

From the Hotline

If you have any questions on this column or other policy and procedural material, please have your Hotline designee call the **Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478**.

Q. My client is applying for SNAP benefits because he was recently laid off. His net Unemployment Compensation (U.C.) payment includes a tax deduction. Do I consider the gross or net U.C. payment amount when calculating my client's SNAP benefits?

A. In this situation, use the gross U.C. amount when calculating the SNAP benefits. Your client's tax deductions are not considered excluded income for SNAP purposes. Whenever a client reports a job loss, remember to consult the Division of Unemployment Assistance's (DUA) Unemployment Insurance Information Inquiry Screen to determine the accurate and countable U.C. payment amount.

Q. I have a client who is applying for SNAP benefits. He has been receiving earnings from the Title V, Older Americans Act. According to SNAP regulations at 106 CMR 363.230(K), these funds are considered excluded earned income and as a result, we will not be counting these funds when calculating his SNAP benefits.

However, this client is also receiving U.C. payments and these payments include a deduction for a portion of his Title V earnings. As a result, his \$200 gross U.C. payment includes a \$75 deduction for these earnings. For SNAP purposes, what is the amount of my client's countable unearned income?

A. Your client's countable unearned income amount is \$125.

(Remember to consult DUA's Unemployment Insurance Information Inquiry Screen for additional information when determining the accurate and countable U.C. payment amount.)

Q. My client who is applying for SNAP benefits was recently laid off and is collecting Unemployment Compensation. He is separated from his wife and is currently living alone. The DUA's online system indicates a deduction for child support obligations. Do I make this same deduction when determining my client's countable U.C. payment amount?

A. Whether or not you exclude child support payments from your client's countable unearned income amount depends on the circumstances of the obligation. Any legally obligated current child support or child support arrearages paid for a child not living in the household must be treated as an income exclusion in SNAP.

For more information on legally obligated child support payment income exclusions, refer to 106 CMR 363.230(O).

Q. My client's U.C. benefit had included a dependency allowance of \$25, which is considered countable SNAP income. This same client is now collecting *extended* U.C. benefits, but when I check the Unemployment Insurance Information Inquiry screen there is no dependency allowance displayed. Is this screen correct?

A. Yes. The extended U.C. benefit amount displayed includes the weekly benefit rate plus the most recent dependency allowance, all in one payment.