

DATE: December 31, 2018

TO: Subscribers

SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION: 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: January 1, 2019

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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 1st of each year.

Effective January 1, 2019, RSDI and SSI recipients will receive a 2.8% COLA increase. SSA and SSI benefits will be increased accordingly.

[18-INF-15](#), dated November 14, 2018, announced the COLA increase to SSI benefits.

Purpose

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

Program Implications

As part of the 2019 January COLA mass re-budgeting/authorization (MRB/A), in response to the 2.8% increase in RSDI and SSI benefits, SNAP benefit levels for affected SNAP households will be adjusted effective January 1, 2019.

Upstate Districts

Information regarding the WMS MRB/A of Temporary Assistance and SNAP benefit levels for Upstate WMS was provided in ABEL Transmittal 18-4, dated November 09, 2018. Affected households received a CNS notice informing them of any change in benefit.

New York City

Information regarding the WMS MRB/A of Temporary Assistance and SNAP benefit levels for New York City WMS was provided in WLM 2018-00333. Information **regarding the SSI COLA and details on its effect on SNAP and SNAP case processing is also provided to New York City Department of Social Services/Human Resources Administration (HRA) workers in HRA Policy Directives PD PD18-19-ELI and PB14-124-ELI.** Samples of notice letters sent to affected households are attached to these HRA directives. The new NYSNIP SNAP benefit amounts (see table of NYSNIP Benefit Levels effective 01/01/19 below) are effective for any **NYSNIP SNAP Shelter Type** budgets with a **FROM Date** of January 1, 2019 or later.

\$257 New NYSNIP “High” Shelter Cost Threshold

New NYSNIP households having cases opened, and existing NYSNIP households recertified, effective January 1, 2019, or later and having shelter costs **greater than \$257** will be “High Shelter” (Shelter Type 94 or 96) cases determined by the standard of the project. Conversely, effective January 1, 2019, **new** and recertifying NYSNIP households having shelter costs of **\$257 or less** will be “Low Shelter” (Shelter Type 95 or 97) cases determined by the standard of the project. This change to the shelter threshold was migrated on November 20, 2018 for budgets having a **FROM Date** of January 1, 2019 or later. Shelter Types 94, 95, 96 and 97 are affected by the SSI COLA increase.

NYSNIP BENEFITS MATRIX BY SHELTER TYPES
01/01/19 - 09/30/19

HOUSEHOLD		MONTHLY SNAP BENEFIT AMOUNT		
		New York City	Nassau/Suffolk	Upstate
Shelter Type 94 (High Shelter/SUA)	SSI Only	\$192	\$192	\$192
	Other Income	\$192	\$192	\$190
Shelter Type 95 (Low Shelter/SUA)	SSI Only	\$192	\$180	\$155
	Other Income	\$187	\$171	\$146
Shelter Type 96 (High Shelter/ SUA/\$21 HEAP)	SSI Only	\$192	\$192	\$192
	Other Income	\$192	\$192	\$190
Shelter Type 96 (No SUA)	SSI Only	\$15	\$15	\$15
	Other Income	\$15	\$15	\$15
Shelter Type 97 (Low Shelter/ SUA/\$21 HEAP)	SSI Only	\$192	\$180	\$155
	Other Income	\$187	\$171	\$146
Shelter Type 97 (No SUA)	SSI Only	\$15	\$15	\$15
	Other Income	\$15	\$15	\$15
Shelter Type 98 (No Shelter or SUA Data)	SSI Only	\$15	\$15	\$15
	Other Income	\$15	\$15	\$15