

Van Buren County General Assistance

Purpose: The purpose of this manual is to describe the forms of assistance provided by Van Buren County, in accordance with Chapter 252, to poor persons, needy persons and emergency situations. This manual establishes criteria, which must be met by an applicant before assistance is made available to persons in any of the three categories.

PERSONS ELIGIBLE FOR GENERAL ASSISTANCE: Assistance shall be available in specified forms to persons meeting the following criteria:

Poor Persons: Shall be construed to mean those who have no property, exempt or otherwise, and are unable, because of physical or mental disabilities, to earn a living by labor. Unless the disability is obvious, **a physician must verify disability.**

Needy Person: A needy person is one who has a lack of resources to maintain self and family in a decent, healthful situation yet meets the eligibility requirements for General Assistance as described in this manual. Needy persons over the age of 60 who are physically or mentally disabled shall be eligible for the same assistance available to poor persons. The income limitations for needy persons shall be within the schedule of living costs (after deductions) set by the Iowa Department of Human Services.

Income guidelines for adults with no children will be based on the Federal Supplemental Security Income Program (SSI) from the Social Security Administration. For those applying for medically related assistance, income guidelines will be based on the Medically Needy Program.

All types of income available to the applicant shall be considered in determining eligibility for General Assistance. If an applicant for General Assistance has income that is less than the applied income guideline, assistance granted shall be in an amount which does not exceed the difference between the applicants income and the applied income guideline.

Persons residing together and presenting themselves as a family unit will be considered a family for the purpose of the income guidelines set out in this manual.

Emergency Situations: Assistance may be made available in certain limited circumstances to persons who do not meet the definitions of either a poor person or a needy person as set out in this manual.

PERSONS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR GENERAL ASSISTANCE:

Veterans: Persons who meet the qualifications outlines in the Code of Iowa for the receipt of assistance from the County Commission of Veterans Affairs shall not be eligible for General Assistance. Such applicants shall be referred to the local Commission Secretary serving the area in which the applicant resides. A person and his dependents are eligible to apply for assistance from the Commission of Veterans Affairs if they received an honorable discharge and are a Veteran as defined in HF503.

Persons eligible for other Assistance: If it appears that an applicant for General Assistance would be eligible for assistance from a state, federal, or privately funded program, the applicant will be required to apply for such assistance. If the applicant refuses or fails to apply

for and follow through with such application or fails to cooperate with these programs, the result shall be denial of initial or continued eligibility for General Assistance. Examples of state, federal or privately funded programs are FIP, SSA, Unemployment, Social Security, Veteran's Benefits, Medicaid, Medicare, Food Stamps, Food Pantries, Vocational Rehabilitation, etc.

Persons on Strike: Persons on strike will be ineligible for General Assistance. Under no circumstances will a striker be eligible for any assistance from this program.

RESOURCES: The resources of applicants for General Assistance shall not exceed those listed in this manual. If an applicant for General Assistance has resources that exceed those listed in this manual, the applicant will not be eligible for General Assistance. Determination of the amount of resources of any applicant shall also include all resources available to other persons in the applicant's household. A household consists of all persons residing together and presenting themselves as a family unit.

Countable Resources:

Bank accounts, time certificates, property other than the homestead, life insurance with a cash value, vehicles, stocks/bonds, antiques, burial trust and trust funds that are available to the applicant will be considered.

Exempt Resources:

Adult Persons: The applicant and/or spouse may have a homestead, used as a place of residence, not to exceed a market value of \$35,000.00. However, if other property is owned, and the applicant is not residing at the property, whether rented out or not, it will be considered a resource. All property owned will be considered.

Household furnishings and personal effects of reasonable value

Automobiles or other vehicles with current market value of all vehicles owned not to exceed \$5,000.00.

An irrevocable pre-paid burial agreement and lot

Cash, bank account, stocks, bonds, annuities, or other real and personal property not to exceed a value of \$150.00 for a single person or \$300.00 for a couple.

Families with children: The family may have a homestead, used as a place of residence, not to exceed a market value of \$35,000.00. However, if other property is owned, and the applicant is not residing in the property, whether rented out or not, it will be considered a resource.

