



The Voice for
Grassroots Government

Vigo Township

Knox County

Assistance Guidelines

Adopted by the

Vigo Township Advisory Board 2025

TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE STANDARDS & GUIDELINES FOR

VIGO TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE

2025

FORWARD

This document has been developed by the Vigo Township Trustee of Knox 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 and how a person qualifies for those services.

Vigo Township has adopted appendixes reflecting other tables for assistance limits for their township. For example, rent, utility, and overall assistance limits are contained in this document.

This instrument, in accordance with Indiana law, has been approved by the Vigo Township Board and will be filed with all appropriate governmental agencies and the Knox County Commissioners.

**NOTICE TO ALL CITIZENS OF
VIGO TOWNSHIP,
KNOX COUNTY, INDIANA**

RE: TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE

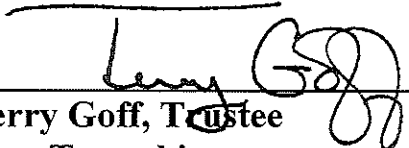
OFFICE LOCATION: 119 East 2nd Street
Bicknell, IN 47512

OFFICE PHONE: 812-735-3955

OFFICE HOURS: Monday, Wednesday & Friday
8 am to 12:45 pm

Township Assistance Applications are accepted online (Preferred) and for walk-ins. The Trustee reserves the right to modify office hours to meet the needs of the township. In such an event, the Trustee will post notice. The Trustee's office will be closed on special holidays and at other times when the Township Trustee's office must participate in educational programs or seminars.

STANDARDS, ELIGIBILITY, AND PROCEDURES - Assistance in Vigo Township is administered in accordance with the standards duly adopted by the Township Board and available for review at the township office.



Terry Goff, Trustee
Vigo Township

TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE STANDARDS, ELIGIBILITY, AND PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

(A) In the state of Indiana, it is the legal duty of the township to provide for its indigent residents. The Township Trustee is charged with the responsibility of assisting and servicing residents who meet the criteria as indigent within their respective township.

(B) In order to meet the legislative purpose of providing necessary and prompt relief of indigent families found within the township, the Trustee will determine eligibility for assistance based on the applicant/recipient's total situation.

(C) All decisions regarding eligibility will be based on the following standards. The standards will be posted at the office of the Township Trustee, and any member of the public will be permitted to inspect and copy them. Copies of these standards will also be made available to interested public and private social welfare agencies. These standards will be periodically revised by the Township to reflect changes in the law and the cost of living.

OFFICE HOURS - The number of hours each township is open for Township Assistance Applications will differ from one township to another. Therefore, the schedule for each township is contained on a separate page of this document as provided by each township. Individuals desiring to make an application for Township Assistance from their respective township should call the trustee's office first. The township telephone number is 812-735-3955 or an email can be sent to trustee@vigotownship42.in.gov.

LOCATION AND DIRECTIONS – The office is located inside the Bicknell City Hall in the former police headquarters. The address is 119 E 2nd Street, Bicknell, Indiana 47512. This information is also available from the Knox County Sheriff, the Bicknell-Vigo Public Library, Sandborn Water Utilities, Edwardsport Town Office, Indiana 211, or online at knoxcounty.in.gov and any other locations deemed appropriate by the Trustee.

APPLICATIONS - An individual desiring to make an initial application for assistance from the township may send an email to trustee@vigotownship42.in.gov. The office will then send a link to the individual to our online application. An individual may also come to the township office during regular business hours to fill out an application. A list of the documents and/or information needed to complete an application will also be given to the applicant. An email or an appointment may be scheduled to acquire additional information. Once the information has been requested by the office, the applicant has 7 days to return the information or risk being denied assistance. Failure to keep an appointment or to bring the necessary documents may cause an unnecessary delay in the applicant receiving assistance. All individuals in a family over the age of 18 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 a complete **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 forms, instruments, or documents required by law or determined necessary for investigative purposes by the trustee as contained in these Standards and Guidelines.

DISCLOSURE AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION - Each applicant and 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. **IC 12-20-6-8 (c)**. Those documents include but are not limited to the Social Security Reimbursement Authorization and Charity Tracker Release form.

ASSISTANCE WITH COMPLETION OF THIS APPLICATION - The township staff may assist an applicant for Township Assistance in completing the application if the applicant has a mental or physical disability or cannot read or write the English language. **IC 12-20-6-1 (e)** 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.

THE PERSONAL EFFORTS AND THE EXPENDITURE OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES - The township trustee, as the administrator of Township Assistance, may provide and shall extend Township Assistance only when the personal effort of the applicant fails to provide one (1) or more basic necessity. This shall include expending the household's available financial resources for basic necessities in the sequence they come due or are 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 PR #1A, that the recipient expend a substantial portion of their monthly financial resource(s) 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)**

RECERTIFICATION - The township trustee will not approve additional or continuing aid to an individual or a household unless the applicant fills out another application along with the required additional documents.

