

December 5, 2025

GENERAL LETTER NO. 4-B-82

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial, Food, and Work Supports
Division of Community Access and Eligibility

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 4, Chapter B, **Family Investment Program
Application Processing**, 1, 3-5, 10, 14, 16, 18 and 19, revised.

Summary

This chapter is revised to

- Update IM worker to eligibility benefit specialist (EBS).
- Clarify instructions for Voter Registration.

Effective Date

Upon receipt.

Material Superseded

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 4, Chapter B, and destroy them:

Page	Date
1, 3-5, 10, 14, 16, 18 and 19	July 5, 2024

Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your area income maintenance administrator.

Overview

When a person submits a valid application for Family Investment Program (FIP) assistance, the Department of Health and Human Services eligibility benefit specialist (EBS) begins processing the application. This chapter describes that process, including:

- Interviewing.
- Determining the household's reporting requirements.
- Verification.
- Deadlines for approving or denying an application.

Legal Basis

The legal basis for these policies and procedures is found in:

- Title IV-A of the Social Security Act,
- Iowa Code Chapter 239B, and
- 441 Iowa Administrative Code, Chapters 40 and 41.

Filing a FIP Application

Legal reference: 441 IAC 40.22(239B)

Any person has the right to apply for assistance without delay. An application for FIP must be submitted on form [470-0462](#) or [470-0462\(S\)](#), **Food and Financial Support Application**. The application can be submitted in person, by mail, by fax, or electronically. Applications that are filed electronically or that are signed and then faxed or scanned and emailed do not have to be signed again.

Give an application to a person immediately upon request. If asked, mail an application in the next outgoing mail. With the application, give or mail:

- Voter Registration form.
- Comm. 51, Information Practices.

The parent must make the application if the parent:

- Is in the home with the child, and
- Is not prevented from acting as payee because of physical or mental impairment.

Document in the case record the impairment that prevents the parent from acting as payee. The impairment must prevent the parent from assuming the responsibility for making the day-to-day decisions regarding the welfare of the child.

Refer to [4-C, Hardship Exemption](#) for application procedures and signature requirements specific to families that have exhausted their 60-month FIP period and that are requesting a hardship exemption.

Date of Application

Legal reference: 441 IAC 40.23(239B)

The date of application is the date the form 470-0462 or 470-0462(S), **Food and Financial Support Application**, is received:

- In **any** Department office. NOTE: Applications received by the Department at a time when the office is open are date-stamped with the same date on which the application is received. Applications left at a closed office or received electronically outside of work hours are date-stamped with the date of the next working day for full-time Department offices.

County A has a less-than-full-time office that is open on Monday and Wednesday. The office was last open Wednesday, April 24. When the office reopens on the following Monday, the staff find applications left under the door. All applications are date stamped as received Thursday, April 25.

- By an EBS housed in an outstationing facility. (An outstationing facility can be any disproportionate-share hospital, federally qualified health center, or other facility providing outstationing services.)
- By a designated EBS in an outstationing facility when the applicant does not request SNAP. These EBSs will then forward the application to the Department.

The date of application is important because it is used to establish the eligibility date for benefits. To establish an application date, the applicant is required only to indicate name and address and sign the form.

An application that is faxed or is scanned and then e-mailed is acceptable and will protect the application date. Applications that are signed and then faxed or scanned and e-mailed do not have to be resigned.

When an application is received in an office other than the one responsible for processing it, date-stamp the application with the date of receipt and forwards it to the appropriate office no later than the next working day.

A household may not check all the programs on the **Food and Financial Support Application** for which it wants to apply. If the applicant asks to apply for additional programs during the interview, or before you take action on the application, allow the applicant to check the applicable box.

The filing date for any additional program is the same date as the filing date for the programs that were initially checked on the application form.

EXCEPTION: When the applicant files a different application form, such as form **470-5170 or 470-5170(S), Application for Health Coverage and Help Paying Costs**, and during the interview decides to apply for FIP, the applicant must file a **Food and Financial Support Application** to be considered for FIP. The date you get the **Food and Financial Support Application** is the date of application for FIP.

Applications Received in Outstationing Facilities

Legal reference: 441 IAC 40.23(239)

The date an EBS assigned to an outstationing facility receives an application is the date of application for all programs (regardless of whether the applicant wants SNAP). The EBS conducts the interview and determines eligibility before forwarding the application to the appropriate local office.