Household furnishings and personal effects of reasonable value

Automobiles or other vehicles with current market value of all vehicles owned not to exceed \$5,000.00.

An irrevocable pre-paid burial agreement and lot

Cash, bank accounts, stocks, bonds, annuities or personal property not to exceed a value of \$150.00 for the first person plus \$50.00 for each additional person in the family, not to exceed \$300.00.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT: If an applicant for General Assistance has, without good cause, voluntarily quit employment or through some fault of their own caused themselves to be involuntarily terminated from employment, prior to 60 days of their application for General Assistance, they will not be eligible for assistance. The applicant will not be eligible for assistance for ninety (90) days from the date of application.

Persons coming to Van Buren County from another location that voluntarily quit employment or through some fault of their own caused themselves to be involuntarily terminated from employment, prior to 60 days of their application for General Assistance, will not be eligible for assistance. The applicant will not be eligible for assistance for ninety (90) days from the date of application.

Recipients who voluntarily quit employment or through some fault of their own caused themselves to be involuntarily terminated from employment while receiving General Assistance will be cancelled from further assistance for ninety (90) days from the date of the last assistance paid.

REFUSAL OF EMPLOYMENT: If an applicant or recipient refuses reasonable employment or a referral to reasonable employment, they will not be eligible for General Assistance.

TRANSFER OF RESOURCES: If an applicant for General Assistance, has sold, traded, or transferred any personal property within 6 months prior to their application for assistance, at less than fair market value, the applicant will be ineligible for General Assistance. The cost of the requested assistance will be calculated against the market value of the resources sold, traded, or transferred and a determination will be made of how many months the applicant could have paid for the assistance themselves. The applicant will be ineligible for assistance for the determined amount of time.

WITHHOLDING OR PROVIDING FALSE INFORMATION: If it becomes apparent that an applicant or recipient has knowingly withheld information or provided false information in order to gain eligibility or to remain eligible for General Assistance, that applicant or recipient will not be eligible for any further assistance. The recipient will be responsible for reimbursing Van Buren County in full for all assistance granted to them under these circumstances.

GUARANTEE OF PAYMENT: The General Assistance office may make a guarantee of payment if the applicant or recipient has a source of income or resources that has not yet been received. If the General Assistance office guarantees payment to a vendor with the understanding that the applicant or recipient will pay the guaranteed amount and that applicant or recipient fails to make the guaranteed payment to the vendor (thus forcing the General Assistance Office to make the payment) that applicant or recipient will not be eligible for any further General Assistance.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE: In the event that emergency assistance is provided prior to the applicant meeting General Assistance eligibility requirements, and the applicant fails to meet the above mentioned eligibility requirements, the applicant will not be eligible for any further assistance until reimbursement for all prior emergency assistance is made.

ILLEGAL RESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES: Adult applicants for General Assistance who are illegal residents of the United States will not be eligible for General Assistance. Illegal minor dependents of illegal adult residents will only be eligible for General Assistance to prevent or rectify a life threatening or emergency situation. Legal aliens or refugees will be eligible for assistance if they meet eligibility criteria.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE REQUIREMENTS:

Employment: Applicants for or recipients of General Assistance that are under the age of 60, and not disabled, will be required to register for work through Work Force Development Center or the local Job Opportunities employment service. Applicants who are not disabled and are recipients of County Assistance may further be required to work for the County or a non-profit organization as a condition to the receipt of benefits.

Proof of Disability: Applicants who claim disability must have such disability verified by a physician. The General Assistance Medical Statement will be used for verification of the disability. The medical statement must define the possible duration of disability. If it is a time limited disability, a new medical statement will be required at the end of the duration. If the applicant is unable to pay for an examination to verify disability and has not all ready verified the disability through a physician, the examination may be billed to the General Assistance Office. Billings for examinations must have prior approval from Van Buren County Community Services Staff who is authorized to do so. If the disability will endure for an extended period of time, the applicant will be required to apply for SSI or SSDI through Social Security.

