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State of Wisconsin  
Governor Scott Walker



TO: **W-2 Agencies  
Training Staff**

FROM: Margaret McMahon, Director  
Bureau of Working Families  
Division of Family and Economic Security  
Department of Children and Families

<b>BWF OPERATIONS MEMO</b>		
No: 15-03		
DATE: 3/5/2015		
W-2 <input type="checkbox"/>	EA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CF <input type="checkbox"/>
JAL <input type="checkbox"/>	RAP <input type="checkbox"/>	Other EP <input type="checkbox"/> *

**SUBJECT: EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE POLICY CHANGE ON CALCULATING  
INCOME AND UPDATED FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY FORM**

**CROSS REFERENCE:** [EA Manual, 3.1 Financial Eligibility Overview](#)  
[EA Manual, 3.2 Available Income](#)  
[Operations Memo 12-52](#)  
[Operations Memo 09-78](#)

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Immediately

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this memo is to communicate an Emergency Assistance (EA) policy change regarding how to calculate household income and to provide the updated EA Financial Eligibility Worksheet supporting the change.

### **BACKGROUND**

[Operations Memo 09-78](#) announced a change in the way household income was calculated for the purpose of determining EA eligibility and introduced a form to assist W-2 agencies with the calculation.

Agencies continue to have questions regarding the correct way to calculate income and have requested modifications to the form to more accurately calculate assets. Currently, EA workers calculate existing income for EA using a monthly prospective income estimate, similar to Wisconsin Works (W-2). However, given that the EA application is preceded by a financial crisis, it is more logical to calculate actual income at the time of the EA application.

**CURRENT POLICY**

EA policy currently requires EA workers to use a prospective income calculation to determine financial eligibility for EA applicants.

**NEW POLICY**

EA workers must determine financial eligibility for EA by calculating the income received in the 30 days prior to and including the EA Application Date.

EA Manual Sections 3.1 and 3.2 have been updated to reflect this change. See attached.

**FORM UPDATES**

BWF has updated the [Financial Eligibility Worksheet \(2010-E\)](#) (Part 2, Page 1 of the EA Application), referenced in Section 3 of the EA Manual. The following changes have been made:

1. Removed the 'Frequency of Pay', 'Hours per Pay Period', and the 'Rate of Pay' fields and added the 'Gross Income' fields. The W-2 agency must enter the 'Gross Income' from each pay source received in the 30 days prior to the EA application date. Income for all EA Group members must be entered. Once the income amounts are entered, the form will calculate the 'Total Monthly Gross Income.' As before, the W-2 agency must enter the 'Group Size' and the form will determine if the applicant is at or below the income limit based on the group size.
2. Updated the form completion instructions to reflect the policy change for determining financial eligibility.
3. Separated the financial asset calculation from the vehicle asset calculation. The W-2 agency must enter the value of assets such as checking and savings accounts in the 'Financial Assets' section. The W-2 agency must enter the 'Vehicle Value' and the 'Amount Owed' and the form will disregard the first \$10,000 of combined vehicle equity value. The form will total the value of the financial assets along with the vehicle equity (after the \$10,000 disregard), and determine if the applicant is at or below the asset limit.

**ACTION REQUIRED**

W-2 agencies must discuss this policy change and the updated form with EA staff and update any relevant local agency EA procedures.

**ATTACHMENTS**

[EA Manual, Section 3.1 Financial Eligibility Overview](#)  
[EA Manual, Section 3.2 Available Income](#)  
[EA Financial Eligibility Worksheet \(2010-E\)](#)

**CONTACTS**

For W-2 Policy Questions in the Balance of State: Bureau of Regional Operations, W-2 Regional Coordinators

For W-2 Policy Questions in Milwaukee: Milwaukee Operations Section Regional Administrators

For W-2 CARES Processing Questions: W-2 Help Desk

DCF/DFES/BWF/JZ&MMM