

Township Assistance Standards and Guidelines 2024

Spencer Township Trustee Jennings County, Indiana

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**Spencer Township Trustee
Jennings County, Indiana**

These standards and guidelines, which conform to the Indiana State Law, will be used by the Spencer Township Trustee in conducting the Trustee's daily business activities with applicants who are seeking Township Assistance.

These standards and guidelines will be displayed for the clients in the public viewing area of the Spencer Township Trustee's Office located at 203 Hoosier St. North Vernon, Indiana.

Laura M. Read
Trustee

2/28/2024
Date

Steven Barlow
President

2-28-2024
Date

David Wagner
Secretary

2/28/2024
Date

Board Member

Date

1.00.00 OFFICE HOURS

The Spencer Township Trustee Office is operating on a part-time basis. An individual desiring to complete an application for township assistance should call the trustee at 812-379-8701 to make an appointment. The office is closed on weekends and all Federal, State and County holidays. A voicemail box is available to record all phone calls when the office is closed. Calls will be returned within the next business day.

1.10.00 APPLICATIONS

The applicant should come to the Spencer Township Trustee's office in person to complete an application for township assistance during their appointment time. If, due to physical or mental disability or illness, the applicant is unable to come into the office, the trustee shall make alternate arrangements for the completion of the application.

All adult members of the applicant's household must sign the application in the presence of the trustee or an employee of the township. **An application for assistance is not considered completed until all adult members of the household have signed 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 consent to and sign a "Disclosure and Release of Information" form and any other form, instrument, or document that is required by law or determined necessary for investigative purposes by the trustee as contained in these Standard and Guidelines. IC 12-20-6-8

1.10.02 ASSISTANCE WITH COMPLETION OF APPLICATION

The Spencer Township Trustee or an employee of the township will assist an applicant for assistance in completing the application if the applicant has a mental or physical disability, including mental retardation, cerebral palsy, blindness or paralysis, or cannot read or write the English language. IC 12-20-6-1(e)

If an individual who is required to sign a form per the application process is unable to sign the form in the township trustee's office due to physical or mental disability, or illness, the trustee shall make alternate arrangements to obtain the individual's signature.

1.10.03 PERSONAL EFFORTS AND 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 applicant fail to provide for one or more of life's basic necessities. **This shall include expending the household's available financial resources for basic necessities in the sequence they come due or as 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 "Notice of Township Assistance Action" (Form TA-1A), that the recipient expend a substantial portion of their monthly financial resources 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

An "Application for Township Assistance" (Form TA-1) is considered valid for a period not to exceed 180 days. However, the township trustee will not extend additional or continuing aid for 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 household have changed from those set forth in the most recent application.

During the 180 day period following the completion of the application for township assistance, all requests will be processed on a month by month basis. IC 12-20-6-1(d)

1.10.05 RESIDENCY

Except for emergency situations affecting applicants who are temporarily in Spencer Township for reasons other than township assistance, all applicants must be permanent Spencer Township residents. Un-emancipated youth and undocumented aliens are not eligible for assistance.

1. The township where the applicant presently resides is obligated to investigate the circumstances of the distressed person(s) and render whatever assistance is necessary. There is no length of residency requirement.
2. Individuals who are residents of another township should be referred to the appropriate township.

Spencer Township must make some determination as to the following:

1. The applicant's living arrangements
2. Whether or not they are physically living in German Township
3. Whether the applicant intends to make the township their permanent place of residence.

A person is a resident of a township if he or she has located in the township and intends to make the township his or her sole place of residence. The trustee may consider all information that supports or refutes the person's intent to make the township his or her sole place of residence except the length of time the person has been located in the township. The township trustee may deny township assistance to a person if the township trustee determines that the person does not intend to make the township his or her sole place of residence. IC 12-20-8-1

In order to verify Spencer Township residency and intent to permanently live in Spencer Township, the trustee should consider the conduct of the applicant, both active and passive, as may reveal intent to reside within a given household and within Spencer Township. In addition, the following list includes some items that could be investigated in order to verify residency:

1. Mailing address (verified by mail received)
2. Telephone listings
3. Utility service billings
4. Drivers License (or state ID card, voter registration,
5. Motor vehicle registrations
6. Address on receipts, addresses given to others (including current or former employers)
7. U.S. Postal Service "change of address" notification
8. Statements of the applicant from others as to residency
9. Contents of the landlord's information statement