Interim Assistance: For the purpose of assuring the availability of assistance to meet basic needs of applicants for benefits under the Supplemental Security Income program for the aged, blind and disabled (SSI) pending determinations of eligibility by the Social Security Administration, the Iowa Department of Human Services, the Van Buren County Board of Supervisors, who are in agreement with the following definition of Terms and which will be applicable to the public relief agency of Van Buren County Community Services.

Section I

“County Agency” means a county public agency which provides relief in the form of cash or vendor payments to needy persons according to established standards. This may be either an agency furnishing general relief under Iowa Code Chapter 252 or furnished by the County Veteran Affairs Commission under Iowa Code Chapter 250.

“Interim Assistance” is relief either in cash or through vendor payments provided an applicant for SSI during the interim period. Interim assistance does not include any payments financed in whole or in part with federal funds, e.g., the Family Investment Program.

“Interim Period” means the period beginning with the day on which the person filed an application for benefits, and was found eligible, and ending with (and including)the month the person’s benefits began, or beginning with the day the person’s benefits were suspended or terminated, and ending with (and including) the month the person’s benefits were reinstated.

“Written authorization” means authorization in a written form approved by the Department and the Social Security Administration in which the applicant authorizes the Social Security Administration to withhold SSI payments due the applicant and pay to a county agency from

the payments withheld an amount sufficient to reimburse the county agency for interim assistance furnished to or on behalf of the applicant.

“Benefits” means SSI benefits and any federally administered State Supplementary Assistance benefits that the Social Security Administration determines are due to the person when the first payment is made.

“Interim assistance reimbursement” means the initial or post eligibility retroactive benefits which are forwarded to the county agency when the applicant has given written authorization, out of which the county agency withholds the amount of interim assistance furnished and forwards any remaining balance to the applicant. No reimbursement will be made to the county agency for any person determined to be ineligible for SSI or federally administered State Supplementary Assistance.

SECTION II

Responsibilities of the Department of Human Services (see PA-6110)

Section III

Responsibilities of the County Agency

The County agency shall:

Obtain a written authorization when any person who has or will receive assistance from the county agency in the form of cash or vendor payments for meeting basic needs has been referred to apply for Supplemental Security Income or has already made that application, using Form 470-1950, Initial Interim Assistance Reimbursement Authorization, or Form 470-2551, post-eligibility Interim Assistance Reimbursement Authorization.

The terms of the authorization shall provide that in consideration of the payment of interim assistance by the county agency, the amount of the person’s initial or post-eligibility payment shall be paid to the county agency to provide reimbursement for that interim assistance. The agency shall furnish a copy of each such authorization to the Social Security Administration office serving that county.

Deduct from the initial or post-eligibility retroactive payment received from the Social Security Administration, with respect to any person, the amount necessary as reimbursement for interim assistance made on behalf of that person

Provide the person a written explanation of the apportionment on Form PA-6108, Interim Assistance Notice of Apportionment. This shall include the amount received by the county agency, and the excess amount due the person (if any). The county agency shall pay the balance to that person within ten working days from the date the county agency receives the initial or post-eligibility retroactive payment.

Provide the person notice on Form PA-6108 and an opportunity for hearing before the County Board of Supervisors or the County Veteran Affairs Commission with respect to disputes arising from the action taken by the county agency pursuant to this agreement with respect to the apportionment of the person’s initial or post-eligibility payment between the county agency and the person.

Maintain adequate records of all transactions relating to interim assistance paid and the apportionment of the person's benefits in accordance with standards prescribed by the Department.

Submit to the Iowa Department of Human Services such reports as the Department may require in the form and at times prescribed by the Department

See Bureau of Eligibility/HIPP, Division of Medical Services; General Letter No. 5-A-AP-1 for further information regarding Interim Assistance Reimbursement for accounting procedures, etc

Applicant/Recipient Responsibility

Applicants for General Assistance will verify all aspects of Eligibility as requested. Recipients shall report any and all circumstances that change, such as income, resources, address, etc. Failure to provide verification will result in denial or termination of General Assistance benefits. Recipients, who fail to report changes within ten (10) days of the change, will be ineligible for assistance for three (3) months.

