NFOCUS Major Release Economic Assistance December 13, 2020

A Major Release of the N-FOCUS system is being implemented December 13, 2020. This document provides information explaining new functionality, enhancements and problem resolutions made effective with this release. This document is divided into four main sections:

General Interest and Mainframe Topics: All NFOCUS users should read this section.

ACCESSNebraska: NFOCUS users responsible for case activity received through the Web based Electronic Application should read this section.

Developmental Disabilities Programs: NFOCUS users who work directly with DD programs and those who work with the related Medicaid cases should read this section.

Note: This section will only appear when there are tips, enhancements or fixes specific to Development Disabilities Programs.

Expert System: All NFOCUS users with responsibility for case entry for AABD, ADC Payment, SNAP, CC, FW, IL, MED, and Retro MED should read this section.

Note: When new functionality is added to NFOCUS that crosses multiple topics (ie General Interest and Mainframe, Alerts, Correspondence, Expert System etc) the functionality will be described in one primary location. This location will usually be the General Interest and Mainframe section or the Expert System section. Alerts, Work Tasks and Correspondence that are part of the new functionality may be documented in both the primary location that describes the entire process and in the Alerts, Work Tasks and Correspondence sections.

Interfaces, Document Imaging and NFOCUS Tips sections will be added as appropriate for the release.

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General Interest and Mainframe

SNAP Charts Referral Designation

   With the December 13, 2020 Release there has been a new Charts referral designation. When the only open Program Case in a Master Case is a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) Program, when a referral is made, this will be signified with a new referral code of (SP). Only those cases with just a SNAP case opened will have this designation.

Alerts

Alert 637 Close ABAWD (New)

   The Close ABAWD alert is created on the first working day each month based on month 6 of ABAWD tracking.

Alert 260 Send CHARTS Referral (Change)

   Alert 260 Send CHARTS referral has added SNAP to this alert.

Narrative

SNAP Child Support Enforcement Referral Subheading (New)

The Child Support Enforcement Referral subheading is now available for the SNAP program.

Correspondence

Child Care Information Text (New)

All Child Care notices will contain a new info text. The text consists of the following:

Changes in income that exceed 85% of the State Median Income must be reported to the agency within 10 days of the change. The State Median Income Limits can be found at

http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Guidance-Documents.aspx.

If your current need for service ends and it is not a temporary change this must be reported to the agency within 10 days of the change.

If you move out of the state of Nebraska you must report this to the agency within 10 day of the change.

SNAP Simplified Reporting Text (Change)

SNAP has updated the wording to the simplified-reporting wording found on SNAP Approval notices. The new wording consists of the following:

Your household is assigned to the Simplified Reporting category. You must report to DHHS if your household's income for the month goes above $1,832.00. Income includes gross earned and unearned income before deductions, such as taxes.

If DHHS learns about a change from another source, DHHS is required to act on it and make changes to your case. If your income goes down or someone moves into your household, you may contact DHHS to see if you are eligible for additional benefits.

If your household includes an Able Bodied Adult without Dependents (ABAWD) who is working or volunteering, you must report if the ABAWD's work or volunteer hours drop below 20 hours per week averaged over a four-week period.

You are required to either meet Able Bodied Adult Without Dependent (ABAWD) Work Requirements or be exempt from meeting these work requirements.

ABAWDS not meeting an exemption will only receive SNAP benefits for 3 of the next 36 months. Listed below are the ABAWD Work Requirement exemptions.

1. Under 18 or over 49 years of age.
2. Physically or mentally unfit for employment.
3. Living in a SNAP household with a household member age 17 or younger.
4. Pregnant
5. Exempt from (above) work requirements
6. Resides in an area that has been granted federal ABAWD waiver.
7. Participating at least half time in a refugee training program approved, funded, or operated by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, Administration for Children and Families, or Department of Health and Human Services.

Both of these changes must be reported within 10 days after the end of the month in which the change occurs. These are the only changes that you must report.

You are eligible to receive information on services to assist families with children so that children may continue to be cared for in their home. Please call the child abuse/neglect hotline for additional information at 800-652-1999.

