



2026 TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE STANDARDS, ELIGIBILITY AND PROCEDURES

**CENTER TOWNSHIP
MARION COUNTY, INDIANA**

LaDonna M. Freeman, Trustee

NOTICE TO ALL CITIZENS OF CENTER TOWNSHIP MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

RE: TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE

Location: Julia M. Carson Government Center
300 E. Fall Creek Parkway N. Drive
Indianapolis, Indiana 46205

Phone: 317.633.3610

Website: www.centergov.org

Hours:	Monday	8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
	Tuesday	8:00 AM – 7:00 PM
	Wednesday	8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
	Thursday	8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
	Friday	8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
	Last Saturday of Each Month	8:00 AM – 11:00 AM
	*By Appointment Only	

The township reserves the right to modify its office hours in conformity with the needs of the township. In such an event, the township will post advance notice. The township will be closed on holidays and at other times when it is necessary to participate in educational programs or seminars.

Assistance in Center Township is administered in accordance with these standards which have been duly adopted by the Center Township Board and filed with the Marion County Board of Commissioners. This document serves as a “guide” on how the township administers the many different services available through the township assistance program, as well as how a person qualifies for those services.

INTRODUCTION

Section 1-1. *Mission Statement.* The primary mission of the Center Township Trustee's Office is to provide assistance and resources to our community. Our goals are to treat everyone with dignity and respect, help our applicants become self-sufficient, and work responsibly on behalf of the public.

Section 1-2. *Equal Opportunity.* The township will administer township assistance without regard to race, religion, source of income, creed, color, sex, disability, handicap status, national origin, age of an adult, marital status, veteran status, political beliefs, or any other arbitrary condition which operates to defeat the goal of providing prompt and necessary relief to eligible residents of the township. Any instances of harassment or discrimination should be reported to the Trustee.

Section 1-3. *Township Assistance Statutes.* Township assistance will be administered in conformity with all relevant township assistance statutes, including but not limited to Indiana Code 12-20-1-1 through 12-20-28-3, whether or not similar provisions are contained in these standards. Statutes will be liberally construed in order that applicants may receive necessary and prompt relief.

Section 1-4. *The Trustee.* The Trustee is an elected official and a purely statutory office, with only such power and authority as the statutes may so vest in the office. By statute, the Trustee is made ex-officio administrator of township assistance. This office will perform all duties that may be prescribed by law to see that township residents are properly relieved and taken care of in the manner prescribed by law and as set forth in these standards.

Section 1-5. *The Township Board.* By statute, there exists a duly elected five (5) member Township Board which functions both as a legislative and fiscal body with regard to the operations of the township

Section 1-6. *Office Hours.* An individual desiring to complete an application for township assistance should come into the office during normal business hours. It is recommended that applicants arrive as early as possible, since applications are processed as received.

The township will work to accommodate legitimate scheduling issues of an applicant desiring to complete an application for township assistance. A phone answering device is available to record all phone calls when the office is closed, and your call will be returned the next business day.

Section 1-7. *Courtesy.* The township expects everyone to be treated in a courteous and dignified manner. We, likewise, expect the staff of the township to be treated in a similar fashion. The township is intent on assisting those in need and will endeavor to provide necessary assistance within the limits of the law and these standards and guidelines.

TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

Section 2-1. *Basic Assistance.* Assistance given to residents of Center Township, which is not emergency assistance.

Section 2-2. *Emergency Assistance.* Temporary assistance that is furnished immediately when the township determines that an emergency has caused immediate suffering that can be remedied only by township assistance.

Section 2-3. *Non-resident Assistance.* Assistance given to an applicant who is physically located in Center Township without the intention to make it their permanent residence.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Section 3-1. *The Application.* No determination of eligibility for assistance will be made by the township unless an application has been completed within one hundred eighty (180) days before the date aid is extended. The township may only furnish assistance when the personal effort of the applicant fails to provide one (1) or more basic necessities.

All applicants for township assistance will be allowed to apply without unnecessary delay during normal business hours. The township will not deny or attempt to defeat the right to apply for assistance. The township will accept an application once it is completed and signed. The township will make every effort to complete the application process without delay and to process all cases promptly to a conclusion.

Section 3-2. *The Consent to Disclosure and Release.* Before the township may provide assistance, each applicant and adult member of the applicant's household must consent to disclosure and release of information. A copy of this consent will be kept on file by the township, and made available to other governmental agencies upon request.

The township may obtain from other governmental agencies information concerning the applicant and the applicant's household members.

The township will also request and is entitled to receive information concerning the applicant and the applicant's household members from the following sources:

Department of Workforce Development (income, resources, assets, and benefits received); Employers (salary or wages earned); A person holding assets or title to assets of the applicant (value of the asset.)

Section 3-3. *Assistance to Applicants.* An applicant may be assisted and/or accompanied by an individual of the applicants' choice.

Section 3-4. *Who Fills Out Application.* The head of a household will ordinarily be required to make applications for assistance. In the case of a multiple member household, the head of the household is the applicant in whose name the household residence is rented or purchased. That applicant must apply for the needs of all members of the household for whom assistance is sought.

If the head of a household is unable to file an application because of incompetence, sickness, physical or mental incapacity, or employment, another adult household member may make the application.

Section 3-5. *Home Visits.* The township will, upon notification, take and process the application of an applicant with a documented physical disability at the place where the person is located.

Section 3-6. *Information Given to Applicants.* Applicants will be informed in writing about the eligibility requirements and the rights and obligations under the township assistance program, including coverage, conditions of eligibility, a list of verifications which may be required, scope of the programs, related services available, and the rights and responsibilities of applicants.

Section 3-7. *Welfare Fraud.* Knowingly and willingly falsifying an application or misrepresenting the facts or withholding vital information, solely to gain township benefits shall be cause to be denied for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days, commencing on the date of the improper conduct or the date that the last assistance was extended based on the improper conduct. The township may also make a criminal referral to the county prosecutor's office. Individual applicants convicted of "Welfare Fraud" shall be denied township assistance in accordance with the provisions of IC 12-20-6-6.5.

