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*California's protection and advocacy system*

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## **MEMORANDUM**

**April 9, 2009**

### **SSI Benefits are Being Cut**

On May 1, 2009, and again on July 1, 2009, Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) rates will be cut.<sup>1</sup>

On May 1, 2009, the benefit for an individual senior (age 65 or older) and person with a disability will be cut from \$907 per month to \$870 per month. The benefit for a married couple will be cut from \$1,579 per month to \$1,524 per month. These new rates are the rates that were in effect in December 2008.

On July 1, 2009, the benefit for an individual senior (age 65 or older) or person with a disability will be cut an additional amount from \$870 per month to \$850 per month. The benefit for a married couple will be cut from \$1,524 per month to \$1,489 per month. This is an additional 2.3% cutback below the May 2009 levels, or \$20 for an aged/disabled individual and \$35 for a married couple.

Benefits are being cut because of state budget cuts. The California Legislature passed a state budget containing these cuts and the Governor signed it. These cuts have been enacted into law. The Social Security Administration (SSA) is now sending out notices notifying recipients of the

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<sup>1</sup> There will be no cut in the Non-Medical Out-of-Home Care (Board and care) rate.

May 1 cuts. SSA will send additional notices, probably in June, notifying recipients of the July 1 cuts.

The charts below give a detailed breakdown of the benefit cuts.

SSI/SSP Payment Rates—Eligible Individual				
	Dec 1, 2008	January 1, 2009	May 1, 2009	July 1, 2009
Independent Living/ Aged or disabled	\$870	\$907	\$870	\$850
Independent Living/ Blind <sup>2</sup>	\$935	\$972	\$935	\$913
Independent Living/ Child under age 18 <sup>3</sup>	\$756	\$793	\$756	\$739
Independent Living/ W/out cooking facilities <sup>4</sup>	\$ 954	\$991	\$ 954	\$934
Non-medical out-of- home care facility <sup>5</sup>	\$1,049	\$1,086	\$1,086	\$1,086

<sup>2</sup> Includes children under age 18 who are blind.

<sup>3</sup> Disabled minor under 18 living with a parent. Does not include children who are blind. The SSP payment level for children who are blind is the same as for adults who are blind.

<sup>4</sup> Based on aged/disabled SSP rate plus Restaurant Meals Allowance (RMA) of \$84 for an individual and \$168 for a married couple. The February 19, 2009 budget bills *do not* reduce the \$84 and \$168 RMA amounts. These amounts did not increase on January 1, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> I.e., residential care facility (board and care), community care facility, foster family home, or certified family home. The 2009 SSP payment rate includes Room and Board payment of \$466, Care and Supervision payment of \$495 max. to \$400 min., and Personal and Incidental Needs allowance (P&I) of \$125 min. to \$220 max. (The P&I amount for the recipient is always the minimum amount because the Care and Supervision payment for the facility is always the maximum amount.) The February 19, 2009 budget bills *do not* reduce or change these amounts.

SSI/SSP Payment Rates—Eligible Individual				
	Dec 1, 2008	January 1, 2009	May 1, 2009	July 1, 2009
Medicaid-funded <sup>6</sup> medical facility	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50

SSI/SSP Payment Rates—Eligible Married Couple				
	Dec 1, 2008	January 1, 2009	May 1, 2009	July 1, 2009
Independent Living/ Both aged or disabled	\$1,524	\$1,579	\$1,524	\$1,489
Independent Living/ Both blind	\$1,751	\$1,806	\$1,751	\$1,711
Independent Living/ One aged or disabled/ One blind	\$1,666	\$1,721	\$1,666	\$1,628
Independent Living/ W/out cooking facilities <sup>7</sup>	\$ 1,692	\$1,747	\$ 1,692	\$ 1,657
Non-medical out-of- home care facility <sup>8</sup>	\$2,098	\$2,172	\$2,172	\$2,172

<sup>6</sup> There has never been an automatic COLA for the Medicaid-funded facility rates.

<sup>7</sup> Based on aged/disabled SSP rate plus Restaurant Meals Allowance (RMA) of \$84 for an individual and \$168 for a married couple. The February 19, 2009 budget bills *do not* reduce the \$84 and \$168 RMA amounts.

<sup>8</sup> I.e., residential care facility (board and care), community care facility, foster family home, or certified family home. The SSP payment rate includes Room and Board payment of \$466, Care and Supervision payment of \$495 max. to \$400 min., and Personal and Incidental Needs allowance (P&I) of \$125 min. to \$220 max. (The P&I amount for the recipient is always the minimum amount because the Care and Supervision payment for the facility is always the maximum amount.) The February 19, 2009 budget bills *do not* reduce or change these amounts.

SSI/SSP Payment Rates—Eligible Married Couple				
	Dec 1, 2008	January 1, 2009	May 1, 2009	July 1, 2009
Medicaid-funded medical facility <sup>9</sup>	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100

Disability Rights California opposed all of these cuts. They were enacted over this organization’s objections, and the objections of many other advocates. We are disappointed that these cuts were enacted. They will cause a hardship for many people.

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<sup>9</sup> There has never been an automatic COLA for the Medicaid-funded facility rates.