LIHEAP Supplemental Notice (Change)

LIHEAP now has a supplemental notice that is created if/when a Household is approved for a supplemental payment through the Expert System. This notice matches the notice that is generated during the summer batch supplemental payments.

Document Imaging

Add Image via Citrix (New)

The following information is for Citrix users only:

Any document that is being added to Document Imaging, when connected to NFOCUS via Citrix, gets sent to the Citrix server to be checked-in to File Director. There are users all across the state that can be adding documents to this server and documents will be processed on a first in, first out order.

For Citrix users, a "Check-In Queue Count" field has been added to the Add Image window. This counter will display the number of documents still waiting to be processed by the Citrix server. If the worker does not see their documents in the List Image window right away, it may be because there are numerous documents to be processed by the server and the counter will provide an indication.

The counter will display the queue count once the worker has clicked "Save" in the Add Image Window to execute the Add Image function.
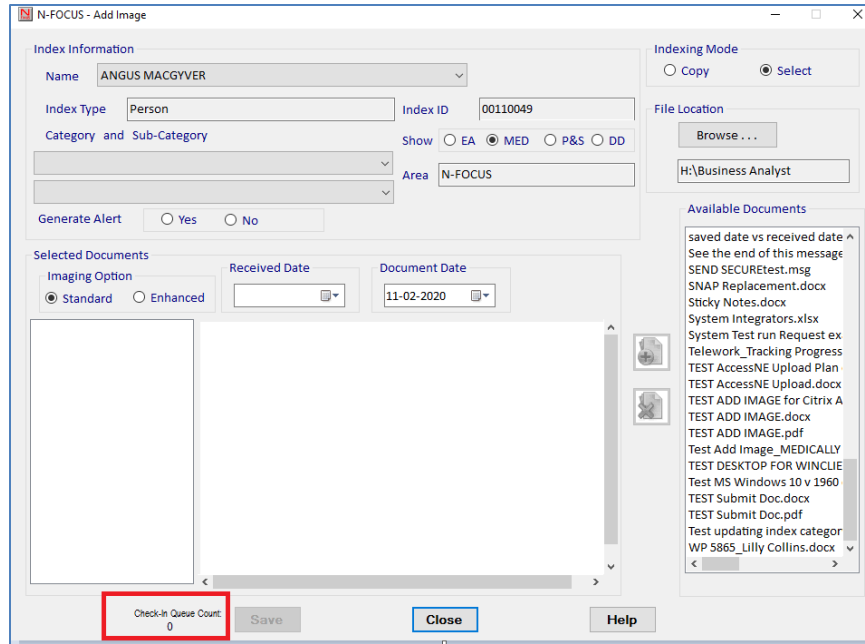
Expert System

ABAWD Clock (New)

An ABAWD Tracking Clock has been added to show information on a participants 36 Month period of ABAWD eligibility. To access the ABAWD Clock, follow these steps:
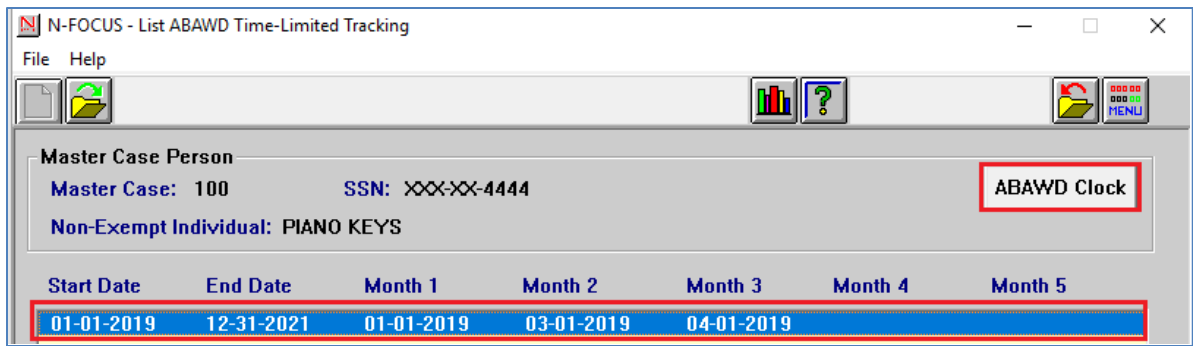
1. Navigate to the SNAP Detail Program Case.
2. Select the appropriate person from the Program Case Person List box.
3. Select Actions>ABAWD Tracking

The List ABAWD Time-Limited Tracking window will display.

