

CHANGE NOTICE FOR MANUAL

DATE: September 22, 2025
MANUAL: Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Certification Manual
TO: County Directors of Social Services
CHANGE NO: 01-2025
SUBJECT: 2025-2026 Fiscal Year (FY) Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) and Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) Policy Updates
EFFECTIVE: October 01, 2025

I. BACKGROUND

The purpose of this change notice is to announce updates to Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) benefits, including higher maximum allotment amounts, income limits, and various deduction allowances, effective October 1, 2025, as processed by NC FAST, while maximum allowable resources and lottery winnings remain unchanged.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has mandated changes to North Carolina's Simplified Nutritional Assistance Program (NCCAP/SNAP), effective October 1, 2025, to ensure cost neutrality. The changes involve new categories for shelter expenses and benefit allotments, with all adjustments managed by NC FAST.

II. SPECIFIC CHANGES

The following sections have been revised and updated to incorporate the increased:	
FNS 360 Determining Benefit Levels	
FNS 360.01, A	Standard Allowance for Utilities
FNS 360.01, B	Standard Deduction
FNS 360.01, F	Excess Shelter Deduction
FNS 360.01, G	Homeless Shelter Allowance
FNS 360.02, A	Maximum Monthly Income
FNS 360.02, B	Maximum Allotment
FNS 360.03	Income Standards for separate FNS units
FNS 360.04, A & E:28	DSS-1700 & Figure 360-1
FNS 600 Simplified Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)	
FNS 600.02 B:1	The section has been revised to incorporate three new categories for allotment amounts and shelter expenses.

III. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please be advised of the updated requirements for applications, changes, and recertifications, which will take effect on October 1, 2025. For your convenience, we have attached the required notices in both English and Spanish. A separate document details how to obtain the notice in one of seven other languages. The attached "Notice to Food and Nutrition Services Recipients" (DSS-8567) must be posted in all public areas of the agency through October 31, 2025.

If you have any questions, please submit them to the Continuous Quality Improvement Specialist (CQIS) dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerquitta Hicks-Smallwood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

Jerquitta Hicks-Smallwood
Assistant Director
Division of Child and Family Well-Being

JHS/vb