RESIDENCY - The township must determine as to an applicant's living arrangements whether they are physically living in the township and whether 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 intent to reside within a given household and/or within their respective township. Except for verified emergencies applicants, must be resident 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. **(IC 12-20-8)**

1. Mailing Address
2. Driver's License
3. Voter registration card
4. Utility billing
5. Motor vehicle registration
6. Addresses given to employer/former employers and others
7. U. S. Postal Service change of address notices
8. A landlord's housing verification statement
9. Proof of job, food stamps, TANF, Township Assistance, Subsidized Housing, Medicaid, etc.
10. Any other item, documentation, or verification requested from the applicant
11. Undocumented alien or un-emancipated youth will not be eligible for Township Assistance benefits

PERMANENT RESIDENCY – All applicants for Township Assistance must be residents of the township as verified by the provisions above. In case of emergency, however, the township may provide temporary assistance to applicants who are temporarily in the township unless the applicant is specifically in the township for Township Assistance benefits. Individual(s) in the United States without the permission of the Immigration and Naturalization Service is ineligible to receive Township Assistance. (IC 12-20-8-1,2,3,4 & 7 & IC 12-14-2.5-3)

TEMPORARY LIVING IN ANOTHER TOWNSHIP – Individuals temporarily living in another township when their immediate past residency was in Vigo Township will not be denied benefits on the grounds of residency. Nor will Vigo Township assist, other than that which is required by law for transients, individuals who are temporarily living in Vigo Township when their immediate past residency was outside the boundaries of Vigo Township. (IC 12-20-8-5)

COOPERATION - 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 assistance. The investigation may include a home visit and/or contact with any 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 Township Assistance.

AGE - Any individual or household where the head of the household is eighteen (18) years of age or older or is legally and completely emancipated at an earlier age will be eligible for assistance from the office of the Township Trustee. Un-emancipated youth requesting township assistance will automatically be reported to the Knox County Office of Families and Children.

DEFINED "Household," for 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 these guidelines, the term "relative" includes 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.

APPLICATION REVIEW - In case of an 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 and **all** requested documents have been received. An action of **"PENDING"** permits an additional 72 hours and must include a statement from the township listing the specific reasons for the action. (IC 12-20-6-7 & 8)

NOTICE OF ACTION /APPEALS - 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 email the Notice of Action (PR #1 A) or provide personal notice not later than 72 hours, excluding weekends and legal holidays, after receiving the **completed** application.
- (2). The notice shall include information that notifies the applicant of their right to appeal the trustee's decision and where the appeal is to be filed.
- (3). The notice shall include the
 - (a) The type and amount of assistance granted.
 - (b) The type and amount of assistance denied or partially granted.
 - (c) The specific reasons for denying all or part of the assistance requested.
- (4). The township shall not render a decision on a request for Township Assistance without a completed application for township assistance (PR #1) on file in the office of the township. This also precludes the township trustee from rendering a decision via the telephone or any other electronic device.

NON-EMERGENCY REVIEW - If, before granting Township Assistance, the trustee determines that an applicant or a member of the household may be eligible for public assistance other than Township Assistance, the applicant or household member shall, when referred to by the trustee, make an application and comply with all requirements of that agency.

REFERRALS - All applicants for Township Assistance and members of the applicant's household are required to comply with all referrals from the trustee to other public or private assistance programs before Township Assistance is considered. Failure to comply may result in a denial for not more than sixty (60) days.

RESPONSIBLE RELATIVES - If it is determined that the applicant/recipient has any relative able to assist him or his household, the Office of the Township trustee shall, before granting aid a second time, ask the relatives to help the applicant or member of the applicant's household, either with material relief or by furnishing them with employment; but if the relatives refuse, then the Trustee may assist the household as may be otherwise provided herein.

TRUSTEE'S ECONOMICAL RESPONSIBILITY - If the Trustee determines an eligible applicant has any essential needs the Trustee has the authority to provide and will provide most economically and practically.

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

- 1) **KNOWINGLY AND WILLINGLY FALSIFYING THEIR APPLICATION**, or by misrepresenting the facts or withholding vital information, to gain township benefits will be denied for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days, commencing on the date of the improper conduct or the date the last assistance was extended based on the improper conduct. The township may also make a criminal referral to the county prosecutor's office. Individual applicants convicted of "Welfare Fraud" shall be denied township assistance in accordance with the provisions of **IC 12-20-6-6.5**.
- 2) **FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE WORKFARE REQUIREMENTS** - As outlined by these standards, the trustee may require applicants, after first receiving township assistance, to participate in the township's workfare program. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in a denial **not to exceed 180 days. (IC 12-20-11-1)** This rule also applies to anyone who fails to comply with workfare requirements in any other township within the State of Indiana.