FORMS AND LIMITS OF AVAILABLE ASSISTANCE:

The forms of assistance hereinafter described shall be available only for current bills or expenses. Current bills are the bills that are due in the month for which you are applying for assistance. Assistance is not available for bills or expenses accrued prior to application for General Assistance. In the case of disconnect or a disconnect notice, the maximum amount that will be paid is \$150.00. In all cases where the utilities have all ready been disconnected or are about to be disconnected and the bill exceeds the \$150.00 limit, the applicant must provide proof of how they will pay the remaining balance on their account before any assistance can be granted. Applicants must receive a denial from other available assistance programs prior to receiving assistance from the county. The County General Assistance is not available to Veterans or to those on or will be approved on the Family Investment Program or who voluntarily withdrew from the FIP program. No payments will be made toward deposit payments.

Rent: All applicants must apply for assistance through Community Action programs and receive a denial prior to application for County General Assistance. Payment will not be paid for deposits. Veterans must apply through the county veterans association. FIP recipients or those who are eligible for FIP and who did not comply with those guidelines, are not eligible for County General Assistance.

Fair market rent will be paid to a maximum of \$150.00 per month with an eviction notice. Payment for deposits will not be made.

When it is determined that separate households are sharing the same dwelling, the amount of assistance shall be determined by dividing the actual monthly rent, as verified by the landlord, by the number of eligible applicant households. People living together and presenting themselves as a family will be considered one household. Assistance will not exceed \$150.00 per eligible applicant household and the applicant MUST have been presented an eviction notice. The landlord must verify rent and what is included in the monthly rent, i.e. utilities.

There shall be a one-month limitation of rental payments through General Assistance and will be based on an eviction notice with assurances that they will be able to continue to pay their rent thereafter. General Assistance will be available for one month only in a twelve month period unless there are unusual or special circumstances that would warrant an extension (health, etc.) Extensions will be implemented for each year period beginning with the first month that rental assistance is received from the General Assistance office.

Through Interim Assistance programs for Poor Persons who have a doctor statement that they are unable to work for an extended period of time and have applied for disability benefits through Social Security, they may receive up to three months of rental assistance (150.00 maximum) based on Interim Assistance agreements and guidelines. If after 3 months, Social Security disability or SSI has still not been determined, an extension of no more than three (3) additional months may be granted with a new doctor statement regarding their ability to work.

Rental assistance will not be granted to persons who rent from parents or close relatives. Rent will be paid to the registered owner of the property unless someone else is designated, through contract, as the caretaker of that property. Rental Assistance will only be granted to applicant households who are listed on the rental agreement.

Utilities: Applicants must apply with community action energy assistance programs prior to application for county general assistance. Veterans must apply through the county veterans association. FIP recipients or those who are eligible for FIP and who did not comply with those guidelines, are not eligible for County General Assistance.

Payment can be approved for lights, heat and water only with shut off notices and for current month bills only up to \$150.00. Payments will not be made for deposits. Assistance will be made only in behalf of applicant households who are listed on the billing.

When it is determined that separate households are sharing the same dwelling, the amount of utility payments shall be determined by dividing the actual bill per eligible applicant household. People living together and presenting themselves as a family unit will be considered one household. Assistance will not exceed \$150.00 per eligible applicant household.

For Needy Persons there shall be a one-month limitation of utility payments through General Assistance. This limitation will be implemented for a one-year period beginning with the first utility payment. An extension may be granted in cases of disconnect if the applicant can provide proof that they made a good faith effort to pay their bill and have made arrangements with the utility company to pay off the balance of their bill. An extension or exception may also be made in emergency situations as; health, death, etc.

For poor persons who have a doctor's statement indicating that they are unable to work for an extended period of time may receive up to three months of General Assistance under the 'Interim Assistance' program. Poor persons who have doctor's verification that they have a permanent disability that does not allow them to work and who are applying for SSI or SSDI, may receive up to three months of General Assistance. If after three months, a disability determination has yet to be made another doctor's statement will be requested and an extension of up to three more months may be granted.