When a designated EBS in an outstationing facility receives an application and the applicant does not request SNAP:

- The date of application is the date the EBS receives the application.
- The designated EBS conducts the interview before forwarding the application to the appropriate local office.
- The EBS in the local office is responsible for making the eligibility determination.

When a designated EBS in an outstationing facility receives an application and the applicant requests SNAP:

- The application is not date-stamped.
- The designated EBS verifies the client's identity, if possible, and faxes the application and the verification of identity to the appropriate local office the same business day. (The applicant may take the application to the local office instead.)

- The date of the application for all programs is the date the local office receives the application.

When the client does not request SNAP until later (for example, during the interview), the designated EBS faxes the application to the local office on the same business day. (The applicant may take the application to the office instead.) The date of application for all programs is the date the local office receives the form.

If the client requests SNAP after the FIP interview, the designated EBS refers the client to the local office to apply for SNAP.

When an Applicant Has a Guardian or Conservator

Legal reference: 441 IAC 40.22(2)

Before determining eligibility for an applicant that has a guardian or conservator, obtain and file a copy of the court order establishing the guardianship or conservatorship.

When an application is filed by a parent or relative who is already under court-ordered conservatorship or guardianship, the conservator or guardian as well as the applicant must sign the application and participate in the application process.

Interviews

Legal reference: 441 IAC 40.22(2), 40.24(2)

Policy: An interview must be held before FIP is approved. The interview may be by telephone or face-to-face. EXCEPTION: An interview is not required when adding an individual to an existing eligible group. An interview may be held at the client's home, at the client's request.

Persons attending the interview may include:

- The applicant (either parent in a two-parent case).
- The applicant's legal guardian or conservator.
- Someone acting on the applicant's behalf because the applicant is mentally or physically unable to attend the interview.

- If the form is completed:
 - Tear off the information section and give it to the client.
 - Keep the declination form, and file it following the instructions in 6-Appendix.
 - If the client chooses to register to vote, send the completed registration form to the county election office following the instructions in 6-Appendix. The actual voter registration occurs at the election office.

If there isn't an interview, and the client has indicated on an e-application "yes" they want to register to vote, mail the Voter Registration form to the client and document your action.

Household Reporting Requirements

Legal reference: 441 IAC 40.27(1)"a," 40.27(4)"e" and "f"

All applicant households must report changes at the interview and thereafter within five calendar days of the date the change occurred.

All participant households must report changes within ten days of the occurrence.

Day one of either reporting period is the day after the change occurred. If the last day of the reporting period falls on a weekend or holiday, extend the time limit to the next working day with regular mail service.

Both applicant and participant households are required to report the following changes:

- Changes in mailing or living address.
- Changes in household membership.
- Changes in school attendance of a child.
- Receipt of a social security number.
- Changes in resources.
- Beginning or ending income. This includes beginning or ending employment or unearned income or receipt of a nonrecurring lump sum.

Verification

Legal reference: 441 IAC 40.24(239B), 40.27(4)

Unless verification is specifically required, accept clients' statements on applications and review forms if the information appears to be accurate and consistent with other

- (Other items that the EBS believes are appropriate.)

You must appear for your appointment or reschedule the interview. You must bring all of these items with you. If you do not, your FIP, SNAP, and Medicaid benefits will be (denied/canceled).

Allow the client at least ten days before the interview date to obtain the requested information.

5. If the client does provide the data, determine if the client is paying all expenses. If expenses are in line with income, the issue is resolved. If not, ask the client to describe how such payments are possible with existing income.

Processing Standards

Legal reference: 441 IAC 40.25(239B)

Policy: A decision to approve or deny an application shall be made as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days after the date the application is filed. The 30-day period may be extended in unusual circumstances. A written notice of decision shall be issued the next working day following the decision to approve or deny.

Procedure: Approve or deny each application unless the applicant:

- Dies or cannot be located. Document this in the case record.
- Voluntarily withdraws the application. Issue a **Notice of Decision** documenting the withdrawal and file a copy in the case record.

Process applications on the earliest possible date, but no earlier than the effective date of assistance. See [Effective Date of Assistance](#) for more information. Do not use the 30-day limit as a waiting period before approving the application or as a basis for denial of the application.

Day one of the 30-day processing period is the calendar day after the date of application. Determine eligibility and issue a written notice of decision by making system entries no later than the 30th day following the date of application. If the 30th day falls on a weekend or holiday, process the application by making system entries the next working day.