1.10.06 COOPERATION

During the interview process, the applicant will be required to complete an Application for Township Assistance (Form TA-1) 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 township assistance. The household is required to cooperate with an investigation of all finances, responsibilities, and their eligibility to receive other types of governmental or quasi-governmental assistance. The investigation may include a home visit and/or contact with relatives who may be willing and able to assist

the household. **Except in emergency situations, an applicant and all adult members of the applicant's household must apply for and utilize all other forms of public assistance before being granted township assistance.**

1.10.07 IDENTIFICATION

In order to determine need and eligibility for township assistance, all applicants must provide sufficient documentation proving their identity. Applicant must provide social security cards for all members of the household and all adult members of the household must provide identification. The township will attempt to assist applicants in obtaining an Indian identification card or other forms of identification when hardship is created by this requirement.

1.20.00 RELATIVES DEFINED

For purposes of these Standards and Guidelines, the term "relative" shall include only the parent, step-parent, child, step-child, sibling, step-sibling, grandparent, step-grandparent, grandchild or step-grandchild of a township assistance applicant or member of an applicant's household

1.20.01 EMERGENCY DEFINED

The term "emergency" as used in this document, 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
2. Cannot be remedied in a timely manner by means other than township assistance.

1.20.02 HOUSEHOLD DEFINED

The term "household" means any of the following:

1. An individual living alone;
2. A family related by blood; or
3. A group of individuals living together in one residence as a domestic unit with mutual economic dependency.

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 within 72 hours after receiving the completed application (weekends and holidays excluded). When a determination cannot be made within the allotted 72 hours, due to circumstances out of the control of the applicant and the township, an action of "pending" may add an additional 72 hours and must include a statement from the township listing the specific reasons for the action. An applicant's failure to cooperate (not providing requested information, missing appointments, etc.) shall not justify the pending of a determination, but will result in denial of assistance.

1.30.01 NOTICE OF ACTION (FORM TA-1A)

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 or personally deliver the Notice of Action (Form TA-1A) not later than 72 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) after receiving the completed application.
2. Include on the notice information that informs the applicant of their right to appeal the trustee decision and where the appeal is to be filed.
3. Include on the notice: (a) the type and amount of assistance granted; (b) the type of and amount of assistance denied or partially granted; and (c) the specific reasons for denying all or part of the assistance requested, if applicable.

4. The township shall not render a decision on a request for township assistance 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 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 Jennings County Office of the Division of Family Services, or any other Federal or State Government agency.

1.40.00 DENIALS

Denials may be issued to applicants for one or more of the following reasons, with a stated duration for the denial period.

1.40.01 FALSIFYING AN APPLICATION

An applicant suspected of fraud by falsifying the information given to the township solely to gain township assistance benefits shall be denied assistance for a period not to exceed 180 days, commencing on the date of the improper conduct or the date the last assistance was extended based on the improper conduct. The township trustee may also make a criminal referral to the county prosecutor's office. Individuals convicted of welfare fraud shall be denied benefits in accordance with IC 12-20-6-6.5.

1.40.02 FAILURE TO MEET WORKFARE REQUIREMENTS

The township trustee may require applicants, after first receiving township assistance benefits, to participate in the township's workfare program. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in a denial not to exceed 180 days. This rule also applies to anyone who fails to comply with the workfare requirements in any other township in the State of Indiana.

1.40.03 WASTING RESOURCES

"Wasted resources" means the amount of money or resources expended by an applicant or any adult member of the applicant's household during the 30 days before the application date for items or services that are not necessities. Income, resources, or tax supported services lost or reduced as a result of a voluntary act during the 60 days before the application date counts as wasted resources unless the adult members of the household can establish a good reason for the act. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Voluntarily terminating gainful employment and/or being involuntarily terminated for just cause
- B. Failure to actively seek and/or accept gainful employment when offered, whether the compensation for the work will be payable in money or house rent, or in commodities supporting the necessities of life
- C. Eviction from subsidized housing for violations of regulations and guideline for voluntarily terminating housing without just cause
- D. Sanctions or denial of TANF benefits or food stamps or other government benefits due to non-compliance or other voluntary acts.

