mes de agosto debido a la nueva SUA, puede pedir una audiencia con el Estado ***antes de que pasen 90 días a partir de la fecha en que recibió esta carta***, escribiendo a:

o llamando gratuitamente al 1-800-952-5253. Si es sordo y usa un aparato de telecomunicaciones para las personas sordas (TDD), llame al 1-800-952-8349. Cuando pida una audiencia con el Estado, tiene que decirnos por qué cree que cometimos un error. Puede representarse a sí mismo en la audiencia o puede representarle un amigo, un abogado u otra persona, pero usted tiene que pedirle a esa persona que le ayude. Puede pedir asistencia legal gratuita en una oficina de asesoramiento legal (*legal aid*) en el área donde usted vive.