

From: [DCF BWF Work Programs Help Desk](#)
To: [DCF DL DFES BWF W-2 Agency CARES Coordinators](#); [DCF DL DFES BWF W-2 Agency Directors](#); [DCF DL DFES BWF TJ TMJ](#)
Cc: [DCF DL DFES BWF Supervisors](#); [DCF DL DFES BWF W-2 REGIONAL STAFF](#); [DCF DL DFES PTT W-2 Staff](#)
Subject: COVID-19 Policy Adjustments
Date: Tuesday, May 26, 2020 11:34:16 AM
Attachments: [Consolidated Policies Ninth Round.docx](#)

Hello.

Attached is the most recent Work Program Policy and Automation Adjustments from BWF. Please be sure to share this information with your staff and alter case management procedures accordingly. This email and the attached document will be posted to the BWF Work Programs Help Desk Home Page located here: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/w2/partners/toolbox/helpdesk> and can be found in the Common Requests section under **COVID-19 Information**. The Program Policy and Automation Adjustment link on this page is now dated instead of labeled as “current” so you will have a reference to when the update occurred.

If you have any questions regarding the updated policies, please contact the W-2 Policy Mailbox at DCFw2PolicyQuestions@wisconsin.gov or the Help Desk at BWFworkprogramsHD@wisconsin.gov as appropriate. For contract questions, please contact Linda Richardson at Linda1.Richardson@wisconsin.gov. Your regional staff are also available for questions.

Thank you!

Jes Moss

Human Services Area Coordinator

Bureau of Working Families

Division of Family and Economic Security

Department of Children and Families

201 E Washington Ave, A200

Madison, WI 53703

T: 608.422.6311

F: 608.261.6376

E: Jessica.moss@wisconsin.gov

COVID-19 UPDATES

COVID-19 continues to impact many families throughout Wisconsin, including those served by the Department of Children and Families through our programs. These impacts come in the form of illness, missed work caused by illness and economic disruptions, lack of childcare due to center closures, K-12 school and early learning closures, and reduced activity opportunities due to worksite closures. During this uncertain and challenging time, we view the COVID-19 pandemic as an event outside of the control of our participants and therefore access to our programs is critical to the COVID-19 emergency response. For that reason, BWF is making temporary adjustments listed below to encourage social distancing and mitigate the spread of the virus while supporting those we serve. Agencies must inform staff of adjustments and alter case management procedures accordingly.

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
Policy Adjustments with automation changes	Application & Case Processing	<p>Requesting Verification from Applicants and Participants</p> <p>Due to COVID-19 and many businesses and external entities closing or operating under reduced capacity, individuals may be unable to furnish needed verification documents and W-2 agency staff may not have the ability to assist.</p> <p>BWF, along with its partners in the Division of Early Care and Education and Department of Health Services, have instituted a temporary policy and supporting CWW automation allowing for the use of best available information as verification for certain eligibility items during COVID-19. See Operations Memo 20-07 for more details.</p>	X	X	X	3/23/2020 Updated 4/15/2020	
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Application & Case Processing	<p>Suspension of In-Person Signature and Meeting Requirements</p> <p>Existing policy requires in-person signatures and meetings at application and various points throughout ongoing case management.</p> <p>BWF is suspending the requirement for in-person signatures and meetings. W-2 agencies may conduct all appointments, typically held in-person, by telephone as necessary to reduce risk of COVID-</p>	X	X	X	3/23/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
		<p>19 exposure. W-2 agencies are to use the Contact Center Anywhere (CCA) software currently in use for CMF, CMF+, and CMU W-2 Eligibility Reviews to collect all required signatures from W-2 applicants and participants.</p> <p>CWW will provide an option for collecting a telephonic signature for eligibility reviews for all placement types. It will not provide the option for collecting a telephonic signature for any other type of meeting, however. Therefore, for telephonic signatures for anything other than an eligibility review, FEPs will have to read whatever document is being telephonically signed, e.g., W-2 application, W-2 Participation Agreement, Employability Plan, etc., in order to record the agreement being made between the FEP and the participant, the FEP will need to read the language that is in the telephonic signature display in CCA. CCA will then provide the FEP with the interaction id number that the FEP should record in case comments.</p> <p>Updated 5/4/2020: BWF created three scripts agencies can use when utilizing CCA for telephonic signatures. The scripts are for Emergency Assistance and W-2 application signatures and W-2 requests for assistance.</p> <p>Information on how to navigate the CCA software is available on the Partner Training Team (PTT) Learning Center in the Contact Center Anywhere Reference Guide for W-2 desk aid. Additional information on use of CCA can be found in Operations Memo 18-09: Telephonic Signatures for CMF, CMF+, and CMU W-2 Eligibility Reviews. Information on requesting CCA is included in this Operations Memo. BWF will also be setting up CCA access for supervisors to oversee work remotely. Information is forthcoming.</p> <p>Update 3/3/20: For refugees and other ORR-eligible populations applying for W-2 or RCA, FEPs may accept Authorized</p>					