1.40.04 FAILURE TO SEEK OR ACCEPT FREE OR LOW-COST SHELTER

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 in which the individual seeks assistance. **Applicants for assistance may be required by the trustee to seek lower cost housing and/or to apply for subsidized or other low-cost housing as a condition of continued consideration for township assistance.**

1.40.05 VIOLENCE, THREATS OF VIOLENCE, OR ABUSIVE LANGUAGE

The Spencer Township Trustee's office is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for all residents and staff. This policy is in place to protect everyone from violence and abusive language. The Spencer Township Trustee will deny service to any individual who:

- **Violence:** Uses or threatens to use physical force against another person or property. This includes, but is not limited to, hitting, kicking, punching, spitting, throwing objects, or threatening to harm someone.
- **Abuse or threatening language:** Uses language that is intended to insult, demean, threaten, or intimidate another person. This includes, but is not limited to, name-calling, yelling, swearing, making threats, or using racial, ethnic, or sexual slurs.

This policy applies to all staff of the Spencer Township Trustee's office, including board members, the staff and/or volunteers of other township trustees and the staff and/or volunteers of the Jennings County Coordinating Council. It will be enforced regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

1.40.06 SUFFICIENT INCOME

Income in excess of the amounts found on pages 19, may be the basis for denial of township assistance. However, individual applicants may have unpredictable circumstances or unusual expenses which would, when reviewed, indicate a necessary expenditure from the township's assistance fund. Sanctions by other governmental agencies will not be considered as justification for waiving the income guidelines.

1.40.07 FAILURE TO COOPERATE

An applicant may be denied township assistance if he or she, or any member of the applicant's household, fails to cooperate or provide the township with the necessary information for determining eligibility. The township does not require an applicant to obtain verifications when the township already has or can readily obtain the needed information. Failure to cooperate may include failure by applicant to seek lower-cost housing or to use available resources toward basic needs as required by the township trustee in a previous assistance determination.

1.40.08 FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE IN AN EDUCATION OR SELF-HELP PROGRAM

Applicants and all able-bodied household members must, when referred by the township, participate fully in all education and/or self-help programs offered by a federal, state, or local government entity, or by a nonprofit agency within the county.

1.40.09 FREQUENT REPORTING OF LOSS/THEFT OF FOOD STAMPS OR MONEY

Applicants who frequently report the loss or theft of Food Stamps or money will be denied township assistance. Any reported theft must also be substantiated by a report to the appropriate law enforcement agency. **The trustee is not obligated to replace stolen or lost resources.**

1.40.10 FAILURE TO LIQUIDATE COUNTABLE ASSETS

Households must liquidate non-essential assets within no more than sixty (60) days of the date of their initial application for township assistance before additional township assistance can be granted. Refer to 2.30.00 of this document.

1.40.11 REFUSING TO SIGN

Whenever it is determined that an applicant or member of the applicant's household has applied for benefits through the Social Security Administration (SSI) or other public assistance program and may receive a retroactive payment, the township will 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 denial of township assistance.

1.40.12 PREVIOUS OR REAFFIRMATION OF DENIAL

The township trustee will not extend aid to or for the benefit of any member of an applicant's household if the aid requested would pay for goods or services that were previously requested and denied by the township, 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 of the denial.

1.40.13 ASSIGNMENT OR TRANSFER OF ASSETS

An applicant may be denied township assistance benefits whenever the applicant or member of the applicant's household makes an assignment of or transfers assets during the 6 months immediately preceding the filing of a township assistance application. Assets considered must be of sufficient value to have rendered the applicant ineligible for township assistance.

1.40.14 FAILURE TO FILE FOR CHILD SUPPORT

Any applicant with a dependent(s) over the age of one is required to file for child support. The applicant must bring proof of such filing before any assistance can be given from this office.

1.15.00 EMPLOYMENT

If a township assistance applicant or any adult member of the applicant's household is in good health, the trustee shall insist that those able to work, shall seek employment, and the trustee shall refuse to furnish any aid until the trustee is satisfied that the persons claiming help are seeking 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 and provide other reasonable documentation that they are endeavoring to find employment.

1.50.01 MEDICAL EXAMINATION

If a township assistance applicant or an adult member of the applicant's household claims an inability to work for health reasons, the township trustee may require and provide for any medical exam necessary to make a determination on the individual's ability to perform work.