1. Ms. A applies for FIP on June 18. The EBS determines that Ms. A received assistance in Missouri for June and was canceled effective July 1. The EBS enters eligibility information into the system on July 3. The application is approved for July.
2. Ms. B applies for FIP on June 23. The EBS determines that Ms. B was unemployed on the date of application, but she began work on July 5. Her projected income for July exceeds the 185% standard. The EBS enters eligibility information into the system on July 14. The application is rejected and no payment is made.
3. Mr. C applies for FIP on June 5. The EBS enters eligibility information into the system on June 30. System entry errors prevent processing. The EBS corrects and completes the entries on July 1. If there is eligibility for July, the application is approved.

Refer to [4-C, Hardship Exemption Decision](#) for specific instructions for processing requests for a hardship exemption for families that are applying for FIP beyond the 60-month limit.

Grace Period Following Denial of an Application

Legal reference: 441 IAC 40.23(4)

Policy: A grace period may be allowed:

- When an application is denied for failure to provide requested information. Eligibility for FIP can be reconsidered without a new application if all information necessary to establish eligibility, including verification of any changes, is provided within 14 days of the date on the **Notice of Decision** denying the application.

If eligibility is established, the effective date of FIP is the date all of the information is provided.

- When an application is denied for failure to attend an interview with the income maintenance EBS. Eligibility for FIP can be reconsidered without a new application if the interview is completed and all information necessary to establish eligibility, including verification of any changes, is provided within 14 days of the date on the **Notice of Decision** denying the application.

NOTE: The grace period does not apply when an application is denied for failure to attend an interview with PROMISE JOBS.

- No information provided or interview not completed:
If the information is not provided or the interview is not completed by the 14th day, no further action is required. Do not issue another notice.
- Partial information provided:
If part of the information is provided, do not issue a **Notice of Decision**. However, it is good practice to contact the family to let them know that you still do not have everything you need to reconsider the application.
- If a change is reported during grace period:
If the previously requested information is provided within the 14-day period, but the family also reports another change that must be verified, make every effort to help the client verify the information within the 14-day period.
 - A written request for information for the subsequent change is not necessary. However, inform the family that the application cannot be reopened until the change is verified.
 - If a generic release is on file, use it to attempt to verify the information.
 - If the new information is not verified by the end of the 14-day period, send a **Notice of Decision** stating the application remains denied. This is required because the original reason for denial has been cured, but the family did not provide verification of the new information.

When it appears unlikely that you will be able to verify additional information or complete the interview before the end of the 14-day period, inform the family that they should submit a new application to preserve the earliest possible effective date of assistance.

Comment:

1. Ms. A, a FIP applicant, fails to provide verification of income that was requested by the Department. The EBS issues a notice denying the application, which is dated December 2.

Ms. A provides the verification on December 10. There have been no other changes in the family's circumstances. The EBS reprocesses the application and approves FIP effective December 10.

2. Ms. B, a FIP applicant, fails to provide verification of income that was requested by the Department. The EBS issues a notice denying the application, which is dated December 2. Ms. B provides the missing verification on December 10, but also reports that she has begun a new job.

The EBS explains that Ms. B has until December 16 to provide verification of the change. Ms. B fails to provide the verification. The EBS issues a notice stating that the application remains denied for failure to provide the requested verification.
3. Ms. C, a FIP applicant, fails to attend her interview with the EBS. The EBS issues a notice denying the application, which is dated December 2. On December 6, Ms. C calls the EBS and asks to complete the interview.

The EBS completes the interview by telephone that day and schedules an FIA appointment with PROMISE JOBS. Ms C signs her FIA on December 10 and provides the last of the required verification on December 12. The EBS approves FIP effective December 12.

Effective Date of Assistance

Legal reference: 441 IAC 40.24(4), 40.26(239B), 41.24(8), 41.25(2)

Policy: The effective date for assistance cannot be earlier than seven days after the date of application.

When an application has been denied for failure to provide requested information but eligibility is established during the 14-day grace period, the effective date of assistance is the date the final piece of the required information is provided.

When an application is denied for failure to attend the application interview but eligibility is established during the 14-day grace period, the effective date of assistance is the date the interview is completed or the date the final piece of the required information is provided, whichever is later.

When approving an application for a household following a **first** limited benefit plan imposed effective on or after June 1, 1999, the effective date of assistance is the **latest** of the following:

- The date the FIA is signed, or
- Seven days from the application date, or
- The date the household is otherwise eligible.