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

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Subject: 1. **Revised Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Income Limits, Deductions, and Benefit Allotment Chart**
2. **Revised Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Maximum Grant Amounts and TANF Chart**
3. **Revised Able Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) Waiver Counties Charts**

Bulletins are sent to supervisors and other regional managers, who must share this information with eligibility staff. Please ensure that copies are provided to staff that do not have access to e-mail. For questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures. Find active bulletins at the following respective handbook websites:

- Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities (MEPD): http://www.dads.state.tx.us/handbooks/mepd_policy/index.htm
- Texas Works: http://www.dads.state.tx.us/handbooks/texasworks_bulletins/index.htm

1. Revised SNAP Income Limits, Deductions, and Benefit Allotment Chart

Background

As part of the annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) for SNAP participants effective October 1, 2014, the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is revising the:

- Maximum gross and net income limits,
- Standard deduction,
- Standard Utility Allowance (SUA),
- Basic Utility Allowance (BUA),
- Maximum excess shelter deduction, and
- Allotment chart (see attachment).

The maximum income limits, some deduction amounts, and benefit allotment chart have changed. There are no changes to the homeless shelter standard, the medical expense standard, or the telephone standard.

Effective Date

Changes are effective October 1, 2014. For Eligibility Determination Groups (EDGs) disposed on or before September cutoff (September 17, 2014), the Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) will use the old income limit and deduction amounts to determine eligibility and benefit amounts. The processes for EDGs disposed after September cutoff are explained below.

Automation Action after Cutoff in September 2014

TIERS will apply the appropriate income limits and deductions for each benefit month, whether the benefit month is before or after the October COLA (including combined allotment situations). TIERS will run a mass update for all active SNAP EDGs during the weekend of Saturday, August 30th, through Sunday, August 31st, 2014.

HHSC will send the following notice, in English and Spanish, to SNAP households receiving an increased allotment:

Benefit amounts for many people have changed. This is due to new federal and state laws or rules. Changes go into effect October 1, 2014.

TIERS is programmed to update benefit amounts for SNAP EDGs in ongoing status with no override designation, and will produce a combined notice for any SNAP/TANF/Medical Assistance (MA) EDGs with a benefit change. **Note:** A TIERS exception report for EDGs not updated will be distributed for advisor action. EDGs not updated will receive an explanation of the October COLA on the next TIERS notice produced for that EDG.

Action on EDGs Disposed After September Cutoff Conversion/Mass Update.*

| For the benefit month of... | eligibility is determined in TIERS by using the... |
|-----------------------------|--|
| September 2014 or earlier | old income limits, the old standard deduction amount, the old maximum excess shelter deduction, and the old BUA/SUA amounts for determining that month's benefits. |
| October 2014 | <p>new income limits, the new standard deduction amounts, the new maximum excess shelter deduction, and the new BUA/SUA amounts for determining that month's benefits.</p> <p>This includes households applying after September 15th who meet the combined allotment eligibility criteria.</p> <p>TIERS will also use the updated 130% Federal Poverty Income Limit (FPIL) amounts 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, 2014.*</p> |

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

Maximum SNAP Income Limits — Effective October 1, 2014

| Household Size | Gross (130%) | Net | 165%** |
|----------------|--------------|-------|--------|
| 1 | 1,265 | 973 | 1,605 |
| 2 | 1,705 | 1,311 | 2,163 |
| 3 | 2,144 | 1,650 | 2,722 |
| 4 | 2,584 | 1,988 | 3,280 |

| | | | |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| 5 | 3,024 | 2,326 | 3,838 |
| 6 | 3,464 | 2,665 | 4,396 |
| 7 | 3,904 | 3,003 | 4,955 |
| 8 | 4,344 | 3,341 | 5,513 |
| 9 | 4,784 | 3,680 | 6,072 |
| 10 | 5,224 | 4,019 | 6,631 |
| Each Additional Person | + 440 | + 339 | + 559 |

**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, 2014)

- Standard Deduction:
 - If household size is three or less — \$155
 - If household size is four — \$165
 - If household size is five — \$193
 - If household size is six or more — \$221
- Standard medical expense — \$137 (minus \$35)
- Maximum Excess Shelter — \$490
- Standard Utility Allowance — \$343
- Basic Utility Allowance — \$326
- Telephone Standard — \$36
- Homeless Shelter Standard — \$143

Handbook

The handbook will be updated with the October 2014 revision.