1.50.02 REFUSAL TO WORK

If the applicant refuses any offered employment by the trustee, another individual or employer, or any governmental agency, regardless of whether the compensation is in the form of money, rent, or other necessities, 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 the 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 Services for non-compliance of or violations of IC 12-14. The township may continue to refuse assistance until the sanction or denial has been lifted or or rectified.

1.70.00 INCOME GUIDELINES

Income guidelines for determining assistance eligibility shall be based on the same guidelines currently being used by Ohio Valley Opportunities (OVO) to determine eligibility for participation in their assistance programs. These guidelines are updated and published routinely on their website. Income guidelines are only one factor in determining eligibility for township assistance. Income guidelines used for initial determination only and do not determine whether need exists in a specific case or whether township assistance will be authorized. *See the Income Guideline Chart on page 19:*

1.70.01 COUNTABLE INCOME

"Countable income" means a monetary amount either paid to an applicant or member of the applicant's household not more than 30 days before the date of township assistance application, or accrued and legally available for withdrawal by an applicant or member of the applicant's household at the time of application or not more than 30 days after the date of application for township assistance. Countable income includes the following:

- A. Net wages
- B. Social Security Benefits, including SSI
- C. TANF benefits
- D. Unemployment compensation
- E. Worker's compensation (except amount restricted for payment of medical expenses)
- F. Vacation pay
- G. Sick pay
- H. Strike benefits
- I. Private or public pensions
- J. Taxable income from self-employment
- K. Bartered goods or services provided by another individual for payment of non-essential needs on behalf of the applicant or a member of the applicant's household if monetary compensation or the provision of basic necessities would have been reasonably available from that individual
- L. Child support
- M. Gifts of cash, goods, or services
- N. Other sources of revenue or services that the township trustee may reasonably determine to be countable income

1.90.00 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS/TEMPORARY AID

Exceptional financial obligations, emergencies, and/or extraordinary expenses or circumstances (as determined, documented, and approved by the trustee) may give justification to temporarily waive certain provisions of these guidelines and grand temporary aid.

2.00.00 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. The township will require receipts for all expenditures of income and/or benefits received by any and all household members. Receipts must be verifiable and certain receipts and expenditures are not considered, including: (A) Hand written receipts provided by friends or relatives are considered unacceptable. (B) Receipts from expenditures for court-related expenses, 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 household member's involvement with the courts, will not be recognized as a legitimate expense. It will, however, count as unexpected income.

2.10.00 EXPENDITURES

Only receipts for necessities of living will be recognized as an acceptable expenditure. Any expenditure not documented by written receipts will be counted as unexpected income. All expenditures for items or services not considered basic necessities will not be recognized.

2.10.01 BASIC NECESSITIES DEFINED

"Basic necessities" are defined, for the purpose of township assistance, as those services or items essential to meeting the minimum standards of health, safety, and decent living, such as:

- A. Food
- B. Shelter
- C. Essential utility services
- D. Medical care
- E. Clothing (including footwear)
- F. Transportation to work or to seek and accept employment
- G. Other services or items determined by the trustee to be basic necessities

2.20.00 ASSETS

Households requesting township assistance must report all assets belonging to any household member. Assets which may affect eligibility are those which are available to the household, but not considered necessary for the health, safety, or decent living standards of the household, that are owned as whole or in part by the applicant or household member, that the applicant or household member has the legal right to sell or liquidate, including all real property other than property that is used for the production of income or that is the primary residence of the applicant's household.

"Countable assets" may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Motorcycles, scooters, or similar modes of transportation not being used as the family's primary mode of transportation.
- B. Boats, boat motors, or boat trailers
- C. Audio or video equipment, computers, or other electronic equipment
- D. Guns and/or hunting equipment
- E. Camping trailers and/or recreational vehicles
- F. Jewelry
- G. Cable or satellite television
- H. Nonessential items being leased or rented
- I. Any other item of value which the trustee determines to be non-essential.

2.30.00 LIQUIDATION

All liquid assets such as bank accounts, bonds, certificates of deposit, stock, etc. must be liquidated immediately.

Recreational equipment (boats, campers, etc.), motorcycles, and other countable assets must also be liquidated in order to receive continued township assistance.