- 3) **WASTED RESOURCES** - The term “**wasted resources**” means the amount of money or resources spent by an applicant or an adult member of an applicant’s household seeking township assistance during the thirty (30) days before the date of application or request for assistance for items or services that are **not necessities**. The dollar amount of wasted resources, as determined by the trustee, will be deducted from the total amount of anticipated assistance.
- Resources or tax-supported services lost or reduced as a result of a voluntary act during the thirty (30) days before the date of application for Township Assistance by an adult member of the applicant household unless the adult can establish a good reason for the act may be denied for sixty (60) days (**IC 12-7-2-200.5**) Examples include, but are not limited to the following:
1. **Voluntarily Terminating Gainful Employment**, or being involuntarily terminated for just cause, for example: absenteeism, theft, or willful misconduct. A denial from the Indiana Office of Employment and Training for Unemployment Compensation may also be used as grounds for being denied Township Assistance benefits.
 2. **Failure to Actively Seek and/or Accept Gainful Employment** when offered, whether the compensation for the work will be payable in money or in-house rent, or commodities consisting of the necessities of life.
 3. **Eviction for Just Cause** -Being evicted from subsidized housing for violations of regulations and guidelines or voluntarily terminating housing without just cause.
 4. **Tax Return Funds**- An applicant will show proof of federal/state tax refunds received by supplying a copy of tax returns for all members of the household. The township will take into consideration the refund received and consider it as income over a prorated period (not to exceed 90 days). If the applicant/member of the household has received more than income guidelines (defined in this document) and is not able to provide the trustee with a reasonable account of how tax return funds were spent, this shall be grounds for denial. Denial will not exceed (90) days from the date of the federal/state refund being received.
- 4) **FAILURE TO ACCEPT ADEQUATE FREE OR LOW-COST SHELTER ARRANGEMENTS** - Shelter accommodation 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 for which the individual seeks assistance.
- 5) **VIOLENCE, THREATS OF VIOLENCE** - The township will deny any individual who threatens violence to the township staff or property, and/or uses abusive or threatening language while on township property or while talking with a township staff person. Denial up to **sixty (60) days. (IC 12-20-17-2)**
- 6) **FAILURE TO COMPLETE AND MAINTAIN MONTHLY REPORT FORMS** as required by governmental programs offering assistance for the basic necessities of living; failure to cooperate with other governmental agency programs; or failure to comply with the rules and regulations of an assisting governmental agency. Denial up to **sixty (60) days. (IC 12-20-6-5 & 5.5)**
- 7) **SUFFICIENT INCOME** - Income more than the amounts found on the **INCOME GUIDELINES** page may be the basis for denial. However, individual applicants may have unpredictable circumstances or unusual expenses that would, when reviewed, indicate the necessary expenditure from the Township Assistance fund. Sanctions by other governmental agencies will not be considered as a justification for waving the income guidelines.

- 8) **TANF RECIPIENT HOUSEHOLDS** - Townships are **not obligated** to extend aid to a Township Assistance applicant or any member of a Township Assistance 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 and Children for non-compliance of/or violations of Title 12 Article 14 of the Indiana Code. The township may continue to refuse Township Assistance until the sanction or denial by the Indiana Division of Family and Children has been lifted or rectified.
- 9) **FAILURE TO COOPERATE** - An applicant may be denied Township Assistance services when they, or an adult member of their household, fail to cooperate or provide the township with the necessary information for determining eligibility. Failure to provide needed information/documentation to other tax-supported public assistance programs. The township does not require an applicant to obtain verifications when the township already has or can readily obtain the needed information.
- 10) **FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE IN AN EDUCATION OR SELF-HELP PROGRAM** - Applicants and all able-bodied adult members of the household must, when referred by the township, participate fully in all self-help programs offered by a federal, state, or local governmental entity, or by a nonprofit agency within the county or an adjoining township in another county.
- 11) **FREQUENT REPORTING THE LOSS OR THEFT OF FOOD STAMPS OR MONEY** - Applicants who frequently report the loss or theft of Food Stamps or money will be denied Township Assistance benefits. Applicants claiming loss or theft must file a police report.
- 12) **FAILURE TO LIQUIDATE COUNTABLE ASSETS** - Households must liquidate nonessential assets within sixty (60) days of the date of their initial application for Township Assistance before additional township benefits can be granted.
- 13) **ASSIGNMENT OR TRANSFER OF ASSETS** - An applicant may be denied township benefits whenever the applicant or another member of an applicant's household makes an assignment of or transfers assets during the six (6) month period immediately preceding the filing of an affidavit and application for Township Assistance. The assets considered must be of sufficient value to have rendered the applicant ineligible for Township Assistance.
- 14) **REFUSING TO SIGN** - Whenever it is determined that an applicant or a member of the applicant's household has applied for benefits through the Social Security Administration (SSI) or other public assistance programs and may receive a "Retro" payment, the township may 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.
- 15) **FAILURE TO FILE PATERNITY ACTIONS** when necessary and appropriate, or failing to take the necessary legal action to pursue child support unless just cause can be determined. **(IC 12-14-2-24)**
- 16) **PREVIOUS ABILITY TO PAY** - The township shall not be obligated to pay for services or the cost of goods incurred by an applicant or member of an applicant's household during the period the applicant or a member of the applicant's household had sufficient income or resources to have paid for either the goods or service.
- 17) **MOVING INTO OR COMING TO THE TOWNSHIP** for the specific purpose of applying for and/or receiving township Assistance services.

18) **AFFIRMATION OF DENIAL** - Notwithstanding any other provision of these guidelines, the township will not extend aid to or for the benefit of an individual if that aid would pay for goods or services provided to or for the benefit of the individual during a period that the individual has previously applied for and been denied Township Assistance, nor will the township be obligated for the cost of necessities incurred on behalf of the household in which the individual (who was previously denied) resides during the duration period of the denial.

EMPLOYMENT - If an applicant for Township Assistance is in good health, or if any members of the household are, the trustee shall insist that those able to work seek employment, and the trustee will refuse to provide any aid until he/she is satisfied that the people claiming help are trying to find work. Each able-bodied adult member of the household will, at a minimum, be required to maintain an updated employment file with the Indiana Department of Employment and Training Services and provide reasonable documentation that they are trying to find employment. The township may also require any adult member of the applicant household to complete a minimum number of employment applications before receiving continued Township Assistance. These forms may be required monthly. The recipient is required to dress and conduct himself or herself appropriately to increase every employment opportunity.

