



Iowa Department of Human Services

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GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-B-68

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial, Health and Work Supports
Division of Adult, Children and Family Services

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter B, **APPLICATION PROCESSING**,
pages 1, 5, 10, and 11, revised.

Summary

Chapter 7-B is revised to:

- ◆ Update the reporting requirements to include the additional requirement for households with able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs). These households are required to report when the ABAWD stops working at least 80 hours per month.
- ◆ Update the references to forms 470-0462 and 470-0462(S). They have been renamed from *Health and Financial Support Application* to *Financial Support Application*.
- ◆ Update all links due to the Department's new website.

Effective Date

Upon receipt.

Material Superseded

This material replaces the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter B:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
1, 5, 10, 11	October 12, 2012

Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your area income maintenance administrator.

Overview

To apply for Food Assistance, a household must file and complete an application, be interviewed, and verify certain information. This chapter covers the mechanics of the application process, emergency service, and processing standards. This chapter also provides information on authorized representatives, household reporting methods, and verification requirements.

Filing a Food Assistance Application

Legal reference: 7 CFR 273.2(a)-(c), 441 IAC 65.2(234)

Anyone can apply for assistance from the Department of Human Services (DHS). The application process starts when a person files a valid application in a DHS local office. A valid application has a name, address, and signature.

Households can file an application at any DHS local office in Iowa. Households can apply either in person, through the mail, by fax, or electronically. Applications that are filed electronically or that are signed and then are faxed or are scanned and e-mailed do not have to be signed again.

| Households can use the *Financial Support Application*, form 470-0462 or 470-0462(S), to apply for Food Assistance.

| Households shall use the *Financial Support Application* when at least one household member is applying for or getting FIP, Refugee Cash Assistance, or a related Medicaid program.

Tell clients applying for FIP that the disadvantages and requirements of applying for cash assistance do not apply to Food Assistance. Also inform households that getting Food Assistance benefits has no bearing on any other program's time limits.

To continue getting Food Assistance when the current certification period is about to end, a household must complete form 470-2881, *Review/Recertification Eligibility Document* (RRED), within 30 days after the end of the certification period.

- You also must send the information about emergency service by:
 - Enclosing Comm. 84 or Comm. 84(S), or
 - Copying the Comm. 84 or Comm. 84(S) content on the back of the letter.

A receptionist, a volunteer, or any other employee shall screen to see if the household may be eligible for emergency services whenever:

- ◆ Someone comes into the office to apply, or
- ◆ One of the following applications is filed:
 - *Financial Support Application*, form 470-0462 or 470-0462(S).
 - *Review/Recertification Eligibility Document* (form 470-2881), if filed **after the end** of a certification period.

Use the criteria under [Determining Eligibility for Emergency Service](#) to make this determination.

Comment:

See [Emergency Service](#) for information on processing requirements for a household eligible for emergency service. Note that when you schedule the interview, keep in mind you have only until the seventh calendar day after the application was filed to:

- ◆ Interview the household,
- ◆ Approve benefits, and
- ◆ Have an electronic benefit transfer card in the household's hands.

Withdrawal of Application

Legal reference: 7 CFR 273.2(c)(6)

Policy:

A household may voluntarily withdraw its application any time before eligibility is determined.

Procedure:

When a household withdraws an application:

1. Contact the household to confirm the withdrawal.
2. Document in the case file the contact and the reason for withdrawal, if the household gave a reason.
3. Tell the household it can reapply at any time. If the household wants the application form back, make a copy for the case file and give the original to the household.

Household Reporting Requirements

Legal reference: 7 CFR 273.12(a)(vii), 273.12(a)(viii), and 441 IAC 65.5(234)

Policy:

There are two changes a household must report while certified. These changes must be reported by the 10th day of the month after the month in which they occur. A household must report when:

- ◆ Its total gross income goes over the gross income limit for the household's size, or
- ◆ An able-bodied adult without dependents (ABAWD) stops working 80 hours.

Procedure:

At each interview, explain to the household how and when to report required changes. Tell the household that it must report when it exceeds its gross income limit in a month or an ABAWD stops working 80 hours per month, and that it must report this by the 10th day of the next month.

Explain this to the household every time you interview, at least once every 12 months. Explaining this carefully, whether you interview by phone or in person will help avoid household caused errors.

When conducting the interview:

- ◆ Explain what "gross income" is. Do not assume that everyone understands the difference between take-home pay and gross income. Explain that "gross" means the amount before any deductions are taken out. Repeat this point each time you interview.
- ◆ Tell the person you interview to keep the form, *Reporting Food Assistance Changes*, and to do the following at the end of each month:
 - Add up the gross income all household members received in the month. Make sure the household understands to include the income of the ineligible members, such as ineligible aliens.
 - If the household has self-employment income, explain that the amount of annualized income will be automatically entered on the form, and that amount must be added to other income.
 - If the household pays child support, subtract the amount it paid in the month from the household's total gross income.

- Compare the household's total gross income for the month to the amount on the form.
- If the household's total gross income is over the amount on the form, report it by the 10th of next month.

Reporting Requirements for Categorically Eligible Households

Legal reference: 441 IAC 65.5(4)

Policy:

Do not require categorically eligible households to report any income changes if the household reported income in excess of its gross income limit and remained eligible. Take appropriate action on all reported changes.

Comment:

A categorically eligible household that reports income in excess of its gross limit is not required to report further income changes until recertification. This includes households that are over the gross limit at the time of application.

Tell the person you interview that:

- ◆ The household may report changes other than income if it wants to, and that action will be taken on all reports of changes.
- ◆ There are consequences if the household does not report if it goes over the limit:
 - The household might have to repay benefits if they do not report as required.
 - Not reporting changes on purpose could result in an Intentional Program Violation (IPV).
 - Quality Control might review the case to see if the household reported if it went over the gross income limit.

Verification

Legal reference: 7 CFR 273.2(f)(4), (5), and (6)

Verification is third-party information or documentation that confirms the accuracy of statements on the application. There are four sources of verification:

- ◆ Documentary evidence
- ◆ Collateral contacts
- ◆ Home visits
- ◆ The state Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS)