



*Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance*


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**Online Guide Transmittal 2018-50
June 29, 2018**

To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff
From:  Paul Sutliff, Assistant Commissioner for Programs and Field Operations
Re: SNAP: Updates to Medical Expense Procedures

Overview

Medical expenses can significantly impact SNAP benefit amounts. SNAP clients who are age 60 or older and those who have a federally certified disability are eligible for a medical expense deduction if they can verify expenses in excess of \$35 in a month.

DTA staff must be diligent in exploring medical expenses with eligible SNAP clients, as many do not volunteer that these expenses have been incurred because they are not aware of the expenses we can count.

To support staff and clients in this effort, the Department will accept Housing Authority documentation that lists a value for medical expenses as verification of an annual medical expense. If this verification is elected, additional verifications cannot be included as part of the SNAP calculation (including health insurance), with the exception of over the counter expenses which are not considered by Housing Authorities.

Overview
(continued)

Housing Authority documents offer clients an easy and expedited way to verify their medical expenses for SNAP purposes, as they have already verified the expenses for their housing determination.

It is important to note that the Department cannot limit or prescribe the source of verification that may be provided, but staff must take care to emphasize this option to support clients and reduce the administrative burden on staff.

Purpose

This Transmittal advises staff of the following updates to the Online Guide:

- Documents from Housing Authorities are now acceptable verifications of medical expenses for households when all members are eligible for a medical expense deduction. Instructions on how to enter this information has been added.
- A Medical Expense Example page was created.
- Costs associated with Emotional Support and Therapy Animals are allowable.
- An Excel spreadsheet was added to help calculate transportation costs for medical and dependent care expenses.

New Online Guide Page

Topic: SNAP
Book: Expenses and Deductions
Chapter: Health Insurance/ Medical Expenses
Subchapter: Medical Expenses
Page: Medical Expense Examples

Revised Online Guide Pages

Topic: SNAP
Book: Expenses and Deductions
Chapter: Health Insurance/ Medical Expenses
Subchapter: Medical Expenses
Page: Medical Expense Deduction

Topic: SNAP
Book: Expenses and Deductions
Chapter: Health Insurance/ Medical Expenses
Subchapter: Medical Expenses
Page: Federal Mileage Rate – Medical

Topic: SNAP
Book: Expenses and Deductions
Chapter: Dependent Care Expenses
Page: Federal Mileage Rate – Dependent Care

Questions

If you have any policy or procedural questions, after conferring with the appropriate TAO personnel, please have your Systems Information Specialists or TAO management email the DTA Mailbox.

Systems issues should be directed to the Systems Support Help Desk.