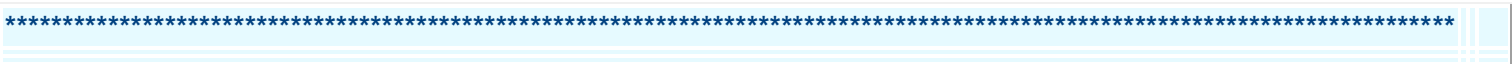


Department of Social and Health Services
Olympia, Washington
EAZ Manual

Revision # 1029
Category Eligibility Review Requirements for Cash Assistance and Medical Programs
Issued 11/20/2020
Revision Author: Ivette Dones-Figueroa
Division CSD
Mail Stop 45440
Phone 360-725-4651
Email donesim@dshs.wa.gov

Summary

Consolidated the previous ER Chapters for Cash and Medical with the Basic Food chapter and update language. Including new emergency WAC 388-434-0015 extending certification periods and waiving MCRs. See below for edited text:



Eligibility Reviews/~~Food Assistance~~ Recertifications -
Requirements for Food, Cash ~~Assistance~~ and Medical
Programs

Revised ~~April 17, 2017~~ November 20, 2020

Purpose:

This section explains how often we review ~~someone's~~ an Assistance Unit's (AU) eligibility based on the type of benefits they receive ~~and~~, their circumstances, and when ACES ~~will set~~ s a review period to match the review end date or certification end date of other programs.

[WAC 388-434-0005](#) How often does the department review my eligibility for benefits?

- [Clarifying Information and Worker Responsibilities](#)

[WAC 388-434-0010 How do I get Basic Food benefits after my certification period has ended?](#)

- [Clarifying Information and Worker Responsibilities](#)

[WAC 388-434-0015 Extension of certification periods and waiver of eligibility reviews and mid-certification reviews during the COVID-19 pandemic.](#)

[WAC 388-493-0010 Working fFamily sSupport](#)

- [Clarifying Information](#)

NOTE: As noted in WAC 388-434-0015, certification periods were extended for the following periods:

- [November 2020 is extended two months, to January 2021;](#)
- [December 2020 is extended two months, to February 2021;](#)
- [January 2021 is extended 4 months, to May 2021;](#)
- [February 2021 is extended 4 months, to June 2021.](#)
- [Mid-Certification Reviews for cash and food are waived due in November 2020 to June 2021. See Mid-Certification Reviews.](#)

Clarifying Information - [WAC 388-434-0005](#) and [WAC 388-~~493~~434-0010](#)

[ACES-Our eligibility system](#) sets a review period for cash and medical benefits based on the AU's circumstances and other benefits the AU receives from the department. The table below shows the length of certification period the system will set if not matching a review period to another program.

AU Circumstances	Default Review Period
ABD cash	12
Refugee Cash Assistance	Up to 8
TANF/ SFA	12
TANF/SFA — AU is Homeless	6
TANF/SFA — AU has Migrant / Seasonal Farm workers	6
L99, and MN with Spend-down	<u>3-6</u>

AU Circumstances	Default Review Period
AEM	3
All other medical programs (other than AEM) not associated with a cash grant	12
Working Family Support	6

When possible, ~~ACES the system will~~ automatically matches the cash review periods ~~and with~~ Basic Food / ~~TANF related family medical~~ certification periods to minimize the number of reviews.

- For Basic Food certification periods, see EAZ Manual Chapter - Certification Periods - Basic Food.
- For more information on medical related certification periods and responsibilities, see HCA Manual Chapter – Eligibility Review.

~~as described below:~~

Equal Access:

Someone who needs Equal Access accommodations has more time to meet certification requirements. If a person receives these services and meets the requirements to be certified within 20 days after the end of their previous certification period, their food and cash benefits start on the first of the month of the new certification period. See Equal Access.

1. Forms / processes a person can use to recertify food, cash and medical programs:

Someone can recertify benefits by:

- Completing DSHS 14-001 (X) Application for Benefits;
- Completing DSHS 14-078(X) Eligibility Review;
- Completing an ACES Interactive Interview Declaration (IID); or
- Completing the online application.

2. Adding a request for assistance to an eligibility review:

See CLARIFYING INFORMATION #3 under WAC 388-406-0010.

3. Interview Requirements:

We must interview a person at cash and food Eligibility Review or recertification if we have not interviewed them in the last twelve months. Exception to this is for the those in the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP) Basic Food. See Clarifying Information #2 under WAC 388-452-0005.

4. Notice of expiration:

If we certified an AU for three or more months, we send them a letter to tell them that their food and cash benefits are ending by the first day of the last month of their certification period.

