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 | INFORMATIONAL LETTER |
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TRANSMITTAL: 91 INF-66

TO: Commissioners of
 Social Services

DIVISION: Income
 Maintenance

DATE: December 6, 1991

SUBJECT: Public Assistance Sewer, Water and Garbage Charges

SUGGESTED

DISTRIBUTION: Public Assistance Staff
 Food Stamp Staff
 Medical Assistance Staff
 Staff Development Coordinators

CONTACT PERSON: Income Support
 Maureen Standish
 1-800-342-3715, extension 3-6555
Food Stamps
 County Food Stamp Representative
 1-800-342-3715, extension 4-9225

ATTACHMENTS: May 15, 1986 letter to districts - not available
 on-line

FILING REFERENCES

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
84 ADM-42		352.3 352.4		<u>PASB</u> Sections XIII-D-1.2 XIII-D-3.1 <u>FSSB</u> Section XI-D-1	

The purpose of this release is to notify social services districts of technical amendments to Department regulations 352.3(b) and 352.4(b). Department regulation 352.3(b) was initially amended in 1989 to assist renters in meeting their shelter obligations for garbage disposal and sewer charges. In other words, sewer and garbage charges were to be considered as shelter expenses subject to the maximum shelter standards. When this amendment was promulgated, the phrase "as a separate charge to a vendor" was used. This phrase has been interpreted to mean that the recipient had to have the bill in his/her own name. However, this was not the intent of the 1989 amendment.

The recent amendments clarify that sewer, garbage and water charges can be included as part of the shelter expenses subject to the public assistance shelter maximums as long as the public assistance recipient is obligated for these charges through a lease. Department regulation 352.4(b) was amended for equity purposes to clarify that sewer and garbage disposal charges are also considered as part of the shelter expenses subject to the maximum shelter standards for homeowners.

Public assistance recipients (renters and homeowners) who receive a water bill directly from the vendor and in their own name are still eligible to receive a separate allowance for water in the amount actually charged. A May 15, 1986 letter to the districts is still in effect (see attachment).

For PA ABEL Budgeting, upstate and downstate, the sewer, garbage and water (if the water is not in the recipient's own name) costs should be entered as part of the actual shelter expense. For water charges directly billed by a vendor in the recipient's own name, there is a separate field for entry of the expense.

Food stamp households which incur a water, sewer or garbage expense would be entitled to the greater of the actual expense(s) or the food stamp standard utility allowance as a food stamp shelter cost. The expense need not be billed in a food stamp household member's name to allow such expense as a food stamp shelter cost.

Oscar R. Best, Jr.
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Income Maintenance