

# Township Assistance Guidelines

## Fall Creek Township, Henry County

653 Locust St, Middletown, IN 47356

Revised Jan 12, 2023

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### FORWARD

*This document has been developed by the trustee office of Fall Creek Township, Henry County and is to be used in the administration of Township Assistance. It is a “guide” on how one administers the many different services available through the Township Assistance program, as well as how a person qualifies for those services. Townships in Henry County may adopt, for their particular township, appendices reflecting other tables for assistance limits. For example, rent limits based on surveys of available rental units in their particular township might be implemented and attached to this basic document.*

*The Fall Creek Township Assistance Guidelines are established in accordance with Title 12 of the Indiana Code, from which the Trustee draws authority. The Indiana Code citations are listed for reference.*

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## **Mission Statement**

The Fall Creek Township Trustee's Office strives to provide the residents of Fall Creek Township with the temporary aid for the basic necessities of life, in the manner required by the laws of the State of Indiana. Our intent is not to support the township's less fortunate, but to assist them until they are able to become self-sufficient.

## **I. Introduction** *(IC 36 6-4; 12-20 5-1 thru 12-20-5.5-6; 12-20-11-1)*

In the state of Indiana, the Township Trustee has the responsibility of serving and assisting people in need residing in the township. The office of the trustee can provide temporary relief in emergency situations when a township resident has exhausted all other means. (Appendix 1)

Applicants requesting assistance from the trustee are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity. Likewise, the trustee expects that the township staff be treated with respect and courtesy by all applicants. The office of the Fall Creek Township will provide assistance based on the following guidelines, which are posted at the township office, on the township website, and are on file with the Henry County Commissioners.

The trustee may provide assistance with food, shelter, utilities, and certain other basic necessities. In order to qualify for and receive assistance, applicants must meet the requirements of these guidelines.

### **ALL ADULT HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS ARE CONSIDERED APPLICANTS AND MUST:**

- Be residents of Fall Creek Township
- Meet income guidelines
- Be employed full time (min. 30 hrs./week); seeking full time employment; or medically exempt from performing work.
- Cooperate with the township's investigation of their circumstances by providing information and signing an application;
- Apply for any and all other public assistance programs for which they may be eligible;
- Seek assistance from their family members

Fall Creek Township evaluates each applicant based on the Township Assistance Guidelines and will not discriminate based on race, color, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, source of income, national origin, disability status or any other arbitrary condition which operates to defeat the broad statutory purpose of providing assistance to residents.

Township employees are ineligible for assistance. Relatives of employees (Appendix 1) who reside in Fall Creek Township must have their application for assistance reviewed by the neighboring Jefferson Township Trustee or her/his designee.

## **II. Trustee Office Hours**

### **A. Location and Hours** *(IC 12-20-5.5-2)*

The office of the Fall Creek Township Trustee, Joseph (Joey) Cooper, is located at 653 Locust St., Middletown, IN 47356. The office is open 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding

holidays. The telephone number is (765) 354 - 2268. The township website is fallcreektownship33.in.gov.

The office may also be closed for the staff to participate in programs or seminars conducted by the Indiana Township Association (ITA), or other agencies, including internal training or staff meetings. For scheduled closings, a 24-hour notice will be posted on the front door and the township website. Closings for weather or other unexpected emergencies will be posted on the township website and township Facebook page on the day of closing.

Appointments may be made by appearing at the office in person during business hours. The individual shall be given an application for assistance and a list of documents and forms needed to complete the application. After the application has been reviewed, an in person or phone interview will take place.

**B. Deputy Trustee** *(IC 36-6-7-2; IC 12-20-4-2)*

The trustee shall appoint a Deputy Trustee who shall have all the powers of the trustee in the trustee's absence. The Deputy Trustee is Sabrina Criswell.

**III. Application Process** *(IC 12-20-6-0.5 thru 12-20-6-10; IC 12-20-7-1 thru 12-20-7-6; IC 12-20-8-1 thru 12-20-8-7; IC 12-20-16-1 thru 12-20-16-17)*

**A. Initial Assistance**

Applicants may receive township assistance by filling out and signing an application/affidavit, known as form T.A.1, and by affirming their current financial situation. Failure to keep an appointment, or to bring the necessary documents, may cause an unnecessary delay in the applicant receiving assistance. Persons requesting township assistance are required to complete and sign necessary township forms and waivers. Each application affidavit and copies of other documents of verification shall be retained in the Trustee's office. Eligibility of a request cannot be determined without the completion of the "Application for Township Assistance". An application for Township Assistance is not considered completed until all adult members of the household have affixed their signature to all documents required by law, or determined necessary, for investigative purposes by the trustee as contained in these Standards and Guidelines.

**B. Additional or Continuing Assistance**

The township trustee will not extend additional or continuing aid to 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 the household have changed from that set forth in the most recent application (Form TA-1B). Applications for Township Assistance are considered valid for a period not to exceed 180 days. During the 180 day period all requests will be processed on a month by month basis.

**C. Relatives of Township Employees**

Relatives of township employees (Appendix 1) may apply for township assistance. They will be given an application and referred to the Jefferson Township Office for an appointment and further investigation.

