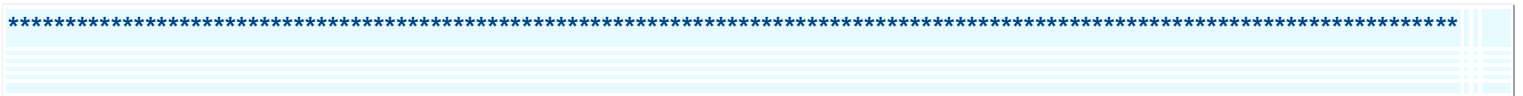


Department of Social and Health Services
Community Services Division
EA-Z Manual

Revision: # 1063
Category: **Eligibility Reviews – Basic Food**
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Summary

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



Eligibility Reviews/ Food Assistance Recertifications - Process for Basic Food

Revised ~~December 27, 2012~~ March 5, 2020

Purpose:

WAC 388-434-0010 How do I get Basic Food benefits after my certification period has ended?

- **Clarifying Information and Worker Responsibilities**

To keep getting Basic Food benefits after your certification period in **WAC 388-416-0005** has ended, we must determine if you are still eligible for benefits. This is called recertification.

Clarifying Information - [WAC 388-434-0010](#)

1. **Equal Access:**

Someone who needs [Equal Access](#) accommodations has more time to meet certification requirements. If a person receives these services and meets the requirements to be certified within 20 days after the end of their previous certification period, their benefits start on the first of the month of the new certification period. See [Equal Access](#).

2. **Forms / processes a person can use to recertify Basic Food:**

Someone can recertify Basic Food benefits by:

- Completing [DSHS 14-001 \(X\)](#) Application for Benefits;
- Completing [DSHS 14-078\(X\)](#) Eligibility Review;
- Participating in the interactive ACES Application for Benefits (AFB); or
- Completing the online application.

3. **Adding a request for assistance to an eligibility review:**

See CLARIFYING INFORMATION #3 under [WAC 388-406-0010](#).

4. **Notice of expiration:**

If we certified an AU for three or more months, we send them a letter to tell them that their food benefits are ending by the first day of the last month of their certification period.

5. **When the system automatically initiates reviews for associated cash and food AUs:**

Associated AUs are ones that have the same head of household in ACES. The system matches the certification/review periods for associated cash and food AUs at review as described below:

- If we initiate a review for cash benefits and there is an active associated Basic Food AU, ACES also initiates a review for Basic Food.
- If we initiate a review for Basic Food benefits and there is an active associated cash AU, ACES also initiates a review for cash.

6. **Verification at recertification:**

- If someone does not give us proof we ask for by the end of their certification period or within 10 days of the date we asked for it, we count the proof as late.
- A person has until the end of the month after the month their certification ended to give us any late or missing proof without losing benefits.
- If someone gives us an application or proof to finish a recertification after the 10-day timeframe and after the end of the month following the certification end month, the person must reapply for benefits.

EXAMPLE John's certification period ends on May 31st. On May 15th, he turns in an eligibility review. On May 23rd, John's worker asks for proof of income and gives him until June 2nd to

give us the information. On June 12th, John turns in his proof of income. If John is still eligible for benefits, his worker reinstates the benefits back to June 1st.

EXAMPLE: Same as above, except John does not submit the outstanding verification until July 5th. Because John missed the one-month window to recertify, he must reapply for benefits.

EXAMPLE: Vicky's certification ends on April 30th. On April 1st, she turns in a review. On April 5th, her worker asks for proof of her circumstances by April 15th. Vicky does not give us the required proof timely, and her worker denies the application to recertify her food benefits. On May 4th, Vicky turns in the required proof. If Vicky is still eligible for benefits, her worker reinstates the benefits back to May 1st.

EXAMPLE: Bill's certification period ends 7/31. He turns in the ER form 7/28, but doesn't contact the CSO for an interview. His benefits terminate 7/31.

On 8/25 Bill contacts the CSO and completes his recertification interview that same day. The worker must pend completion of the ER because Bill hasn't provided proof of income. Bill has until the end of August to provide the income verification in order to have benefits reinstated back to 8/1.

The worker should send an information request letter on 8/25 to Bill giving the him until 8/31 to provide the information. If Bill doesn't provide the income proof by 8/31 the case remains closed and Bill must reapply.

NOTE: People have 10 days to provide information or proof we need to determine if they are eligible. The denial letter we send if they do not give us the proof we ask for informs them what they must do to have us reconsider the denied recertification.

7. See [Letters](#) for information on what to include in approval and denial letters.

8. See [Limited English Proficiency \(LEP\)](#) for information on what we must translate in letters.

Worker Responsibilities - [WAC 388-434-0010](#)

1. **Electronic or Paper Application / Eligibility Review Form**

- a. Ensure the household has completed and signed one of the following as part of the recertification process:
 - i. Online application or eligibility review;
 - ii. Application for Benefits ([DSHS 14-001](#));
 - iii. Eligibility Review ([DSHS 14-078](#)); or
 - iv. ACES AFB after reviewing the information for accuracy.

2. Rights and Responsibilities (14-113) and Your DSHS Cash or Food Assistance Benefits (14-520)

a. Face to Face Interviews

- i. When conducting a face-to-face interview, review DSHS 14-113 and 14-520 with the client and ask them to sign the forms to acknowledge their understanding. Send the forms as file only to be scanned into the client's Electronic Case Record (ECR).
- ii. For mandatory Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) review *Basic Food Eligibility Requirements: What You Need to Know to Keep Your Benefits (DSHS 11-034b)*.

b. Phone Interviews

- i. When conducting a phone interview, review [DSHS 14-113](#) and [14-520](#) with the client. Send the client a copy of the forms and request them to sign and return both forms.
- ii. For mandatory Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) review *Basic Food Eligibility Requirements: What You Need to Know to Keep Your Benefits (DSHS 11-034b)*.

3. Recertification Interview

- a. If the client calls before the end of the certification period to do an interview but we have not received the review form:
 - i. Complete the interview.
 - ii. Send a letter requesting for a completed and signed review form.
 - iii. If the review form is received after the certification period ends but before the end of the following month, issue prorated benefits from the date the form is received. Another interview is not required.
 - iv. If the review form is received later than the end of the month following the month the certification period ends, an intake is required before benefits can be issued.

Mid-Certification Reviews

For information on mid-certification reviews, please see the [Mid-Certification Reviews](#) section.

ACES Procedures

- See [Eligibility Reviews and Recertification](#)