



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY KINSLEY • Secretary

JOYCE MASSEY-SMITH, MPA
Director, Division of Aging and Adult Services

February 28, 2023

ATTENTION: Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organizations (LME/MCOs)

SUBJECT: Important Legislative and Policy Changes for the Special Assistance In-Home (SAIH) Program

REQUIRED ACTION: Information Only Time Sensitive Immediate

As per North Carolina Session Law 2022-74 and effective January 1, 2023 (and each January 1 thereafter), Special Assistance rates shall be adjusted using the federally approved Social Security cost-of-living change (if any) effective for the applicable year. The federally approved Social Security cost-of-living (COLA) adjustment effective for 2023 is 8.7%. As a result, the following Special Assistance rate changes will occur:

- Effective January 1, 2023, the monthly **Basic Rate** for Special Assistance shall be \$1,285.00, and the SA Basic Maintenance Amount shall be \$1,355.00
- Effective January 1, 2023, the monthly **Enhanced Rate** (previously known as the SCU Rate) for Special Assistance shall be \$1,647.00, and the SA Enhanced Maintenance Amount shall be \$1,717.00. Note: In order for an individual to be eligible for the enhanced rate, there must be diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or dementia annotated on the FL-2. SAIH beneficiaries without a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or dementia are budgeted with the SA Basic rate. SAIH beneficiaries with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or dementia are budgeted with the SA Enhanced rate.
- As enacted by statute in North Carolina Session Law 2021-180 and Session Law 2022-74, effective January 1, 2023, the standard amount of Special Assistance In-Home (SAIH) payment is the same as it would be if the applicant or beneficiary were in an adult care home. The SAIH program will accept the applicant or beneficiary statement that the standard payment amount (the full amount a SAIH a/b is eligible for) is needed to meet all of the necessary expenses of safely remaining at home.
- This change in statute means that SAIH applicants and beneficiaries will no longer receive an Adult Services economic assessment, thus negating the use of SAIH Adjusted Payments or use of Adjusted Payment evidence in NC FAST. This is applicable immediately and affects both SAIH cases and SAIH/TCL cases.

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Special Assistance policy and forms will be updated to indicate this change and a related Change Notice issued at a later date.

Please see DCDL# DAAS_AS_05 regarding the SAIH adjusted payment mass change projected to occur in NC FAST on the evening of February 28, 2023.

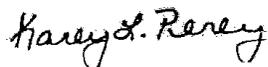
SOCIAL SECURITY AND VETERANS' CHANGES DUE TO COLA ADJUSTMENT

1. RSDI/SSI - Effective January 1, 2023, recipients of RSDI and/or SSI will receive an 8.7% COLA increase in their monthly benefits.
2. SSI Federal Benefit Rate (FBR) - Effective January 1, 2023, the SSI FBR for an individual will increase to \$914.00 per month.
3. VA Compensation and Benefits - Effective January 1, 2023, most recipients of VA compensation and benefits will receive an 8.7% COLA increase in their monthly benefit.

The COLA mass change process in NC FAST for Special Assistance facility cases and for Special Assistance In-Home (SAIH) cases took place in the normal manner. Both NC FAST and DAAS issued communications regarding the COLA mass change process.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact the Special Assistance listserv at specialassistance@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,



Karey Perez
Adult Services Section Chief
Division of Aging and Adult Services

KP/tg/wb/pg

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