



Applications

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Texas

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

State policy sets standards of timeliness for processing applications:

Applications must be acted upon within 45 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:

- Sign personal responsibility contract
- Attend orientation session
- Agree to cooperate with child support enforcement
- Cooperate with child support activity:
 - Provide information

The following applicants are exempt from pending application requirements:

- Exempt from all requirements: child only/payee cases and control group cases in waiver evaluation sites.
- Exempt from orientations session attendance: under age 16 or over age 60; incapacitated individual; individual who lives too far from an orientation site; and individual caring for a child under age 4

Personal Responsibility Contracts

Applicants and/or recipients are required to sign a personal responsibility contract.

Applicants must sign a personal responsibility contract:
While the application is pending

The personal responsibility contract is:

- A standard form listing obligations

The following people must sign the contract:

- Head of household
- Both parents in "two-parent" families

The following applicants and recipients are exempt from developing and signing a contract:

- Non-parent caretaker not receiving assistance
- Waiver evaluation control group; individual who has been disqualified for: violation of third party resources rule, not providing a social security number, or intentional program violation; individual disqualified because of citizenship/alien requirement or state time limit requirements

The following obligations can be included in the contract:

- Agreement to participate in work activities
- Child school attendance requirements
- Minor parent school attendance requirements
- Immunization or preventative health requirements
- Cooperation with child support enforcement
- Participation in life skills or parenting classes
- Drug or alcohol provisions
- Agreement to not voluntarily quit employment without good cause

The contract includes a state or county agreement to provide services, and lists the services.

The sanction for refusing to sign a contract is:
Denial of application or termination of grant

The sanction lasts until compliance.

Employability Plans

Applicants and recipients are not required to sign an employability plan, i.e. a plan that covers only work requirements.

Formal Diversion Programs

The state operates a formal diversion program.

Current cash assistance recipients may not participate in the diversion program.

The maximum cash payment is \$1000.

The size of the diversion payment is calculated as follows:

Flat amount of \$1000 for any recipient

The income and asset limits used to determine diversion program eligibility are the same as those applied to applicants for ongoing cash assistance.

Eligibility for a cash diversion payment is decided based upon:

Objective written criteria

A family that receives a diversion payment is ineligible for ongoing cash assistance for 12 months.

A family can receive cash assistance during the period of ineligibility under the following circumstances:

If the household composition changes by adding a member that would not have been included in the certified group that received the diversion payment, such as the addition of a grandchild or a payee only child. These individuals would be eligible for ongoing cash assistance. If the household splits and a child in the household that received the diversion payment goes to another TANF eligible household, s/he would be eligible.

A diversion payment uses one month of the 60 month lifetime limit, but does not count toward the state's 12, 24, or 36 month limit.

When a family receives a diversion payment, its child support rights are not assigned to the state.

Families that receive diversion payments are eligible to receive:

Although families receiving diversion payments are not directly linked to services as they might have been through TANF, they are income eligible for various services through the Texas Workforce Commission.

The estimated scale of the diversion program in terms of the proportion of TANF applicants receiving diversion payments is:

Less than one percent

Emergency Assistance

The state does not have an emergency assistance program.

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.