

BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP
 Monroe County, Indiana
 TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES
 Revised, March 2022

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The Bloomington Township Assistance Guidelines are established in accordance with Title 12 of the Indiana Code, from which the Trustee draws authority. The Indiana Code citations are listed for reference.

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I. Introduction (IC 36-6-4; 12-20-5-1 thru 12-20-5.5-6; 12-20-11-1)

In the state of Indiana, the Township Trustee is charged with the responsibility of serving and assisting people in need residing in the Township. The office of the Trustee is designed to provide temporary relief in emergency situations when a township resident has exhausted other means of relief. (Appendix 1)

Applicants requesting assistance from the Trustee are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity. Likewise, the Trustee expects that the Township staff be treated with respect and courtesy by all applicants. The Township shall report all suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. The office of the Bloomington Township Trustee will provide assistance based on the following guidelines, which are posted at the Township office, on the Township website, and are on file with the Monroe County Commissioners.

The Trustee may provide assistance with food, shelter and utilities and certain other basic necessities. In order to qualify for and receive assistance, applicants must meet the requirements of these guidelines. **ALL ADULT HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS ARE CONSIDERED APPLICANTS AND MUST:**

Be residents of Bloomington Township;

Meet income guidelines;

Be employed full time (min. 30 hrs./week); seeking full time employment; performing workfare; or medically exempted from performing work;

Cooperate with the Township's investigation of their circumstances by providing information and signing an application;

Apply for any and all other public assistance programs for which they may be eligible;

Seek assistance from their family.

This section is intended simply as an overview. Types of assistance available and eligibility criteria are explained in detail in other sections of these guidelines.

Workfare is defined as an amount of work that must be performed by the applicant's household which equals the value of assistance received by the applicant(s). The applicant(s) will receive credit for the work performed, as assigned by the Trustee, at a rate not less than the federal minimum wage.

Bloomington Township evaluates each applicant based on the Township Assistance Guidelines and will not discriminate based on race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation, source of income, national origin, disability status or any other arbitrary condition which operates to defeat the broad statutory purpose of providing assistance to residents.

Township employees are ineligible for assistance. Relatives of employees (Appendix 1) who

reside in Bloomington Township must have their application for assistance reviewed and decided by the Perry Township Trustee or her/his designee. Refer to Sections III and V for further guidance.

II. Trustee Office Hours

A. Location and Hours (IC 12-20-5.5-2)

The office of the Bloomington Township Trustee, Kim Alexander, is located at 924 W. 17th St., Suite C, Bloomington, Indiana 47404. The office is open 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. The telephone number is (812) 336-4976. The Township website is www.bloomingtontownship.in.gov.

The office may also be closed for the staff to participate in programs or seminars conducted by the Indiana Township Association (ITA) and United Township Association (UTA) or other agencies, including internal training or staff meetings. For scheduled closings, a 24-hour notice will be posted on the front door, the Township website, and the Township Facebook page prior to the closing. Closings for weather or other unexpected emergencies will be posted on the Township website and the Township Facebook page on the day of the closing.

Due to the uncertainty regarding current office practices since the pandemic began, please check www.bloomingtontownship.in.gov for current appointment scheduling procedures. The individual shall be provided with an application for assistance and a list of documents and forms needed to complete the appointment. For the interview, the application must be complete and all requested information provided.

B. Deputy Trustee (IC 36-6-7-2; 12-20-4-2)

The Trustee shall appoint a Deputy Trustee who shall have all the powers of the Trustee in the Trustee's absence. The Deputy Trustee is Lisa Myers.

III. Application Process (IC 12-20-6-0.5 thru 12-20-6-10; IC 12-20-7-1 thru 12-20-7-6; IC 12-20-8-1 thru 12-20-8-7; IC 12-20-16-1 thru 12-20-16-17)

A. Initial Assistance

Applicants are entitled to seek township assistance by filling out and signing an application/affidavit, known as form T.A.1, and other forms, and by affirming their current financial situation. All applicants must use this form and sign the form in the presence of a township case investigator. Verbal requests will only be considered when allowed by the Indiana State Board of Accounts. Applicants needing special aid, readers, or interpreters to make an application should notify a case investigator prior to the appointment regarding the type of accommodation needed.

All applicants, adults 18 years and older, in the household must be present for the appointment. Only work or school related absences will be excused. Excused adults must, within 24 hours of the date of the appointment, meet with the case investigator to complete the application process.

Applicants will be required to cooperate with an investigation of their personal finances, family responsibility, and eligibility to receive assistance. This investigation may include a home visit and/or contact with relatives who may be able and willing to assist them. Applicants may be

requested to provide relevant information that the Trustee may consider in determining eligibility (Appendix 1). All relevant information must be provided at the time of application, or the application may be denied. As soon as reasonably possible, applicants will be required to apply for any other assistance provided by governmental or non-profit agencies for which they may be eligible. The application will not be considered complete until all information the applicant(s) is required to provide is received, and the application is signed by all adult household members.

Knowingly and willfully falsifying the affidavit, misrepresenting the facts, or withholding vital information is considered fraud. If the Township finds that an applicant has falsified her/his application for township assistance, the Township will refuse to extend aid for 60 days from the date of the falsified application or the date falsification becomes known. A criminal referral to the county prosecutor's office may be made.

B. Case Investigator Assigned

When an applicant first visits the Trustee's office, a case investigator will be assigned to handle the case. All contact/communication with the Trustee's office should be made through the assigned case investigator, who will forward the necessary information to the Trustee. During the application procedure, the case investigator may ask that the applicant meet with the Trustee. Failure to keep an appointment with the Trustee's office may be considered non-cooperation and may be grounds for denial of any assistance requested.

