



Portage Township St Joseph County

Township Assistance Guidelines

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

NOTICE TO ALL CITIZENS OF PORTAGE TOWNSHIP, ST JOSEPH COUNTY, INDIANA

Portage Township Assistance

Office Location: 340 Columbia Ave., South Bend, IN 46601

Office Phone: (574) 233-2127

Office Hours:	8:00 am – 4:30 pm	8:00 am – 12:00 pm
	Monday – Thursday	Friday

Township Assistance applications are accepted by appointment and walk-in appointments are accepted as office schedule allows. The Trustee reserves the right to modify office hours in conformity to the needs of the township or due to environmental conditions. In such event, the Trustee will post notice. The Township Trustee's office will be closed on holidays and at other times when it is necessary for the Trustee's office to participate in educational programs or seminars. In case of office hour changes due to inclement weather, notice will be given to local media and placed on Township social media accounts.

Standards, Eligibility, and Procedures

Assistance in Portage Township is administered in accordance to the standards duly adopted by the Township Board and available at all times for review at the township office or on the Township website.

Mission Statement

The Portage Township Trustees Office is committed to helping individuals and families facing moments of crisis in our community. Our goal is to help as many people as possible build stronger futures for themselves.

Jason Critchlow
Portage Township Trustee

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TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE STANDARDS, ELIGIBILITY, AND PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

(A) In the state of Indiana, it is the legal duty of the township to provide for its poor and needy, and the Township Trustee is charged with the responsibility of assisting and servicing all the poor and needy persons within their respective township.

(B) In order to meet the legislative purpose of providing necessary and prompt relief to both the poor and needy families found within their township, the Trustee will determine eligibility for assistance based upon the applicant/recipient's total situation.

(C) All decisions regarding eligibility will be based on the following standards. The standards will be posted at the office of the Township Trustee and any member of the public will be permitted to inspect and copy them. Copies of these standards will also be made available to interested public and private social welfare agencies. These standards will be periodically revised by the Township to reflect changes in the law and the cost of living.

1.00.00 OFFICE HOURS - The office hours for the Portage Township Trustee's office are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Thursday and 8:00 am to 12:00 pm on Fridays. The Trustee reserves the right to modify office hours in conformity to the needs of the township or due to environmental conditions. In such event, the Trustee will post notice. The Township Trustee's office will be closed on holidays and at other times when it is necessary for the Trustee's office to participate in educational programs or seminars. Individuals desiring to make application for Township Assistance are encouraged should call the trustee's office first. The township telephone number will be made available where possible. Website and an answering device will also give the business schedule. In case of office hour changes due to inclement weather, notice will be given to local media and placed on Township social media accounts.

1.00.01 LOCATION AND DIRECTIONS – The office of Portage Township Trustee is located at 340 Columbia Ave., South Bend, IN 46601. Applicants contacting the office will be given directions as necessary.

1.10.00 APPLICATIONS - An individual desiring to make an initial application for assistance from the township may call the township office during regular business hours to confirm assistance requested. Applicants must come to township office to complete their application in-person. Applicant will be given a list of the documents and/or information needed to complete an affidavit. Failure to bring the necessary documents may cause an unnecessary delay in the applicant receiving assistance or result in a denial due to incomplete application. Persons requesting township assistance are required to complete and sign necessary township forms and waivers. Each application affidavit and copies of other documents of verification shall be retained in the Trustee's office. Eligibility of a request cannot be determined without the completion of the "Application for Township Assistance". An application for Township Assistance is not considered completed until all adult (defined as age 18 or older) members of the household have affixed their signature to all forms, instruments, or documents required by law or determined necessary for investigative purposes by the trustee as contained in these Standards and Guidelines.

1.10.01 DISCLOSURE AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION - Each applicant and each adult member of the applicant's household must sign a "Disclosure and Release of Information" and any other

form, instrument, or document that is required by law or determined necessary for investigative purposes by the trustee and as contained in these standards. **IC 12-20-6-8 (c)**. Those documents include, but are not limited to: Social Security Reimbursement Authorization.

1.10.02 ASSISTANCE WITH COMPLETION OF THIS APPLICATION - The township trustee will assist an applicant for Township Assistance in completing the application if the applicant has a mental or physical disability, including intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, blindness or paralysis; has dyslexia; or cannot read or write the English language. **IC 12-20-6-1 (e)** If an individual who is required to sign a form as per the application process is unable to sign the form in the township trustee's office due to a physical or mental disability, or illness, the trustee shall make alternate arrangements to obtain the individual's signature.

1.10.03 THE PERSONAL EFFORTS AND THE EXPENDITURE OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES - The township trustee, as administrator of Township Assistance, may provide and shall extend Township Assistance only when the personal efforts of the Township Assistance applicant fails to provide one (1) or more basic necessity. This shall include expending the household's available financial resources for basic necessities in the sequence they come due or considered necessary and reasonable at the time the expenditure is made. The township, before continuing Township Assistance is provided, may require, in writing on the Form TA-1A, that the recipient expend a substantial portion of their monthly financial resource(s) on a specific recurring basic necessity. Failure to comply may result in a denial for a period **not to exceed sixty (60) days. (IC 12-20-16-1)**

1.10.04 RECERTIFICATION - The township trustee will not extend additional or continuing aid to an individual or a household unless the individual or household files an affidavit with the request for assistance affirming how, if at all, the personal conditions of the individual or the household have changed from that set forth in the most recent application (Form TA-1B). Applications for Township Assistance are considered valid for a period not to exceed 180 days. During the 180 day period all requests will be processed on a month by month basis.

1.10.05 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 in which they are requesting assistance their permanent place of residence. The township may consider the conduct of the applicant, both active and passive, as it may reveal an intent to reside within a given household and within their respective township. Except for verified emergencies affecting applicants who are temporarily in the township for reasons other than Township Assistance, they must be residents of the township in which they apply. The following items may be used to determine residency or the person's intent to make the township their permanent place of residency. **(IC 12-20-8)**

1. Mailing address
2. Telephone listing
3. Driver's license or state issued-ID
4. Voter registration card
5. Utility billing
6. Motor vehicle registration
7. Addresses given to former employers and others
8. U. S. Postal Service change of address notices
9. The return, in a completed fashion, of the landlord's housing information verification statement
10. Where the applicant came from and how they supported themselves there (i.e. job, SNAP (Food Stamps), TANF, Township Assistance, Subsidized Housing, Medicaid, etc.)

11. What means of transportation brought them (applicant household) to this township and how it was paid
12. Were they invited or promised assistance by anyone such as relatives, friends, or other social service agencies
13. Any other item, documentation, or verification requested from the applicant
14. Undocumented alien or un-emancipated youth will not be eligible for Township Assistance benefits
15. If in a temporary / transient location (sleeping in car, hotel, etc.), where the last permanent residence was

1.10.06 PERMANENT RESIDENCY - All applicants for Township Assistance must be residents of the township as verified by the provisions of Section 1.10.05 sub-paragraph (1) through (15) of these standards. In case of emergency, however, the township may provide temporary assistance to applicants who are temporarily in the township unless the applicant is specifically in the township for Township Assistance benefits or has come from another St. Joseph County township to stay in temporary / transient shelter within the past 30 days. This will not be interpreted or construed to mean that individuals living in adjoining townships should come to the larger urban township for shelter assistance. The township in which they presently reside or are found to be in distress is still obligated to investigate the circumstances of the distressed person(s) and render whatever assistance is necessary. Consequently, each St. Joseph County township may refer individuals falling into this category to the appropriate township. An individual in the United States without the permission of the Immigration and Naturalization Service is ineligible to receive Township Assistance.

