

STATE OF VERMONT
AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES

DCF

Department for Children and Families

BULLETIN NO.: 04-09

FROM: Betsy Forrest, Deputy Commissioner
Economic Services Division

DATE: October 8, 2004

SUBJECT: Income Maximums and Fuel Tables

CHANGES ADOPTED EFFECTIVE 11/1/04

INSTRUCTIONS

Maintain Manual - See instructions below.
 Proposed Regulation - Retain bulletin and attachments until you receive Manual Maintenance Bulletin: _____
 Information or Instructions - Retain until _____

MANUAL REFERENCE(S):

Table of Contents	P-2900 C
P-2905 A	P-2905 B
P-2905 D	P-2910 A

This bulletin revises procedures to reflect changes in the fuel program.

At P-2900 C, Fuel Procedures have been developed to meet specific verification requirements when any household member has applied for, or is actively participating in, the Reach Up, Food Stamp, Essential Person, or Healthcare programs.

At P-2905 A and B the Seasonal Fuel tables have been updated with an increase in allowable income maximums at 125% of Poverty Guidelines as issued by the Department of Health and Human Services.

At P-2905 D the tables reflect an increase in the deductions for meals and snacks as a business expense and an increase in the allowances for room and board.

At page 2910A, Section B, the Crisis Fuel table has been updated with an increase in allowable income maximums based on 150% of the Poverty Guidelines as issued by the Department of Health and Human Services.

The 2004-2005 application for Seasonal Fuel Assistance reflects changes to clarify the application period, add the fuel company account number, and highlight the signature required section. Some text was changed to color for emphasis.

Manual Maintenance

Fuel Procedures

<u>Remove</u>		<u>Insert</u>	
TOC 2900 (P.1 and P.2)	(03-13)	TOC 2900 (P.1 and P.2)	(04-09)
P-2900 C	(03-13)	P-2900 C	(04-09)
P-2900 C2	(03-13)	P-2900 C2	(04-09)
Nothing		P-2900 C3	(04-09)
Nothing		P-2900 C4	(04-09)
P-2905 A	(03-13)	P-2905 A	(04-09)
P-2905 B	(03-13)	P-2905 B	(04-09)
P-2905 D	(03-13)	P-2905 D	(04-09)
P-2910 A	(03-13)	P-2910 A	(04-09)

Forms Manual

PATH201SF	(R 6/02)	PATH201SF	(R 6/04)
-----------	----------	-----------	----------

P-2900

Fuel Program

- A. Forms and Notices
- B. General Application Procedures
 - 1. Instructions for District Offices
 - 2. Application Period
 - a. Prior Year Applicants
 - b. General Public and Those Not Covered in a. Above
- C. Application Processing
 - 1. Data Entry and Application Processing
 - 2. Processing Codes
 - 3. Requests for Additional Information or Verification
 - a. Fuel Assistance and/or Healthcare Programs Only
 - b. Pending Eligibility for Reach Up, Food Stamps, Essential Person, and/or Healthcare Programs
 - c. Active Reach Up, Food Stamps, and/or Essential Person Programs
 - d. Eligibility determination when verification is provided
 - e. Eligibility determination when verification is not received
 - f. Verification for caretaker/companionship/medically necessary services
 - D. Desk Review
- E. Notification
- F. Benefit Delivery
- G. Eligibility Calculation
- H. Changes
 - 1. No Effect on Eligibility or Benefits
 - 2. Death or Change in Resident Status
- I. June 30 through July 15
- J. Certified Fuel or Energy Suppliers
- K. Expedited Fuel Application Process
 - 1. Expedited Application Period
 - 2. Eligibility Determination and Data Entry
 - a. Granted Expedited
 - b. Denied Expedited
 - 3. Payment of Benefit

11/01/04

Bulletin No. 04-09

Table of Contents P.2

P-2905

Fuel Tables

- A. Allowable Income Maximums
- B. Household Income per Month as a Percentage of Poverty Based on Household Size
- C. Standard Heating Subsidy Tables
- D. Business Expenses - Providing Day Care Meals and Snacks
- E. Payment Rate

P-2910

Crisis Assistance Program

- A. Application
- B. Allowable Income Maximums
- C. Expedited Fuel Benefit for Eligible Crisis Applicants
 - 1. Expedited Application Period
 - 2. Eligibility Determination
 - a. Granted Expedited
 - b. Denied Expedited
 - 3. Payment for Crisis Services Authorized

11/01/04

Bulletin No. 04-09

P-2900 C

P-2900 Fuel ProgramC. Application Processing1. Data Entry and Application Processing

Staff of the Office of Home Heating Fuel Assistance (OHHFA) enters applications into ACCESS upon receipt each day (APPL/C).