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
		<p>Representative forms from resettlement agency staff without applicant/participant signatures. FEPs may then work with those authorized representatives from resettlement agencies to complete any necessary forms by the adjusted means outlined in other areas of this document.</p>					
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Nonfinancial Eligibility	<p>Extension of Eligibility Period for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA)</p> <p>By policy, RCA and RMA eligibility periods are eight months.</p> <p>Under authority from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), the eligibility periods for RCA and RMA are extended up to eighteen months.</p> <p>For RCA, this includes individuals who are about to terminate from the program or who have successfully exited the program and then subsequently either lost employment or sustained a reduction in hours that would requalify them for RCA.</p> <p>For both RCA and RMA, this extension applies for those who became eligible after April 1, 2019, with the additional months not extending beyond September 30, 2020. For those who became eligible on or after February 1, 2020, the eligibility period will remain at eight months.</p> <p>For more detailed information, refer to the email issued by the BWF Work Programs Help Desk on April 29, 2020.</p>			X (RCA and RMA)	4/29/20	9/30/20
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Nonfinancial Eligibility	<p><u>Convicted Drug Felon Testing</u></p> <p>In alignment with DHS, the drug testing for drug felons due to the COVID-19 public health emergency may be suspended. During the COVID-19 public health emergency, if a W-2 applicant or</p>	X	X	X	5/26/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
		<p>participant reports a drug felony conviction, the W-2 worker must take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update the "Has the individual agreed to take a drug test," question on the Drug Felon page in CWW to "Yes". 2. Do not enter a date in the Drug Test Date field or the Drug Test Date Verification field. 3. W-2 eligibility can be confirmed if the individual meets all other nonfinancial and financial requirements. In addition, individuals are considered eligible for a full W-2 payment in the interim. 4. Once the public health emergency is no longer in effect and vendors have resumed the drug testing service, W-2 workers must revisit drug felon testing with individuals who previously reported a drug felony conviction at the next W-2 eligibility review. 5. At the next W-2 eligibility review, the W-2 worker must ask individuals if they agree to take the drug test and enter the appropriate information in CWW in accordance with guidelines for drug felon testing at W-2 Manual Chapter 11.7.2. 					
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Nonfinancial Eligibility	<p>Drug Screening, Testing, and Treatment</p> <p>The drug testing requirement for work experience programs subject to controlled substance abuse screening, testing, and treatment requirements under Wis. Sta. 49.162 may be suspended due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. If the results of the screening questionnaire indicate reasonable suspicion that the individual is abusing a controlled substance, and the individual is unable to be tested due to the public health emergency, the individual must agree to complete a drug test when the public health emergency is no longer in effect and vendors have resumed this service.</p>	X			5/26/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
Policy Adjustments with automation changes	Application & Case Processing	<p>Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) SWICA Data Exchange</p> <p>By policy, FEPs must review and process SWICA discrepancies identified through the IEVS-related data exchanges.</p> <p>The SWICA run that was scheduled for Saturday April 25, 2020, will not run and no information will be updated in CWW for W-2, thus eliminating the need to review and process SWICA discrepancies.</p> <p>Workers must continue to review and process other discrepancy types that are generated per current policy, including, Unemployment Insurance benefits, SSNs, SSI payments, other SS income, Incarceration status, and citizenship or qualified non-citizen status.</p>	X		X	4/21/20	
Policy Adjustments with automation changes	Nonfinancial Eligibility	<p>JAL Eligibility</p> <p>If a customer applies for a JAL but is then laid off due to COVID-19 at some point during the JAL application process with no known time to return to work, would they remain eligible for a JAL?</p> <p>The agency needs to verify that the applicant is currently employed, regardless of the number of hours, including up to a full lay off. The applicant still needs to demonstrate their ability to repay the loan to be eligible. The agency is reminded that applicants are able to renegotiate their repayment terms to extend out to 24 months instead of 12 months.</p>		X		3/25/2020	
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Nonfinancial Eligibility	<p>Child Support Noncooperation Good Cause Determinations</p> <p>The Bureau of Child Support (BCS) has issued a guidance to CSAs encouraging workers to accept the COVID-19 crisis as a valid reason for failing to cooperate with child support. This guidance is</p>	X	X		4/15/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