In order to be considered a resident of a township, a person must be able to establish the legal right to be in the United States. A citizen, including a child born in the United States regardless of parentage, or a non-citizen person possessing documentation, such as a permanent resident alien card, allowing them to reside in the United States, may establish residency for purposes of township assistance. In the case of a mixed household, where some members are not legally allowed to reside in the United States, a trustee should only count the members of the household who are legally allowed to reside in the United States for purposes of providing township assistance. **(IC 12-20-8-1,2,3,4 & 7 & IC 12-14-2.5-3)**

1.10.07 TEMPORARY LIVING IN ANOTHER TOWNSHIP - Individuals temporarily living in another township when their immediate past residency was in Portage Township will not be denied benefits on the grounds of residency. Nor will Portage Township provide assistance, other than that which is required by law for transients, to individuals who are temporarily living in Portage Township when their immediate past residency was outside the boundaries of Portage Township. Individuals living or spending time in a charitable or benevolent institution, or in a hospital located in Portage Township will not be considered a Portage Township resident unless their immediate past residency was within the boundaries of Portage Township. **(IC12-20-8-5)**

1.10.08 COOPERATION - During the interview process, the applicant will be required to complete an Application for Township Assistance on behalf of the household and must provide the names of all household members and any information necessary for determining the household's eligibility for assistance. The household will be required to cooperate with an investigation of finances, responsibilities, and eligibility to receive governmental or quasi-governmental assistance. The investigation may include a home visit and/or contact with their relatives who may be willing and able to assist them. Except in cases of emergencies, an applicant must apply for all other forms of public assistance before being granted continuing Township Assistance.

1.10.09 AGE - Any individual or household where the head of the household is eighteen (18) years of age or older, or where the individual or household head is legally and completely emancipated at an earlier age, will be eligible for assistance from the office of the Township Trustee. Un-emancipated youth requesting township assistance will automatically be reported to the St. Joseph County Office of Families and Children.

1.20.00 “HOUSEHOLD” DEFINED - “Household”, for the purposes of these guidelines, means an individual living alone, a family related by blood, or a group of individuals living together at one (1) residence as a domestic unit with mutual economic dependency.

1.20.01 “RELATIVES” DEFINED - For the purposes of these Standards and Guidelines, the term “relative” shall include only the parent, stepparent, child, stepchild, sibling, stepsibling, grandparent, stepgrandparent, grandchild, or stepgrandchild of the applicant for township assistance.

1.20.02 “EMERGENCY” DEFINED - The term “emergency” means an unpredictable circumstance or a series of unpredictable circumstances that : (1) place the health or safety of a household or a member of a household in jeopardy; and (2) cannot be remedied in a timely manner by means other than township assistance.

1.30.00 APPLICATION REVIEW - In case of emergency, the trustee will accept and promptly act upon a verified request for emergency assistance. In all other non-emergency requests, the trustee shall act on the application not later than seventy-two (72) hours after receiving the completed application. Weekends and legal holidays are excluded from the 72 hour rule. The 72 hour “time clock” commences the moment the completed application is received by the township. An action of “PENDING” permits an additional 72 hours and must include a statement from the township listing the specific reasons for the action. **(IC 12-20-6-7 & 8)**

1.30.01 NOTICE OF ACTION /APPEALS - The township will notify the applicant, as required by law, of the action taken by the township upon their request for Township Assistance. The township shall do the following:

1. Mail the Notice of Action (Form TA-1A) or provide personal notice not later than 72 hours, excluding weekends and legal holidays, after receiving the **completed** application.
2. The notice shall include information that notifies the applicant of their right to appeal the trustee decision and where the appeal is to be filed.
3. The notice shall include (a) the type and amount of assistance granted, (b) the type and amount of assistance denied or partially granted, and (c) the specific reasons for denying all or part of the assistance requested.
4. The township shall not render a decision on a request for Township Assistance without a completed application for township assistance (Form TA-1) on file in the office of the township. This also precludes the township trustee from rendering a decision via the telephone or any other electronic device.

1.30.02 NON EMERGENCY REVIEW - If, before granting Township Assistance, the trustee determines that an applicant or a member of the household may be eligible for public assistance other than Township Assistance, the applicant or household member shall, when referred by the trustee, make an application and comply with all necessary requirements for completing the application process for public assistance administered by the county office of the Division of Family Resources, or any other federal or state governmental entity.

1.30.03 REFERRALS - All applicants for Township Assistance and members of the applicant’s household are required to comply with all referrals from the trustee to other public or private assistance

programs within fifteen (15) working days of the referral date. Failure to comply may result in a denial for not more than sixty (60) days.

1.30.04 RESPONSIBLE RELATIVES - If it is ascertained that the applicant/recipient has any relative able to assist him or his household, the office of the township trustee shall, before granting aid a second time, ask the relatives to help the applicant or member of the applicant's household, either with material relief or by furnishing them with employment; but if the relatives refuse, then the Trustee may assist the household as may be otherwise provided herein.

1.30.05 TRUSTEE'S ECONOMICAL RESPONSIBILITY - If the Trustee determines an eligible applicant has any essential needs, the Trustee has the authority to provide, and will provide, them in the most economical and practical manner.

1.40.00 DENIALS - Denials may be issued to applicants for one or more of the following reasons with a stated duration of the denial period:

1.40.01 KNOWINGLY AND WILLINGLY FALSIFYING THEIR APPLICATION, or by misrepresenting the facts or withholding vital information, solely to gain township benefits shall be cause to be denied for a period **not to exceed sixty (60) days**, commencing on the date of the improper conduct or the date the last assistance was extended based on the improper conduct. The township may also make a criminal referral to the county prosecutor's office. Individual applicants convicted of "Welfare Fraud" shall be denied township assistance in accordance with the provisions of **IC 12-20-6-6.5**.

1.40.02 FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE WORKFARE REQUIREMENTS - As outlined by these standards, the trustee may require applicants, after first receiving township assistance, to participate in the township's workfare program. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in a denial **not to exceed 180 days. (IC 12-20-11-1)** This rule also applies to anyone who fails to comply with workfare requirements in any other township within the State of Indiana.