C. Additional or Continuing Assistance

To receive township assistance more than once within 180 days, a current application/affidavit (TA-1B) must have been filed with the Trustee's office within 180 days of receiving such assistance. If at the time assistance is requested, a current application/affidavit is not on file, applicants will be required to complete a new one. Applicants must provide any updated information, which may have changed since their most recent application including personal finances, family responsibility, and eligibility to receive other types of assistance.

D. Relatives of Township Employees

Relatives of Township employees (Appendix 1) may apply for township assistance. They will be provided with an application and referred to the Perry Township Office for an appointment and further investigation.

Applicants must follow Perry Township's procedures and will be required to cooperate with an investigation of their personal finances, family responsibility, and eligibility to receive other types of assistance. All other Bloomington Township Guidelines and requirements apply. The Perry Township Trustee or designee will make the determination of assistance eligibility, which Bloomington Township will fulfill by issuing the decision and any other necessary paperwork if the request is approved.

IV. Applicant Residency Requirement (IC 12-20-8-1 thru 12-20-8-7)

A. Determining Residency

It is necessary for the Township to make some determination as to an applicant's living arrangements and whether the applicant is physically living in the Township, and whether or not the applicant intends to make the Township her/his permanent place of residence. Except for

verified emergencies affecting applicants who are temporarily in the Township, applicants must be residents of the Township. This will not be interpreted to mean that individuals living in adjoining townships should come to Bloomington Township for assistance. The township in which they presently reside or are found to be in distress is still obligated to investigate the circumstances of the distressed person(s) and render whatever assistance is necessary. A residence legally acquired continues until the legal residence is lost by acquiring a new legal residence or by willful and uninterrupted absence from the township in which legal residence has been gained. Bloomington Township may refer individuals falling into this category to the appropriate township. Bloomington Township will provide assistance, as required by law, for transients who request to return to their permanent residence. The following items may be used to determine residency or the person's intent to make the Township her/his permanent residence: current driver's license, state ID card, current utility bill, US Postal Service change of address notification, current lease for housing, and/or a statement of intent to rent from a potential landlord.

B. Temporary Residence with Friends, Relatives

Residence and household shall not mean temporary living arrangements made available by relatives (Appendix 1), friends, acquaintances, or private or public social service agencies. Bloomington Township will investigate the applicant's residency prior to the temporary arrangement. If residence cannot be established, then Bloomington Township will treat the applicant as if s/he is a Bloomington Township resident.

C. Temporarily Living in Another Township

Individuals temporarily living in another township when their most recent residency was in Bloomington Township will not be denied benefits on the grounds of residency.

D. Institutional Time

Institutionalized persons will be considered residents of the township where they lived before their admission. This includes time spent in any institution, or in any public or private charitable institution or hospital, or in any place while in the armed forces of the United States; however, a nursing home or similar residential facility may be considered as a place of residence.

E. Illegal Immigration

Individuals in the United States without the authorized documentation of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) are ineligible to receive township assistance.

V. Eligibility Requirements

A. General Requirements (IC 12-20-5.5-1 thru 12-20-5.5-6; IC 12-20-6-0.5 thru 12-20-6-10)

In addition to being residents of Bloomington Township, all applicants must be at least eighteen (18) years of age or provide legal proof of emancipation. Applicants must provide proof of identification. Applicants must cooperate with the Trustee's investigation of eligibility for assistance.

The Trustee may refuse to provide assistance that would pay for goods or services provided during a period that an applicant has previously applied for and been denied township assistance by Bloomington Township or by any other township.

B. Employment Requirement (IC 12-20-10-1 thru 12-20-10-4)

Every applicant who is physically and mentally able to work must be employed full time or be actively seeking full time employment or the application may be denied. The Trustee may refuse to furnish any assistance for 60 days until satisfied that all able-bodied adults in the household are employed full time or actively seeking full time employment.

For the purposes of these guidelines, full time employment shall mean income raising activity that raises at least the equivalent of 30 hours per week times the current federal minimum wage.

All able-bodied household adults may be required to show evidence of employment or, if unemployed, of seeking employment at a minimum of three establishments each week. Employment sought and secured must be enough hours and/or pay to cover basic living expenses. All able-bodied household adults may be required to register with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development or a similar agency designated by the Trustee. All able-bodied household adults will be required to accept employment offered at a reasonable compensation rate. The Township may also require any able-bodied household adult to complete a Township Employment Search Form prior to receiving assistance a second time.

The Trustee may require that an applicant or household member(s) attend job training courses as a condition of continuing assistance.

C. Employment Requirement Exemption (IC 12-20-11-1)

An applicant may be exempted from working, seeking employment or performing workfare for a specified period if s/he either:

Provides a licensed medical doctor's written statement of medical disability dated less than 30 days from township appointment; or

Provides proof of enrollment and full time attendance in an adult education or vocational course; or

Is required to provide care for a household member or family member due to health, age or disability, as confirmed by a licensed medical doctor's written statement; or

Is a minor or is 65 years old or over.

The Trustee may require written verification of the above.

The Trustee may require and provide for any medical examination necessary to determine if an applicant or household member is able to perform work.

D. SSI/SSI(D) Reimbursement Authorization (IC 12-20-27-1.5)

On the date of application, an applicant who claims disability and is applying for SSI or SSI (D) benefits must sign an SSI Reimbursement Authorization Form supplied by the Township.

E. Other Resources/Assets (IC 12-7-2-44.7)

Township assistance is designed to provide for basic living needs when no other resources are available. Countable assets (i.e. bank accounts, investments, property other than that required for living and vehicles not required for transportation to work) and anticipated assets (i.e. upcoming

payroll checks, unemployment checks, child support, TANF, income tax refunds, economic stimulus payments, social security checks, retirement account and refundable portions of tuition payments) are considered resources available to the applicant and may affect eligibility for assistance.

Based on the circumstances in each case, the Trustee may determine that certain countable assets must be liquidated before assistance is granted, or that their market value be deducted from any assistance granted.

