

Which Shelter Rate Should I Choose?

You have a choice between two shelter rates: a base rate for your family size plus the actual amount you pay for utilities (called the Utilities Excluded Shelter Rate) or a higher amount that stays the same regardless of what you pay for utilities (called the Utilities Included Shelter Rate.)

<u>Utilities Excluded Shelter Rate</u>	<u>Utilities Included Shelter Rate</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may be better off with this option if you are living in a house or if you have higher than average utility costs. • You will receive a lower amount for rent, but you will also receive an amount equal to your actual utility costs. • You may be eligible to have your utility bills paid directly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may be better off with this option if you are living in an apartment or if you have lower than average utility costs. • You will receive a higher amount for rent, but you will not get any additional money even if your actual utility bills go up. • You will be responsible to pay your own utility bills. • You will be responsible for dealing with any arrears if you don't or are unable to pay your full utility bills.

- If you decide to receive the "utilities included" rate, you should check with your utility company to find out what the average cost for your unit is. This will help you plan for your future utility costs.
- Many utility companies will allow you to set up direct billing if you want.
- At the time when you decide to move to the "utilities included" rate, you should provide any utility bills to your EIA case worker so they can do a final reconciliation for you.
- It's important to note that after July 1 2016, the decision to receive the "utilities included" rate is permanent, even if you move.
- Your individual circumstances may vary from the examples given in this document and you should talk to your case coordinator about your situation to help you make a decision.
- Even with helpful information from staff, the decision about which shelter rate to choose is yours.

Consent to transition to **Utilities Included** EIA Shelter Rate

By signing this form, I am giving EIA permission to change my EIA shelter allowance to the "utilities included" rate. By signing this form, I confirm that I understand the following:

- The utilities included shelter rate is a flat-rate amount to be used to cover the cost of my utilities and rent.
- The amount of my utilities included shelter rate is determined by my family size and will be adjusted to reflect any changes to my family size that occur.
- I will be responsible to pay my own utility bills as EIA does not pay utilities directly for those receiving the utilities included shelter rate.
- EIA will not conduct a utility reconciliation or provide any extra money if my utility costs are higher than the utilities included shelter rate given to me.
- I am responsible for managing any arrears or payment plans resulting from arrears with the utility companies.
- Effective July 1 2016, the decision to move to the utilities included rate is a permanent decision that cannot be reversed.
- I have read and understood the information in this document.

Signature _____
(Applicant)

Signature _____
(Second Adult)

Signed on _____ (dd/mm/yyyy)