

**WSR 25-21-055**  
**EXPEDITED RULES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF**  
**SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES**  
(Economic Services Administration)  
[Filed October 10, 2025, 10:54 a.m.]

Title of Rule and Other Identifying Information: The department of social and health services (DSHS) is proposing amendments to WAC 388-412-0015 General information about your food assistance allotments, 388-450-0185 What income deductions does the department allow when determining if I am eligible for food benefits and the amount of my monthly benefits?, 388-450-0190 How does the department figure my shelter cost income deduction for basic food?, 388-450-0195 Does the department use my utility costs when calculating my basic food or WASHCAP benefits?, and 388-478-0060 What are the income limits and maximum benefit amounts for basic food?

Purpose of the Proposal and Its Anticipated Effects, Including Any Changes in Existing Rules: This filing is necessary to implement supplemental nutrition assistance program cost-of-living adjustments received August 13, 2025, from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), effective October 1, 2025. Related emergency amendments are currently in effect under WSR 25-20-076.

Reasons Supporting Proposal: The USDA FNS has issued annual updates to standards for the upcoming federal fiscal year, effective October 1, 2025. These updates affect the standard deduction, shelter deduction, homeless shelter deduction, utility deduction, and minimum and maximum allotments for the basic food program.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: RCW 74.04.005, 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.200, 74.04.500, 74.04.510, 74.08.090, 74.08A.010, 74.08A.120, and 74.08A.250.

Rule is necessary because of federal law, [no further information supplied by agency].

Name of Proponent: DSHS, governmental.

Name of Agency Personnel Responsible for Drafting, Implementation, and Enforcement: Alexis Miller, P.O. Box 45470, Olympia, WA 98504-5470, 253-579-3144.

This notice meets the following criteria to use the expedited adoption process for these rules:

Relates only to internal governmental operations that are not subject to violation by a person.

Adopts or incorporates by reference without material change federal statutes or regulations, Washington state statutes, rules of other Washington state agencies, shoreline master programs other than those programs governing shorelines of statewide significance, or, as referenced by Washington state law, national consensus codes that generally establish industry standards, if the material adopted or incorporated regulates the same subject matter and conduct as the adopting or incorporating rule.

Explanation of the Reason the Agency Believes the Expedited Rule-Making Process is Appropriate: See above.

NOTICE

THIS RULE IS BEING PROPOSED UNDER AN EXPEDITED RULE-MAKING PROCESS THAT WILL ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR THE AGENCY TO HOLD PUBLIC HEAR-

INGS, PREPARE A SMALL BUSINESS ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT, OR PROVIDE RESPONSES TO THE CRITERIA FOR A SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATIVE RULE. IF YOU OBJECT TO THIS USE OF THE EXPEDITED RULE-MAKING PROCESS, YOU MUST EXPRESS YOUR OBJECTIONS IN WRITING AND THEY MUST BE SENT TO DSHS, Rules Coordinator, P.O. Box 45850, Olympia, WA 98504, email DSHSRPAURulesCoordinator@dshs.wa.gov, BEGINNING noon on October 22, 2025, AND RECEIVED BY 5:00 p.m. on December 23, 2025.

October 10, 2025  
Katherine I. Vasquez  
Rules Coordinator

## SHS-5107.2

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 23-07-095, filed 3/17/23, effective 4/17/23)

**WAC 388-412-0015 General information about your food assistance allotments.** (1) Your monthly allotment under the Washington basic food program, food assistance program for legal immigrants (FAP), Washington combined application project (WASHCAP), or the transitional food assistance (TFA) program is the total dollar value of benefits your assistance unit (AU) receives for a calendar month.

(2) **How we determine monthly allotments:**

(a) We calculate your monthly allotment for federally funded basic food as described under WAC 388-450-0162.

(b) We calculate your monthly allotment for state-funded food assistance as described under WAC 388-400-0050.

(3) **Maximum allotment:**

(a) The maximum allotment for the number of people in your AU eligible for federally funded basic food benefits is described under WAC 388-478-0060.

(b) The maximum allotment for the number of people in your AU eligible for state-funded FAP benefits is set by the legislature in the biennial operating budget as described in WAC 388-400-0050.

(4) **Prorated benefits in the first month.** If we determine you are eligible for food assistance, your first month's benefits are calculated from the date you applied through the end of the month of your application. This is called proration and is based on a 30-day month:

(a) If your prorated benefits for the first month are under 10 dollars, you will not receive an allotment for the first month.

(b) If there was a delay in processing your application, we determine when your benefits start under WAC 388-406-0055.

(5) **Combined allotment for first and second month's benefits.** If you apply for benefits on or after the 16th of the month and we determine you are eligible for food assistance for both the first and second month, we will issue both months' benefits in one allotment.

