

**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA  
February 1, 2018**

**IM 5324**

**TO:** County Social Service Directors  
Economic Assistance Policy Regional Representatives  
Economic Assistance Policy Quality Control Reviewers

**FROM:** Michele Gee, Director, Economic Assistance

**SUBJECT:** VISTA Income

**PROGRAMS:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

**EFFECTIVE:** Immediately

**SECTIONS**

**AFFECTED:** Earned Income 430-05-50-20-05

An error was discovered in the earned income policy. AmeriCorps VISTA income is countable earned income when an individual is **not** receiving SNAP at the time they take their oath to join.

If the individual was receiving SNAP at the time they took their oath to join; the income is excluded.

### **Earned Income 430-05-50-20-05**

Earned income is profit from activities in which an individual is engaged through employment. Earned income must entail personal involvement and effort on the part of the applicant or recipient.

The following types of earned income are countable:

1. Wages and salaries including:

- Paid sick, vacation and holiday leave

**EXCEPTION:**

**Sick, vacation and holiday leave is considered unearned income if the individual is no longer employed and it is paid from employer funds.**

- Commissions
  - Wages garnished by the employer
  - Advances are counted when received
  - Tips. When tips are not shown on wage stub, the recipient's statement as to the amount of tips received each month is adequate if consistent with place, type of employment and number of hours worked.
  - Bonuses
    - Recurring bonuses are counted. At application or review, the worker must verify the last bonus received. The verified amount is then prorated over the period of time intended to cover and used in the new review period.
    - Non-recurring bonuses are excluded.
2. Self-employment income
  3. Employment Contracts
  4. Wages received by an individual or Qualified Service Provider (QSP) for providing services under Family Home Care, when the individual is employed by an agency. (When an individual or QSP is not an employee of an agency, the income is considered self-employment.)
  5. Short term or long term disability or loss of time insurance payments for illness or injury paid by the employer.

**EXCEPTION:**

**Short term or long term disability or loss of time insurance payments for illness or injury paid by someone other than the employer is unearned income.**

6. In-kind income is paid or given in goods, credit, including in-store credit or services instead of money. In-kind income is considered earned income when the individual has the option to receive a wage or monetary payment.

The value of the goods received may have been verbally negotiated or specified in a written document and must be verified. Otherwise a mutually acceptable market value must be negotiated.

**Example:**

An individual working as an apartment manager receives a \$330 deduction from the rent. The \$330 deduction would be counted as income when the employee has the option to receive payment of \$330.

7. Income earned by higher education students from internships, or stipends, teaching assistantships, or fellowships which **require work participation** to receive the income.

**Exception:**

**Wages earned under the Federal or State Work Study Program are excluded.**

8. Military Pay, including:
  - a. Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS) and Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance (FSSA) for members of the armed forces
  - b. Variable Housing Allowances (VHA), Basic Allowance for Quarters (BAQ) and Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) paid to military personnel for housing costs
  - c. Military re-enlistment bonus.

If a household receives up to 50% of the bonus amount as an initial payment with the remainder paid in equal annual installments, the initial payment and the annual installments are annualized.

If a household receives the bonus as a lump-sum payment, it is excluded as a non-recurring lump-sum payment.

9. Wages received by an individual enrolled in a Job Corps Program, when the wages are not provided by the Job Corps Program.
10. Sheltered workshop employment - An organization that employs people with disabilities.
11. Earnings from on-the-job training
12. Compensation for jury duty
13. Compensation for plasma donations, participation in medical studies, etc.
14. Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance/Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance wage subsidy, provided under the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Extension Act of 2011. This wage subsidy is paid to eligible workers over the age of 50 and pays a portion of the individual's wage (the difference between the individual's new wage and old wage).
15. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) or Youthbuild earnings.

**EXCEPTION:**

**Earnings of individuals participating in on-the-job training programs under Title I of WIOA or Youthbuild who are under the age of 19 and under parental control are not counted.**

16. AmeriCorps VISTA income when an individual is not receiving SNAP at the time they take their oath to join.
17. Census Income.

**If you have any questions, please contact your Regional Representative.**