

Attachment 1

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[Notices]

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

Annual Update of the HHS Poverty Guidelines

AGENCY:

Department of Health and Human Services.

ACTION:

Notice.

SUMMARY:

This notice provides an update of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) poverty guidelines to account for last calendar year's increase in prices as measured by the Consumer Price Index. DATES: Applicable Date: January 11, 2019 unless an office administering a program using the guidelines specifies a different effective date for that particular program.

ADDRESSES:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Room 404E, Humphrey Building, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC 20201.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

For information about how the guidelines are used or how income is defined in a particular program, contact the Federal, state, or local office that is responsible for that program. For information about poverty figures for immigration forms, the Hill-Burton Uncompensated Services Program, and the number of people in poverty, use the specific telephone numbers and addresses given below.

For general questions about the poverty guidelines themselves, contact Kendall Swenson, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Room 422F.5, Humphrey Building, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC 20201--telephone: (202) 690-7409--or visit <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/>.

For information about the percentage multiple of the poverty guidelines to be used on immigration forms such as USCIS Form I-864, Affidavit of Support, contact U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services at 1-800-375-5283.

For information about the Hill-Burton Uncompensated Services Program (free or reduced-fee health care services at certain hospitals and other facilities for persons meeting eligibility criteria involving the poverty guidelines), contact the Health Resources and Services Administration Information Center at 1-800-638-0742. You also may visit <https://www.hrsa.gov/get-health-care/affordable/hill-burton/index.html/> .

For information about the number of people in poverty, visit the Poverty section of the Census Bureau's website at <https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty.html> or contact the Census Bureau's Customer Service Center at 1-800-923-8282 (toll-free) or visit <https://ask.census.gov> for further information.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 673(2) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) requires the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to update the poverty guidelines at least annually, adjusting them on the basis of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). The poverty guidelines are used as an eligibility criterion by Medicaid and a number of other Federal programs. The poverty guidelines issued here are a simplified version of the poverty thresholds that the Census Bureau uses to prepare its estimates of the number of individuals and families in poverty.

As required by law, this update is accomplished by increasing the latest published Census Bureau poverty thresholds by the relevant percentage change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). The guidelines in this 2019 notice reflect the 2.4 percent price increase between calendar years 2017 and 2018. After this inflation adjustment, the guidelines are rounded and adjusted to standardize the differences between family sizes. In rare circumstances, the rounding and standardizing adjustments in the formula result in small decreases in the poverty guidelines for some household sizes even when the inflation factor is not negative. In cases where the year-to-year change in inflation is not negative

and the rounding and standardizing adjustments in the formula result in reductions to the guidelines from the previous year for some household sizes, the guidelines for the affected household sizes are fixed at the prior year's guidelines. As in prior years, these 2019 guidelines are roughly equal to the poverty thresholds for calendar year 2018 which the Census Bureau expects to publish in final form in September 2019.

The poverty guidelines continue to be derived from the Census Bureau's current official poverty thresholds; they are not derived from the Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM).

The following guideline figures represent annual income.

2019 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
1	\$12,490
2	16,910
3	21,330
4	25,750
5	30,170
6	34,590
7	39,010
8	43,430

For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,420 for each additional person.

2019 Poverty Guidelines for Alaska

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
1	\$15,600
2	21,130
3	26,660
4	32,190
5	37,720

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
6	43,250
7	48,780
8	54,310

For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$5, 530 for each additional person.

2019 Poverty Guidelines for Hawaii

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
1	\$14,380
2	19,460
3	24,540
4	29,620
5	34,700
6	39,780
7	44,860
8	49,940

For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$5,080 for each additional person.

Separate poverty guideline figures for Alaska and Hawaii reflect Office of Economic Opportunity administrative practice beginning in the 1966-1970 period. (Note that the Census Bureau poverty thresholds--the version of the poverty measure used for statistical purposes--have never had separate figures for Alaska and Hawaii.) The poverty guidelines are not defined for Puerto Rico or other outlying jurisdictions. In cases in which a Federal program using the poverty guidelines serves any of those jurisdictions, the Federal office that administers the program is generally responsible for deciding whether to use the contiguous-states-and-DC guidelines for those jurisdictions or to follow some other procedure.

Due to confusing legislative language dating back to 1972, the poverty guidelines sometimes have been mistakenly referred to as the "OMB" (Office of Management and Budget) poverty guidelines or poverty line. In fact, OMB has never issued the guidelines; the guidelines are issued each year by the Department of Health and Human Services. The poverty guidelines may be formally referenced as "the poverty guidelines updated

periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2)."

Some federal programs use a percentage multiple of the guidelines (for example, 125 percent or 185 percent of the guidelines), as noted in relevant authorizing legislation or program regulations. Non-Federal organizations that use the poverty guidelines under their own authority in non-Federally-funded activities also may choose to use a percentage multiple of the guidelines.

The poverty guidelines do not make a distinction between farm and non-farm families, or between aged and non-aged units. (Only the Census Bureau poverty thresholds have separate figures for aged and non-aged one-person and two-person units.)

