MDHS COMBINED MANUAL ML 126 07/2003 ASSISTANCE UNITS 0014

An assistance unit (also referred to as unit) is a person or group of people who live together whose needs, assets, and income you consider together, and who receive a single benefit from a cash assistance program or the Food Support Program.

Each program has its own rules to determine who is in an assistance unit.

Some people MUST be in the unit. Other people may choose whether or not to be in the unit. See §0014.03 (Determining the Assistance Unit), §0014.03.03 (Determining the Cash Assistance Unit), §0014.03.06 (Determining the Food Support Unit).

Certain people cannot be in a unit. See §0011 (Technical Eligibility), §0012 (Procedural Eligibility), §0014.06 (Who Must Be Excluded From Assistance Unit).

Some people may be members of the unit while they temporarily live apart from the rest of the unit. See §0014.09 (Assistance Units - Temporary Absence).

There may be people not in the unit whose income and assets you must consider when determining eligibility and benefits. See §0015.48 (Whose Assets to Consider), §0016 (Income From People Not in the Unit).



Advocacy and Technical Assistance and Support Division

COMBINED MANUAL ISSUE DATE 11/2006 INCOME FROM PEOPLE NOT IN THE UNIT 0016

Count the income of members of the unit according to the provisions of Chapter 17. You must also count all or part of the income of certain people outside an assistance unit in the unit's income eligibility tests and benefit determination. This is sometimes called income "deemed" available to a unit. Count this income even if the unit does not actually receive it. See program provisions below to determine whose income to count.

MFIP, DWP:

To determine gross income of people outside an assistance unit, follow §0017 (Determining Gross Income). To determine the net amount deemed from people outside the unit, apply the deductions and disregards described in the following subsections:

Disqualified unit members. These are mandatory members of the MFIP unit who are disqualified. See §0014.06 (Who Must Be Excluded From Assistance Unit), §0016.03 (Income From Disqualified Unit Members), §0025.24.06 (Disqualification for Fraud).

Parents of minor caregivers. These are parents of a minor caregiver who live with the unit. See §0016.18 (Income of Inel. Parent/Guard. of Minor Crgvr).

Sponsors of immigrants. These are people who signed an affidavit of support as an immigrant's condition of entry into the United States. Sponsors may or may not live with the unit. See §0016.21 (Income of Sponsors of Immigrants With I-134).

Ineligible parents and stepparents in the household of minor children. See §0016.15 (Income From Ineligible Parents), §0016.09 (Income From Ineligible Stepparents).

Do not deem the income of people who receive MSA or SSI. See §0017.15.45 (Income From RSDI and SSI).

Do not deem the income of a person who is away from home on military duty. See §0017.15.93 (Military Income) for information on how to determine countable military pay. Also see TE02.10.90 (Military Families Receiving FS, MFIP or DWP).

When the parent who normally resides with the family is living and working away from the home (or the family) and there is no marital or relationship breakdown, consider that parent a mandatory unit member. When a parent does not live in

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Minnesota he or she is considered an ineligible mandatory unit member because the parent is not physically present in Minnesota. Count total income of all unit



members, including the members away from the family, when determining the unit's eligibility and benefit level. For information on counting assets, see §0015.48 (Whose Assets to Consider).

FS: To determine the gross and net amount of income counted from people outside the unit, follow the instructions in the following subsections:

Disqualified mandatory unit members. See §0016.03 (Income From Disqualified Unit Members).

Sponsors of immigrants. See §0016.21 (Income of Sponsors of Immigrants With I-134), §0016.21.03 (Income of Sponsors of Immigrants With I-864).

Ineligible non-citizens. See §0016.33 (Income of Ineligible Non-Citizens). (Also see sections for parents, stepparents, etc.).

Unit members not applying for FS ("non-applicants"). See §0016.42 (Income of Non-Applicants).

Ineligible students. See §0015.06.03 (Availability of Assets with Multiple Owners), §0016.36 (Income of Ineligible Students).

Ineligible able-bodied adults. See §0015.06.03 (Availability of Assets With Multiple Owners), §0016.39 (Income of Ineligible Able-Bodied Adults).

