



**Department of Human Resources  
311 West Saratoga Street  
Baltimore MD 21201**

**FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL**

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Control Number: #22-30</b> | <b>Effective Date: Upon Receipt</b>     |
|                               | <b>Issuance Date: September 1, 2022</b> |

**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT  
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF**

**FROM: LASHERRA AYALA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**RE: EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN (EAFC)  
REQUIREMENTS UPDATE**

**PROGRAM AFFECTED: EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES WITH  
CHILDREN (EAFC)**

**ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS**

**Summary and Changes:**

Following review of the Emergency Assistance for Families with Children (EAFC) policy, the Family Investment Administration (FIA) revised guidelines to clarify eligibility requirements. The chart below summarizes basic EAFC eligibility requirements. The guideline changes are in bold for ease of identification. Each LDSS is required to submit a new or amended Local Plan (LP) to reflect the changes in this Action Transmittal (AT). This AT replaces action transmittal #12-17.

| <b>EAFC Basic Requirements</b>   |
|--|
| Assistance unit must contain a child under the age 21  |
| Assistance unit composition follows Transitional Cash Assistance (TCA)                                 |
| A combination of EAFC benefits and customer's resources must resolve the crisis                        |
| LDSS has a fixed EAFC budget allocation which must be taken into account when designing local programs |

|  |
|--|
| LDSS cannot request supplemental EAFC funds  |
| LDSS develops and submits LP for approval by the FIA Executive Director  |
| LDSS determines maximum amount EAFC authorized for an individual EAFC household  |
| One EAFC benefit in 24 months. (Eligible in the 25 <sup>th</sup> month)  |
| <p><b>Each LDSS has the flexibility to define what constitutes an emergency. The local plan must specifically state the types of covered emergencies. The following are examples of emergencies the local may choose to include in their plan. This is not an exhaustive list.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Disasters: fire, flood, hurricane, tornado, civil disturbance</b></li> <li>● <b>Theft or breakdown of an essential appliance</b></li> <li>● <b>Pending foreclosure or eviction</b></li> <li>● <b>Lack of an essential appliance due to landlord's refusal to furnish the appliance</b></li> <li>● <b>Pending eligibility determination for continuing assistance</b></li> <li>● <b>Being stranded away from home</b></li> <li>● <b>Lack of a home for a child discharged from Foster Care or an institutional placement</b></li> <li>● <b>Lack of or insufficient supply of heating fuel, lack of utilities, or threat of imminent utility turn-off</b></li> <li>● <b>Theft of applicant's resources (i.e. money and non-monetary resources)</b></li> </ul> |
| Customers must apply for Energy Assistance first if the emergency is heating and/or cooling related.   |
| The cause of the emergency cannot have been due to the applicant or other responsible adult in the assistance unit quitting a job.   |

**REQUIRED ACTION:**

**Local Plans:**

Local Departments continue to determine the maximum EAFC allotment per customer for their jurisdiction.

1. Look back in E&E to determine if the applicant has received EAFC in the past 24 months.
2. The Local Department Director or the Director's designee may approve a second EAFC benefit within the 24 month eligibility period in extreme circumstances. Examples of extreme circumstances may include but are not limited to:
  - Providing rental assistance for victims of family violence who are working with Social Services or community based organizations.
  - Providing rental assistance when the family is dislocated because of a natural disaster.

3. If the applicant has not received E AFC in the past 24 months, process the application as usual. (Please see Eligibility Determination below)
4. The E AFC grant along with the customer's resources must be sufficient to resolve the crisis by preventing the eviction, foreclosure or continuing utility services. Customers must also show that they will be able to pay the ongoing expense so that the emergency does not recur.

### **E AFC SOP Process:**

Each LDSS is responsible for developing and submitting an E AFC SOP each fiscal year, including when there are any changes to services, maximum grant amounts, etc. The SOP should be submitted to the Office of Cash Programs (OCP) for approval via [fia.contracts@maryland.gov](mailto:fia.contracts@maryland.gov).