F. Support by Relatives (IC 12-20-6-10b)

If an applicant has a relative living in the Township, the Township Trustee shall ask the relative to help before granting aid a second time. If the relative refuses, the Trustee may assist the applicant.

G. Bills 30 Days Past Due Not Eligible

The Trustee shall not be required to pay rent, mortgage, or utility bills that are more than 30 days past due, nor shall the Trustee be required to pay bills incurred in another township. Inability to provide a bill to substantiate a request for assistance may result in a delay in processing the request; refusal or failure to provide such a bill may be grounds for denial of assistance.

Applicants who request assistance for rent, mortgage, or utility bills that are more than 30 days past due will be required to submit relevant income and documentation of expenditures as required by other sections of these guidelines for the period in which the debt was incurred to determine if the applicant met all conditions for receiving assistance during that period (Example in Appendix 1).

The Trustee may assist in payment of non-qualifying bills only if the applicant can prove that all reasonable effort was made to provide for the service during the period in question and if the applicant meets all other requirements of these guidelines.

H. Acceptable Expenditures for Basic Necessities (IC 12-20-5.5-6)

Applicants are expected to apply their resources toward basic necessities (Appendix 1). Expenditures for items other than basic necessities, or for excessive expenditures not justified by medical or employment needs, will be deducted from an approved applicant's benefit level, or may be used as a basis for denial if the amount exceeds the applicant's benefit level or the amount of assistance requested.

Certain expenditures, even if court-ordered, that the applicant may be legally required to pay may not be considered acceptable expenditures in determining eligibility and may be deducted from any benefit awarded.

I. Township Employees and Their Relatives

Township employees and anyone living in the employee's household are ineligible for assistance. Relatives of employees (Appendix 1) who reside in Bloomington Township may apply for township assistance. However, their application for assistance will be reviewed and decided by the Perry Township Trustee or her/his designee. The applicant is expected to comply with all

other guidelines and to cooperate fully with the Perry Township Office. (Also see Section III of the Guidelines.)

VI. Income Guidelines (IC 12-20-5.5-6)

A. Countable Household Income

An applicant's countable household income (Appendix 1), for 30 days prior to the application date or for the period in which assistance is requested, must be less than the monthly amounts listed in Appendix 4 of the Guidelines in order to be eligible for township assistance. Applicants must also meet all other requirements of the Township Guidelines. Income guidelines are 100% of the federal poverty guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and are updated annually.

B. Lump Sum Income

If lump sum income, such as tax refunds, court settlements, financial aid refunds, retroactive social security payments, insurance settlements, economic stimulus payments, or workers compensation received in the last 90 days and combined with other countable household income, totals more than three times the qualifying monthly income, then 90 days of financial information may be considered in determining eligibility. The Trustee may require additional financial information if the time period for which assistance is requested is not included within the 90 day time period.

Applicants whose income falls within the Guidelines must prove that their necessary living expenses are greater than their resources in order to be eligible for assistance.

VII. Determination of Needs/Forms of Assistance Provided (IC 12-20-16-1 thru 12-20-16-17)

A. Trustee To Determine Needs

The Trustee shall determine if eligible applicants have any of the following immediate needs listed in Section VII. The Trustee has the authority to provide assistance in the most economical and practical manner. Purchase orders must be signed by the applicant, signed by the vendor, and returned to the Township within 30 days of approval date unless stated otherwise or the purchase order will be voided.

B. Food (IC 12-20-16-5)

The Trustee may furnish food necessary to maintain health. Food purchase orders may be issued on a daily, weekly or monthly basis and shall not exceed the weekly amount of current federal SNAP benefits, commonly called food stamps, as listed in Appendix 4 of the Guidelines.

Nutritious foods shall be purchased with food purchase orders along with necessities such as soap, laundry supplies and paper products. Purchase orders are not to be used for the purchase of candy, soft drinks, tobacco products, snacks, or alcoholic beverages. Purchase of such items shall be considered abuse of food purchase orders and will be grounds for future denial.

Any individual or family applying to the Trustee for food shall be referred to the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits as required by law. The Trustee will not provide purchase orders to supplement SNAP benefits except in extreme circumstances such as loss, theft or medical emergency.

C. Non-Food Items (IC 12-7-2-20.5)

Necessary household supplies such as soap, laundry supplies and paper products will be issued in the weekly allotments listed in Appendix 4 of the Guidelines.

D. Shelter (IC 12-20-16-17; IC 12-20-6-10)

The Trustee may help provide shelter as needed on a month-by-month basis. Assistance will be provided in whatever form necessary to provide or prevent the loss of shelter so long as such aid constitutes the most economical and practical means of providing shelter. For rental requests, a valid lease that includes landlord's name, address and phone number, amount of monthly rent and the number of adults residing in the household is required. For mortgage requests, a current mortgage statement that includes the mortgage holder's name, address and phone number, amount of monthly payment, and current amount due is required.

Any person who is a co-signer on a mortgage/lease for the applicant's shelter will be considered a member of the applicant's household for the duration of the mortgage/lease.

The Trustee may provide for an inspection of current or proposed shelter to ensure its habitability prior to granting shelter assistance. The Township may require that rental properties conform to applicable building and health codes before rent will be approved. The landlord must agree not to evict the applicant during the period covered by the township purchase order.

The Trustee will not issue a rent purchase order to supplement any rent subsidy, supplement or other government rent assistance unless a special emergency need exists. The Trustee may not provide rent or mortgage payment without proof that the applicant will be able to continue to pay the monthly rent or mortgage.

The Trustee will pay only for basic shelter expenses. Application fees, rent deposits, late fees, renter's insurance, damages, furniture rental, monthly parking charges/fees, or maintenance costs are excluded.