Applicants must follow Jefferson Township's procedures and will be required to cooperate with an investigation of their personal finances, family responsibility, and eligibility to receive other types of assistance. All other Fall Creek Township guidelines and requirements apply. The Jefferson Township Trustee or designee will make the determination of assistance eligibility, which Fall Creek Township will fulfill by issuing the decision and any other necessary paperwork, if the request is approved.

**D. Disclosure and Release of Information** *(IC 12-2026-8)*

Each adult member of the applicant's household must sign a "Disclosure and Release of Information" and any other form, instrument, or document that is required by law or determined necessary for investigative purposes by the trustee and as contained in these standards. Those documents include, but are not limited to: Social Security Reimbursement Authorization.

**E. Assistance with the Completion of this Application** *(IC 12-20-6-1)*

The township trustee will assist an applicant for Township Assistance in completing the application if the applicant has a mental or physical disability, including mental retardation, cerebral palsy, blindness or paralysis; has dyslexia; or cannot read or write the English language. If an individual who is required to sign a form as per the application process is unable to sign the form in the township trustee's office due to a physical or mental disability, or illness, the trustee shall make alternate arrangements to obtain the individual's signature.

**F. Application Review** *(IC 12-20-6-7 & 8)*

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 on the application not later than seventy-two (72) hours after receiving the completed application. Weekends and legal holidays are excluded from the 72 hour rule. The 72 hour "time clock" commences the moment the completed application is received by the township. An action of "PENDING" permits an additional 72 hours and must include a statement from the township listing the specific reasons for the action.

**IV. Applicant Residency Requirements** *(IC 12-20-8-1 thru 12-20-8-7)*

**A. Determining Residency**

It is necessary for the township to make some determination as to an applicant's living arrangements and whether they are physically living in the township, and whether or not they intend to make the township in which they are requesting assistance their permanent place of residence. The township may consider the conduct of the applicant, both active and passive, as it may reveal an intent to reside within a given household and within their respective township. Except for verified emergencies affecting applicants who are temporarily in the township for reasons other than Township Assistance, they must be residents of the township in which they apply. The following items may be used to determine residency or the person's intent to make the township their permanent place of residency:

1. Mailing address
2. Driver's license

3. Voter registration card
4. Utility billing
5. Motor vehicle registration
6. U. S. Postal Service change of address notices
7. The return, in a completed fashion, of the landlord's housing information verification
8. Where the applicant came from and how they supported themselves there (i.e. job, food stamps, TANF, Township Assistance, Subsidized Housing, Medicaid, etc.)
9. What means of transportation brought them (applicant household) to this township and how it was paid
10. Were they invited or promised assistance by anyone such as relatives, friends, or other social service agencies
11. Any other item, documentation, or verification requested from the applicant
12. Undocumented alien or un-emancipated youth will not be eligible for Township Assistance benefits
13. If in a temporary / transient location (sleeping in car, hotel, etc.), where the last permanent residence was

Residence and household shall not mean temporary living arrangements made available by relatives (Appendix 1), friends, acquaintances, or private or public service agencies.

Institutionalized persons will be considered residents of the township where they lived before their admission. This includes time spent in any institution, or in any public or private, charitable institution or hospital, or in any place while in the armed forces of the United States; however a nursing home or similar residential facility may be considered as a place of residence.

Individuals in the United States without the authorized documents of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) are ineligible to receive township assistance.

## **V. Eligibility Requirements**

### **A. General Requirement** *(IC 12-20-5.5-1 thru 12-20-5.5-6; IC 12-20-6-0.5 thru 12-20-6-10)*

In addition to being residents of Fall Creek Township, all applicants must be at least eighteen (18) years of age, or provide legal proof of emancipation. Applicants must provide proof of identification. Applicants must cooperate with the trustee's investigation of eligibility for assistance. During the interview process, the applicant will be required to complete an

Application for Township Assistance 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 assistance. The household will be required to cooperate with an investigation of finances, responsibilities, and eligibility to receive governmental or quasi-governmental assistance. The

investigation may include a home visit and/or contact with their relatives who may be willing and able to assist them. Except in cases of emergencies, an applicant must apply for all other forms of public assistance before being granted continuing Township Assistance.

**B. Employment Requirement** *(IC 12-20-10-1 thru 12-20-10-4)*

Every applicant who is physically and mentally able to work must be employed full time, or actively seeking full time employment. The trustee may refuse to furnish any assistance for 60 days until satisfied that all able-bodied adults in the household are employed full time or actively seeking full time employment.

For the purposes of these guidelines, full time employment shall mean income raising activity that raises at least the equivalent of 30 hours per week times the current federal minimum wage.

All able-bodied household adults may be required to show evidence of employment or, if unemployed, of seeking employment at a minimum of three establishments each week. Employment sought and secured must be enough hours and/or pay to cover basic living expenses. All able-bodied household adults may be required to register with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development or a similar agency designated by the trustee. All able-bodied household adults will be required to accept employment offered at a reasonable compensation rate. The township may also require any able-bodied household adult to complete a Township Employee Search Form prior to receiving assistance a second time.