All household members will be expected to liquidate any assets listed in 2.20.00 (A through I) and any other unnecessary items as soon as possible, but no longer than 60 days from the date their initial application was filed. However, nonessential items purchased by any household member after having applied for township assistance must be immediately liquidated before further assistance can be authorized. This included any rental or lease agreement entered into for nonessential items.

The township may require the termination of any and all credit cards in the name of any adult member of the household.

The following factors will be considered by the township trustee when it is necessary to require an applicant to liquidate assets:

- A. Marketability of the asset - the true monetary value of the item to be liquidated may not be realized because of existing market conditions.
- B. Expected duration - the length of time that the applicant household may reasonably be expected to remain on township assistance
- C. Lease/rental items - whether or not the item being rented or leased is necessary for basic living and/or whether the same item could be purchased or secured more economically.
- D. Exemptions - assets that are exempt from liquidation include one house or mobile home (the household's primary residence) in which the equity does not jeopardize the household from qualifying for other state or federal assistance programs; however, a township assistance recipient may be required to liquidate and retrieve the equity in the home if their expected duration of needing township funds are used 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.

2.40.00 REIMBURSEMENT/REPAYMENT OF TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE

The repayment of township assistance, or a promise to repay assistance, may not constitute a condition of eligibility for assistance, except as provided in 1.40.11 (SSI Reimbursement Authorization), 2.30.00 (mortgage payment lien), and 2.40.10 (future third party benefit subrogation agreement). A trustee may not seek federal or state reimbursement, foreclose a lien, or otherwise seek repayment of assistance for which an applicant or adult household member has satisfactorily completed a workfare requirement.

2.40.10 FUTURE THIRD PARTY BENEFIT

If it is anticipated that a township assistant 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 subrogation agreement or sign an authorization for the repayment of any township assistance benefits provided during the 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.

2.40.20 SOCIAL SECURITY REIMBURSEMENT

Individuals awaiting a determination from the Social Security Administration or SSI benefits will not be required to perform workfare during the initial stages of the SSI application process. Once the initial application has been denied by the SSa, the applicant may be obligated to perform workfare, unless they present a current medical statement from a licensed physician as to why they cannot perform work. Other members of an SSI applicant's household who are able to work will be required to perform workfare to work off his or her proportionate share of the workfare obligation.

2.50.00 FOOD ORDER LIMITATIONS

It is unlawful for the township to purchase food out of the township assistance fund for an applicant or household that is eligible for food stamps. The township may purchase food for an eligible food stamp applicant or household only under the conditions below:

- A. During the interim while an applicant or household is awaiting a determination of eligibility from the food stamp office and ending not later than 5 days after the day the applicant becomes eligible to participate in the food stamp program
- B. Upon the loss of the food supply through unavoidable spoilage, fire, or an act of nature
- C. Upon receipt of a physician statement indicating that one or more members of the household needs a special diet, the cost of which is greater than the household's allotment of food stamps. For compliance with this section, assistance should not occur until later in the monthly food stamp issuance cycle.
- D. When the trustee determines that a household is in need of supplementary food assistance provided that the household fully participates in the food stamp program and that such supplementary food assistance is given solely upon the circumstances in the individual case.

Households reporting the theft of food stamps must first file a theft report with the appropriate law enforcement agency before any assistance can be given. Frequent incidents involving the theft or loss of food stamps and/or tax supported cash awards will result in a denial. **The trustee is not obligated to replace stolen or lost resources.**

2.50.10 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 and Guidelines. 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 household's circumstances. The township may, instead of providing direct township assistance food assistance, refer an otherwise eligible household to a local governmental or privately funded food pantry.

2.70.00 SHELTER

"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.

The township will provide aid in whatever form is necessary to provide shelter or prevent the loss of shelter as long as such aid constitutes the most economical and practical method of relieving the applicant and the amount paid by the township does not exceed the amounts listed on the *applicable chart shown on page 19*.

2.70.20 OTHER SHELTER

The township shall not be obligated to pay the cost of shelter assistance to or for an applicant when the applicant's relative purchases a house or mobile home for the intended purpose of having an applicant live in the unit. This paragraph applies to real estate purchases or other property transactions made within the ninety (90) days immediately preceding the 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).

2.70.30 LIVING WITH RELATIVES

The township trustee 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 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.

