

## From the Hotline

If you have any questions on this column or other policy and procedural material, please have your Hotline designee call the **Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478**.

- Q.** Can the cost of a cell phone be considered a utility allowance deduction in SNAP?
- A.** Yes. The cost of a cell phone can be considered the basic service for one telephone.
- Q.** Are the costs of prepaid calling cards an allowable utility allowance deduction in SNAP?
- A.** No. One-time deposits cannot be included. A deduction is only allowed in the month when an expense is billed or otherwise becomes due. There is no bill or due date for a prepaid calling card. See 106 CMR 364.400(G) for more information on the telephone standard utility allowance expense deduction.
- Q.** I have a SNAP application from a woman who works for our local school department and she has an annual contract. She has not been working during the summer months and receives her income during the 10-month school period. How do I consider this income?
- A.** When considering the income of school employees, remember that each employee may receive the earnings differently. Some are paid over 10 months and others are paid over a 12-month period. In both situations, school employees and others who work under a renewable contract are considered to be receiving their pay over the entire year, even though they may receive their salary only during the school year. Even if an applicant is given an hourly wage rate, as a contracted school employee, he or she must have the earned income averaged over the 12-month period. See 106 CMR 365.430 for more information.
- Q.** If a TAFDC client becomes a school employee on an annual contract, how would I consider the client's income?
- A.** If a TAFDC client is receiving earnings based on an annual contractual salary, then the amount of the salary is divided by 12. Verify that the client is receiving the earnings on an annual contracted salary by obtaining a copy of the signed contract or a signed letter stating the annual salary to be received. See 106 CMR 204.290 for more information.
- Q.** My SNAP client is receiving earned income from an ARRA-funded source. How is his income treated in SNAP?
- A.** For SNAP purposes, ARRA-funded earnings continue to be excluded as income. In addition, WIA-funded earnings (unless from on-the-job training) and the earnings of students under age 18 are also excluded. See 106 CMR 363.230 for more information.