

Department of Social and Health Services

Olympia, Washington

EAZ

Revision # [865](#)

CATEGORY [Interview Requirements](#)

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/manuals/eaz/sections/InterviewReq.shtml>

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Summary : The elderly interview demonstration project detail was added.

INTERVIEW REQUIREMENTS

Revised April 18, 2013

Purpose: This section explains when someone must have an interview for benefits, when we schedule an interview, and when Basic Food households can have an authorized representative complete the required interview on the households behalf.

[WAC 388-452-0005](#)

Do I have to be interviewed in order to get benefits?

[WAC 388-452-0010](#)

What does the family violence amendment mean for TANF recipients?

WAC 388-452-0005 Do I have to be interviewed in order to get benefits?

1. Unless you are applying for medical only, you or your authorized representative must have an interview with the department:
 - a. At initial certification; and
 - b. At least once every twelve months.
2. An interview is not required if you are applying for or recertifying medical benefits only. If we deny your application for cash assistance or Basic Food because you did not have an interview, we continue to process your request for medical benefits.
3. You will have just one interview even if you are applying for or are having a review for benefits from more than one program.
4. We hold interviews either in person or over the phone.
5. If we do not interview you on the same day that we receive your application, we will schedule an interview appointment for you or have you contact us by phone during our business hours to complete your interview.
6. If we schedule an interview, we will set your appointment to allow you at least ten days after the interview to provide needed verification:
 - a. Before the end of the thirty-day processing period for applications; or
 - b. Before your certification period ends for eligibility reviews or recertifications.
7. If you miss your first interview and ask for another interview within thirty days of the date you applied for benefits, we schedule a second interview or have you call us and complete the interview over the phone.
8. If you must have an interview for benefits, you or someone who can give us the information we need about your AU must participate in the interview. You may ask any person you choose to help with your interview.
9. For Basic Food only, your authorized representative as described in WAC 388-460-0005 may take your place during your interview.

This is a reprint of the official rule as published by the [Office of the Code Reviser](#). If there are previous versions of this rule, they can be found using the [Legislative Search page](#).

CLARIFYING INFORMATION

1. **When we require interviews:**

- a. For cash assistance and Basic Food, we must interview a person at:
 - i. Application; and
 - ii. Eligibility review or recertification, if we have not interviewed them in the last twelve months.

2. **When we don't require interviews:**

- a. Beginning with August 2013 applications and eligibility reviews, Basic Food assistance units who meet the following Elderly Interview Waiver criteria **do not** need to complete an interview at application or review for food benefits:
 - i. All members of the household are elderly (age 60+);
 - ii. No household members have earned income;
 - iii. The paper or electronic application or eligibility review is complete;
 - iv. The household has provided all necessary verification or the verification is available through interfaces available to the department; and
 - v. No information provided is questionable.

Those meeting the waiver criteria cannot be denied or terminated from Food assistance for failure to complete an interview.

- b. If someone applies for medical assistance or long-term care **only**, we do not require an interview.

Example

Fran is 65 and her spouse is 60. The couples only source of income is Fran's Social Security. Fran does not need to complete an interview for her Basic Food application and will be sent a mail in Eligibility Review.

Example

Jim is 70 and receives a pension from Germany. Jim did not provide verification of his current monthly pension amount with his eligibility review. Jim will need to complete an interview for Basic Food and provide current verification of his income.

EXAMPLE

Steve is homeless and received a 6-month certification for Basic Food in January. When he was due for recertification in June, he did not have to have an interview. Steve's worker recertified the case using a desk review.

EXAMPLE

Kay and her two kids receive Basic Food and medical benefits. They are certified for these benefits through November. In October, she loses her job and applies for TANF benefits. Kay will need an interview for TANF and to recertify her Basic Food benefits.

EXAMPLE

Mary applies for cash, food, and medical and is scheduled for an interview. Later, Mary withdraws her request for cash and food and only wants medical. Mary's worker denies the request for food and cash based on her request and can process the application for medical as there is no interview required.

2. Phone interviews:

People do not need to claim a hardship in order to have a phone interview. We can interview anyone by phone regardless of their circumstances.

WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. First contact resolution:

Complete the interview the day we receive the application whenever possible. This helps ensure timely service and eliminates the need to schedule an interview or send a letter to inform the applicant of options for having their required interview.

- a. If the client is in the office, complete the face-to-face interview while they are in the office if possible.
- b. If we receive the application electronically or through the mail, attempt to contact the client to complete the interview.
- c. If unable to complete the interview in person or over the phone on the day you receive an application, follow your local office procedure to either:
 - i. Schedule a specific date and time for an interview;
 - ii. Send the household a letter informing to call in or come into the local office between 8:00am and 3:00pm by a specific date to have their required interview.