		<p>expected to decrease child support noncooperation referrals to W-2, however for those participants who are still found to be not cooperating with child support and referred to W-2, BWF is allowing W-2 workers to delay the determination of good cause without imposing sanctions on the participant. This allows participants to continue receiving necessary assistance during this crisis.</p> <p>When W-2 workers receive an 092 alert in CWW indicating the participant is not cooperating with Child Support, they must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On the Absent Parent Page in CWW, indicate that good cause was claimed using the reason code “cooperation would cause physical harm to the participant” 2. In the Good Cause Approved? field, indicate that good cause is “unknown.” This will allow the participant’s case to stay open without sending a Notice of Action Needed to the participant. 3. Add a case comment identifying the reason code was chosen due to COVID-19 and the participant’s case will remain open until Good Cause can be determined once the public health emergency is over. <p>Once the COVID emergency is over, cases in this special status will be identified using a Webl report and workers will make a good cause determination following existing policy.</p>					
Policy Adjustments without	Financial Eligibility	<p>Economic Stimulus Payments</p> <p>The economic stimulus payments are treated as tax credits. Per the W-2 Manual 3.2.9.1, federal tax refunds that result from federal</p>	X	X	X	4/6/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
automation changes		tax credits are disregarded income when determining financial eligibility. The payment is also disregarded as an asset for a period of 12 months per W-2 Manual 3.3.4.5 .					
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Assessment	<p>Career and Educational Assessment 30-day Timeframe</p> <p>Currently, when completion of a standardized educational needs assessment tool is necessary to determine or confirm the applicant or participant’s current educational levels, the tool must be scheduled and documented in CARES within 30 days of placement. Career assessment must be offered to all applicants and assigned as an activity on the initial EP. If an applicant is new to W-2 or is re-applying and does not have a career assessment documented, a career assessment must be scheduled within 30 days of application and completed within 30 days of placement.</p> <p>BWF is suspending the 30-day timeframe for scheduling and documenting career assessments and standardized educational needs assessment tools in CARES to support social distancing efforts and reduce risk of COVID-19 exposure.</p> <p>This timeframe suspension includes the RCA requirement to work with recipients to manually develop individual Employability Plans.</p>	X		X	3/25/2020	
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Assessment	<p>Formal Assessment 30-day Requirement</p> <p>Currently, participants offered or referred for formal assessment must have a formal assessment activity scheduled and documented in CARES within 30 calendar days of the referral date. Participants placed in W-2 T must have a formal assessment scheduled and documented in CARES within 30 calendar days of placement into W-2 T. During the COVID-19 public health emergency, challenges and delays in scheduling and completing formal assessments are anticipated.</p>	X			3/25/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
		BWF is suspending the required 30-day timeframe for scheduling and documenting formal assessments to accommodate anticipated delays in scheduling and completing formal assessments due to COVID-19. Because formal assessments are necessary to ensure full participation and reasonable accommodations, the formal assessment is to be scheduled and completed as soon as it is safe to do so and the appropriate qualified assessor is accepting appointments.					
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	W-2 Placements	<p>Use of the Unemployed Individuals Capable of Obtaining Employment (CMJ) Case Management Placement</p> <p>BWF has provided W-2 agencies with significant flexibility to accommodate challenges likely to be experienced during the public health emergency. Agencies have been encouraged to make discretionary decisions favorably for applicants and participants due to the impact of the pandemic on low-income parents and their families.</p> <p>W-2 agencies must carefully consider who they place in CMJ during a time where jobs and people’s ability to work is very limited.</p> <p>In addition, the W-2 agency must carefully assess individuals in CMJ placements and other case management placements to determine if there are barriers that make it difficult for the individual to obtain or maintain employment, particularly during the pandemic, e.g., unavailability of jobs, needed to care for children due to school or daycare closures, etc. If the FEP determines that there are barriers, the FEP may place the individual in the appropriate paid placement if the individual meets financial and nonfinancial eligibility criteria.</p>	X			5/4/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
Policy Adjustments with automation changes	Activity Assignment	<p>New Social Distancing Activity Code</p> <p>A new Activity Code has been created to report hours previously assigned to activities affected by the COVID-19 outbreak and community sequester. Use CX – Social Distancing Activities for individuals who are unable to participate in activities that entail face-to-face contact or group activity due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The activity code will be available in CARES on Tuesday, March 24, 2020.</p> <p>Agencies must evaluate activity assignments, determine which activities cannot be done in compliance with COVID-19 Social Distancing requirements, close out those activities using component Completion Code B - Unsuccessfully Completed/Interrupted, and report the aggregate hours using the CX Activity Code. The social distancing activity can be closed using component Completion Code A - Successfully Completed, when a new EP is created after the public health emergency is over.</p> <p>Agencies are encouraged to continue activities that could be done from home, for example: CD – Caring for Disabled Child CE – Career Planning & Counseling CF – Caring for Other Family Member LF – Life Skills MO – Job Readiness/Motivation MP – Ongoing Medical/Personal Care PA – Parenting Skills PD – Personal Development PR – Physical Rehabilitation</p> <p>The following forms are required for CD, CF, MP, and PR. These forms will be considered valid through the duration of the public health emergency.</p>	X		X	3/23/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need to Care for Disabled Family Member DCF-F-DWSP10786 2. Medical Examination & Capacity DCF-F-DWSP2012 3. Mental Health Report DCF-F-126 					