1.40.03 WASTING RESOURCES - The term "wasted resources" means the amount of money or resources expended by an applicant or an adult member of an applicant's household seeking township assistance during the thirty (30) days before the date of application or request for assistance for items or services that are not basic necessities, which could and should have been applied to the household's basic necessities. Income, resources, or tax supported services lost or reduced as a result of a voluntary act during the **sixty (60) days** before the date of application for Township Assistance by an adult member of the applicant household, unless the adult can establish a good reason for the act, are wasted resources. (**IC 12-7-2-200.5**) Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

1. **Voluntarily Terminating Gainful Employment**, or being involuntarily terminated for just cause, i.e. absenteeism, theft, or willful misconduct. A denial from the Indiana Department of Workforce Development may also be used as grounds for being denied Township Assistance benefits.
2. **Failure to Actively Seek and/or Accept Gainful Employment** when offered, whether the compensation for the work will be payable in money (at least minimum wage) or in house rent, or in commodities consisting of the necessities of life
3. **Eviction for Just Cause**- Being evicted from subsidized housing for violations of regulations and guidelines or voluntarily terminating housing without just cause.

1.40.04 FAILURE TO ACCEPT ADEQUATE FREE OR LOW COST SHELTER

ARRANGEMENTS - Shelter accommodations provided by relatives or others should be considered a resource and something the applicant should not refuse without good reason. The township is not required to provide shelter assistance to an otherwise eligible individual if the individual's most recent residence was provided by the individual's parent, guardian, or foster parent, and the individual, without just cause, leaves that residence for the shelter for which the individual seeks assistance.

1.40.05 VIOLENCE, THREATS OF VIOLENCE - The township will deny any individual who threatens violence to the township staff or property, and/or uses abusive or threatening language while on township property or while talking with a township staff person. Denial up to **sixty (60) days. (IC 12-20-17-2)**

1.40.06 FAILURE TO COMPLETE AND MAINTAIN MONTHLY REPORT FORMS as required by governmental programs offering assistance for the basic necessities of living; failure to cooperate with other governmental agency programs; or failure to comply with the rules and regulations of an assisting governmental agency. Denial up to **sixty (60) days. (IC 12-20-6-5 & 5.5)**

1.40.07 SUFFICIENT INCOME - Income in excess of the amounts found on **Appendix A** may be the basis for a denial. However, individual applicants may have unpredictable circumstances or unusual expenses which would, when reviewed, indicate a necessary expenditure from the Township Assistance fund. Sanctions by other governmental agencies will not be considered as a justification for waiving the Income Guidelines unless the trustee determines that the action/inaction of the applicant was not intentionally negligent.

1.40.08 FAILURE TO COOPERATE - An applicant may be denied Township Assistance services when they, or an adult member of their household, fail to cooperate or provide the township with the necessary information for determining eligibility, including failure to provide required information / documentation to other tax supported public assistance programs. The township does not require an applicant to obtain verifications when the township already has, or can readily obtain, the needed information.

1.40.09 FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE IN AN EDUCATION OR SELF-HELP PROGRAM - Applicants and all able-bodied adult members of the household must, when referred by the township, participate fully in all self-help programs offered by a federal, state, or local governmental entity, or by a nonprofit agency within the county or an adjoining township in another county.

1.40.10 FREQUENT REPORTING OF THE LOSS OR THEFT OF SNAP (FOOD STAMPS) OR MONEY - Applicants who frequently report the loss or theft of SNAP (Food Stamps) or money will be denied Township Assistance benefits. Applicants claiming loss or theft must file a police report.

1.40.11 FAILURE TO LIQUIDATE COUNTABLE ASSETS – With notice given by the trustee, households must liquidate nonessential assets within sixty (60) days of the date of their initial application for Township Assistance before additional township benefits can be granted. Refer to 2.00.00 of this document.

1.40.12 ASSIGNMENT OR TRANSFER OF ASSETS - An applicant may be denied township benefits whenever the applicant or another member of an applicant's household makes an assignment or transfer of assets during the six (6) month period immediately preceding the filing of an affidavit and application for Township Assistance. Assets considered must be of sufficient value to have rendered the applicant ineligible for Township Assistance.

1.40.13 REFUSING TO SIGN - Whenever it is determined that an applicant or a member of the applicant's household has applied for benefits through the Social Security Administration (SSI/SSDI) or other public assistance programs and may receive a "Retro" payment, the township may require them to sign an SSI "Reimbursement Authorization" or enter into a subrogation agreement as provided by statute for the repayment of any Township Assistance granted. Failure to sign such documents will result in a denial.

1.40.14 FAILURE TO FILE PATERNITY ACTIONS when necessary and appropriate, or failing to take the necessary legal action to pursue child support unless just cause can be determined. **(IC 12-14-2-24)**

1.40.15 PREVIOUS ABILITY TO PAY - The township shall not be obligated to pay for services or the cost of goods incurred by an applicant or member of an applicant's household during the period the applicant or a member of the applicant's household had sufficient income or resources to have paid for either the goods or service. Lump sum income (i.e. insurance settlements, tax refunds, grants/loans, etc.) will be examined for ability to pay for basic necessities exceeding a thirty (30) day period.

1.40.16 MOVING INTO OR COMING TO THE TOWNSHIP for the specific purpose of applying for and/or receiving township Assistance services. (See 1.10.06 & 1.10.07)

1.40.17 AFFIRMATION OF DENIAL - Notwithstanding any other provision of these guidelines, the township will not extend aid to or for the benefit of an individual if that aid would pay for goods or services provided to or for the benefit of the individual during a period that the individual has previously applied for and been denied Township Assistance, nor will the township be obligated for the cost of basic necessities incurred on behalf of the household in which the individual (who was previously denied) resides during the duration period of the denial.

1.50.00 EMPLOYMENT - If an applicant for Township Assistance is in good health, or if any members of the household are so, the trustee shall insist that those able to labor shall seek employment, and the trustee shall refuse to furnish any aid until he/she is satisfied that the persons claiming help are endeavoring to find work for themselves. Each able-bodied adult member of the household will, at a minimum, be required to maintain an updated employment file with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, as well as provide other reasonable documentation that they are endeavoring to find employment. The township may also require any adult member of the applicant household to complete a minimum number of employment applications prior to receiving continued Township Assistance. These forms may be required on a monthly basis. The recipient is required to dress and conduct his or herself appropriately to increase every opportunity for employment.

1.50.01 MEDICAL EXAMINATION - An applicant/recipient who claims a physical and/or mental inability to seek and/or accept employment, must provide the Trustee with a current doctor's statement or accept a referral to obtain a current medical evaluation verifying such condition. Similarly, ongoing recipients may be required periodically to present an updated doctor's statement for their file. In addition thereto, they shall provide a medical release to the Trustee upon request for the purpose of obtaining medical records. The Trustee may provide for medical examinations where such an examination is necessary to determine an applicant/recipient's ability to work for assistance. **(IC 12-20-10-3.5)**

1.50.02 REFUSAL TO WORK - If the applicant is offered employment by the trustee, regardless of whether the compensation is in the form of money (at least minimum wage), rent, or other necessities; or refuses employment at a

reasonable compensation offered by any other individual, governmental agency, or employer; the township trustee shall not furnish assistance to the applicant until they perform the work or show just cause for not performing the work.

