

BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP
 Monroe County, Indiana
TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES
 Revised, January 2014

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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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BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP
Monroe County, Indiana
TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES
Revised, January 2014

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

In the state of Indiana, the Township Trustee is charged with the responsibility of servicing and assisting poor and needy persons 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. See 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 and 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 APPLICANTS AND ALL ADULT HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS MUST:

- Be residents of Bloomington Township;
- Meet income guidelines;
- Be employed full-time (min. 35 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.

Bloomington Township evaluates each applicant based on these standards and will not discriminate based on race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, 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 needy families.

II. Trustee Office Hours

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

The office of the Bloomington Township Trustee, Lillian Henegar, is located at 2111 Vernal Pike, Bloomington, Indiana 47404. The office is open 9:00-12:00 and 1:00-4:00 Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. The telephone number is (812) 336-4976. The township website is www.bloomingtontownship.in.gov.

The office will 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. A 24-hour notice will be posted prior to the closing.

Appointments may be made by appearing at the office in person during business hours. The individual shall be given an application for assistance and a list of documents and forms needed to complete the application. An appointment will be scheduled at that time for an interview, unless an urgent emergency need exists (utility disconnection, medical, burial) in which case the person could be seen immediately. For the interview, the application and all requested information must be complete.

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

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

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)

Initial Assistance

Applicants are entitled to seek Township Assistance by filling out and signing an application/affidavit, form T.A.1, and other forms, and by affirming their current financial situation. All applicants must use this form and all adult household members must sign the form in the presence of a township caseworker. No verbal requests will be considered. Applicants needing special aid, readers, or interpreters to make an application should notify a caseworker/investigator regarding the type of accommodation needed. All adults in the household must come in for the appointment. Only work related absences will be excused, and those excused adults must sign the application within 24 hours of the date of the appointment with a caseworker witnessing the signature.

Applicants will be required to cooperate with an investigation of their personal finances, family responsibility, and eligibility to receive other types of assistance. This investigation may include a home visit and/or contact with their 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 (See 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 for which they may be eligible. The application will not be considered complete until all information the applicant 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 or household member has falsified their application for township assistance, the township will refuse to extend aid for sixty (60) days from the date of the falsified application or date falsification became known. A criminal referral to the County Prosecutor's Office may be made.

Case Investigator Assigned

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

Continuing Assistance

To receive Township Assistance on a continuing basis, a current application/affidavit 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 income, available resources, employment status, number in household and other pertinent matters.

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 they are physically living in the township, and whether or not they intend to make the township their 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 found to be in distress is still obligated to investigate the circumstances of the distressed person(s) and render whatever assistance is necessary. 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 their permanent residence: current driver's license, state ID card, current utility bill, US Postal Service "change of address" notification, and current lease for housing.

- B. *Temporary Residence with Friends, Relatives*** – Residence and Household shall not mean temporary living arrangements made available by relatives (see 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 residency 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 immediate past residency was in Bloomington Township will not be denied benefits on the grounds of residency.
- D. *Institutional Time and Illegal Immigration*** – ~~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. Individuals in the United States without the permission of the Immigration and Naturalization Service 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. Applicant and all members of the applicant's household 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 adult member of the family of the applicant's household, 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 until satisfied that all eligible adults in the household are working or trying to find work.

For the purposes of these guidelines, "full-time employment" shall mean income-raising activity that raises at least the equivalent of 35 hours per week times the current federal minimum wage.

All eligible household adults will 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 eligible household adults will be required to maintain an updated employment file with Work One. All able-bodied adult members will be required to keep their employment card updated and be willing (registered) to accept employment at the federal minimum wage level. The Township may also require any adult member of the household to complete a Township Employment Search Form prior to receiving assistance a second time.

If the Trustee offers workfare to those able, or if employment at a reasonable compensation is offered by another person, no assistance shall be furnished unless and until such work is accepted and performed.