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Activity Assignment	<p>Suggestions for Assigning W-2 Activities</p> <p>For more suggestions for assigning W-2 activities, please see the March 27, 2020 – COVID-19 Suggestions for W-2 Activity Assignment email from the BWF Work Programs Help Desk.</p>	X		X	3/27/2020	
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Activity Assignment	<p>Job Skills Training Activity Assignment</p> <p>Currently, short-term job skills trainings assigned under the JS – Job Skills Training activity code must include a minimum of 40 hours of classroom instruction. BWF is waiving this 40-hour classroom time requirement for the duration of the public health emergency. W-2 agencies may assign the JS – Job Skills Training activity code when a participant enrolls in a training that meets all other criteria as outlined in the JS activity definition. For example, at one agency, CBRF training is 40 hours, but due to the current COVID - 19 situation and removal of in-person classroom hours, students are now certified after approximately 28 training hours. Coding a CBRF training shortened from 40 hours to 28 hours of classroom time due to COVID-19 is an appropriate application of this policy adjustment. Additional information on appropriate selection of the JS (and MO) codes can be found in Operations Memo 17-10: Wisconsin Works (W-2) Contractor Vocational Training Incentive Payments.</p>	X		X	5/4/2020 (Reformatted Only)	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Activity Assignment	<p>Technical College Activity – Related Activity Assignment</p> <p>Currently, individuals participating in a program under the TC – Technical College Activities activity code must also be employed or assigned 25 hours of work activities per week. The 25 hours of work activities must include study time required for the TC program as well as other work activities that relate to the participant’s training. BWF is waiving the requirement for the additional 25 hours of work activities to be directly related to the training for the duration of the public health emergency. W-2 agencies may temporarily assign individuals the CX activity as part of the 25-hour work activity requirement if no remote options for activities related to their training are available.</p>	X		X	TBD	
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Time Limits	<p>State 60-Month Time Limit Extension Criteria</p> <p>Current state 60-month lifetime limit extension criteria accommodate many challenges that applicants and participants may have experienced prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, it is important to highlight that W-2 agencies may interpret the “family problems” extension criterion to include the unique challenges that applicants and participants may be experiencing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Examples of family problems that may be prevalent during the public health emergency include the need to remain at home to provide childcare due to school/day care closures or adhere to social distancing practices. The “family problems” extension reason may also be used in situations where an individual is unable to obtain a valid formal assessment for criteria 2, 3, and 4 due to the COVID-19 outbreak and community sequester.</p> <p>In making extension approval vs. denial decisions, W-2 agencies are encouraged to review and interpret time limit extension requests favorably for the applicant or participant due to the</p>	X			3/25/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE						
			W-2	JAL	RCA								
		impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on low-income parents and their families.											
Policy Adjustments with automation changes	Eligibility Reviews	<p>Three-month Extension for Eligibility Reviews</p> <p>W-2 agencies are required to conduct a W-2 eligibility review at least every six (6) months. The due dates for W-2 eligibility reviews originally scheduled for months March through August have been extended for a period of 3 months.</p> <p>March Eligibility Reviews: As noted above, March eligibility review due dates were extended to June 30, 2020. However, when the date was changed in CWW, there were some cases that were already in “Pending” status. BWF is asking that the W-2 agencies review these cases to ensure that they are not incorrectly closed for failing to provide verification related to a review, since reviews have been extended. A list of pending cases by agency has been attached to this email.</p> <p>April Eligibility Reviews: BWF is issuing a one-time letter the week of March 23, 2020, notifying 778 W-2 participants who have received a 45-day notice that they had eligibility reviews in April that their review date has been extended three months. BWF will work with Wisconsin’s Department of Health Services determine future communications for May and June.</p> <p>Update 3/25/2020: The W-2 eligibility due review dates for April through August were changed in CWW and ACCESS. The following language was added to case comments for the relevant cases:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>From Date</th> <th>To Date</th> <th>Case Comment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>4/30/20</td> <td>7/31/20</td> <td>3/23/20 - W-2 eligibility review period ending 4/30/20 systematically extended by 3 months due to COVID-19 emergency.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	From Date	To Date	Case Comment	4/30/20	7/31/20	3/23/20 - W-2 eligibility review period ending 4/30/20 systematically extended by 3 months due to COVID-19 emergency.	X			3/23/2020	
From Date	To Date	Case Comment											
4/30/20	7/31/20	3/23/20 - W-2 eligibility review period ending 4/30/20 systematically extended by 3 months due to COVID-19 emergency.											