A person who is away from home on military duty. See §0017.15.93 (Military Income) for information on how to determine countable military pay. Also see TE02.10.90 (Military Families Receiving FS, MFIP or DWP).

MSA: THE PROVISIONS OF THIS CHAPTER DO NOT APPLY TO SSI RECIPIENTS. If a client, other than an SSI recipient, lives with a spouse who also has a basis of eligibility and who applies for MSA, combine the couple's income and need when determining eligibility and benefit level. See §0022.12.01 (How to Calculate Benefit Level - FS/MSA/GRH).

To determine the net amount counted from people outside the unit, apply the deductions and disregards as described in the following sections:

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Ineligible spouses of unit members. See §0016.06 (Income From Ineligible Spouse of Unit Member).

Ineligible stepparents. See §0016.09 (Income From Ineligible Stepparents).

Ineligible parents of minor children. See §0016.15 (Income From Ineligible Parents).

Ineligible parents and guardians of minor caregivers. See §0016.18 (Income of Inel. Parent/Guard. of Minor Crgvr).

Sponsors of immigrants.

Parents who choose not to apply. See §0016.24 (Income of Parents Not



Applying).

Spouses who choose not to apply. See §0016.27 (Income From Spouses Who Choose Not to Apply).

GA: If people are not in the unit because they receive MFIP, do not count any of their income as available to the unit unless the amount of allocation from the MFIP participant is equal to or exceeds the GA standard of assistance. If it does, there is no GA eligibility.

To determine gross income of people outside the unit, follow §0017 (Determining Gross Income). To determine the net amount counted from people outside the unit, apply the deductions and disregards as described in the following subsections:

Disqualified mandatory unit members. See §0016.03 (Income From Disqualified Unit Members).

Ineligible spouses. See §0016.06 (Income From Ineligible Spouse of Unit Member).

Ineligible stepparents. Treat as parents. See §0016.09 (Income From Ineligible Stepparents).

Ineligible parents of adult units. See §0016.12 (Income From Parents of Adult GA Children).

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Sponsors of immigrants. See §0016.21 (Income of Sponsors of Immigrants With I-134).

Spouses who choose not to apply. See §0016.27 (Income From Spouses Who Choose Not to Apply).

Ineligible non-citizens. See §0016.33 (Income of Ineligible Non-Citizens). **GRH:** The provisions of this chapter do NOT apply to SSI recipients.

For non-SSI clients who are aged, blind, or disabled: To determine the net amount counted from people outside the unit, see §0016.21 (Income of Sponsors of Immigrants With I-134).

For all other adults: To determine the net amount counted from people outside the unit, see §0016.21 (Income of Sponsors of Immigrants With I-134).



MDHS COMBINED MANUAL ML 129 04/2004 DETERMINING THE ASSISTANCE UNIT 0014.03

All units consist of people who live together. Groups of people who live together may constitute 1 unit or more than 1 unit for each program. Apply the rules below to determine the units.

Also see §0014.06 (Who Must Be Excluded From Assistance Unit) for people who must be excluded from the unit because they are not eligible or are disqualified due to noncooperation with a program procedure.

People may remain part of a unit while physically absent under certain conditions. See §0014.09 (Assistance Units - Temporary Absence).

To determine who to include in an MFIP, DWP, MSA, GA, or GRH unit, see §0014.03.03 | (Determining the Cash Assistance Unit).

To determine which children to exclude from the MFIP cash portion, see §0014.06.03 (Family Cap).

To determine who to include in a food support unit, see §0014.03.06 (Determining the Food Support Unit).



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COMBINED MANUAL ISSUE DATE 05/2006 DETERMINING THE CASH ASSISTANCE UNIT 0014.03.03

People who apply for a program and are not eligible may be eligible for other assistance as a separate assistance unit. See §0014.03 (Determining the Assistance Unit). Also see §0014.06 (Who Must Be Excluded From Assistance Unit) for people who must be excluded from the unit because they are not eligible or are disqualified due to noncooperation with a program procedure.

MFIP: Some people MUST be in the same assistance unit when they live together. This manual calls these people "Mandatory Unit Members". To determine who meets the definition of family, see §0013.03 (MFIP Bases of Eligibility).