MEDICAL EXAMINATION - An applicant/recipient who claims a physical and/or mental inability to seek and/or accept employment must provide the Trustee with a current doctor's statement or accept a referral to obtain a current medical evaluation verifying such conditions. Ongoing recipients may be required periodically to present an updated doctor's statement for their file. In addition, he/she or they shall provide a medical release to the Trustee upon request to obtain medical records. The Trustee may provide medical examinations where such an examination is necessary to determine an applicant/recipient's ability to work for assistance. **(IC 12-20-10-3.5)**

REFUSAL TO WORK - If the applicant is offered employment by the trustee, regardless of whether the compensation is in the form of money, rent, or other necessities; or refuses employment at a reasonable compensation offered by any other individual, governmental agency, or employer; the township trustee shall not furnish assistance to the applicant until they perform the work or show just cause for not performing the work.

INCOME GUIDELINES - Income guidelines for determining township assistance eligibility shall be based upon 100% of the Federal Poverty Level as outlined on **the Income Guidelines** page. This document will be available in the office or on the Facebook page.

COUNTABLE INCOME - This term means a monetary amount either paid to an applicant or a member of an applicant's household not more than thirty (30) days before the date of application for Township Assistance, or accrued and legally available for withdrawal by an applicant or a member of an applicant's household at the time of application or not more than thirty (30) days after the date of application for Township Assistance. The term also includes:

1. Gross wages *before* mandatory deductions
2. Social Security benefits, including Supplemental Security Income
3. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
4. Unemployment Compensation
5. Workers' compensation (*except compensation that is restricted to the payment of medical expenses*)
6. Vacation pays
7. Sick benefits
8. Strike benefits
9. Private or public pensions

10. Taxable income from self-employment

11. The value of bartered goods and services provided by another individual for the payment of nonessential needs on behalf of an applicant or an applicant's household if monetary compensation or the provision of necessities would have been reasonably available from that individual

12. Child support

13. Gifts of cash, goods, or services

14. Educational grants and loans to the extent that they are intended to cover basic living needs

15. Other sources of revenue or services that the township trustee may reasonably determine to be countable income.

The household's total gross monthly income in the previous month will be projected for the coming month including only income that is reasonably certain to be received within the coming month. Uncertain income will not be counted. A household's income must fall within the township's financial guidelines to be eligible for township assistance.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS / TEMPORARY AID - Exceptional financial obligations, emergencies, and/or extraordinary expenses or circumstances, as may be determined, documented, and approved by the Trustee, may give justification to TEMPORARILY waive certain provisions of these guidelines and grant temporary aid.

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 trustee may require receipts for noted expenditures and/or cash withdrawals from accounts. 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 a member of the applicant's household, because of their involvement with the courts, will not be recognized as a legitimate expense. It will, however, be counted as unexpended income.

EXPENDITURES - Only receipts for the necessities of living will be recognized as an acceptable expenditure. The township will require receipts for all expenditures of income/benefits received by all members of the household. Handwritten receipts provided by friends or relatives are considered unacceptable. Undocumented expenditures will be counted as wasted resources. Expenditures for items not considered "necessities" will not be recognized. Receipts should closely balance with reported income.

CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS - Child support payments may be recognized as a legitimate expense, provided the support payments are verified by the trustee as such. At the discretion of the township trustee, child support payments may be required to be processed through a county clerk's office and the figure to be recognized may not exceed the amount originally ordered by the court. *Payments made to cover child support delinquency will not be considered.*

BASIC NECESSITIES are defined, by Township Assistance Administration, include those services or items essential to meet the minimum standards of health, safety, and decency such as Food, Shelter, Clothing including footwear, Medical, Transportation to seek and accept employment, household supplies, essential utility service, and other necessary services or items as the trustee may determine. (IC 12-7-2-20.5)

ASSETS - Households requesting assistance must also report all assets belonging to any member of the household. Assets that may affect eligibility are those that are available to the household, but are not necessary for the health, safety, or decent living standard of a household that:

1. Are they owned wholly or in part by the applicant or a member of the applicant's household.
2. The applicant or the household member has the legal right to sell or liquidate; and includes:
 - a. real property other than property that is used to produce income or that is.
NOT the primary residence of the household.
 - b. savings and checking accounts, certificates of deposit, bonds, stocks, and other.
intangibles that have a net cash value; and
 - c. boats, motorcycles, other vehicles, or any other personal property used solely for
recreational or entertainment purposes.
 - d. Camping trailers and/or Recreational Vehicles.
 - e. Guns and/or hunting equipment.
 - f. Any other item of value which the trustee may determine as a non-essential asset.

LIQUIDATION - All liquid assets, such as bank accounts, bonds, certificates of deposit, etc. must be liquidated immediately. Recreational equipment (boats, motors, and camping trailers), motorcycles, etc... must also be liquidated to receive continued assistance from the township. All members of the household will be expected to liquidate any of the assets listed or other unnecessary items of a similar nature, as soon as possible, but no longer than sixty (60) days from the date their initial application is filed. However, non-essential assets purchased by any member of a household after having applied for Township Assistance must be liquidated immediately before further assistance can be authorized. This would also include the applicant and/or members of the applicant's household entering into a rental or lease agreement for non-essential household items. The township highly recommends, or in some cases, the termination of all credit cards in the name of any adult member of an applicant's household. The following factors will be taken into consideration by the township when it is necessary to require an applicant to liquidate assets (**IC 12-7-2-44.6**)

REASONABLE SALE OF THE ASSET - The true monetary value of the item to be liquidated may not be realized because of existing market conditions, i.e., sale of a boat or motorcycle during chilly winter months.