Section 3-8. *Frequency of Requests.* The township shall not be obligated to provide assistance to an applicant or a member of an applicant's household within thirty (30) days from the date assistance was last provided, with the exception of medical or burial assistance.

Section 3-9. *Assistance Only Upon Necessity.* The township may provide and shall extend township assistance only when the personal effort of the applicant fails to provide one (1) or more basic necessities.

VERIFICATIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Section 4-1. *Emergency Assistance* - When the township determines there is an emergency, the township will furnish immediate assistance upon proof of identification and any other verification that the applicant can provide prior to the close of business on the date of application.

If the township determines that an applicant who receives emergency township assistance may be eligible for public assistance other than township assistance, the applicant shall within fifteen (15) working days after the date that emergency township assistance is granted, file an application for such public assistance and comply with all the requirements necessary for completing that application process. An applicant who has received emergency assistance and who fails to file an application for the other public assistance within fifteen (15) working days of the date that emergency township assistance was granted may not be granted township assistance for sixty (60) days following the grant of emergency township assistance.

Section 4-2. *Basic Assistance - Investigation on Initial Application.* An applicant is required to cooperate with a township investigation of the applicant's household finances, household responsibilities, property, legal residence, the cause of the household's need for township assistance (if it can be ascertained), the existence of relatives capable of providing assistance and eligibility to receive basic assistance. The investigation may include a home visit for all applicants.

Failure to cooperate with a township investigation is grounds for denial of township assistance for up to sixty (60) days.

The period of investigation will normally include the thirty (30) days preceding the date of application, or up to thirty (30) days after the date of application, except that (a) income, resources or tax supported services reduced as a result of a voluntary act by an adult applicant will be investigated for the sixty (60) days preceding the application, (b) assistance for utility bills will be investigated for the month before the first day the bill for which the applicant is seeking assistance became due, continuing to the date of application for assistance, plus any period for which overdue bills must be paid to prevent termination of service or to obtain reconnection of service and (c) lump sum amounts of money or resources from tax refunds, lawsuits, inheritances, or pension payments of at least four hundred dollars (\$400) that are expended by an adult member of the applicant's household during the one hundred eighty (180) days immediately preceding the date of application for township assistance for items or services that are not basic necessities if, at the time of the expenditure, there were amounts due and owing for items or services constituting basic necessities.

Section 4-3. *Verifications Required for Each Household Member:*

Legal residence, identity, including names, ages, and social security numbers, as verified by social security cards and birth certificates. All names under which the applicant has previously applied for assistance from the township. Current and immediately past residences, if any. Present and previous employment and occupation, if any. Countable income and other resources available and to become available including but not limited to check stubs or statements from employers listing the dates and amounts of all gross pay received including vacation pay and sick pay or benefits; lay-off or termination slip; unemployment resignation card from the Indiana Department

of Workforce Development; a statement from an agency making a personal loan or contribution; a notarized statement; Letters of Award or Denial from the Social Security Administration, the Veterans Administration, the County Office (including food stamps) or other government agencies; applications for pending determination for assistance from any government entity, Income received from the rental or sale of any property; Receipt of child support or verification from the Prosecuting Attorney that the name and location of the other parent of an applicant's child has been reported to the Prosecutor, where applicable; the fact that a charge has been filed with the Prosecuting Attorney against the perpetrator of domestic violence which caused an application for township assistance a pending claim or cause of action against a third party that may result in receipt of a monetary award;

A physician's statement that a physical or mental illness or disability prevents an adult applicant from being employed or otherwise able to perform labor;

Other family relationships and whether any relatives are able and willing to assist;

All expenditures, including, but not limited to, the following: rent or house payments; real estate tax payments; food payments; utility payments, showing services used; heating payments; insurance payments; installment payments; loan payments; payment for telephone service showing services used; charge account payments; car payments; furniture payments; clothing payments; child support payments; child care expenses; medical expenses; book fees or school tuition; transportation expenses; cable television expenses.

Assets, including but not limited to, the following: checking or savings account statements; certificates of deposit; stock and bond certificates; record of any other intangibles that have a net cash value; cash on hand; deeds or contracts for any real property; titles of automobiles, boats or other vehicles; any other personal property used solely for recreational or entertainment purposes.

If the applicant has not applied for or received, within the preceding one hundred eighty (180) days, other public assistance for which the township reasonably believes the applicant may be eligible, the township will refer the applicant and require the applicant to apply and comply with all necessary requirements for completing the application process not more than fifteen (15) working days after the date of the township's referral. Verification of the applicant's compliance is required. Lack of verification may cause township assistance to be denied for up to sixty (60) days.

The township may require other documents prescribed by the Internal Revenue Service and the Indiana Department of Revenue and other state and local social service agencies. The applicant shall provide a notarized statement from any person paid by the applicant if no receipt was given at the time of payments.

The township may confirm the existence or accuracy of all verifications submitted.

A copy of each application, affidavit and all documents of verification will be retained by the township whether or not assistance is granted.

An application will be denied if verifications are not obtained or delivered to the township within the seventy-two (72) hour period the township has to act on an application or during the additional seventy-two (72) hours the application may remain pending. Exceptions will be made for verifications that, for reasons outside the control of the applicant, the applicant cannot obtain within the two (2) seventy-two (72) hour periods, such as a social security card for a newborn child. Further assistance will be denied if an excepted verification is not provided by the applicant within forty-five (45) days after application. Denial for failure to verify does not prevent the applicant from reapplying.

Section 4-4. Basic Assistance - Home Inspections. The township may schedule a home inspection at any time, may make an unscheduled home inspection and may re-determine eligibility as the facts may indicate at any time.

Section 4-5. *Authentication of Documents.* The township may consider any document to be authentic if it appears to be genuine. The township may require a document to be notarized if it does not appear to be authentic. Examples of documents appearing to be authentic are letters written on printed letterheads, statements for charges on printed forms, a certified copy of a public record, and an affidavit of a person other than the applicant or his relative. A copy may be considered authentic if it appears to be a photo static or accurate copy of the original of what it purports to be except for such official documents as driver's licenses, social security cards, and immigration and naturalization documents.