Mandatory members of the unit are:

- A child who meets the definition of a minor child and who has a parental caregiver(s). See MINOR CHILD in §0002.41 (Glossary: Medically Necessary...).
- The minor child's minor siblings, minor half-siblings, and minor step-sibling(s), whether natural or adopted. NOTE: There must be a relationship from the caregiver to the minor child for that child to be eligible for MFIP even if the child is a sibling or half-sibling to the other children in the HH.
- The minor child's natural, step-, or adoptive parent(s). If there is no parent in the minor child's home, see below for who may be optional caregivers.
- A pregnant woman.
- The spouse of a pregnant woman.
- A pregnant minor with no other children, who receives assistance with her parents, must remain as part of her parent's unit until after the birth of her child.

When the parent who normally resides with the family is living and working away from the home (or the family) and there is no marital or relationship breakdown, consider that parent a mandatory unit member. When a parent does not live in Minnesota, he or she is considered an ineligible mandatory unit member because the parent is not physically present in Minnesota. Count total income and assets of all unit members, including the members away from the family, when determining the unit's eligibility and benefit level. See §0015.48 (Whose Assets to Consider), §0016 (Income From People not in the Unit). This is not considered temporary absence.

Do NOT include the parent who is away from the home on active military duty as a



member of the assistance unit, but count any income and assets the person on active duty makes available to the family. See §0015.48 (Whose Assets to Consider), §0017.06 (Excluded Income), §0017.12.03 (Unearned Income), §0017.15.93 (Military Income).

Some people may choose to be in the assistance unit when they live with mandatory members of the unit. This manual calls these people "Optional Unit Members". Optional members are:

A non-parental eligible caregiver and the spouse of the non-parental eligible caregiver, if there is not a natural or adoptive parent or stepparent in the minor child's home. If an optional caregiver chooses to be in the unit, that person's spouse must also be in the unit. **Optional caregivers who choose not to be in the unit may be eligible to receive Food Support as a separate unit. See §0022.24** (FS Only Benefits for Mixed Households).

Any of the following adults who live with the child and give the child care and support may be an optional caregiver:

- Grandparent, great-grandparent, great-great-grandparent, or great-grea

- Sister or brother.
- Half-sister or half-brother.
- Step-sister or step-brother.
- Uncle, great-uncle, or great-great-uncle, or great-great-great-uncle.
- Aunt, great-aunt, or great-great-aunt, or great-great-great-aunt.
- First cousin or first cousin once removed.
- Niece or nephew.

- Legal custodian or legal guardian. See LEGAL CUSTODIAN and LEGAL GUARDIAN in §0002.37 (Glossary: Learning...). Legal custodians and legal guardians are not covered under federal dollars. The portion of the grant for the legal custodian or legal guardian must be paid from state dollars.

- A spouse or former spouse of any of the above even after the marriage ends by death or divorce.

NOTE: This may include individuals whose parental rights have been terminated but are now caregivers for their former children as long asthey meet any category of MFIP caregiver as listed in the sub-bullets above.

Other minor children who are not mandatory members, such as nieces, nephews, cousins, etc.



A relative foster care provider who is receiving federal, state, or local foster care payments and who meets the definition of an MFIP caregiver is eligible even if the only minor child living in the home is receiving foster care maintenance

payments. If the provider is living with a spouse, the spouse must also be included in the provider's unit. See §0020.09 (MFIP/DWP Assistance Standards).

A minor caregiver and his or her children must be a separate assistance unit. See §0012.06 (Requirements for Custodial Parents Under 20). When the parents of the minor caregiver also have other minor children, the parents and the other minor children are a separate unit.

Adult caregivers of a minor caregiver are also eligible to be a separate assistance unit from the minor caregiver and the minor caregiver's child when:

The adult caregiver or caregivers have no other minor children in the household. AND

The minor caregiver and the minor caregiver's child are living with the adult caregiver or caregivers.

AND

The minor caregiver and the minor caregiver's child receive MFIP, or would be eligible to receive MFIP, if they were not receiving SSI benefits.

For information on shared households, see §0020.09 (MFIP/DWP Assistance Standards).

Units may choose to "opt out" of the cash portion of the MFIP grant. See §0014.03.03.03 (Opting Out of MFIP Cash Portion).