2.70.40 SHELTER RENTED FROM RELATIVES

In situations where an applicant is renting from a relative with an encumbered mortgage for the housing being used, and that was previously rented to another tenant at fair market rent for at least six (6) months, the township may pay only the maximum allowed or the amount of the interest-only option of the mortgage payment, whichever is lesser. Receipts signed by relatives for rental payments will not be recognized for more than the actual mortgage payment.

2.70.50 TAX-SUPPORTED SHELTER PROGRAMS

The township is not under any obligation to enter into a contract or pay emergency shelter cost on behalf of an otherwise eligible applicant, to a public or private agency that is as a whole or partially funded by federal or state funds.

2.70.60 SUBSIDIZED SHELTER ASSISTANCE

The township is not 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.

2.70.70 SHELTER MOVING

Clients moving within sixty (60) days immediately preceding their township assistance application, from shelter provided by a relative from any type of subsidized shelter will be declared ineligible for township assistance, unless proof is provided clearly showing reasonable and just cause for the move. The burden of establishing just and reasonable cause for having moved shall be upon the applicant.

2.70.80 INFERIOR HOUSING

The township may deny shelter assistance whenever the trustee determines that the housing for which rental assistance being requested is suspected of being inferior and may not meet the minimum requirements of health, safety, and construction.

2.70.90 SHELTER DEPOSITS

The township will not pay the cost of security or damage deposits.

3.00.00 UTILITY SERVICE/HEATING FUELS

The township may, in cases of necessity, authorize the payment of electric, water, gas, and other fuels used for heating and/or cooking. In emergency situations, the trustee may authorize payment of delinquent bills when necessary to prevent disconnection or to restore terminated services. Following are exceptions and limitations:

- A. The utility must be in the name of an adult member of the applicant's household or an emancipated minor who is head of the household.

- B. The township will not pay any utility that is in the name of the landlord or someone who is not an adult member of the household.
- C. The township will not consider the payment of delinquent utility bills if the applicant was not a tenant residing at the service address at the time the cost was incurred or when the delinquent bill is older than ninety (90) days.
- D. The township will not consider the payment of utility services when more than one household is served by the same meter
- E. Telephone usage is not considered an essential utility service except when required, per a physician statement, due to illness or disability of an applicant or member of the applicant's household.
- F. Prepaid electric - The township will only consider payment from township assistance funds if the applicant has been enrolled in a prepaid electricity plan for not less than sixty (60) days prior to completing the application. If assistance is granted, it will not be for more than six dollars (\$6.00) per day for not more than thirty one (31) days.
- G. The township may consider, on a case-by-case basis, the payment of utility deposits
- H. The township will not pay late fees or reconnect fees

3.10.00 ENERGY PROGRAMS

Applicants seeking township assistance for payment of energy bills must first utilize all available federal and state energy assistance programs, and must furnish the township with proof that an application for assistance has been requested from all available programs. The township shall inform and refer all energy assistance applicants to available programs for assistance. Failure to apply for such assistance as directed by the township will result in denial of township assistance.

4.00.00 BURIALS, FUNERALS, AND CREMATIONS

The trustee may provide a person to superintend (take charge) and authorize either the funeral and burial or the cremation of the decedent not leaving sufficient resources (cash, insurance, automobile, real or personal property) to cover such expenses. If the decedent is eligible for burial assistance through Medicaid, the trustee will not pay burial expenses.

The allowable costs for burial or cremation for any deceased indigent person are detailed in the chart below. The township will require an itemized invoice/statement from the funeral home before payment can be authorized. If it is determined that the deceased individual is a resident of another township in Indiana, the trustee shall notify the trustee of that township, who shall then make a determination of eligibility and, if eligible, provide a person to superintend and authorize either the funeral and burial or the cremation of the decedent.

4.00.10 REQUEST FOR BURIAL AND FUNERAL OR CREMATION

The township may require that a surviving member of the decedent's family, if known and available, make a formal request for assistance before providing a person to superintend. Family members of the deceased, who are financially stable, will be asked to financially contribute to the payment of the funeral and burial or cremation expenses. Any amounts contributed may be deducted from the township's maximums.

4.00.20 TRANSPORTATION BURIAL EXPENSE

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 a resident of Spencer Township at the time of death and the transportation cost can be accomplished within the total allotment for burials, funerals, and cremations as set forth in section 4.00.00 of this document.

