Emergency Assistance Policy Attachment

1.2.2 Completing the Emergency Assistance Application

The W-2 agency must provide an opportunity to complete an Emergency Assistance (EA) application to all persons who request EA. If EA is requested in-person or over the phone, the W-2 agency must provide applicants the opportunity to complete and sign the EA application ~~in the presence of a W-2 agency worker~~ on the same day as the request or inquiry. (See 1.2.2.1) If an application is submitted via ACCESS, the agency must contact the applicant within one working day of receiving the application to continue the EA application process. If the application in ACCESS is submitted after 4:30 p.m. or on a non-working day, the agency must contact the applicant within one working day of the next working day.

Applicants can submit an EA application by submitting a completed *Emergency Assistance (EA) Application (2010)* to the W-2 agency or by submitting the application in the ACCESS web portal. The W-2 agency must date stamp the completed EA application on the date it is received by the agency, which is used as the application date. For applications received via ACCESS, the application date is determined in ACCESS based on the time and date of application submittal. ~~The applicant signature will be obtained via an electronic signature as part of the application process. (See 1.3.1)~~

An EA application is considered complete when it has:

1. A legible name;
2. An address, if available;
3. A reason for the emergency;
4. A signature by the applicant or their ~~his or her~~ representative (see 1.2.2.1); and
5. Been completed to the best of the applicant's ability.

The applicant, or that person's representative, must complete the Emergency Assistance (EA) Application (2010) or the online ACCESS application to the best of their ~~his or her~~ ability. A W-2 agency worker must complete any missing information from the EA application with information provided by the applicant. Any information added or updated by the W-2 agency must be clearly explained in EA comments in WWP.

During the meeting with the applicant, a W-2 agency worker must review each of the assurance statements in the *Emergency Assistance (EA) Application (2010)* with the applicant to ensure that the applicant has an opportunity to ask for clarification of each item. ~~The applicant must initial each statement in the presence of the W-2 agency worker to verify that he or she understands each statement and sign the form. If the applicant already initialed the statements, then the applicant must initial each statement again.~~

Applicants using ACCESS to complete an EA application cannot schedule an interview in ACCESS. Instead, the agency must contact the applicant to determine eligibility within five working days. (See 1.3.2) ~~ACCESS applicants will review and initial the assurance statements through their electronic signature on the online application. The W-2 agency staff person must~~

~~review these assurance statements with the applicant during the application process to ensure that the applicant has the opportunity to ask for clarification.~~

The W-2 agency must scan and store all pages of each application in ECF or place a copy in the paper file if an Emergency Assistance (EA) Application (2010) is submitted. (See 4.4.3)

1.2.2.1 Applicant Signatures

A valid signature is required for an application to be considered complete. (See 1.2.2)

EA application signatures from the applicant can be obtained one of four ways below. W-2 agencies must provide the option to sign the application in whichever acceptable signature method the applicant prefers.

1. **Written signature**: The applicant physically signs the *Emergency Assistance (EA) Application (2010).*

2. **Electronic signature**: The applicant electronically signs the *Emergency Assistance (EA) Application (2010)* via an electronic signature software.

3. **Telephonic signature**: The applicant telephonically signs the *Emergency Assistance (EA) Application (2010)* during a recorded call.

   FEPs must read the EA application in order to record the agreement being made between the FEP and the applicant. Additionally, the FEP must read the language that is in the telephonic signature display in Genesys. The Telephonic Signature Interaction ID generated in Genesys must be documented on the signature line and in PIN comments.

4. **ACCESS signature**: The applicant signs the application to submit a completed EA application in ACCESS.

The W-2 agency worker must review the assurance statements with all applicants during the meeting, regardless of how the application signature was obtained.

1.3.1 Application Processing Timeframe

Within five working days of the application date, the W-2 agency must process the EA application, which includes:

1. Determining Eligibility (see 1.3.2);
2. Entering all EA applications in WWP (see 4.4.2);
3. Issuing an Eligibility Notice of Decision (see 1.3.3); and
4. Issuing Payments (see 1.3.4).

The application date is used to determine the five working days timeframe. Day one is the first working day after the application date. Day five ends at the close of business on the fifth

working day after the application date. If the agency date stamp is different from the date the applicant signed the application, the date stamp is the date that is used to calculate the five working days timeframe for processing EA.

EXAMPLE 1: Inez inquired about EA on Tuesday, May 29th. She completed an EA application on the same day and the W-2 agency date stamped the completed EA application as received on May 29. Inez had to pick up her children from school, so she was unable to wait to meet with an EA worker that day to complete the ~~face-to-face~~ meeting. Inez met with an EA worker on Thursday, May 31st, when the worker reviewed the EA application and Inez ~~initialed~~ reviewed each assurance statement. The W-2 agency used the date of the agency date stamp (May 29th) to begin the five working days timeframe for processing the EA application, therefore Tuesday, June 5 is day five of the five working days timeframe for processing the EA application.

