
CalFresh Handbook 63-5.3 :. CalFresh Reference Tables - Cost-of-Living Adjustment

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Summary:

This handbook is being updated to provide the fiscal year (FY) [2021](#) Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) to CalFresh income eligibility standards and deductions that are effective as of [October 1, 2020](#). The reference chart of the tables has also been updated [here](#).

I. General

The Food Stamp Act of 1977 provides annual COLA adjustments to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (**SNAP**), known in California as CalFresh. Changes may be made to allotment maximums, eligibility standards, and deductions.

COLA changes apply to SAR households. If October falls mid-period in a SAR household, COLA changes are effective October 1 and are treated as county-initiated mid-period changes.

II. Gross/Net Income Test

Households may be required to pass one or both of the income tests each month to qualify for benefits. These tests are the "Gross Income (130%) test" and the "Net Monthly Income test." The following are the types of households and how to apply the income and determine if the household meets the gross eligibility test:

Semi-Annual Reporting Households PAFS, NAFS & Mixed Households:

Compute income prospectively for the SAR period using the reasonably anticipated (or actual) income over the entire payment period.

III. Maximum Allotment

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Each Additional Member
Maximum Allotment	\$204	\$374	\$535	\$680	\$807	\$969	\$1,071	\$1,224	+ \$153

IV. Standard Deductions:

The standard deduction for a household of 1 to 3 persons has changed as the chart indicates below. The standard deduction for a household with 1 to 3 persons changed from \$160 to \$164 a month. The standard deduction for households is as follows:

Household Size	Standard Deduction
1 – 3	\$167
4	\$181
5	\$212
6 or more	\$243

V. Shelter Deduction:

The maximum shelter deduction for households without elderly or disabled members increased from \$569 to \$586 effective October 1, 2020.

VI. Homeless Household Shelter Allowance:

The homeless shelter deduction increased from \$152.06 to \$156.74.

VII. Standard Utility Allowance (SUA):

Effective October 1, 2020, the SUA amount increased from \$432 to \$438. A household that has heating and cooling costs separate from their rent or mortgage is eligible for the SUA.

VIII. Limited Utility Allowance (LUA):

Effective October 1, 2020, the LUA amount increased from \$135 to \$139. A household that does not qualify for SUA but incurs expenses of at least two separate utilities other than heating and cooling is eligible for a LUA.

IX. Telephone Utility Allowance (TUA):

Effective October 1, 2020, the TUA amount has remained the same at \$18. A household that is not eligible for SUA or LUA, but incurs a telephone expense or in its absence an equivalent form of communication, is eligible to receive a telephone deduction.

X. Income Eligibility Standards and Maximum Monthly Income Standards

The income eligibility standards have changed for FFY 2020-2021. The following charts contain the current "Gross Monthly Income Eligibility Standards" and "Net Monthly Income Eligibility Standards".

A) Gross Monthly Income Eligibility Standards for Modified Categorical Eligibility (MCE) / Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) (200% of Poverty Level)

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Each Additional Person
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200% FPL Gross Income	\$2,128	\$2,874	\$3,620	\$4,368	\$5,114	\$5,860	\$6,608	\$7,354	+ \$748
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Effective July 1, 2014, NACF households with gross income at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Limit (FPL), must be conferred Modified Categorical Eligibility (MCE) status if they are issued or have online access to the "Family Planning - PUB 275" brochure and meet all other conditions of eligibility for CalFresh. (See exceptions below.) Beginning in 11/2014, CalWIN will use the 200% FPL limit to confer MCE and waive resources for NACF households. Once MCE is conferred, the household's resources are waived.

Households NOT eligible for MCE and excluded from the 200% Gross Monthly Income Eligibility Standard include those when:

- Any household member who is disqualified for Intentional Program Violation (IPV).
- The head of household does not comply with work requirements.
- Any member of a household who has been convicted of a drug-related felony and is a disqualified drug felon.

These households are subject to the 130% FPL gross income limit and are also subject to the CalFresh resource limit. The household may be conferred MCE status once it is determined that the sanction period has expired and the household meets all other conditions of MCE eligibility.