5. When the system automatically initiates reviews for associated cash and food AUs:

Associated AUs are ones that have the same head of household in ACES. The system matches the certification/review periods for associated cash and food AUs at review as described below:

- o If we initiate a review for cash benefits and there is an active associated Basic Food AU, ACES also initiates a review for Basic Food.
- o If we initiate a review for Basic Food benefits and there is an active associated cash AU, ACES also initiates a review for cash.
- o If we initiate a review for Basic Food or Cash, and there is an initiated review, ACES also initiates a review for classic medical S02, S03, or S05.

6. Verification at recertification:

- o If someone does not give us verification we ask for by the end of their certification period or within 10 days of the date we asked for it, we count the verification as late.
- o A person has until the end of the month after the month their certification ended to give us any late or missing verification without losing benefits.
- o If someone gives us an application or verification to finish a recertification after the 10-day timeframe and after the end of the month following the certification end month, the person must reapply for benefits.

EXAMPLE: John's certification period ends on May 31st. On May 15th, he turns in an eligibility review. On May 23rd, John's worker asks for proof of income and gives him until June 2nd to give us the information. On June 12th, John turns in his proof of income. If John is still eligible for benefits, his worker reinstates the benefits back to June 1st.

EXAMPLE: Same as above, except John does not submit the outstanding verification until July 5th. Because John missed the one-month window to recertify, he must reapply for benefits.

EXAMPLE: Vicky's certification ends on April 30th. On April 1st, she turns in a review. On April 5th, her worker asks for verification of her circumstances by April 15th. Vicky does not give us the required verification timely, and her worker denies the application to recertify her food benefits. On May 4th, Vicky turns in the required verification. If Vicky is still eligible for benefits, her worker reinstates the benefits back to May 1st.

EXAMPLE: Bill's certification period ends July 31st. He turns in the ER form July 28th, but doesn't contact the CSO for an interview. His benefits terminate July 31st.

On August 25th, Bill contacts the CSO and completes his recertification interview that same day. The worker must pend completion of the ER because Bill hasn't provided proof of income. Bill has until the end of August to provide the income verification in order to have benefits reinstated back to August 1.

The worker should send an information request letter on August 25 to Bill giving the him until August 31 to provide the information. If Bill doesn't provide the income verification by August 31st, the case remains closed and Bill must reapply.

NOTE: People have 10 days to provide information or verification we need to determine if they are eligible. The denial letter we send if they do not give us the verification we ask for informs them what they must do to have us reconsider the denied recertification.

7. Letters:

- o See Letters for information on what to include in approval and denial letters.
- o See Limited English Proficiency (LEP) for information on what we must translate in letters.

~~1. Eligibility Review period defaults:~~

~~2. Matching cash review periods and Basic Food certification periods:~~

~~3. Basic Food approved first:~~

- ~~1. If there are **at least six months left** in the Basic Food certification period, ACES sets the mid-certification review (MCR) and eligibility review end dates for the new cash / medical benefit to match dates for Basic Food.~~
- ~~2. If there are **less than six months left** in the Basic Food certification period, ACES sets a 12-month review period and with the MCR due at six months for the new cash / medical benefit. The system will not change the review end date for Basic Food.~~

~~**NOTE:** When the system does not automatically match the mid-certification review and eligibility review end dates because there are less than six months in the certification period, staff can match these dates by initiating a review for Basic Food. Staff can initiate reviews within 45 days of the certification end date.~~

- ~~o If we do not initiate a review to manually match the certification / review periods, the MCR due dates and review periods *will not match*. The household will receive more than one MCR.~~
- ~~o The system initiates a review for associated cases at the next ER or recertification. When we complete the review, the end dates and MCR due dates will match.~~

4.1. Primary source of information for medical:

~~The case record is the primary source of information used to redetermine medical eligibility. Ask the person for more information if the case record is not enough. (See Worker Responsibilities, below.)~~

If the customer stated they'd like to continue to receive CN Medical, w~~We~~ don't need the actual review form DSHS 14-078(X) to determine eligibility for medical if during the past six months, the assistance unit completed:

1. An application;
2. An eligibility review;
3. A Basic Food application or recertification;
4. An in-person or telephone interview.

