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| Program: HEAP Fuel Assistance | MHPN # 2023-HEAP-012 |
| Action: Program Guidance Clarification | Effective Date: 8/18/2023 |
| Issued by: MaineHousing, Energy and Housing Services | Expired Date: |

This MaineHousing Notice is being issued to provide clarification regarding completing the HEAP Income Worksheet for Applicants who submit documentation of Categorical Income Eligibility (SNAP or TANF).

1. Use of HEAP Income Worksheet for Applicants submitting documentation of Categorical Income Eligibility.

Per the Chapter 24 HEAP Rule, Section 3.D., “Households in which at least one member receives TANF or SNAP assistance will have Categorical Income Eligibility for HEAP. Households providing documentation of receiving TANF or SNAP assistance on Application Create Date- Non Online or Application Intake Date may have their HEAP Benefit determined at a pre-established percentage of the federal poverty level, or using actual vetted income if provided by Maine DHHS. If documentation of receiving TANF or SNAP assistance is not provided by the Applicant, the Applicant must provide income documentation as outlined in Section G.”

HEAP Handbook Appendix G: Categorical Income TANF & SNAP provides detailed guidance regarding documentation requirements for Categorical Income Eligibility and how CAAs are to process Applications in which Applicants are using Categorical Income Eligibility. The last two paragraphs in Appendix G. state,

“If documentation of receiving TANF or SNAP assistance is not provided by the Applicant and the Application is certified eligible using the Household’s actual or vetted income, the Household cannot then submit the missing TANF or SNAP documentation for the Application to be updated in order to receive a higher benefit.

If Household does not provide proof of TANF or SNAP assistance or income documentation, the application will be denied and the Applicant will have 15 business days to submit the missing documentation.”

Clarification-

During Intake, CAAs should ask Applicants if any member of the Applicant Household receives TANF or SNAP assistance. If a Household member receives TANF assistance, the CAA should request documentation of receiving TANF assistance and income documentation. If a Household member receives TANF assistance, provides related documentation, and is determined eligible for a HEAP Benefit, the Household will receive the highest HEAP Benefit they are eligible to receive, as the Benefit will be calculated using the 0-25% federal poverty level (FPL) bracket. If the Household provides documentation of receiving TANF assistance and income, the Categorical Eligibility- TANF checkbox on the Income Worksheet needs to be checked and no further action is needed on the form, other than being signed and dated by the Certifier. CAAs do not need to record or calculate income for Applicants using Categorical Eligibility- TANF. If the Applicant does not provide documentation of receiving TANF assistance, but they provided income documentation, the CAA will certify the application using the income documentation.

If a Household member receives SNAP assistance, the CAA should request documentation of receiving SNAP assistance and income documentation. The CAA will complete the Income Worksheet using income documentation, if it is provided. This will allow the CAA to calculate Household income and compare against the benefit the household would receive using Categorical Income Eligibility- SNAP

(125% FPL). If it is determined that the Household will receive a higher benefit using the Categorical Income Eligibility- SNAP, the Categorical Eligibility- SNAP checkbox must be checked towards the top of the Income Worksheet and related Household Size and 125% FPL fields on the worksheet are completed. If the Applicant only provides documentation of receiving SNAP assistance, and no income documentation, the Application should be processed using Categorical Eligibility- SNAP. If the Applicant only provides income documentation and does not provide documentation of receiving SNAP assistance, the Application will be processed using income. As mentioned above, per HEAP Handbook Appendix G,

“If documentation of receiving TANF or SNAP assistance is not provided by the Applicant and the Application is certified eligible using the Household’s actual or vetted income, the Household cannot then submit the missing TANF or SNAP documentation for the Application to be updated in order to receive a higher benefit.

If Household does not provide proof of TANF or SNAP assistance or income documentation, the application will be denied and the Applicant will have 15 business days to submit the missing documentation.”

2. Notice Contact

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*Lauren Bustard, Maine State Housing Authority, 26 Edison Drive, Augusta, Maine 04330,
Telephone Number 1-800-452-4668 (voice in state only), (207) 626-4600 (voice) or Maine Relay 711.*