Note that this notice does not provide definitions of such terms as "income" or "family," because there is considerable variation in defining these terms among the different programs that use the guidelines. These variations are traceable to the different laws and regulations that govern the various programs. This means that questions such as "Is income counted before or after taxes?", "Should a particular type of income be counted?", and "Should a particular person be counted as a member of the family/household?" are actually questions about how a specific program applies the poverty guidelines. All such questions about how a specific program applies the guidelines should be directed to the entity that administers or funds the program, since that entity has the responsibility for defining such terms as "income" or "family," to the extent that these terms are not already defined for the program in legislation or regulations.

Alex M. Azar,
Secretary of Health and Human Services.
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Attachment 2

100 Percent, 110 Percent and 150 Percent of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Federal Poverty Guidelines Published on February 1, 2019

The tables below show the calculations for the Federal Poverty Guidelines for optional use in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019 LIHEAP and mandatory use in FFY 2020 LIHEAP.

For All States (except Alaska and Hawaii), and for the District of Columbia:

Size of household	100 Percent of HHS Poverty Guidelines	110 Percent of HHS Poverty Guidelines	150 Percent of HHS Poverty Guidelines
1	\$12,490	\$13,739	\$18,735
2	\$16,910	\$18,601	\$25,365
3	\$21,330	\$23,463	\$31,995
4	\$25,750	\$28,325	\$38,625
5	\$30,170	\$33,187	\$45,255
6	\$34,590	\$38,049	\$51,885
7	\$39,010	\$42,911	\$58,515
8	\$43,430	\$47,773	\$65,145

For households at 110 percent of HHS poverty guidelines with more than 8 members add \$4,862 for each additional member. For households at 150 percent of HHS poverty guidelines with more than 8 members add \$6,630 for each additional member.

For Alaska:

Size of household	100 Percent of HHS Poverty Guidelines	110 Percent of HHS Poverty Guidelines	150 Percent of HHS Poverty Guidelines
1	\$15,600	\$17,160	\$23,400
2	\$21,130	\$23,243	\$31,695
3	\$26,660	\$29,326	\$39,990
4	\$32,190	\$35,409	\$48,285
5	\$37,720	\$41,492	\$56,580
6	\$43,250	\$47,575	\$64,875
7	\$48,780	\$53,658	\$73,170
8	\$54,310	\$59,741	\$81,465

For households at 110 percent of HHS poverty guidelines with more than 8 members add \$6,083 for each additional member. For households at 150 percent of HHS poverty guidelines with more than 8 members add \$8,295 for each additional member.

For Hawaii:

Size of household	100 Percent of HHS Poverty Guidelines	110 Percent of HHS Poverty Guidelines	150 Percent of HHS Poverty Guidelines
1	\$14,380	\$15,818	\$21,570
2	\$19,460	\$21,406	\$29,190
3	\$24,540	\$26,994	\$36,810
4	\$29,620	\$32,582	\$44,430
5	\$34,700	\$38,170	\$52,050
6	\$39,780	\$43,758	\$59,670
7	\$44,860	\$49,346	\$67,290
8	\$49,940	\$54,934	\$74,910

For households at 110 percent of HHS poverty guidelines with more than 8 members add \$5,588 for each additional member. For households at 150 percent of HHS poverty guidelines with more than 8 members add \$7,620 for each additional member.

Attachment 3

100 Percent, 110 Percent and 150 Percent of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Federal Poverty Guidelines Adjusted for LIHEAP Use by Puerto Rico.¹

The tables below show the calculations for the Federal Poverty Guidelines for optional use in (FFY) 2019 LIHEAP and mandatory use in FFY 2020 LIHEAP by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and recommended for the other territories.

Size of household	100 Percent of HHS Poverty Guidelines	110 Percent of HHS Poverty Guidelines	150 Percent of HHS Poverty Guidelines
1	\$4,752	\$5,229	\$7,128
2	\$6,256	\$6,883	\$9,384
3	\$7,760	\$8,537	\$11,640
4	\$9,264	\$10,191	\$13,896
5	\$10,768	\$11,845	\$16,152
6	\$12,272	\$13,499	\$18,408
7	\$13,776	\$15,153	\$20,664
8	\$15,280	\$16,807	\$22,920

For households at 110 percent of the adjusted HHS poverty guidelines with more than 8 members add \$1,654 for each additional member. For households at 150 percent of the

¹ HHS does not issue poverty guidelines for federal programs in the U.S. territories. HHS has indicated that federal programs are generally responsible for deciding whether to use the Continental United States poverty guidelines for the territories or follow some other procedure. See "Annual Update of the HHS Poverty Guidelines," Federal Register, Vol. 84, No. 22, February 01, 2019, pp. 1167-1168. However, the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services (OCS), Division of Energy Assistance (DEA) has developed an approach to adjust the HHS poverty guidelines for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico's use in determining income eligibility for LIHEAP. This approach involves using state median income data from the American Community Survey and from the Puerto Rico Community Survey to adjust the poverty guidelines of the Continental United States. Median income data is lacking for the other territories because a similar survey does not exist for those territories. Consequently, DEA recommends that those territories use the adjusted poverty guidelines developed annually for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in determining LIHEAP income eligibility.

adjusted HHS poverty guidelines with more than 8 members add \$2,256 for each additional member.