



TANF 103-5 Processing

Supersedes: TANF 103-5 (1/1/13)

Reference: ARM 37.78.216 and .228

Overview: All applications must be processed and eligibility determined in a timely manner.

PROCESSING TIME FRAMES:

The eligibility determination - approval or denial - must be completed within the 30-day application processing time period.

If there is a processing delay beyond 30 days due to the actions of a third party that is beyond the control of the applicant/client, the processing time frames may extend beyond 30 days with supervisor approval. A case note must be entered explaining the reason for the delay/extension.

An application cannot be denied for “failure to comply” with providing necessary information/verification until the application is at least 30 days old.

BENEFIT START DATE:

The benefit start date depends in part on whether or not the assistance unit includes an individual(s) who is required to be referred to either Pathways (and negotiate an Employability/Service Plan (E/SP)) or Tribal NEW for Employment and Training services.

If the household does not include an individual who is required to negotiate an Employability/Service Plan, the benefit start date will be the application date.

If the household includes one or more individuals who are required to enroll in an Employment and Training program (Pathways or Tribal NEW), the benefit start date will be the application date as long as one of the following criteria is met.

1. All individuals referred to Pathways:
 - a. Have negotiated an E/SP for the application month within three (3) business days of being referred or within three (3) business days of the Pathways start date; or
 - i. The three (3) business day ‘count’ begins the first day after referral.

- b. Has good cause for failing to negotiate an E/SP for the application month within three (3) business days of being referred or within three (3) business days of the Pathways start date and enrolls as soon as possible.
2. All individuals have been referred to Tribal NEW services.

If the household includes one or more individuals who are required to enroll in Pathways, and the individual(s) fail to enroll timely, without good cause, the benefit start date will be the date the individual(s) negotiate an E/SP with Pathways. In cases where more than one individual is referred to Pathways, the benefit start date will be the latter date that all required members have negotiated the E/SP.

PATHWAYS START DATE:

The Pathways start date is the application date or the first day of the following month if the individual requests that TANF benefits begin the month following application.

CASE NOTES:

During the 30-day application processing period, case notes must be entered documenting the interview and any processing delays.

Case notes must be entered by both OPA and Pathways indicating the application date and start date and, if they are different, an explanation for the difference.

AGENCY PERSONNEL:

Only qualified DPHHS employees, restricted from disclosing confidential information, will conduct the required interviews and determine TANF eligibility. Volunteers or others who are not employed by DPHHS may not conduct interviews or determine eligibility unless specifically allowed under federal regulation (e.g., federally declared disaster).

Non-program employees or volunteers may assist in related activities such as:

1. obtaining necessary information; and
2. helping applicants complete the application form.

Effective Date: January 01, 2018