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 or household member may be exempted from working, seeking employment or performing workfare for a specified period if they either:

- Show a licensed medical doctor's written statement of medical disability; or
- Are enrolled in and attending adult education or vocational courses at the referral of the Trustee; or
- Are required to provide care for a household or family member due to health, age or disability, as confirmed by a doctor's written statement; or
- Applicant or household member is a minor or over sixty-five (65) years old.

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, a person applying for assistance who claims disability and is applying for SSI or SSI(D) benefits must sign a SSI Reimbursement Authorization Form supplied by the township office.

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

The Township Assistance program is designed to provide for basic living needs when no other resources are available. "Countable" assets such as bank accounts, investments, property other than that required for living; vehicles not required for transportation to work; anticipated assets (i.e., upcoming payroll checks, unemployment checks, child support, TANF, income tax refunds, 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 12-20-6-9(a))*

If an applicant or a member of the applicant's household has a relative living in the township, the township trustee shall ask the relative to help before granting aid a second time. If the relatives refuse, the Trustee may assist the applicant.

G. *Bills 30 Days Past Due Not Eligible (IC 12-20-16-3)*

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.

Persons 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. See 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 (see 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 make may not be considered acceptable expenditures in determining eligibility and may be deducted from any benefit awarded.

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

A. Countable Household Income

An applicant's countable household income (see Appendix 1), for 30 days prior to the application, or for the period in which assistance is requested, must be less than the monthly amounts listed in Appendix 5 of these Guidelines in order to be eligible for Township Assistance. Applicants must also meet all other requirements of these Guidelines. Income guidelines are at 100% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines as set by the U.S. Department of Health & 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, or workman's compensation received in the last 90 days and combined with other countable household income, is more than three times the qualifying monthly income, 90 days' income may be considered in determining eligibility.

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 an eligible applicant has any of the following immediate needs and has the authority to provide assistance in the most economical and practical manner. Purchase orders must be picked up within 30 days of approval date 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 food stamp benefits as listed in Appendix 5.

Only good 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, imported foods, cookies 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 Food Stamp Office to determine eligibility as required by law. The Trustee will not provide purchase orders to supplement food stamps 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 5.

D. Shelter (IC 12-20-16-17)

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. A valid lease that includes landlord's name, address and phone number, amount of monthly rent and the number of individuals residing in the household is required. 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 will not pay rent deposits or late fees or damage or maintenance costs. The Trustee may not provide rent or mortgage payment without proof applicant will be able to continue to pay the monthly rent or mortgage.

The Trustee will not pay legal costs related to an eviction.

IC 12-20-6-10

Support by relatives

Sec. 10. (a) As used in this section, "relative" includes only the parent, stepparent, child, stepchild, sibling, stepsibling, grandparent, step-grandparent, grandchild, or step-grandchild of a township assistance applicant.

(b) If an applicant who applies for township assistance or a member of the applicant's household has a relative living in the township who is able to assist the applicant or member of the applicant's household, the township trustee shall, as administrator of township assistance and before granting aid a second time, ask the relative to help the applicant or member of the applicant's household, either with material relief or by furnishing employment.

(c) A township 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 if the applicant lives in:

- (1) the same household as the relative; or
- (2) housing separate from the relative and either:
 - (A) the housing is unencumbered by mortgage; or
 - (B) the housing has not been previously rented by the relative to a different tenant at reasonable market rates for at least (6) months.

(d) 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.

The Trustee is not required to pay for additional shelter costs as a result of the applicant keeping pets. A service dog is considered a medical necessity, not a pet, but the need must be documented by a physician's statement.

The Trustee may not provide housing assistance for an applicant who resides in a substance abuse halfway house or treatment facility, or is otherwise incarcerated or institutionalized.

Rent purchase orders shall be provided in amounts not exceeding those listed in Appendix 5.