4. Select a row from the list box.

The ABAWD Clock push button will enable.
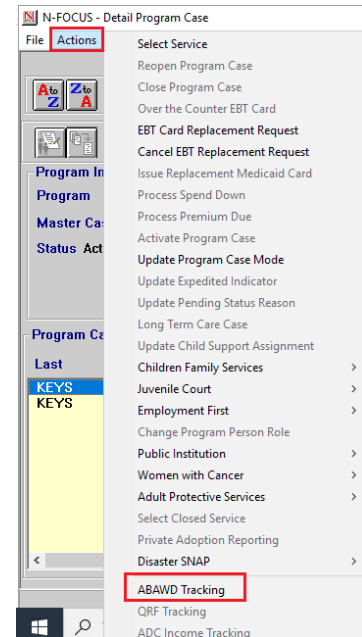
5. Select the ABAWD Clock push button.

The ABAWD Clock window will display.
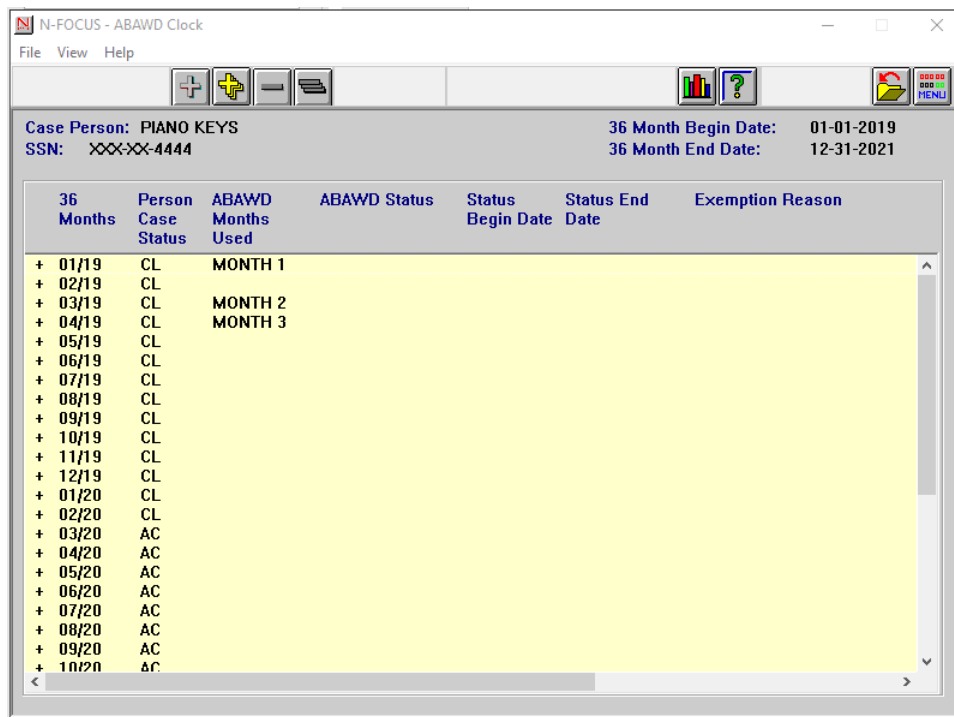
The information on the ABAWD Clock window is pulled from existing data entry fields in the Mainframe and Expert System. If no data is available, the window will be blank.

- The list on the ABAWD window has scroll bars to scroll up, down and across to view the entire 36 month time period.
- If a month has a Case Status with no end date, the status will be used as the status for the subsequent months, until and end date is entered.

