

Department of Social and Health Services

Olympia, Washington

EAZ Manual

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Category	Emergency Food Supplements
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Summary

Updated EAZ Chapter: Emergency Food Supplements to support automation of emergency supplements when finalizing or reinstating cases as of April 16th.

See below for new text:

Emergency Food Supplements

Created on:

Mar 31 2020

Revised April 16, 2020

Purpose:

This section lists emergency rules related to food assistance programs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

WAC 388-437-0005 - Changes to food assistance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Clarifying Information and Worker Responsibilities
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Clarifying Information - WAC 388-437-0005

Supplemental Issuance

- Households on food assistance are eligible for a supplemental benefit amount to increase their benefits to the maximum allotment for their household size for the month of March and/or April. They are not eligible for this supplement if they already receive the maximum allotment.
 - This includes all approved applications regardless of their application date in March and April 2020 (i.e. prorated benefits).
 - **Households receiving \$0 are also qualified for this supplement.**
 - These supplements are not subject to recoupment.

Example: Tomas applied for benefits on March 16th and completed an interview the same day. The worker processes and approves the case with prorated benefits in March of \$97 and full allotment of \$194 in April. Tomas receives combined issuance of \$291 on his EBT card the next day. After the system delivers the mass issuance, an additional \$97 emergency supplement will appear on Tomas's EBT to ensure he receives the maximum food amount of \$194 for March, but the system will not issue an emergency supplement for April as Tomas already qualifies for the maximum benefit of \$194.

- If the only reason the household is receiving less than the maximum is due to a recoupment, then the household is not eligible.
- ~~Households eligible for the maximum allotment do not qualify for a supplement for March and April.~~

Example: Heather was approved in January for the maximum food allotment of \$194, but due to an overpayment, \$10 is recouped each month. Heather receives \$184 per month. She will not be eligible for an emergency supplement in March and April as she is eligible for the maximum allotment.

Automatic Issuance:

Prior to April 16th:

- ~~The An~~ automatic mass supplement was issued for March benefits to ~~will issue to~~ all households on April 3rd and are were available the following day, April 4th.
 - Aces.Online Benefit Issuance history will show emergency supplements as ***FS/EBT-Supplemental Issuance – 863*** for the months of March and/or April after automatic mass supplements are completed.

- The April supplements ~~will be~~ available either:
 - April 4th if the household's normal availability date is between April 1st to April 3rd, or
 - On the client's normal availability date.
- AU's that are closed with a paid thru date of 3/31/2020 will receive a supplement for March, but not automatically for April.
 - ~~If the case is reinstated in April, review Worker Responsibilities below.~~
- Notices will be suppressed.

Starting April 16th:

- The system will automatically determine the emergency supplement amount owed to the client after finalizing an application or reinstatement in overnight batch.
- Staff only need to complete a manual BEG when adding a person. See Worker Responsibilities.
 - Emergency supplements will show in Aces.Online as FS/EBT-Supplemental Issuance – 863 after overnight batch.

Example: Jon and his partner were certified from November 30th to October 31st to receive \$200 per month in food assistance due to household income. Their issuance date is the 11th of each month. As the maximum allotment for a two-person household is \$355 per month, Jon and his partner will receive \$155 emergency supplement after the automatic issuance for March, and the full maximum allotment of \$355 on April 11th.

Example: Pheobe applies for food assistance on April 5th after she lost her job. The worker interviews her on April 17th, determines her eligible and approves the prorated benefit amount of \$168 from the date of application. The system will automatically issue emergency supplements in overnight batch for \$26 to give her the maximum \$194 standard for a one person household in April.

Example: Anita and her spouse applied for benefits on March 27th and interviewed on the April 16th. The worker was able to verify Anita is receiving Unemployment Compensation of \$400 per week. The worker processes and approves the case with \$0 benefits in March and the minimum allotment of \$16 in April. The system will automatically issue emergency supplements in overnight batch for \$355 in March and \$339 to the household in April.