The trustee may require that an applicant or household member(s) attend job training courses as a condition of continuing assistance.

**C. Employment Requirement Exemption** *(IC 12-20-11-1)*

An applicant may be exempt from working, seeking employment or performing workfare for a specified period if s/he either:

- Provides a licensed medical doctor's written statement of medical disability dated less than 30 days from the township appointment
- Provides proof of enrollment and full time attendance in an adult education or vocational course
- Is a minor or is 65 years old or over.

The trustee may require written verification of the above.

**D. SSI/SSI(D) Reimbursement Authorization** *(IC 12-20-27-1.5)*

On the date of the application, an applicant who claims disability and is applying for SSI or SSI (D) benefits, must sign an SSI Reimbursement Authorization Form supplied by the township.

**E. Other Resources/Assets** *(IC 12-7-2-44.7)*

Township assistance is designed to provide for basic living needs when no other resources are available. Countable assets (i.e. bank accounts, investments, property other than that required for living and vehicles not required for transportation to work) and anticipated assets (i.e. upcoming payroll checks, unemployment checks, child support, TANF, income tax refunds,



economic stimulus payments, social security checks, retirement account and refundable portions of tuition payments) are considered resources available to the applicant and may affect eligibility for assistance.

Based on circumstances in each case, the Trustee may determine that certain countable assets must be liquidated before assistance is granted, or that their market value be deducted from any assistance granted.

#### **F. Support by Relatives** *(IC 12-20-6-10b)*

If an applicant has a relative living in the township, the Township Trustee shall ask the relative to help before granting aid a second time. If the relative refuses, the trustee may assist the applicant.

#### **G. Bills 30 Days Past Due Not Eligible**

The trustee shall not be required to pay rent, mortgage, or utility bills that are more than 30 days past due, nor shall the trustee be required to pay bills incurred in another township. Inability to provide a bill to substantiate a request for assistance may result in a delay in processing the request; refusal or failure to provide such a bill may be grounds for denial of assistance.

Applicants who request assistance for rent, mortgage, or utility bills that are more than 30 days past due will be required to submit relevant income and documentation of expenditures as required by other sections of the guidelines for the period in which the debt was incurred to determine if the applicant met all conditions for receiving assistance during that time period. (Example in Appendix 1)

The trustee may assist in payment of non-qualifying bills only if the applicant can prove that all reasonable effort was made to provide for the service during the period in question and if the applicant meets all other requirements of these guidelines.

#### **H. Acceptable Expenditures for Basic Necessities** *(IC 12-20-5.5-6)*

Applicants are expected to apply their resources toward basic necessities (Appendix 1). Expenditures for items other than basic necessities, or for excessive expenditures not justified by medical or employment needs, will be deducted from an approved applicant's benefit level or the amount of assistance requested.

Certain expenditures, even if court-ordered, that the applicant may be legally required to pay may not be considered acceptable expenditures in determining eligibility and may be deducted from any benefit awarded.

#### **I. Township Employees and their Relatives**

Township employees and anyone living in the employee's household are ineligible for assistance. Relatives of an employee (Appendix 1) who reside in Fall Creek Township may apply for township assistance; however, their application for assistance will be reviewed and decided by the Jefferson Township Trustee or her/his designee. The applicant is expected to comply with all other guidelines and to cooperate fully with the Jefferson Township Office. (Also see Section III of the Guidelines.)

## **VI. Income Guidelines** *(IC 12-20-5.5-6)*

### **A. Countable Household Income**

An applicant's countable household income (Appendix 1), for 30 days prior to the application date or for the period in which assistance is requested, must be less than the monthly amounts listed in Appendix 4 of the guidelines in order to be eligible for township assistance. Applicants must also meet all other requirements of the Township Guidelines. Income guidelines are 100% of the federal poverty guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and are updated annually.

### **B. Lump Sum Income**

If lump sum income, such as tax refunds, court settlements, financial aid refunds, retroactive social security payments, insurance settlements, economic stimulus payments, or workers compensation received in the last 90 days and combined with other countable household income, totals more than three times the qualifying monthly income, then 90 days of financial information may be considered in determining eligibility. The trustee may require additional financial information if the time period for which assistance is requested is not included within the 90 day time period.

Applicants whose income falls within the guidelines must prove that their necessary living expenses are greater than their resources in order to be eligible for assistance.

## **VII. Determination of Needs/Forms of Assistance Provided** *(IC 12-20-16-1 thru 12-20-16-17)*

### **A. Trustee Determines Needs**

The trustee shall determine if eligible applicants have any of the following immediate needs listed in Section VII. The trustee has the authority to provide assistance in the most economical and practical manner. Purchase orders must be signed by the applicant, signed by the vendor, and returned to the township within 30 days of approval date unless stated otherwise or the purchase order will be voided.

### **B. Food** *(IC 12-20-16-5)*

The trustee may furnish food necessary to maintain health. Food purchase orders may be issued on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis and shall not exceed the weekly amount of current federal SNAP benefits, commonly called food stamps, as listed in Appendix 4 of the guidelines.

