

2. *Other Self-Help Requirements*

All members of an applicant's household are required to apply for other forms of aid if it might help the household meet basic needs. Examples of other forms of assistance are:

- a. Food Stamps
- b. TANF
- c. Social Security
- d. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- e. Medicare
- f. Medicaid
- g. Veteran's Benefits
- h. Unemployment
- i. Child Support

3. *Cooperation*

Applicants for township assistance must cooperate with the trustee's office in providing necessary information, documents and signatures. Failure to cooperate with the trustee could result in denial or termination of assistance.

What happens after the application?

Once a completed application is received by the township, the application is reviewed by the trustee and/or staff. In some situations, it will be necessary to make a home visit.

1. Non-emergency requests for assistance will be acted upon within 72 hours, excluding weekends and holidays
2. Emergency requests (such as food or medicine) will be acted upon promptly
3. An action of "Pending" may exceed 72 hours, but the township must provide a statement listing the specific reasons for the action

What if the trustee denies all or part of my request for assistance?

The township is required to provide you with a *No-*

tice of Action in writing, by mail or in person. This will include the following information:

1. The type and amount of assistance granted;
2. The type and amount of assistance denied or partially granted;
3. Specific reasons for denying all or part of the assistance requested; and
4. Information advising the applicant of the right to appeal the township's decision to the County Board of Commissioners, along with appeal procedures.

How does the township trustee provide aid?

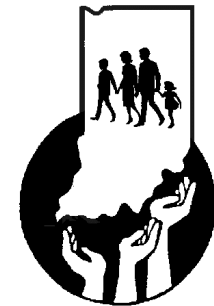
The trustee issues vouchers, never cash, to pay for the goods and services which they provide for eligible applicants. A voucher is not money, but is a written promise that the trustee will pay money to the company or person who provides the aid. For instance, if you need food, the trustee may give you a voucher to take to a grocery store. The voucher is good for the amount stated on the voucher, and only if you take it to the store specified on the voucher. The grocery takes the voucher in exchange for the food you select. You will receive no change if you use less than the full amount of your voucher. Then the store turns the voucher back in to the trustee, who is required to pay the store the amount of the voucher within 45 days.

How do I find out more about my township's application standards and eligibility for assistance?

Each township is required to adopt a set of standards, based on Indiana law, which are available for anyone to see at the township trustee's office. The laws governing township assistance administration can be found in Indiana Code Title 12, Article 20 (IC 12-20).

*A public service of . . .
Bloomfield Township Trustee
LaGrange County, Indiana*

Township Assistance



**“Serving Your
Needs With Dignity
and Respect”**

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Bloomfield Township Trustee
LaGrange County, Indiana*

Why do I see the Trustee if I need help?

The township trustee is an elected official who, in addition to other duties, is designated as the administrator of township assistance. The township trustee, as administrator of township assistance, is responsible for the oversight and care of all poor individuals in the township as long as the individuals remain in the trustee's charge. It is the trustee's responsibility to see that township residents are properly taken care of in the manner required by law.

What kind of assistance can the township trustee provide?

Specifically, the trustee may provide assistance to meet the following basic needs:

1. Clothing: necessary for employment, school or ordinary decency.
2. Food: for households not receiving food stamps. The trustee will not supplement food stamps except in specific emergencies such as theft, spoilage or health needs.
3. Household Supplies: cleaning and hygiene items.
4. Medical Assistance: not otherwise provided by insurance, clinics, and/or other government subsidized programs.
5. Shelter: The trustee will not pay for housing that is unfit.
6. Utilities: bills in the current name of the applicant for the current residence.
7. Other services such as transportation to seek and/or maintain employment, and burials may be provided depending on the circumstances.

Who is eligible for township assistance?

There are three (3) general rules that establish your eligibility:

1. Apply to the township where you live;
2. Be in need of the essentials of life; and
3. Be willing to help yourself as much as possible.

How is need determined?

A person or family is in need if there is not enough income or resources to provide the basic necessities of life. Necessities of life include food, shelter, utilities, medical, household supplies, clothing and other basic needs.

Eligibility is determined by the trustee or staff after an application is completed, and is based on written standards adopted by the township.

How do I apply for township trustee assistance?

In most cases you will need to phone the trustee's office to schedule an appointment. Some townships accept walk-ins, but most prefer or require appointments.

An individual seeking township assistance will be given an application and a list of other documents or information needed to complete the application. Generally, an appointment will be scheduled at this time for an interview with the trustee or investigator, at which time the application and all requested information is to be completed. An application is not considered completed until all adult members of the household have signed all forms and documents, including a *Disclosure and Release of Information*, that are required by law or are determined necessary by the township.

The township trustee or staff will assist any individual in completing the application when needed if the applicant has a mental or physical disability, 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 trustee's office due to a physical or mental disability, or illness, the trustee shall make alternate arrangements to obtain the individual's signature.

What should I bring in when I come to apply?

Some of the most important information to bring with you are:

1. Identification and proof of residence, along with social security numbers for all residents in the household
2. Bills which you are requesting assistance with

(most recent)

3. Rent receipt or mortgage payment book
4. Receipts or cancelled checks from at least the last 30 days showing how you have spent your money
5. Proof of income, including pay stubs, payroll statement from employer, Certificate of Action from caseworker (if receiving TANF and/or Food Stamps), court order for child support, etc.

The township may require additional documentation depending on your specific situation.

What determines residency in a township?

An individual is a "resident" of a township if the individual has located in the township, and shows an intention to make the township their sole place of residence.

What is expected of me as an applicant?

There are three major requirements to be met before a determination of eligibility can be made:

1. Work Requirement

By law, the trustee must require any able-bodied, unemployed member of an applicant's household to seek and accept employment, unless:

- a. Disabled;
- b. Under age 18, or over age 65;
- c. Needed to care for another person;
- d. There is no work assignment available;
- e. Employed full-time;
- f. Employment would violate fair labor standards or the law

The trustee may require proof of your inability to work, such as a doctor's statement. If you are granted assistance by the township, are unemployed but able to work, you may be assigned to a **workfare** job. The work you perform, as directed by the township, will help pay for the aid you get. For many, workfare has been a major step on the road to a job in the private sector.