The Trustee will not pay legal costs, including attorney collection fees, court costs, or late fees, related to an eviction. The applicant will have responsibility for paying all such costs, or providing a written agreement outlining a payment plan issued by the landlord, before a purchase order is issued.

If a rent request is approved, before a purchase order will be issued, a rent ledger or landlord statement must be provided confirming the assistance amount approved by the Trustee is the only amount required to prevent eviction or dismiss the eviction in process. If the amount shown due on the ledger is less than the approved assistance amount, the purchase order will be issued for the lesser amount.

The Trustee is not required to pay for additional shelter costs as a result of the applicant keeping pets. A service dog, or an animal used for therapy or emotional support, is considered a medical necessity, not a pet, but the need must be documented by a licensed medical doctor's written statement issued within the past 30 days.

Rent/mortgage purchase orders shall be provided in amounts not exceeding those listed in Appendix 4 of the Guidelines.

Under IC 12-20-6-10, the Trustee may not use township assistance funds to pay the cost of an applicant's shelter with a relative who is the applicant's landlord. This applies if the applicant lives in the same household as the relative or in housing separate from the relative where either the housing is unencumbered by mortgage or the housing has not been previously rented by the relative to a different non-relative tenant at reasonable market rates for at least 6 months.

If shelter payments are made to a relative of a township assistance applicant on behalf of the applicant or a member of the applicant's household, the Trustee may file a lien against the relative's real property for the amount of township shelter assistance granted.

E. Utilities/Fuel (IC 12-20-16-3)

The Trustee may, as necessary to prevent the loss of service, authorize the payment from township assistance funds for essential utility services including water, gas and electric services, and for coal, wood, liquid propane or fuel oil when these are used for heating or cooking. Sufficient fuel services shall be provided to maintain the residential shelter at a reasonable temperature during the months when conditions require heat.

The Trustee will not pay late fees, deposits or trip charges.

The Trustee may not provide utility payment (electric, gas, water, propane) without proof that the applicant will be able to continue to pay the monthly bill.

The Trustee does not pay for internet, cable TV, satellite service, or other entertainment services such as internet streaming services and gaming services.

All utility bills must be in an applicant's name or a landlord's name if applicant proves that the applicant is responsible for utility payment. All applicants will be required to apply for the Energy Assistance Program. If the applicant is approved for Energy Assistance Program funds, the applicant must continue to make payments on the utility bills as reasonably determined by the Trustee. Once the Energy Assistance Program moratorium has ended, the Trustee will not authorize utility assistance if payments have not been made unless proof is provided of other emergency payments that prohibited the applicants from making utility payments. Applicants may be asked to sign a deferred payment agreement with the utility company if the Trustee determines this to be economical and practical. If the Trustee determines that a utility is going to be disconnected regardless of the amount of township assistance provided, the Trustee may decide not to provide such utility payment. The Trustee will not pay utility bills that are more than 24 months old.

If a utility request is approved, before a purchase order will be issued, confirmation must be received from the utility provider that the assistance amount approved by the Trustee is the only amount required to restore service or prevent disconnection of the utility service. If the utility provider determines an amount less than the approved assistance amount will restore service or

prevent disconnection of the utility service, the purchase order will be issued for the lesser amount. The Trustee will not pay late fees or court costs if the matter has been turned over to collection. The applicant will be responsible for paying all of the late fees and court costs or fees before the Trustee issues a purchase order.

IMPORTANT: It is the responsibility of residents to seek assistance before the utility is actually disconnected to prevent the overuse and wasting of additional community services.

Utility allowances will be determined in accordance with the standards established in Appendix 4 of the Guidelines.

The Trustee will not pay for any utility service received as a result of a fraudulent act.

F. Medical Services (IC 12-20-16-2)

The Trustee shall in cases of necessity pay for medical services including doctor's fees, allowable medical supplies, prescriptions, and special dietary needs unless these goods and services are available through other government programs and/or social service agencies.

The Township is under no obligation to provide medical services and/or prescription medications that are excluded for payment by either Medicaid or the Medicare program (IC 12-20-16-2b). The Township is not responsible for paying for insulin if the Township has evidence that the applicant has the financial ability to pay for the insulin. The Township will pay only for a medical service which has been applied for and approved by the Trustee prior to the service being rendered. The Trustee may pay for emergency medical services if the otherwise eligible resident is admitted as an emergency patient due to an accident or sudden illness.

State law establishes specific restrictions on the types of medical assistance which trustees may provide (Appendix 3).

G. Traveler's Aid (IC 12-20-9-3)

The Trustee may provide assistance to persons or family units passing through the Township and to permit their return to place of legal residence.

Non-residents applying for traveler's aid shall be informed of their future ineligibility for assistance and will be required to cooperate in signing a statement acknowledging their understanding of their eligibility status. This statement may be used as the basis for denial of future assistance.

Applicants requesting gasoline assistance must provide a valid driver's license and proof of insurance.

Applicants requesting transportation assistance to a location outside the Township may be required to complete workfare obligations before assistance is granted. They will also be required to provide verification that their destination is their legal residence.

H. Funeral Expenses (IC 12-20-16-12)

The Trustee may provide for mortuary and cremation or burial expenses at the lowest possible cost, not to exceed \$1,500 for cremation and \$2,965 for burial, if the deceased is not eligible for Medicaid or VA burial benefits. Family members will be required to attest that the deceased does not have resources (including insurance policies of the deceased) available to them with which to pay funeral expenses by completing an application for township assistance prior to signing a contract with a funeral home.

The Trustee will pay for a cremation rather than a burial unless there is a prior objection in writing by the deceased individual or a surviving family member. If there is good cause to believe that a written objection to cremation may exist or will be made by a relative, then a period of three (3) working days will be provided. If no objection is received within three (3) working days, the Trustee will determine whether there will be a cremation or burial.