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT			PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
					W-2	JAL	RCA		
		5/31/20	8/31/20	3/23/20 - W-2 eligibility review period ending 5/31/20 systematically extended by 3 months due to COVID-19 emergency.					
		6/30/20	9/30/20	3/23/20 - W-2 eligibility review period ending 6/30/20 systematically extended by 3 months due to COVID-19 emergency.					
		7/31/20	10/31/20	3/23/20 - W-2 eligibility review period ending 7/31/20 systematically extended by 3 months due to COVID-19 emergency.					
		8/31/20	11/30/20	3/23/20 - W-2 eligibility review period ending 8/31/20 systematically extended by 3 months due to COVID-19 emergency.					
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Payments	<p>Updating Agency Addresses for W-2 and RCA Payment Checks</p> <p>Below is guidance on updating agency addresses for W-2 payment checks when offices have closed to both the public and staff.</p> <p><u>Returned checks:</u> The agency director (or whomever is listed as authorized at the post office) should create a forwarding address or a hold for pick-up at USPS and have returned checks temporarily sent to an alternative location. Agencies will then need to develop a plan for distribution of checks to participants, e.g., have limited hours to distribute checks.</p> <p><u>Checks mailed from the Department of Children and Families mailroom, e.g., JAL checks, auxiliaries over \$1000, etc.:</u> If an agency does not have access to its primary location, it must provide an alternative agency address for the mailroom to use. To make a permanent or long-term change to their primary address, agencies must notify the DHSCARESCallCenter@dhs.wisconsin.gov, which will update the address in CWW. Once updated the new address</p>			X	X	X	3/25/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
		will appear as the return address on W-2 checks. Until that change takes effect, agencies must take action as noted above for checks that are in transit to a closed location.					
Policy Adjustments with automation changes	Sanctions	<p>New Good Cause Reason Code</p> <p>A Good Cause Reason Code: CX has been created for W-2 activities that cannot be completed due to the COVID-19 outbreak and community sequester. Individuals who are unable to participate in assigned activities due to the public health emergency must be provided Good Cause for non-participation. The CX reason code is now available in CARES.</p>	X		X	3/23/2020	
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Sanctions	<p>Rectifying 20% Payment Reduction Policy</p> <p>Individuals who have received a 20% payment reduction notice have 7 working days to provide written verification of good cause, if necessary. Under existing policy, the verification due date cannot be extended from 7 working days to 30 days.</p> <p>Due to COVID-19, FEPs should extend the due date on written verification for good cause to 30 days or more for participants who have received a 20% reduction letter.</p> <p>Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, it is highly likely that participants will not be able to obtain written verification of good cause within the 7 working day timeframe and attempts to do so could put them at risk of contracting or further spreading the virus.</p>	X			3/23/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Case Closure	<p>Case Closure for Loss of Contact</p> <p>Under existing policy, FEPs are required to close a case for noncooperation if they have not been able to contact a participant for 30 days or more after repeated attempts.</p> <p>Due to COVID-19, FEPs may keep cases open even if they have been unable to contact the participant for 30 days or more.</p> <p>Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, it is very possible that participants may be in quarantine or in the hospital for long periods of time, and therefore unable to have any in-person contact with the FEP at the agency, a worksite, or even their own home. Additionally, if participants lose their jobs due to COVID-19 related closures and are unable to pay a phone or internet bill as a result, there would be no way to contact them.</p>	X			3/23/2020	