~~5. **Citizenship verification at time of review:**~~

- ~~0. When processing an eligibility review for any Medicaid-related AU (this includes Medical Assistance for AF/F01 and ABD/G02), update the citizenship/identity verification following ACES procedures. If the record does not contain citizenship/identity verification then the CCU will follow up with the client to help obtain the missing documentation.~~
- ~~1. If the CCU terminates the ABD/G02, the G02 will auto change to G01. If the case cannot automatically change, then a tickler will be sent to the worker to re-determine eligibility for ABD/G01. Please note that verification of citizenship and picture identification are not requirements for ABD/G01.~~

~~See ACES User Manual—Separate Medical Eligibility for processing.~~

WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES - WAC 388-434-0005

Acceptable forms and Interviews

1. Electronic or Paper Application / Eligibility Review Form

- a. Ensure the household has completed and signed one of the following as part of the process if they aren't completing a Telephonic Signature:
 - i. Online application or eligibility review;
 - ii. Application for Benefits (DSHS 14-001);
 - iii. Eligibility Review (DSHS 14-078); or
 - iv. ACES IID after reviewing the information for accuracy.
- b. Accept any of the above forms to complete the recertification process if received after the ER notice was mailed to the customer, but prior to the system allowing initiation of the review.

2. Rights and Responsibilities (14-113) and Your DSHS Cash or Food Assistance Benefits (14-520)

- a. Face to Face Interviews
 - i. When conducting face-to-face interviews, explain and review forms: Your Cash and Food Assistance Rights and Responsibilities (DSHS 14-113) and Your DSHS Cash or Food Benefits (DSHS 14-520). Answer any questions about the forms and ask them to sign both forms to acknowledge their understanding. Send the forms as file only to scan into the Electronic Case Record (ECR).

ii. For mandatory Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) review *Basic Food Eligibility Requirements: What You Need to Know to Keep Your Benefits* (DSHS 11-034b).

b. Phone Interviews

i. When conducting a phone interview, explain the rights and responsibilities and the allowable use of benefits to the customer, send them a copy of the *DSHS 14-113* and the *DSHS 14-520* and request them to sign and return the documents.

ii. For mandatory Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) review *Basic Food Eligibility Requirements: What You Need to Know to Keep Your Benefits* (DSHS 11-034b).

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3. Recertification Interview

a. If the customer calls before the end of the certification period to do an interview, but we have not received the review form, determine if the customer is eligible for a Telephonic Signature.

i. Follow *CSD Procedure Handbook – Accepting a Telephonic Signature for an Eligibility Review*.

Rights and Responsibilities

Review form ~~DSHS 14-113(X), Client Rights and Responsibilities with the household:~~

~~1. Review at interview for cash and food assistance:~~

~~1. Face to Face Interviews~~

~~When conducting a face-to-face interview, explain the rights and responsibilities to the client and ask them to sign *DSHS 14-113* to acknowledge that they understand them. Send the document as file only to be scanned into the client's Electronic Case Record (ECR).~~

~~2. Phone Interviews:~~

~~When conducting phone interviews, explain the rights and responsibilities to the client, send them a copy of form, and request them to sign and return the document.~~

~~Your DSHS Cash or Food Assistance Benefits~~

~~For cash or food assistance benefits, review form *DSHS 14-520*, *Your DSHS Cash or Food Assistance Benefits* with the household:~~

~~3. Face to Face Interviews:~~

~~When conducting a face-to-face interview, explain the allowable use of benefits to~~

~~the client and ask them to sign form 14-520 to acknowledge that they understand the restrictions and penalties for illegal use. Send the document as file only to be scanned into the client's Electronic Case Record (ECR).~~

~~4. **Phone Interviews:**~~

~~When conducting phone interviews, explain the allowable use of benefits to the client, send them a copy of form DSHS 14-520, and request them to sign and return the document.~~

Completing the Review

2.1. Review of current circumstances:

1. As part of the review ensure that:
 1. The ~~person~~ customer answered all questions clearly and completely; and
 2. For cash assistance, they ~~person(s) has~~ signed and dated the application or ER. ~~Both husband and wife~~ Both spouses, or both parents of a child in common must sign when the parents live together.
2. Complete an Equal Access (EA) Screening.
 1. Guidance on completing an EA Screening can be found in the CSD Procedures Handbook.
- ~~2. Review the record for the Equal Access (EA) plan (see EA).~~
3. Review the record to see if earlier actions or changes may have an impact on eligibility.
4. Review for eligibility factors, especially:
 1. Income:
 - a. Review income to see if net income meets expenses for rent, utilities, and other expenses the assistance unit pays. See EA-Z Manual – Verification for more information on living above means (LAM)
 - b. For medical programs, we must get proof of income at each review.
 2. Resources: (**Except for: Children's medical, recipients of Family Medical, or Basic Food AUs that are Categorically Eligible**)
 - a. Review resources the household claims to see if there are any changes to resources we earlier excluded or decided were not available.
 - b. Review funds in joint checking accounts that we excluded earlier.
 - c. Review the plan to exclude business property of a self-employed person to decide if the property leads to full or partial self-support.
 - d. Review the value of liquid and nonliquid resources. Look for an increase in the value of real estate, cash value of life insurance, and securities that can be sold such as stocks, bonds, and certificates of deposit (COD).
 - e. Review and get proof of eligibility factors that have changed.
 - f. Review and document previous proof to ensure that:

