



MEPD and TW Bulletin 25-23

Date: March 05, 2026

To: State and Regional Operations Supervisors and Staff
Program Managers
Regional Directors
Policy Attorneys
Hearings Officers

From: Access and Eligibility Services Program Policy
State Office 2106

Subject: **Revised** - Mandatory Shelter Costs Verification

The information in this bulletin will be included in a future handbook revision. Until the handbook is updated, staff must use the information in this bulletin. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures.

Active bulletins are posted on the following websites:

- [Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities Handbook \(MEPDH\)](https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins) at <https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins>;
- [Texas Works Handbook \(TWH\)](https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins) at <https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins>.

Revised - Mandatory Shelter Expense Verification

Background

Section 1113 of the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) 310, Quality Control Review Handbook, identifies situations in which deductions must be disallowed when households fail to report or verify expenses. The following new policy changes are intended to improve the Quality Control Payment Error Rate (PER) and reduce errors related to unverified housing costs.

Current Policy

SNAP

When processing a household-reported or agency generated address change, update the physical and mailing address, if applicable. Send Form H0603, Shelter Cost Notice, if shelter expense information is not provided with the change of address. Do not send [Form H1020](#), Request for Information or Action, for shelter expenses or remove the shelter deduction if the household fails to provide verification. This applies regardless of the household's streamlined reporting requirements, the age of the change, or any conflicts with information previously used to certify the case. If the household:

- Responds to Form H0603, update the shelter expense information on the case.
- Does not respond to Form H0603, do not update the household's shelter expenses. Address shelter expenses at the next redetermination. ([MEPD and TW Bulletin 25-05, Flexibility: SNAP Change of Address, released on March 10, 2025](#))

Allowable shelter costs include rent, mortgage payments and other continuing charges leading to ownership of a property, such as mandatory maintenance and homeowner association fees. To verify shelter costs, accept client statement unless information provided by the household appears inconsistent, incomplete, or questionable. A list of acceptable verification sources can be found under [TWH A-1441, Verification Sources](#). If requested shelter expense verification is not provided, do not deny the Eligibility Determination Group (EDG) and disallow the deduction. If the requested shelter expense verification is subsequently provided, use change reporting guidelines to budget the deduction. ([TWH A-1410 General Policy](#), [A-1440, Verification Requirements](#) and [A-1429.1, Allowable Shelter Costs](#))

New Policy

SNAP

Verify shelter costs at application and redetermination and do not accept client statement as a verification source. This policy change applies to all allowable shelter

costs including rent, mortgage payments and other continuing charges leading to ownership of a property, such as mandatory maintenance and homeowner association fees. A list of acceptable verification sources can be found under TWH A-1441, Verification Sources. **Utility expenses are not included in this change. Follow existing utility expense verification and budgeting policy.**

If the household does not provide acceptable verification by the Form H1020 due date, disallow the shelter cost when determining eligibility and benefit amount.

Note: Verification of shelter costs is required for homeless households reporting shelter costs. Homeless households or those living in temporary housing arrangements who claim shelter costs will not be excluded from the mandatory verification requirement.

Current Status of Verification Documents

Shelter expense verification must be dated within 60 days from the file date. If staff establish a new file date after a failure to provide closes the SNAP edg, the 60-day timeframe starts from the new file date. Staff must confirm that the verification reflects the household's current address and rent or mortgage amount.

Staff may use an existing lease agreement, already imaged in the case record, without re-pending the case when all of the following are true:

- The lease is still active and has not expired;
- The lease shows the same address the household reported;
- The household confirms the rent amount has not changed;
- The lease covers the current certification period.

If the lease does not meet these criteria, staff must request updated verification.

When processing a household-reported or agency generated address change, continue to follow MEPD and TW Bulletin 25-05 and update the physical and mailing address, if applicable. Send Form H0603, Shelter Cost Notice, if shelter expense information is not provided with the change of address. This applies regardless of the household's streamlined reporting requirements, the age of the change, or any conflicts with information previously used to certify the case. Do not send Form H1020 for shelter expenses or remove the shelter deduction if the household fails to provide verification. If the household:

- Responds to Form H0603, update the shelter expense information on the case.
- Does not respond to the Form H0603, do not update the household's shelter expenses. Address shelter expenses at the next redetermination.

Automation

Automation changes are not required.

Correspondence

Changes to Form H1010-R, Your Texas Works Benefits – Renewal Form, and Form H0011-R, Texas Simplified Application Project (TSAP) for SNAP Food Benefits Renewal will be implemented June 20, 2026.

Handbook

Updates to the MEPDH are not required.

The TWH is currently scheduled to be updated in the October 2026 revision.

Training

Training is not required.

Effective Date

This policy is effective with the release of this bulletin; **including applications, redeterminations that were initiated and not yet disposed before the bulletin's release.** If shelter costs were previously accepted, based on client statement during case initiation, staff may need to re-pend the case and obtain acceptable verification of shelter expenses before allowing the deduction.