Note: Each month in the 36 month ABAWD timeframe will have a + or - next to it. Users can toggle between those. When the month has a + next to it, the Month, Person Status, and ABAWD Month elements are

displayed. When a month has a - next to it, ABAWD Status, Begin Date, End Date, Exemption Reasons, and Updated by information is displayed. The ++ and -- buttons will expand or contract all of the months on the window and the + and - buttons will only expand or contract the highlighted month.

The information in the columns is populated from the ABAWD Time Limited Tracking data located in the Person Case Status History window and data from the Work Requirement window for ABAWD in Expert System.

36 Months Column: The first row of this column will show the first month of the ABAWD time period and each subsequent month so that all 36 months are shown. The Month starts with the 36 Month Begin Date in monthly increments until 36 months has lapsed.

Person Case Status: This column indicated the Person's status in the SNAP program for the Benefit Month. (AC - Active, CL Closed, etc.)

ABAWD Months Used: This column indicates the months counted toward the first three months of ABAWD eligibility and the additional three months of regained Eligibility.

ABAWD Status: This column indicates the status for the month appearing on the same row as the ABAWD month. Status options - Non-ABAWD, Exempt and Mandatory.

Status Begin Date: This column indicated the month, day and year the Status for the month began.

> **Note**:   The begin date does not need to be the beginning of the month, it can be any day of the month. This date is also the date the exceptions began if there were exceptions for that month.

Status End Date: This column indicated the month, day and year the Status for the month ended. It is the begin date of the Status and also the date of any exemption.

> **Note:**   The end date does not need to be the beginning of the month, it can be any day of the month. This date is also the date the exceptions ended if there were exceptions for that month.

Exemption Reasons: This column displays an exemption reason that covers the benefit month entered in the Expert System Work Requirement ABAWD window. It is the begin date of the Status and also the date of any exception.

> **Note:** If there is more than one exemption, a row for each exemption will display.

Modified By: This column indicated the ID of the worker who last made an update to the row of the benefit time period in the Expert System Work Requirement ABAWD window.

Modified Date: This column indicates the date the worker last made an updated to the row.

Updated Time: This column indicates the time the worker last made an update to the row.

Work Registration Now Work Requirements (Change)

The Work Registration task has been changed to be the Work Requirement task. The Work Requirement task is mandatory for SNAP. Each participant age 16-59, who has a status of Active or Pending, will have their information documented in this task for all Pending and Recertification SNAP cases.

Each person in the case will need to have the Work Requirements entered separately. Highlight the individual's name to enable either the Add or Update pushbuttons.

Add Button: This button will only be enabled for individuals who have not had a Work Requirement Status previously entered.

Update Button: This button will allow for updates of new information to be entered for individuals who already have Work Requirement information.

There are three Work Requirement elements that are to be documented:

- Student Status
  - When a student is determined an Exempt Student, The Work Requirement page will auto populate the check box to No and the Status on the Work Requirement window will be Exempt.
    - The other exemption reason questions on the Work Requirement window will be disabled and remained checked No.

- If the student has been determined a Non-Student, the No check box on exemption reason #3 on the Work Requirement window will remain No and will be disabled.
- If it is determined that a student is a Non-Exempt Student, no further questions will need to be answered on the Work Requirement or ABAWD pages, those pages will be auto populated. The worker will select the Next push button on each of these pages and then select the Done push button.
- Work Requirement
  - A statement "The Individual is Work Registered" will display at the top of the page and Yes radio button is automatically selected for all individuals.
- Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD)
  - The statement "Participant is less than 18 years of age or greater than 49 years of age" has been added to this page.
  - The Yes and No radio button is automatically selected for all individuals
    - If Yes, the status will auto populate to Non-ABAWD.
    - If No, an exemption reason will need to be selected.
  - The Begin Date will default to the current date but can be changed
  - All questions on this page will be disabled and remained checked as No if the first statement auto populates to Yes.
    - This occurs once the Student Status window is opened to either add or update information.

Once a participant has been determined to be Exempt on either the Student Status or Work Requirement window, the exemption reason #1 on *the ABAWD window* will auto populate to Yes. The Status on the *ABAWD window* will auto populate to Exempt.