Example: Peter works and normally receives \$124 per month in food assistance. Peter forgot to complete his March MCR. He received a termination notice that his benefits are closed as of March 31st. Peter calls to complete his MCR on April 16th reporting no changes. Peter asks about an extra \$73 on his EBT card-recently. The worker explains the ~~supplement was issued~~~~extra allotment was disbursed~~ in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as we are ~~issuing~~~~providing~~ maximum monthly allotments in March and April.

The worker reinstates Peter for April and he is still eligible for \$124 per month in food assistance.
The system will automatically issue an emergency supplement in overnight batch for Since the
system will not automatically provide him a supplement in April, the worker creates a BEG type
Emergency Supplements – ES for April in the amount of \$73 in April, and are available the
following day. The regular \$124 will be available on his regular availability date.

Manual BEGS

- Starting April 16th, Staff will need to review cases for a issue a mManual BEG after the automatic mass supplements are issued, starting April 6thonly when, for:
 - New applications approved
 - Currently pending applications, not finalized
 - Cases reinstated or reopened adding a new person.
 - A new BEG type Emergency Supplements – ES was created to provide supplements manually for cases processed after automatic issuanceneeding to add a person.
 - Staff will continue to determine correct eligibility for the household and then issue a supplement for the difference.
 - This is important to track the funds for this program.
 - Letters will not generate when the BEG Emergency Supplements – ES is released.
 - We do not require a notice for these emergency supplements for March and April.
 - Confirm that the client has received the maximum allotment for their household size in March and/or April prior to confirming an Underpayment (UP) or Overpayment (OP) for any reason other than Emergency Supplement – ES.
 - Staff should ignore the UP or OP with the exception of an Add a Person(s). See Worker Responsibilities.

Example: Pheobe applies for food assistance on April 5th after she lost her job a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The worker determines eligibility and approves the prorated benefit amount of \$168 from the date of application. Pheobe is owed a supplement of \$26 to give her the maximum \$194 standard for a one person household. The worker manually creates a BEG of \$26 for the month of April using the new BEG type ES – Emergency Supplement for the additional benefit amount.

Example: Joseph applies for benefits on March 16th and completes an interviewed on March 20th. The worker pends the application for verification of stop work. Joseph faxed the stop work verification and it is processed on April 5th, after the automatic mass supplemental issuance. The worker finalizes and approves the case with prorated benefits in March of \$97 and full allotment of \$194 in April. The worker creates a manual BEG type ES – Emergency Supplement for the month of March of \$97 to ensure Joseph receives the maximum food amount of \$194, but does not issue an emergency supplement for April as Joseph already qualifies for the maximum benefit of \$194.

Example: Anita and her spouse applied for benefits on March 27th and interviewed on the April 10th. The worker was able to verify Anita she is receiving Unemployment Compensation of \$400 per week. The worker processes and approves the case with \$0 benefits in March and the minimum allotment of \$16 in April. The worker creates manual BEGs and issues a full emergency supplement in March of \$355 and then \$339 to the household in April.

- Staff must determine if a manual BEG is needed if, after reinstatement, the client is not receiving the maximum allotment for their household size.

Example: Peter works and normally receives \$124 per month in food assistance. Peter forgot to complete his March MCR. He received a termination notice that his benefits are closed as of March 31st. Peter calls to complete his MCR on April 6th reporting no changes. Peter asks about an extra \$73 on his EBT card recently. The worker explains the extra allotment was disbursed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as we are providing maximum allotments in March and April. The worker reinstates Peter for April and he is still eligible for \$124 per month in food assistance. Since the system will not automatically provide him a supplement in April, the worker creates a BEG type Emergency Supplements – ES for April in the amount of \$73, available the following day. The regular \$124 will be available on his regular availability date.