Once a household is conferred MCE status, the household must still meet the 100% FPL net income limit. If the household exceeds the net income limit, they may still be eligible for a benefit amount. MCE households of 1 or 2 persons who exceed the net income limit will be eligible for a minimum benefit amount of \$16. MCE households of 3 or more who exceed the net income limit, will be eligible for benefits according to the bracketed issuance tables (Links: [1-10 persons](#), [11-20 persons](#)). Households of three or more whose net income entitles them to zero (\$0) benefits will be denied for CalFresh.

B) Gross Monthly Income Eligibility Standards for non-MCE households/ Income Reporting Threshold for Semi-Annual Reporting (SAR) (130% of Poverty Level)

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Each Additional Person
130% FPL Gross Income	\$1,383	\$1,868	\$2,353	\$2,839	\$3,324	\$3,809	\$4,295	\$4,780	+ \$486

130% Monthly Gross Test:

Households with no elderly/disabled members who are not eligible for MCE (IPV, Work sanction, or drug felony disqualified) must pass both the 130% gross test and the 100% net income test (see C). Once the income test has been applied, according to the type of household, all gross income shall be entered into CalWIN. CalWIN will automatically apply these tests and determine income eligibility using the following steps.

- If a household's gross income is over the maximum gross monthly income standard (130% test), the household is ineligible and shall be denied or discontinued.
- If the gross income is at or below the maximum gross standard, the budget is computed to determine the net monthly income. CalWIN will compute the net budget based on the income and deductions entered into the system.
- If the net income exceeds the maximum net standard, the household is ineligible and shall be denied or discontinued.
- If the net income is at or below the maximum set standard, the net monthly income is compared to the CalFresh Allotment.

C) Net Monthly Income Eligibility Standards (100% of Poverty Level)

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Each Additional Person
Net Income	\$1,064	\$1,437	\$1,810	\$2,184	\$2,557	\$2,930	\$3,304	\$3,677	+ \$374

Households **with** a member meeting the definition of elderly or disabled are not subject to a Gross Income Test. These households shall have their income eligibility determined using only the net income standard using the following steps:

- The net monthly income shall be computed by CalWIN based on the income and deductions entered into the system.
- If the net monthly income exceeds the maximum net monthly income standard, the household shall be denied or discontinued.
- If it is at or below the allowable maximum net monthly income standard, the household is eligible. The net monthly income is compared to the Food Stamp Allotment Tables to determine the benefit amount.

D) Gross Monthly Income Eligibility Standards for Household Where Elderly/Disabled Are A Separate Household (165% of Poverty Level)

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Each Additional Person
165% FPL Gross Income	\$1,755	\$2,371	\$2,987	\$3,603	\$4,219	\$4,835	\$5,451	\$6,067	+ \$616

165% Elderly/Disabled Test:

The 165% test is **only** used when an elderly/disabled member(s) is unable to purchase and prepare separately due to a severe permanent disability but wishes to establish a separate household status. CalWIN will apply the test automatically based on the entries made for the disabled/aged individual:

- At Application,
- At Recertification,
- When the household composition changes, and

- When the household reports a change in the income of other people in the home.

Example

An individual who is 60 years of age or older and his/her spouse who are living with others, may be a separate household if the individual is unable to purchase and prepare meals separately because he/she suffers from a disability considered permanent under the Social Security Act, or suffers from a non-disease-related, severe, permanent disability. However, the income of the others with whom the individual lives, may not exceed the maximum gross monthly income elderly/disabled standards 165% Test.

XI. Assistance In-Kind Values (AIK)

The following values (effective July 1, 2020) are derived from the CalWORKS MBSAC Region 1 table and are **only** to be used in CalFresh for determining indigence for sponsored non-citizen. AIK values are **not** to be counted in the CalFresh budget.

Household Size	Housing	Utilities	Food	Clothing
1	336	71	184	56
2	447	81	393	110
3	489	84	503	163
4	514	88	623	216
5	514	88	755	275
6	514	88	873	330
7	514	88	972	386
8	514	88	1,062	428
9	514	88	1,168	493
10	514	88	1,263	540

XII. Notices

The State required notice, [CF 11](#) (8/18), is available in English & Spanish, and will be mass mailed to all active CalFresh households.

XII. Table Of Benefit Issuance

For benefit table amounts for [October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021](#), use these links:

[1-10 persons](#) [11-20 persons](#)

A reference chart of the tables is available [here](#).

REFERENCES:

- [ACIN I-65-20](#)
- [ACL 19-47](#)
- [MPP Sections 63-102 & 63-503](#)