EXPECTED DURATION - The length of time that the applicant /household may be expected to remain on township assistance. Example: Temporary employment or the major "breadwinner" is on strike, and the expected duration, which the household may need assistance appears to be of a short duration (approximately sixty (60) days).

LEASED/RENTED ITEMS - Whether the items rented or leased are necessary for basic living. Or, if needed, could the same items have been purchased or secured more economically? Example: An individual may rent a cooking stove and/or refrigerator from a "Rent to Own" facility. These are, of course, considered basic needs, but the cost of renting will be greater than the direct purchase of a used item.

EXEMPTIONS - Assets that are exempt from liquidation will include one (1) house in which the household resides, and one (1) automobile, the value or equity of which does not preclude the household from qualifying for other state or federal assistance programs. However, a client may be required to liquidate and retrieve the equity in a house if their expected duration of needing Township Assistance exceeds a reasonable time as determined by these standards (See 2.00.02). Whenever Township Assistance funds are used directly or indirectly to pay the household's mortgage payments, the township may place a lien against the property to recover the equity value of such payments.

FOOD VOUCHERS – Not available in this township. The Township maintains a small amount of non-perishable food items in cases of emergency. The Township may also refer applicants to any food banks within the county.

NON-FOOD ITEMS (HOUSEHOLD ESSENTIALS) Necessary supplies, such as minimal household furnishings, utensils, appliances, personal hygiene, and toiletry items are considered household essentials. The township will request that the applicant be specific when requesting household items. The Township may purchase items deemed necessary. At no point will a client be given a check to purchase items.

HOUSING

The township should provide aid in whatever form is necessary to provide shelter or prevent the loss of shelter so long as such aid constitutes an economic and practical method of assistance. Clients will not be denied shelter assistance merely because they are buying their home. However, the amount paid on behalf of a client may not exceed the shelter allowance standards contained in the following schedule.

A client may be required to liquidate and retrieve the equity in their house if their expected duration of needing township assistance exceeds a reasonable time as determined by the trustee (approximately sixty (60) days). Whenever township assistance funds are used directly or indirectly to pay the household's mortgage payments, the township may place a lien against the property to recover such payments' equity value.

INFERIOR HOUSING - If the trustee determines that the housing unit of which payment is requested is below minimum standards of health, safety, or construction, the trustee, when necessary, shall assist the applicant in obtaining appropriate alternate shelter. **(IC 12-20-16-17)**

SHELTER (Rental Assistance) - The township will provide aid in whatever form is necessary to provide shelter or prevent the loss of shelter so long as assistance is economical and practical. 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; Exception to the definition of "shelter" may include temporary group homes and/or shelters.

A Rental/Lease Agreement is required and must be in the name of an adult member of the applicant's household and a copy of the lease furnished to the township. To qualify for rental assistance, the landlord must agree that the amount of assistance will keep the applicant out of eviction for at least 30 days.

The amount paid by the township will be at the discretion of the Trustee. The amount may not exceed 2 times the amount on the rental agreement. The amount may not exceed \$1600.00.

SHELTER LIMITATIONS - Shelter assistance may not be paid to an applicant's relative who is the landlord if the applicant lives in:

1. the same household as the relative; or
2. housing separate from the relative and either:
 - (a) the housing is unencumbered by mortgage; or
 - (b) the housing has not been previously rented by the relative to a different tenant at reasonable market rates for at least six (6) months.

Nor will the township recognize expenditures (receipts) paid to relatives when living in the same household. Suppose 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. In that case, the trustee may file a lien against the relative's real property for the amount of township shelter assistance granted. For this section, the term "relative" includes only the parent, stepparent, child, stepchild, sibling, stepsibling, grandparent, step-grandparent, grandchild, or step-grandchild of a Township Assistance applicant. **(IC 12-20-6-10)**

SHELTER DEPOSITS - A township is not required to spend Township Assistance funds for a security deposit for an eligible applicant or household.

SHELTER-RENTING FROM A FAMILY MEMBER- In situations where an applicant is renting from a relative with a mortgage for the house/apartment being used, the township may pay only the maximum allowable rent or the amount of the mortgage payment, whichever is the lesser. Receipts signed by relatives for rental payments from an income source other than Township Assistance will not be recognized for more than the actual mortgage payment.

TEMPORARY RESIDENTS - The definition of residency/household shall not be construed to mean temporary living arrangements made available by friends, relatives, acquaintances, or social service agencies, either public or private. The residency must not be established for the primary purpose of qualifying for Township Assistance.

SHELTER MOVING - Clients moving within sixty (60) days immediately preceding their application for Township Assistance, from a shelter provided by a relative, or any form, kind, or type of subsidized shelter will be declared ineligible for Township Assistance. The burden of establishing good, just, and reasonable cause for having moved shall be upon the applicant.

OTHER SHELTER - The township will not pay the cost of shelter assistance to or for an applicant when an applicant's relative purchases a house or mobile home for the intended purpose of having the applicant live in the unit. The paragraph applies to real estate purchases or other property transactions made within ninety (90) days before making an 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: divorce or probate.

LIVING WITH RELATIVES - The township will not 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 for 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.