Bloomington Township maintains an emergency shelter, Rosie's Place, in which shelter may be provided for a limited time (usually no more than seven days) until the applicant can make other arrangements. The

agreement for housing in Rosie's Place is incorporated in these guidelines as Appendix 4. Violation of the agreement shall be grounds for denial of future assistance.

E. Utilities (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 if used for heating or cooking, coal, wood, liquid propane or fuel oil. Sufficient fuel services shall be provided to maintain the residential shelter at a reasonable temperature during the months when conditions require heat. The Trustee does not pay for cable TV or satellite service. The Trustee will not pay late fees, deposits, or trip charges.

All utility bills must be in the name of the applicant or an adult member of the household or a landlord if applicant proves that the applicant is responsible for utility payment. All applicants will be required to apply for the Energy Assistance program. During the period the applicant or member of the applicant's household has been approved for the Energy Assistance Program, the applicant and/or member of the applicant's household must continue to make payments on their utility bills as reasonably determined by the Trustee. Once the Energy Assistance Program 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 them 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.

IMPORTANT: It is the responsibility of any adult member of the household 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 5.

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, incurred during a period of eligibility, including doctor's fees, allowable medical supplies, prescriptions and special dietary needs unless these goods and services are available through other government programs. The Township will see that medical service is furnished to persons otherwise qualified for aid under the guidelines.

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 12-20-16-2(b)). The township is not responsible for paying for insulin if the township has evidence that the individual has the financial ability to pay for the insulin. The Township will pay only for medical service, which is 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 person is admitted as an emergency patient due to an accident or sudden illness. However, a medical emergency does not exist in situations where the illness/injury could have been treated during a routine office call by a family doctor, and the applicant could have made contact with the township office before such a visit.

State law establishes specific restrictions on the types of medical assistance, which Trustees may provide. For more detailed information, see 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 residence.

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

The Trustee may provide for mortuary and burial expenses at the lowest possible cost, not to exceed \$1,600 for burial and \$1,100 for cremation, if 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 making arrangements 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 3 working days will be provided. If no objection is received within 3 days, the Trustee will determine whether to do a burial or cremation. See Appendix 7.

Funeral home and 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 burial or same day of burial is included (not both). The cost of a gravestone is not included. The deceased person's family is allowed to upgrade the funeral at their own expense up to the current Medicaid standard of \$1,750 for funeral and \$400 for cemetery if the township has agreed to provide assistance. The township should receive a death certificate and an itemized statement (invoice) from the funeral home before making payment.

1) If an individual dies in the township:

- a) Without leaving money, real or personal property, other assets that may be liquidated, or other means necessary to defray funeral expenses; and
- b) The individual is not a resident of another township in Indiana; then
- c) The Township Trustee shall provide a person to superintend and authorize either the funeral and burial or cremation of the deceased individual.

2) If the Township Trustee determines that the deceased individual is a resident of another township in Indiana, the Township Trustee shall notify the trustee of that township, who shall then provide a person to superintend the arrangements.

3) The Trustee may deduct from the maximum amount

- a) Any monetary benefits that the deceased individual is entitled to receive from a state or federal program.
- b) Any money that another person provides on behalf of the deceased individual above the Medicaid standard described in paragraph three.

4) A Township Trustee who provides funeral and burial or cremation 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.

I. Other Assistance

The Trustee may provide new or used clothing to keep persons 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 to seek or accept employment when there is a reasonable likelihood of being hired. All such assistance will be provided at the most economical means. Applicants requesting gasoline assistance must provide a valid license and proof of insurance. Gasoline will be provided if public transportation is not practical.

J. 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 Assistance recipient who dies, leaving an estate; and 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 in the possession of a coroner.

If a Trustee anticipates that a Township Assistance applicant or a member of the applicant's household is likely to receive a judgment, compensation, or a monetary benefit from a third party, the Trustee may require the applicant or the affected household member to enter into a subrogation agreement; or 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:

- beginning when the agreement or authorization is signed; and
- ending when the applicant or member of the applicant's household 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.

