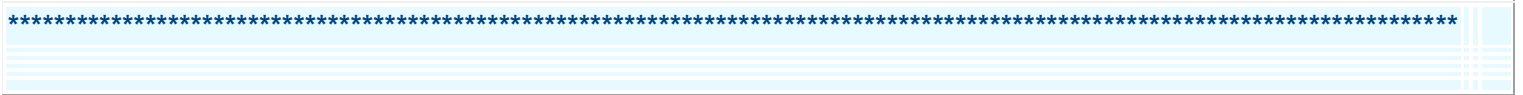


Department of Social and Health Services
Community Services Division
EA-Z Manual

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Category: **Applications for Assistance- Expedited Service for Basic Food**
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Summary

Revised for Able Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) Updates. Corrected some other errors.



Expedited Service for Basic Food

Revised ~~March 20, 2018~~ March 5, 2020

Purpose:

This section lists the emergent conditions needed to get benefits under the Washington Basic Food Program (Basic Food) within seven calendar days. This section also includes Basic Food expedited service requirements and certification procedures.

WAC 388-406-0015 Can I get Basic Food right away?

- *Clarifying Information and Worker Responsibilities*

WAC 388-406-0021 How does being a migrant or seasonal farmworker affect my application for Basic Food?

- *Clarifying Information and Worker Responsibilities*

Clarifying Information - WAC 388-406-0015

EXAMPLE: Bob applies for Basic Food and meets expedited service criteria. He reports \$100 income from his parents and \$350 monthly income through AmeriCorps. Since we exclude AmeriCorps under WAC 388-450-0015(1)(g), his gross income is \$100. Bob is eligible for expedited service.

1. **Gross monthly income:**

Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) defines “gross monthly income” as income before taxes less excluded income. We don't consider excluded income when determining expedited eligibility. See [WAC 388-450-0015](#) for excludable income.

2. **Resources**

We must consider countable liquid resources under [WAC 388-470-0055](#) when determining eligibility for expedited services, even if the client is categorically eligible under [WAC 388-414-0001](#).

3. **Request for Basic Food:**

Applicants request Basic Food by:

- Checking “Food” on the application; or
- Checking “Other” and indicating they want or need food on their application. See [WAC 388-406-0010](#) for information on what constitutes an application.

EXAMPLE: Joe checks “Food” on the application form. Consider this a request for Basic Food.

EXAMPLE: Petra checks “Other” on the application form and indicates she needs food. Consider this a request for Basic Food.

EXAMPLE: John does not check “Food” nor does he request food next to “Other” on his application form. Do not consider this a request for Basic Food.

5. **Screening and Determining Eligibility for Expedited Service**

- a. Households entitled to expedited services must be interviewed and receive benefits within seven calendar days of filing an application. If the seventh day falls on a day when the office is closed (holiday, temporary layoff), benefits must be issued the working day prior to the office closure.
- b. To identify households entitled to expedited service, we review the application to determine whether the circumstances meet one of the Expedited Service

criteria under [WAC 388-406-0015 \(2\)](#). We must consider the household's circumstances at the time of application, [including work registration sanctions or disqualifications](#), when we are making the determination.

- c. We screen for expedited service eligibility on the day we receive each application. If we receive an application outside of normal business hours, we screen for expedited service on the next business day.
- d. We determine expedited service eligibility for **all** Basic Food applicants during the interview.
 - i. Except for identification, verification that is not available at the time of the interview is postponed (see Postponed Verification and Required Verification sections for more information).
 - ii. A person who was not screened as expedited or who waives the expedited interview can be determined expedited at the interview and receive benefits within seven days.
 - iii. A person who was screened as expedited but who is determined not expedite eligible at the interview must be processed under regular procedures.

NOTE: Applicants **cannot waive** being screened for expedited service and do not have to ask for expedited service screening. Clients **can waive** an appointment and interview for expedited service; this includes not appearing for the scheduled interview without notice.

NOTE: **Not all households** are eligible for the Standard Utility Allowance (SUA). When comparing an AU's gross income and available cash resources to their total shelter cost, use the appropriate utility allowance as a part of their shelter cost.

NOTE: ABAWD Cases:

- [If an ABAWD does have non-qualifying months available they can be considered for expedited services.](#)
- [Clients who have been disqualified for Basic Food due to not meeting ABAWD participation requirements are not eligible for expedited services until they have requalified.](#)
- [Expedited cases can be approved with postponed verification for proof of out of state non-qualifying months.](#)

EXAMPLE: Bertha requests Basic Food on the application. The information provided in the expedited screening section of the application appears to make her eligible for Expedited Service. Provide Bertha an Expedited Service appointment.