TAX SUPPORTED/SUBSIDIZED SHELTER ASSISTANCE - The township may not be obligated to enter a contract or pay temporary shelter costs on behalf of an otherwise eligible applicant, to a public or private agency that is funded by federal or state funds. The township may not be obligated to subsidize or otherwise provide shelter assistance from the Township Assistance fund to households living in shelter units under the control of another governmental entity.

UTILITY SERVICE / HEATING FUELS - The trustee, in cases of necessity and if the applicant otherwise qualifies, will authorize the payment of water, gas, sewer, heating, and electric services. In addition, the trustee may authorize the payment of delinquent bills, only when necessary to prevent their termination or to restore terminated service. The following are the exceptions and limitations:

- A. All utilities must be in the name of an adult member of the requesting household; an emancipated minor who is the head of the household; a landlord; or a former member of the household if the applicant proves that the applicant is responsible for the payment of the bill.
- B. Before payment is authorized, the applicant/recipient must have first attempted to make reasonable arrangements with the appropriate utility company, and if arrangements have been made, the trustee will only pay that part of the agreed-upon payments, which are beyond the ability of the applicant/recipient to pay.
- C. The township will not pay for utility service received because of a fraudulent act by any adult member of a household requesting township assistance.
- D. The township will not pay utility deposits.
- E. Fuel oil or L.P. gas must be ordered by the Trustee. No payment on fuel bills will be made if ordered by the applicant.
- F. The township will not consider the payment of estimated utility bills.
- G. The township will not consider the payment of delinquent utility bills if the applicant was ineligible for Township Assistance at the time the cost was incurred, or if the delinquent bill is older than twenty-four (24) months.
- H. Individual applicants for Township Assistance needing utility assistance on a continuing basis shall be informed by the township to request such assistance monthly. Failure to do so may result in a denial for failing to cooperate.

The determination of the dollar amount of utility assistance will be on a case-by-case basis scenario and at the discretion of the Trustee.

ENERGY PROGRAMS - Applicants seeking township assistance with the payment of energy bills must first utilize all available federal and state programs designed to assist indigent households with the cost of energy and must furnish the township with written proof that an application for such assistance has been requested from other governmental sources. **(IC 12-20-16-3)**

AUTOMOBILES - An automobile is not, by statute, recognized as a 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 determination of whether, or not, the automobile is excessive in value or payment, and whether, or not, it shall be factored into the overall expenses of the household is on a case-by-case basis and at the total discretion of the trustee.

BURIAL AND FUNERALS OR CREMATIONS - The trustee shall authorize either the funeral and burial or cremation of the deceased individual. If it is determined that the deceased individual is a resident of another township in Indiana, the township shall notify the trustee of that township, who shall then provide a person to superintend and authorize either the funeral and burial or cremation of the deceased individual not leaving sufficient resources (i.e.... cash, automobile, and/or real property) to defray expenses. Contributions or payment of benefits from any other source may be deducted from the township's allowable maximum. The total cost of a burial and funeral for any deceased indigent person may be found in the Townships Resolution. The township may also require a "death certificate" and an itemized (invoice) statement from the funeral home before payment can be authorized. **(IC 12-20-16-12)**

REQUEST FOR BURIAL AND FUNERAL OR CREMATION - The township requires that a surviving member of the deceased person's family make a formal request for "Burial and Funeral or Cremation" assistance before making formal and final arrangements with the funeral home. If there are no surviving family members, the person appointed to superintend will make a formal request for burial assistance by completing the Burial Assistance Application. Family members of the deceased, who are financially able, will be requested to financially contribute to the payment of the funeral and burial or cremation expenses. Any amount contributed may be deducted from the township's maximums.

TRANSPORTATION BURIAL / EXPENSES - 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 the township at the time of death and the transportation cost can be accomplished within the amount determined as most economical.

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 coverage under a private insurance policy; or receive governmentally subsidized medical benefits, such as Medicaid or Medicare. The township shall only pay the cost of the following medical services for the eligible and qualifying poor of the township: **(IC 12-20-16-2)**

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS - The township may assist with prescription drugs, when prescribed by a physician, for eligible Township Assistance clients, provided the client obtains prior authorization from the township office. **(IC 12-20-16-2)**. The trustee will require the individual to complete the standard application for Township Assistance for the township trust to investigate the financial condition of the individual claiming to be indigent. In addition, authorization from the physician may be required to affirm the physician's belief that the person is financially unable to pay for the medication themselves. Prescriptions for narcotic medications will not be considered for township assistance.

OFFICE CALLS - It is the responsibility of the applicants to make their appointments for visits to medical service providers. Clients requesting authorization for a visit to a medical service provider, except in 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 as a specialist by their physician. **(IC-12-20-16-2)**

EMERGENCY ROOM TREATMENT - The township may pay for necessary emergency room treatment that is of an emergency nature. However, a medical emergency does not exist in situations where the illness/injury could and would have been treated during a routine office call by a family doctor, and the applicant could have contacted the township office before such a visit. **(IC 12-20-16-2)**

REPORT OF EMERGENCY TREATMENT - Emergency room treatment, duly prescribed drugs and necessary emergency medical treatment received in a hospital emergency room may be paid by the township, provided a proper request for the service is made to the township office, by the applicant or a member of the applicant's household, within fifteen (15) office days of the time the services are billed. The medical service provider must indicate the services they provided on a "REPORT OF MEDICAL AID RENDERED" form PR#4, properly executed and signed by the service provider and the applicant and submitted to the township within the prescribed time limits shall result in a denial.

