

## **IC 12-20-5.5**

### Chapter 5.5. Township Assistance Standards

#### **IC 12-20-5.5-1**

##### **Processing applications; nondiscrimination**

Sec. 1. (a) The township trustee shall process all applications for township assistance according to uniform written standards and without consideration of the race, creed, nationality, or gender of the applicant or any member of the applicant's household.

(b) The township's standards for the issuance of township assistance and the processing of applications must be:

- (1) governed by the requirements of this article;
- (2) proposed by the township trustee, adopted by the township board, and filed with the board of county commissioners;
- (3) reviewed and updated annually to reflect changes in the cost of basic necessities in the township and changes in the law;
- (4) published in a single written document, including addenda attached to the document; and
- (5) posted in a place prominently visible to the public in all offices of the township trustee where township assistance applications are taken or processed.

*As added by P.L.51-1996, SEC.20. Amended by P.L.73-2005, SEC.24.*

#### **IC 12-20-5.5-2**

##### **Standards; content**

Sec. 2. (a) Standards for the administration of township assistance must contain the following:

- (1) Criteria for determining township assistance eligibility.
- (2) Minimum requirements of township trustee accessibility.
- (3) Other information as needed, including the following:
  - (A) Township office locations, hours, and days of availability.
  - (B) Initial eligibility criteria.
  - (C) Continuing eligibility criteria.
  - (D) Workfare requirements.
  - (E) Essential and nonessential assets.
  - (F) Available resources.
  - (G) Income exemptions.
  - (H) Application process.
  - (I) Countable income.
  - (J) Countable assets.
  - (K) Wasted resources.

(b) Standards for the administration of township assistance must exclude a Holocaust victim's settlement payment received by an eligible individual from countable assets and countable income.

*As added by P.L.51-1996, SEC.20. Amended by P.L.128-1999, SEC.25; P.L.73-2005, SEC.25.*

#### **IC 12-20-5.5-3**

**Adequate access ensured; telephone number; office**

Sec. 3. (a) The township trustee shall ensure adequate access to township assistance services, including a published telephone number in the name of the township.

(b) A township assistance office, if separate from the township trustee's residence, must be designated by a clearly visible sign that lists the:

- (1) township trustee's name;
- (2) availability of township assistance; and
- (3) township assistance office's telephone number.

The sign must conform to all local zoning and signage restrictions. *As added by P.L.51-1996, SEC.20. Amended by P.L.73-2005, SEC.26.*

**IC 12-20-5.5-4**

**Scheduled hours of township trustee**

Sec. 4. (a) This section does not apply to a township trustee who has assisted less than fifty-one (51) households during each of the two (2) years immediately preceding the date of the township trustee's annual report under IC 12-20-28-3.

(b) To ensure minimum accessibility, a township trustee operating a township assistance office in a township with a population of at least ten thousand (10,000) shall provide scheduled office hours for township assistance and staff each office with an individual qualified to:

- (1) determine eligibility; and
- (2) issue relief sufficient to meet the township assistance needs of the township.

(c) To meet the requirements of subsection (b), the township trustee shall do the following:

- (1) Provide township assistance office hours for at least fourteen (14) hours per week.
- (2) Provide that there is not more than one (1) weekday between the days the township assistance office is open.
- (3) Provide for after hours access to the township assistance office by use of an answering machine or a service:
  - (A) capable of taking messages; and
  - (B) programmed to provide information about township assistance office hours.
- (4) Respond to a telephone inquiry for township assistance services not more than twenty-four (24) hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, after receiving the inquiry.
- (5) Post township assistance office hours and telephone numbers at the entrance to each township assistance office.

*As added by P.L.51-1996, SEC.20. Amended by P.L.73-2005, SEC.27.*

**IC 12-20-5.5-5**

**Inclusion of standards governing provision of basic necessities**

Sec. 5. The township's standards for the administration of township assistance must include all applicable standards governing the provision of basic necessities, including maximum amounts, special conditions, or other limitations on eligibility, if any have been established for one (1) or more basic necessities.

*As added by P.L.51-1996, SEC.20. Amended by P.L.73-2005, SEC.28.*

#### **IC 12-20-5.5-6**

##### **Income standards**

Sec. 6. (a) A township trustee shall set income standards for the township that provide for financial eligibility in an amount consistent with reasonable costs of basic necessities in the trustee's particular township.

(b) A township trustee may not consider a Holocaust victim's settlement payment received by an eligible individual when setting income standards under this section.

*As added by P.L.51-1996, SEC.20. Amended by P.L.128-1999, SEC.26.*