



**COMBINED MANUAL
DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES ATTACHMENT
REVISED SECTIONS – ISSUED 01/2017**

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PROPOSED CHANGES

The following sections contain proposed COLA related changes and are EFFECTIVE 01/01/17.

0018.13 (Transportation Expense) updates the transportation rate to 53.5 cents.

0018.18 (Earned Income Disregards) in MSA and in GRH updates the Student Earned Income Disregard.

0020.21 (MSA Assistance Standards) in MSA updates the MSA Assistance Standards.

0029.06.03 (Supplemental Security Income Program) updates SSI benefits. It also deletes the Federal Living Arrangement (FLA) C (Child) because there is no lower FBR for SSI recipients with FLA C.

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0018.13 (TRANSPORTATION EXPENSE)

The flat rate deduction for transportation for all programs is 53.5 cents per mile based on the current Federal IRS rate. Use the flat rate deduction or itemize transportation expenses.

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0018.18 (EARNED INCOME DISREGARDS)**

Earned income disregards are an employment incentive. Subtract earned income disregards only from the monthly earned income of a client. See [0017.12.06 \(Earned Income\)](#), [0017.15.33 \(Self-Employment Income\)](#). Do not reduce earned income to less than \$0 or use earned income disregards to reduce unearned income.

People may lose the earned income disregard when computing overpayments for failure to report a change timely. See [0025.03 \(Determining Incorrect Payment Amounts\)](#).

MFIP, DWP, GA:

Disregard the 1st \$65 of earned income per wage earner plus half of the remaining earned income of the assistance unit.

SNAP:

Allow 20% of the unit's gross earned income as a work expense deduction. If you already applied the deduction to work study or fellowship income when calculating student financial aid, do not include the work study or fellowship income in earned income when applying this deduction. See [0017.15.36.06 \(Identifying Title IV or Federal Student Aid\)](#), [0017.15.36.09 \(Student Financial Aid Deductions\)](#).

If after applying the farm loss offset, the unit passes the GIT and income remains, allow a 20% deduction of the gross earned income from that amount prior to applying other deductions. See the [SNAP Farm Loss Offset Policy Guide \(PDF\)](#).

People may lose the work expense deduction when computing overpayments for failure to report a required change timely. See [0025.03 \(Determining Incorrect Payment Amounts\)](#).

MSA:

For SSI recipients, no county action is required.

For non-SSI recipients due to excess income, disregard the 1st \$65 of earned income plus half of the remaining earned income of the assistance unit.

- Allow the Student Earned Income Disregard from earned income when a client meets ALL 3 of the following conditions:
 - Is under age 22.
 - Is certified as blind or disabled by the Social Security Administration or the State Medical Review Team.
 - Is expecting to attend school at least 1 month in the next calendar quarter, or did attend school at least 1 month of the current calendar quarter.

Limit the Student Earned Income Disregard to a maximum of [\\$1,790](#) a month and [\\$7,200](#) in a calendar year. Apply it only to the client's income.

Also see [0018.06 \(Work Expense Deductions\)](#).

GRH:

For SSI recipients, no county action is required.

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For non-SSI recipients who are aged, blind, or disabled, disregard the 1st \$65 of earned income per wage earner plus half of the remaining earned income of the assistance unit.

- Allow the Student Earned Income Disregard from earned income when a client meets ALL 3 of the following conditions:
 - Is under age 22.
 - Is certified as blind or disabled by the Social Security Administration or the State Medical Review Team.
 - Is expecting to attend school at least 1 month in the next calendar quarter, or did attend school at least 1 month of the current calendar quarter.

Limit the disregard to a maximum of \$1,790 a month and \$7,200 in a calendar year. Apply it only to the client's income.

Also see [0018.06 \(Work Expense Deductions\)](#).

For all other adults, follow GA.

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0020.21 (MSA ASSISTANCE STANDARDS)

MFIP, DWP, SNAP, GA, GRH:

No provisions.

MSA:

MSA has assistance standards whose use depends upon the applicant or participant's circumstances. Which assistance standard you use is determined by:

- The SSI Federal Benefit Rate (FBR) upon which the client's SSI grant is based. See [0029.06.03 \(Supplemental Security Income Program\)](#).
- Whether a person is eligible for MA home and community based waivers (MA waivers), including Community Access for Disability Inclusion (CADI), Elderly Waiver (EW), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Community Alternative Care for Chronically Ill Individuals (CAC), and Home and Community Based Services for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (DD). See the [Minnesota Health Care Programs Eligibility Policy Manual](#) for information on these programs. A person who is eligible for an MA home and community based waiver is considered to be living alone. Apply the appropriate "living alone" assistance standard when determining eligibility. See below for the living alone assistance standard.