Worker Responsibilities - [WAC 388-437-0005](#)

Confirming automatic mass issuance:

Staff receive questions about extra benefits placed on EBT cards for the months of March and/or April. Staff can confirm the automatic benefits by reviewing Benefit Issuance history in Aces.Online. The supplements for March and/or April will display as *FS/EBT – Supplemental Issuance (863)*.

April benefits are available on food assistance households' regular availability date.

Starting April 16th, households finalized or reinstated will receive the emergency supplement in overnight batch. Advise the household that if they qualify for an emergency supplement, it will be available the following day.

Note: If the household is a SNAP/FAP mixed household, each month will display a *FS/EBT – Supplemental Issuance (863)* for a SNAP supplement and a FAP supplement.

Manual BEGs:

Starting April 6th/16th, staff are no longer required to process a manual BEG, unless they are adding a person(s) to the AU. prior to creating a Manual BEG type Emergency Supplement – ES, staff should:

Review the Benefit Issuance history in Aces.Online to confirm an automatic issuance was not completed.

If a supplement was issued, it would display as ***FS/EBT – Supplemental Issuance (863)***.

~~Confirm eligibility and determine if the client is not already eligible for the maximum allotment for their household size.~~

~~Remember to review finalized cases for prorated benefits based on application date~~

~~Verify the maximum allotment that the household is entitled to receive.~~

~~Subtract the normal eligibility allotment from the maximum allotment for the household size.~~

~~Create and issue the manual BEG.~~

~~To create a manual BEG, see Mainframe Processing - How do I manually create an overpayment or underpayment?.~~

~~A notice will not generate and is not required for the emergency supplements in March and April.~~

~~The benefits will be available on the client's EBT card the following day after the BEG is released.~~

Follow the ACES Manual - How do I add a person to an existing Assistance Unit (AU)? To add the person to the AU.

1. Once finalized, the individual will be denied in the initial month and then added in the following month.
 1. As the individual is not eligible in the initial month, do not issue an emergency supplement.
2. In the following month, confirm the supplement reason as Add a Person (AP). Release the supplement and add text to the notice.
 - a. Review the new total benefit amount for the household to determine if an emergency supplement is needed:
 - i. If the new benefit amount is the maximum allotment for the new household size, no emergency supplement is needed.
 - ii. If the new AP supplement and original monthly allotment amount does not total the new household maximum benefit amount, review if an additional emergency supplement (ES) is needed.
 1. Subtract the new benefit amount from the maximum household allotment.
 2. Create a Manual BEG in ACES mainframe for the difference using ES type. To create a manual BEG, see Mainframe Processing - How do I manually create an overpayment or underpayment?

NOTE: You may be prompted for either soft edit:

1598, "REASON SHOULD NOT BE USED IF AUTO WILL OR DID ISSUE THE SUPPLEMENT"

0294, "SHOULD AMOUNT BE > \$499?"

Once you verify the Manual BEG is needed and correct, press F4 to pass the soft edit.

EXAMPLE:

Robert gets the regular benefit amount of \$194 per month. In March, he requested his daughter be added to his active food assistance. The worker pends the case for the daughters SSN. On April 10th, the SSN is provided and the daughter is added to the food assistance. The worker confirms the supplement of \$355 for a two person household, he is not eligible for an additional emergency supplement.

EXAMPLE:

Jose and his partner regularly receive \$200 per month in food assistance. Jose has taken custody of his grandchild with income and completed a change of circumstance in March. Jose received an emergency supplement of \$155 received on April 4th after mass issuance for a two person household.

On April 6th, the worker processes the request to add the child. After completing the add a person, it results in a supplement of \$100. The worker reviews the total allotment issued to the household:

\$200 + \$155 emergency supplement + \$100 add a person = \$455 April total issuance

\$509 (3 person max) - \$455 = \$54 is what is owed for April, create a Manual ES BEG.

Note: Do not use the Manual BEG type **Emergency Supplement – ES** outside of the months of March and April. We are not approving Emergency Supplements for the month of May.