Township Assistance

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State Board of Accounts
TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE STANDARDS

IC 12-20-5.5-1

Required to provide assistance according to uniform written standards

Proposed by the Trustee, adopted by the Township Board, and filed with the board of county commissioners

Reviewed and updated annually – reflect changes in cost of basic necessities

Published in a single written document

Posted prominently in all offices where township assistance is processed
IC 12-20-5.5-2

Criteria for determining eligibility

Minimum requirements for accessibility of Trustee

Other information including:

- Office locations, hours, and days of availability
- Eligibility criteria – both initial and continuing
- Workfare requirements
- Essential and nonessential assets
- Available resources
- Income exemptions
- Application process
- Countable income and assets
- Wasted resources
IC 12-20-5.5-3

Required to publish a telephone number

If Township assistance office not in home, then location must have a sign that includes Trustee’s name, availability of assistance, and telephone number

IC 12-20-5.5-4

For Townships that have assisted more than 50 households in the prior two years and have a population at least 10,000 must provide the following:

- Scheduled office hours with staff qualified to process assistance
- Minimum of 14 office hours per week, with not more than one weekday between days office is open
- Provide afterhours access via answering machine, answering service, etc.
- Must respond within 24 hours after receiving inquiry, excluding Saturday, Sunday and holidays
- Post office hours and telephone at each Township office
TOWNSHIP APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

IC 12-20-6

Must have an application or affidavit on file with the Trustee within the prior 180 days

If additional assistance is provided, then an affidavit must be filed where the applicant affirms the condition of the individual or household

If Trustee knows that the individual may be eligible for other public assistance, then when referred by the Trustee, the individual is required to apply for the other public assistance prior to getting Township Assistance

For example, if you believe the applicant may be eligible for food stamps, then you could refer them to apply for the federal program prior to providing township assistance
Emergency situations require immediate action. For nonemergency situations, the Trustee has up to 72 hours after receiving the application, excluding weekends, to act.

Actions would include – providing assistance, denying assistance, leave decision pending further information.

Notice of action must be in writing, provided in person or mailed with 72 hours, and include the option of the applicant to appeal a denial with the county board of commissioners.

Requires Trustee to complete an Investigation of circumstances prior to providing assistance.

If an applicant or a member of the applicant’s household has a relative living within the Township, then the Trustee is required to request the relative to assist the applicant prior to providing assistance for a second time.
PAYMENT OF TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE CLAIMS

IC 12-20-20

Assistance claims must be itemized, audited, and certified by the Trustee
Payments directly to vendors must be made within 45 days

IC 12-20-24

If money is not available for the payment of township assistance, the township board must appeal to the DLGF to borrow money
If the township board does not appeal to borrow money or if an appeal fails, the county board of commissioners may borrow money or otherwise provide the money
Debt must be paid back within 5 years
Additional appropriations must be requested and a tax rate must be levied
IC 12-20-28-3

Requires the SBOA to collect an annual statistical report of township assistance
Statute lists the specific information that must be collected
SBOA has included the list of information in a section on the TA-7
Requires a copy of the report to be provided to the County Auditor

HB 1005

Would require the SBOA to determine the information to be included in the annual statistical report
COMMON QUESTIONS

Burials

When do I have to pay burial expenses?

When a resident of the Township passes away without money, personal property, assets to be liquidated, or other means to pay for burial expenses.

How much can I pay for burial expenses?

A trustee shall determine the cost for the items and services required by law for the funeral and burial of an individual, including a burial plot, and for the cremation of an individual, and include in the township's township assistance standards the maximum funeral and burial or cremation amount to be paid from township assistance funds.

The cost of the funeral may not be more than the cost of the least expensive funeral, including any necessary merchandise and embalming, available from the funeral director under the funeral director's price list disclosed to the Federal Trade Commission.

State Board of Accounts

2017
Wasted Resources

Do we have to provide assistance to someone that has a cell phone?

IC 12-20-5.5-2 details the requirements of the Township Assistance standards and includes information for “Wasted Resources”. Definition of Wasted Resources is listed in IC 12-7-2-200.5 and includes “(1) the amount of money or resources expended by an applicant or an adult member of an applicant's household seeking township assistance during the thirty (30) days before the date of application for township assistance for items or services that are not basic necessities;”