1. Previously verified factors are clear and complete in the case file; and
 - g. ~~We are~~Do not asking ~~for the person to give us~~ duplicate or unneeded proof.
 - h. Document proof ~~you~~we received.
 - i. Take action on any incorrect payments you discover.
 - j. Send the ~~person~~customer a letter about the actions you took.
3. Work Registration: Check the work registration status of each customer to see if it matches their current circumstance. Take any action to update the status if there are changes.

3.2. Referrals: Review all mandatory and voluntary referrals and complete referrals as needed.

4.3. Incomplete and late reviews: A household is ineligible for benefits if they do ~~n~~ot complete a required interview, complete a review form (if asked to do so), or give us proof we ask for.

1. See Equal Access(EA) for additional actions required when the household has an ~~Equal Access~~EA plan.
2. If the person does not take the needed actions or give ~~you~~us the proof ~~you~~we need to decide if they are eligible for benefits by the end of the review month, cash assistance will auto close.
- ~~3. If the person fails to complete a review, has an incomplete review, or misses the required interview, continue medical assistance for twelve months from the last completed:~~
 - ~~1. Application;~~
 - ~~2. Eligibility review; or~~
 - ~~3. Basic Food application or recertification.~~
- ~~4. If you receive a review for TANF cash and medical, but the person does not complete the required interview for cash assistance, cash assistance will auto close. Continue medical while you review continued medical eligibility.~~
- 5.3. If you initiateIf a review is initiated for a review for CN medical, ACES ~~the system~~ continues to issue medical benefits even if the person does not return the required proof. When pending a review, set an alert to check the case and determine if the person returned the required proof.
- 6.4. If we asked for proof but the customer did not provide the proof we requested ~~for someone does not provide the proof you asked for, and you asked for proof for:~~
 1. Both cash and medical assistance, cash will auto close. Class M ~~m~~ medical assistance will need to ~~be~~close ~~d~~ with advance and adequate notice.
 2. Cash assistance but you also need the information for classic medical, cash will auto close. Send a letter asking for the proof needed to determine classic medical eligibility. Give the person 10 days to return the proof. If they do not respond, close medical assistance with advance and adequate notice.
 - ~~3. Cash assistance but not for medical, continue medical for 6 months from the last complete application, eligibility review or recertification.~~

~~7.5. For food and cash, if we receive information to establish eligibility the month after the month the review was due, we will reopen the benefits effective the date you determined they were eligible. See APPLICATIONS.~~

~~5. **Redetermination of Medical:** When our review results in someone losing eligibility for cash:~~

- ~~1. Continue the same medical coverage that the person received when eligible for cash assistance while you redetermine if they are eligible for other medical programs; and~~
- ~~2. Notify the assistance unit of the action you took.~~

~~**EXAMPLE** Mary had a TANF and Basic Food certification period from 9/2010—2/2011. When Mary failed to turn in her eligibility review for March 2011, her cash and Basic Food benefits closed effective 2/28/2011. The family is eligible for F04 medical for 12 months from their last review. Mary's completed her last review for TANF and Basic Food in September 2010. The family is still eligible for F04 medical through September 2011.~~

~~**EXAMPLE** Teresa has a TANF case with a review period of January 2006 through June 2006 based on her circumstances and homeless status. In March 2006, we opened Basic Food from March 2006 through June 2006. At her eligibility review in June, Teresa reports that she now receives \$3,000 in monthly unearned income. Her worker closes cash and Basic Food benefits with advance notice. Teresa's family is not eligible for F04 medical because their income is more than the F04 standard. Teresa's children are eligible for F07 as the family's income is below the SCHIP standard.~~

~~**EXAMPLE** Cheryl's household has a TANF review period and Basic Food Certification of August 2005 through January 2006. On January 2nd, we received the review and set up an interview for January 15th. Cheryl did not make her required interview. We terminate TANF and Basic Food effective January 31st. Since we received the ER form by the end of the review period, we continue medical while we determine eligibility for family medical.~~

WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES – WAC 388-493-0010

Working Family Support recertifications occurs every six months and align with the Basic Food Mid-Certification (MCR) and Eligibility Review (ER) periods. See the CSD Procedures Manual section *Working Family Support* for WFS recertification procedures at Basic Food MCR and ER.