An applicant who fails to submit a specific document of verification required by the township may present other evidence of verification. Each offered substitute for a requested verification will be reviewed on its individual merits. The township is aware of the difficulty, at times, of obtaining certain information and, in cases where needed information is readily available to the township from other sources, the township will not unduly burden the applicant to obtain such documentation. This does not change the applicant's ultimate responsibility to furnish all necessary documentation.

TOWNSHIP ACTION ON APPLICATIONS AND NOTICES

Section 5-1. *Action.* The township will act on a non-emergency application within seventy-two (72) hours (excluding weekends and the State's legal holidays) after it is received, by granting or denying the assistance requested, partial denials in whole or in part, or by pending the decision for not more than another seventy-two (72) hours (excluding weekends and the State's legal holidays). The township shall not be obligated to provide assistance to a household within thirty (30) days from the date assistance was last provided with the exception of medial and burial assistance.

Section 5-2. *Notice.* Within each seventy-two (72) hour period for determination of eligibility, written notice of the township's action will be mailed or handed to the applicant who made the application.

Each notice of action shall contain a statement of the types and amounts of assistance granted (in whole or in part), partial denials (in whole or in part) or pending (in whole or in part), specific reason(s) for the action, any computation on which the decision is based, the statute or standard supporting such action, and specify any information the applicant must supply, together with an explanation of the applicant's right to appeal the decision to the Board of County Commissioners and the procedure for doing so.

Notices will be given on the Notice of Township assistance Action form. A copy of the notice will be filed with the applicant's application.

Section 5-3. *Denial.* If the applicant has not complied within the appropriate period, the application will be denied.

MONTHLY ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

Section 6-1. *Monthly Certifications.* During the one hundred eighty (180) day period that the application is in effect, there may be several different requests for assistance and eligibility may change during that time. Therefore, the township may not furnish additional or continuing aid to unless an application and affidavit is filed affirming how, if at all, the personal condition or circumstances of the household has changed from that set forth in the most recent application.

REASONS FOR DENIAL OF TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE

Section 7-1. *Denial of Other Public Assistance.* A denial of other public assistance may be cause for the township to deny or discontinue township assistance. The township may base denial of township assistance on refusal to appeal the denial of other public assistance benefits. The township may refer a applicant to available free legal services for advice regarding such a denial.

Section 7-2. *Previous Denial of Assistance.* The township may not extend aid to or for the benefit of a applicant if that aid would pay for goods or services provided to or for the benefit during a period that the applicant had previously applied for and been denied township assistance.

Section 7-3. *Welfare Fraud.* If an individual has been convicted of an offense under I.C. 35-43- 5-7 (See Section 3-7(b). *supra*), the township may not extend aid to or for the benefit of that individual for one (1) year after a misdemeanor conviction and for ten (10) years after a felony conviction. If the township otherwise finds that individual has obtained township assistance from any township by means of conduct described in I.C. 35-43-5-7, the township may refuse to extend aid to or for the benefit of that individual for sixty (60) days after the later of the date of the improper conduct or the date aid was last extended to the individual based on the improper conduct.

Section 7-4. *Failure to Apply for Child Support.* Failure of a custodial parent not receiving child support payments from the other parent to apply for child support assistance from the Prosecuting Attorney's office by naming the child's other parent and attempting to locate that parent is grounds for denial of township assistance unless good cause is shown for the failure to do so.

Section 7-5. *Charge Against Domestic Violence Perpetrator.* An applicant whose need for township assistance is caused by domestic violence must file a charge against the perpetrator with the Prosecuting Attorney's office. Failure to file a charge is grounds for denial of township assistance unless good cause is shown for failure to do so.

Section 7-6. *Falsification.* The submission of an official document which has been altered, or verified falsification of an application or a required affidavit is ground for denial of township assistance.

Section 7-7. *Home Visits.* The township will deny assistance to applicants who do not make themselves and their residences available for scheduled home visitation or who refuse to admit the township when requested.

Section 7-8. *Verifications.* Failure to supply requested verifications, is grounds for denial of township assistance.

Section 7-9. *Abusive Applicant Behavior.* Township assistance may be denied to a applicant who is violent, threatens violence or uses abusive language during interactions with township staff or on township property.

Section 7-10. *Loss or Theft.* The township shall not be obligated to provide assistance when the emergency was due to lost or stolen resources or occurred under questionable circumstances as determined by the township.

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ELIGIBILITY-GENERAL

Section 9-1. *Residence.* Except in cases of traveler's aid, burial, and emergency assistance, assistance will be provided only to township residents. An applicant who is in the township solely for the purpose of receiving township assistance in the township will be denied assistance. An adult alien without a green card is not a township resident for the purposes of township assistance.

Section 9-2. *Help From Responsible Relative(s).* Before granting township assistance a second time, the township will call on a applicant's relative(s) (parent, stepparent, child, stepchild, sibling, stepsibling, grandparent, step grandparent, grandchild, or step grandchild) living in the township to assist the applicant with material relief or employment. If the relative refuses or is unable to help, the township may assist an otherwise eligible applicant.

WORK TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Section 10-1. *General.* The township requires each applicant to search for and accept employment offered by the township or any private or other public employer which complies with state and federal law, or to perform workfare or participate in counseling, training, education or special services as assigned by the township.

Section 10-2. *Employment Search.* The township will exert all possible efforts to secure employment for applicants. When possible, the township will refer each adult applicant assigned to employment search to one or more employers who are in need of workers. The applicant must return to the township each job referral form filled out by the prospective employer within seven (7) days of the date the job referral was issued until the applicant becomes employed. Any employment must be reported to the township within seventy-two (72) hours, including estimated duration of employment and the wage to be paid.

The township may at any time require applicants to register with the local office of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development as willing to accept employment at the federal minimum wage and to keep their employment card updated.

Section 10-3. *Workfare.* When feasible, the township will require an adult applicant to do any work needed for any governmental unit, including Center Township, or a nonprofit agency operating within Marion County, Indiana. Suitability to perform available work shall be determined by the township. The township may request and provide for medical examinations necessary to make the determination.

The township will carry the medical treatment and burial expense coverage required by the Indiana Workers' Compensation law, I.C. 22-3-2 through I.C. 22-3-6 with regard to the work performed.