EXAMPLE 2: Jonathan applied in ACCESS the morning of Wednesday, February 23rd. ACCESS processes the application with an application date of that day, 2/23. The W-2 agency contacts him the following day (2/24, day 1) to continue with the application process and explain his options for conducting the meeting. He prefers to meet over the phone, and they set up a time for later that day when he is able to take the call in private, to ensure his attention and confidentiality. The EA worker has until Wednesday, March 2 to process the EA application in the five working days timeframe.

1.3.2 Determining Eligibility

1.3.2.1 Meeting Options

The first step in processing the EA application is determining eligibility. To determine eligibility within the five working days timeframe, the W-2 agency must:

1. Have at least one ~~face-to-face contact~~ meeting with the applicant or their ~~his or her~~ representative (see 1.3.2.1) ~~to go through the application and the assurance statements of the *Emergency Assistance (EA) Application form (2010)* (see 1.2.2)~~;
2. Determine nonfinancial eligibility (see Chapter 2);
3. Determine financial eligibility (see Chapter 3); and
4. Request and complete all necessary information and verification (see Chapter 4).

1.3.2.1 Meeting Options

The required meeting with an applicant can be conducted in one of three ways below. W-2 agencies must provide the option to meet in whichever acceptable meeting format the applicant prefers.

1. **In-person**: The applicant meets physically in-person with an EA worker.

2. **Video call**: The applicant and EA worker use a video platform to meet where each person can see and hear one another.

3. **Telephonically**: The applicant and EA worker use a telephone to meet.

EA workers must document in PIN comments which meeting format was used.

3.2.2 Counting Income

To determine countable income for the 115% income test, the EA worker must choose the most appropriate of the following income test periods, depending on the situation of the applicant:

1. Prospective income, making the best estimate to determine what income will be received by the applicant in the 30 days following the EA application date; or
2. Actual earned and unearned income received in the 30 days prior to and including the EA application date is considered for EA eligibility.

Use W-2 policy for the following:

- Prospective Income Eligibility (see W-2 Manual 3.2.2);
- Estimating Income (see W-2 Manual 3.2.3);
- Income Availability (see W-2 Manual 3.2.4);
- Fluctuating Income (see W-2 Manual 3.2.5);
- Prorating Income (see W-2 Manual 3.2.6); and
- Qualified Alien Deeming (see W-2 Manual 3.2.8.1);
- Farm & Self-Employment Income (see W-2 Manual 3.2.8.2);
- Child Support Income (see W-2 Manual 3.2.8.3);
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Caretaker Supplement Income (see W-2 Manual 3.2.8.4); and
- Census Employment and Other Temporary Employment Income (see W-2 Manual 3.2.8.5)
- Counting Income (see W-2 Manual 3.2.8).

EXAMPLE 1: Anita applied for EA on January 14. She has one child. Anita is employed but was off work from December 21 to January 4 due to an employer shutdown over the holidays. Her rent is past due, and she has received an eviction notice. Anita has returned to work but has not received another paycheck yet. Anita submitted the following check stubs to verify her employment in the 30 days prior to the EA application date:

Check stub dated 12/20 $255.00
Check stub dated 12/27 $274.13

The W-2 agency calculates that Anita's income in the 30 days prior to the EA application date was $529.13. Based on the EA group of two people, Anita meets financial eligibility as she has income less than 115% of the FPL.

EXAMPLE 2: Porter applied for EA on August 7. He has one child. Porter is residing with friends temporarily but looking for a new place to live. Porter was employed but was laid off and is now receiving unemployment. Porter submitted the following check stubs to verify his employment income in the 30 days prior to the EA application date, and the W-2 agency uses CARES to verify the unemployment income.

Check stub dated 7/11 $616.26
Unemployment income 7/25 $200.00
Unemployment income 8/1 $200.00

The W-2 agency calculates that Porter's income in the 30 days prior to the EA application date was $1,016.26. Based on the EA group of two people, Porter meets financial eligibility as the EA group's income is less than 115% of the FPL.

EXAMPLE 3: Winston was in an accident and due to his injuries is unable to work for several months while he recovers. He is currently living in temporary housing and needs to find a permanent place to live. The EA worker uses a prospective income test period to calculate the estimated income in the next month, which is more indicative of his current situation than the last 30 days due to the loss of income.

Since Winston is not currently working, doesn't anticipate working for several months, and has no other income, the worker does not enter any income on the EA application. The worker continues to review the remaining eligibility requirements to determine eligibility in five working days.