The Date on the *ABAWD window* will auto populate to the same date that is on either the Student Status or Work Requirement window, whichever one met the exemption, but the date can be changed by the worker. If exemption reason #1 on the *ABAWD window* is auto populated to Yes, the other questions will be disabled, and remain checked No.

If the individual has not been determined to be Exempt on either the Student Status or Work Requirement window, the No check box on question #1 on the *ABAWD* window will remain populated to No and will be disabled. No status will be auto populated on the *ABAWD* window.

If the statement 'Participant is less than 18 years of age or greater than 49 years of age' was auto populated to Yes, on the ABAWD window, the exemption reason #1 will not auto populate to 'Yes'. The Non-ABAWD Status will remain as is.

Mandatory Begin and End Dates on Work Requirements

- A Begin Date has been added to each of the three Work Requirements.

- If a change or addition is made to a Work Requirement, the Begin Date will auto populate to the Current Date.
  - o If a worker manually enters a Begin Date to be prior to the previous row, the following warning message will display.

Warning! ×

At least one Begin Date is prior the previous Begin Date. If you continue, all previous information will be deleted.
Do you want to continue?

Yes   No
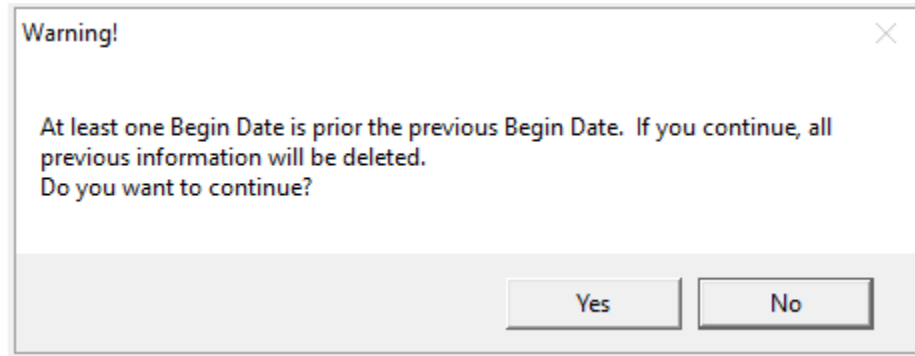
- The End Date will auto populate to the day prior to the new begin date and will display on the Work Requirement and History windows.

History Window

The History window has been added to the Work Requirement window. The following information is available on this window:

- The User ID of the individual adding or updating the information.
- The Date, of the change.
- The Time, of the change.
- The Status of the Work Requirement.
- The Exemption reason.
- The Status Begin.
- The Status End Date.

Self-Employment Tax Return Window (Change)

Wording has been updated to match the current 1040. Changes include line numbers 6 and 8; along with tab name change to Schedule 1 and 1040. No changes have been made to how Self-Employment is budgeted.

LIHEAP Benefit Summary: Display Fuel Type on Benefit Summary (Fix)

Prior to the release, when a LIHEAP refund budget was run with the benefit to be paid to the client, it was unable to determine which fuel type the refund budget represented. The fuel type has always displayed in the benefit summary for refund budgets being paid to a provider.

This has been changed to now have the benefit summary display the fuel type that a refund payment represents when the refund is being paid to the client.

Prior to December, 2020 Release

Screen prints on next page.

		LIHEAP	REFUND	REGULAR
Energy Year		Unit Size		4

Energy Year
  10-2019 to 09-2020
Budget Type   REFUND
Original Budget Type   HEATING
Calculation Method
  Exempt

Fuel Type
Dwelling Type
  Public Housing / Apartm
Paid To   Client

Resource Total   0.00
Resource Limit   0.00
Resource Test: Exempt

Public Assistance Grant   0.00
Self Employment Income   0.00
Earned Income   0.00
Unearned Income   0.00
Expenses   0.00

LIHEAP Need Amount   380.00
LIHEAP Prorate Amount   380.00
Authorized Amount   19.64
Refund Amount   19.64

