



1101-1 Emergency Assistance for Needy Families

Bulletin TB- 78	<p>December 10, 2012</p> <p>TO: TANF Cash Assistance Policy Manual Holders</p> <p>FROM: Stephanie Wilkins, TANF Policy Specialist</p> <p>SUBJECT: Bulletin TB- 78</p> <p>TANF Manual: Place this bulletin at the beginning of TANF 1101-1</p> <p>=====</p> <p>SUBJECT: TANF Emergency Assistance – Soft Services</p> <p>EFFECTIVE DATE: December 1, 2012.</p> <p>INTRODUCTION: TANF Emergency Assistance Soft Services are those Services approved and entered by CFSD workers into the CAPS system. CAPS interfaces into CHIMES EA and creates an alert. Current TANF policy requires that a new case must be registered and the Primary Individual in the case must be the child for whom services are requested.</p> <p>NEW POLICY: A new case does not need to be registered unless the recipient is new to the system. The child does not need to be the primary individual on the case. Do not use Foster Care Medicaid, Subsidized Adoption, Breast/Cervical Cancer or Guardianship cases. If the child is open under one of these programs, a new application will need to be registered.</p> <p>REMINDERS: The TANF Emergency Assistance Soft Services procedure can be found in the CHIMES EA online help.</p> <p>UPDATED MANUAL MATERIAL WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE; UNTIL THAT TIME, USE THIS BULLETIN AS A GUIDE. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL POLICY SPECIALIST</p>
Supersedes:	TANF 1101-1 (01/01/06)
References:	ARM 37.78.102, .601 and .602
Overview:	<p>GENERAL RULE--Emergency Assistance (EA) provides financial assistance on behalf of families with children under age 21 when an unforeseen event has occurred which may cause the destitution of the child or a situation involving abuse or neglect of a child which has occurred or may occur in the immediate future.</p> <p>For purposes of this policy, ‘destitution’ means: the child will go without a basic need such as shelter, basic utilities, food, basic clothing, etc.</p> <p>NOTE: Situations involving abuse or neglect of a child must be identified by the Department’s Children’s Services Bureau workers or the Family Preservation contractor.</p> <p>The purpose of the assistance is to provide immediate resolution of the emergency</p>

	<p>situation or prevent the child’s removal from the home, expedite the return of the child to the home, or prevent the need for protective services for the child. Emergency Assistance is NOT available to pay for items or services a family has chosen not to pay with currently available means. Receipt of EA is limited to only once in any period of twelve (12) consecutive months.</p> <p>NOTE: The EA must be reasonably expected to provide resolution of the emergency situation, not just delay the emergency. For example, EA cannot be used to pay rent if there is no future means to pay the expense.</p> <p>Emergency Assistance may be provided in addition to but not as a substitute for basic needs assistance including, but not limited to, TANF cash assistance or BIA General Assistance. However, a family cannot be required to apply for any of the above programs before an eligibility determination can be made for EA. Some families may not need continuing assistance provided by the above programs; others may need ongoing help but also require immediate assistance with EA.</p> <p>NOTE: The receipt of Emergency Assistance does NOT count as using any month of time-limited TANF cash assistance.</p> <p>NOTE: For TANF recipients, EA is not to be used as a substitute for Supportive Services. Any need identified as necessary to meet employment or FIA/EP participation requirements, must access Supportive Services first, if at all possible.</p> <p>If the household would be an appropriate referral for a Tribal TANF program, they are not eligible for Emergency Assistance and must apply with the tribe. See TANF 103-7.</p>
<p>UNFORSEEN EVENT</p>	<p>The first determination that must be made is what unforeseen event created the emergency situation. An unforeseen event is one which the adult(s) could not anticipate would occur and it was not under his/her control.</p> <p>The unforeseen event and the emergency situation do not have to immediately follow each other. For example, the layoff could have occurred a couple of months ago and the family has been living on savings. The eviction notice came when savings were exhausted.</p> <p>Emergency Assistance can be requested by the family in need or by an employee or agent of the Department.</p>
<p>APPLICATION PROCESS</p>	<p>If the family is requesting assistance, Form HCS-020, "Emergency Assistance Request" must be completed and submitted to the Office of Public Assistance (OPA).</p> <p>If Child and Family Services is requesting the assistance on behalf of a child or family, the Division’s (CFSD) Financial Specialist will review the HCS-020 and enter the information into the CAPS system.</p> <p>The HCS-020 is valid for 30 days from the application date. Changes to needed</p>