1.60.00 TANF RECIPIENT HOUSEHOLDS - Townships are **not obligated** to extend aid to a Township Assistance applicant or any member of a Township Assistance applicant's household if any member of that household has been denied assistance or sanctioned by the local office of the Indiana Division of Family Resources for non-compliance or violations of Title 12 Article 14 of the Indiana Code. The township may continue to refuse Township Assistance until the sanction or denial by the Indiana Division of Family Resources has been lifted or rectified.

1.70.00 INCOME GUIDELINES - Income guidelines for determining township assistance eligibility shall be based upon the Federal Poverty Level as outlined on **Appendix A**.

1.70.01 COUNTABLE INCOME - This term means a monetary amount either paid to an applicant or a member of an applicant's household not more than thirty (30) days before the date of application for Township Assistance, or accrued and legally available for withdrawal by an applicant or a member of an applicant's household at the time of application or not more than thirty (30) days after the date of application for Township Assistance. The term also includes:

1. Gross wages before mandatory deductions
2. Social Security benefits, including Supplemental Security Income
3. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
4. Unemployment compensation
5. Workers' compensation (except compensation that is restricted for the payment of medical expenses)
6. Vacation pay
7. Sick benefits
8. Strike benefits
9. Private or public pensions
10. Taxable income from self-employment
11. The value of bartered goods and services provided by another individual for the payment of nonessential needs on behalf of an applicant or an applicant's household if monetary compensation or the provision of basic necessities would have been reasonably available from that individual
12. Child support
13. Gifts of cash, goods, or services
14. Educational grants and loans to the extent that they are intended to cover basic living needs. If the grant / loan is intended to cover more than thirty (30) days of expenses, the township may consider the extent to which it was intended.
15. Other sources of revenue or services that the township trustee may reasonably determine to be countable income

The household's total gross monthly income in the previous month will be projected for the coming month including only income that is reasonably certain to be received within the coming month. Uncertain income will not be counted. A household's income must fall within the township's financial guidelines to be eligible for township assistance.

1.80.00 SPECIAL CONDITIONS / TEMPORARY AID - Exceptional financial obligations, emergencies, and/or extraordinary expenses or circumstances, as may be determined, documented, and approved by the Trustee, may give justification to TEMPORARILY waive certain provisions of these guidelines and grant temporary aid.

1.90.00 RECEIPTS - When a household applies for Township Assistance, both initially and on a continuing month by month basis, members of the household must verify HOW their income was expended. Expenditures for court related expenses (excluding those for defense), such as *attorney fees, probationary fees, Drug and Alcohol program fees, fines, court costs, bail, user fees for an In Home Detention program, restitution, or any other expenditure directly or indirectly associated with the applicant or a member of the applicant's household, because of their involvement with the courts,* will not be recognized as a legitimate expense. It will, however, be counted as income available for the household's basic necessities.

1.90.01 EXPENDITURES - Only receipts for the basic necessities of living will be recognized as an acceptable expenditure. The township will require receipts for all expenditures of income/benefits received by any and all members of the household. Handwritten receipts provided by friends or relatives are considered unacceptable. Undocumented expenditures will be counted as income available for the household's basic necessities. Expenditures for items not considered "**basic necessities**" will not be recognized. Receipts should closely balance with reported income. At a minimum, applicant must provide a printout for the last thirty (30) days of expenditures when using a bank account or other debit card (i.e. unemployment benefits, Social Security income, etc.). Expenditures for basic necessities that are required in relation to a verifiable disability, as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act, will be excluded from countable income.

1.90.02 CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS - Child support payments may be recognized as a legitimate expense, provided the support payments are verified by the trustee as such. At the discretion of the township trustee, child support payments may be required to be processed through a county clerk's office and the figure to be recognized may not exceed the amount originally ordered by the court. Payments made to cover child support delinquency may not be considered.

1.90.03 BASIC NECESSITIES are defined, for the purpose of Township Assistance Administration, to include those services or items essential to meet the minimum standards of health, safety, and decency such as: *food, shelter, clothing (including footwear), medical, transportation to seek and accept employment, household supplies, essential utility service,* and other necessary services or items as the trustee may determine. Basic telephone services are allowable at the discretion of the trustee; however, the township will not be obligated for payment of such services. **(IC 12-7-2-20.5)**

1.90.04 TAXES - Documentation of mandatory state, local, and federal taxes will be recognized by the trustee as necessary expenditures.

2.00.00 ASSETS - Households requesting assistance must also report all assets belonging to any member of the household. Assets which may affect eligibility are those which are available to the household, but are not necessary for health, safety, or decent living standard of a household that:

1. are owned wholly or in part by the applicant or a member of the applicant's household;
2. the applicant or the household member has the legal right to sell or liquidate; and
3. includes:
 - a. Real property other than property that is used for the production of income or that is NOT the primary residence of the household
 - b. Savings and checking accounts, certificates of deposit, bonds, stocks, and other intangibles that have a net cash value
 - c. Boats, motorcycles, other vehicles, or any other personal property used solely for recreational or entertainment purposes
 - d. Tools, power equipment, etc.

- e. Camping trailers and/or recreational vehicles
- f. Jewelry (gold chains, rings, etc.) (excluding those of legitimate sentimental value)
- g. Guns and/or hunting equipment
- h. Any other item of value which the trustee may determine as a non-essential asset

2.10.00 LIQUIDATION – A trustee may require that all liquid assets (bank accounts, bonds, certificates of deposit, etc.) be liquidated immediately. Recreational equipment (boats, motors, camping trailers, motorcycles, etc.) must also be liquidated in order to receive continued assistance from the township. All members of the household may be expected to liquidate any of the assets listed in 2.00.00 (a through h), or other unnecessary items of a similar nature, as soon as possible, but no longer than sixty (60) days from the date their initial application is filed. However, non-essential assets purchased by any member of a household after having applied for Township Assistance, must be liquidated immediately before further assistance can be authorized. This would also include the applicant and/or members of the applicant’s household entering into a rental or lease agreement for non-essential household items. The township highly recommends, or in some cases insists, the termination of any and all credit cards in the name of any adult member of an applicant’s household. The following factors will be taken into consideration by the township when it is necessary to require an applicant to liquidate assets. **(IC 12-7-2-44.6)**

2.10.01 MARKETABILITY OF THE ASSET - The true monetary value of the item to be liquidated may not be realized because of existing market conditions, i.e. sale of boat or motorcycle during cold winter months.

2.10.02 EXPECTED DURATION - The length of time that the applicant/household may be reasonably expected to remain on township assistance. Example: Temporary employment or the major “bread winner” is on strike, so the expected duration for which the household may need assistance appears to be of a short duration (approximately sixty (60) days).

2.10.03 LEASED/RENTED ITEMS – The trustee can determine whether or not the items rented or leased are necessary for basic living. Or, if needed, whether the same items could have been purchased or secured more economically. Example: An individual may rent a cooking stove and/or refrigerator from a “Rent to Own” facility. These are, of course, considered basic needs, but the cost of renting will probably be greater than the direct purchase of a used item. Other examples: storage units/garages & other monthly recurring items/auto-delivery obligations. These items may be required to be discontinued as a condition of continuing assistance.