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

A. Requirement

All applicants and all adult household members will be required to work in return for assistance. The Trustee may arrange work for the township or some other local government or non-profit agency unless one of the following conditions exist:

- Applicant or household member is not physically or mentally able to perform the proposed work and possesses a statement less than 30 days old from a licensed medical doctor stating such;
- Applicant or household member is a minor or over sixty-five (65) years of age;
- Applicant or household member has a child under school age and/or childcare is unavailable;
- Applicant or household member has full-time (35 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 or household member is needed to care for a person as a result of that person's age or physical condition, as confirmed by a doctor's statement less than 30 days old; or
- The Trustee determines that there is no work available for the applicant or household member;
- The individual obligated to perform the work is in the Impact program. Applicant or household member will receive workfare credit hours if compliance with Impact is provided.
- The individual obligated to perform the work is enrolled in GED classes or a work training program for a period of 30 days beginning the day assistance is granted. Verification of participation must be provided.
- Individuals 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 and household members shall be required to work off relief at the time and place assigned. The Trustee may require that workfare obligations be completed 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 recipient or the recipient's household for not more than 180 days.

The Township Trustee may require a Township Assistance applicant or an adult member of the applicant's household to satisfy all obligations to perform work 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 or a household 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 or a member of the applicant's household who is granted emergency township assistance may be eligible for public assistance other than township assistance, the applicant or household member shall within fifteen (15) working days file an application and comply with all the necessary requirements for completing the application process. An applicant or household member who fails to do this may not be granted township assistance for sixty (60) days following the date emergency township assistance was provided.

B. 12-20-6-5.5 Application for Public Assistance Before Granting Township Assistance

(a) This section does not apply in an emergency.

(b) If, before granting township assistance, the township trustee determines that an applicant or a member of an applicant's household may be eligible for public assistance other than township assistance, the applicant or household member shall, when referred by the township trustee, make an application and comply with all necessary requirements for completing the application process for public assistance administered by:

- (1) Family Social Service Administration (FSSA) offices; or
- (2) any other federal or state government entity.

(c) An applicant or a household member who fails to:

- (1) file an application as specified in subsection (b); and
- (2) show evidence that the application, as referred by the township trustee was filed not more than fifteen (15) working days after the township trustee's referral; may be denied township assistance for not more than sixty (60) days from the most recent application date.

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 or household member who has had benefits reduced from other public programs because of voluntary actions or non-compliance with program requirements will 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 (Family Social Service Administration or Social Security Administration) the misuse of funds by a recipient. When reporting misuse of funds, the Trustee may officially recommend that the recipient's payments be placed in the hands of a protective or designated payee. The township may refuse to extend aid to an individual or household member until such time or the person initiates and executes the proper papers for obtaining a payee to handle the finances.

X. Reasons for Denial (IC 12-20-5-1; IC 12-20-5.5-1)

A. Failure to Comply With Guidelines

Failure to comply with any requirements set forth in these guidelines may be grounds for denial of assistance. In addition, any of the following shall be considered grounds for denial of assistance:

1. Willful giving of false information or withholding information.
2. Voluntary termination of gainful employment; firing for just cause, i.e. absenteeism, theft; failure to pass an employer's drug screening test. The township trustee shall not be obligated to provide assistance for 60 days from the date employment terminated. Refusal of gainful employment or failure to seek employment is a basis to deny assistance for up to 60 days.
3. Use of violence, intimidation or abusive language in or around the Trustee's office or premises.
4. Failure to follow printed work order requirements as explained and outlined in the workfare agreement.
5. Failure to accept free or low cost shelter arrangements provided by relatives, the Township or others.
6. Abuse or voluntary termination or reduction of any other programs in the last 180 days offering assistance for basic necessities, including TANF, Food Stamps, subsidized housing or other programs for which the applicant may be eligible.
7. Eviction in the last 180 days from subsidized housing for violation of regulations or guidelines.
8. Failure or refusal by any household adult to sign the Township waiver authorizing release of information concerning the application.
9. Ineligibility for Food Stamps due to alien status.
10. Having sufficient income to provide for necessary living expenses, regardless of meeting Township income guidelines.
11. Failure to respond to the Trustee's request to pursue other assistance or provide documentation of pending applications.
12. Past abuse of food purchase order privileges or other Trustee assistance.
13. Excessive, unnecessary and/or luxury expenses.
14. Failure or refusal to sign Township Reimbursement Form for SSI.
15. Failure to file paternity actions when necessary and appropriate, or failure to take necessary legal action to pursue child support.
16. Failure or refusal to cooperate with or provide the Trustee's office with necessary information to determine eligibility for assistance.
17. Conviction of an offense under IC 35-43-5-7 (Welfare fraud). Persons convicted of a misdemeanor are ineligible for Township Assistance for one year from their conviction; ten years if a felony conviction.
18. Violation of rules and regulations for Rosie's Place.
19. Habitually reporting the theft or loss of money or food stamps will result in denial.

B. Wasted Resources

"Non-necessities" or "non-essential expenditures" (also known as "wasted resources") include:

- Those items prohibited from purchase with food purchase orders including: candy, soft drinks, tobacco products, snacks, imported foods, cookies, alcoholic beverages, pet food and pet supplies; whether purchased with cash or purchase orders;
- 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, restitution, 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;
- 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 (pay day loans, rent-to-own payments, etc.);
- Personal loans made by the applicant to other persons;
- Non-basic phone charges exceeding \$50.

- 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 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 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 will 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 citizen 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 seventy-two (72) hours or three (3) working days (excluding weekends and holidays) 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, a "Pending" decision may be issued allowing the township an additional seventy-two (72) hours or three (3) working days to complete the investigation. Should the township be unable to access the required information within 72 hours of issuing the "Pending" decision, the township may deny the application.

All decision notifications will include the following information:

- The type and amount of assistance granted, denied, or partially granted;
- 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, they 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 action.

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

A. Guidelines Posted

All decisions regarding the eligibility of applicants will be based on these standards and guidelines and in accordance with Indiana law. The guidelines will be posted in the office of the Township Trustee at all times and will be filed with the 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 social agencies at their 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.

B. Approval and Annual Review of Guidelines

These guidelines shall supercede any and all previous guidelines. The appendices listed on the next page are also incorporated as part of these guidelines.

These guidelines are effective when signed and posted by the Township Trustee and filed with the Monro 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 Definitions and Examples
- Appendix 2 Maximum Income Eligibility Standards
- Appendix 3 Allowable Medical Services
- Appendix 4 Rosie's Place Shelter Rules and Regulations
- Appendix 5 Bloomington Township Assistance Chart
- Appendix 6 Bloomington Township Budget Form
- Appendix 7 Authorization of Cremation and Interment

SIGNED THIS 13th DAY OF February, 2014.



TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE



PRESIDENT, TOWNSHIP BOARD



MEMBER, TOWNSHIP BOARD



SECRETARY, TOWNSHIP BOARD

APPENDIX 1-DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

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

Section 1a – 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 the 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.”

Section 1b – Application Process

“Household members” or “members of the applicant’s household” includes “any person who lives in the same residence as the applicant.” (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, and social security number for all persons living in the household;
- Picture ID or driver’s license for anyone 18 or older;
- Car registration and insurance policy on all vehicles;
- A completed budget sheet for the previous 30 days; or for the period in which the request for assistance is being made;
- Verification of income for all members of the household 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 in the presence of a township staff member; all receipts are subject to verification.
- Bank statement, debit/check cashing cards showing activity for the past 30 days or for the period in which the request for assistance is being made;
- Financial aid statement from Indiana University or Ivy Tech or online university that shows the date and amount of aid refunded in the past 90 days and anticipated refunds.
- Income tax refunds and retroactive back pay from social security received in the past 90 days.
- A valid utility bill.
- A current lease that includes the names of the applicant and all adult household members.
- Acceptable residency documentation 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 12-20-6-9)
- Copy of police report to verify reported theft.
- Proof of applications pending for other types of assistance.
- Proof of employment status.
- TANF and/or food stamp benefit letter or case ID number.