Work which would result in the displacement or reduction in hours of government employees will not be assigned. Work performed under this subsection is considered satisfaction of a condition for township assistance and is not considered services performed for remuneration or repayment for township assistance. Applicants shall be required to do an amount of work which equals the value of assistance already received by the household.

The township will not seek repayment from a applicant or any others for assistance for which that applicant has performed workfare.

Section 10-4. *Counseling, Training and Education.* The purpose of township assistance is to aid applicants who cannot supply their basic necessities through their own efforts. If the township determines that an applicant would be aided in supplying their basic necessities by participating in employment counseling, job training or educational programs the township will require participation in such a program.

Section 10-5. *Special Services Aid.* The township will make referrals to mental health and substance abuse providers when appropriate and assist applicants on parole or probation to find housing and fulfill their parole or probation obligations.

Section 10-6. *Working with Budget Counselor.* If an applicant for township assistance has income or resources, the township may refer the applicant to a budget counselor.

Section 10-7. *Referral for Employment or Help.* Before the township refers an applicant to a place of business for possible employment or to another community agency or organization for help, the township will communicate with the entity to determine whether the entity may be of assistance.

Section 10-8. *Exceptions to Employment, Workfare, Training and Education.* An applicant will be excused from seeking employment, accepting a job, or workfare if the applicant is not physically able to perform the proposed work; is a minor or at least sixty-five (65) years of age; has full-time employment at the time of receiving township assistance; is needed to care for a person as a result of that person's age or physical condition; or shows just cause why the work should not be performed.

Section 10-9. *Verification of Inability to Work or Comply with Other Assignments.* An applicant who claims a physical or mental inability to seek or accept employment or comply with other assignments must provide the township with (1) a current physician's statement of the nature of the disability, the expected duration of the disability and the work duties or other assignments which they are unable to perform because of the disability, or (2) a physician's or official determination of permanent or temporary total or partial disability setting out the information required in (1).

Section 10-10. *Grounds For Denial of Township Assistance*

Section 10-10.1. Failure to complete an assigned obligation under this section in a timely manner.

Section 10-10.2. Failure to actively seek or accept employment without just cause or quitting or losing a job without just cause. Assistance will not be furnished when a loss of income is due to a planned layoff that is normal or customary for the employer and/or industry.

Section 10-10.3. Refusal or failure to perform workfare assigned by an Indiana township.

Section 10-10.4. Failure to enroll in, be accepted and attend assigned counseling, education, or training programs. The township will not provide assistance to any household in which an adult member is registered as a student.

Section 10-10.5. Notification by a workfare agency that the applicant is unacceptable to the agency because of unsuitable behavior.

Section 10-11. *Demonstration of Willingness to Comply.* Assistance that is denied for failure to comply with any provision of this section can only be remedied by willingness to comply with the section and completion of the original obligation before new assistance will be granted.

FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY – DEFINITIONS

Section 11-1. *Basic Necessities.* Basic necessities include, but are not limited to:

medical care; clothing; food; shelter; transportation; household essentials; essential utility services; household supplies; basic telephone service if a physician certifies that it is a medical necessity; reimbursement for tuition expenses incurred for township referred education; any other type of assistance provided by the township pursuant to law.

Section 11-2. *Countable Income.* Except as otherwise provided by law, countable income shall include the following either paid to the applicant within the thirty (30) days immediately preceding the date of application, or

accrued and legally available for withdrawal by the applicant at the time of application or not more than thirty (30) days after the date of application:

Gross wages after mandatory deductions; Social Security or Supplemental Security Income benefits, AFDC, Unemployment Compensation, Worker's Compensation (except to the extent it is restricted for payment of medical expenses); vacation pay, sick benefits, strike benefits, private or public pensions and taxable income from self-employment; interest and dividends on bank accounts, stocks, bonds, certificates of deposit or similar assets; rent paid to the applicant; bartered goods and services provided by another individual for the payment of nonessential needs on behalf of an applicant or an applicant's household if monetary compensation or the provision of basic necessities would have been reasonably available from that individual; child support; gifts of cash, goods, or services to the applicant; education grants and loans to the extent that they are intended to cover basic needs.

Section 11-3. *Non-Countable (Exempt Income).* Food stamps and other income the township prohibited by law or regulation from considering shall not be included in countable income for purposes of calculating eligibility for township assistance.

Section 11-4. *Countable Assets.* Countable assets are non-cash property that is not necessary for the health, safety or decent living of a household, which property is owned, wholly or in part, by the household and has the legal right to sell or otherwise liquidate. Countable assets include:

real property that is not used for the primary residence of the applicant or for the production of income; savings and checking accounts, certificates of deposits, stocks and bonds and other tangibles that have a net cash value; boats or other vehicles and any other personal property used solely for recreational or entertainment purposes; an automobile in which the applicant's equity is worth more than \$1,200.00; more than one automobile.

Section 11-5. *Countable Liquid Assets.* Countable liquid assets are assets that are liquid or can be liquidated easily, such as savings and checking accounts, certificates of deposit, stocks and bonds and other intangibles that have a net cash value.

Section 11-6. *Non-Countable Assets.* Non-exclusive examples of non-countable assets are:

a place of residence; one car, in which the applicant's equity or value is less than \$1,200.00; normal home furnishings; clothing and personal effects; income producing property.

Section 11-7. *Wasted Resources.* Wasted resources include, but are not limited to:

Gifts or fraudulent transfers of assets for the purpose of making the household eligible for township assistance; the amount of money or resources expended during the thirty (30) days before the date of application for township assistance for items or services that are not basic necessities; income, resources, or tax supported services lost or reduced as a result of a voluntary act during the sixty (60) days before the date of application for township assistance unless a good reason for the act can be established; lump sum amounts of money or resources from tax refunds, lawsuits, inheritances, or pension payments of at least four hundred dollars (\$400) that are expended by an adult member of the applicant's household during the one hundred eighty (180) days immediately preceding the date of application for township assistance for items or services that are not basic necessities if, at the time of the expenditure, there were amounts due and owing for items or services constituting basic necessities.