Nutritious food shall be purchased with food purchase orders along with the necessities such as soap, laundry supplies and paper products. Purchase orders are not to be used for the purchase of candy, soft drinks, tobacco products, snacks or alcoholic beverages. Purchases of such items shall be considered abuse of food purchase orders and will be grounds for future denial.

Any individual or family applying to the trustee for food shall be referred to the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits as required by law.

The trustee will not provide purchase orders to supplement SNAP benefits in extreme circumstances such as loss, theft, or medical emergency.

**C. Non-Food Items** *(IC 12-7-2-20.5)*

Necessary household supplies such as soap, laundry supplies and paper products will be issued in the weekly allotments listed in Appendix 4 of the guidelines.

**D. Shelter** *(IC 12-20-16-17)*

The trustee may help provide shelter as needed on a month-by-month basis. Assistance will be provided in whatever form necessary to provide or prevent the loss of shelter so long as such aid constitutes the most economical and practical means of providing shelter. For rental requests, a valid lease that includes the landlord's name, address and phone number, amount of monthly rent and the number of adults residing in the household is required. For mortgage requests, a current mortgage statement that includes the mortgage holder's name, address and phone number, amount of monthly payment, and current due is required.

The trustee may provide for an inspection of current or proposed shelter to ensure its habitability prior to granting shelter assistance. The township may require that rental properties conform to applicable building and health codes before rent will be approved. The landlord must agree not to evict the applicant during the period covered by the township purchase order.

The trustee will not issue a rent purchase order to supplement and rent subsidy, supplement or other government rent assistance unless a special emergency need exists. The trustee may not provide rent or mortgage payment without proof that the applicant will be able to continue to pay the monthly rent or mortgage.

The trustee will pay only for basic shelter expenses. Application fees, rent deposits, late fees, renter's insurance, damages, furniture rental, or maintenance costs are excluded.

The trustee will not pay legal costs, including attorney collection fees, court costs, or late fees, related to an eviction. The applicant will have responsibility for paying all such costs, or providing a written agreement outlining a payment plan issued by the landlord, before a purchase order is issued.

If a rent request is approved, before a purchase order will be issued, a rent ledger or landlord statement must be provided confirming the assistance amount approved by the trustee is the only amount required to prevent eviction or dismiss the eviction in process. If the amount shown due on the ledger is less than the approved assistance amount, the purchase order will be issued for the lesser amount.

The trustee is not required to pay for additional shelter costs as a result of the applicant keeping pets. A service dog, or an animal used for therapy or emotional support, is considered a medical necessity, not a pet, but the need must be documented by a licensed medical doctor's written statement issued within the past 30 days.

Rent/mortgage purchase orders shall be provided in amounts not exceeding those listed Appendix 4 of the Guidelines.

Under IC 20-6-10, the trustee may not use township assistance funds to pay the cost of an applicant's shelter with a relative who is the applicant's landlord. This applies if the applicant lives in the same household as the relative or in housing separate from the relative where either the housing is unencumbered by mortgage or the housing has not been previously rented by the relative to a different non-relative tenant at reasonable market rates for at least 6 months.

If shelter payments are made to relative of a township assistance applicant on behalf of the applicant lives in the same household as the relative or in housing separate from the relative where either the housing is unencumbered by mortgage or the housing has not been previously rented by the relative to a different non-relative tenant at reasonable market rates for at least 6 months.

If shelter payments are made to a relative of a township assistance applicant on behalf of the applicant or a member of the applicant's household, the trustee may file a lien against the relative's real property for the amount of township shelter assistance granted.

#### **E. Utilities/Fuel** *(IC 12-20-16-3)*

The trustee may, as necessary to prevent the loss of service, authorize the payment from township assistance funds for essential utility services including water, gas, and electric services, and for coal, wood, liquid propane or fuel oil when they are used for heating or cooking. Sufficient fuel services shall be provided to maintain the residential shelter at a reasonable temperature during the months when conditions require heat.

The trustee will not pay late fees, deposits, or trip charges.

The trustee may not provide utility payment (electric, gas, water, propane) without proof that the applicant will be able to continue to pay the monthly bill.

The trustee does not pay for cable TV, satellite service, or internet streaming services.

All utility bills must be in an applicant's name or a landlord's name if the applicant proves that the applicant is responsible for utility payment. All applicants will be required to apply for the Energy Assistance Program.

During the period the applicant has been approved for the Energy Assistance Program, the applicant must continue to make payments on the utility bills as reasonably determined by the trustee. Once the Energy Assistance Program has ended, the trustee will not authorize utility assistance if payments have not been made unless proof is provided of other emergency payments that prohibited the applicants from making utility payments. Applicants may be asked to sign a deferred payment agreement with the utility company if the trustee determines this to be economical and practical. If the trustee determines that a utility is going to be disconnected regardless of the amount of township assistance provided, the trustee may decide not to provide such utility payment. The trustee will not pay utility bills that are more than 24 months old.