Total before Disregard   0.00

Maximum Allowable Income   33,475.00
Income Test: Pass

Earned Income Disregard   0.00

Creation Date   03-24-2020

Total Countable Income   0.00

OK   Help

After the December, 2020 Release

DAN SMITH   LIHEAP   REFUND   REGULAR

Energy Year
  10-2017 to 09-2018
Budget Type   REFUND
Original Budget Type   HEATING
Calculation Method
  Exempt

Unit Size   1
Fuel Type   Natural Ga
Dwelling Type
  Apartment, Duplex, Trip
Paid To   Client

Resource Total   0.00
Resource Limit   0.00
Resource Test: Exempt

Public Assistance Grant   0.00
Self Employment Income   0.00
Earned Income   0.00
Unearned Income   0.00
Expenses   0.00

LIHEAP Need Amount   250.00
LIHEAP Prorate Amount   250.00
Authorized Amount   250.00
Refund Amount   250.00

Total before Disregard   0.00

Maximum Allowable Income   15,782.00
Income Test: Pass

Earned Income Disregard   0.00

Creation Date   01-21-2020

Total Countable Income   0.00

OK   Help

Correct FR for Child added to TMA-G Program (Fix)

Work which had been completed for July, 2020 allowed the addition of individuals to ADC/TMA-G program cases as an FR (Financially Responsible Individual), however, that change resulted in those newly added persons being displayed with an FR reason of "Prnt in MC" (Parent in Master Case), regardless of whether the individual was a parent or not. This did not affect benefit calculations, but just did not look correct.

A fix has been made which will still code the newly added person as Financially Responsible, but is the newly added person is a child (age 19 or under as of the end of the benefit month being budgeted), and that "child" does not have a parental relationship to another child in the program case, then the FR reason will display as "Child in MC". If the newly added FR does have a parental relationship to another in the program case, the FR reason will continue to display as "Prnt in MC" as it has since July, 2020.

ADC/TMA-G Budgeting/Sanctions TMA G Grant Payment (Change)

Previously, if the CSE Non-Coop sanction was imposed on an ADC program, the ADC benefit would be reduced by 25%. If the household later failed ADC eligibility and qualified for TMA-G benefits, NFOCUS would issue the full 1/5 grant payment, not accounting for the 25% reduction that was imposed while the household was eligible for ADC grant. The TMA-G benefits were not being reduced and continued to pay the full TMA-G grant payment.

Logic has been added which will allow a 25% reduction of grant benefits for CSE Non-Cooperation sanctions to continue when a case is determined eligible for TMA-G benefits when the CSE Non-Cooperation was imposed on the active ADC program case. The TMA-G benefit amount will reduce by 25% when budgeted if the non-cooperation was imposed while the household was receiving ADC benefits.

Additional logic has been added which will allow for a CSE Non-Cooperation sanction to be lifted while the household is receiving TMA-G benefits. If the household is actively receiving TMA-G benefits and the individual who was in a non-cooperative status with Child Support Enforcement reestablishes their cooperation, NFOCUS will now allow the sanction to be lifted and upon recalculation of the benefits, the previous TMA-G benefit reduction of 25% will be removed and the household can receive the full 1/5 grant amount they are eligible for.

Work is planned for a future release to allow an individual to begin a CSE Non-Cooperation sanction after TMA-G benefits have started, and when that functionality is available, it will be outlined in future release notes.

Account for Recoupment from TMA-G grant when Budget for Same Month (Fix)

Audit findings identified that in cases where a household which had received a TMA-G payment for a benefit month that had been reduced from the full budgetary need amount by a recoupment that was taken out, and then the household reapplied for the ADC program and were determined eligible, that NFOCUS was determining the ADC payment for the incorrect amount, as it was taking the newly calculated budgetary need in the ADC budget and subtracting the "authorized amount" from the TMA-G benefit for the month and issuing the difference. This was resulting in the household being credited for the recoupment amount from TMA-G onto the account receivable, but then being issued the "recouped" amount in the ADC payment.