2.10.04 EXEMPTIONS - Assets which are exempt from liquidation will include one (1) house in which the household resides and one (1) automobile. However, a client may be required to liquidate and retrieve the equity in a house if their expected duration of needing Township Assistance exceeds a reasonable time frame as determined by these standards (See 2.10.02). Whenever Township Assistance funds are used directly or indirectly to pay the household’s mortgage payments, the township may place a lien against the property in order to recover the equity value of such payments.

2.20.00 FOOD ORDER LIMITATIONS - It shall be unlawful for the township to purchase out of the Township Assistance fund food for an applicant or a household that is eligible to participate in the federal Food Stamp program. The township may purchase food for an eligible food stamp applicant or household only under the following conditions:

1. During the interim when an applicant or a household is awaiting a determination of eligibility from the food stamp office or is awaiting benefits.

2. Upon the loss of the food supply through unavoidable spoilage, fire, or other acts of nature.
3. Upon a written statement from a physician indicating one or more members of the household needs a special diet, the cost of which is greater than can be purchased with the household's allotment of SNAP (Food Stamps).
4. When the trustee determines that a household (including a one-member household) is in need of supplementary food assistance, provided, however, that the household has participated in the food stamp program to the fullest extent allowable and that such supplementary food assistance is given solely upon the circumstances in each individual case.
5. Households reporting the theft of SNAP (Food Stamps) must first file a "theft report" with the appropriate law enforcement agency before any assistance will be given. Habitually reporting the theft or loss of SNAP (Food Stamps) and/or tax supported cash awards will result in a denial.

2.20.10 FOOD ORDER ALLOTMENTS - Food allotments provided to an eligible household are determined by the household's size and other criteria as established by these standards. Food orders can only be purchased directly from a combined grocery and meat market. The township may administer Township Assistance food allotment on a weekly basis or less, depending on the circumstances of the requesting household. The township may, instead of providing direct Township Assistance food assistance, refer and otherwise eligible household to a governmentally or privately funded food pantry. See **Appendix B** for food purchase order limits.

2.30.00 NON-FOOD ITEMS (HOUSEHOLD ESSENTIALS) Necessary supplies, such as minimal household furnishings, utensils, appliances, personal hygiene, and toiletry items. The township will request that the applicant be specific when requesting household items. The township may then include these specific items on the township purchase order or refer the client to a governmentally or privately funded pantry. See **Appendix C** for household essential purchase order limits.

2.40.00 SHELTER - The township will provide aid in whatever form is necessary to provide shelter or prevent the loss of shelter so long as such aid constitutes the most economical and practical method of relieving the applicant. Shelter is defined for the purpose of Township Assistance as a house, a mobile home, an apartment, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters, or if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters where the occupant or intended occupant does not live and eat with any other individual in the building; and has direct access to the occupant's living quarters from the outside of the building or through a common hall. Exception to the definition of "shelter" may include temporary group homes and/or shelters. The amount paid by the township does not exceed the amounts listed in **Appendix D**.

2.40.10 INFERIOR HOUSING - If the trustee determines that a housing unit for which payment is requested is substantially below minimum standards of health, safety, or construction, the trustee, when necessary, shall assist the applicant in obtaining appropriate alternate shelter. **(IC 12-20-16-17)**

2.40.20 SHELTER LIMITATIONS - Shelter assistance may not be paid to an applicant's relative who is the 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 six (6) months.

Nor will the township recognize expenditures (receipts) paid to relatives when living in the same household. 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. For the purpose of this section, the term "relative" includes only the parent, stepparent, child, stepchild, sibling, stepsibling, grandparent, stepgrandparent, grandchild, or stepgrandchild of a Township Assistance applicant. **(IC 12-20-6-10)**

2.40.30 SHELTER DEPOSITS - A township is not required to spend Township Assistance funds for a shelter damage or security deposit or an eligible applicant or household. However, the trustee may encumber money for a shelter damage or security deposit by making an agreement with a property owner who furnishes shelter for the recipient/household. The agreement must be in accordance with **IC 12-20-16-17**.

2.40.40 SHELTER ENCUMBERED - In situations where an applicant is renting from a relative with an encumbered mortgage for the housing being used, the township may pay only the maximum allowable rent or the amount of the mortgage payment, less principal, whichever is the lesser. Receipts signed by relatives for rental payments from an income source other than Township Assistance will not be recognized for more than the actual mortgage payment.

2.40.50 TEMPORARY RESIDENTS - The definition of residency/household shall not be construed to mean temporary living arrangements made available by friends, relatives, their acquaintances, or social service agencies, either public or private. The residency must not be established for the primary purpose of qualifying for Township Assistance. **See Sections 1.10.06 & 1.10.07.**

2.40.51 SHELTER MOVING - Clients moving within sixty (60) days immediately preceding their application for Township Assistance, from a shelter provided by a relative, or any form, kind, or type of subsidized shelter, will be declared ineligible for Township Assistance. The burden of establishing good, just, and reasonable cause for having moved shall be upon the applicant.

2.40.60 OTHER SHELTER - The township shall not be obligated to pay the cost of shelter assistance to or for an applicant when an applicant's relative purchases a house or mobile home for the intended purpose of having the applicant live in the unit. The paragraph applies to real estate purchases or other property transactions made within ninety (90) days prior to making application for Township Assistance, anytime immediately following the filing of a Township Assistance application, or during the period an applicant remains otherwise eligible for Township Assistance. The township shall not be obligated to pay, directly or indirectly, the cost of mortgage payments when the property in question is part of a potential property settlement in a pending court proceeding, such as a divorce or probate.

2.40.70 LIVING WITH RELATIVES - The township is not required to provide shelter assistance to an otherwise eligible individual if the individual's most recent residence was provided by the individual's parent, guardian, or foster parent, and the individual, without just cause, leaves that residence for the shelter for which the individual seeks assistance. If an individual as described in this section becomes a member of another Township Assistance household, then the entire household may be denied assistance.

2.40.80 TAX SUPPORTED SHELTER PROGRAMS - The township is not under any obligation to enter into a contract or pay temporary shelter cost on behalf of an otherwise eligible applicant to a public or private agency which is wholly or partially funded by federal or state funds.

2.40.90 SUBSIDIZED SHELTER ASSISTANCE - The township will not be obligated to subsidize or otherwise provide shelter assistance from the Township Assistance fund to households living in shelter units under the control and within the power of another governmental or quasi-governmental agency or municipality unless it is via an approved application from an individual.

