

Department of Social and Health Services

Olympia, Washington

EAZ Manual

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Category Income-Treatment
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Revision Author: Don Winslow
Division CSD
Mail Stop 45470
Phone 360-725-4580
Email winsldg@dshs.wa.gov

Summary

Child support is currently a deduction from a household's countable gross income for Basic Food Assistance. The department is exercising an option from the 2002 Farm Bill to treat child support payments made to someone outside of the home as an income exclusion prior to administering the gross income test.

Currently, some households are denied for Basic Food Assistance for excess gross income, even when up to 50% of their income is paid out in child support. These families are now unable to qualify for Food Assistance due to income that they have no access to because it is paid out in child support. This change will enhance the Division of Child Support's mission to collect child support and will enhance the Community Services Division's mission to assist low income families to access the Basic Food program.

Effective November 15, 2009:

WAC 388-450-0015 What types of income are not used when figuring out my benefits?

This section applies to cash assistance, children's, family, or pregnancy medical, and basic food benefits.

1. There are some types of income we do not count to figure out if you can get benefits and the amount you can get. Some examples of income we do not count are:

- a. Bona fide loans as defined in WAC [388-470-0045](#), except certain student loans as specified under WAC [388-450-0035](#);
 - b. Federal earned income tax credit (EITC) payments;
 - c. Federal economic stimulus payments that are excluded for federal and federally-assisted state programs;
 - d. Title IV-E and state foster care maintenance payments if you choose not to include the foster child in your assistance unit;
 - e. Energy assistance payments;
 - f. Educational assistance we do not count under WAC [388-450-0035](#);
 - g. Native American benefits and payments we do not count under WAC [388-450-0040](#);
 - h. Income from employment and training programs we do not count under WAC [388-450-0045](#);
 - i. Money withheld from a benefit to repay an overpayment from the same income source. For Basic Food, we **do not** exclude money that is withheld because you were overpaid for purposely not meeting requirements of a federal, state, or local means tested program such as TANF/SFA, GA, and SSI;
 - j. Legally obligated child support payments received by someone who gets TANF/SFA benefits;
 - k. One-time payments issued under the Department of State or Department of Justice Reception and Replacement Programs, such as Voluntary Agency (VOLAG) payments; and
 - l. Payments we are directly told to exclude as income under state or federal law.
 - m. **For cash and Basic Food:** Payments made to someone outside of the household for the benefits of the assistance unit using funds that are not owed to the household; and
 - (n) **For Basic Food Only:** The total monthly amount of all legally obligated current or back child support payments paid by the assistance unit to someone outside of the assistance unit for:
 - (i) A person who is not in the assistance unit; or
 - (ii) A person who is in the assistance unit to cover a period of time when they were not living with the member of the assistance unit responsible for paying the child support on their behalf.
 - (o) **For medical assistance:** Only the portion of income used to repay the cost of obtaining that income source.
2. For children's, family, or pregnancy medical, we also do not count any insurance proceeds or other income you have recovered as a result of being a Holocaust survivor.