	items/services may be made during this 30-day window.
DATE OF APPLICATION	The date of application (request) for <u>hard services</u> is the date the HCS-020 is received and date stamped (not hand written) in the OPA; or for soft services, the date the HCS-020 submitted to the CFSD Financial Specialist is <u>signed by the applicant</u> .
ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION TIME LINE	Due to the emergent nature of the request, the eligibility determination should be completed within five (5) calendar days after receiving the application and all verification required to support the application . This time line also applies to referrals received from the CFSD Financial Specialist to input the information after receipt of the verifications supporting the application.
ELIGIBILITY START DATE	If eligible, the first month of the twelve-month period is the month the application (HCS-020) is date-stamped or for soft services the month the signed application (HCS-020) is received by the CFSD Financial Specialist.
ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	<p>There is no residency requirement. Emergency Assistance may be provided to transient and migrant worker families if the following eligibility criteria are met. The eligibility requirements are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An emergency, child abuse or neglect exists as per the General Rule. 2. The child is under age 21 and living with a specified caretaker relative (Section 305-1). Or the child is under age 18 and has lived with a specified caretaker relative within the most recent 6 months prior to the month of the request, in a place of residence maintained by the relative as the child's home. 3. All family members are U.S. citizens or qualified aliens (Section 301-1). 4. The emergency did not arise because the child or the specified relative refused, without good cause, to accept or maintain employment or training for employment (Section 1509-1). 5. All other means available to meet the emergency need, including but not limited to all accessible liquid resources and any benefits or services for which the family is eligible have been exhausted. <p>NOTE: Liquid resources are defined as cash or other financial holdings which are convertible to cash and include checking and savings accounts, stocks, bonds, mutual fund shares, promissory notes, deferred compensation funds, certificates of deposits, cash value of insurance policies, etc.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. The household did not spend income or resources for items other than basic needs after the unforeseen event occurred. This is determined by adding net household income to liquid resources and subtracting expenses paid for basic needs (food, shelter, basic utilities, i.e., heat and electricity) <p>NOTE: The amount of the family's food budget that can be allowed is the</p>

	<p>SNAP thrifty food plan for the household size minus any SNAP benefits issued to the household for the month.</p> <p>7. A pregnant woman who has no children living with her is not eligible unless</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. She is in the last trimester of her pregnancy; and b. The circumstances comply with the General Rule; and c. A CFSD protective services worker determines she is in need of emergency services.
<p>EXCLUDED ITEMS/SERVICES</p>	<p>Emergency Assistance, whether “hard” or “soft” services cannot be used to pay for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxes, including but not limited to, personal and real property taxes • Insurance premiums - auto, life, home • Burials • Reimbursements for expenses already paid or money loaned to the household to pay expenses • Deposits (Rental/utility/cleaning/security) • Legal fees/fines/penalties • Purchase of a vehicle • Late fees (rental/mortgage) • Mortgage payments • Bills for services already received, including medical bills, and bills more than 30 days past due, except the two most recent months of past due rent or utility bills as stated earlier in this section. The circumstances causing the eviction/shut off must comply with the General Rule. • Travel expenses that would be payable by any other source, including but not limited to, Medicaid Travel, Supportive Services (Section 704-1), or BIA General Assistance. • Emergency Assistance cannot be used to provide ongoing (daily, weekly, monthly) cash payments for basic maintenance items essential for day-to-day living such as food, shelter, clothing, personal care items.
<p>HARD SERVICES</p>	<p>Items/services authorized by the OPA must be directly related to overcoming the emergency caused by the “unforeseen” event.</p> <p>NOTE: If the total of the hard services requested is over \$1,000, Central Office must approve the Emergency Assistance request.</p> <p>Hard services that may be provided are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter (rent or temporary lodging), utilities, or personal care items. <p>The two (2) most recent months of rent and/or utility services may be paid</p>

	<p>if eviction and/or final utility shut-off is imminent and the circumstances causing the eviction/utility shut off comply with the General Rule. Or if the household is homeless due to an unforeseen circumstance, temporary lodging can be provided for up to 30 days, as long as the household is working toward obtaining their own shelter and availing themselves of all other community resources to accomplish this. Contact the TANF Policy Specialist at Central Office if there is a specific case that needs to be discussed.</p> <p><u>For purposes of this policy, ‘imminent’ means ‘likely to happen without delay as a result of unanticipated circumstances.’</u></p> <p>If rent and/or utilities are paid, the payment must result in the cancellation of the eviction notice and/or the shut-off notice. This outcome should be verified before the payment is authorized.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Temporary transportation such as a bus pass or taxi service or costs of necessary repairs of the vehicle owned by the applicant and is essential to retain employment. The household must obtain two (2) estimates for the cost of repairs prior to any repairs being completed. If two vendors are not available in the proximity of their location, an estimate from one will be accepted. (If the household receives TANF, supportive services are considered a prior resource). <p>NOTE: For purposes of this policy ‘employment’ is defined as permanent full-time or part-time work.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Replacement or repair of necessary home appliances such as a refrigerator or heating/cooling equipment, owned by the applicant. 4. Replacement or repair of necessary household furnishings such as a bed and bedding. 5. Other items and/or services necessary to overcome the emergency situation. <p>NOTE: Medical services or related expenses are not covered by Emergency Assistance hard services.</p>
SOFT SERIVES	<p>“Soft” services are those services approved by CFSD workers or Family Preservation contractors directly related to overcoming the abuse and/or neglect, prevent the child’s removal from the home, expedite the return of the child to the home, or prevent the need for protective services for the child. Soft services do not require an unforeseen event.</p> <p>Emergency Assistance will not be opened under a Foster Care case number (County 72) since that program is administered in Helena and the county offices have no case file or documentation. Even if the child is currently open in Foster Care, we will</p>

	<p>register the case with a new case number with the child as the PI.</p> <p>NOTE: An application referral made by CFSD will always be approved and authorized unless a household member has received Emergency Assistance within the previous 12 months.</p>
Date Revised	July 1, 2007