DETERMINING NEED AND AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE

Section 12-1. *Determining Need.* An applicant will be determined to be in need if the applicant's own efforts fail to provide one or more basic necessities.

Section 12-2. Income Guidelines. No township assistance will be provided by the township to a applicant whose countable income, assets and resources equal or exceed **one hundred thirty eight percent (138%)** of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines as last determined and published by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, except in an emergency.

Section 12-3. Determining Amount of Assistance. Verified expenditures, obligations, income and assets, as defined above for the preceding thirty (30) days will be examined to determine the amount of township assistance to which the applicant is entitled, if any. The township will not pay for the cost of basic necessity services or goods incurred by a applicant during a period in which the household had sufficient income or resources to have paid for the goods or services. When countable income has ceased or been reduced (for example, by loss of job or illness), the township will determine eligibility by using the expected income and any remaining unspent income, plus other countable assets.

Section 12-4. Liquidation of Assets. Countable liquid assets must be liquidated and used for basic necessities prior to township assistance being granted. Any countable assets purchased after applying for township assistance must be liquidated immediately before further assistance will be authorized.

If countable assets are not liquidated within the required sixty (60) days, then the net dollar value of the asset will be considered wasted resources.

REPAYMENT OF ASSISTANCE

Section 13-1. Requirement to Repay. Applicants are not ordinarily required to promise repayment of assistance prior to the receipt of assistance. However, applicants who receive assistance from the township, but have some means at the time assistance is given to repay, or anticipates receiving means of repayment in the future, may be required to repay the assistance given. If required to repay, the applicant must sign a repayment or subrogation agreement provided by the township prior to receiving assistance. This agreement may include, but is not limited to, a promissory note or lien.

Section 13-2. Funds From Which Repayment Required:

Section 13-2.1. Third Party Benefits. If it is anticipated that an applicant has the potential of receiving a judgment, compensation, or monetary benefit from a third party, including the Social Security Administration, the township will require the applicant to enter into a subrogation agreement or sign a Social Security Administration reimbursement authorization for repayment of any township assistance benefits provided by the township during the period between the signing of the agreement and the applicant's receipt of the benefit or leaving the household.

Section 13.2.2. Estates. The township may file a claim for the value of township assistance given before the applicant's death against the estate of a township assistance applicant who dies, leaving an estate and is not survived by a spouse, disabled adult dependent, or dependent child less than eighteen (18) years of age.

For purposes of this subsection, an estate includes any money or other personal property in the possession of a coroner.

Section 13-2.3. Lien on Real Property. See Section 41-8.3(b), Shelter Assistance given for mortgage or contract payments. If shelter assistance payments for an applicant are made to the applicant's relative, the township may file a lien against the relative's real property for the amount of township assistance shelter assistance given.

Section 13-3. Credit of Repayment and Release of Lien. Repayment to the township from any source will be credited against the total amount of assistance given after the repayment agreement is signed, less any credit received by a applicant for satisfactorily performing workfare. A township lien will be satisfied at the Recorder's

Office when repaid in full.

Section 13-4. *Repayment Not Sought.* Repayment will not be sought for assistance for which a applicant has satisfactorily completed a workfare assignment.

Section 13-5. *Refusal to Agree.* Refusal to sign a required repayment agreement, an SSI Reimbursement Authorization or a subrogation agreement is grounds for denial of township assistance.

SERVICE AND BENEFITS PROVIDED

Section 14-1. *Burial/Cremation.* Except for an unclaimed body over which the Marion County Coroner assumes jurisdiction, the township will provide assistance with necessary and reasonable funeral and burial or cremation expenses for a person who dies in Center Township, without leaving the means necessary for burial and who is not a resident of another Indiana township. "Means" includes without limitation, money, real or personal property, other assets that may be liquidated or any other means necessary to defray funeral expenses.

If the township determines that the deceased is a resident of another Indiana township, the township will notify that township, who will superintend, authorize, and pay the burial expense.

The cost of any funeral provided by the township 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. The township will deduct any monetary assistance the decedent is entitled to receive from a state or federal program, or that is provided by another person or entity.

The township will not pay the cost of transporting the remains of any decedent into or from Center Township. Neither will the township pay for transportation to attend funerals.

The next of kin of the deceased or, if there is no known adult surviving next of kin who will take responsibility, a funeral director, may apply for burial assistance. The township will not pay expenses incurred prior to the filing of an application for assistance. The person applying must have sought all other means for burial assistance before applying. If a funeral director applies, he shall advertise for next of kin before burial assistance is provided. The person applying will be responsible for verifying eligibility by affidavit before burial assistance is issued and must submit a death certificate.

The township has a first priority claim, to the extent of the cost of the burial assistance paid by the township, against any money or other personal property held by the coroner under I.C. 36-2-14-11.

The township will not cremate a deceased individual if the deceased individual or a surviving family of the deceased individual has objected in writing to cremation.

The township will submit to the appropriate state division or department requests for reimbursement for burial expenses for an individual who was a resident of a state institution or a special institution government by I.C. 16-33 (mental health) at the time of death.

Section 14-2. *Clothing.* The township will provide ordinary clothing, including footwear, necessary for employment, health, education, or decency and, upon a physician's (clothing required for medical reasons). The township may refer a applicant to another appropriate agency to provide clothing if that proves to be the most economical way to relieve the applicant.

The township requires verification of eligibility for school clothing for each applicant for whom assistance is requested. **Birth certificates not already on file with the township must be provided.** The township may contact the school corporation's social service department for verification of eligibility.

Section 14-3. *Education.* The Township may reimburse a township assistance applicant for tuition expenses incurred in attending courses, if the applicant: has a proven aptitude for the courses being studied; was referred by the township; does not qualify for other tax supported educational programs; maintains a passing grade in each course; and maintains the minimum attendance requirements specified by the educational institution.

Section 14-4. *Food.*

Section 14-4.1. *Verification Required.* At the time of application for township assistance, applicants must furnish verification of applying for federal food stamps and whether the application was granted, denied, or is pending; and with verification of the amount of any federal food stamp assistance received or the reason for a denial.

