



Date: August 31, 2018 **MEPD and Texas Works Bulletin 18-7**

To: Eligibility Services – Regional Directors
Program Managers
Eligibility Services Supervisors
Regional Attorneys
Hearings Officers

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Subject: **1. SNAP Combined Application Project (SNAP-CAP) Shelter Threshold and Allotment Changes**
2. SNAP Employment and Training County Changes
3. Revised SNAP Income Limits, Deductions, and Allotments
4. Revised TANF Maximum Grant Amounts

Bulletins are sent to supervisors and other regional managers. Supervisors must share this information with all eligibility staff. Please ensure that copies are provided to staff that do not have access to e-mail. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures.

Active bulletins are posted on the following websites:

- Texas Works Handbook (TWH) at <http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins>;
- Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities Handbook (MEPDH) at <http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/medicaid-elderly-and-people-disabilities-handbook/mepd-policy-bulletins>.

1. SNAP Combined Application Project (SNAP-CAP) Shelter Threshold and Allotment Changes

Background

HHSC operates a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Combined Application Project (SNAP-CAP) to simplify the application process for individuals who are elderly or have a disability.

States administering SNAP-CAP are required to adjust shelter and allotment amounts regularly to reflect changes in SNAP and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefit levels.

Current Policy

SNAP-CAP

SNAP-CAP participants receive a standard allotment amount based on monthly shelter expenses.

- If the individual's monthly shelter expenses are less than \$400 per month, the monthly SNAP-CAP allotment is \$65.
- If the individual's monthly shelter expenses are more than or equal to \$400 per month, the monthly SNAP-CAP allotment is \$95.

New Policy

SNAP-CAP

Effective with the October 2018 benefit month, the shelter threshold will increase from \$400 to \$440 when determining the SNAP-CAP allotment amounts.

- If the individual's monthly shelter expenses are less than \$440 per month, the monthly SNAP-CAP allotment will increase to \$75.
- If the individual's monthly shelter expenses are more than or equal to \$440 per month, the monthly SNAP-CAP allotment will increase to \$130.

SNAP-CAP Benefit Month	Monthly Shelter Expenses		
	<i>Below \$400</i>	<i>\$400-\$439</i>	<i>At/Above \$440</i>
Prior to October 2018	\$65	\$95	\$95
October 2018 and ongoing	\$75	\$75	\$130

Automation

TIERS will apply the appropriate shelter threshold and allotment amounts for each benefit month, regardless of whether the benefit month is before or after October 2018. TIERS will run a mass update for all active SNAP-CAP EDGs during the weekend of September 1, 2018 and send Form H1843, FNS Authorized SNAP-CAP Benefit Increase Notice, informing SNAP-CAP households of the adjusted allotment and shelter threshold amounts.

Effective Date

The policy is effective beginning with benefit month October 2018.

Handbook

The Texas Works Handbook will be updated in the January 2019 revision.

Training

Training is not required.

2. SNAP Employment and Training County Changes

Background

Beginning October 2018, 17 counties currently classified as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) **non**-Employment and Training (E&T) counties will become SNAP E&T counties.

Current Policy

The following 17 counties are designated as SNAP **non**-E&T counties:

Bosque, Cass, Castro, Childress, Culberson, Hamilton, Hardin, Haskell, Moore, Ochiltree, Runnels, Sabine, San Jacinto, San Saba, Stephens, Trinity, and Tyler

Currently, Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Workforce Solutions offices in these counties are not required to outreach SNAP recipients for SNAP E&T. SNAP recipients residing in these counties:

- may receive workforce services;
- may voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T services provided by other Workforce Solutions offices near the affected counties;
- are not sanctioned; and
- are not subject to Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) time limits.