Section 1c – Applicant Residency Requirement

“Relevant information” used to determine residency is defined in Section IV.

“Relative” includes: the spouse, parent, stepparent, child, stepchild, sibling, stepsibling, grandparent, stepgrandparent, grandchild, or stepgrandchild of a Township Assistance applicant.

Section 1d – 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 conditions benefits on disability.

Example from Section V. H.: Acceptable Expenditures for Basic Necessities. If a bill is unpaid for 30 days and further non-payment may result in loss of service, the applicant must document household income and expenditures for the 30 days in order for the Trustee to determine that the applicant had made an effort to provide the service and exhausted all other remedies during the period in question.

Section 1e – 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 or property, 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 gross monthly household income must be less than 100% of the federally established poverty level. The federal maximum income eligibility standards are revised annually.

APPENDIX 3 – ALLOWABLE MEDICAL EXPENSES

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

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

1. 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.
2. Office calls to a physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1
3. Dental care needed to relieve pain or infection or to repair cavities in the most economical manner.

4. Repair or replacement of dentures. The initial cost of dentures will be considered only when the medical necessity has been documented.
5. Emergency room treatment that is of an emergency nature.
6. Pre-operation testing prescribed by an attending physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1
7. Over-the-counter drugs prescribed by a practitioner (as defined in IC 16-42-19-5) other than a veterinarian.
8. X-rays and laboratory testing as prescribed by an attending physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1
9. Visits to a medical specialist when referred by an attending physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1
10. Physical therapy prescribed by an attending physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1
11. Eyeglasses, eye exams, eyeglass repair or replacement. The township will not pay for contact lenses, unless medically necessary.
12. Repair or replacement, not initial cost, of a prosthesis not provided for by other tax supported state or federal programs.
13. 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 – SHELTER RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. The only people who are allowed in the shelter are those members listed on the agreement. No visitors or overnight guests are allowed.
2. YOU MUST REPORT IN WITH YOUR CASEWORKER EACH DAY BETWEEN 9:00A.M.AND NOON, except when the office is closed. If you fail to check in each day you will not be allowed back into the shelter unless you have a valid reason. The shelter will be inspected daily.
3. You will be required to work up to 2 hours in the Workfare Program for each night of shelter, unless you are employed full time or have a medical disability or have children under school age and childcare is unavailable. If you are currently unemployed you must be actively seeking employment. Your caseworker will provide employment information and an employment search form.
4. Alcoholic beverages, smoking, and controlled substances are prohibited in the shelter. Smoking is permitted only in the designated area. Residents are asked to extinguish cigarettes only in the receptacle provided. No unauthorized weapons are allowed. You will be evicted for any violation of these rules.
5. Damage to the shelter will result in immediate eviction and possible prosecution through the courts.
6. The shelter does not have an on-duty supervisor. However, employees of the Bloomington Township Trustee’s Office, New Hope Family Shelter and the Police Department have the right to inspect the shelter at any time.
7. Children under the age of 12 are not to be left unsupervised at any time.
8. You may only bring 3 bags of clothing/personal items to the shelter. No furniture may be brought into the shelter. Towels and linens will be provided to you, if needed. You must turn in your linens and towels at the time you move out of the shelter. Items left in the shelter will be donated to a non-profit thrift store after 7 days. We are not responsible for your property that is lost, stolen, or left in the shelter.
9. You are responsible for cleaning the shelter daily. In the winter, you are responsible for shoveling the walk from the shelter to the driveway.

