



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

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

BWF OPERATIONS MEMO					
No:	24-08	(Amended)			
DATE:	03/25/2024	04/22/2024			
W-2	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CF	<input type="checkbox"/>
JAL	<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>
RAP	<input type="checkbox"/>	TMJ	<input type="checkbox"/>	TJ	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other EP	<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBJECT: *Emergency Assistance Verification and Payment Updates*

- CROSS REFERENCE:**
- [EA Policy Manual Section 4.1.1 Introduction](#)
 - [EA Policy Manual Section 4.2.2 Verification of Eligibility Criteria for All EA Groups](#)
 - [EA Policy Manual Section 4.3.1 Verification of Housing Prior to Payment Issuance](#)
 - [EA Policy Manual Section 5.2.3 Multiple Payments](#)
 - [EA Policy Manual Section 5.3.1 Determining How and Where to Send the Payment](#)
 - [EA Policy Manual Section 5.3.2 Verification that Eviction or Foreclosure Will Not Proceed](#)
 - [EA Policy Manual Section 5.3.3 Verification of new Permanent Housing Reported](#)
 - [EA Policy Manual Section 5.4.2 Payment Delay due to New Housing Not Yet Obtained](#)
 - [EA Policy Manual Section 5.4.1 Timeframe for Issuing Payment](#)
 - [EA Policy Manual Section 5.4.3 Payment Delay due to Lack of Verification that Eviction or Foreclosure Will Not Proceed](#)

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 6, 2024

PURPOSE

The purpose of this operations memo is to announce changes to verification requirements and payment procedures for the Emergency Assistance (EA) program.

BACKGROUND

The Bureau of Working Families is making the policy changes described in this memo in an effort to increase access to the EA program, reduce the applicant's verification burden, and remove barriers to approval.

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.

REQUIRED VERIFICATION

Current Policy

As part of determining eligibility for EA, the Wisconsin Works (W-2) agency must attempt to verify the following items:

1. The EA Group information;
2. That the applicant has not received EA in the past 12 months;
3. The qualifying emergency;
4. Financial eligibility; and
5. For energy crisis and impending homelessness/financial crisis only: That there is a financial crisis beyond the control of the applicant.

New Policy

Additional language was added to [EA Policy Section 4.1.1](#) to clarify that W-2 agencies may not impose stricter verification requirements or require applicants to verify items outside the eligibility and housing items listed in sections 4.2 and 4.3.

[See attached EA Manual Sections 4.1.1 and 4.2.2.](#)

VERIFICATION OF NEW PERMANENT HOUSING

Current Policy

If an EA Group is moving to new permanent housing, the W-2 agency must verify with the landlord that the EA Group has secured housing with that landlord prior to payment.

New Policy

If an EA Group is moving to new permanent housing, the W-2 agency is no longer required to verify with the landlord that the EA Group has secured housing. The EA Group must still report having new permanent housing prior to payment being issued and can still receive a payment delay if they have not obtained permanent housing at the time of application.

[See attached EA Manual Sections 4.3.1, 5.3.3, and 5.4.2.](#)

EA CHECK RECIPIENT

Current Policy

The W-2 agency may issue the payment:

1. By check to the applicant, landlord, or vendor; or
2. By voucher to the landlord or vendor.

The W-2 agency will determine whether to send the payment to the applicant, landlord, or vendor based on the type of emergency and/or the planned living arrangement.

New Policy

The W-2 agency still has the option to issue the payment to the applicant, landlord, or vendor, depending on the situation.

The W-2 agency is now required ask the applicant to identify their preferred EA payee. The worker must have a discussion with the applicant about their circumstances and may advise the applicant, but it is ultimately the applicant's decision. The discussion must consider:

- The type of emergency;
- The planned living arrangement;
- The cooperation of the landlord or vendor; and
- The applicant's specific situation.

W-2 agencies must document their rationale in EA comments on how the payment recipient decision was made.

[See attached EA Manual Sections 4.3.1, 5.2.3, 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.4.1, and 5.4.3.](#)

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 functionality described in this memo and update any relevant agency procedures.

ATTACHMENTS

[EA Policy Attachment](#)

CONTACTS

For EA Policy Questions: [BWF Policy Question SharePoint](#)

For EA WWP Functionality Questions: BWF Work Programs Help Desk
BWFworkprogramsHD@wisconsin.gov

DCF/DFES/BWF/AP