MFIP and Food Support unit composition rules are different. Some households will have people who are part of the Food Support unit but are not part of the MFIP unit.

Follow the rules in §0011 (Technical Eligibility) and §0014.06 (Who Must Be Excluded From Assistance Unit) to identify members of the MFIP unit.

Follow the rules in §0014.03.06 (Determining the Food Support Unit) and §0014.06 (Who Must Be Excluded From Assistance Unit) to identify members of the Food Support unit.

Any person who would be a member of a Food Support unit but is not a member of the MFIP unit (as opposed to being disqualified or ineligible) may receive Food Support benefits if they are otherwise eligible (commonly referred to as "Uncle Harry" cases). See §0022.24 (FS Only Benefits for Mixed Households).

DWP: For information on family units eligible for DWP, see §0013.05 (DWP Bases of Eligibility).

Do NOT include the parent who is away from the home on active military duty as a member of the assistance unit, but count any income and assets the person on active



duty makes available to the family. See §0015.48 (Whose Assets to Consider), §0017.06 (Excluded Income), §0017.12.03 (Unearned Income), §0017.15.93 (Military Income). Also see TE02.10.90 (Military Families Receiving FS, MFIP or DWP).

However, when the parent who normally resides with the family is living and working away from the home (or the family) and there is no marital or relationship breakdown, consider that parent a mandatory unit member. When a parent does not live in Minnesota, he or she is considered an ineligible mandatory unit member because the parent is not physically present in Minnesota. Count total income and assets of all unit members, including the members away from the family, when determining the unit's eligibility and benefit level. See §0015.48 (Whose Assets to Consider), §0016 (Income From People not in the Unit). This is not considered temporary absence.

FS: See §0014.03.06 (Determining the Food Support Unit). Also see MFIP provisions above.

MSA, GRH:

Each participant is a separate assistance unit.

GA: A married couple who have no minor children or living apart from any children are an assistance unit.

A person who is unmarried and has no minor children or living apart from any spouse or children is an assistance unit.



Assistance and Support Division

MDHS COMBINED MANUAL ML 131 10/2004 WHO MUST BE EXCLUDED FROM ASSISTANCE UNIT 0014.06

See §0014.09 (Assistance Units - Temporary Absence) for a list of people who remain part of the unit while they are temporarily absent.

Some people must be excluded from the assistance unit because they are not eligible. See the program provisions below and any cross-referenced sections.

Some people are disqualified due to non-cooperation with a program procedure. See DISQUALIFIED PERSON in §0002.17 (Glossary: Displaced Homemaker...). Exclude people who are disqualified from a program from any assistance units for that program until the period of disqualification ends. Apply the disqualification either for a specified period of time or until the client complies with program requirements.

Non-citizens may or may not be eligible to be in the unit. See §0011.03 (Citizenship and Immigration Status).

A mandatory unit member who is disqualified cannot receive benefits, but the person's income must be deemed to the unit. See §0016 (Income From People Not in the Unit). **MFIP, DWP:**

Exclude the following people from all units:

SSI or MSA participants.

Children living with the unit and receiving local, state, or federal foster care or on-going monthly adoption assistance payments.

Children covered under the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children | (ICPC). See INTERSTATE COMPACT ON THE PLACEMENT OF |

CHILDREN in §0002.33 (Glossary: Independent...) |

Also exclude the following people who are disqualified until the period of disqualification ends:

People who fail to provide an SSN. See §0012.03 (Providing/Applying for an SSN).

Parole violators. See §0011.27.06 (Parole Violators).

Fleeing felons. See §0011.27.09 (Fleeing Felons).



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Also see §0014.06 (Who Must Be Excluded From Assistance Unit) for people who must be excluded from the unit because they are not eligible or due to disqualification due to noncooperation with a program procedure.

MFIP: See §0014.03.03 (Determining the Cash Assistance Unit), §0022.24 (FS Only Benefits for Mixed Households), TE02.08.143 (Food Support When MFIP is Closed).

DWP, MSA, GA, GRH:

No provisions

FS: With the EXCEPTIONS noted below, the following rules determine FS units: A person living alone.

