



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

FROM: Patara Horn, Director
Bureau of Working Families
Division of Family and Economic Security
Department of Children and Families

BWF OPERATIONS MEMO					
No:	24-06				
DATE:	03/11/2024				
W-2	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CF	<input type="checkbox"/>
JAL	<input type="checkbox"/>				
RAP	<input type="checkbox"/>	TMJ	<input type="checkbox"/>	TJ	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other EP	<input type="checkbox"/>				

SUBJECT: *Emergency Assistance Maximum Benefit Increase*

CROSS REFERENCE: [EA Policy Manual Section 5.2.1 Determining the Payment Amount](#)
[EA Policy Manual Section 5.2.2 Financial Need Calculation](#)
[EA Policy Manual Section 5.2.3 Multiple Payments](#)
[Emergency Assistance Application Form \(DCF-F-DWSP2010-E\)](#)

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 1, 2024

PURPOSE

The purpose of this operations memo is to announce an increase to the maximum benefit amounts for the Emergency Assistance (EA) program.

BACKGROUND

The EA program aims to alleviate a family’s crisis due to a housing-related emergency. Based on application data and a cost-of-living analysis, the Bureau of Working Families (BWF) determined that current benefit amounts are not meeting the needs of Wisconsin families in crisis.

By raising the benefit amounts, BWF hopes to meet family needs more closely and better align with the current cost of living in Wisconsin.

POLICY

EA policy updates are summarized below. The relevant policy manual sections are attached to this memo and will be incorporated into the EA Manual. Policy that was removed is highlighted light grey, and language that is added is highlighted yellow.

The [Emergency Assistance Application form \(DCF-F-DWSP2010-E\)](#) will be updated as of the effective date consistent with the updates described in this memo.

CURRENT POLICY

An emergency assistance payment for impending homelessness, homelessness, fire, flood, or natural disaster shall be the lowest of the following:

1. The maximum payment amount per emergency assistance group size.
 - \$516 for an EA Group with 2, 3, or 4 members;
 - \$645 for an EA Group with 5 members;
 - \$110 per group member for an EA Group with 6 or more members.
2. The financial need resulting from the emergency.

An emergency assistance payment for energy crisis shall be the lowest of the following:

1. \$500 regardless of group size; or
2. The amount needed to obtain or maintain essential utility service.

NEW POLICY

Maximum benefits have been increased for all application types as described below.

- For impending homelessness, homelessness, fire, flood, or natural disaster:
 - \$1,200 for an EA Group with 2, 3, 4, or 5 members;
 - \$220 per group member for an EA Group with 6 or more members.

There is no longer a distinction for maximum payments between EA groups of 2-4 and 5 household members, which will all have the same maximum amount.

- For energy crisis, \$750 regardless of group size.

The current policy of paying the lesser amount between the maximum amount and the financial need of the emergency remains. See [EA Policy Manual 5.2.2](#) for more information on how to calculate the EA Group's financial need.

[See attached EA Manual Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.3.](#)

WISCONSIN WORK PROGRAMS (WWP)

Maximum payment amounts will be updated in WWP as of the effective date of this memo. WWP will use the new values to populate the **Maximum Payment Amount** field, which calculates the **Lesser Amount** to determine the **Approved Payment Amount**. See Figure 1 below.

Financial Need	Amount
Security Deposit	\$ 1,400.00
First Month's Rent	\$ 1,400.00
+ Add Need	
Total Financial Need	\$ 2,800.00
Maximum Payment Amount	\$ 1,200.00
Lesser Amount	\$ 1,200.00

Figure 1 Financial Need and Maximum Payment Amount calculation in WWP

W-2 agencies must enter the financial need associated with the emergency(s) as reported by the applicant, even if the financial need exceeds the **Maximum Payment Amount** based on their emergency type and housing size.

NEW APPLICATIONS

All applications with an application date on or after the effective date of this memo will utilize the new maximum benefit amounts to calculate the **Lesser Amount** field in WWP when processing an application to determine the **Approved Payment Amount**.

IN PROGRESS OR PENDING APPLICATIONS

All applications that are In Progress or Pending as of the effective date of this memo will utilize the new maximum benefit amounts to calculate the **Lesser Amount** field in WWP when processing an application to determine the **Approved Payment Amount**.

APPROVED, DENIED, OR WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

All applications that are Approved, Denied, or Withdrawn as of the effective date of this memo will have utilized the old maximum benefit amounts and cannot be updated to utilize the new values.

TRAINING

The Partner Training Team will update any relevant trainings based on this operations memo.

AGENCY ACTION

W-2 agencies must familiarize staff with the updated policy as described in this operations memo and update any relevant local agency procedures.

ATTACHMENTS

[EA Policy Attachment](#)

CONTACTS

For W-2 Policy Questions: [BWF Policy Question SharePoint](#)

For W-2, CARES and WWP Functionality Questions: BWF Work Programs Help Desk
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DCF/DFES/BWF/AP