DENTAL CARE AND TREATMENT - The payment of dental care and/or treatment shall be limited to those costs that are medically necessary to eliminate pain and/or infection most economically and practically. The township may pay the cost of denture replacements and/or repairs not covered by other tax-supported programs. However, the township will not pay for the initial cost of dentures. **(IC 12-20-16-2)**

EYEGLASSES - The township may pay the cost of eye exams, 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. **(IC 12-20-16-2)**

OTHER PRESCRIBED TREATMENTS - Other Treatments prescribed by an attending physician under **IC 25-22.5** including pre-operation testing, over-the-counter drugs, x-rays and laboratory testing, visits to a medical specialist when referred, physical therapy, repair or replacement of a prosthesis may be eligible for Township Assistance if not provided for by other tax-supported state or federal programs.

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 people, that member of the household most suited to perform available work. Suitability for performing available work shall be determined by the Trustee, who may provide for medical examinations necessary to make the determination. **(IC 12-20-10-3.5)**

WORKFARE REQUIREMENTS - The township shall require a recipient household to do any work that needs to be done within the township or an adjoining township for any governmental unit (including the state) having authority in those townships, or for a not-for-profit social service agency. **(IC 12-20-1101)**

WORKFARE OBLIGATION - Minimum criteria for satisfactory participation in the workfare program shall be established by the township with a maximum of one shift per day or five shifts per week. Unexcused absences for scheduled workfare assignments may result in the discontinuance of township assistance. Any workfare obligations incurred in another township will be carried forward to the gaining township, if the applicant fails to comply, they shall be denied for one hundred and eighty (180) days. Failure to comply with printed instructions on a work order will not only cancel the work order but will also constitute ineligibility for further assistance for not more than one hundred and eighty (180) days unless the recipient shows worthy cause for not performing the work.

WORKFARE PARTICIPATION - The recipient(s) is required to maintain the minimum criteria that are necessary for the fulfillment of his/her workfare responsibility until his/her obligation with the township is satisfied. Recipients will not be permitted to voluntarily work in advance of receiving township assistance to accrue workfare credit. It is the sole responsibility of the recipient(s) to meet the criteria of workfare participation. In satisfying this obligation, only the recipient or members of the recipient's household will be allowed to perform the required work.

WORKFARE COMPENSATION - Work performed is considered "as the 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 that equals the value of assistance at a rate of no less than the existing Federal Minimum wage. This translates into the hours the recipient will owe in total workfare hours.

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

- A. The obligated individual is not physically able to perform the proposed work.
- B. The obligated individual is a minor or is over sixty-five (65) years of age.
- C. The obligated individual is needed to care for an individual because of the individual's age or physical condition.
- D. The obligated individual has full-time employment at the time the recipient receives Township Assistance; or
- E. The township trustee determines that there is no work available for any adult member of the recipient household.
- F. The individual(s) obligation, at the direction of the trustee, to attend educational courses or self-help classes.

WORKFARE RESTRICTIONS - A recipient shall not be assigned to work that would result in the displacement of governmental employees or the reduction of hours worked by those employees.

(IC 12-20-11-1 g)

OTHER WORKFARE CREDIT - As a condition of continuing eligibility, a trustee may require a recipient of Township Assistance or any member of a recipient's household to participate in an appropriate work training program that is offered to the recipient or a member of the recipient's household or other work as directed by the Trustee.

In the event, that the Trustee deems that an applicant/recipient would benefit in his/her search for employment by participating in employment counseling, job training, and/or educational programs referred by the Trustee, the applicant/recipient's refusal to participate in the same is deemed as a refusal to actively seek employment which will be grounds for denial or termination of township assistance for a period of (180) days.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME - Individuals awaiting a determination from the Social Security Administration for SSI benefits will not be required to perform workfare during the initial stages of the SSI application process. Once the initial application for SSI benefits has been denied by SSA, the applicant may, at this point, be obligated to perform workfare. Other members of an SSI applicant's household able to perform Workfare will be required to participate and work his/her proportionate share of the workfare obligation. EXAMPLE: A member of a multi-member household (three (3) members) awaiting an SSI determination shall be excused from performing workfare while the SSI determination is pending. Other adult members of the household will, however, be required to comply with the workfare obligation, but will only be required to work the remaining proportionate share. The township will obligate this household to two-thirds (2/3) of the assistance rendered as a workfare obligation. This holds only if the entire household shares assistance, such as shelter, utilities, or food. If, however, Township Assistance was rendered specifically for the SSI applicant, workfare will not be required, but the amount of this assistance may be recovered through the Interim Assistance Reimbursement program. Individuals currently receiving SSI monthly benefits are not automatically excused from workfare. To be excused, the individual SSI recipient must still meet one of the exempting reasons contained in 3.50.50 of these guidelines.

INTERIM PERIOD – “Interim Period” means the period beginning when a township trustee obtains from a Township Assistance applicant or member of the applicant's household an agreement or authorization described in subsection 3.60.00 and ending when the Township Assistance applicant or member of the applicant's household receives the judgment, compensation, or monetary benefit or leaves the household.

REIMBURSEMENT/REPAYMENTS OF TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE EXPENDITURES - The repayment of assistance or a promise to repay assistance, may not constitute a condition of eligibility for Township Assistance, except as provided in 1.40.13 & 3.90.00 of these standards. A trustee may not seek federal or state reimbursement, foreclose a lien, or otherwise seek repayment of assistance for which a recipient or an adult member of the recipient's household has satisfactorily completed a workfare requirement.

