



HUMAN SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT

Susana Martinez, Governor  
Brent Earnest, Secretary  
Mary Brogdon, Division Director

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## Interim Policy & Procedure Memorandum

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ISD IPP 18 – 04

TO: ISD Employees

FROM:  Mary Brogdon, Division Director

RE: Homeless Individuals and Chronic Homeless Individuals – Defined;  
Homeless Shelter Standard and Deductions; and  
Unfit for Employment Exemption

DATE: March 23, 2018

SNAP's definition of homeless is broader than individuals living on the street or in homeless shelters. The SNAP definition is intended to capture those individual who do not have a permanent residence, including those who are temporarily residing in someone else's home as defined below:

**Homeless Individuals:** Homeless individual means an individual who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence or an individual whose primary nighttime residence is one of the below:

- a) A supervised shelter designed to provide temporary accommodations (such as a welfare hotel or congregate shelter).
- b) A halfway house or similar institution that provides temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized.
- c) A temporary accommodation for not more than 90 days in the residence of another individual.
- d) A place not designed for, or ordinarily used, as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (a hallway, a bus station, a car, lobby or similar places).

**Chronic Homeless Individuals:** If the individual is currently homeless (based on the definition of homeless given above) and one of the following situations apply to the individual they would meet the definition of Chronic Homelessness:

- a) Have been homeless for more than six months; or
- b) Have been homeless more than one time in the last year; or

- c) The homeless individual states they are unable to meet the basic necessities of everyday life. Basic necessities of everyday life include: a roof over their head, heat, lights, running water, food and clothing. Please note that there is NO time limit attached to this situation.

The Living Arrangement Screen now includes a new question which asks “*are you chronically homeless?*”

- a) Some households may not identify themselves as homeless, either because of the stigma or because they do not consider themselves homeless since they are living in someone else’s home.
- b) In order to better help homeless households, ISD must first correctly identify individuals and families without permanent housing.
- c) It is also important that living conditions be reviewed at recertification as the living conditions of applicant may have changed.

Best practice is asking open-ended questions, i.e., what is your current living situation? (renting, own/buying a home, living with friends/relatives, migrant/seasonal worker, no permanent home, group shelter etc. Giving people more options to describe their living situation may enable them to receive the benefits they need.

**Homeless shelter standard deduction:** The homeless shelter standard deduction can assist individuals with income who have shelter costs by enabling them to deduct the homeless shelter standard deduction from their income without verifying their actual shelter costs.

- a) A household, in which all household members are defined as homeless, shall be allowed the homeless shelter standard if the household incurs any shelter expenses at any time during the month.
- b) A household receiving the standard homeless deduction **cannot** receive the excess shelter deduction.
- c) A household receiving the standard homeless deduction **cannot** receive a utility allowance.
- d) The homeless shelter standard will be subtracted from the household's countable net income.

**Examples of typical expenses for the homeless shelter deduction are:**

- payments to a homeless shelter;
- payments to a hotel;
- payments to family or friends in exchange for temporary housing;
- for individuals living in their vehicles, payments on the vehicle and the portion of insurance payments that covers vehicle damage; and
- laundry costs.

**Homeless actual shelter expenses:** A homeless household may claim actual shelter expenses if the expenses exceed the homeless shelter standard and the expenses are verified.

- a) The household's statement is acceptable for verification of shelter expense if the information is not questionable as per 8.100.130.26 (A) & (B) NMAC.
- b) A homeless household without permanent housing is able to claim shelter expense under the excess shelter deduction if their actual shelter expenses exceed the homeless standard deduction.
- c) The caseworker shall assist the homeless household in determining whether claiming the homeless shelter standard or actual expenses would be most beneficial to the household.
- d) If an individual is not able to verify expenses in excess of the standard homeless shelter deduction, the household can still claim the homeless shelter deduction .

**Mentally or physically unfit to work:** Individuals who are identified as chronically homeless may be eligible for an exemption from SNAP general work requirements based on being physically or mentally unfit for employment as per 8.139.410.12(B) NMAC.

In Data Collection under the Living Arrangement Screen:

- a) If the living arrangement type is "*homeless*" or "*homeless shelter*;" and
- b) the chronically homeless question answer is yes; then
- c) the SNAP participant will be exempt.

The exemption reason for the General Work Requirement will be "*Mentally or physically unfit to work.*"

For questions regarding this IPP, please contact Rita A. Paz via e-mail at [rita.paz@state.nm.us](mailto:rita.paz@state.nm.us) or by telephone at 505-827-7286.

Living Arrangement/Domicile - Details

Case Name: Sample4, Sample4 Case #: 111319562 Case Action: Case change Case Status: Closed

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Individual Information

Name: Jhsdf.Chld CF Individual #: 0100186221

Living Arrangement Dates

When did the circumstance begin or change? 12 09 2017 When did the circumstance end? 12 31 2017
When was the verification for the information received? 12 09 2017
When did the agency become aware of this information? 12 09 2017 When did the client become aware? 12 09 2017

Living Arrangement Details

Living Arrangement Type: Homeless Shelter
Does this living arrangement apply to everyone in household? NO
Is the individual identified as chronically homeless? YES

Facility Information

Facility is a non profit organization? Facility is public institution?
Individual/student receives 1/2 meals from student meal plan or other source?
Living in a residential shelter care facility or other group home licensed by DOH?

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