The application should include a yellow return receipt postcard completed by the applicant. If the card is received and complete, it is stamped with the date received and anticipated date of benefit issuance if the applicant is determined eligible. It is mailed back to the applicant within two business days.

Fuel BPS processes eligibility in ACCESS using FUEL/C. All approvals and denials are done on a nightly basis. Fuel BPS may manually approve eligibility. Denial notices are generated daily. Notices of eligibility are generated at the time payment is made.

2. Processing Codes (VERIFIED Field in FUEL/C)

When fuel eligibility or verification is pending, the VERIFIED field on FUEL/C is Q (Questionable).

When the information or verification is received change the Q to V (verified) in VERIFIED field on FUEL/C for applications received by the primary application period deadline (July 15 through August 31 or as specified in Fuel Rule 2902.1)

If the application was received in **September**, but after the primary application period deadline, enter an S in the VERIFIED field on FUEL/C. These recipients will receive 100 percent of the full season's benefit in January. If the application may be processed and included in time for the November benefit, enter a V in the VERIFIED field to generate the issuance in November.

If the application was received in **October** enter an **O** in the VERIFIED field on FUEL/C. These recipients will receive 100 percent of the full season's benefit in January.

If the application was received in **November** enter an **N** in the VERIFIED field on FUEL/C. These recipients will receive 100 percent of the full season's benefit in January.

If the application was received in **December** enter a **D** in the VERIFIED field on FUEL/C. These recipients will receive 80 percent of the full season's benefit in February.

If the application was received in **January** enter a **J** in the VERIFIED field on FUEL/C. These recipients will receive 60 percent of the full season's benefit in March.

If the application was received in **February** enter an **B** in the VERIFIED field on FUEL/C. These recipients will receive 40 percent of the full season's benefit in March.

11/01/04

Bulletin No. 04-09

P-2900 C2

P-2900 Fuel ProgramC. Application Processing (Continued)3. Requests for Additional Information or Verification

Interviews are not required, but Fuel BPS may contact applicants by phone or mail to clarify questionable or confusing information or to obtain additional information.

If information is questionable, verification may be required as stated in Fuel Rule 2905.

Applicants will be allowed no less than twelve days to respond to a request for information or verification. The twelve day count begins the day after we mail the request.

a. Fuel Assistance and/or Health Care Programs Only

When information is questionable and may be provided verbally, attempt to contact the applicant by phone. If the applicant cannot be reached by phone or a written response is required, send a PATH 202V, Verification Request, with a deadline for providing the information or verification and enter a Q in the VERIFIED field on FUEL/C in ACCESS.

If the applicant does not provide the information within the specified time frame, change the Q to F. The application will be denied and a notice will be generated.

b. Pending Eligibility for Reach Up, Food Stamps, Essential Person, and/or Healthcare Programs

When the applicant has applied for other programs and the eligibility determination is pending, the fuel application cannot be accurately processed. Enter a Q in the VERIFIED field on FUEL/C and hold the application until eligibility has been determined for other programs. If a benefit issuance deadline is near, notify the District Office Benefit Program Specialist of possible adverse effects to the applicant and request expeditious processing.

c. Active Reach Up, Food Stamps, and/or Essential Person Programs

Income / Resource Verification: To the extent that the department collects and maintains income and resource information within its automated ACCESS data system on recipients of ongoing programs, such income/resource information will be used for the determination of eligibility and benefits for the Fuel Program.

If income or resource information in ACCESS is different and more recent than what is reported on the Fuel application, the information in ACCESS will be used to determine Fuel eligibility.

