

INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance (FSSA)

1. PURPOSE. To provide information regarding a new allowance.

2. DISCUSSION.

a. The Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization for Fiscal Year 2001 enacted a new allowance to get soldiers off food stamps by providing them a monetary allowance that raises them above the gross income threshold set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. FSSA is a supplement to the Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS), and became effective 1 May 2001.

b. FSSA is a voluntary program. Members must apply and be certified in order to receive the FSSA payment. Soldiers are eligible for FSSA if their gross income, together with the gross income of the soldier's household, does not exceed 130 percent of the poverty line as defined by the Department of Agriculture. The Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) or, in the case of a soldier living in government quarters, the value of the housing, must be counted as income for FSSA eligibility. Since the value of Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) is included in the income calculation (even if the soldier lives in government quarters), it is expected that very few USAREUR soldiers will satisfy the criteria for receiving FSSA.

c. Soldiers who believe they are entitled to FSSA should visit their nearest Army Community Service (ACS) financial counselor for pre-screening. ACS financial counselors will assist soldiers with the application process.

d. Once soldiers have completed the pre-screening with financial counselors, they will take a copy of the application and supporting documentation to their Personnel Administration Center (PAC) where the PAC will prepare a DA Form 4187, Personnel Action Request, and forward it with the application and supporting documentation to the first field grade officer in the soldier's chain of command for certification. After certification, the original copy of the DA Form 4187 will be provided to the servicing field finance activity in order to start the allowance.

e. Eligibility for FSSA terminates when soldiers are promoted or have received FSSA for 12 months. Soldiers may reapply if they believe that they are still eligible. In addition, all soldiers receiving FSSA must re-certify (1) when the monthly household income increases by \$100 or more; (2) there is any decrease in household size; (3) the soldier is promoted; (4) when permanently changing stations; or (5) annually (February of each year). Recertifications must be performed within 30 days before or after one of the above listed events. When soldiers do not reapply within 30 days after certification has lapsed, re-certification shall be treated as an initial application.

Approved: Stephen L. Bridges, Director, Finance and Accounting Policy Date: 29 June 01