Training

There is no additional training requirement.

2. Revised TANF Maximum Grant Amounts and TANF Chart

Background

State law requires the monthly TANF maximum grants to be adjusted to approximately 17% of the FPIL. Policy is revised to reflect the annual TANF maximum grant increase.

Effective Date

The monthly TANF grants increased effective October 1, 2014. There are no changes in the budgetary or recognizable needs amounts for these eligibility tests.

Policy for EDGs Processed before September Cutoff

Use the old TANF Budgetary Allowances chart found in Texas Works Handbook (TWH) [C-111](#) to determine the maximum grant amount for TANF EDGs.

Automation Action in September 2014

TIERS will run a mass update for active TANF EDGs during the weekend of Saturday, August 30th, through Sunday, August 31st, 2014. The new TANF grant amounts are budgeted in TIERS for October 2014 ongoing. TIERS will convert the amount of benefits for TANF EDGs in ongoing status without an override designation and will produce a combined notice for any SNAP/TANF/MA EDGs with a benefit change.

Note: A TIERS exception report for EDGs not included in the mass update will be distributed for advisor action. EDGs not updated will receive an explanation of the October COLA on the next TIERS notice produced for that EDG.

HHSC will send a notice in English and Spanish to TANF households receiving an increased allotment:

Benefit amounts for many people have changed. This is due to new federal and state laws or rules. Changes go into effect October 1, 2014.

TANF Maximum Grant Increase

Policy for EDGs Processed After September Cutoff

| For the benefit month of... | use... |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| September 2014 or earlier, | the old maximum grant amount. |
| October 2014 or later, | the new maximum grant amount. |

TANF Maximum Grants (October 1, 2014)

| Family Size | Non-caretaker Cases | Caretaker Cases Without Second Parent | Caretaker Cases With Second Parent |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | 96 | 117 | — |
| 2 | 138 | 243 | 186 |
| 3 | 194 | 281 | 308 |
| 4 | 231 | 338 | 346 |
| 5 | 297 | 375 | 401 |
| 6 | 320 | 431 | 440 |
| 7 | 399 | 468 | 493 |
| 8 | 438 | 532 | 531 |
| 9 | 503 | 571 | 596 |
| 10 | 542 | 635 | 634 |
| 11 | 606 | 674 | 699 |
| 12 | 645 | 739 | 738 |
| 13 | 709 | 777 | 802 |

| | | | |
|----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| 14 | 748 | 842 | 841 |
| 15 | 812 | 880 | 905 |
| For each additional member | 65 | 65 | 65 |

Handbook

The handbook will be updated with the October 2014 revision.

Training

There is no additional training requirement.

3. Revised ABAWD Waiver Counties Charts

Background

The list of ABAWD waiver counties is revised to reflect the annual changes effective October 1 of each year. No counties are designated as ABAWD waiver counties this fiscal year.

Current Policy

Individuals identified as an ABAWD in Red River, Jefferson, Newton, Sabine, San Augustine, Maverick, Zavala, Presidio, Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, and Willacy counties are exempt from the 18-50 work requirements.

New Policy

Effective October 1, 2014, ABAWD individuals in Red River, Jefferson, Newton, Sabine, San Augustine, Maverick, Zavala, Presidio, Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, and Willacy counties must work or participate in a specified work program (see TWH [A-1941.2](#), Meeting the Work Requirement Through a Work Program) an average of at least 20 hours per week in order to meet the 18-50 work requirement. An individual may use a combination of work and participation in a work program to meet this requirement. The initial three months of time-limited benefits do not have to be consecutive. A non-exempt individual's 36-month period begins with the first countable month the individual works less than an average of 20 hours per week and receives SNAP benefits. This is also the first of the three countable months of time-limited benefits. **Exception:** A month in which benefits are prorated is not a countable month.

State office will mail the following bilingual notice to all SNAP EDGs with potential ABAWDs in Red River, Jefferson, Newton, Sabine, San Augustine, Maverick, Zavala, Presidio, Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, and Willacy counties where the 18-50 time limits and work requirements policy will apply.

"As a result of federal law, all adults age 18-50 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 18-50 in your home who is not meeting this work requirement may become ineligible."

Automation Action in October 2014

TIERS ABAWD waiver counties are revised at September cutoff to reflect the updated list of counties effective October 1, 2014

Handbook

The handbook will be updated with the October 2014 revision.

Training

There is no additional training requirement.