I fully understand and agree that my stay in the shelter is limited, and I am expected to put effort into obtaining more suitable permanent housing.

Signature	Date	Signature	Date
CASEWORKER INFORMATION: Days Approved _____		Date Shelter Vacated _____	
Comments on Back of Form _____			

APPENDIX 5 – BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE CHART

- **HOUSEHOLD INCOME GUIDELINES**
(100% federally established poverty level. Updated when new poverty levels are released.)

<u>Number of Persons in Household</u>	<u>Total Monthly Gross Income</u>
1	\$ 972.00
2	\$1,310.00
3	\$1,649.00
4	\$1,987.00
5	\$2,325.00
6	\$2,664.00
7	\$3,002.00
8	\$3,340.00
Each additional person	+ \$338.00

- **FOOD PURCHASE ORDER GUIDELINES/GASOLINE GUIDELINES**
(Current Federal Food Stamp Weekly Allotments)

<u>Number of Persons in Household</u>	<u>Weekly Food Order</u>	<u>Weekly Household Items</u>	<u>Monthly Gasoline</u>
1	\$ 47.25	\$ 20.00	\$ 30.00
2	\$ 86.75	\$ 25.00	
3	\$ 124.25	\$ 30.00	
4	\$ 158.00	\$ 35.00	
5	\$ 187.50	\$ 40.00	
6	\$ 225.00	\$ 45.00	
7	\$ 248.75	\$ 50.00	
8	\$ 284.25	\$ 55.00	
Each additional person	+ \$142.00	+ \$ 5.00	

- **RENT GUIDELINES AND/OR UTILITIES MAXIMUM**

<u>Number of Persons in Household</u>	<u>Monthly Purchase Order Amount</u>
1	\$500
2	\$650
3 or more persons	\$775

- **FUNERAL EXPENSES**
The maximum amount payable for funeral expenses is \$1,600 for burial and \$1,100 for cremation.

- **WORKFARE RATE IS \$11.00 PER HOUR**
- **BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP SERVES AS AN OUTLET FOR THE USDA COMMODITY PROGRAM**
- **BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP OPERATES THE CK EXPRESS FOOD PANTRY FOR TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS**
- **BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP IS A V-CAN SITE FOR TOWNSHIP CLIENTS**

APPENDIX 6 – BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP BUDGET FORM

GROSS INCOME FROM _____ TO _____

	DATE	AMOUNT	VERIFIED
EMPLOYMENT			
SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS			
VA BENEFITS			
TANF			
UNEMPLOYMENT			
CHILD SUPPORT			
FOOD STAMPS			

TOTAL INCOME _____

EXPENSES PAID FROM _____ TO _____

RENT/MORTGAGE			
ELECTRIC			
GAS (HEAT)			
WATER/SEWER			
PHONE			
CABLE			
COURT COSTS / PROBATION / JUDGMENTS			
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 (NOT INCLUDING F.S.)			
OTHER			

TOTAL EXPENSES _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____ CASE # _____

IN HOUSEHOLD _____ INCOME GUIDELINE _____ CASEWORKER _____

APPENDIX 7 – AUTHORIZATION OF CREMATION AND INTERMENT

The undersigned authorizes the Bloomington Township Trustee to cremate the deceased's remains and to dispose of the cremated remains as allowed by Indiana law. The undersigned further acknowledges that the Township Trustee has made arrangements with _____ Funeral Home.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Consent to the Disclosure of Information to the Township

I, _____, consent to the disclosure of information contained in this application for burial/cremation assistance.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Acknowledgment and Pledge of Confidentiality by the Township

The Undersigned township trustee or employee acknowledges that he/she may, in the course of employment, have access to certain personal information and that such information is to be treated as confidential, and is to be released and exchanged only with agencies related to the undersigned employment by the township in receiving and investigating this application or as other wise provided by law.

Trustee or Employee _____ Date _____