A person living with others, but who customarily buys and prepares food separately.

People who live together and who customarily buy and prepare food together. Consider the following people to customarily buy and prepare food together, even if they do not do so.

Spouses who live together must always be in the same unit.

Children and stepchildren who live with their parent(s) and are under age 22 must be in the same Food Support unit as their parent(s), regardless of whether they also live with their spouse and/or children or purchase and prepare food separately.

Children under the age of 18 who are under the parental control of a unit member must be in the unit with that member.

Foster children and adults who live with their foster parent(s) may be excluded from the unit, but if they apply for FS they must be in the same unit as their foster parent(s).

Children who receive Relative Custody Assistance grants and who live with their relative custodian(s) may be excluded from the unit, but if they apply for FS they must be in the same unit as their relative custodian(s).

NOTE: Any person, other than a person noted in the 5 bullets above, who is too disabled to buy and prepare his/her food separately from those with whom he/she lives, may be certified as a separate unit. Consider the person to be an individual living with others, but who customarily buys and prepares food separately.

EXCEPTIONS:

Exclude all people listed in §0014.06 (Who Must Be Excluded From Assistance



Unit).

People who are 60 or older and permanently disabled and their spouses who live with them may be certified separately from others with whom they live, if they are unable to buy and prepare food separately from the others and if the gross income of the others is not greater than 165% of the federal poverty guidelines. See §0012.15 (Incapacity and Disability Determinations), §0019.09 (GIT for Separate Elderly Disabled Units).

A boarder who pays reasonable compensation to a member of a unit for meals. Reasonable compensation is the amount of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) for more than 2 meals a day, or 2/3 of the TFP for 2 or fewer meals. See §0022.12.01 (How to Calculate Benefit Level - FS/MSA/GRH). If possible, count only the amount the boarder pays for food. Do not certify a boarder as a separate unit. Do not consider as a boarder any parent, child, spouse, or any child under 18 who is under the parental control of a unit member.

A roomer who compensates a household for lodging, but does not receive meals, may participate as a separate unit.

Foster children and adults (including siblings) under the foster care of a unit member may be excluded from the unit.

Children receiving Relative Custody Assistance grants may be excluded from the unit.

Each woman, or woman with children, living in a battered women's shelter is an individual unit regardless of how food is purchased and meals are prepared.

Residents of institutions as listed in the FS EXCEPTIONS in §0011.12 (Institutional Residence) are certified as 1-person units or grouped together according to relationship policies.

A personal care live-in attendant who resides with a unit to provide medical, housekeeping, child care or similar personal services may be certified separately even if the attendant purchases and prepares food with the people for whom the attendant cares. The attendant cannot be a child or spouse of the people needing the care.



COMBINED MANUAL ISSUE DATE 11/2006 INCOME FROM PEOPLE NOT IN THE UNIT 0016

Count the income of members of the unit according to the provisions of Chapter 17. You must also count all or part of the income of certain people outside an assistance unit in the unit's income eligibility tests and benefit determination. This is sometimes called income "deemed" available to a unit. Count this income even if the unit does not actually receive it. See program provisions below to determine whose income to count.

MFIP, **DWP**:

To determine gross income of people outside an assistance unit, follow §0017 (Determining Gross Income). To determine the net amount deemed from people outside the unit, apply the deductions and disregards described in the following subsections:

Disqualified unit members. These are mandatory members of the MFIP unit who are disqualified. See §0014.06 (Who Must Be Excluded From Assistance Unit), §0016.03 (Income From Disqualified Unit Members), §0025.24.06 (Disqualification for Fraud).

Parents of minor caregivers. These are parents of a minor caregiver who live with the unit. See §0016.18 (Income of Inel. Parent/Guard. of Minor Crgvr).

Sponsors of immigrants. These are people who signed an affidavit of support as an immigrant's condition of entry into the United States. Sponsors may or may not live with the unit. See §0016.21 (Income of Sponsors of Immigrants With I-134).

Ineligible parents and stepparents in the household of minor children. See §0016.15 (Income From Ineligible Parents), §0016.09 (Income From Ineligible Stepparents).

Do not deem the income of people who receive MSA or SSI. See §0017.15.45 (Income From RSDI and SSI).