### **For Maximum Grant Amount Changes:**

1. Submit an updated E AFC SOP to [fia.contracts@maryland.gov](mailto:fia.contracts@maryland.gov).
2. If the amount is approved, OCP will submit a JIRA ticket to have the grant amount changed. (Please do not submit a JIRA ticket on the local's behalf).
3. Once the change has been made, OCP will email the local informing the change has been made in E&E.
4. The local will need to check E&E to ensure that the requested change is correct and inform OCP that the amount(s) are correct or needs correction.

### **Eligibility Determination:**

Anyone may file an application for E AFC. They have the right to file even when they appear to be ineligible because they have received a prior E AFC benefit within the last 24 months. When this occurs, send a denial letter stating that the customer is not eligible because he or she has received an E AFC grant within a 24 month period.

To determine eligibility:

1. Count the gross income of all **adult** household members in the month of the E AFC application.
  - Do not count the income of children under age 21.
2. Deduct the mandatory deductions from gross pay such as taxes, social security, FICA, and then consider the cost of work, transportation, child care, shelter and any other expenses which the customer paid in the month of the emergency or must pay in order to continue to work or stay in a work activity.
3. Consider all available liquid resources which the customer can use to resolve the

emergency prior to approving the EAFC grant.

4. Require the customer to show how they will meet the ongoing expense for which they are requesting assistance. If they cannot meet the expense, do not approve the EAFC grant.
5. Approve the application when the customer's available income and resources are less than the emergency amount.
6. Deny the application if:
  - The customer has sufficient income and resources to meet the emergency.
  - The customer's 24 month ineligibility period has not expired.
  - If the customer cannot show how he or she will pay the ongoing expense to keep the emergency from reoccurring.

**Example:**

Terk E. Burger is applying for an EAFC grant because he has a BGE turn off notice. He is a single dad with 2 children, ages 10 and 13. He works and earns \$1,100 biweekly. In the month of January, the weather was extremely cold. Mr. Burger slipped on the ice and fractured his ankle. He was off work for 3 weeks and his gross earnings for January totaled \$1,800. He only received sick pay for the 3 weeks he was off, instead of his regular pay. He does not receive child support for his two children. His gas and electric bill came to \$1,300 for January. This was an unusually high bill because of extremely cold temperatures. Mr. Burger's rent is \$1000 per month. His medical bills, food, and transportation costs totaled \$1,239 for the month of January. He used his savings to help pay for his January expenses and does not have any more money to pay his turn off notice. Mr. Burger has gone back to work but will not get another paycheck for 2 weeks. Mr. Burger is eligible for EAFC. His income and resources were exhausted for the month of January. He had no money left to pay the turnoff notice. He is able to pay the expenses ongoing.

**Reminders:**

Do not pay EAFC when the crisis is a result of someone in the household voluntarily quitting a job without good cause. This policy has not changed. Follow TCA policy requirements when determining good cause for quitting a job.

**Eligibility & Enrollment (E&E)**

Please use E&E code **553** to deny an EAFC application that is filed within the 24 months. Case managers must send customer a manual notice (or free form text when available in E&E) stating;

“Your application for Emergency Assistance to Families with Children (EAFC) is being

denied because you can only receive EAFC assistance once every 24 months."

**REFERENCES:**

- How To Guide: Process an Emergency Assistance for Families with Children (Located in the Help section of E&E).
- [TCA Manual Section 1301](#)

**INQUIRIES:**

Please direct policy questions to FIA Policy by completing the [FIA Policy Information Request Form](#) found on Knowledge Base or via email at [fia.policy@maryland.gov](mailto:fia.policy@maryland.gov) for Montgomery County only.

For systems questions, please email [fia.bsdm@maryland.gov](mailto:fia.bsdm@maryland.gov).

cc: DHS Executive Staff  
Constituent Services  
DHS Help Desk  
FIA Management Staff  
Office of Administrative Hearings