(6) **Minimum allotment.** Unless it is the first month of your certification period and your benefits are prorated as described in subsection (4) of this section, your monthly allotment will be at least:

(a) (~~(\$23)~~) \$24 if your AU has one or two members and at least one person is eligible for federally funded basic food; or

(b) ((~~\$23~~) \$24 dollars if your AU has one or two members and all members of your AU are eligible for state-funded FAP.

(7) **Use of food assistance benefits.** Your food assistance benefits may only be used to buy eligible food items as described under WAC 388-412-0046. If you use your benefits in any other way, it is an intentional program violation under WAC 388-446-0015 and could result in fines, imprisonment, disqualification from receiving food assistance benefits, or any combination of these penalties.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 25-01-045, filed 12/10/24, effective 1/10/25)

**WAC 388-450-0185 What income deductions does the department allow when determining if I am eligible for food benefits and the amount of my monthly benefits?**

(1) We determine if your assistance unit (AU) is eligible for basic food and calculate your monthly benefits according to requirements of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and federal regulations related to the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP).

(2) Under these federal laws, we subtract the following amounts from your AU's total monthly income to determine your countable monthly income under WAC 388-450-0162:

(a) A standard deduction based on the number of eligible people in your AU under WAC 388-408-0035:

| Eligible AU members | Standard deduction                   |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 3 or fewer          | (( <del>\$204</del> ) <u>\$209</u> ) |
| 4                   | (( <del>\$217</del> ) <u>\$223</u> ) |
| 5                   | (( <del>\$254</del> ) <u>\$261</u> ) |
| 6 or more           | (( <del>\$291</del> ) <u>\$299</u> ) |

(b) Twenty percent of your AU's gross earned income (earned income deduction);

(c) Your AU's expected monthly dependent care expense needed for an AU member to:

- (i) Keep work, look for work, or accept work;
- (ii) Attend training or education to prepare for employment; or
- (iii) Meet employment and training requirements under chapter 388-444 WAC;

(d) Medical expenses over \$35 a month owed or anticipated by an elderly or disabled person as defined in WAC 388-400-0040 in your AU as allowed under WAC 388-450-0200; and

(e) A portion of your shelter costs as described in WAC 388-450-0190.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 25-01-045, filed 12/10/24, effective 1/10/25)

**WAC 388-450-0190 How does the department figure my shelter cost income deduction for basic food?** The department calculates your shelter cost income deduction for basic food as follows:

(1) First, we add up the amounts your assistance unit (AU) must pay each month for shelter. We do not count any overdue amounts, late

fees, penalties, or mortgage payments you make ahead of time as allowable shelter costs. We count the following expenses as an allowable shelter cost in the month the expense is due:

- (a) Monthly rent, lease, and mortgage payments;
- (b) Property taxes;
- (c) Homeowner's association or condo fees;
- (d) Homeowner's insurance for the building only;
- (e) Utility allowance your AU is eligible for under WAC

388-450-0195;

(f) Out-of-pocket repairs for the home if it was substantially damaged or destroyed due to a natural disaster such as a fire or flood;

(g) Expense of a temporarily unoccupied home because of employment, training away from the home, illness, or abandonment caused by a natural disaster or casualty loss if your:

- (i) AU intends to return to the home;
- (ii) AU has current occupants who are not claiming the shelter costs for basic food purposes; and
- (iii) AU's home is not being leased or rented during your AU's absence.

(h) A homeless AU with shelter costs is eligible for a homeless shelter expense deduction of (~~(\$190)~~) \$198. If the homeless AU has shelter costs in excess of this amount, the AU has the option to claim either:

- (i) The homeless shelter deduction; or
- (ii) Actual shelter costs.

(2) Second, we subtract all deductions your AU is eligible for under WAC 388-450-0185 (2) (a) through (2) (d) from your AU's gross income. The result is your AU's countable income.

(3) Finally, we subtract one-half of your AU's countable income from your AU's total shelter costs. The result is your excess shelter costs. Your AU's shelter cost deduction is the excess shelter costs:

- (a) Up to a maximum of (~~(\$712)~~) \$744 if no one in your AU is elderly or disabled as defined in WAC 388-400-0040; or
- (b) The entire amount if an eligible person in your AU is elderly or disabled, even if the amount is over (~~(\$712)~~) \$744.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 25-01-045, filed 12/10/24, effective 1/10/25)

**WAC 388-450-0195 Does the department use my utility costs when calculating my basic food or WASHCAP benefits?**

(1) The department uses utility allowances instead of the actual utility costs your assistance unit (AU) pays when we determine your:

- (a) Monthly benefits under WAC 388-492-0070 if you receive Washington state combined application project (WASHCAP); or
- (b) Shelter cost income deduction under WAC 388-450-0190 for basic food.