If the utility request is approved, before purchase order will be issued, confirmation must be received from the utility provider that the assistance amount approved by the trustee is the only amount required to restore service or prevent disconnection of the utility service. If the utility provider determines an amount less than the approved assistance amount will restore service or prevent disconnection of the utility service, the purchase order will be issued for the lesser amount. The trustee will not pay late fees or court costs if the matter has been turned over for

collection. The applicant will be responsible for paying all of the late fees and court costs or fees before the trustee issues a purchase order.

IMPORTANT: It is the responsibility of residents to seek assistance before the utility is actually disconnected to prevent the overuse and wasting of additional community services.

Utility allowances will be determined in accordance with the standards established in Appendix 4 of the Guidelines.

The trustee will not pay for any utility service received as a fraudulent act.

#### **F. Medical Services** *(IC 12-20-16-2)*

The trustee shall in cases of necessity pay for medical services including doctor's fees, allowable medical supplies, prescriptions, and special dietary needs unless these goods and services are available through other government programs and/or social services agencies.

The township is under no obligation to provide medical services and/or prescription medications that are excluded for payment by either Medicaid or the Medicare program (IC 12-20-16-2(b)). The township is not responsible for paying for insulin if the township has evidence that the applicant has the financial ability to pay for the insulin. The township will pay only for a medical service which has been applied for and approved by the trustee prior to the service being rendered. The trustee may pay for emergency medical services if the otherwise eligible resident is admitted as an emergency patient due to an accident or sudden illness.

State law establishes specific restrictions on the types of medical assistance which trustees may provide (Appendix 3).

#### **G. Traveler's Aid** *(IC 12-20-9-3)*

The trustee may provide assistance to persons or family units passing through the township and to permit their return to place of legal residence.

Non-residents applying for traveler's aid shall be informed of their future ineligibility for assistance and will be required to cooperate in signing a statement acknowledging their understanding of their eligibility status. This statement may be used as the basis for denial of future assistance.

Applicants requesting gasoline assistance must provide a valid driver's license and proof of insurance.

Applicants requesting transportation assistance to a location outside the township may be required to complete workfare obligations before assistance is granted. They will also be required to provide verification that their destination is their legal residence.

#### **H. Funeral Expenses** *(IC 12-20-16-12)*

The trustee may provide mortuary and cremation or burial expenses at the lowest possible cost, not to exceed \$1,500 for cremation and \$2,965 for burial, if the deceased is not eligible for Medicaid or VA burial benefits. Family members will be required to attest that the deceased does not have resources (including insurance policies of the deceased) available to them with

which to pay funeral expenses by completing an application for township assistance prior to signing a contract with a funeral home.

The trustee will pay for cremation rather than a burial unless there is a prior objection in writing by the deceased individual or a surviving family member. If there is good cause to believe that a written objection to cremation may exist, or will be made by a family member, then a period of three (3) working days will be provided. If no objection is received within three (3) working days, the trustee will determine whether there will be a cremation or burial.

Funeral home and cremation or burial expenses covered by the township are for basic goods and services only as agreed upon by the township trustee and funeral home director (a standard package). Either visitation the day prior to a cremation or burial, or same day of cremation or burial is included (not both). The cost of a gravestone is not included. A family organization may pay up to \$500.00 for the incidental costs not allowed by township restrictions - i.e. religious ceremony or public viewing and other arrangements. The township should review a death certificate and an itemized statement (invoice) from the funeral home before making payment. In the case of a cremation, a provisional statement and a coroner's report may be accepted in place of the death certificate.

If an individual dies in the township without leaving assets-money, real or personal property, resources that may be liquidated, or other means necessary to defray funeral expenses - and if the deceased was not a resident of another township in Indiana, then the township trustee may deduct from the maximum amount either or both of the following: any monetary benefits that deceased individual is entitled to receive from a state or federal program; and /or any money that another person provides on behalf of the deceased individual.

A township trustee who provides funeral and cremation or burial benefits to a deceased individual is entitled to a first priority claim, to the extent of the cost of benefits paid against any money or other personal property held by the coroner under IC 36-2-14-11.

The township trustee may file a claim against the decedent's estate for the cost of the cremation or burial if her/his assets are found to be sufficient for opening the estate.

#### **I. Recovery of Benefits (IC 12-20-27-1; IC 12-20-27-1.5)**

A trustee who furnishes township assistance may file a claim for the value of that assistance against the estate of a township resident who dies, leaving an estate, and who is not survived by a spouse, disabled adult dependent or dependent child less than 18 years of age.

The estate includes any money or other personal property.

If a trustee anticipates that a township assistance applicant is likely to receive a judgment, compensation, or a monetary benefit from a third party, the trustee may require the applicant to enter into an agreement allowing the township to pursue reimbursement from the third party to sign a Social Security Administration's reimbursement authorization.

These agreements cover repayment of any township assistance benefits provided by the township during the interim period. The interim period begins when the agreement or authorization is signed and ends when the applicant receives the judgment, compensation, or monetary benefit or leaves the household.

This section does not apply to any assistance for which workfare has been satisfactorily completed.

#### **J. Other Assistance**

The trustee may provide new or used clothing to keep residents warm and clean, and may provide for necessary household supplies such as first aid equipment, minimal furnishings, utensils, and appliances.