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Learnfare	<p>Adjustment of School Enrollment and Attendance Requirements</p> <p>W-2 policy requires children in W-2 Groups to be enrolled in and attending school. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools in Wisconsin are closed. Learnfare school enrollment and attendance requirements are adjusted as follows:</p> <p>For new applicants: W-2 agencies should not subject new W-2 applicants to Learnfare requirements. Children would be exempt from the school enrollment and attendance requirement due to circumstances beyond their control that make them unable to be enrolled in and attend school. Due to system limitations, agencies should use Learnfare Status Code WST – Student in Good Standing for the Learnfare Status Code and AR – Attendance Record for the Verification Code on the School Enrollment page in CWW. Agencies should also enter CWW Case Comments indicating that children were exempt from Learnfare due to schools being closed and that coding is WST and AR to prevent referral to Learnfare.</p>	X			3/25/2020 Updated 4/7/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT	PROGRAMS			ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			W-2	JAL	RCA		
		<p>For current W-2 participants with children subject to Learnfare Case Management requirements: Children who are currently mandatory for Learnfare Case Management will remain mandatory until the next review.</p> <p>W-2 agencies must evaluate Learnfare Case Management activity assignments, determine which activities cannot be done in compliance with COVID-19 Social Distancing requirements, close out those activities using component Completion Code B - Unsuccessfully Completed/Interrupted, and report the aggregate hours using the CX Social Distancing Activity Code. See further instructions on Activity Assignment above.</p> <p>Individuals who were unable to participate in assigned Learnfare Case Management activities due to COVID must be provided Good Cause for nonparticipation using the Good Cause Reason Code CX.</p>					
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Other	<p>Fillable Forms</p> <p>At the request of W-2 agencies, the Bureau of Working Families are releasing multiple forms in fillable format. This will allow workers to complete the forms as they review them with applicants and participants, record the CCA Interaction ID, and save the forms so that they could be printed later and uploaded into ECF. It will also make sharing the forms with individuals via email easier.</p> <p>See BWF Work Programs Help Desk e-mail dated 4/16/20 for a list of forms and their release date.</p>	X	X	X	04/xx/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ADJUSTMENT	ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Application & Case Processing	<p>Suspension of In-Person Signature and Meeting Requirements</p> <p>Under existing policy, the EA application form must be completed and signed in the presence of a W-2 agency staff person, and the worker must have at least one face-to-face contact with the EA applicant to go through the application and assurances on the application prior to determining eligibility.</p> <p>Due to COVID-19, W-2 agencies may conduct all appointments, typically held in-person, by telephone as necessary to reduce risk of COVID-19 exposure. W-2 agencies are to use the Contact Center Anywhere (CCA) software currently in use for CMF, CMF+, and CMU W-2 Eligibility Reviews to collect all required signatures from EA applicants. See similar guidance above.</p>	3/23/2020	
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Application & Case Processing	<p>Emergency Assistance Applications Fillable Form Now Available</p> <p>Due to COVID-19 and the reduction of in-person applications, part one of the Emergency Assistance application (Form 2010) has been formatted to a fillable Microsoft Word document. There are no policy updates associated with this change.</p> <p>The Spanish version of Form 2010 has also been formatted to a fillable Microsoft Word document.</p>	3/27/2020	
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Financial Eligibility	<p>Prospective Income Determination</p> <p>Under existing policy, the combined total earned and unearned income of the EA Group must be at or below 115% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) in the 30 days prior to and including the EA Application date.</p> <p>Due to COVID-19, when determining the combined total earned and unearned income of the EA Group to be at or below 115% of the FPL, workers may use either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The prior 30 days prior to and including the EA Application date; or 	3/23/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ADJUSTMENT	ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
		2. Prospective budgeting using a best estimate of what income will be received in the next 30 days.		

