




Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Office of Medicaid
600 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111
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MassHealth
Eligibility Letter 187
July 1, 2009

TO: MassHealth Staff
FROM: Tom Dehner, Medicaid Director 
RE: Increase in Standard Deduction for Utility Expenses

This eligibility letter transmits an increase in the standard deductions for heating and nonheating utility expenses under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. These two amounts are used in the calculation of the minimum-monthly-maintenance-needs allowance (MMMNA) for the community spouse of an institutionalized member.

These regulations are being issued as emergency regulations, retroactive to October 1, 2008.

MANUAL UPKEEP

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**MASSHEALTH
FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY**

**Chapter 520
Page 520.026**

Rev. 10/01/08

- (1) The MassHealth agency determines the MMMNA by adding the following amounts:
 - (a) \$1,750 (the federal standard maintenance allowance); and
 - (b) an excess shelter allowance determined by calculating the difference between the standard shelter expense of \$525 and the shelter expenses for the community spouse's principal residence, including:
 - (i) the actual expenses for rent, mortgage (including interest and principal), property taxes and insurance, and any required maintenance charge for a condominium or cooperative; and
 - (ii) the applicable standard deduction under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for utility expenses. If heat is included in the rent or condominium fee, this amount is \$375. If heat is not included in the rent or condominium fee, this amount is \$612.
- (2) The maximum-monthly-maintenance-needs allowance is \$2,610.00 per month, unless it has been increased as the result of a fair-hearing decision based on exceptional circumstances in accordance with 130 CMR 520.017(D).
- (3) If the institutionalized individual is subject to a court order for the support of the community spouse, the court-ordered amount of support must be used as the spousal-maintenance-needs deduction when it exceeds the spousal-maintenance-needs deduction calculated according to 130 CMR 520.026(B) or resulting from a fair hearing.

(C) Deductions for Family-Maintenance Needs.

- (1) The MassHealth agency allows a deduction from the income of a long-term-care resident to provide for the maintenance needs of the following family members if they live with the community spouse:
 - (a) a minor child — a child under age 21 of either member of the couple;
 - (b) a dependent child — a child over age 21 who is claimed as a dependent by either spouse for income-tax purposes under the Internal Revenue Code;