2. Scheduled interviews:

For scheduled interviews, set up the interview enough in advance to allow the person 10 days to give us the information we need before the end of their certification period or 30-day processing period. When possible, set up an interview time that fits with a person's work or other circumstances, including offering a phone interview.

EXAMPLE

Marissa turns in her eligibility review form for Basic Food on June 12th. Her certification period ends on June 30th. Schedule the interview to be done by June 20th, so she has 10 days to give us the information we need before her certification period ends.

NOTE: Schedule the interview in ACES in order to ensure that households receive the required Notice Of Missed Interview (NOMI) letter overnight if we don't complete the interview function on the date of the scheduled interview.

3. Missed interviews:

If a client misses a scheduled interview, they will receive the notice of missed interview informing them to contact us to reschedule the interview. If they contact us to reschedule, use the time to complete the interview rather than rescheduling another appointment.

4. Offices that do not use scheduled interviews:

Always attempt to complete an interview before sending out a letter to the client as stated in "first contact resolution above". If you cannot interview the client on the day they apply, send them a general correspondence letter using the interview template containing the following information:

- The benefits they applied for;
- That they must have an interview by the:
 - 7th day after the date of application for expedited cases; or
 - Two weeks from the date of application for all other cases.
- That they can come in or call Monday through Friday between 8:00am and 3:00pm for their interview;
- The location of your office;
- The number(s) to call in for phone interviews; and
- That they can call or come into the office during regular walk-in hours within 30 days of their application date even if they miss the deadline of the 7th day or two weeks; and
- That if they do not have their interview within 30 days, they will need to reapply for benefits.

NOTE: Schedule the interview on the MISC screen in ACES for the 7th day from the date of application for expedited cases or two weeks from the date of application for all other requests.

This will ensure that households receive the required Notice Of Missed Interview (NOMI) letter overnight if we don't complete the interview function on the date of the scheduled interview.

5. **Interpreter Services:**

If someone has Limited English Proficiency, arrange for interpreter services as allowed under Chapter [388-271 WAC](#). See: [Limited English Proficiency \(LEP\)](#).

6. **Conducting the interview:**

- a. Review all completed forms with the person as described below:
 - i. Make sure they have correctly filled out all the forms you need;
 - ii. Confirm the information in the application – Resolving any unclear, incomplete, or inconsistent information with them; and
 - iii. Get the proof you need about their circumstances as described in

[VERIFICATION](#).

- b. See [APPLICATIONS - Information Needed to Determine Eligibility](#) to decide if the person completed all the forms you need
- c. Review the DSHS 14-113(X), "Your Rights and Responsibilities" with the person and give them a copy of the form. Document that you reviewed the form with the person and gave them a copy. See: RIGHTS for information.

7. **Referrals:**

Based on the household's circumstances, make referrals to the appropriate resource or specialists including:

- Incapacity Specialist - see [Incapacity](#)
- VOC / FRED Worker - see [Fraud](#)
- Refugee Caseworker - see [Refugee Assistance](#)
- Teen Parent Caseworker - see [Teen Parents](#)
- First Steps Caseworker - see [Pregnancy and Women's Health](#)
- Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs - see [Veteran's Referrals](#).

8. **TANF Family Violence Screening:**

Complete screenings for family violence on TANF households as described below:

- a. Review the application or eligibility review form to determine if the person claims "good cause" for not helping the Division of Child Support (DCS) establish paternity and collect child support. This may be the first sign that family violence is an issue.
- b. Review the Family Violence Option with the individual.
- c. Explain WorkFirst work activities and eligibility requirements.
- d. Tell the individual about cooperation and referrals, including the right to ask for a referral at any time while receiving benefits.
- e. After the individual understands the Family Violence Option, screen the individual for family violence using the "Family Violence Screening/Evaluation" in eJAS.
- f. Tell the individual that they only need to answer "yes" or "no" to each question. The individual does not have to explain their answers.
- g. If the individual answers "no" to any of the questions, determine an appropriate work activity.
- h. If the individual answers "yes" to any of the questions, provide them with referral information to local resources and determine an appropriate WorkFirst approved activity. Referrals may include one or more of the following:
 - i. Shelters for battered individuals or families;
 - ii. Medical services;
 - iii. Family and domestic violence hot lines;
 - iv. Emergency help for individuals or families fleeing family violence;
 - v. Legal counseling and advocacy, including initiation of legal proceedings;
 - vi. Mental health care, counseling and support groups;
 - vii. Other available services.

NOTE: See [WAC 388-452-0010](#) for additional information about Family Violence screening.

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