

**DATE:** January 5, 2017

**TO:** Subscribers

**SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION:** Upstate Commissioners, TA, SNAP and HEAP Directors,  
WMS Coordinators

**FROM:** Jeffrey Gaskell, Assistant Deputy Commissioner  
Employment and Income Support Programs

**SUBJECT:** SSI COLA NYSNIP Standard Benefit Amount Adjustments

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Immediately

**CONTACT PERSON:** SNAP Bureau at: (518) 473-1469

### **Background**

The Social Security Administration (SSA) annually evaluates the *Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers* (CPI-W) data to determine if a cost of living adjustment (COLA) should be made to RSDI (regular Social Security and Social Security Disability benefits) and federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits to reflect an increase or decrease in the cost of living. Historically, when COLA adjustments have been required, the adjustments take place effective January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

Effective January 1, 2017, RSDI and SSI recipients will receive a 0.3% COLA increase. SSA and SSI benefits will be increased accordingly.

16 INF-18, dated 12/30/16, announced the COLA increase to SSI benefits.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this GIS is to inform the local social services districts about the effect of the annual Social Security COLA on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, and, in particular, on the benefits of SNAP recipients participating in the New York State Nutrition Improvement Project (NYSNIP) benefits.

### **Program Implications**

As part of the 2017 January COLA mass re-budgeting/authorization (MRB/A), in response to the 0.3% increase in RSDI and SSI benefits, SNAP benefit levels for affected SNAP households will be adjusted effective January 1, 2017. Information regarding the WMS MRB/A of Temporary Assistance and SNAP benefit levels for Upstate WMS was provided in ABEL Transmittal 16-4, dated November 14, 2016.

**\$247 New NYSNIP “High” Shelter Cost Threshold**

**New** NYSNIP households having cases opened, and existing NYSNIP households recertified, effective January 1, 2017, or later and having shelter costs **greater than \$247** will be considered to be “High Shelter” (Shelter Type 94 or 96) cases by the standard of the project. Conversely, effective January 1, 2017, **new** and recertifying NYSNIP households having shelter costs of **\$247 or less** will be considered to be “Low Shelter” (Shelter Type 95 or 97) cases by the standard of the project. This change to the shelter threshold was migrated on November 27, 2016 for budgets having a **FROM Date** of January 1, 2017, or later. Only benefits in Shelter Types 95, 96 and 97 are affected by the SSI COLA increase.

**NYSNIP BENEFITS MATRIX BY SHELTER TYPES**  
*01/01/17 - 09/30/17*

HOUSEHOLD		MONTHLY FOOD STAMP BENEFIT AMOUNT		
		New York City	Nassau/Suffolk	Upstate
Shelter Type 94 (High Shelter/SUA)	SSI Only	\$194	\$194	\$194
	Other Income	\$194	\$194	\$194
Shelter Type 95 (Low Shelter/SUA)	SSI Only	\$194	\$180	\$156
	Other Income	\$187	\$171	\$147
Shelter Type 96 (High Shelter/ SUA/\$21 HEAP)	SSI Only	\$194	\$194	\$194
	Other Income	\$194	\$194	\$194
Shelter Type 96 (No SUA)	SSI Only	\$26	\$26	\$26
	Other Income	\$17	\$17	\$17
Shelter Type 97 (Low Shelter/ SUA/\$21 HEAP)	SSI Only	\$194	\$180	\$156
	Other Income	\$187	\$171	\$147
Shelter Type 97 (No SUA)	SSI Only	\$16	\$16	\$16
	Other Income	\$16	\$16	\$16
Shelter Type 98 (No Shelter or SUA Data)	SSI Only	\$16	\$16	\$16
	Other Income	\$16	\$16	\$16