4.10.00 AUTOMOBILES

An automobile is not, by statute, recognized as a basic necessity. Therefore, automobile payments and other related expenses may not be considered as acceptable expenses, unless it is required to maintain current employment. In that case, the reasonableness of the expenditure will be considered.

5.00.00 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 no coverage under a private insurance policy, and are not receiving governmentally subsidized benefits such as Medicaid or Medicare. The township shall only pay the cost of the following medical services for eligible applicants and only when no other assistance is available from another agency or through hospital indigent care:

1. Prescription drugs - Spencer Township will furnish life-sustaining prescription medication, as prescribed by a licensed physician and sustained by an original prescription, for eligible township assistance clients, provided the client obtains prior authorization from the township.
2. Insulin- Spencer Township will furnish insulin without charge to Spencer Township residents who are in need of such treatment for diabetes and who are financially unable to pay for the insulin themselves, upon the application of a duly licensed physician. Upon receipt of an official form properly completed and signed, in ink, by a physician, any dealer may provide the insulin and then file the documents as a legal claim with the township in order to receive the market price of the insulin furnished. Applicants are not required to file a regular township assistance application (Form PR1), except in situations where the township trustee has evidence that the individual has the financial ability to pay for the insulin. After being presented with a legal claim for insulin being furnished to the same individual a second time, and provided there is evidence that indicates the individual's financial ability to pay, the township trustee may require the individual to complete and file a standard application for township assistance in order for the township trustee to investigate the financial condition of the individual claiming to be indigent. The trustee will notify the individual's physician that:
 - a. The financial ability of the individual claiming to be indigent is in question;
 - b. And a standard township assistance application must be filed with the township.
 - c. The township will continue to provide insulin to the individual until such time as the investigation is complete.

The township will also consider the individual needing insulin as an individual and not as a member of a household requesting assistance. IC 16-41-19-7 and IC 12-20-16-2(c)(13) and IC 12-20-16-14.

3. Office Calls - It is the responsibility of the applicant to make their own appointments for visits to medical care providers. Clients requesting assistance for a visit to a medical service provider, except in the 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 the specialist by their attending physician and authorization was first obtained from the township.
4. Dental care and treatment - Spencer Township assistance payment of dental care and/or treatment is limited to those costs which are medically necessary to eliminate pain and/or infection in the most economical and practical way.
5. Eyeglasses, eyeglass repair - Spencer Township may pay the cost of 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.

6. Over-the-counter drugs - Spencer Township may pay the cost of over-the-counter drugs when prescribed by a practitioner as defined in IC 16-42-19-5.
7. X-Rays and laboratory testing - Spencer Township may pay for the cost of x-rays and/or laboratory testing as prescribed by an attending physician under IC 25-22-5.
8. Physical Therapy - Spencer Township may pay the cost of physical therapy as prescribed by an attending physician under IC 25-22-5.
9. Repair or replacement of prosthesis - Spencer Township may pay for the cost of repairing or replacing prosthesis, when such assistance is not provided for by any other tax-supported state or federal programs.

6.00.00 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, the members of the household most suited and able to perform available work. Suitability to perform available work shall be determined by the trustee, and the township may provide for medical examinations necessary to make such determination.

6.00.10 WORKFARE REQUIREMENTS

Spencer Township trustee shall require a recipient to do any work needed within Spencer Township for any governmental unit having jurisdiction in Spencer Township (including the State) or for a not-for-profit social service agency.

6.00.20 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 which equals the value of assistance already received by the applicant or the applicant's household divided by the hourly rate of \$9.00. This translates to the number of hours the recipient will owe in total workfare hours.

6.00.30 WORKFARE OBLIGATIONS

The trustee will require the person or persons obligated to perform workfare to complete the workfare before providing additional township assistance benefits. Failure to perform the workfare as assigned by the township will result in a denial for a period not to exceed one hundred eighty (180) days.

6.00.40 WORKFARE EXCEPTIONS

Recipients may be excused from workfare for only the following reasons:

- A. The individual has applied for Supplemental Social Security Income (and has not yet received an initial determination) and has signed a "Reimbursement Authorization" - see section 2.40.20 of this document.
- B. The individual(s) obligated is not physically or mentally able to perform work and has provided the township with medical evidence that they are unable to perform the work.
- C. The individual(s) obligated is over 65 years of age.
- D. All obligated members of the household have full-time employment at the time assistance is received.
- E. The obligated individual(s) is, at the direction of the trustee, attending educational courses or self-help classes. Such attendance may be considered creditable as workfare participation.

