

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Division of Family and Economic Security
PO Box 7935
Madison, WI 53707-7935

TO: W-2 Manual Holders

FROM: Janice Peters, Director
Bureau of Working Families

Rebecca Swartz, Chief
Wisconsin Works Policy Section

RE: Wisconsin Works Manual
Release 09-02

DATE: May 1, 2009

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

The effective date of the change is the date of publication. However, if the change was announced through an Operations or Administrator's Memo, the change is effective on the date identified in the memo. If there is a different effective date or implementation schedule other than the publication date or the date identified in the Operations or Administrator's Memo, it will be highlighted below.

NOTE: While major changes to the W-2 Manual material are identified below, the Bureau of Working Families (BWF) is making a concerted effort to update the entire W-2 Manual. In addition to the changes listed below, policy materials within each chapter may have been reworded and reorganized for better readability and to provide the user with easier access to relevant policy. In addition, relevant W-2 forms and publications have been identified and web links to those forms have been provided, where appropriate.

POLICY CHANGES

Chapter 17

Added or clarified the following policies: (Operations Memo 09-22)

- Impending Homelessness for Renters in Foreclosure Housing: Allows EA due to impending homelessness for EA groups who meet all other eligibility criteria and are renters who must leave their rental housing because the housing's owner is in foreclosure.
- Impending Homelessness Financial Crisis Other Reason: Clarifies other similar reasonable circumstances for the financial crisis requirement in impending homelessness.

- Energy Crisis Immediate Threat to the Health or Safety of the Group: Revises when the lack of or imminent loss of utility service is likely to be an immediate threat to the health or safety of the group and therefore an energy crisis, to add a young child to the high-risk individuals in the home, with young child defined as a child age five or younger.
- "Doubled-Up" Housing: Clarifies that a group residing in "doubled-up" housing meets the temporary or transitional living arrangement requirements for EA eligibility due to homelessness when the EA group: is not on the lease/mortgage; is using the "doubled-up" housing as a short-term housing solution to avoid homelessness; and has been residing in the "doubled-up" housing for one month or less.
- EA Utility Expense Amount for the Financial Need Calculation: Clarifies for the financial need calculation, the utility expense amount is the utility company's payment plan amount when there is a remaining utility expense after the required pursuit of other payment options for utility expense.
- Maximum EA Payment Amount for All EA Emergency Types except Energy Crisis: Revises the maximum EA payment amount for impending homelessness, homelessness, fire, flood and natural disaster to be:
 - \$516 for eligible EA groups with two through four members,
 - \$645 for EA groups with five members, and
 - \$110 per group member for EA members with six or more members.
- Maximum EA Payment Amount for Energy Crisis: Establishes the maximum EA payment amount for energy crisis to be \$500 for eligible EA groups of any size.
- Beyond the Control of the Caretaker Relative(s): Eliminates the recent policy requirement for homelessness, fire, flood and natural disaster emergencies that the emergency must be beyond the control of the caretaker relative(s) of the group or constitute good cause as determined by the W-2 agency. However the beyond control of the caretaker relative(s) requirement for impending homelessness and energy crisis are retained as policy requirements. Note: An emergency caused by a caretaker relative's criminal behavior is not eligible for EA.
- Pursuit of Other Payment Options: Requires the group to complete pursuit of other payment options for utility expense when the emergency is energy crisis. These other payment options include the Wisconsin Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and assistance from local utility companies based on state regulations. When the EA group is experiencing an energy crisis, the W-2 agency must assist the EA group in completing the pursuit of other payment options for utility expense.