New Policy

The following 17 counties are now SNAP E&T counties:

Bosque, Cass, Castro, Childress, Culberson, Hamilton, Hardin, Haskell, Moore, Ochiltree, Runnels, Sabine, San Jacinto, San Saba, Stephens, Trinity, and Tyler

TWC Workforce Solutions offices in these counties will outreach and provide SNAP E&T services. SNAP recipients residing in these counties:

- will be sanctioned for failure to respond to outreach or failure to participate in SNAP E&T if they are a mandatory SNAP E&T participant; and
- are subject to ABAWD time limits if they do not meet the ABAWD work requirements or meet an exemption listed in [TWH A-1940](#), SNAP Work Requirements. (ABAWD time limits start October 1, 2018 for non-exempt individuals)

Automation

TIERS will update the new SNAP E&T counties during the weekend of September 1, 2018 for benefit month October 2018 and ongoing.

Correspondence

Affected households in the 17 counties will receive the following notice included on the Form TF0001, Notice of Case Action:

As a result of federal law, all adults age 18-49 who are not working 20 hours per week are limited to three months of SNAP food benefits in a three-year period unless they have a minor child in the home, are disabled, pregnant, or otherwise exempt from the SNAP Employment and Training Program. Any non-exempt adult age 18-49 in your home who is not meeting this work requirement may become ineligible. If you have any questions, please contact HHSC at 2-1-1.

Effective Date

The policy is effective beginning with benefit month October 2018.

Handbook

The Texas Works Handbook updates are scheduled for October 2018.

Training

Training is not required.

3. Revised SNAP Income Limits, Deductions, and Allotments

Background

As part of the annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for SNAP recipients, effective October 1, 2018, the following limits and amounts have changed:

- Maximum SNAP income limits;
- Standard deductions;
- Standard Utility Allowance (SUA);
- Basic Utility Allowance (BUA);
- Maximum excess shelter deduction;
- Telephone standard; and
- SNAP allotments.

Note: The homeless shelter deduction, standard medical deduction, and minimum monthly SNAP allotment for one and two person households did not change.

Current Policy

Staff must use the SNAP income limits found in TWH C-121, Maximum Income Limits; deductions found in TWH C-121.1, Deduction Amounts; and allotment amounts found in TWH C-1431, Whole Monthly Allotments by Household Size, effective October 1, 2017, to determine eligibility for SNAP eligibility determination groups (EDGs).

New Policy

Staff must use the following income limits, deductions, and allotment amounts effective October 1, 2018, to determine eligibility for SNAP EDGs.

Maximum SNAP Income Limits Effective October 1, 2018

Household Size	Gross (130%)	Net (100%)	165%**
1	\$1,316	\$1,012	\$1,670
2	\$1,784	\$1,372	\$2,264
3	\$2,252	\$1,732	\$2,858
4	\$2,720	\$2,092	\$3,452
5	\$3,188	\$2,452	\$4,046
6	\$3,656	\$2,812	\$4,640
7	\$4,124	\$3,172	\$5,234
8	\$4,592	\$3,532	\$5,828
9	\$5,060	\$3,892	\$6,422
10	\$5,528	\$4,252	\$7,016
Each Additional Person	+ \$468	+ \$360	+ \$594

**The figures in the 165% column are used to determine whether an elderly person with a disability living with others may claim separate household status even though the individual purchases or prepares food with the others. The figures in this column are also the gross income limits for categorically eligible households.

Standard or Maximum Deduction Amounts Effective October 1, 2018

- Standard Deduction:
 - If household size three is less - \$164
 - If household size is four - \$174
 - If household size is five - \$204
 - If household size is six or more - \$234
- Standard medical expense - \$137 (minus \$35)
- Maximum Excess Shelter - \$552
- Standard Utility Allowance - \$357
- Basic Utility Allowance - \$316
- Telephone Standard - \$38
- Homeless Shelter Standard - \$143

SNAP Allotment Amounts Effective October 1, 2018

The minimum monthly SNAP allotment for a one or two person household remains at \$15. SNAP allotment charts providing the whole monthly allotments by household size are included as an attachment to this bulletin.