The trustee may also provide transportation for medical appointments and for seeking or accepting employment when there is a reasonable likelihood of the applicant being hired. All such assistance will be provided with the most economical means. Applicants requesting gasoline assistance must provide a valid driver's license and proof of insurance. Gasoline may be provided if public transportation is not practical.

### **VIII. Workfare** *(IC 12-20-11-1 thru 12-20-11-5)*

#### **A. Requirement**

All applicants will be required to work in return for assistance. The trustee will arrange work for the township or another local government or non-profit agency unless one of the following conditions exist:

- Applicant is not physically or mentally able to perform the proposed work and provides a licensed medical doctor's written statement issued within the past 30 days.
- Applicant is a minor, or over 65 years of age or older
- Applicant has a child under school age and/or childcare is unavailable
- Applicant has full time (30 hours) a week employment at the time assistance is provided and maintains full time employment for an unbroken period of 30 days beginning the day assistance is granted.
- Applicant is needed to care for a person as a result of that person's age or physical condition and provide a licensed medical doctor's written statement issued within the past 30 days as confirmation.
- The trustee determines that there is no work for the applicant
- A public health emergency is declared by local or state officials
- The applicant obligated to perform the work is in the Indiana Manpower Placement and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) program. Applicant will receive workfare credit hours if proof of compliance with IMPACT is provided.
- The applicant obligated to perform the work is enrolled in GED classes, an alcohol and /or drug treatment program, or a work program training program for a period of 30 days beginning the day assistance is granted. Verification of participation must be provided.
- Applicant is currently enrolled in full time studies (Those applicants are not automatically exempted from workfare but exemptions will be determined on a case by case basis.)

#### **B. Supervised through trustee**

All work will be coordinated by and under the supervision of the Trustee's office. Assistance will be worked for at no less than the federal minimum wage. Applicants shall be required to attend their workfare assignment. The trustee may require that workfare obligations be completed before any assistance is granted. Failure to work as scheduled or failure to fulfill workfare

obligations within a reasonable period is required by the Township Trustee is a basis for denying further assistance to the applicant for not more than 180 days. In emergency situations the Trustee may waive the workfare obligations.

## **IX. Other Program Eligibility** (IC 12-20-6-5.5) (IC 12-20-6-5.5)

### **A. Requirement to Apply for Other Assistance**

If the Township Trustee determines that an applicant who is granted emergency township assistance may be eligible for assistance other than the township assistance, the applicant shall within 15 working days file an application and comply with all the necessary requirements for completing the application process. An applicant who fails to do this may not be granted township assistance for 60 days following the date emergency assistance was provided.

### **B. Application for Public Assistance Before Granting Township Assistance**

If, before granting township assistance, the Township Trustee determines that an applicant may be eligible for assistance other than township assistance, the applicant shall, when referred by the Township Trustee, make an application for public assistance administered by the Family Social Service Administration (FSSA) or any other federal or state government entity and must comply with all necessary requirements for completing the application process. An applicant who fails to file an application per the trustee's referral may be denied township assistance for not more than 60 days after the trustee's referral.

Paragraphs A and B, however, do not apply in an emergency situation.

### **C. Reduced Benefit for Failure to Properly Apply Other Benefits**

Failure to properly apply public monies or private charitable donations received by the applicant from other programs may result in denial of assistance. An applicant who has had benefits reduced from other public programs because of voluntary actions or non-compliance with program requirements may have equal reductions made by the township from any benefit the applicant may qualify to receive.

### **D. Protective Payee**

The trustee may report to other government agencies, including the Family Social Service Administration or Social Security Administration, the misuse of funds by an applicant. When reporting misuse of funds, the trustee may officially recommend that the applicant's payments be placed in the hands of a protective or designated payee. The township may refuse to extend aid to an applicant until the applicant initiates and executes the proper papers for obtaining payee to handle the finances.

## **X. Reasons For Denial**

### **A. Failure to Comply with Guidelines**

Any of the following are grounds for the denial of assistance. The applicant(s):

- Does not reside in Fall Creek Township.



- Does not intend to make Fall Creek Township her/his sole place of residence per the trustee's determination.
- Willfully gives false information or withholds information.
- Voluntarily terminates gainful full time employment; is fired for just cause, i.e. absenteeism, theft; fails to pass an employer's drug screening test. The trustee shall not be obligated to provide assistance for 60 days from the date employment terminated. Refusal of gainful full time employment or failure to seek full time employment is a basis to deny assistance for up to 60 days.
- Uses violence, intimidations, or abusive language in or around the trustee's office/premises, including over the phone.
- Fails to follow printed work order requirements as explained and outlined in the workfare agreement.
- Fails to accept free or low cost shelter arrangements provided by relatives, the township, or others.
- Engages in abuse of or voluntary termination or reduction of any other programs in the last 180 days offering assistance for basic necessities, including TANF, SNAP, subsidized housing or other programs for which they may be eligible.
- Has an eviction in the last 180 days from subsidized housing for violation of regulations or guidelines.
- Fails to respond to the trustee's request to pursue other assistance or provide documentation of pending applications.
- Has failed or refused to sign Township Reimbursement Form for SSI.
- Has excessive, unnecessary and or luxury expenses, i.e. wasted resources.
- Has failed to file paternity actions when necessary and appropriate, or failed to take necessary legal action to pursue child support unless exempt.
- Fails or refuses to cooperate with or provide the trustee's office with necessary information to determine eligibility for assistance.
- Has a conviction of an offense under (IC 35-43-5-7 Welfare Fraud). Persons convicted of a welfare misdemeanor are ineligible for township assistance for one year from their conviction; ten years if convicted of a welfare felony.
- Has requested assistance with a bill that is 30 days or more past due. The trustee shall not be required to pay bills that are more than 30 days past due.
- Has requested assistance with bills incurred in another township. The trustee shall not be required to pay bills incurred in another township.
- Has insufficient income to provide for necessary living expenses, regardless of meeting the township's income guidelines.
- Has requested rental or utility deposits.
- Is requesting assistance for previously decided requests (i.e. duplicate requests).
- Is requesting rental assistance when the landlord is a relative.
- Does not have the authorized documentation of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.
- Has contracted with funeral services before applying for township assistance.