Funeral home and cremation or burial expenses covered by the Township are for basic goods and services only as agreed upon by the Township Trustee and funeral home director (a standard package). Either visitation the day prior to cremation or burial or same day of cremation or burial is included (not both). The cost of a gravestone is not included. A family or organization may pay up to \$500.00 for the incidental costs not allowed by township restrictions -- i.e., religious ceremony or public viewing and other arrangements. The Township should receive a death certificate and an itemized statement (invoice) from the funeral home before making payment. In the case of a cremation, a provisional statement and an itemized statement (invoice) from the funeral home may be accepted until a copy of the death certificate is available.

If an individual dies in the Township without leaving assets--money, real or personal property, resources that may be liquidated, or other means necessary to defray funeral expenses--and if the deceased was not a resident of another township in Indiana, then the Township Trustee shall provide a person to superintend and authorize either the funeral and cremation or burial of the deceased individual.

For further reimbursement of expenses to the Township, the Trustee may deduct from the maximum amount either or both of the following: any monetary benefits that the deceased individual is entitled to receive from a state or federal program; and/or any money that another person provides on behalf of the deceased individual.

A township trustee who provides funeral and cremation or burial benefits to a deceased individual is entitled to a first priority claim, to the extent of the cost of benefits paid against any money or other personal property held by the coroner under IC 36-2-14-11.

The Township Trustee may file a claim against the decedent's estate for the cost of the cremation or burial if her/his assets are found to be sufficient for opening the estate.

I. Recovery of Benefits (IC 12-20-27-1; IC 12-20-27-1.5)

A trustee who furnishes township assistance may file a claim for the value of that assistance against the estate of a township resident who dies, leaving an estate, and who is not survived by a spouse, disabled adult dependent or dependent child less than 18 years of age.

The estate includes any money or other personal property.

If a trustee anticipates that a township assistance applicant is likely to receive a judgment, compensation, or a monetary benefit from a third party, the Trustee may require the applicant to enter into an agreement allowing the Township to pursue reimbursement from the third party or to sign a Social Security Administration's reimbursement authorization.

These agreements cover repayment of any township assistance benefits provided by the Township during the interim period. The interim period begins when the agreement or authorization is signed and ends when the applicant receives the judgment, compensation, or monetary benefit or leaves the household.

This section does not apply to any assistance for which workfare has been satisfactorily completed.

J. Other Assistance

The Trustee may provide new or used clothing to keep residents warm and clean and may provide for necessary household supplies such as first aid equipment, minimal furnishings, utensils and appliances.

The Trustee may also provide for transportation for medical appointments and for seeking or accepting employment when there is a reasonable likelihood of the applicant being hired. All such assistance will be provided with the most economical means. Applicants requesting gasoline assistance must provide a valid driver's license and proof of insurance. Gasoline may be provided if public transportation is not practical.

VIII. Workfare (IC 12-20-11-1 thru 12-20-11-5)

A. Requirement

All applicants will be required to work in return for assistance. The Trustee will arrange work for the Township or another local government or non-profit agency unless one of the following conditions exists:

Applicant is not physically or mentally able to perform the proposed work and provides a licensed medical doctor's written statement issued within the past 30 days.

Applicant is a minor or is 65 years old or over.

Applicant has a child under school age and/or childcare is unavailable.

Applicant has full time (30 hrs./wk) employment at the time assistance is given and maintains full time employment for an unbroken period of 30 days beginning the day assistance is granted.

Applicant is needed to care for a person as a result of that person's age or physical condition and provides a licensed medical doctor's written statement issued within the past 30 days as confirmation.

The Trustee determines that there is not work available for the applicant.

A public health emergency is declared by state or local officials.

The applicant obligated to perform the work is in the Indiana Manpower Placement and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) program. Applicant will receive workfare credit hours if proof of compliance with IMPACT is provided.

The applicant obligated to perform the work is enrolled in GED classes, an alcohol and/or drug

treatment program, or a work training program for a period of 30 days beginning the day assistance is granted. Verification of participation must be provided.

Applicant is currently enrolled in and attending full time studies. (Those applicants are not automatically exempted from workfare but exemptions will be determined on a case by case basis.)

Applicants who are currently receiving SSI monthly benefits are not automatically exempted from workfare. In order to be exempted, an SSI recipient must still meet one of the exempting reasons listed above.

B. Supervised Through Trustee

All work will be coordinated by and under the supervision of the Trustee's office. Assistance will be worked for at no less than the federal minimum wage. Applicants shall be required to attend their workfare assignment. The Trustee may require that workfare obligations be complete before any assistance is granted. Failure to work as scheduled or failure to fulfill workfare obligations within a reasonable period required by the Township Trustee is a basis for denying further assistance to the applicant for not more than 180 days.

The Township Trustee may require a township assistance applicant to satisfy all obligations to perform workfare incurred in another township before additional township assistance is granted. However, in case of an emergency, the Trustee may temporarily waive the work obligation incurred from another township and provide temporary assistance to an applicant in order to relieve need or immediate suffering.

IX. Other Program Eligibility (IC 12-20-6-5; IC 12-20-6-5.5)

A. Requirement to Apply for Other Assistance

If the Township Trustee determines that an applicant who is granted emergency township assistance may be eligible for assistance other than township assistance, the applicant shall within 15 working days file an application and comply with all the necessary requirements for completing the application process. An applicant who fails to do this may not be granted township assistance for 60 days following the date emergency township assistance was provided.

B. Application for Public Assistance Before Granting Township Assistance

If, before granting township assistance, the Township Trustee determines that an applicant may be eligible for assistance other than township assistance, the applicant shall, when referred by the Township Trustee, make an application for public assistance administered by the Family Social Service Administration (FSSA) or any other federal or state government entity and must comply with all necessary requirements for completing the application process. An applicant who fails to file an application per the Trustee's referral and fails to show evidence that the application was filed within 15 working days of the referral may be denied township assistance for not more than 60 days after the Trustee's referral.