Section 14-4.2. *Applications For Food Stamps Required.* Each applicant who applies for food assistance, without proof of application for federal food stamp assistance will be immediately referred to apply for food stamps. The township will notify the applicant that food assistance when granted is limited to thirty (30) days at most, and that no further food assistance will be granted until the applicant supplies verification of applying for food stamps and the amount of food stamps received or the reason for denial.

Section 14-4-3. *Food Assistance for Applicants Eligible for Food Stamps.* It is unlawful for the township to provide food assistance to an applicant eligible to participate in the food stamp program except in the following verified circumstances:

during the interim period beginning on the day of application for food stamps and ending not later than five (5) days after being determined eligible to participate in the federal food stamp program; upon the verified loss of the food stamps or food supply by: fire, flood or other natural disaster; burglary or other criminal act shown by a copy of a police report; upon the unpreventable loss of the household's food supply through spoilage; upon a written statement from a licensed physician indicating that one or more members of the household needs a special diet, the cost of which is greater than can be purchased with the allotment of food stamps; or when the township determines that a household is in need of supplementary food assistance, and determines that the applicant has participated in the federal food stamp program to the fullest extent allowable under federal and state law, and that such supplementary food assistance is given solely as required by the circumstances of the particular case; or for a new member of a household already receiving food stamps, upon verification that the food stamp office has been notified that a member has been added to the household, until not later than five (5) days after the day the food stamp office finds the new household member eligible.

Section 14-4.4. *Eligibility for and Amount of Food Assistance.* Applicants denied food stamp assistance will be given food assistance if otherwise eligible for township assistance under these standards and Indiana law. The amount of food assistance per week which will be given to various sized households. It is based on federal food stamp monthly allotments. Amounts will be changed from time to time as federal food stamp allotments change, or as economic or other conditions warrant.

Section 14-4.5. *Supplemental Food Order.* An additional amount of food may be supplied for special health reasons as prescribed by a physician or verified loss of food by: fire, flood or other natural disaster; burglary or other criminal act; unpreventable spoilage of food.

Section 14-4.6. The township may, instead of providing direct township food assistance, refer an eligible household to a local governmentally or privately funded food pantry. Applicants eligible for food assistance will be given a food purchase order (voucher) for any eligible grocery or meat market requested. It may be used by the to purchase food up to the amount of the voucher. Only food may be purchased with the voucher. Violations may cause township assistance to be denied for sixty (60) days. If the township considers the head of household incompetent or irresponsible to select food it will issue the food purchase order in the name of another adult member of the household or another relative living in another household or any other competent individual.

Section 14.6. *Household Supplies.* Household supplies shall include, but shall not be limited to, first-aid and medical supplies for minor injury and illness, soap, cleaning supplies, and toiletries. The township may provide aid in the form of vouchers, referral to other agencies or items available on hand. The township provides a list of what products may and what may not be purchased with a household supplies voucher. Violation may cause township assistance to be denied for sixty (60) days.

Section 14-7. *Medical Assistance.* Medical services will, to the extent possible, be provided by referring eligible applicants to medical institutions in Marion County which provide medical services and/or to Medicaid or other governmental medical programs.

The township may provide interim medical services upon verification that the applicant has a pending application for medical assistance from a governmental program and is reasonably complying with all application process requirements.

Prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, medical clothing and equipment, eyeglasses and prosthesis repair or replacement not provided by a medical institution or governmental programs will be provided upon presentation of a written physician's statement that the items have been prescribed by the physician. Office calls to a private licensed physician and dental care needed to relieve pain or infection or to repair cavities plus repair or replacements of dentures may be covered. Assistance to pay basic telephone service will be granted if a physician certifies that a telephone is a medical necessity. Insulin and items needed to administer insulin will be supplied.

Except where prohibited by federal law, the township will apply for reimbursement of medical assistance from any state program to the same extent as any medical provider.

Section 14-8. *Shelter*

Section 14-8.1. *Definitions.* "Shelter" means a house, a mobile home, an apartment, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied or is intended for occupancy as separate living quarters where the occupant or intended occupant: does not live and eat with any other individual in the building; has direct access to the occupant's living quarters from the outside of the building or through a common hall.

For temporary emergency shelter assistance, "shelter" also includes a shelter program which does not require participation, as a condition of eligibility, in religious services and which provides twenty-four (24) hours a day shelter.

Section 14-8-2. *Rentals.*

Section 14-8-2(a). *Qualifications of Landlord and Shelter.* The township reserves the right to determine which property owners or landlords will be allowed to receive payments from the township. In exercising these rights, the township will take into consideration the condition and quality of the housing, whether there have been any prior problems with the prospective landlord, including whether the landlord has returned any township paid security deposits, the availability of comparable or better housing at the same or lower price, and the expected length of time the applicant will require housing assistance. The township will not make shelter payments for a residential unit which is available for additional rental income, business, commercial purposes, religious purposes, or any other nonresidential purpose.

Section 14-8-2(b). *Qualifications of Landlord and Shelter.*

Each rental unit for which an applicant requests township assistance may be inspected by the township prior to the assistance for compliance with HUD recommended standards for Public Housing Authorities ("PHAS") and with

the Marion County Building Codes.

If the housing is below minimum standards of health, safety or construction, or if suitable housing is available at a lesser cost than the applicant's current dwelling (including a situation where the township has temporarily located a homeless applicant as an emergency measure), the township may refer the applicant to more suitable housing either directly or through another agency.

Failure to accept recommended shelter is grounds for denial of assistance.

Section 14-8-2(c). *Qualifications and Duties of Tenant.* The township may not provide assistance for shelter in any one of the following circumstances:

No applicant qualified to receive assistance is a named party to the lease or lives with a person whose income or assets render the household ineligible for township assistance. A judgment for eviction or back rent has been taken against the applicant by the landlord of the shelter for which assistance is sought; The applicants most recent residence was a property subsidized in any way, or was provided by their parent, guardian or foster parent and without just cause, left that residence for the shelter; The applicant has damaged the dwelling in an amount of more than \$100.00; relocation during the period of which shelter assistance was paid by the township, without prior approval of the township; eviction from subsidized housing for violation of the housing regulations or guidelines;

An applicant is, at the time assistance is requested, under the influence of drugs or alcohol or incapable of self-care. The township may refer any such applicant at no cost to the township to an agency or facility in Marion County or an adjoining county that has a program or charter specifically addressing problems of substance abuse, mental illness or self-care.

