

## **How to Apply for Benefits**

### **Obtaining an Application**

An application for benefits can be obtained at our office; Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM. Or, you may request that an application be mailed to you by contacting us at 469-4524.

Because benefits for some programs are prorated from the date that you apply, we encourage you to file an application the same day that you contact the agency, either by mail or in person, as soon as possible. If you are found eligible, the amount of time to process your application and the amount of benefits you receive will depend on the date your signed application is received in our agency.

### **Processing Time**

Medicaid and the Auxiliary Grant programs allow 45 days to determine an individual's eligibility. TANF allows a 30 day processing timeframe.

The State and Local hospitalization program only allows 30 days processing time, and you must apply within 30 days of your date of service.

The Food Stamp program is slightly different than the other programs. An individual is first allowed 30 days to get in the necessary information---if more information is needed, the individual is given another 30 days to try and get the information in. Benefits will then be prorated from the day the last verifications are received in the agency.

### **Intake Hours**

You may file an application at any time. However, an interview may be necessary, and you may need to stay for an interview. Our agency's eligibility intake hours are currently:

Monday thru Friday: 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Hours are subject to change due to holidays. If there is no intake on a particular day, a notice will be posted on the front door of the agency. If you leave an application, an appointment will be sent to you for an interview.

### **Interviews**

Medicaid and the State & Local Hospitalization programs do not require an interview. However, the other major benefit programs; Food Stamps, TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families), and the Auxiliary Grant program require an interview before eligibility can be determined.

During the interview, your application will be reviewed with an eligibility worker and you will be advised of what verifications are needed to evaluate your application and determine whether or not you are eligible for assistance.

### **Verifications**

Federal, State, and local policy regulations require that certain verifications be provided before your application can be processed. Your eligibility worker will advise you during your interview or by mail as to what specific information is needed regarding your case. Some examples of the most commonly requested verifications are:

- Birth certificates for children
- Social Security numbers for all household members
- Verification of all income for prior month, such as:
  - Pay stubs
  - Records of tips, bonuses, or commissions
  - Social Security checks
  - Child Support
  - Unemployment compensation
  - Pensions & other retirement income
  - Self employment records
  - Educational income (Student loans or grants)
- Verification of shelter expenses
  - Lease or mortgage payment book
  - Utility bills (electric, gas, phone, oil)
- Proof of disability (doctor's statement)
- Proof of identity (Driver's license or other valid picture ID)
- Verification of resources
  - Most recent account statements (Checking, savings, Christmas club, CDs, credit union, trust funds money market accounts)
  - Proof of stocks or bonds
  - Property owned other than your own home
  - Life insurance policies--face value & cash value (Not required for food stamps)
  - Burial plots and burial arrangements
  - Car registration

### **How will I know if I am eligible for assistance?**

All of the benefit programs have specific income and resource limits. If you are under these limits, and have provided all of the requested information, your eligibility worker will notify you by mail as to whether or not you are eligible for assistance.

If you do not provide all of the requested information, your case will be denied for failure to provide information. You may reapply at any time.