NOTE: Consider a person who lives with others eligible for MA home and community based waivers when the person is receiving Minnesota Senior Health Options (MSHHO) and EW services are being provided by the MSHO plan (rate cell B), or is receiving MSHO and was on CADI, TBI, or CAC but switched to EW when enrolled in MSHO (rate cell B), or is receiving DD waiver services through the county agency but also enrolled in an MSHO plan (rate cell A).

- Whether a person meets the county plan requirements for GRH placement (GRH plan) though not actually living in a GRH.
- Whether a person is eligible for the housing special need. See [0023.24 \(MSA Housing Assistance\)](#). A person who is eligible for MSA Housing Assistance is always considered to be living alone. Apply the appropriate "living alone" assistance standard when determining eligibility.
- A client's marital status.
- A client's living arrangement.

A county may set its own standards at a higher level than the State Standards, but there is no State aid for the extra costs.

The term "living with others" applies to anybody who is living with others, regardless of financial arrangements or relationship. MSA clients are considered to be in a "shared household" living situation if they live with another person(s) and they do not have separate, self-contained living quarters with a separate entrance. Self-contained living quarters consists of the client's own bedroom, living room and kitchen. A person in a "shared household" may or may not be receiving the reduced SSI standard (FBR) due to In-kind Support and Maintenance (ISM).

If a client lives with others, the living with others (shared) MSA standard will be applied unless he/she is eligible for MA home and community based waiver, meets the county plan requirements for GRH, or is eligible for the MSA Housing Assistance (shelter need) special need. If the client is receiving an MA home and community based waiver, meets the county plan requirements for GRH, or is eligible for MSA Housing Assistance, the living alone assistance standard must be applied.

DRAFT**MSA COMMUNITY STANDARDS**

The standard for MSA applicants and participants who live independently in the community is the total of the client's MSA assistance standard and any ongoing special needs allowances. See [0023.12 \(Special Diets\)](#), [0023.15 \(Guardian or Conservator Fees\)](#), [0023.18 \(Restaurant Meals\)](#), [0023.24 \(MSA Housing Assistance\)](#). If a married couple lives together and both partners are applying and have an MSA basis of eligibility, combine their incomes to determine eligibility and benefit level. Use the highest appropriate standard.

MSA MONTHLY ASSISTANCE STANDARDS

Person living alone (or some people with ineligible spouses or eligible for MA waivers, GRH plan, or a shelter special need)	<u>\$796.00</u>
Person living with others (or some people with ineligible spouses)	<u>\$582.66</u>
Married couple living alone	<u>\$1,194.00</u>
Married couple living with others	<u>\$799.34</u>
Married couple living alone (pre-1994)	<u>\$1,209.00</u>
Married couple living with others (pre-1994). (See explanations below.)	<u>\$1,062.34</u>

APPLY THE \$796 LIVING ALONE STANDARD WHEN:

- A single person receives SSI benefits based on the \$735 FBR and lives alone.
- A single person does NOT receive SSI solely due to excess income and lives alone.
- A single person lives with others and is eligible for MA waivers, a GRH plan, or a shelter special need.
- A single person at the SSI \$735 FBR due to a presidential disaster declaration and/or being homeless.
- A married person lives with his or her ineligible spouse and receives SSI benefits based on the \$735 FBR or does not receive SSI due to excess income.
- A married person lives with an ineligible spouse and receives SSI benefits based on the \$490 FBR and is eligible for MA Waivers, a GRH plan, or a shelter special need.

APPLY THE \$582.66 LIVING WITH OTHERS STANDARD WHEN:

- A person receives SSI benefits based on the \$490 SSI FBR, and is not eligible for MA waivers, a GRH plan or a shelter special need.
- A person does NOT receive SSI solely due to excess income, and lives with others (including minor children but excluding spouse), and is NOT eligible for MA waivers, a GRH plan, or a shelter special need.
- A person at the SSI \$735 FBR and lives with others (including minor children). Do not apply this standard to a person living only with a spouse ineligible for MSA (see "Apply the \$796 living alone standard when:" above.)
- A married person lives with his or her ineligible spouse and receives SSI benefits based on the \$490 FBR, and is NOT eligible for MA waivers, a GRH plan, or a shelter special need.