Policy for EDGs Processed After September Mass Update

For the benefit month of:	Use:
September 2018 or earlier,	The previous income limits, standard deduction amount, SUA/BUA amounts, maximum excess shelter deduction, telephone standard, and allotment amounts for determining that month's benefits.
October 2018 or later,	<p>The updated income limits, standard deduction amounts, SUA/BUA amounts, maximum excess shelter deduction, telephone standard, and allotment amounts for determining that month's benefits.</p> <p>This includes households applying after September 15, 2018 who meet the combined allotment eligibility criteria.</p> <p>The updated 130% federal poverty level (FPL) amounts are used to notify a streamlined reporting household of the reporting requirement at application, recertification, or incomplete review when the action is disposed on or after October 1, 2018. *</p>

*TIERS will automatically use the correct amounts for each month.

Automation

TIERS will update all active SNAP EDGs during the weekend of September 1, 2018. The updated income limits, deductions, and allotments are budgeted in TIERS for benefit month October 2018 and ongoing. The appropriate income limits, deductions, and allotments are automatically applied for each benefit month, whether the benefit month is before or after the October COLA (including combined allotment situations). TIERS converts the amount of benefits for SNAP EDGs in ongoing status without an override designation and produces a combined Form TF0001, Notice of Case Action, for any SNAP/TANF/Medical Assistance (MA) EDGs with a benefit change.

Note: A TIERS exception report for EDGs not included in the mass update are distributed for staff action. EDGs not updated will receive an explanation of the October cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) on the next Form TF0001 produced for that EDG.

Correspondence

SNAP households with an increased or decreased allotment will receive the following notice included on the Form TF0001:

Benefit amounts for many people have changed. This is due to new federal and state laws or rules. Changes go into effect October 1, 2018.

Effective Date

The policy is effective beginning with benefit month October 2018.

Handbook

The Texas Works Handbook will be updated in the October 2018 revision.

Training

Training is not required.

4. Revised TANF Maximum Grant Amounts

Background

State law requires that the monthly Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) maximum grant amounts be adjusted to 17 percent of the current federal poverty level (FPL). Policy is revised to reflect the annual TANF maximum grant increase.

Current Policy

Staff must use the TANF Budgetary Allowances chart, effective October 1, 2017, found in TWH C-111, Income Limits, to determine the maximum grant amount for TANF eligibility determination groups (EDGs).

New Policy

Staff must use the TANF Budgetary Allowances chart, effective October 1, 2018, to determine the maximum grant amount for TANF EDGs.

TANF Maximum Grants (Effective October 1, 2018)			
Family Size	Non-caretaker Cases	Caretaker Cases Without Second Parent	Caretaker Cases with Second Parent
1	\$101	\$123	---
2	\$145	\$255	\$195
3	\$204	\$295	\$323
4	\$242	\$354	\$363
5	\$311	\$394	\$421
6	\$336	\$452	\$461
7	\$419	\$491	\$517
8	\$460	\$559	\$557
9	\$528	\$599	\$625
10	\$569	\$667	\$666
11	\$637	\$708	\$733
12	\$677	\$775	\$774
13	\$745	\$816	\$842

14	\$786	\$884	\$882
15	\$853	\$924	\$950
For each additional member	+ \$68	+ \$68	+ \$68

Policy for EDGs Processed After September Mass Update

For the benefit month of:	Use:
September 2018 or earlier,	The previous maximum grant amount.
October 2018 or later,	The updated maximum grant amount.

Automation

TIERS will update the TANF grant amounts during the weekend of September 1, 2018. The updated TANF grant amounts are budgeted in TIERS for benefit month October 2018 and ongoing. TIERS converts the amount of benefits for TANF EDGs in ongoing status without an override designation and produces a combined Form TF0001, Notice of Case Action, for any SNAP/TANF/Medical Assistance (MA) EDGs with a benefit change.

Note: A TIERS exception report for EDGs not included in the mass update are distributed for staff action. EDGs not updated will receive an explanation of the October cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) on the next Form TF0001 produced for that EDG.

Correspondence

TANF households with an increased allotment will receive the following notice included on the Form TF0001:

Benefit amounts for many people have changed. This is due to new federal and state laws or rules. Changes go into effect October 1, 2018.

Effective Date

The policy is effective beginning with benefit month October 2018. There are no changes in the budgetary or recognizable needs amounts for these eligibility tests.

Handbook

The Texas Works Handbook will be updated in the October 2018 revision.

Training

Training not required.