(2) We use the following amounts if you have utility costs separate from your rent or mortgage payment:

- (a) If your AU has heating or cooling costs or receives more than \$20 in low income home energy assistance program (LIHEAP) benefits from the heat and eat program under WAC 388-400-0047 each year, you get a standard utility allowance (SUA) of (~~(\$502)~~) \$515.

(b) If your household does not receive a LIHEAP heat and eat payment and the reason is solely because of your immigration status, you get a SUA of ~~((502))~~ 515.

(c) If your AU does not qualify for the SUA and you have any two utility costs listed in subsection (3) of this section, you get a limited utility allowance (LUA) of ~~((396))~~ 406.

(d) If your AU has only telephone costs and no other utility costs, you get a telephone utility allowance (TUA) of ~~((56))~~ 58.

(3) "Utility costs" include the following:

- (a) Heating or cooling fuel;
- (b) Electricity or gas;
- (c) Water;
- (d) Sewer;
- (e) Well installation/maintenance;
- (f) Septic tank installation/maintenance;
- (g) Garbage/trash collection; and
- (h) Telephone service.

(4) If you do not have a utility cost separate from your rent or mortgage payment and do not receive LIHEAP from the heat and eat program under WAC 388-400-0047, you do not receive a utility allowance.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 25-01-045, filed 12/10/24, effective 1/10/25)

**WAC 388-478-0060 What are the income limits and maximum benefit amounts for basic food?** (1) If your assistance unit (AU) meets all other eligibility requirements for basic food, your AU must have income at or below the limits in columns B and C of this subsection to get basic food, unless you meet one of the exceptions listed below in subsection (2) of this section.

The maximum monthly food assistance benefit your AU could receive is listed in column D of this subsection.

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| Column A<br>Number of<br>Eligible AU<br>Members | Column B<br>Maximum Gross<br>Monthly Income<br>(130% of Poverty<br>Level) | Column C<br>Maximum Net<br>(Countable) Monthly<br>Income (100% of<br>Poverty Level) | Column D<br>Maximum<br>Allotment  | Column E<br>165% of<br>Poverty Level |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1   | <del>((1,632))</del> <u>1,696</u>   | <del>((1,255))</del> <u>1,305</u>   | <del>((292))</del> <u>298</u>     | <del>((2,071))</del> <u>2,152</u>    |
| 2   | <del>((2,215))</del> <u>2,292</u>   | <del>((1,704))</del> <u>1,763</u>   | <del>((536))</del> <u>546</u>     | <del>((2,811))</del> <u>2,909</u>    |
| 3   | <del>((2,798))</del> <u>2,888</u>   | <del>((2,152))</del> <u>2,221</u>   | <del>((768))</del> <u>785</u>     | <del>((3,551))</del> <u>3,665</u>    |
| 4   | <del>((3,380))</del> <u>3,483</u>   | <del>((2,600))</del> <u>2,680</u>   | <del>((975))</del> <u>994</u>     | <del>((4,290))</del> <u>4,421</u>    |
| 5   | <del>((3,963))</del> <u>4,079</u>   | <del>((3,049))</del> <u>3,138</u>   | <del>((1,158))</del> <u>1,183</u> | <del>((5,030))</del> <u>5,177</u>    |
| 6   | <del>((4,546))</del> <u>4,675</u>   | <del>((3,497))</del> <u>3,596</u>   | <del>((1,390))</del> <u>1,421</u> | <del>((5,770))</del> <u>5,934</u>    |
| 7   | <del>((5,129))</del> <u>5,271</u>   | <del>((3,945))</del> <u>4,055</u>   | <del>((1,536))</del> <u>1,571</u> | <del>((6,510))</del> <u>6,690</u>    |
| 8   | <del>((5,712))</del> <u>5,867</u>   | <del>((4,394))</del> <u>4,513</u>   | <del>((1,756))</del> <u>1,789</u> | <del>((7,249))</del> <u>7,446</u>    |
| (9  | 6,295   | 4,843   | 1,976                             | 7,989                                |
| 10  | 6,878   | 5,292   | 2,196                             | 8,729))                              |
| Each Additional<br>Member                       | + <del>((583))</del> <u>596</u>   | + <del>((449))</del> <u>459</u>   | + <del>((220))</del> <u>218</u>   | + <del>((740))</del> <u>757</u>      |

(2) Exceptions:

(a) If your AU is categorically eligible as under WAC 388-414-0001, your AU does not have to meet the gross or net income standards in columns B and C of subsection (1) of this section. We budget your AU's income to decide the amount of basic food your AU will receive.

(b) If your AU includes a member who is 60 years of age or older or has a disability, your AU's income must be at or below the limit in column C of subsection (1) of this section.

(c) If you are 60 years of age or older and cannot buy and cook your own meals because of a permanent disability, we will use column E of subsection (1) of this section to decide if you can be a separate AU.

(d) If your AU has zero income, your benefits are the maximum allotment in column D of subsection (1) of this section, based on the number of eligible members in your AU.