

Texas WIC Health and Human Services Commission

Effective August 1, 2017

Policy No. CS:10.0 (T)

Economic Unit for Income

Purpose

To establish a consistent method of determining income eligibility.

Authority

7 CFR Part 246.7; USDA FNS Instruction 803-3; 25 TAC §31.22

Policy

Income eligibility for WIC services shall be based on the total income of the economic unit.

Definitions

Economic Unit means all persons, related and/or unrelated, living together in the same dwelling, with the exception of the following special situations: pregnant woman, infants/children placed through Department of Family Protective Services (DFPS), e.g., foster/kinship, and individuals who qualify as a separate economic unit.

Procedures

- I. When determining an applicant's income eligibility for WIC services:
 - A. Determine economic unit size by counting all persons living in the dwelling, with the following exceptions:
 1. pregnant women;
 2. individuals who reside in institutions;
 3. infants/children placed through DFPS; and
 4. individuals who qualify as a separate economic unit.
 - B. Determine total economic unit income by counting all incomes of all members of the unit.

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- C. Compare the total economic unit income for the economic unit size with the Texas WIC Income Guidelines (see [Policy CS:12.0](#)).
- D. Record unit size and income(s) in Family Page of the MIS.
- II. For a pregnant woman, with the exception that she qualifies as a separate economic unit, increase her family size by the number of children she expects to give birth to. If she is expecting one child, count her as two individuals; if she is expecting twins, count her as three individuals. Any unborn fetus(s) shall be counted as part of the household size.
- III. Individuals residing in institutions (e.g., homes for battered women, drug treatment centers, intermediate care facilities for mentally retarded or mentally ill persons, half-way houses, etc.) that meet the conditions specified in [Policy CS:35](#) are considered a separate economic unit which consists of the applicant and family members residing in the institution.
- IV. An infant/child placed through DFPS shall be considered a separate economic unit (a one-person economic unit).
 - A. The income of the child shall be the payments made by DFPS or another outside source for the care of the child. Note: If a foster child receives income, whether from a job or outside financial resource, it must be counted in the income determination.
 - B. Income reassessment during an active certification for an infant/child who is later adopted is not required if 90 days or less before expiration for certification period.
- V. When determining economic unit size:

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- A. Do not include members who have been absent from the economic unit for more than six months, unless the member continues to exercise customary family responsibilities, i.e., financially contributes to family.

- B. You may include persons temporarily absent if the following circumstances exist:
 - 1. other members still consider the economic unit to be the principal residence of the absent member; and
 - 2. the absence does not exceed six months (except in the case of school or military service); and
 - 3. the absence is for a purpose such as school, training, employment, hospitalization, institutionalization, military service etc.; and
 - 4. the absent member continues to exercise customary family responsibilities, e.g., a parent continues providing support, physical care, planning, etc.

- VI. On an exception basis, a separate economic unit (SEU) may be identified within a dwelling;
 - A. if the applicant indicates that he/she should be counted as a separate group/economic unit; and
 - B. the applicant verbally confirms that the unit usually purchases or intends to purchase and prepare food separately; and
 - C. the unit meets the minimum income requirements.
 - D. LA staff shall identify the household as a SEU in the Family Page of The MIS.

- VII. Do not certify the following as a Separate Economic Unit:
 - A. minor children who live with their parents;
 - B. a child under age 18 who lives with adult household members who serve as managing conservators; That is,
 - 1. the household member(s) provides more than half of the child's total support; and

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- 2. the family states that the child is under parent or guardian control.
- C. spouses: two people who are legally married, and/or two persons who live together and represent themselves as married.

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