6.00.50 WORKFARE RESTRICTIONS

A recipient shall not be assigned to work which would result in the direct or indirect displacement of government employees or in the reduction of the number of hours worked by those employees, nor will an obligated individual be assigned to work at a location where a labor dispute is in effect.

7.00.00 APPEALS

Anytime an applicant for assistance is not satisfied with all or part of the decision of the Spencer Township Trustee, the applicant may appeal that decision to the Jennings County Commissioners. The Commissioner's office is located in the Jennings County Government Center. Appeals must be filed in the commissioners' office not more than fifteen (15) days from the issuance of the trustee's "Notice of Township Action".

8.00.00 REPORTING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The Spencer Township Trustee and township staff shall report all suspected cases of neglect and abuse to the proper authorities.

9.00.00 COURTESY

The Spencer Township Trustee expects everyone who comes into the office of the trustee will be treated in a courteous and respectful manner. It is likewise expected that the township staff will be treated in the same manner. The Spencer Township Trustee and the township staff are dedicated to assisting those in need and will strive to provide necessary assistance within the limits of the law and these Standards and Guidelines.

9.10.00 ADVOCACY

The Spencer Township Trustee and the staff of the Spencer Township Trustee's office shall act as advocates and agents of support for those individuals and members of households applying for township assistance in Spencer Township. Such advocacy and support may include, when deemed appropriate by the trustee, or when needed and requested by the applicant:

- A. Assistance with completing the township assistance application in our office.
- B. Direction and assistance in gathering information needed to process the township assistance application.
- C. Assistance in obtaining an Indiana State issued identification card.
- D. Referral to any and all agencies and organizations that may offer assistance to the applicant and/or any member of the applicant's household.
- E. Assistance making appointments and/or completing applications for assistance with other agencies or organizations.
- F. Assistance with transportation to necessary appointments (using medical transport services or through other arrangements).
- G. Answering questions about available assistance and resources; explaining steps needed to receive assistance through other agencies and organizations.
- H. Acting as a liaison between the individual and another agency or organization.
- I. Education (directly or by referral) related to personal budgeting, nutrition, employment attainment, personal care, or healthy living.
- J. Any other advocacy or support deemed appropriate by the trustee that would assist the individual or household in meeting basic needs, whether in an immediate or longer-term manner.

10.00.00 CONCLUSION

All decisions regarding eligibility will be based on the standards in this document. These Standards and Guidelines will be available at the Spencer Township Trustee's office. Additional copies will be furnished to the Jennings County Commissioners. Any member of the public will be permitted to inspect and copy

these at their own expense. The Standards and Guidelines will be reviewed annually to reflect changes in both statutory and case law, and to reflect changes in income or expense guidelines.

INCOME GUIDELINES

NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD	MONTHLY	QUARTERLY	ANNUAL
1	\$2,479	\$7,438	\$29,755
2	\$3,242	\$9,727	\$38,911
3	\$4,005	\$12,016	\$48,067
4	\$4,768	\$14,305	\$57,223
5	\$5,531	\$16,594	\$66,378
6	\$6,294	\$18,883	\$75,534
7	\$6,437	\$19,312	\$77,251
8	\$6,580	\$19,741	\$78,967
9	\$6,723	\$20,171	\$80,684
10	\$6,866	\$20,600	\$82,401

NOTE: Spencer Township Assistance Guidelines are based on the same guidelines currently being used by Ohio Valley Opportunities (OVO) to determine eligibility for participation in their assistance programs. These guidelines are updated and published routinely on their website.

RENT/SHELTER ASSISTANCE

NUMBER IN HOUSEHOLD	MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE BENEFITS
1 TO 2	\$400
3 TO 4	\$500
5+	\$600

UTILITY ASSISTANCE

UTILITY	MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE BENEFITS
Electric/Gas	\$450
Water	\$150

BURIAL ASSISTANCE

FUNERAL HOME SERVICE PROVIDED	AMOUNT ALLOWED
Adult Funeral	\$2,000
Child (5 years and under) Funeral	\$1,500
Cremation (with Memorial Service)	\$1,250