## **B. Wasted Resources**

Non-necessities or non-essential expenditures (also known as wasted resources) include, but are not limited to:

- fast food, candy, soft drinks, and snack foods

- Tobacco products
- Alcoholic beverages
- Pet food and pet supplies
- Court costs, probation fees, garnishments or other costs incurred through or by the criminal or civil justice systems (i.e. bail, user fees for an in-home detention program, restitution, substance abuse fees)
- Bank penalties or overdraft charges
- Cable TV, satellite, streaming services, or other entertainment costs
- Child care expenses that are not required by employment or medical purposes
- Extravagant purchases (for applicant(s) or others) that are not required for employment or medical purposes
- Payments toward living costs incurred by other households
- Loan and credit card payments including payday loans or rent-to-own payments
- Personal loans made by the applicant to other persons, or repayment of personal loans by the applicant to other persons
- Non-basic phone cares exceeding \$50
- Non-basic internet charges exceeding \$60
- An automobile is not, by statue, recognized as a basic necessity. Therefore automobile payments and other related expenses may not be considered an acceptable expense, unless it is necessary to maintain current employment. Then, the reasonableness of the expenditure will be considered.

The total amount of payments made toward non-necessities for the period in which assistance is being requested may be deducted from an approved applicant's benefit level; or may be used as a basis for denial if the amount for which the request for assistance is being made is less than the total amounts dedicated by the application for payment towards non-necessities. Example: a request is made for a one-month utility bill but the applicant has expended more than the cost of utility bill on provision of non-necessities during the period for which the request for assistance is made; the request for assistance can be denied.

## **XI. Trustee Obligation/ Notification of Decision**

### **A. No Verbal Denials (*IC 12-20-6-7; IC 12-20-6-8*)**

In order to protect the rights of all applicants who are potentially eligible for township services, no one will be verbally denied assistance. All applications must be in writing on the appropriate forms, and all determination of eligibility will be made in writing on Form TA-1A.

### **B. Decision Notification**

Applicants are entitled to a decision on their completed applications within 72 hours or three (3) working days (excluding weekends and holidays IC 12-20-6-7, IC 12-20-6-8 and other closings determined by the trustee) unless the investigation cannot be completed because the applicant has not submitted the required information, or the township is unable to gather necessary information.

If the township experiences difficulty in gathering necessary information, the applicant(s) will be notified that the case will be pending to allow the township an additional 72 hours, or three (3) working days, to complete the investigation. Should the township be unable to access the

required information within the additional time after issuing the notification , the township may deny the application.

All decision notifications will include the following information:

- The type and amount of assistance requested, and whether it was approved, partially approved, or denied;
- Specific reasons for denying all or part of the assistance requested;
- Information advising the applicant of the procedures for appeal to the Henry County Commissioners

### **C. Appeals Process (IC 12-20-15-1 thru 12-20-15-9)**

If any action taken by the Township Trustee is not acceptable to any client, the applicant may appeal the decision to the Henry County Commissioners in New Castle, IN. A form describing the process for appeals is attached to the TA-1A form used to inform applicants of the Trustee's decision.

## **XII. Availability and Annual Review of Guidelines**

All decisions regarding the eligibility of applicants will be based on these standards and in accordance with Indiana law. The guidelines are available on the township website and will be posted in the office of the township trustee at all times. The guidelines will be filed with the Henry County Commissioners. Any member of the public will be permitted to inspect and copy them. Copies will be made available to interested public and private agencies at their own expense.

The township trustee may provide benefits beyond those listed when special need is shown. The amount and length of assistance, when added to all other income and resources, shall be sufficient to meet the needs determined by the trustee.

These guidelines shall supersede any and all previous guidelines. The appendices included are also incorporated as part of these guidelines.

These guidelines are effective when signed and posted by the township trustee and filed with the Henry County Commissioners. They are approved by the Fall Creek Township Board and will be reviewed annually. The trustee shall make technical adjustments in these guidelines to reflect changes in applicable federal standard and Indiana statutes subject to review of the Township Board.