EXAMPLE: A 3-person household applied on August 1st and reported anticipated income of \$500 for the month, plus rent of \$450 and the SUA. They receive an expedited interview based on this information. At the interview, you find out that the household has anticipated income of

\$1,000. Since the income is greater than rent plus the SUA the household is not eligible for expedited issuance. Process this application as a non-expedited application.

EXAMPLE: Don is unemployed and has no resources. He lives for free in a trailer in the back of his uncle's house. Don's parent's send Don \$250 monthly to help out. With no utility expenses, Don is coded as ZUA. He is not eligible for expedited service because his monthly income from his parents exceeds his countable expenses at time of application.

EXAMPLE: Jude files an application on Monday, May 23rd and meets expedited service criteria. The office is closed on Friday, May 27th for a temporary layoff day and Monday, May 30th for a holiday. The office is regularly closed for the weekend. Because the seventh day falls on a day the office is closed, expedited benefits must be issued by Thursday, May 26th (the working day prior to the office closure). To meet the seven day timeframe, Jude is interviewed on May 26th and is issued expedited benefits the same day.

EXAMPLE: Linda applies for Basic Food on March 25th and does not appear to meet the expedited criteria based on the information she provides on her application. At her regular interview on April 10th, she indicates that her circumstances have changed and her situation in April appears to meet the expedited criteria. Because expedited services are based on the circumstances at the time the person applies, we evaluate whether to provide expedited issuance based on the March information.

EXAMPLE: Teresa mails in her application and it is received on July 2nd. Based on the information available, Teresa does not appear to meet expedited criteria and is given a regular appointment on July 10th. At her interview, the worker finds that Teresa did actually meet one of the criteria. We provide expedited issuance and use July 10th as the date of discovery for expedited services.

EXAMPLE: Ira is attempting to requalify for Basic Food after being terminated for non-participation under ABAWD rules. He would otherwise meet the expedited criteria based on the information he provided on his application. Ira must provide verification that he has met requalification before benefits can be issued. The application is denied and Ira is provided the 11-034b with information on how to requalify.

6. **Screening an institutionalized client for Expedited Service:**

Applications from persons living in an institution are denied unless the person will be released within 30 days of submitting the application. Use the date of release from the institution as the date of request and as the expedited service start date.

- a. If the applicant is eligible for expedited service, provide an interview within seven calendar days of the date of request; and or
- b. If the client is eligible for Basic Food, issue benefits within seven calendar days of the date of request.

EXAMPLE: Olivia files an application on May 6th. She is in the hospital and is not eligible for Basic Food until released from the hospital on May 16th. The date of request for Basic Food is May 16th; the date of her release from the hospital. Her answers to the screening questions suggest that she meets Expedited Service criteria. Further review of the information Olivia provided supports this finding. Because she must get an expedited interview within seven calendar days of the date of request, we must interview Olivia and issue benefits by May 23rd.

7. Destitute migrant or seasonal farm workers:

To determine if a client is a destitute migrant or seasonal farm worker use [WAC 388-406-0021](#), then see [WAC 388-450-0230](#) for information about budgeting income in the month of application.

EXAMPLE: Kate applies for Basic Food, and the answers to the screening questions suggest that her household may not meet Expedited Service criteria. A further review of income sources indicates that she has income in excess of the Expedited Service criteria that you **cannot** exclude.

- Deny expedited service; and
- Process the case using regular processing standards.

EXAMPLE: Mary applies for Basic Food, meets expedited service criteria and is interviewed the same day. At the interview, she states she does not have identification but previously received benefits in another state. We call the other state and ask them to fax a copy of her identification, which they say will take about a week. Mary's boyfriend is at the interview with her. Since the boyfriend is not a member of Mary's Basic Food household, we can take a statement from him as collateral contact verification of her identity and issue benefits the same day. All other verification is postponed including further verification of Mary's identity.

8. Denying Expedited Service:

- a. If the household is not eligible for expedited services based on any of the criteria describe in [WAC 388-406-0015](#):
 - i. Inform them that they will get a regular appointment; and
 - ii. Explain how to get a department review of the decision (see [WAC 388-406-0015\(10\)](#)).
- b. If at the interview we determine a household is not eligible for expedited issuance and more information is needed to determine eligibility:
 - i. Inform the client that they do not meet the criteria for expedited issuance with postponed verification; and
 - ii. process the case using regular application rules.

NOTE: Clients who have been disqualified for Basic Food due to not meeting ABAWD participation requirements are not eligible for expedited services until they have requalified.

9. Required Verification:

- a. Verification of identity of the applicant (and authorized representative if the head of household is not at the interview) is the **only** required verification to issue benefits on an expedited case. All other verification can be postponed.
 - i. Identity can be verified with available documents, through interfaces such as SOLQ, or through a collateral contact. Photo ID is not required.
 - ii. Delay benefit issuance only when there is no means to establish identity.
- b.** When all required verification to determine eligibility is available at the interview, issue benefits and establish an appropriate certification period (see [WAC 388-416-0005](#)).

