

CHANGE NOTICE FOR MANUAL

MANUAL: Food Stamp Certification Manual

CHANGE NO.: 4-2003 **DATE:** February 26, 2003

TO: County Directors of Social Services

EFFECTIVE March 1, 2003, make the following changes to the Food Stamp Certification Manual.

I. BACKGROUND

The purpose of this change is to provide instructions to apply new policy regarding the use of a simplified utility allowance as outlined by Public Law 107-171 in the Food Stamp Reauthorization Act of 2002. The change eliminates the use of actual utility amounts in determining the deduction for shelter expenses.

II. SPECIFIC CHANGES

A. Simplified Utility Allowance

1. This change mandates the use of the Standard Utility Allowance (SUA), Basic Utility Allowance (BUA), or the new Telephone Utility Allowance (TUA). Food Stamp Units (FSUs) will no longer be able to use actual utility expenses as a utility deduction.
2. Do not prorate utility expenses for multiple households living in the same residence and sharing utility costs. Each household will be allowed the utility allowance for the applicable size of their individual household whether or not the other household participates in the program.
3. Use the SUA for a household living in public housing and the household is billed for excess utility costs for a heating or cooling expense.
4. Use the BUA for a household that incurs at least two non-heating or non-cooling utility expenses. A telephone can be considered one of the utility expenses.
5. Use the TUA for a household whose only utility expense is a telephone. The TUA is the average basic service fee for one telephone, calculated using data from the North Carolina Utilities Commission and telephone companies throughout the state. The TUA standard is \$21.00. Use utility type 7 in field 45 on the DSS-8590.

6. If the FSU is ineligible for any of the utility standards, do not allow a utility deduction.

B. Medical Deductions

The allowable mileage rate for medical expenses is currently 36 cents per mile.

III. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

These changes are effective with each application, change in situation, or recertification taken or processed on or after March 1, 2003, for benefits effective March 1, or later.

IV. INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL

REMOVE		INSERT	
Section	Pages	Section	Pages
280	1-26	280	1-24
285	1- 2	285	1- 2

If you have any questions, please contact your Program Integrity Representative.

Sincerely,

Wilbert R. Morris, Chief

Economic Independence Section

SB/bh

Attachments

[FSs280](#)

[FSs285](#)