Emergency Situations: In instances where a disconnect notice has been received or a utility vendor, because of non-payment, refuses to deliver fuel oil, propane, etc., the General

Assistance guidelines may be waived and emergency assistance provided after all other resources available have been exhausted. General assistance will assist with no more than \$150.00 toward preventing disconnect or for minimal tank fill if less than 5%. The applicant will make their own arrangements for future utility services or for funding the remainder of the bill in order to reconnect.

Food:

Grocery orders will be allowed in emergency situations if the need exists, food pantry is not available and food stamps cannot be expedited (see DHS guidelines). Grocery orders will not be allowed in place of food stamps or to supplement food stamps. Orders will be allotted according to the Food Stamp Program guidelines.

Products that CANNOT be purchased with a grocery order from a Van Buren County grocery include all taxable items, frozen sandwiches, non-generic chips/snacks, TV dinners, cream/half and half, frozen pies/cakes/donuts, flavored milk-chocolate, etc., relishes/condiments, imported cheeses or coffee, olives, prepared puddings, steak sauce, condensed milk, instant breakfast, granola bars, frozen fruit, snack packs, ice cream and toppings, expensive cuts of meat: boneless hams (excludes canned), rib eye steaks, t-bone steaks, porter house steaks, club steaks, boneless rump roast, loin cut pork chops, Iowa pork chops, pork rinds, country hams, including salmon, shrimp, oysters.

Clothing: Purchase of clothing shall be approved on only an emergency basis. Applicants must apply at any and all other agencies that provide such assistance before General Assistance will be approved for clothing. An estimated cost of clothing will need to be obtained from a local consignment or discount store. The maximum voucher will be \$50.00.

Medical and Prescriptions: Doctor visits must have prior approval to be eligible for County payment. Physicians will be paid the Medicaid rate. General Assistance funds will not be used to pay for extensive medical testing or for local inpatient treatment (Van Buren County Hospital and Clinics only) over and above \$1500.00.

Effective July 1, 2005, those persons with medical needs and referrals to the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City or Broadlawns in Des Moines, will make application through the Iowa Cares program with eligibility determined by the Department of Human Services. Applications will be available through the General Assistance office

Those Van Buren County residents that demonstrate medical need but insufficient income and insurance coverage will be referred to River Hills Community Health Center in Ottumwa, Iowa.

In emergency type hospitalizations at either the University of Iowa Hospitals or Van Buren Hospital, application may be made within 5 days after the emergency. An extension may be granted under extreme medical circumstances. A friend or relative may apply on the applicants' behalf.

Prescription drugs and other medically necessary supplies may be allowed for Needy persons. Payment will be made based on Medicaid rates and will be limited to a one month period and a maximum payment of 150.00. Payment will not be made for over the counter products unless medically necessary.

Prescription drugs, other medically necessary supplies may be allowed for poor persons. Payment will be made based on Medicaid rates and will be limited to a three month time period for poor persons applying for SSI or SSDI and having entered into an Interim Assistance agreement with the County. An additional three-month extension may be granted after the initial 3 months with an updated doctor's statement of disability. This will make it a maximum of six months assistance that may be granted for a poor person. Poor persons receiving assistance for prescription drugs will need to meet the same eligibility criteria as is required for rent and utility assistance.

Poor and Needy persons of Van Buren County will be referred to River Hills Health Center in Ottumwa, Iowa to receive samples and will be directed to contact their personal physicians for samples and/or application to pharmaceutical needy medication programs.

Dental: Payment for any dental care for the elimination of pain and will only be approved based on medical necessity. Dental work for cosmetic purposes will not be approved. Dentists will be paid the Medicaid rate with payment being limited to \$150.00 per year. A cost estimate will be obtained from the dentist and written approval from the General Assistance office obtained prior to the service being received. Medical emergencies assistance must be validated by the Dentist and the applicant must meet eligibility criteria to be approved. Denture repair is limited to \$150.00. Payment for routine physical examinations will not be approved.

