

## **Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance Program (FSSA)**

Authorized and enacted by Congress in 2001.

- Voluntary Program.
- Increases BAS by amount that renders a member's household ineligible for food stamps
- FSSA entitlement will not exceed \$500.00 per month.

### **Eligibility based on . . .**

- Household size
- Total income (Military and Household)

The first Field Grade officer in the Chain of Command will certify FSSA

Payment of FSSA is effective on the date of receipt by the Certifying Officer

### **FSSA Program requires re-certification when:**

- Household income increases by \$100.00 or more
- Household size changes (decrease or increase)
- Soldier promotion or PCS
- Annually (1 Feb of each year)

### **USDA Definition of Household**

An individual who lives alone or who, while living with others, customarily purchases food and prepares meals for home consumption separate and apart from others. Household members should be authorized family members/dependents.

- A group of individuals who live together and customarily purchase food and prepare meals together for home consumption
- Spouses who live together
- Parents and their children 21 years of age or younger who live together
- Children (excluding foster children) under 18 who live with and are under parental control of a person other than their parent
  
- In the case of joint custody, the child may be counted as a part of the household when 50% or more of the time is spent with the SM during the month.

NOTE: An individual may not be counted as a member of more than one household at the same time.

## **Household Income Defined**

### **What is included?**

- Military income
  - Basic pay
  - Basic allowance for subsistence
  - Basic allowance for housing or cash equivalent if quarters provided
  - All bonuses and special incentive pay except those specifically listed as excluded
- Wages, earnings, & salaries
- Commissions and tips
- Self-employment income
- Supplemental Security Income
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Interest or dividend income
- Alimony and child support received
- Unemployment and workers compensation
- Veterans' benefits
- Annuities, pensions, & other retirements
- Other payments unless covered in the excluded box

### **What is excluded?**

- Income of students under 18 years of age
- Loans, grants, and scholarships for post-secondary students
- Income tax refunds
- Insurance settlements
- Payments from federal earned income tax credits
- Federal energy assistance payments (except those made under TANF)
- HUD utility reimbursements
- Reimbursement for medical or dental care (if it does not exceed actual expenses)
- Value of food stamps
- Overseas cost of living allowance
- CONUS cost of living allowance
- Family separation housing allowance
- Travel and transportation allowances
- Clothing allowances

### **FSSA Process**

- The application for FSSA is web-based and can be found using the URL:  
<HTTPS://WWW.DMDC.OSD.MIL/FSSA>
- Soldiers who believe they are eligible for the entitlement may go to the website and fill out the on-line form to determine whether or not they might qualify for FSSA
- Soldiers that believe they may be entitled to FSSA should visit their nearest Army Community Service Financial Counselor for pre-screening assistance.
- When the soldier is eligible for FSSA, the ACS Counselor prints the form and recommends payment to the certifying official.
- The soldier then takes a copy of the application and supporting documentation to his Personnel Administration Center (PAC).
- The PAC prepares a DA Form 4187, Personnel Action Request Form and forwards the package to the soldier's first field grade officer in the chain of command for certification.

- Once the application is certified, the PAC will forward the approved DA 4187 to the DMPO/Finance Battalion.
- The Finance Battalion will forward all requests to DFAS-IN for processing and payment.
- All soldiers are required to re-certify annually in February.

### **ACS Role**

- Prescreen soldiers to determine eligibility
- Review paperwork
- Assist soldiers in completing application
- Estimate amount of FSSA
- During the application process counsel soldier about . . .
- Participation in FSSA could affect other entitlements I.e., WIC, food stamps, child care fees
- Re-certification
- Purpose of FSSA
- Penalty clause
- Explain options (I.e. remain on food stamps)