Section 14-8-2(d). *Kinds and Amount of Assistance.* The township will not pay late charges, rent accrued prior to the first day of the month before the month of application, judgments for back rent, or attorney fees. The maximum amounts the township will pay for various sized rentals per month will not exceed the current Fair Market Rents established by HUD, revised annually.

In determining the maximum amount of rent assistance for a particular residence, the township will consider the size, location, condition, facilities, the number of residents in the rental, amenities and utilities provided.

Section 14-8.2(e). *Administration of Assistance.* The township will provide rental assistance for only one month at a time. When rent assistance is initially approved, the landlord will be sent a landlord agreement to sign. No rent assistance will be paid until the landlord signs and returns the landlord agreement and purchase order to the township.

Section 14-8.2(f). *Security Encumbrances.* The township may encumber money for a security deposit for shelter that meets the minimum standards of health, safety and construction for up to one hundred eighty (180) days, but only if the landlord and the township have inspected the property and have agreed in writing to the property's pre-assistance (pre-move-in, when appropriate) condition, and have agreed to move-out inspections by the township and the landlord, and if both have agreed that money encumbered by the township may be used only to pay the cost of verified damages, normal wear excluded, caused during the term of the agreement plus any unpaid rent for which the applicant is obligated, the total amount to be paid from the encumbered funds limited to one (1) month's rent.

The township will not encumber money for a security deposit if the township has previously paid a security deposit on the same dwelling or to the same landlord which has neither been refunded nor properly accounted for.

Section 14-8.2(g). *Relatives Who Are Landlords.* The township will issue no shelter assistance to a landlord on

behalf of a applicant when the landlord is a relative of the applicant and the applicant lives: in the same household as the relative; or housing separate from the relative and either; the housing is encumbered by a mortgage, or the housing has not been previously rented by the relative to a different tenant at reasonable market rates for at least six (6) months.

If shelter payments are made to a relative of a applicant on behalf of the applicant, the township may file a lien against the relative's property for the amount of township assistance shelter assistance granted.

Section 14-8.3. *Legal and Equitable Owners.*

Section 14-8.3(a). The townships obligation to provide shelter assistance for those who are eligible does not mean that it is obligated to save every residence which is owned by the applicant subject to a mortgage or which is being purchased on a land contract. However, the township recognizes that, for persons who owns or are buying a home and who need shelter assistance, assistance might best be provided by allowing them to remain in their home.

Section 14-8.3(b). *Lien.* Should the township provide shelter assistance in this situation, it may impose a lien on the residence in an amount equal to the shelter assistance so provided.

Section 14-8.3(c). *Factors Considered in Determining Eligibility.* In determining whether to make monthly mortgage or land contract payments, the township will take into consideration the following factors:

value and marketability of the property; the date the residence was purchased; the purchase amount; the total amount owed on the residence; the amount of monthly payments; the amount of delinquent payments, if any, owed to the seller or the mortgagee; the age and condition of the residence and the cost of maintenance; the size of the residence; the number of persons living in the residence; the applicants age, health and social circumstances; the probable duration of the need to receive shelter assistance; the cost of utilities, including heat, at the residence; the cost of relocation of the applicant; the availability or lack of availability of cheaper housing; whether the mortgage or land contract can be renegotiated or some other type of payment relief secured from the lender or contract seller; whether the applicant can remain in his present shelter without having to make monthly mortgage or land contract payments; whether it is necessary for the mortgage or land contract monthly payments to be paid at the time of application in order to remain in the residence.

Section 14-8.3(d). *Amount of Assistance.* In no event will the township make a payment on a land contract or mortgage in excess of the maximum fair market rent for the residence or a payment accrued prior to the first day of the month before the application unless it determines that an emergency exists necessitating temporary assistance. Reasonable late fees up to the maximum unit size allotment may be considered.

Section 14-8.3(e). *Referral to Other Shelter.* After considering the factors set out above, if determined that mortgage or land contract payments are not the best way to provide shelter assistance, the township will attempt to secure other shelter for the applicant within thirty (30) days.

If after four (4) months, if it appears that there will be a continued need of shelter assistance beyond one hundred eighty (180) days, the applicant shall attempt to secure other housing at a lesser cost to begin no later than the sixth month from the date the initial shelter assistance was granted.

Section 14-9. *Transportation.* The township may provide eligible persons with transportation assistance to verified job interviews when employment is likely available, and to accept employment and to go to and from work **until thirty (30) days after the start of employment.** The township may provide transportation assistance, if necessary, to keep medical appointments.

Section 14-10. *Traveler's Aid.* The township may return a nonresident applicant who applies for township assistance or who has received public assistance of any kind to the applicant's place of legal settlement if such place can be verified. No transportation in another direction will be provided unless it is shown that the applicant has a valid claim for support or a means of support in the other place to which the applicant asks to be sent.

Traveler's Aid for a nonresident will be issued one time only and will not be issued for personal reasons such as vacations, funerals, family reunions, or illness of a family member. A nonresident will be denied township assistance for one hundred eighty (180) days after being transported by court order or at the applicant's request outside the township at the expense of township assistance funds.

Section 14-11. *Utilities and Fuel.*

Section 14-11.1. *General.* The township, in cases of necessity may authorize township assistance for water, sewage, gas and electric services and fuel oil, coal, wood or liquid propane used for heating or cooling.

Section 14-11.2. *Utilities.* Delinquent bills may be paid when necessary to prevent the termination of or obtain reconnection of utilities, including payments for utility bills at a prior address located within Center Township.

All utilities must be in the name of an adult member of a household or an emancipated minor who is head of the household, or if the applicant proves they are responsible for paying the bill, in the name of a landlord or a former member of the household.

The township will not pay for utility service received as a result of a fraudulent act.

The township will not pay more than the minimum rate for water services fixed by the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission.

