



Illinois Hunger Coalition

Working to End Hunger in Illinois since 1988

Implementation of Food Stamp Provisions from
2008 Farm Bill in Illinois – 09/30/2008

Farm Bill Provision	IDHS Policy	IDHS Implementation Date	Comments
Deobligation of Coupons - Section 4115 states that no new coupons can be issued and all existing coupons must be used by 6/17/2009.	MR#08.28	6/18/2008 – end issuance; 6/17/2009- all coupons expire	
Expanding Simplified Reporting – Sections 4105 allows states to exercise the option to expand simplified reporting, with less paperwork to households where all members are disabled or elderly and have no earned income, migrant farmer households, or homeless households.	PM 19-07-02 and WAG 19-07-02	07/14/2008	IDHS changes EI REDE (Earned Income Redetermination) to EZ REDE and allows all food stamp only households to use the PSI or Phone Stamp Interview Process for 6-month redetermination.
Standard Deduction – Section 4102 raises and indexes the standard deduction for food stamp households with 1-3 members for inflation, this group having been left out in 2002 Farm Bill.	MR #08.20	10/1/2008	\$134 → \$144 for households with 1-3 persons. [4- \$147] [5- \$172] [6+ \$197]
Minimum Benefit – Section 4107 indexes minimum benefit for households of 1-2 persons to inflation, using 8% of the maximum benefit for a household of 1 as the new basis. The original \$10 amount was fixed by the Food Stamp Act of 1977.	MR #08.20	10/1/2008	\$10 → \$14
Accrual of Benefits – Section 4114 states that states must allow clients to keep active benefits for at least 6 months even if they do not access the account. Previously, food stamp benefits could be moved offline after 3 months of no activity on the account.	MR #08.23	09/08/2008	IDHS no longer moves any benefits off-line. After one year of no use of Link Card, benefits are expunged and applicant must re-apply.

If you have any questions about these or any other provisions of the Farm Bill or other food stamp policy questions, contact the Illinois Hunger Coalition at 312-629-9580



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Dependent Care Deduction – Section 4103 states that the cap on expenses of childcare or dependent care for households be lifted for households with parents working or in work training.	MR #08.24	09/15/2008 for REDEs effective 10/1/2008 or later; other cases 10/1/2008	Notice mailed to households with dependent care expenses on record on 09/05/2008. Customer's statement of expense should be accepted with no further verification required.
Renaming the Food Stamp Program – Section 4001 changes name of the Food Stamp Program to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program			States may adopt another name and it appears that IDHS plans to exercise this option, but the name has not yet been selected or made public.
Combat Pay Exclusion – Section 4101 excludes pay for those deployed in combat zones as countable income for food stamp program, allow more families with spouses or parents serving abroad to qualify for benefits or higher benefits.	PM 08-04-04-v; WAG 08-04-04-v		No change because temporary rule was made permanent law.
Asset Limit Indexed to Inflation - Section 4104 indexes asset limits of \$2,000 or \$3,000 (if senior or disabled person in household) to inflation.			Asset Limit will be adjusted only in increments of \$250, and so no likely effect for several years.
Retirement and Education Savings Accounts Excluded - Section 4104 also will exclude all tax-preferred savings accounts for retirement or education from countable assets. These include 401(k)s, IRAs, 529s, and Coverdell education savings accounts.	MR #08.25	10/1/2008	

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