REIMBURSEMENT FOR MEDICAL SERVICES - During the application pending period for Medicaid (**IC 12-15**) or other governmental medical programs, the trustee may provide interim medical services if the individual is reasonably complying with all requirements of the application process and, unless prohibited by law, the township will seek reimbursement for the payment of medical services from Township Assistance funds, provided the individual for which the services were rendered is eligible for medical services under a state medical plan. (**IC 12-20-16-2 e**)

ESTATE CLAIMS / REIMBURSEMENT FROM - A claim may be filed against the estate of a Township Assistance recipient who dies, leaving an estate; and is not survived by a: (1) spouse; (2) disabled adult dependent; or (3) dependent child less than eighteen (18) years of age; for the value of township assistance given the recipient before the recipient's death, subject to **IC 12-20-11-5(b)**. For this section, the estate of a Township Assistance recipient includes any money or other personal property in the possession of a coroner under **IC 36-2-14-11**.

REIMBURSEMENT EXCLUSION - A township trustee may not seek federal or state reimbursement, foreclose a lien, or otherwise seek repayment of assistance for which a recipient or an adult member of the recipient's household has satisfactorily completed a workfare requirement.

FUTURE THIRD PARTY BENEFITS - If it is anticipated that a Township Assistance 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 subornation agreement or sign an authorization for the repayment of any Township Assistance benefits provided by the township during this 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.

REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE (REPORTING) - The township may from time-to-time report and recommend to other governmental agencies (TANF or Social Security Administration) the misuse of funds by a recipient. The township may officially recommend when reporting misuse, that the recipient's cash "award" be placed in the hands of a "protective or designated payee." The township may refuse to extend aid to an individual or household member until the applicant initiates and executes the proper instruments for obtaining a payee to manage their finances. The township may agree to serve as the payee.

APPEALS - Anytime an applicant for Township Assistance is not satisfied with all or part of the decision of the township trustee, they may appeal that decision to the Board of County Commissioners. Appeals must be filed not more than fifteen (15) days from the date of issuance of the township trustee's adequate notice of the denial. This is referred to as "**NOTICE OF ACTION form PR #1 A**". The appeal may be filed in the Auditor's office in the Knox County Courthouse.

DISCRIMINATION - At all times, the Office of the Township Trustee will determine eligibility for assistance without regard to race, source of income, creed, color, sex, disability status, national origin, marital status, political beliefs, or any other arbitrary condition which operates to defeat the broad statutory purpose of assisting needy families.

COURTESY - We expect everyone who comes into this office to act and be treated in a courteous and dignified manner. If for any reason, you are not satisfied with our service, please write directly to the Township Board President. It is not necessary to sign your name. We likewise expect the staff of the township to be treated similarly. The purpose of this office is to assist the indigent of the township and provide necessary assistance within the limits of the law and these standards and guidelines

Federal Poverty Level Income Chart

Household size	Monthly income limit for HIP Basic eligibility	Monthly income limit for HIP Plus eligibility*
1	\$1,255	\$1,732
2	\$1,704	\$2,351
3	\$2,152	\$2,970
4	\$2,600	\$3,588
5	\$3,049	\$4,207
6	\$3,497	\$4,823
7	\$3,945	\$5,444
8	\$4,394	\$6,062
For each additional person, add:	\$448.00	\$618.00

Income guidelines for determining township assistance eligibility shall be based upon 100% of the Federal Poverty Level as outlined above and shall be updated every year. The Vigo Township Advisory Board provides and allows for the inclusion of the annual Federal Poverty Guidelines to become a supplement of the foregoing policies, each year, without formal approval.

COUNTABLE INCOME - This term means a monetary amount either paid to an applicant or a member of an applicant's household not more than thirty (30) days before the date of application for Township Assistance, or accrued and legally available for withdrawal by an applicant or a member of an applicant's household at the time of application or not more than thirty (30) days after the date of application for Township Assistance. Exception only in the matter of Federal and State Income Tax returns. During the calendar period in which applicants have possible received a federal or state income tax return the income period can include up to (90) days. The trustee will require proof of the amount of the return received. Proof will be provided by the applicant by providing the tax return for review, copying and approval by the Township office. If a large return was received within (90) of when the individual is requesting assistance, proof of use of the funds will be required to ensure the resources were not wasted on non-essential items. The total discretion of the Trustee will be the final determination as to whether assistance will be provided in whole, part, or denied.

TAX REFUNDS- An applicant will show proof of federal/state tax refunds received by supplying a copy of tax returns for all members of the household. The township will take into consideration the refund received, and consider it as income over a prorated period (usually not to exceed 90 days). If the applicant/member of household have received more than income guidelines (defined in this document) and are not able to provide the trustee with a reasonable account of how those funds were spent, this is grounds for denial. Denial will not exceed (90) days from the date of federal/state refund being received.

TOWNSHIP BOARD RESOLUTION

2025-2

Be it resolved that the foregoing document shall serve as the standards for the administration of Township Assistance in Vigo Township, Knox County, Indiana.

Adopted this 12th day of February, 2025.

BY TOWNSHIP BOARD:

Absent

Karen Byrer

Carol A. Anderson

Carol Anderson

Stacey Kahre

Stacey Kahre

ATTEST:

Terry Goff

Terry Goff, Trustee