Before assistance is authorized, applicants must have attempted to make reasonable arrangements with the appropriate utility company including making budget payment arrangements with the utility companies as appropriated. In the event that arrangements are made, the township will pay only that part of the agreed upon payments which are beyond the ability of the applicant to pay.

The township will not pay utility bills for residential units which house business or commercial enterprises, bills for residences which are not in compliance with building and health codes applicable to Center Township or costs resulting from leaks or faulty installations.

Section 14-11.3. *Fuel.* The word "fuel" used in this subsection includes fuel oil, coal, wood, liquid propane and gas and electric services for heating and cooking.

The township will provide fuel only to a dwelling which maintains a separate heating and separate cooking unit, and for which the landlord does not provide fuel as part of the rent. The township will provide fuel for heating purposes sufficient to maintain a shelter at sixty- eight degrees (68°) during the months when conditions require heat. The township will provide fuel for cooking to permit ample use of the cooking facilities.

The township requires applicants to apply for weatherization and other public assistance for which they might be eligible.

During the part of the year when allocations for assistance are accepted by the government agency which dispenses energy assistance, the township may not provide assistance to make any part of a payment for heating fuel for more than thirty (30) days unless the applicant files an application with the township that includes evidence from the appropriate government agency that they have applied for assistance for heating fuel and the amount of assistance received, or the reason for denial of assistance.

Section 14-12. *Transitional Housing.* In an emergency situation when an applicant is without shelter, the township, in cases of necessity may pay for a maximum of ninety (90) days at a township approved transitional housing facility.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Section 15-1. *General Policy.* The office will operate in a professional manner. Applicants and recipients will be treated respectfully and courteously. The township will attempt to meet the needs of the people as economically and efficiently as possible.

Section 15-2. *Interviews.* All interviews will be conducted in a professional manner, with the aim of assisting in any way possible. All investigations will be carried out with due respect for the rights and privacy of the applicant.

Section 15-3. *Applicant Complaint Procedure.* Complaints are to be directed to the Executive Assistant who will take a statement. The statement will be promptly forwarded to Administration to be investigated. Once the matter has been resolved, a copy of the statement and its resolution will be filed.

Section 15-4. *Designated Payee.* The township may, from time to time, report to other governmental agencies that an applicant is misusing funds supplied by the agency.

When the township has made such a report and recommendation for a applicant, the township may deny township assistance until the applicant has executed the documents and is following the procedures prescribed by the other agency to obtain a designated payee.

APPEALS

Section 16-1. *Appeal Process.* An applicant who is unsatisfied with the any determinations made by the township may appeal not more than fifteen (15) days from the date of issuance of the notice of action by the township. The appeal must be made to the Office of the Marion County Commissioners located in the City County Building.

ADOPTION, REVISION AND POLICY PROCEDURES

Section 17-1. *Authority.* These Standards are adopted pursuant to Indiana Code 12-20-1-1-et seq.

Section 17-2. *Effective Date.* These Standards shall be in full force and effect from the date of their adoption by the Township Board.

Section 17-3. *Amendment.* These Standards may be amended by the Township Board at a regular or special meeting.

Section 17-4. *Filing.* Upon adoption, these Standards and any revision of these Standards shall be filed with the Office of the Marion County Commissioners.

Section 17-5. *Adoption of Policies.* The township may adopt policies implementing these standards and related policy statements. The policies and statements should be in writing and made accessible to the general public upon request.

DEFINITIONS

Section 18-1. *Applicant* means any person who has signed and filed with the township a written township

assistance application and affidavit or a reapplication and affidavit, either directly or through written authorization of a representative. Including all members of the household for whom assistance is being requested. An incompetent or incapacitated individual becomes an applicant when someone acting responsibly for the individual makes his need known to the township and requests a home or institutional visit.

Section 18-2. *Assistance* means voucher payments, purchase orders or services or goods of any kind paid for or furnished by the township.

Section 18-3. *Eligibility* means the statutory right to receive benefits or services from the township.

Section 18-4. *Emergency* means a situation caused by an unpredictable circumstance or a series of such circumstances which place a applicant in jeopardy for health or safety reasons, and which can be timely remedied only by township assistance.

Section 18-5. *Fair Market Rent* means the cost of rental housing for the Indianapolis Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area determined and published by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development at least annually in the Federal Register and at 24 C.F.R.888

Section 18-6. *Homeless Person* means a person who spent the preceding night (or with the likelihood of spending the night in the immediate future) in an environment unsafe or unhealthy or in a place designed to provide temporary living accommodations.

Section 18-7. *Household* means an individual living alone, a group of persons related by blood or marriage, or other group of persons living together with mutual economic dependency as a domestic unit in one dwelling unit.

Section 18-8. *Legal Residence* means a person having located in the township intending to make the township the sole place of residence. Time spent in Center Township in a penal institution, public or private charitable or benevolent institution, hospital, fraternal home or serving in the armed forces must be excluded in determining legal residence.

Section 18-9. *Medical Necessity* means the existence of facts which make goods and services, usually of a medical nature, a necessity to meet the health requirements of a person as determined by a physician.

Section 18-10. *Necessity* means an indispensable item essential to meet basic needs of health, safety, and decency.

Section 18-11. *Recipient* means each member of a household, including an applicant, who has received or is receiving assistance from the township under the provisions of the township assistance Statutes.

Section 18-12. *Temporary or Interim Period* means occurring for a limited time. As applied to emergency township assistance, it describes the time period required, after an application for emergency relief is granted, for the applicant to process and receive the benefits of federal or state public assistance programs.

Section 18-13. *Vendor* means any business, institution or person which accepts a township voucher in exchange for goods or services.

Section 18-14. *Vendor Fraud* it is a class D Felony for a vendor to receive payment from the township for goods or services that the person does not provide. (IC 12-20-1-4) (If a vendor requires a person to pay an additional charge for a good or service, then the vendor has not provided the service,)

Section 18-15. *Verification* means proof that information provided to the township is truthful and correct.

Section 18-16. *Interpretation.* Words and phrases used in these standards have their usual and ordinary meaning unless the law or other sections of these standards dictate otherwise.