Transportation: Payment for transportation or related expenses such as gasoline, oil, public transportation or volunteer driver may be approved for a medical emergency or travel to employment before salary is received. Employment transportation expenses such as gasoline for a private vehicle will be made only with proof of registration and insurance and at a maximum of \$50 to the vendor. Payment may be approved for ambulance service for a medical emergency if no other form of transportation is available to the applicant – up to \$300.00 and at the Medicaid billable rate.

CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY:

All General Assistance cases will be reviewed for continued eligibility as follows:

In cases of General Assistance for emergency needs, the situation will be reviewed monthly.

University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics (UIHC): State Quota Paper program to be eliminated July 1, 2005. HF 841-Iowacare Act/Medicaid Reform will replace this program. All inquiries will be referred to the local Department of Human Services.

Van Buren County will no longer offer County Clinical assistance to fund University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics for medical care due to imminent client eligibility for the Medicaid expansion program. Van Buren County Community Services will track referrals, comments and concerns of citizens about this program change.

BURIAL: It is the intent and purpose of Van Buren County to assist in the cost of burials for poor persons in Van Buren County. This policy is to clarify the guidelines for indigent persons, which items will be paid and the method of application. The Van Buren County Community Services General Assistance Director will be responsible for administering this policy.

Eligibility: Payment will only be made for poor persons who reside in Van Buren County but will be based on legal settlement. Reimbursement will be requested from the county of legal

settlement. The maximum that can be paid for burial of non-resident indigent transients in \$250.00, as stated in Chapter 252.27 in the Code of Iowa

Applications: All applications must be made to the Van Buren County Community Services Director and all payment of burial arrangements is subject to prior approval. No payment will be made unless an application for burial benefits has been filed with the respective Director (or County Board of Supervisor if Director is absent) within 15 calendar days of the date of death. The respective Director shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary information from the descendants' relatives and from any other funeral director. The decision to approve or deny the application shall be made and the notice mailed or given to the applicant and the funeral director within five working days of the date of application is filed.

Eligibility for burial benefits will exist when the deceased person's estate does not have at least \$1800.00 which can be applied toward the funeral expense.

Reimbursable Items: Van Buren County will contribute toward the agreed upon cost of an indigent burial or cremation. Van Buren County will not pay for additional services, merchandise, or other expenses.

Van Buren County Burial expenses include basic services of funeral director and staff, transfer of remains to funeral home, least expensive casket, least expensive vault or grave liner and hearse. Opening and closing of grave may be considered if all other possible resources are exhausted.

Burial expense is limited to a maximum of one thousand eight hundred dollars (\$1800.00). If the deceased had a burial contract and/or any resources (death benefit policy, social security, railroad retirement, veteran's benefits, estate, etc.) those amounts will be deducted from the one thousand eight hundred dollars (\$1800.00) maximum amount allowed.

If benefits are paid to family members, heirs or direct to the funeral home, they shall reimburse Van Buren County for all services received. The bill from the funeral home shall include the cost of the following items:

1. Preparation and embalming of body
2. K-Flair covered casket
3. Concrete burial box
4. Cemetery equipment; box delivery
5. Transportation of the body from place of death to place of internment within Van Buren County. Exception: transportation from place of death to the place where the recipient lived prior to his removal from that place for hospitalization and/or medical treatment at the time of terminal illness shall not be considered as part of the funeral cost.
6. Services of a second funeral director
7. Opening and closing of grave
8. If an indigent lot is not available at other cemeteries, Van Buren County will provide a lot in one of the county's township cemeteries at a maximum of \$100 per lot. Choice of cemetery shall be at the sole discretion of the Board of Supervisors. The family may provide for a lot at another location, but such lot and the opening and closing of the grave will be at the family's expense.

The total cost of the funeral and burial shall not exceed \$1800.00. Other funds may be used to provide for burial costs not to exceed \$300.00, if furnished by anyone other than the deceased person's funds, to pay the following items:

1. Clothing
2. Clergyman's fee
3. Music
4. Flowers
5. Automobiles furnished for the burial procession or transportation related to the burial

Cemetery lot not a considered resource. If the deceased has no resources at death, and if the family elects to purchase a cemetery lot in a cemetery of their choice, the cost of such lot, if paid for by the family, shall not be considered in determining the mount paid by Van Buren County toward the funeral. A cemetery lot provided to veterans by any other organization shall also not be considered as a resource.

