



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 5101:1-2-20 Ohio works first, and refugee cash assistance: verification and reporting requirements.

Effective: October 1, 2020

(A) What is verification?

(1) "Verification" is a document or statement from a third party or collateral contact that confirms statements made by the assistance group regarding need and/or a specific eligibility factor.

(2) Verification establishes that the factors of eligibility are met and the assistance group is eligible to receive benefits under the program. Verification is not an eligibility requirement in its own right, but a method for assuring that an eligibility requirement is met.

(3) A telephone contact may be made by the county agency to secure verification. Written consent from the assistance group is necessary unless an exception described in rule 5101:1-1-03 of the Administrative Code is met. The following information shall be included:

(a) The name and telephone number of the person who gave the information;

(b) The name of the agency or business contacted, when appropriate;

(c) The date of the contact; and

(d) An accurate summary of the information.

(B) What is required to be verified?

(1) All eligibility factors required to establish initial and continuing eligibility and items subject to change shall be verified at the time of application, reapplication and when a change in circumstances occurs in the assistance group. A change in circumstances includes the discovery of a discrepancy in income and a change in income amounts.



(2) All income of a member of the assistance group and any person whose income affects the assistance group must be verified.

(C) What happens when verifications are not received?

(1) It is the assistance group's responsibility to provide the information necessary to establish eligibility.

(2) When the assistance group is aware of the requirements of verification but refuses to provide both consent and necessary verification, the county agency shall deny or terminate assistance as eligibility cannot be established.

(3) Assistance may not be terminated when the assistance group refuses to cooperate in validating past eligibility because past eligibility has no bearing upon present need and eligibility.

(4) The assistance group may not be compelled to cooperate in giving testimony or records that may prove guilt of a crime because of protections of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

(D) When is verification not required?

(1) When the assistance group's own statement on the application establishes that the assistance group is ineligible for cash assistance, verification is not required. The county agency shall confirm the statement on the application to assure it was an accurate statement and not a mistake in completing the form.

(2) Verification of earned or unearned income is not necessary when the assistance group either alleges no income or employment in the current period and there is no reason to question the statement, or the assistance group reports earnings sufficiently high to make them clearly ineligible for benefits.

(3) Verification is not required when some other factor of eligibility, such as age or citizenship, is clearly not met.



(E) What are the county agency's responsibilities?

The county agency shall:

- (1) Explain what verifications and information are necessary to establish eligibility for cash assistance programs. Explain where and how to obtain the required verifications.
- (2) Assist in securing all the required verifications necessary to establish eligibility when the assistance group requests such assistance because of an inability to provide them without the agency's help.
- (3) Obtain the verifications when the assistance group is not financially able or is not competent to secure them. This shall not be interpreted as noncooperation, nor shall it be used to deny assistance.
- (4) The JFS 07341 "Applicant/Recipient Authorization for Release of Information" shall be obtained each time verification of an eligibility factor is required.
 - (a) Verification of information from public records does not require written consent.
 - (b) Verification need be obtained only once when the eligibility factor is not subject to change.

(F) How is verification handled between reapplications?

- (1) The county agency shall pursue clarification and verification of the assistance group's circumstances by issuing the JFS 04219 "Request for Contact Important Notice" or the statewide automated eligibility system generated equivalent, that clearly advises the assistance group of the verification it shall provide or the actions it shall take to clarify its circumstances.
 - (a) The JFS 04219 or the statewide automated eligibility system generated equivalent shall afford the assistance group at least ten days to respond and to clarify its circumstances, either by telephone or by correspondence, as the county agency directs. It shall further state the consequences when the assistance group fails to respond to the county agency.



(b) When the assistance group does not respond to the county agency, or does respond but refuses to provide sufficient information to clarify its circumstances, the county agency shall terminate the cash assistance case.

(c) When the assistance group responds to the county agency and provides sufficient information, the county agency shall act on the new circumstances and adjust the budget accordingly.

(G) What happens when verification is not available or there is a discrepancy?

(1) When verification is not available through no fault of the assistance group, the determination is based on the best possible evidence.

(2) Where information from another source contradicts statements made by the assistance group, the assistance group shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to resolve the discrepancy prior to an eligibility determination.

(3) In situations that there is no available verification, the county agency shall not deny or terminate the case but shall accept a signed affidavit, a third-party statement, notarized statement, or the statement on the application as verification when the information is consistent with other facts and statements.

(4) When the statement provided is incomplete and/or inconsistent and the assistance group is unable to clarify the statement, the county agency shall deny or terminate the case as eligibility cannot be established.

(5) The county agency shall exhaust all possibilities for verification before accepting these statements. The use of a statement shall be on a case-by-case basis. This approach shall not be used for the sole purpose of meeting the promptness requirement of rule 5101:1-2-01 of the Administrative Code.

(6) Homeless and migrant assistance groups may not have easy access to required verifications that may exist. In order to ensure that these assistance groups do not experience a lengthy delay in



receiving Ohio works first (OWF) or refugee cash assistance (RCA) benefits, the following procedures shall be followed:

- (a) Once the homeless or migrant assistance group has submitted verification of identity, the county agency shall approve the application for assistance when the assistance group appears to meet eligibility criteria based on statements on the application or a signed affidavit, and the best evidence available.
- (b) The county agency shall attempt to obtain verification of all other eligibility factors by the next reapplication. When the verifications cannot be obtained by the next reapplication, the county agency shall continue the attempt and document in the case record.
- (7) The methods used for verification shall be thoroughly documented in the case record. All documents submitted to the county agency shall be photocopied and retained in the case record.
- (H) What are the assistance group's change reporting requirements and the time frames?
 - (1) The following changes shall be reported within ten calendar days of the date that the change occurs for OWF, or RCA assistance groups:
 - (a) Change in the source of earned and unearned income. This includes new employment, loss of employment, changing of jobs and initial receipt of unearned income;
 - (b) Change in the amount of gross monthly income of more than fifty dollars;
 - (c) Changes in the legal obligation to pay child support;
 - (d) Change in the assistance group composition;
 - (e) An assistance group member becomes pregnant, or a pregnancy ends when there are no other children;
 - (f) Change in residence;



- (g) Withdrawal from school for individuals subject to the learning, earning and parenting program requirements;
 - (h) Change in address, job or other information related to an absent parent;
 - (i) Change in living arrangement for a minor parent;
 - (j) An assistance group member violates a condition of his probation or parole or becomes a fugitive felon.
- (2) The county agency shall use the time frame provisions described in paragraph (M) of rule 5101:1-2-01 of the Administrative Code when calculating the ten day reporting time period.