Paragraphs A and B, however, do not apply if the request is determined by the Trustee to be an emergency.

C. Reduced Benefit for Failure to Properly Apply Other Benefits

Failure to properly apply public monies or private charitable donations received by the applicant

from other programs may result in denial of assistance. An applicant who has had benefits reduced from other public programs because of voluntary actions or non-compliance with program requirements may have equal reductions made by the Township from any benefit the applicant may qualify to receive.

D. Protective Payee

The Trustee may report to other government agencies, including the Family Social Service Administration or Social Security Administration, the misuse of funds by an applicant. When reporting misuse of funds, the Trustee may officially recommend that the applicant's payments be placed in the hands of a protective or designated payee. The Township may refuse to extend aid to an applicant until the applicant initiates and executes the proper papers for obtaining a payee to handle the finances.

X. Reasons for Denial

A. Failure to Comply with Guidelines

Any of the following may be grounds for denial of assistance. The applicant(s):
does not reside in Bloomington Township.

does not intend to make Bloomington Township her/his sole place of residence per the Trustee's determination.

willfully gives false information or withholds information.

voluntarily terminates gainful full time employment; is fired for just cause, i.e. absenteeism, theft; fails to pass an employer's drug screening test. The Trustee shall not be obligated to provide assistance for 60 days from the date employment is terminated. Refusal of gainful full time employment or failure to seek full time employment is a basis to deny assistance for up to 60 days.

uses violence, intimidation, or abusive language in or around the Trustee's office/premises, on social media, or when speaking on the phone with any township staff.

fails to follow printed work order requirements as explained and outlined in the workfare agreement.

fails to accept free or low cost shelter arrangements provided by relatives, the Township or others.

engages in abuse of or voluntary termination or reduction of any other programs in the last 180 days offering assistance for basic necessities, including TANF, SNAP, subsidized housing or other programs for which the applicant may be eligible.

has an eviction in the last 180 days from subsidized housing for violation of regulations or guidelines.

fails or refuses to sign the Township waiver authorizing release of information concerning the application.

is ineligible for SNAP benefits due to undocumented status.

has sufficient income to provide for necessary living expenses, regardless of meeting the Township's income guidelines.

fails to respond to the Trustee's request to pursue other assistance or provide documentation of pending applications.

has in the past abused food purchase order privileges or other assistance provided by the Township.

has excessive, unnecessary and/or luxury expenses, i.e., wasted resources.

has failed or refused to sign Township Reimbursement Form for SSI.
has failed to file paternity actions when necessary and appropriate, or failed to take necessary legal action to pursue child support unless exempt.
fails or refuses to cooperate with or provide the Trustee's office with necessary information to determine eligibility for assistance.
has a conviction of an offense under IC 35-43-5-7 (Welfare fraud). Persons convicted of a welfare misdemeanor are ineligible for township assistance for one year from their conviction; ten years if convicted of a welfare felony.
has requested assistance with a bill that is 30 days or more past due. The Trustee shall not be required to pay bills that are more than 30 days past due.
has requested assistance with bills incurred in another township. The Trustee shall not be required to pay bills incurred in another township.
has insufficient income to provide for necessary living expenses, regardless of meeting the Township's income guidelines.
has requested rental or utility deposits.
has requested assistance with a utility bill that is more than 24 months old.
is requesting assistance for previously decided requests (i.e. duplicate requests).
fails to properly apply public monies or charitable donations from other assistance programs.
has requested assistance when the service provider/landlord reports the account balance is zero.
has requested assistance but the service provider/landlord will not accept a purchase order, or the purchase order will not maintain service and/or residence.
has medical expenses considered ineligible by Medicare or Medicaid; these may not be covered.
did not make the request prior to the medical service being rendered.
is requesting rental assistance when the landlord is a relative.
has had services received as a result of a fraudulent act.
does not have the authorized documentation of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.
has contracted with funeral services before applying for township assistance.

B. Wasted Resources

Non-necessities or non-essential expenditures (also known as wasted resources) include, but are not limited to:

fast food, candy, soft drinks, snack foods
tobacco products
alcoholic beverages
pet food and pet supplies
charitable contributions, including tithes
court costs, probation fees, garnishments or other costs incurred through or by the criminal or civil justice systems (i.e. bail, user fees for an in-home detention program, restitutions, substance abuse fees)
bank penalties or overdraft charges
cable TV, satellite dishes, or other entertainment costs
childcare expenses that are not required by employment or medical purposes
extravagant purchases (for applicant(s) or others) that are not required for employment or medical purposes
transportation expenses not justified or required for medical, employment or employment-seeking purposes

payments toward living costs incurred by other households
loan and credit card payments including pay day loans or rent-to-own payments
personal loans made by the applicant to other persons, or repayment of personal loans by the applicant to other persons
non-basic phone charges exceeding \$50
non-basic internet charges exceeding \$60

An automobile is not, by statute, recognized as a basic necessity. Therefore, automobile payments and other related expenses may not be considered an acceptable expense, unless it is necessary to maintain current employment. Then, the reasonableness of the expenditure will be considered.

The total amount of payments made toward non-necessities for the period in which assistance is being requested may be deducted from an approved applicant's benefit level; or may be used as a basis for denial if the amount exceeds the applicant's benefit level; or be used as a basis for denial if the amount for which the request for assistance is being made is less than the total amounts dedicated by the applicant for payment towards non-necessities. Example: a request is made for a one-month utility bill but the applicant has expended more than the cost of the utility bill on provision of non-necessities during the period for which the request for assistance is made; the request for assistance can be denied.