3.00.00 UTILITY SERVICE / HEATING FUELS - The trustee, in cases of necessity and if the applicant otherwise qualifies, will authorize the payment of water, gas, sewer, heating and cooking fuels, an electric services. In addition, the trustee may authorize the payment of delinquent bills, only when necessary to prevent their termination or to restore terminated service. Following are the exceptions and limitations:

1. All utilities must be in the name of an adult member of the requesting household, an emancipated minor who is the head of the household, a landlord, or a former member of the household if the applicant proves that the applicant is responsible for the payment of the bill.
2. Before payment will so be authorized, the applicant/recipient must have first attempted to make reasonable arrangements with the appropriate utility company, and in the event that arrangements have been made, the trustee will only pay that part of the agreed-upon payments, which are beyond the ability of the applicant/recipient to pay.
3. The township will not pay for utility service received as a result of a fraudulent act by any adult member of a household requesting township assistance.
4. The township will not pay utility deposits.
5. Fuel oil or L.P. gas must be ordered by the Trustee. No payment on fuel bills will be made if ordered by the applicant.
6. The township will not consider the payment of estimated utility bills.
7. The township will not consider the payment of delinquent utility bills if the applicant was ineligible for Township Assistance at the time the cost was incurred, or if the delinquent bill is older than twenty-four (24) months.
8. Individual applicants for Township Assistance needing utility assistance on a continuing basis shall be informed by the township to request such assistance monthly. Failure to do so may result in a denial for failing to cooperate.

3.10.00 ENERGY PROGRAMS - Applicants seeking township assistance with the payment of energy bills must first utilize all available federal and state programs designed to assist indigent households with the cost of energy, and must furnish the township with written proof that an application for such assistance has been requested from other governmental sources. **(IC 12-20-16-3)**

3.20.00 TRANSPORTATION - Certain assistance may include transportation to seek and accept employment on a reasonable basis. Transportation assistance to public and private social agencies to which an applicant or recipient is referred by the trustee may be provided if applicant has no means of transportation and such applicable agency is not within reasonable walking distance.

3.20.10 TRANSPORTATION / DEPORTATION OF NONRESIDENTS - It is unlawful to furnish any nonresident of the township with transportation until after the legal residence of the person applying has been ascertained beyond a reasonable doubt. Any transportation furnished to such a person shall be in the direction of their legal residence unless it is shown that the individual in need has a valid claim for support, or a means of support, in some other place to which the individual asks to be sent. The township may, under this section, require an applicant to perform workfare prior to receiving transportation assistance. **(IC 12-20-16-11)**

3.20.20 DEPORTATION RE-APPLICATION - An individual may be denied township assistance for not more than one hundred and eighty (180) days whenever the individual or a member of the

individual's household has been: sent by a township where the individual does not reside to a location outside the township at the individual's request or by court order; and transported to a location outside the township at public expense; and knowingly reapplies for assistance in the township from which the individual or member of the individual's household was sent. **(IC 12-20-9-6)**

3.20.30 AUTOMOBILES - 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, seek employment, or for other necessary reason determined by the trustee. Then, the reasonableness of the expenditure will be considered. Special consideration will be given to those with physical or mental disabilities.

3.30.00 BURIAL OR CREMATION AND FUNERAL - The trustee shall provide a person to superintend (take charge) and authorize either the funeral and burial or cremation of the deceased individual. If it is determined that the deceased individual is a resident of another township in Indiana, the township shall notify the trustee of that township, who shall then provide a person to superintend and authorize either the funeral and burial or cremation of the deceased individual not leaving sufficient resources (i.e. cash, automobile, and/or real property) to defray expenses. Contributions or payment of benefits from any other source **may be** deducted from the township's allowable maximum (see **Appendix E**). The township will also require a "death certificate" and an itemized (invoice) statement from the funeral home before payment can be authorized. **(IC 12-20-16-12)**

3.30.10 REQUEST FOR BURIAL OR CREMATION AND FUNERAL - The township requires that a surviving member of the deceased person's family make a formal request for "Burial or Cremation and Funeral" assistance before providing a person to superintend. If there are no surviving family members, the person appointed to superintend will make the formal request for burial assistance by completing the standard Form TA-1 Application for Township Assistance. Family members of the deceased person, who are financially able, will be requested to financially contribute to the payment of the funeral and burial or cremation expense. Any amounts contributed **may be** deducted from the township's maximums.

3.30.20 BURIAL TRANSPORTATION / EXPENSES - The township will not pay for the cost of transporting the remains of an indigent person back to the township unless it can be determined that the deceased was, in fact, a resident of the township at the time of death and the transportation cost can be accomplished within the amount determined as most economical.

3.40.00 MEDICAL SERVICES - The township will, in cases of necessity, promptly provide medical assistance for qualifying Township Assistance applicants who are not provided for in public institutions; have coverage under a private insurance policy; or are receiving governmentally subsidized medical benefits, such as Medicaid or Medicare. The township shall only pay the cost of the following medical services for the eligible and qualifying poor of the township: **(IC 12-20-16-2)**

3.40.10 PRESCRIPTION DRUGS - The township will compensate for prescription drugs, when prescribed by a physician, for eligible Township Assistance clients, provided the client contacts the township office for authorization first. **(IC 12-20-16-2)**

3.40.20 OFFICE CALLS - It is the responsibility of the applicant to make their own appointments for visits to medical service providers. Clients requesting authorization for a visit to a medical service provider, except in case of emergencies, must first obtain authorization from the township. The cost of visits to a medical specialist cannot be paid by the township, unless the applicant was first referred to a specialist by their attending physician. **(IC-12-20-16-2)**

3.40.30 EMERGENCY ROOM TREATMENT - The township may pay for necessary emergency room/urgent care center treatment that is of an emergency nature. However, a medical emergency does not exist in situations where the illness/injury could, and would, 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 visit. (IC 12-20-16-2)

3.40.31 REPORT OF EMERGENCY TREATMENT - Emergency office calls, duly prescribed drugs and necessary emergency room medical treatment received in a hospital emergency room/urgent care center may be paid by the township, provided a proper request for the service is made to the township office, by the applicant or a member of the applicant's household, within fifteen (15) working days of the time the services are rendered. The medical service provider must indicate the services they provided on a "REPORT OF MEDICAL AID RENDERED" Form TA-4, properly executed and signed by the service provider and the applicant and submitted to the township within the prescribed time limits, or it shall result in a denial.

3.40.40 DENTAL CARE AND TREATMENT - The payment of dental care and/or treatment shall be limited to those costs which are medically necessary to eliminate pain and/or infection in the most economical and practical way. The township may pay the cost of denture replacements and/or repairs not covered by other tax supported programs. However, the township will not pay for the initial cost of dentures. (IC 12-20-16-2)

3.40.50 EYEGLASSES - The township may pay the cost of eye exams, eyeglasses, eyeglass repair, or eyeglass replacement for eligible Township Assistance applicants provided the applicant has exhausted all other tax supported programs providing a similar service. (IC 12-20-16-2)

3.40.60 OTHER PRESCRIBED TREATMENTS – The township may pay for other treatments prescribed by an attending physician under IC 25-22.5 including: *pre-operation testing, over-the-counter drugs, x-rays and laboratory testing, visits to a medical specialist when referred, physical therapy, canes, walkers, wheelchairs, braces, and repair or replacement of a prosthesis* when not provided for by other tax supported state or federal programs.