**Township Assistance in Fall Creek Township, Henry County, Indiana.**

**Adopted this 6th day of February, 2023.**

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**Township Trustee**

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**Township Deputy Trustee**

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**President, Township Board**

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**Member, Township Board**

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**Secretary, Township Board**

## APPENDIX 1

### DEFINITIONS & EXAMPLES

**“HOUSEHOLD” DEFINED** - “Household”, for the purposes of these guidelines, means an individual living alone, a family related by blood, or a group of individuals living together at one (1) residence as a domestic unit with mutual economic dependency.

**“RELATIVES” DEFINED** - For the purposes of these Standards and Guidelines, the term “relative” shall include only the parent, stepparent, child, stepchild, sibling, stepsibling, grandparent, step grandparent, grandchild, or step grandchild of the applicant for township assistance.

**“EMERGENCY” DEFINED** - The term “emergency” 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; and (2) cannot be remedied in a timely manner by means other than township assistance.

**“HOMELESSNESS” DEFINED** - “An individual or household which has spent the prior night (or the likelihood of spending the night in the immediate future) in an environment considered to be unsafe or unhealthy.”

## APPENDIX 2

### MAXIMUM INCOME ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

An applicant’s gross monthly household income must be less than 100% of the federally established poverty level. The federal maximum income eligibility standards are revised annually (see Appendix 4).

## APPENDIX 3

### ALLOWABLE MEDICAL EXPENSES

The following are the specific guidelines for allowable medical expenses as reference in Section VII. F. of these guidelines and as established in IC 12-20-16-2 (c).

The Township Trustee shall pay only for the following medical services:

- Prescription drugs as prescribed by an attending practitioner (as defined in IC 16-42-19-5) other than a veterinarian. Prescriptions are not to exceed a 30 day supply. The trustee will pay only for generic when available. Narcotic prescriptions will not be provided if a non-opiate drug is available.
- Office calls to a physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1.
- Dental care needed to relieve pain or infection or to repair cavities in the most economical manner.
- Repair or replacement of dentures. The initial cost of dentures will be considered only when the medical necessity has been documented.
- Emergency room treatment that is of an emergency nature.

- Preoperative testing prescribed by an attending physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1.
- Over-the-counter drugs prescribed by a practitioner (as defined in IC 16-42-19-5) other than a veterinarian.
- X-rays and laboratory testing as prescribed by an attending physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1.
- Visits to a medical specialist when referred by an attending physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1.
- Physical therapy prescribed by an attending physician licensed under IC 25-22.5-1-1.1.
- Eyeglasses, eye exams, eyeglass repair or replacement. The township will not pay for contact lenses, unless medically necessary.
- Repair or replacement, not initial cost, of a prosthesis not provided for by other tax supported state or federal programs.
- Insulin and items needed to administer insulin in accordance with IC 12-20-16-2(c) not to exceed a 30 day supply.

**APPENDIX 4**

**FALL CREEK TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE CHART**

- **HOUSEHOLD INCOME GUIDELINES (100% federally established poverty level)**

Number of Persons in Household

Total Monthly Gross Income

1	\$1073.00
2	\$1452.00
3	\$1830.00
4	\$2208.00
5	\$2587.00
6	\$2965.00
7	\$3343.00
8	\$3722.00
Each additional person	+\$378.00

- **MAXIMUM MONTHLY ASSISTANCE AMOUNT**

Number of Persons in Household

Monthly Purchase Order Amount

1	\$275
2	\$350
3 or more persons	\$450

The household size of an applicant whose minor children live at the residence less than 100% of the time will be determined by the inclusion of the child as a dependent on the applicant's most recent tax return.

- **FUNERAL EXPENSES**

The maximum amount payable for funeral expenses is \$2,965 for burial and \$1,500 for cremation.

- **WORKFARE RATE IS \$15.00 PER HOUR**

- **MIDDLETOWN HOSTS A FOOD PANTRY FOR FALL CREEK TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS**

**APPENDIX 5**

**FALL CREEK TOWNSHIP BUDGET FORM**

- HOUSEHOLD GROSS INCOME FROM \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_

	PAY DATE	GROSS	NET	VERIFIED
EMPLOYMENT				
EMPLOYMENT				
EMPLOYMENT				
SOCIAL SECURITY				
VA BENEFITS				
TANF				
OTHER ASSISTANCE				
UNEMPLOYMENT				
UNEMPLOYMENT				
UNEMPLOYMENT				
CHILD SUPPORT				
CHILD SUPPORT				
<b>TOTAL</b>				

- HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES PAID FROM \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_

RENT/MORTGAGE			
ELECTRIC			
GAS (HEAT)			
WATER/SEWER			
PHONE/CELL			
CABLE/INTERNET			
COURT COST/ PROBATION/ JUDGEMENTS			
CAR PAYMENT			
CAR INSURANCE			
GASOLINE			
MEDICAL			
CREDIT CARDS			
BANK FEES			
FOOD			
LAUNDRY/TOILETRIES			
OTHER			
<b>TOTAL</b>			

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_ # IN HOUSEHOLD \_\_\_\_\_