XI. Trustee Obligation/Notification of Decision

A. No Verbal Denials (IC 12-20-6-7; IC 12-20-6-8)

In order to protect the rights of all applicants who are potentially eligible for township services, no one will be verbally denied assistance. All applications must be in writing on the appropriate forms, and all determinations of eligibility will be made in writing on Form TA-1A.

B. Decision Notification (IC 12-20-6-7; IC 12-20-6-8)

Applicants are entitled to a decision on their completed applications within 72 hours or three (3) working days (excluding weekends and holidays and other closings determined by the Trustee) unless the investigation cannot be completed because the applicant has not submitted the required information, or the Township is unable to gather necessary information.

If the Township experiences difficulty in gathering necessary information, the applicant(s) will be notified that the case will be pended to allow the Township an additional 72 hours, or three (3) working days, to complete the investigation. Should the Township be unable to access the required information within 72 hours, or three (3) working days, of issuing the notification, the Township may deny the application.

All decision notifications will include the following information:

The type and amount of assistance requested, and whether it was approved, partially approved, or denied;

Specific reasons for denying all or part of the assistance requested;

Information advising the applicant of the procedures for appeal to the Monroe County Commissioners

C. Appeals Process (IC 12-20-15-1 thru 12-20-15-9)

If any action taken by the Township Trustee is not acceptable to any applicant, the applicant may appeal the decision to the Monroe County Commissioners in Bloomington, Indiana. A form describing the process for appeals is attached to the TA-1A form used to inform applicants of the Trustee's decision.

XII. Availability and Annual Review of Guidelines (IC 12-20-5.5-1)

All decisions regarding the eligibility of applicants will be based on these standards and Guidelines and in accordance with Indiana law. The Guidelines are available on the Township website and will be posted in the office of the Township Trustee at all times. The Guidelines will be filed with the Monroe County Commissioners. Any member of the public will be permitted to inspect and copy them. Copies will be made available to interested public and private agencies at their own expense.

The Township Trustee may provide benefits beyond those listed when special need is shown. The amount and length of assistance, when added to all other income and resources, shall be sufficient to meet the needs as determined by the Trustee.

These Guidelines shall supersede any and all previous guidelines. The appendices listed below are also incorporated as part of these guidelines.

These Guidelines are effective when signed and posted by the Township Trustee and filed with the Monroe County Commissioners. They are approved by the Township Board and will be reviewed annually. The Trustee shall make technical adjustments in these guidelines to reflect changes in applicable federal standards and Indiana statutes subject to review of the Township Board.

- Appendix 1 Definition and Examples
- Appendix 2 Maximum Income Eligibility Standards
- Appendix 3 Allowable Medical Expenses
- Appendix 4 Bloomington Township Assistance Chart
- Appendix 5 Bloomington Township Budget Form

SIGNED THE 10TH DAY OF MARCH 2022.

Kim Alexander
TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE

dlhangan
PRESIDENT, TOWNSHIP BOARD

Corwin Harrison Full
MEMBER, TOWNSHIP BOARD

Martin Spechler
SECRETARY, TOWNSHIP BOARD

APPENDIX 1 -- DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

The following definitions and examples are provided to further explain portions of the Township Assistance Guidelines.

Introduction

IC 12-20-17-1 states that if a township trustee determines by investigation that a township assistance applicant or a township assistance applicant's household requires assistance, the township trustee shall, after determining that an emergency exists, furnish to the applicant or household the temporary aid necessary for the relief of immediate suffering. However, before any further final or permanent relief is given, the township trustee shall consider whether the applicant's or household's need can be relieved by means other than an expenditure of township money.

IC 36-1-2-4.5 defines emergency as a situation that could not reasonably be foreseen and that threatens the public health, welfare, or safety and requires immediate action.

Application Process

Applicants include any persons who live in the same residence (IC 12-20-6-0.5).

Relevant information which the Trustee may require and consider in determining eligibility includes, but is not limited to:

Names, birthdates, birth certificates, and social security numbers for all persons living in the household.

State issued photo ID or driver's license for anyone 18 or older.

Car registration and insurance policies on all vehicles.

A completed budget form for the previous 30 days or for the period in which the request for assistance is being made. (Appendix 5)

Verification of income for all applicants for the previous 30 days or for the period in which the request for assistance is being made.

Expense receipts for the previous 30 days or for the period in which the request for assistance is being made. Handwritten receipts are accepted only when written and signed in the presence of a Township staff member; all receipts are subject to verification.

Bank and/or prepaid debit card statement(s) [child support, SSI, SSI(D), payroll, tax refunds] showing activity for the previous 30 days or for the period in which the request for assistance is being made.

Financial aid statement from any college or university, including online education, that shows the date and amount of aid refunded in the previous 90 days and any anticipated refunds.

Income tax refunds and retroactive back pay from social security received in the previous 90 days.

Valid utility bill(s).

A current lease or written statement from the landlord which includes the name(s) of the applicant(s).

Acceptable residency documentation which includes current driver's license, motor vehicle registration, utility bill, US Postal Service change of address notification, and current lease for housing.

Verification of medical status if claiming medical reason for being unemployed.

A valid prescription for any medication request (IC 16-42-19-7).

Copy of police report to verify reported theft.

Proof of applications pending for other types of assistance.

Proof of employment status.

TANF and/or SNAP benefit letter or case ID number.

Relatives

As defined in IC 12-20-6-10(a), a relative includes only the parent, stepparent, child, stepchild, sibling, stepsibling, grandparent, grandchild, or step-grandchild of a township assistance applicant.

Eligibility Requirements

Living necessities or basic necessities or acceptable expenditures include those needed to provide food, shelter, clothing, essential utilities, basic telephone and internet expenses, and transportation costs directly related to employment. Child support payments may be recognized as an acceptable expenditure when paid through a county clerk's office.

Non-necessities or non-essential expenditures are also known as wasted resources.

