



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
600 Washington Street . Boston MA 02111

Argeo Paul Cellucci
Governor

Jane Swift
Lieutenant Governor


William D. O'Leary
Secretary

Claire McIntire
Commissioner

FAX 01-17

Field Operations Memo 2001-18
March 30, 2001

TO: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

FROM:  Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

RE: Food Stamp Program - Implementation of the Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction

Overview

Assistance units in which all members are homeless as defined in 106 CMR 360.030 (C) that incur or reasonably expect to incur any shelter and/or utility expenses during a month, no matter how small, are eligible for a \$143 per month Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction.

The \$143 Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction includes both shelter and utility expenses and is allowed if the AU incurs a rent expense, a utility expense or both. An AU that receives the Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction is not entitled to the Excess Shelter Deduction (uncapped or capped at \$340).

A homeless AU can claim actual shelter and/or utility expenses if these expenses result in a shelter deduction higher than the \$143 Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction. Claimed higher shelter and utility expenses must be verified before being allowed if used in lieu of the Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction.

Either the Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction (\$143) *or* the Excess Shelter Deduction (uncapped or capped at \$340) can be allowed in determining food stamp eligibility or benefit level. AUs may not receive both simultaneously.

**Overview
(continued)**

There is no limit to the number of times a homeless AU can switch between the homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction and actual costs if adequate verification is obtained.

State Letter 1204 issues the policy revision which implements this change effective 04/01/2001. Homeless food stamp AUs that apply, are reevaluated, or report changes after 04/01/2001 should have their food stamp eligibility or benefit level determination made based on possible eligibility for the Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction.

Verification

Since almost all homeless AUs incur or can expect to incur some shelter or utility-related expense(s) while they are homeless, the AU Manager **may assume** that costs are being incurred and is **not required to document** in the AU record why the Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction is being allowed. For example, homeless AUs may be responsible for costs related to making phone calls, washer/dryer expenses, voluntary or minimal contribution costs towards utilities, etc. *

However, if based on information from the AU or other sources, the AU Manager determines that the homeless AU neither incurs nor expects to incur *any* shelter and/or utility costs, it must be documented in the case file why the deduction is not being allowed.

PACES Input Document

Once it is determined that a food stamp AU is entitled to the Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction, the following PACES Input Document entries are required.

- Enter 0.00 in PID Block 54 (Shelter).
- Enter 0.00 in PID Block 55 (Utilities).
- Enter "9" in PID Block 56 (Cd).

The above entries will affect the food stamp calculation by:

- applying the \$143 as the Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction in calculating eligibility and benefit level (\$143 will appear on notices as the Shelter Deduction); and
- only allowing either the excess shelter deduction or the Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at (617) 348-8478.



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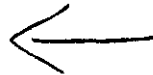
Claire McIntire
 Commissioner

State Letter 1204
 April 1, 2001

To: Department Staff
 From: *C.M.* Claire McIntire, Commissioner
 Re: Food Stamp Program - Implementation of the Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction

The Department is implementing a Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction of \$143 per month. Food stamp AUs in which all members are homeless individuals that incur or reasonably expect to incur any shelter and/or utility expenses during a month are entitled to this deduction.

This material is effective April 1, 2001.



MANUAL UPKEEP

INSERT

REMOVE

TRANS. BY S.L.

364.370	364.370	1105
364.400 (1 of 7)	364.400 (1 of 6)	1149
364.400 (2 of 7)	364.400 (2 of 6)	1201
364.400 (3 of 7)	364.400 (3 of 6)	1105
364.400 (4 of 7)	364.400 (4 of 6)	938
364.400 (5 of 7)	364.400 (5 of 6)	1118
364.400 (6 of 7)	364.400 (6 of 6)	1147
<i>→</i> 364.400 (7 of 7)		
364.500 (2 of 2)	364.500 (2 of 2)	1082
364.550	364.550	1201