3.50.00 WORKFARE (RECIPIENT DEFINED) - The term *recipient* as it relates to workfare means a *single person receiving Township Assistance or, when Township Assistance is received by a household with two (2) or more persons, that member of the household most suited to perform available work*. Suitability to perform available work shall be determined by the Trustee, who may provide for medical examinations necessary to make the determination. (IC 12-20-10-3.5)

3.50.10 WORKFARE REQUIREMENTS - The township shall require a recipient household to do any work needed to be done within the township, an adjoining township, any governmental unit (including the state) having jurisdiction in those townships, or for a not-for-profit social service agency. (IC 12-20-1101)

3.50.20 WORKFARE OBLIGATION - Minimum criteria for satisfactory participation in the workfare program shall be established by the township with a maximum of one shift per day or five shifts per week. Unexcused absences for scheduled workfare assignments may result in the discontinuance of township assistance. Any workfare obligations *incurred in another township will be carried forward to the gaining township*, unless the applicant failed to comply, they shall be denied for one hundred and eighty (180) days. *Failure to comply with printed instructions on a work order will not*

only cancel the work order, but will also constitute ineligibility for further assistance for not more than one hundred and eighty (180) days, unless the recipient shows good cause for not performing the work.

3.50.30 WORKFARE PARTICIPATION - The recipient(s) is required to maintain the minimum criteria that is necessary for the fulfillment of his/her workfare responsibility until such time as his/her obligation with the township is satisfied. Recipients will not be permitted to voluntarily work in advance of receiving township assistance in order to accrue workfare credit. It is the sole responsibility of the recipient(s) to meet the criteria of workfare participation. In satisfying this obligation, only the recipient or members of the recipient's household will be allowed to perform the required work.

3.50.40 WORKFARE COMPENSATION - Work performed is considered "as satisfaction of a condition for Township Assistance and is not considered as services performed for remuneration." The recipient shall be required to do an amount of work that equals the value of assistance at a rate no less than \$15 per hour. This translates into hours the recipient will owe in total workfare hours.

3.50.50 WORKFARE EXCEPTIONS - Recipients may be excused from workfare for only the following reasons:

1. The obligated individual is not physically able to perform the proposed work
2. The obligated individual is a minor or is over sixty-five (65) years of age
3. The obligated individual is needed to care for an individual as a result of the individual's age or physical condition
4. The obligated individual has full-time employment at the time the recipient receives Township Assistance
5. The township trustee determines that there is no work available for any adult member of the recipient household
6. The individual(s) obligated is, at the direction of the trustee, attending educational courses or self-help classes
7. The individual is age 18 or older and enrolled in high school.

3.50.60 WORKFARE RESTRICTIONS - A recipient shall not be assigned to work which would result in displacement of any employees or in the reduction of hours worked by those employees. **(IC 12-20-11-1 g)**

3.50.70 OTHER WORKFARE CREDIT - As a condition of continuing eligibility, a trustee may require a recipient of Township Assistance or any member of a recipient's household to participate in an appropriate work training program that is offered to the recipient or a member of the recipient's household:

1. within the county
or
2. by a governmental entity.

While attending, the recipient would receive workfare "credit hours".

In the event the Trustee deems that an applicant/recipient would benefit in his/her search for employment by participating in employment counseling, job training, and/or educational programs referred by the Trustee, the applicant/recipient's refusal to participate in the same is deemed as a refusal to actively seek employment which will be grounds for denial or termination of Township Assistance.

3.60.00 SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME - Individuals awaiting a determination from the Social Security Administration for SSI/SSDI benefits will not be required to perform workfare during the initial

stages of the SSI/SSDI application process. Once the initial application for SSI/SSDI benefits has been denied by SSA, the applicant may, at this point, be obligated to perform workfare. Other members of an SSI applicant's household able to perform workfare will be required to participate and work his/her proportionate share of the workfare obligation. Example: A member of a multi-member household (three (3) members) awaiting an SSI determination shall be excused from performing workfare while the SSI determination is pending. Other adult members of the household will, however, be required to comply with the workfare obligation, but will only be required to work the remaining proportionate share. The township will obligate this particular household to two-thirds (2/3) of the assistance rendered as a workfare obligation. This holds true only if the entire household shared in the assistance, such as shelter, utilities, or food. If, however, assistance was rendered specifically for the SSI applicant, workfare will not be required, but the amount of this assistance may be recovered through the Interim Assistance Reimbursement program. Individuals currently receiving SSI monthly benefits are not automatically excused from workfare. In order to be excused, the individual SSI recipient must still meet one of the exempting reasons contained in 3.50.50 of these guidelines.

3.70.00 INTERIM PERIOD -“Interim period” means the period beginning when a township trustee obtains from a Township Assistance applicant or member of the applicant's household an agreement or authorization described in subsection 3.60.00 and ending when the Township Assistance applicant or member of the applicant's household receives the judgment, compensation, or monetary benefit or leaves the household.

3.80.00 REIMBURSEMENT/REPAYMENTS OF TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE EXPENDITURES - The repayment of assistance or a promise to repay assistance, may not constitute a condition of eligibility for Township Assistance, except as provided in 1.40.13 & 3.90.00 of these standards. A trustee may not seek federal or state reimbursement, foreclose a lien, or otherwise seek repayment of assistance for which a recipient or an adult member of the recipient's household has satisfactorily completed a workfare requirement.

3.80.10 REIMBURSEMENT FOR MEDICAL SERVICES - During the application pending period for Medicaid (**IC 12-15**) or other governmental medical program, the trustee may provide interim medical services if the individual is reasonably complying with all requirements of the application process and, unless prohibited by law, the township will seek reimbursement for the payment of medical services from Township Assistance funds, provided the individual for which the services were rendered is eligible for medical services under a state medical plan. (**IC 12-20-16-2 e**)

3.80.20 ESTATE CLAIMS / REIMBURSEMENT FROM - A claim may be filed against the estate of a Township Assistance recipient who dies, leaving an estate, and is not survived by a: (1) spouse, (2) disabled adult dependent, or (3) dependent child less than eighteen (18) years of age for the value of Township Assistance given to the recipient before the recipient's death, subject to **IC 12-20-11-5(b)**. For the purposes of this section, the estate of a Township Assistance recipient includes any money or other personal property in the possession of a coroner under **IC 36-2-14-11**.

3.80.30 REIMBURSEMENT EXCLUSION - A township trustee may not seek federal or state reimbursement, foreclose a lien, or otherwise seek repayment of assistance for which a recipient or an adult member of the recipient's household has satisfactorily completed a workfare requirement.

3.90.00 FUTURE THIRD PARTY BENEFITS - If it is anticipated that a Township Assistance applicant has the potential of receiving a judgment, compensation, or monetary benefits from a third party, the trustee may require the applicant to enter into a subordination agreement or sign an authorization for the repayment of any Township Assistance benefits provided by the township during this interim period. Failure of an applicant to sign the necessary authorization for reimbursement to the township shall result in a denial of Township Assistance benefits.