Applicants claiming disability must apply for appropriate disability pensions with Social Security, Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation, Worker's Compensation, or some other government operated or supervised program which awards benefits based on disability.

Example of Acceptable Expenditures for Basic Necessities (reference Section V, [G, H])

If a bill is unpaid for 30 days and further non-payment may result in loss of service (electric, gas, water, or housing only), the applicant must document household income and expenditures for the prior 30 days in order for the Trustee to determine that the applicant could not provide payment for the service and had exhausted all other remedies during the period in question.

Income Guidelines

Countable household income for determining eligibility includes that gross income which is available to the household from any source. This includes wages, self-employment, other financial aid programs, child support payments, spousal support, sale of blood products or property, economic stimulus payments, and gifts from friends, institutions and family. Applicants who are self-employed will be required to provide the Township with credible financial records establishing their income and expenses.

Court-ordered expenditures such as those listed in Section V will not be deducted from gross

income amounts in order to establish eligibility for township assistance purposes.

APPENDIX 2 -- MAXIMUM INCOME ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

An applicant's net monthly household income must be less than 100% of the federally established poverty level. The federal maximum income eligibility standards are revised annually. (See Appendix 4).

APPENDIX 3 -- ALLOWABLE MEDICAL EXPENSES

The following are the specific guidelines for allowable medical expenses as referenced in Section VII. F. of these Guidelines and as established in IC 12-20-16-2(c).

The Township Trustee shall pay only for the following medical services:

Prescription drugs as prescribed by an attending practitioner (as defined in IC 16-42-19-5) other than a veterinarian. Prescriptions are not to exceed a 30-day supply. The Trustee will pay only for generic when available. Narcotic prescriptions will not be provided if a non-opiate drug is available.

Office calls to a physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1.

Dental care needed to relieve pain or infection or to repair cavities in the most economical manner.

Repair or replacement of dentures. The initial cost of dentures will be considered only when the medical necessity has been documented.

Emergency room treatment that is of an emergency nature.

Pre-operation testing prescribed by an attending physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1.

Over-the-counter drugs prescribed by a practitioner (as defined in IC 16-42-19-5) other than a veterinarian.

X-rays and laboratory testing as prescribed by an attending physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1.

Visits to a medical specialist when referred by an attending physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1.

Physical therapy prescribed by an attending physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1.

Eyeglasses, eye exams, eyeglass repair or replacement. The Township will not pay for contact lenses, unless medically necessary.

Repair or replacement, not initial cost, of a prosthesis not provided for by other tax supported state or federal programs.

Insulin and items needed to administer insulin in accordance with IC 12-20-16-2(c) not to exceed a 30-day supply.

APPENDIX 4 -- BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE CHART

HOUSEHOLD INCOME GUIDELINES

(100% federally established poverty level, effective January 12, 2022)

Number of persons in Household	Total Monthly Net Income
1	\$1133.00
2	\$1526.00
3	\$1919.00
4	\$2313.00
5	\$2706.00
6	\$3099.00
7	\$3493.00
8	\$3886.00
Each additional person	+\$394.00

FOOD PURCHASE ORDER/HOUSEHOLD ITEMS/GASOLINE GUIDELINES
(Current Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Weekly Allotments)

Number of Persons in Household	Weekly Food Order	Weekly Household Items	Monthly Gasoline
1	\$62.50	\$20.00	\$30.00
2	\$114.75	\$25.00	
3	\$164.50	\$30.00	
4	\$208.75	\$35.00	
5	\$248.00	\$40.00	
6	\$297.50	\$45.00	
7	\$329.00	\$50.00	
8	\$376.00	\$55.00	
Each additional person	+\$47.00	+\$5.00	

MAXIMUM MONTHLY ASSISTANCE AMOUNT

Number of Persons in Household	Monthly Purchase Order Amount
1	\$700.00
2	\$900.00
3 or more persons	\$1100.00

The household size of an applicant whose minor children live at the residence less than 100% of the time will be determined by the inclusion of the child as a dependent on the applicant's most recent tax return.

FUNERAL EXPENSES

The maximum amount payable for funeral expenses is \$2,965.00 for burial and \$1,500.00 for cremation.

WORKFARE RATE IS \$15.00 PER HOUR
BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP SERVES AS AN OUTLET FOR THE USDA COMMODITY
PROGRAM
BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP HOSTS A FOOD PANTRY FOR TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS

APPENDIX 5 -- BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP BUDGET FORM

GROSS INCOME FROM _____ TO _____

	DATE	GROSS	VERIFIED	NET
EMPLOYMENT				
EMPLOYMENT				
EMPLOYMENT				
EMPLOYMENT				
SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS				
VA BENEFITS				
TANF				
OTHER ASSISTANCE				
UNEMPLOYMENT				
UNEMPLOYMENT				
UNEMPLOYMENT				
UNEMPLOYMENT				
CHILD SUPPORT				
CHILD SUPPORT				
CHILD SUPPORT				
CHILD SUPPORT				
TOTAL				

EXPENSES PAID FROM _____ TO _____

	DATE	AMOUNT	VERIFIED
RENT / MORTGAGE			
ELECTRIC			
GAS (HEAT)			
WATER / SEWER			
PHONE / CELL			
CABLE / INTERNET			
COURT COSTS / PROBATION / JUDGEMENTS			
CAR PAYMENT			
CAR INSURANCE			
GASOLINE			
RENT-TO-OWN			
TOBACCO			
ALCOHOL			
CAB / BUS FARE			
CHILD SUPPORT			
MEDICAL			
CREDIT CARDS			
BANK FEES			
PAPER / SOAP / LAUNDRY			
PAY DAY LOANS			
FOOD			
OTHER			
TOTAL			

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____ # IN HOUSEHOLD _____

INCOME GUIDELINE _____ CASE INVESTIGATOR _____ CASE # _____