11/01/04

Bulletin No. 04-09

P-2900 C3

P-2900 Fuel ProgramC. Application Processing3. Requests for Additional Information or Verificationc. Active Reach Up, Food Stamps, and/or Essential Person Programs (Continued)

*If the income or resource information on the Fuel application is different and more recent than what is on ACCESS, the Fuel BPS will request verification for **all active programs**. A PATH 202V Verification Request will be sent, checking off all active programs and with a deadline allowing the applicant no less than twelve days to respond. A questionable code Q will be entered in the VERIFIED field on FUEL/C in ACCESS. A CATN message will be sent to the district BPS worker indicating verification has been requested for all programs and the date due.*

If income reported is “new”, having not been reported or recorded in the ACCESS system, the fuel BPS will send a PATH 202V requesting the client have their employer complete an Employment Information form (218E) and submit all pay stubs received in the last 30 days.

If the applicant indicates termination of employment, which has not been reported or recorded in the ACCESS system, the fuel BPS will send a PATH 202V requesting the client have their employer complete an Employment Termination form (218ET) and submit all pay stubs received in the last 30 days.

d. Eligibility Determination when verification is provided

When the applicant provides information as requested, the fuel BPS worker will update the appropriate STAT panels in ACCESS, process fuel eligibility, and send a CATN message to the district BPS worker indicating verification was received. The original documentation will be sent via interoffice “pink” mail to the district BPS with a brightly colored routing slip. Copies of the documentation will be kept with the fuel application.

e. Eligibility Determination when verification is not received

If the applicant does not provide the information within the specified time frame, the Fuel BPS will change the Q to F. The application for fuel assistance will be denied and a notice will be generated the following morning. The fuel BPS will notify the district BPS case worker by sending a CATN message that verification was not received. District BPS staff will be responsible for determining the course of action and determination of eligibility for the programs they administer according to applicable program rules and regulations.

11/01/04

Bulletin No. 04-09

P-2900 C4

P-2900 Fuel ProgramC. Application Processing3. Requests for Additional Information or Verification (Continued)f. Verification for Caretaker/Companionship/Medically Necessary Services

An elderly or disabled applicant whose live-in caretaker has resources or income (other than payment from the applicant for services provided in the home) may be asked to provide proof that the caretaker provides homemaker or personal care services that the applicant cannot or should not perform. If the need for these services is questionable, send the applicant a PATH 202SFP (Verification for Medically Necessary Services) to be completed by the applicant's physician, or a PATH 202SFH (Household Verification for Caretaker or Companionship Services) to be completed by the customer and signed by both customer and caretaker or companion. If proof is not provided, the live-in caretaker must be included as a member and his or her income and resources considered when determining eligibility.

NOTE: No verification is needed if the applicant receives Essential Person benefits.

11/01/04

Bulletin No. 04-09

P-2905 A

P-2905 Fuel TablesA. Allowable Income Maximums

<u>Size of Household</u>	<u>Maximum Net Monthly Income</u>
1	970
2	1301
3	1633
4	1964
5	2295
6	2626
7	2958
8	3289
9	3620
10	3951
11	4283
12	4614
13	4945
14	5276
15	5608

For each additional person add \$ 331.

11/01/04

Bulletin No. 04-09

P-2905 B

P-2905 Fuel TablesB. Household Income per Month as a Percentage of Poverty Based on Household Size