10. Postponed Verification:

- a. When verification is postponed, issue benefits as described in [WAC 388-406-0015\(6\)](#) based on the information available.
- b. Send a letter of limited approval and request the client provide the missing information for continued eligibility to be determined. The letter also functions as a denial notice should the client fail to provide all of the verification listed in the letter timely.
- c. The denial of ongoing benefits can be reconsidered if all of the required information is provided within the timeframes listed in subsection (6) of the WAC. The letter will reflect the correct timeframes. Do not send another request letter with a new timeframe if the client provides only part of the required verification.
- d. If all postponed verification is not received timely (within thirty days or the end of the second month), the client is not eligible for ongoing benefits without a break in benefits. If the client turns in the postponed verification untimely, but before the 60th day after the date of application, refer to [WAC 388-406-0055 \(4\)](#) (c) to determine the reconsideration date of benefits.
- e. It is possible for a client to receive expedited benefits and not be eligible for ongoing Basic Food when the postponed verification is provided. We must send clients a denial letter if we determine they are ineligible from the verification.

Applicants who meet expedited criteria and are eligible for Basic Food can get benefits even though they do not have all the necessary verification to determine eligibility. We must attempt to verify as much information as possible at the interview prior to postponing verification (see [Verification](#)).

EXAMPLE: Edward applies for Basic Food **May 6th** (on or before the 15th of the month), and meets expedited service criteria. He is eligible for expedited Basic Food with postponed verification and benefits are issued for May only. Edward must provide postponed verification by June 5th (the 30th day from the date of request for Basic Food) to be eligible for ongoing benefits without a break in benefits.

EXAMPLE: Martina applies for Basic Food **May 16th** and meets expedited service criteria. She is eligible for expedited Basic Food with postponed verification and is issued Basic Food for May and June. Martina must provide postponed verification by the end of the second month after the date of request for Basic Food (June 30th) to be eligible for ongoing benefits without a break in benefits.

Worker Responsibilities - [WAC 388-406-0015](#)

1. Record the date each application is received, or the next business day if received after business hours.
2. When the application is received, screen for expedited eligibility using the responses to the expedited screening questions on page one of the application (part one for the online application). Review other information on the application as needed to identify expedited households.
3. Whenever possible, interview clients who apply in person and meet expedited service criteria the same day the applications are received. The interview can be conducted by telephone.
4. Issue benefits the same day to households determined expedited.

Clarifying Information - [WAC 388-406-0021](#)

EXAMPLE: Seasonal farmworker client applied for Basic Food on April 22nd and has **not** received income in the month of April. The client has no available cash resources. The client states he has worked two 8-hour days for this period at \$7 an hour. He expects to get this income on April 26th ($\$7/\text{hr} \times 8\text{hrs} \times 2\text{ days} = \112). The AU's shelter expenses for April are \$200.00. - The farmworker client is not destitute because they will receive over \$25.00 within

ten days of their date of application. - Since they have income and available resources under their shelter costs, the client **is** eligible for expedited service under WAC 388-406-0015.

EXAMPLE: Seasonal farmworker client applies for Basic Food. The client is **not currently working** and has no other income. The client states that they will work as soon as the farms start hiring. The client has always worked this season over the past several years and averages \$900.00 income each month. We would consider this client destitute because they do not have a source of income identified.

EXAMPLE: Migrant farmworker client arrived in the state on July 1st and was hired by a grower to pick cherries on July 2nd. On July 3rd, the client applied for Basic Food. The client was unsure of when he would be paid, and the worker was unable to contact the grower. The client was told that the farmer pays everyone when the harvest is complete. The client wasn't sure how much longer the harvest would take. In this example, the client **is destitute**. Based on the information available to us, we do not know when the worker will be paid or exactly how much. We cannot be reasonably certain that the client will receive more than \$25 within ten days of July 3rd, the date of application.

EXAMPLE: Migrant farmworker client arrived in the state on July 1st and was hired by a grower to pick cherries on July 2nd. On July 3rd, the client applied for Basic Food. The client states he averages about twelve boxes a day but was unsure of when or how much he would be paid. The worker contacted the grower by phone and confirmed that the client was hired and worked on July 2nd. The grower stated that they expect to have work for the client through the rest of the month. According to the grower, the client will be paid weekly, beginning July 10th. The grower confirms that the client averages 12 boxes each day. He pays \$3.50/box and the client will work 6 days/week. The first check will be for five days (12 boxes/day x \$3.50/box x 5 days = \$210). In this example, the client **is not destitute**. Because we have confirmed that the client will be paid on July 10th, we are reasonably certain that the client will receive more than \$25 within ten days of July 3rd, the date of application.