CATEGORY	TOPIC	SUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT ADJUSTMENTS	PROGRAM		ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			TJ/TMJ	W-2 TEMP		
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Application & Case Processing	<p>Requesting Verification from Applicants and Participants</p> <p>Due to COVID-19 and many businesses and external entities closing or operating under reduced capacity, individuals may be unable to furnish needed verification documents and W-2 and TJ/TMJ agencies may not have the ability to assist. While BWF is not yet making changes to current verification requirements, this is a reminder that there is significant flexibility currently in policy to accommodate challenges likely to be experienced during the public health emergency. Workers are encouraged to exercise this discretion to ensure individuals can access our programs and resources without unnecessary delay.</p>	X	See Page 1 of the W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT above	4/21/2020	
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Application & Case Processing	<p>Suspension of In-Person Signature and Meeting Requirements</p> <p>Existing policy requires in-person signatures and meetings at application and various points throughout ongoing case management.</p> <p>BWF is suspending the requirement for in-person signatures and meetings. Agencies may conduct all appointments, typically held in-person, by telephone or other methods (skype, video conference, etc.) as necessary to reduce risk of COVID-19 exposure. If an individual is unable to provide a signature for an application because of the remote situation or other factors, an</p>	X	See Page 1 of the W-2 AND RELATED PROGRAMS ADJUSTMENT above	4/21/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	SUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT ADJUSTMENTS	PROGRAM		ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			TJ/TMJ	W-2 TEMP		
		email stating the information is true and accurate is acceptable in lieu of collecting a signature. If a participant is unable to provide paystubs, an employment termination or layoff letter or other verification due to issues related to COVID-19, then an email statement to that effect with the best available information the participant has is acceptable.				
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Payments	<p>Continuation of Subsidized Employment Wages and Unemployment Insurance (UI)</p> <p>During the pandemic, agencies can continue paying subsidized wages to participants whose subsidized jobs are no longer available, or who have reduced hours due to COVID and for participants who experience employment changes due COVID-19 issues, including loss of childcare, caring for a sick family member, or other needs that arise due to COVID-19.</p> <p>Program participants may also be eligible for unemployment insurance (UI). The participant may apply for UI, but the agency worker should inform the participant that UI benefits may impact financial eligibility for subsidized employment and other public assistance programs.</p>	X	X	4/21/2020	
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Payment Amounts	<p>Subsidized Employment Payment Amounts</p> <p>Agencies must pay subsidized wages at the number of weekly hours designated in the participant's subsidized employment agreement. The maximum allowable hourly wage rate remains \$7.25 per hour.</p> <p>For participants with a reduction in hours due to COVID-19, agencies must pay the subsidized wages up to the number of hours in the participant's subsidized employment agreement.</p>	X	X	4/21/2020	

CATEGORY	TOPIC	SUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT ADJUSTMENTS	PROGRAM		ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
			TJ/TMJ	W-2 TEMP		
		<p>For former subsidized employment participants, agencies must pay subsidized wages at the number of weekly hours designated in the participant's previous subsidized employment agreement. The maximum allowable hourly wage remains \$7.25 per hour.</p> <p>DCF will continue to reimburse for payroll taxes during COVID-19.</p>				
Policy Adjustments without automation changes	Time Limits	<p>Subsidized Employment Time Limits</p> <p>Participants may participate in the TJ/TMJ program for a maximum of 1,040 hours actually worked. [Wis. Stat. § 49.163(3)(a)(1)] For that reason, only hours actually worked during COVID-19 will count against the 1,040 limit. If a participant is not working or has decreased hours due to COVID-19, non-work hours should not be counted towards the lifetime limit even if he or she is receiving subsidy payments.</p>	X		4/21/2020	