Household Size	less than 45%	45% to 54%	55% to 64%	65% to 74%	75% to 84%	85% to 94%	95% to 104%	105% to 114%	115% to 125%
1	\$0 to \$349	\$350 to \$419	\$420 to \$496	\$497 to \$574	\$575 to \$561	\$652 to \$729	\$730 to \$807	\$808 to \$884	\$885 to \$970
2	\$0 to \$468	\$469 to \$562	\$563 to \$666	\$667 to \$770	\$771 to \$874	\$875 to \$978	\$979 to \$1082	\$1083 to \$1186	\$1187 to \$1301
3	\$0 to \$587	\$588 to \$705	\$706 to \$835	\$836 to \$966	\$967 to \$1097	\$1098 to \$1227	\$1228 to \$1358	\$1359 to \$1488	\$1489 to \$1633
4	\$0 to \$706	\$707 to \$848	\$849 to \$1005	\$1006 to \$1162	\$1163 to \$1319	\$1320 to \$1476	\$1477 to \$1633	\$1634 to \$1790	\$1791 to \$1964
5	\$0 to \$826	\$827 to \$991	\$992 to \$1175	\$1176 to \$1358	\$1359 to \$1542	\$1543 to \$1725	\$1726 to \$1909	\$1910 to \$2093	\$2094 to \$2295
6	\$0 to \$945	\$946 to \$1134	\$1135 to \$1344	\$1345 to \$1554	\$1555 to \$1764	\$1765 to \$1974	\$1975 to \$2185	\$2186 to \$2395	\$2396 to \$2626
7	\$0 to \$1064	\$1065 to \$1277	\$1278 to \$1514	\$1515 to \$1750	\$1751 to \$1987	\$1988 to \$2224	\$2225 to \$2460	\$2461 to \$2697	\$2698 to \$2958
8	\$0 to \$1183	\$1184 to \$1420	\$1421 to \$1683	\$1684 to \$1946	\$1947 to \$2210	\$2211 to \$2473	\$2474 to \$2736	\$2737 to \$2999	\$3000 to \$3289
9	\$0 to \$1303	\$1304 to \$1563	\$1564 to \$1853	\$1854 to \$2143	\$2144 to \$2432	\$2433 to \$2722	\$2723 to \$3011	\$3012 to \$3301	\$3302 to \$3620
10	\$0 to \$1422	\$1423 to \$1706	\$1707 to \$2023	\$2024 to \$2339	\$2340 to \$2655	\$2656 to \$2971	\$2972 to \$3287	\$3288 to \$3603	\$3604 to \$3951

P-2905 Fuel Tables

D. Business Expenses - Providing Day Care Meals and Snacks (Effective 10/1/04)

Applicants providing day care in their own homes are entitled to deduct, as a business expense from earned income, the cost of meals and snacks provided to those children. Use the following standard deductions per child per day unless the day care provider submits information from self-employment tax forms (see P-2900 G).

Breakfast	\$ 1.04 per day
Lunch only	\$ 1.92 per day
Dinner only	\$ 1.92 per day
Snacks	\$.57 per day

In cases that have documented non-meal related expenses, follow these directions:

- a) Manually figure the total monthly meal expense using the higher of the standard deduction table or the actual verified expenses. Convert weekly (biweekly) expenses to a monthly figure, by multiplying by 4.3 (2.15).
- b) Figure the monthly total for non-meal related expenses.
- c) Add a) and b) then enter the total in the ACTUALS field on the DCIN panel in ACCESS. For these cases the entries in the meals field will be disregarded and the amount in the ACTUALS field will be used.

Business Expenses - Providing Room and Board (Effective 10/1/04)

Use either A or B below, whichever is higher, for the business expense deduction.

A.

ACCESS		Group Size					
Code	Type	1	2	3	4	5	6+
1	Room Only	119	219	314	399	473	568
2	2/3 Board	99	183	262	333	395	474
3	Board Only	149	274	393	499	592	711
4	Room and 2/3 Board	218	402	576	732	868	1042
5	Room and Board	268	493	707	898	1065	1279

- B. The actual documented amount of business expenses for room and/or board providing the amount does not exceed the income received from the roomers and boarders.

11/01/04

Bulletin No. 04-09

P-2910 A

P-2910 Crisis Assistance ProgramA. Application (2952)

Households that experience a heating crisis during regular office hours may apply for crisis assistance at their local Community Action Agency.

After office hours and on weekends or holidays, households with a heating crisis may call the Department for Children and Families toll-free number in Waterbury: 1-800-287-0589.

B. Allowable Income Maximums (2953)

<u>Size of Household</u>	<u>Countable Monthly Income</u>
1	\$ 1164
2	1562
3	1959
4	2357
5	2754
6	3152
7	3549
8	3947
9	4344
10	4742
11	5139
12	5537
13	5934
14	6332
15	6729

For each additional person, add \$ 398