Do not deem the income of a person who is away from home on military duty. See §0017.15.93 (Military Income) for information on how to determine countable military pay. Also see TE02.10.90 (Military Families Receiving FS, MFIP or DWP).

When the parent who normally resides with the family is living and working away from the home (or the family) and there is no marital or relationship breakdown, consider that parent a mandatory unit member. When a parent does not live in Minnesota he or she is considered an ineligible mandatory unit member because the parent is not physically present in Minnesota. Count total income of all unit members, including the members away from the family, when determining the unit's eligibility and benefit level. For information on counting assets, see



§0015.48 (Whose Assets to Consider).

FS: To determine the gross and net amount of income counted from people outside the unit, follow the instructions in the following subsections:

Disqualified mandatory unit members. See §0016.03 (Income From Disqualified Unit Members).

Sponsors of immigrants. See §0016.21 (Income of Sponsors of Immigrants With I-134), §0016.21.03 (Income of Sponsors of Immigrants With I-864).

Ineligible non-citizens. See §0016.33 (Income of Ineligible Non-Citizens). (Also see sections for parents, stepparents, etc.).

Unit members not applying for FS ("non-applicants"). See §0016.42 (Income of Non-Applicants).

Ineligible students. See §0015.06.03 (Availability of Assets with Multiple Owners), §0016.36 (Income of Ineligible Students).

Ineligible able-bodied adults. See §0015.06.03 (Availability of Assets With Multiple Owners), §0016.39 (Income of Ineligible Able-Bodied Adults). A person who is away from home on military duty. See §0017.15.93 (Military Income) for information on how to determine countable military pay. Also see TE02.10.90 (Military Families Receiving FS, MFIP or DWP).

MSA: THE PROVISIONS OF THIS CHAPTER DO NOT APPLY TO SSI RECIPIENTS. If a client, other than an SSI recipient, lives with a spouse who also has a basis of eligibility and who applies for MSA, combine the couple's income and need when determining eligibility and benefit level. See §0022.12.01 (How to Calculate Benefit Level - FS/MSA/GRH).

To determine the net amount counted from people outside the unit, apply the deductions and disregards as described in the following sections:

Ineligible spouses of unit members. See §0016.06 (Income From Ineligible Spouse of Unit Member).

Îneligible stepparents. See §0016.09 (Income From Ineligible Stepparents). Ineligible parents of minor children. See §0016.15 (Income From Ineligible Parents).

Ineligible parents and guardians of minor caregivers. See §0016.18 (Income of Inel. Parent/Guard. of Minor Crgvr).

Sponsors of immigrants.

Parents who choose not to apply. See §0016.24 (Income of Parents Not Applying).



Spouses who choose not to apply. See §0016.27 (Income From Spouses Who Choose Not to Apply).

GA: If people are not in the unit because they receive MFIP, do not count any of their income as available to the unit unless the amount of allocation from the MFIP participant is equal to or exceeds the GA standard of assistance. If it does, there is no GA eligibility.

To determine gross income of people outside the unit, follow §0017 (Determining Gross Income). To determine the net amount counted from people outside the unit, apply the deductions and disregards as described in the following subsections:

Disqualified mandatory unit members. See §0016.03 (Income From Disqualified Unit Members).

Ineligible spouses. See §0016.06 (Income From Ineligible Spouse of Unit Member).

Ineligible stepparents. Treat as parents. See §0016.09 (Income From Ineligible Stepparents).

Ineligible parents of adult units. See §0016.12 (Income From Parents of Adult GA Children).

Sponsors of immigrants. See §0016.21 (Income of Sponsors of Immigrants With I-134).

Spouses who choose not to apply. See §0016.27 (Income From Spouses Who Choose Not to Apply).

Ineligible non-citizens. See §0016.33 (Income of Ineligible Non-Citizens).

GRH: The provisions of this chapter do NOT apply to SSI recipients.

For non-SSI clients who are aged, blind, or disabled: To determine the net amount counted from people outside the unit, see §0016.21 (Income of Sponsors of Immigrants With I-134).

For all other adults: To determine the net amount counted from people outside the unit, see §0016.21 (Income of Sponsors of Immigrants With I-134).

