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1200.00.00 GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

This chapter presents general information about the following Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) programs:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
(Section 1205);

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Cash Assistance) (TANF), Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), and Indiana Manpower Placement and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) (Section 1210.)

These programs are administered by the state throughout 92 counties.

1205.00.00 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program(S)

The purpose of the SNAP Program is to assist eligible low income participants to obtain a more nutritious diet by increasing food purchasing power. Indiana uses an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system for issuance of SNAP benefits. The EBT system electronically distributes SNAP benefits on the Hoosier Works card which is similar to a commercial debit or ATM card. Each card has a unique sixteen-digit account number, a magnetic stripe on the back and only works with a four digit Personal Identification Number (PIN) selected by the participant.

1205.05.00 LEGAL BASIS (S)

The legal basis for SNAP is the Food Stamp Act of 1977, the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1981, and the Food Security Act of 1965. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is the federal agency which is responsible for administration of SNAP. This agency's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) provides specific guidance to states concerning the SNAP Program.

1205.10.00 PROGRAM OVERVIEW (S)

Assistance groups (AGs) are issued benefits electronically through the Hoosier Works card. The Hoosier Works card is used to purchase eligible food items at retail stores

authorized by USDA. SNAP is intended to supplement other AG income. The amount of benefits received is based on the AGs size and financial circumstances. These benefits are funded 100 percent by the federal government, and administrative costs are shared by the state and federal governments on a 50 - 50 basis.

1205.15.00 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (S)

Individuals who purchase and prepare food together are considered an AG for SNAP purposes and their eligibility is determined together. Individuals who apply for SNAP must qualify on the basis of income and resources. Income, unless specifically exempt by federal regulations, is counted. After adding all the AGs countable income, federally allowed deductions are subtracted. In order to be eligible, any remaining income must fall below set income limits, depending on the AGs size.

In addition, families and individuals must meet work registration requirements as well as certain citizenship and residency requirements. Eligibility criteria are established by USDA and are uniform throughout the United States.

Any AG in which all members are recipients of Cash Assistance (TANF) or Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and/or SSI benefits are considered categorically eligible because of their entitlement to these benefits. Eligibility factors accepted for SNAP eligibility and Cash Assistance and/or SSI eligibility are:

1. Gross and net income limits;
2. Resources;
3. Social Security number information;
4. Sponsored alien information, and
5. Residency.

1210.00.00 CASH ASSISTANCE AND IMPACT (C, I)

Cash Assistance programs are designed to provide financial assistance to individuals who meet specific program eligibility requirements. Two federal programs, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), comprise the Cash Assistance Programs in the eligibility system.

TANF provides financial assistance to dependent children and their parents or relatives who are deprived of financial support and who meet non-financial eligibility criteria.

RCA provides financial assistance to refugee adults and families who have resettled in the United States. The purpose of the program is to provide for the effective resettlement of refugees and to assist them to achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.

1210.05.00 LEGAL BASIS (C, I)

The legal basis for the TANF cash assistance program is Title IV-A of the Social Security Act as amended by the Personal Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996. The Indiana Code (IC) provides authority for operating in Indiana, and the Indiana Administrative Code (IAC) contains specific rules about how the program is run in Indiana. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is the federal agency responsible for the program.

The legal basis for the RCA program is Title IV of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and the Refugee Act of 1980.

1210.10.00 PROGRAM OVERVIEW (C, I)

With the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935, states were given the option of participating in the Assistance to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) Program (Title IV-A of the Social Security Act). Once the program was adopted, the state was required to comply with laws and regulations of the federal government. The Welfare Act of 1936 established the AFDC Program in Indiana. The program went through many changes and in 1967 was expanded to make payments for the second parent in the home when one of the parents was incapacitated (AFDC-I). Although a federal option previously, the AFDC-Unemployed Program was not adopted in Indiana until October 1, 1990. It became mandatory as a result of the Family Support Act of 1988. In 1996, welfare reform efforts resulted in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act that eliminated the AFDC Program and created TANF. The goal of the TANF program is to enable participants to achieve economic self-sufficiency. The aim of the TANF policies and procedures is to meet this goal.

TANF cash assistance is funded through the federal TANF Block Grant which requires states to maintain financial support of other programs for low-income families in order to receive the complete grant amount.

The Refugee Act of 1980 set procedures for the administration of the Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) program and for the admission of refugees to the United States. Standardized immigration documents were developed at this

time to assist in program administration. A basic principle in the development of this program was that eligibility for other assistance programs was to be determined prior to determining eligibility for RCA.

RCA is funded completely by federal funds.

1210.15.00 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (C, I)

The determination of eligibility for TANF cash assistance is a two step process. In addition to financial eligibility, which includes income and resource consideration, each applicant/recipient of TANF must also be determined eligible according to the non-financial requirements of the TANF Program as administered in the State of Indiana.

TANF eligibility is determined on the basis of the eligibility of the child. An eligible child is:

1. A dependent child under age 18 who is a citizen of the United States or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence.
2. Living with an eligible relative (as described in Section 3215.05.00) who is unable to provide adequate financial support for the child.

The determination of eligibility for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) is dependent on the determination of refugee status by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). In addition, other non-financial requirements, income, and resources are considered. Refugee Cash Assistance is time limited based upon the refugee's date of entry into the United States.

IMPACT services are available to TANF and SNAP recipients. TANF IMPACT services are available for individuals included in the TANF grant, including zero grants, and those who are not included in the grant:

Whose 24 months of eligibility have expired, but the individual's TANF Assistance Group (AG) remains open,
or

Who are no longer eligible for TANF, but have not completed the On-the-Job Training (OJT) contract initiated for the individual while the TANF AG was open.