EXAMPLE: Seasonal farmworker client applied for benefits on May 2nd. A grower hired the client, but the client isn't sure when work will start. The client must check with the grower each day to see if the harvest has started. The financial worker calls the grower and confirms that the client has been hired and says that work will start the next day, if the weather is good. The grower states that if all goes well, the client will be paid on May 9th and should receive over \$25. In this example, work is uncertain. The client ****is destitute.** * * The uncertainty around the harvest and when the client will start work prevents us from being reasonably certain that the client will receive more than \$25 within ten days of May 2nd, the date of application.

EXAMPLE: Client applied for benefits on May 2nd. The client works for the same grower every year. The financial worker calls the grower and confirms that the client has been hired and says that work will start on Monday May 5th. The grower states that first check will be paid on May

9th and client is expected to produce 10 boxes/day and will be paid for three days work at \$3.50/box for the first week ($\$3.50 \times 30 = \105). The client agrees with the estimate.

EXAMPLE: Farmworker client arrived in Washington from California on June 16th. The client worked in California and was paid every Friday. They were last paid \$90 on June 14, and will not be paid on June 21st. This income is from a terminated source, because the client does not expect to be paid by the California grower for the remainder of June or in July.

EXAMPLE: A seasonal farmworker applies on March 6th. They anticipate income on a weekly basis from their employer starting on March 22nd. The client last received wages from this employer on January 18th. We consider the income from this employer as income from a new source.

EXAMPLE: Client arrived in Washington from California on June 16th and applied for Basic Food on June 17th. The client worked in California and was paid \$200 on June 14 from a terminated source. The client expects to be paid in Washington on June 28th from a new source. In this example, the client is **destitute**. They will not receive more than \$25 from their new source of income within ten days of the date the client applied for benefits. In this scenario, **don't** count the income the client expects to receive on June 28th. See [WAC 388-450-0230](#).

1. **General information regarding seasonal farmworkers:**

- a. A seasonal farmworker can work all year round and still be considered a seasonal farmworker.
- b. The unemployment compensation a seasonal farmworker may receive does not have to be from seasonal farm work.
- c. We do not average a migrant or seasonal farmworker's income when determining if they are destitute.
- d. [Seasonal farmworkers may be required to meet ABAWD participation.](#)

2. **Eligibility for expedited service:**

- a. Destitute farm worker assistance units (AUs) with under \$100 are eligible for expedited service.
- b. Migrant and seasonal farmworkers who aren't destitute may receive expedited service based on other criteria under [WAC 388-406-0015](#).

3. **Earnings from a previous season:**

Do not use a previous season's information unless it reflects what the client anticipates for the current season.

4. **The source of a farmworker's income:**

Consider the grower, not the crew chief, as the source of income.

5. **Farmworkers with income from a new source:**

We consider a farmworker who has income from a new source destitute unless it is **reasonably certain** that the farmworker will receive more than \$25 in income within ten calendar days of the date of application.

6. **Employer's statement of likely work:**

An employer's statement that the client will *likely* have work should not be considered a guarantee that the client will work and receive more than \$25. Farm work is uncertain because harvests may be delayed or interrupted by weather problems. There also may be times when a grower discovers they need less labor than originally predicted.

7. **Income from a terminated source:**

Consider income to be from a source no longer providing income when:

- a. The AU is usually paid at least once a month and income from that source is not expected for the remainder of the month of application or the following month; or
- b. The AU is paid less often than monthly, such as quarterly, and the household will not receive the next payment in the month it would normally be received.

8. **Income from a new source:**

Consider income to be from a new source when:

- a. The household is paid at least monthly and received \$25 or less from that source in the 30 days prior to the date of application; or
- b. The household is paid less often than monthly, such as quarterly, and received \$25 or less from that source since the last regular pay date.

9. **Income from a terminated source and a new source in the same month:**

A farmworker AU may receive income from a source no longer providing income and a new source in the same month and still be considered destitute.

10. **Travel advance:**

If a migrant/seasonal farmworker client gets an advance from an employer to cover travel costs, we do not consider the advance when deciding if the client is destitute.

- a. We exclude the travel funds if they are a reimbursement for travel expenses.
- b. If the funds are an advance on wages and **not** a reimbursement for travel, we budget the advance as earned income.

11. **Budgeting income:**

- a. For the standard rule on how to budget a client's income, see [WAC 388-450-0215](#).
- b. For the rule about budgeting a destitute client's income, see [WAC 388-450-0230](#).

Worker Responsibilities - [WAC 388-406-0021](#)

1. **Document the decision on a client's destitute status:**

Document your decision on whether or not a migrant/seasonal farmworker client is destitute. If you exclude any income under [WAC 388-450-0230](#) document that this income was excluded.

2. **Document income:**

Always document the income you budgeted for the AU.