County will consider payment for oversized casket, payment not to exceed \$100.00

The county will not provide partial or full assistance if burial arrangements exceed one thousand eight hundred dollars (\$1800.00).

Infant Youth Burials: Van Buren County will pay one-half of the above amounts for a funeral of a child five (5) years of age or less.

Cremation: If the family elects cremation, Van Buren County will pay a maximum of 1100.00 toward such cremation expenses. The following may be paid by the County for cremation services:

\$650.00 for funeral service which would include casket rental for viewing at visitation

\$350.00 crematory

\$25.00 permit

\$75.00 miscellaneous expense

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

Application: All applicants for General Assistance must complete the Van Buren County General Assistance application in its entirety. The applicant must also have an interview with the General Assistance Director prior to approval for any assistance. This requirement will be waived only in an emergency situation.

Eligibility: Eligibility will be determined and a written notice mailed within thirty (30) days from receipt of a completed application according to the guidelines established herein.

APPEALS:

The State of Iowa, rather than Van Buren County, must sometime pay for MH/DD services provided to you. Appeals about these cases and the Department of Human Services program eligibility decisions are governed by administrative agency rules and by the Iowa Administrative Procedures Act, Iowa Code Chapter 17(A). More information about these appeals will be provided to you by the Department of Human Services. The purpose of this section is to describe how Van Buren County Community Services decisions can be appealed.

Appeal Process: If you disagree with the decision you may seek an appeal of that decision. Only appeals initiated by you or your representative will be heard.

To appeal, you must send a written notice of appeal within ten (10) working days of the receipt of your Notice of Decision. Send your request to the GA Administrator, Van Buren County Community Services, Box 475, Keosauqua, IA 52565.

Within five (5) working days of the receipt of the written request for an appeal, the GA Administrator of Van Buren County shall deliver to you, either personally or by certified mail, a written notice informing you of the date, time and place the appeal will be heard.

A written decision will be issued no later than ten (10) working days after the appeal is heard. A copy of the decision will be sent to you and your representative, if any, by certified mail. The decision will be accompanied by a notice explaining the effect of the Administrator's decision regarding the services provided to you and your rights regarding a subsequent appeal to the Board of Supervisors.

Second Appeal: If you elect to appeal the Administrator's decision, you must comply with the procedure outlined in paragraph 2, within ten (10) working days of the Administrator's decision.

Within five (5) working days of the receipt of the written request for an appeal, the Board of Supervisors, shall deliver to you, either personally or by certified mail, a written notice informing you of the date, time and place the appeal will be heard.

Any appeal hearing before the CPC Administrator or Board of Supervisors will be held in private. At an appeal hearing, you have the right to have an attorney or other advocate accompany and represent you at your own expense. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may contact legal services Corp. of Iowa, the Iowa Volunteer Lawyer Project, or Iowa Protection and Advocacy Services, inc., for assistance. Telephone numbers for these agencies are available from the General Assistance Director upon request.

The Board of Supervisors will render its decision within 30 days of the date of the hearing. A copy of the decision will be sent to you and your representative, if any, by certified mail.

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS:

Residence: Residency requirements applies to General Assistance. The applicant must physically reside in Van Buren County in order to receive general assistance funding. If the applicant has a mental health diagnosis, residency requirements will not apply but will be referred to the applicant's county of legal settlement for reimbursement.

Liability of Relatives: Relatives of applicants or recipients of General Assistance shall not be held liable for support unless a legal obligation for support exists. The possibility of assistance from parent(s) or adult children shall be explored with the applicant or recipient. Minor children will remain the responsibility of their parent (s), will not be eligible for General Assistance, and will be referred to the DHS. (Minor is 17 years and less). Persons under the age of 21 shall apply for the CMAP through DHS.

Recovery of Assistance: Van Buren County reserves the right to enact the provision of Section 252.13, Code of Iowa

Exception to Policy: In unusual circumstances the General Assistance Director may waive any or all rules.

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