



*Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance*


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**Online Guide Transmittal 2023-1
January 5, 2023**

To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff
From:  **Sarah Stuart, Associate Commissioner for Change Management**
Re: SNAP: Manual SNAP Benefits Calculation

Overview

SNAP benefit amounts are based on a combination of variables, including (but not limited to) income, expenses, and household size. These variables are factored into a mathematical calculation, which determines the client's monthly SNAP allotment. This calculation is automatically performed by BEACON.

To provide staff with a more detailed understanding of this process, **the steps for calculating a household's SNAP benefit amount are now detailed on a new Online Guide page.**

Although BEACON automatically performs this calculation, SNAP staff are frequently asked by clients to explain the calculation in more detail. Additionally, by having a more a detailed understanding of how SNAP benefit amounts are determined, SNAP staff will have a greater ability to check whether BEACON is functioning properly if it derives a benefit amount that seems incorrect. Finally, there are times when it is necessary to perform a manual calculation to determine a related benefit amount for a past period, for which the variables no longer apply to the system's What-If or proration calculations.

Purpose

The purpose of this Online Guide Transmittal is to advise staff of how to manually calculate SNAP benefits, and the corresponding updates to the Online Guide.

**New Online
Guide Pages**

Topic: SNAP
Book: Case Maintenance
Page: How SNAP Benefits are Calculated

**Revised Online
Guide Pages**

Topic: SNAP
Book: Expenses and Deductions
Chapter: Household Expenses
Subchapter: Shelter Expenses
Page: Shelter Expenses Deduction

Topic: SNAP
Book: Expenses and Deductions
Chapter: Household Expenses
Subchapter: Shelter Expenses
Page: Standard Utility Allowance Expense Introduction

Questions

If you have any policy or procedural questions, after conferring with the appropriate TAO personnel, please have your Systems Information Specialists or TAO management email them to DTA.Procedural Issues.

Systems issues should be directed to the Systems Support Help Desk.
