

**Medicaid Eligibility Procedure Letter No. 103**

**Effective Date:** October 1, 2015

**OAC Rules:** 5160:1-3-04.3 and 5160:1-3-24

**To:** All Medicaid Eligibility Manual Holders

**From:** John B. McCarthy, Director

**Subject:** Medicaid: Standard Utility Allowance Increase

**Reason for Change:** The Office of Family Assistance, with approval from the Food and Nutrition Service, is increasing the standard utility allowance (SUA) from \$498 to \$510. As a result of the increase in the Food Assistance Program's standard utility allowance, the SUA for determination of the minimum monthly maintenance needs allowance (MMMNA) is also being increased.

Ohio's SUA from the Food Assistance Program can be used in lieu of an individual's utility expenses when determining the community spouse's MMMNA as part of the institutionalized spouse's patient liability calculation.

The MMMNA is used when determining the monthly income allowance (MIA) for a community spouse. The MIA, in turn, is deducted during the calculation of the institutionalized spouse's patient liability in order to account for the needs of the community spouse. The MIA is the MMMNA minus the community spouse's monthly income.

For reference purposes, this table shows the previous (2014) standard as well as the increased amount for 2015 (in bold).

	2014	<b>2015</b>
Standard Utility Allowance (SUA)	\$498	<b>\$510</b>

**Action Required:** For budgets effective on or after October 1, 2015, the standard utility allowance of \$510 shall be used when determining the community spouse's MIA.

A review of all long term care facility (LTCF) and home and community-based services (HCBS) covered groups with a community spouse must be completed prior to the October 1, 2015 cutoff to ensure the new increased standard is applied appropriately. The CDJFS must recalculate the MIA using the increased utility allowance.

These cases, with MIA for the community spouse (MA M), can be identified by utilizing the caseload query system available on CRIS-E. No case alerts will be issued and there will not be a mass change done by CRIS-E. All covered groups affected by the increased utility allowance shall be provided with written notice of proposed action.

Effective October 1, 2015, all new applicants must have eligibility determined using the utility standard of \$510.

A CRIS-E View Flash Bulletin (CLVB) will be issued with this information. The new standard utility allowance can be found in CRIS-E reference table TMEP.