4.00.00 REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE (REPORTING) - The township may from time to time report and recommend to other governmental agencies (TANF or Social Security Administration) the misuse of funds by a recipient. The township may officially recommend when reporting misuse that the recipient's cash "award" 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 as the applicant initiates and executes the proper instruments for obtaining a payee to handle their finances. The township may agree to serve as the payee.

4.10.00 APPEALS - Anytime an applicant for Township Assistance is not satisfied with all or part of the decision of the township trustee, they may appeal that decision to the board of county commissioners. Appeals must be filed not more than fifteen (15) days from the date of issuance of the township trustee's adequate notice of the denial (Notice of Action Form TA-1A). The appeal may be filed in the Auditor's office in the St Joseph County-City Building.

4.20.00 DISCRIMINATION - At all times, the office of the Township Trustee will determine eligibility for assistance without regard to race, source of income, creed, color, sex, disability status, national origin, marital status, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other arbitrary condition which operates to defeat the broad statutory purpose of providing assistance to needy families.

4.30.00 COURTESY - We expect everyone who comes into this office to act and be treated in a courteous and dignified manner. If for any reason you are not satisfied with our service, please write directly to the Township Board President. It is not necessary to sign your name. We likewise expect the staff of the township to be treated in a similar manner. The office is intent on assisting the poor of the township and will endeavor to provide necessary assistance within the limits of the law and these standards and guidelines.

APPENDIX A - Income Guidelines

Household Size	Monthly Income	Annual Income
1	\$1,822	\$21,870
2	\$2,465	\$29,580
3	\$3,107	\$37,290
4	\$3,750	\$45,000
5	\$4,392	\$52,710
6	\$5,035	\$60,420
7	\$5,675	\$68,130
8	\$6,320	\$75,840
For each additional family member, add \$7,710 annually and \$642 monthly.		
Figures based on 150% of 2024 Federal Income Guidelines published in the Federal Register.		

Portage Township will use 150% of the Federal Poverty level as its guide in determining eligibility.

COUNTABLE INCOME - This term means a monetary amount either paid to an applicant or a member of an applicant's household not more than thirty (30) days before the date of application for Township Assistance, or accrued and legally available for withdrawal by an applicant or a member of an applicant's household at the time of application or not more than thirty (30) days after the date of application for Township Assistance.

APPENDIX B - Food (non-taxable food items only)

Household Size	Maximum Food	
	Per Month	Per Week
1	\$240	\$60
2	\$320	\$80
3	\$400	\$100
4	\$480	\$120
5	\$560	\$140
6	\$640	\$160
7	\$720	\$180
8	\$800	\$200
Each Additional	\$80	\$20

APPENDIX C - Household Essentials

Household Size	Maximum Household Essentials		
	Per Month	Per Week	Per Day
1	\$80	\$20	\$3
2	\$100	\$25	\$4
3	\$120	\$30	\$5
4	\$140	\$35	\$5
5	\$160	\$40	\$6
6	\$180	\$45	\$7
7	\$200	\$55	\$8
8	\$220	\$60	\$9
Each Additional	\$20	\$5	\$1

Necessary household supplies will be administered according to the table above. Other household necessities may be furnished by the township when a need is determined. The township will request that the applicant be specific when requesting household supplies. Special consideration may be given to individual households with preferential needs, i.e. diapers and/or feminine supplies. Unless unusual or extraordinary circumstances exist, as determined by the trustee, the amounts listed above will not be exceeded.

Special Accommodation – Baby Essentials

Household Size	Maximum Baby Essentials		
	Per Month	Per Week	Per Day
Any	\$100	\$25	\$4

Any household with 1 or more dependent children under the age of 2.5 may qualify for a special accommodation for the purchase of essential baby supplies. This benefit would be given in addition to the household essentials maximums. Qualifying expenses include: diapers, wipes, formula, baby/toddler medicine or supplies, and baby/toddler hygiene items. Qualifying expenses do not include clothing, toys, or other household items. Unless unusual or extraordinary circumstances exist, as determined by the trustee, the amounts listed above will not be exceeded.

Clothing Assistance

Household Size	Maximum Clothing Allowance
	Per Month
1	\$50
2	\$75
3	\$100
4	\$125
5	\$150
6	\$175
7	\$200
8	\$225
Each Additional	\$25

Necessary clothing allowance will be administered according to the table above. Other clothing necessities may be furnished by the township when a need is determined. The township will request that the applicant be specific when requesting clothing assistance. Special consideration may be given to individual households with preferential or urgent needs. Unless unusual or extraordinary circumstances exist, as determined by the trustee, the amounts listed above will not be exceeded.

APPENDIX D - Housing

This addendum is adopted in addition to the guidelines adopted by the Trustees of St. Joseph County. Maximum rent allowances are based on the survey of available housing in Portage Township.

The township shall provide aid in whatever form is necessary to provide shelter or prevent the loss of shelter so long as such aid constitutes the most economical and practical method of relieving the applicant. Clients will not be denied shelter assistance merely because they are buying their home. However, the amount paid on behalf of a client may not exceed the shelter allowance standards contained in the following schedule and must still meet the test of being the “most economical and practical” method of relieving the applicant.

A client may be required to liquidate and retrieve the equity in their house if their expected duration of needing township assistance exceeds a reasonable time frame as determined by the trustee (approximately sixty (60) days). Whenever township assistance funds are used directly or indirectly to pay the household’s mortgage payments, the township may place a lien against the property in order to recover the equity value of such payments.

SHELTER DEFINED: For the purpose of administering shelter assistance, the definition of a shelter unit is a house, a mobile home, an apartment, a group of rooms, or a single room, occupied as separate living quarters. “Separate Living Quarters” are those in which the occupants do not live and eat with any other person(s) in the building and which have direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall.

If a lease agreement is required, then the lease must be in the name of an adult member of the applicant’s household and a copy of the lease furnished to the township.

Garage, Carport, and Fireplace charges WILL NOT be considered for payment by the trustee.

Household Size	Per Month
1	\$350
2	\$400
3	\$450
4	\$500
5	\$550
6	\$600
7	\$650
8	\$700
Any rooming house/transitional shelter	\$250

APPENDIX E – Burials

The trustee shall superintend or provide a person to superintend (take charge) and authorize either the funeral and burial or cremation of the deceased individual. In some cases, this may be the Trustee or Township Staff.

The next of kin or member of the decedent's household shall complete the Application for Assistance (Form TA-1) on behalf of the decedent. In the absence of kin or other household member, the Trustee shall complete the application on their behalf.

The township will also require a "death certificate" and an itemized (invoice) statement from the funeral home before payment can be authorized.

The total cost of a burial and funeral or cremation and funeral for any deceased indigent person, including burial plot may not exceed \$800

Contributions or payment of benefits from any other source **may be** deducted from the township's allowable maximum.

(IC 12-20-16-12)

Be it resolved that the attached document shall serve as the standards for the administration of Township Assistance in Portage Township, St. Joseph County, Indiana.
Adopted January 21, 2025

BY:

Jason Critchlow, Portage Township Trustee

TOWNSHIP BOARD:

Ryan Hill, Board Chair

Cheryl Ashe, Board Member

Muhammad Shabazz, Board Member