



Applications

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Massachusetts

Applications

Filing and Processing Applications
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Filing and Processing Applications

All persons have a right to file an application for cash assistance.

Right provided for in regulation

The same application for cash assistance is used throughout the state.

The statewide application is a joint application for:

- Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- Emergency Assistance
- State "general assistance"

State policy sets standards of timeliness for processing applications:

Applications must be acted upon within 30 days.

The agency is required to issue a written decision on applications.

Pre-Application Requirements

The state does not impose requirements that must be met before a family can submit an application for cash assistance.

Pending Application Requirements

The state imposes pending application requirements that a family must meet while its cash assistance application is pending. Failure to meet these requirements results in denial of the application.

The pending application requirements are:

- Begin work activity participation
- Teen parent sanctioned for not meeting school attendance requirement must meet the requirement during re-application.

The following applicants are exempt from pending application requirements:

- All except those previously sanctioned for failure to meet work or teen parent school attendance requirements.

Personal Responsibility Contracts

Applicants and recipients are not required to sign a personal responsibility contract.

Employability Plans

Applicants must sign an employability plan, i.e. a plan that covers only work requirements for the individual, after eligibility is determined.

An individual develops an employability plan with:

- TANF eligibility worker at the TANF office

The following people must sign an employability plan:

- Head of household
- Both parents in "two-parent" families
- Minor parent who is not head of household
- Volunteer who wants services; dependent age 16 to 18

The following applicants and recipients are exempt from developing and/or signing an employability plan:

- Individual with a child under age 24 months
- Individual working more than 19 hours per week
- Disabled caretaker
- Non-parent caretaker not receiving assistance
- Child under age 16 or up to age 18 and in school; good cause exceptions (lack of suitable child care, family crisis); caring for disabled child or spouse; parent age 60 or older; pregnant woman in last 120 days of pregnancy

Employability plans include a state or county agreement to provide services, and the services are listed.

There is no sanction for refusal to develop or sign an employability plan.

Formal Diversion Programs

The state does not operate a formal cash diversion program.

Emergency Assistance

The state provides emergency assistance to families that are receiving TANF cash assistance as follows:

- Eviction prevention
- Temporary shelter for homeless families

The state provides emergency assistance to families that are eligible for but not receiving TANF cash assistance as follows:

- Eviction prevention
- Temporary shelter for homeless families

The state does not provides emergency assistance to families that are not eligible for TANF cash assistance as follows:

- Eviction prevention
- Temporary shelter for homeless families

Note: Information on exemptions from work requirements and sanctions for noncompliance with work requirements will be available in the Work and Sanction Provisions sections later this year.