Example:

TMA-G Budget for Sample Benefit Month:

- Budgetary need calculated to be - $90
- Minus recoupment - $9
- Equals TMA Authorized Amount - $81

Resource Total	0.00	Unit Size	3
Resource Limit	0.00		
		Budgetary Need	90.00
Earned Income	1,720.00	Prorated Budgetary Need	90.00
20% Earned Inc Disregard	0.00	Compared to	
Child Care Disregard	0.00	Child/Spousal Support	18.83
Standard of Need	793.00	Sanctioned Amount	0.00
Net Earned Income	1,720.00	Recoupment Amount	9.00
Result	0.00	Offset Amount	0.00
Compared to		Overpayment Amount	0.00
Payment Standard	450.00		
Initial Eligibility Test:	Pass	Authorized Amount	81.00
		Allocation Out Amount	0.00
Determination of Payment:		Creation Date	10-26-2018
Earned Income	1,720.00		
50% Earned Inc. Disregard	0.00	Resource Test:	N/A
Child Care Disregard	0.00	Payment Eligibility Test:	Pass
Result	0.00		
Compared to SON			
Payment Standard	450.00	** TMA Half Grant Case **	
Lower Amount	90.00		
Unearned Income	0.00		
Allocation In Amount	0.00		
Deemed Income	0.00		
Budgetary Need	90.00		

OK   Help

ADC Budget for Same Benefit Month:

- ADC Budgetary need calculated to be - $450
  - *No Recoupment as already done for the month

- ADC Authorized Amount - $369 *
    - *This was incorrect
    - New logic now correctly calculates amount of $360

Resource Total	0.00	Unit Size	3
Resource Limit	6,000.00		
		Budgetary Need	450.00
Earned Income	190.00	Prorated Budgetary Need	450.00
20% Earned Inc Disregard	38.00	Compared to	
Child Care Disregard	0.00	Child/Spousal Support	0.00
Standard of Need	816.00	Sanctioned Amount	0.00
Net Earned Income	152.00	Recoupment Amount	0.00
Result	664.00	Offset Amount	0.00
Compared to		Overpayment Amount	0.00
Payment Standard	450.00		
Initial Eligibility Test:	Pass	Authorized Amount	369.00
		Allocation Out Amount	0.00
Determination of Payment:		Creation Date	12-18-2018
Earned Income	190.00		
50% Earned Inc. Disregard	95.00	Resource Test:	Pass
Child Care Disregard	0.00	Payment Eligibility Test:	Pass
Result	95.00		
Compared to SON			
Payment Standard	450.00		
Lower Amount	450.00		
Unearned Income	0.00		
Allocation In Amount	0.00		
Deemed Income	0.00		
		Eligibility Period:	
Budgetary Need	450.00	08-01-2018 - 12-31-2018	

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Example Detailed Explanation:

The correct calculation in the example above should have resulted in the authorized ADC payment being $360, rather than the $369 shown *($450 minus the TMA-G payment of $81 minus the recoupment amount of $9, resulting in ADC payment of $360).*

The $9 was incorrectly included in the approved ADC payment for the month, so the household received the full $450 ADC and they were given credit for $9 being paid on the outstanding accounts receivable.

Logic has been updated so that when the ADC benefit is calculated, it also subtracts the amount that had been applied to the account receivable along with the TMA-G payment amount for the month. This way the household's total payment amount still reflects that a recoupment was taken for the benefit month.

LIHEAP Refund Budget Override (New)

Functionality has been added which will allow LIHEAP policy to override the amount being authorized in a Refund Budget in order to prevent incorrect payments on received refunds from being reissued. This will also prevent needing database edits on already authorized refund budgets to prevent those payments from being issued.

Note: Access to this function is only granted to those with appropriate security clearance, as directed by LIHEAP policy.

NFOCUS Tips

Duplicate Persons

Please call Production Support when duplicate is identified as the duplicate MUST be discontinued.

Same Sex Married Parents

When married parents are of the same sex, if both are female, only one can have the Role of Bio Parent of the child. The other parent should be listed as either the Step or Adoptive parent.