

Topic	Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) Eligibility Procedures	ID #	14.10-19.04
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Verification for Zero Income Individuals and Households

Confirmation must be obtained when either an individual or entire household has zero income.

1. Both individual applicants and entire households which have family assistance cases that are active during the verification period can provide printouts from ACCENT as the sole source of zero income verification.
2. When whole households report zero income, statements from relatives and friends may be used, but only when other sources of verification are not available.
 - a. The documentation must be reasonable and clearly indicate how the household is surviving without any cash income.
 - b. Gifts of cash or in-kind contributions (food, clothing, etc.) are not considered income. However, all gifts (cash, goods to meet basic necessities, etc.) must be documented with a statement of support and placed in the applicant's file.

The statement of support is a written document that must identify:

1. who is being supported,
2. what support is given,
3. who is providing the support,
4. the relationship between the applicant and the person giving the support, and
5. the person providing support is not receiving assistance themselves as a member of a zero income household.

When zero income is claimed, this document must be signed by both parties and attached to the application for assistance.

According to their own policies, providers may require additional documentation and verification from the supporting individuals. Agencies that do so must be consistent for all applicants without bias.

In all cases where zero income is verified for the entire household, redetermination must be completed every following month by the same day. For example, if the determination date is May 5th, then redetermination must be completed by June 5th, then July 5th, etc., until the household begins to earn income.

Calculating Income

All income for the entire household must be verified and documented at the time of application and at redetermination.

When calculating income to determine eligibility:

- the provider must calculate income in a manner that best reflects the actual income for the household of the individual applying for services.
- use gross income.
- use the income of the current month or the month prior to the date the application is signed

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- when an applicant receives income for part of the year but uses the income to last the entire year, the income must be treated as though it was earned throughout the year. For a monthly income amount, take the total and divide by twelve (12). For example, schoolteachers, construction workers, seasonal employees, farmers, etc.
- if the individual's employment status or rate of pay changes, the current income must be considered.

All income must be averaged and converted to monthly amounts using the generally accepted accounting principles provided below:

- Hourly income is multiplied by the hours in the individual's usual work day to determine gross daily pay. Multiply the gross daily pay by the number of days in the individual's work week to obtain weekly pay.
- Weekly income is multiplied by 4.33
- Bi-weekly income is multiplied by 2.15
- Semi-monthly income is multiplied by 2
- Monthly income is multiplied by 1.
- Bi-monthly income is divided by 2
- Quarterly income is divided by 3
- Semi-annual income is divided by 6
- Annual income is divided by twelve (12).

Application Determination

All providers must notify each applicant of the outcome of his or her application within fifteen (15) days of determination. Each provider must develop a form letter on agency letterhead that includes or has the option to include each of the following, as applicable:

- Letter date
- Indication of application approval or denial, or whether a determination could not be made
- Explanation for any determination that is not an approval
- Statement that all applications must be processed within one (1) business day of the date the application was signed
- Application signature date
- Determination date
- In all cases where the application was not completed in a timely manner, include a thorough explanation for the delay
- Information about the right to and processes for appealing the determination
- Any further information as the provider finds appropriate⁰³

Application determination letters that deny services based on income must also include or enclose a copy of the current income guidelines.

Adult Protective Services (APS) Referral to Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) and Closure of APS Case

All APS referrals to providers for the purpose of providing homemaker or adult day services must be completed using form [HS-0041 Purchase of Service Authorization and Request for Services](#). The authorization must be submitted to the provider at the point the purchased services are requested, and remains in effect without reauthorization until APS services are terminated using form [HS-0878 Termination of Services](#).

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When APS submits the termination to the provider, it must indicate whether the provider is to continue services or close its case.

In circumstances where an income-eligible client is already receiving services and the provider receives an authorization for services, the client is then considered without regard to income (WRI) from the date of the authorization throughout the period during which the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) authorizes services. The client will not pay ADC fees during this period, nor will the provider need to perform the periodic redetermination required for income eligible (IE) clients.