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APPLY THE \$1,194 (OR \$1,209 PRE-1994) STANDARD FOR A MARRIED COUPLE LIVING TOGETHER WHEN:

- Couple receives SSI based on the \$1,103 FBR or is ineligible for SSI solely due to excess income and lives alone.
- Couple receives SSI based on the \$1,103 FBR or is ineligible for SSI solely due to excess income, lives with others, and one or both is eligible for MA Waivers, a GRH plan, or a shelter special need.
- Couple at the SSI \$1,103 FBR due to presidential disaster declaration and/or being homeless.

APPLY THE \$799.34 (OR \$1,062.34 PRE-1994) STANDARD FOR A MARRIED COUPLE LIVING WITH OTHERS WHEN:

- Couple receives SSI benefits based on the \$735.34 FBR.
- Couple NOT receiving SSI solely due to excess income.

MSA FACILITIES STANDARD:

The assistance standard for people either at the SSI \$30 FBR (federal living arrangement "D"), see [0029.06.03 \(Supplemental Security Income Program\)](#) and living in facilities where personal needs are not otherwise provided or some blind children is the personal needs allowance - \$97. See [0020.24 \(Personal Needs Allowance\)](#) for the eligibility requirements.

A person hospitalized for illness may continue to receive their community standard established before being hospitalized if it is more than the personal needs allowance and if the person meets the conditions of temporary absence in [0014.09 \(Assistance Units - Temporary Absence\)](#).

MSA clients who are residents of a licensed residential facility are NOT eligible for any special needs allowances EXCEPT for representative payee services. See [0023.21 \(Representative Payee Services\)](#).

NOTE: Clients living in a Minnesota Consolidated Chemical Dependency Treatment Fund (CCDTF) facility are NOT eligible for an MSA standard of need.

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0029.06.03 (SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME PROGRAM)**

The Social Security Administration operates the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. This program provides monthly income to low income aged, blind, and disabled people. GA and RCA applicants who are aged, blind, or disabled must apply for SSI. MFIP participants who are disabled must apply for SSI. See [0012.12 \(Applying for Other Benefits\)](#), [0012.12.06 \(Special Services – Applying for Social Security\)](#), [0030.03 \(Refugee Cash Assistance\)](#). SSI recipients may be eligible for MSA.

All SSI recipients have a basis of eligibility for MA but are not automatically eligible for benefits. SSI recipients who are age 18 or over or under age 18 and blind have a basis of eligibility for MSA. SSI recipients are not eligible for DWP, MFIP or GA. See [0013 \(Basis of Eligibility\)](#).

SSI RESOURCE LIMITS

Individual \$2,000

Couple \$3,000

SSI FEDERAL BENEFIT RATES 2017

	Individual	Couple
Federal Living Arrangement (FLA) A(Own home)	<u>\$735.00</u>	<u>\$1,103.00</u>
Federal Living Arrangement (FLA) B (Home of another)	<u>\$490.00</u>	<u>\$735.34</u>
Federal Living Arrangement (FLA) C (Child)	<u>\$722.00</u>	
Federal Living Arrangement (FLA) D (Living in medical facility)	\$30.00	

In some situations, Social Security will adjust benefits by using standard amounts based on the full Federal Benefit Rate (FBR). For 2017, these amounts are:

	Individual	Couple
Value of 1/3 reduction (VTR):	<u>\$245.00</u>	<u>\$367.66</u>
Presumed maximum value (PMV) of in-kind support and maintenance (ISM)	<u>\$265.00</u>	<u>\$387.66</u>
Essential person increment	<u>\$368.00</u>	
Ineligible child allocation	<u>\$368.00</u>	

Refer applicants/participants who want help applying for or retaining SSI to the Disability Linkage Line, 1-866-333-2466. See [0012.12.06 \(Special Services – Applying for Social Security\)](#).

Provide potentially eligible clients and clients who are referred to SSA with the [SSA web site](#) and toll-free telephone number. The toll-free number is 1-800-772-1213.

For information on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) resources, see the [Employment Services Manual](#) Appendix G (Resources for Americans with Disabilities (ADA)).