

Chapter 388-412 WAC

BENEFIT ISSUANCES

WAC

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DISPOSITION OF SECTIONS FORMERLY CODIFIED IN THIS CHAPTER

388-412-0045	General information about cash and food assistance issued by electronic benefits transfer. [Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.510, 74.08.090, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and S. 825, Public Law 104-193, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. 99-02-039, § 388-412-0045, filed 12/31/98, effective 1/31/99.] Repealed by 01-18-054, filed 8/30/01, effective 9/30/01. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.510 and 74.08.090.
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WAC 388-412-0005 General information about your cash benefits. (1) Each separate cash assistance unit (AU) gets a separate benefit amount. If several AUs live in the same house, each AU gets a separate benefit amount.

(2) You cannot receive the same type of benefits in:

(a) Two states in the same month; or

(b) Two AUs in the same month; unless

(c) You left the AU to live in a shelter for battered women and children. See WAC 388-408-0045.

(3) If you are married and both you and your spouse get Disability Lifeline, you and your spouse are one AU.

(4) Your grant is rounded down to the next whole dollar amount unless:

(a) You get a clothing and personal incidental (CPI) allowance; or

(b) Your benefits are reduced to pay an overpayment.

(5) We do not issue any cash benefits if you are eligible for less than ten dollars unless:

(a) You get a CPI allowance;

(b) Your benefits are reduced to pay an overpayment; or

(c) You get Supplemental Social Security (SSI) interim assistance payments.

(6) You may use your cash benefits to pay for basic living expenses as detailed under WAC 388-412-0046 (1)(c).

(7) You may not use your electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards or cash obtained with EBT cards for any of the activities specified under WAC 388-412-0046 (1)(d).

(8) If you choose to withdraw your cash benefits using an automated teller machine (ATM), our EBT vendor may charge a fee for the transaction in addition to any charges by the bank or ATM owner.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.08.090, 74.04.510, 74.04.770, 74.12.260, 74.08.580, 9.91.142, 7 C.F.R. 273.16, the

(9/13/11)

Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 as amended and 42 U.S.C. 601a; and 2011 c 42. 11-19-047, § 388-412-0005, filed 9/13/11, effective 10/14/11. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.08.090. 05-02-015, § 388-412-0005, filed 12/27/04, effective 1/27/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.510 and 74.08.090. 01-18-054, § 388-412-0005, filed 8/30/01, effective 9/30/01; 99-16-024, § 388-412-0005, filed 7/26/99, effective 9/1/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.510, 74.08.090, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and S. 825, Public Law 104-193, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. 99-02-039, § 388-412-0005, filed 12/31/98, effective 1/31/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and 74.08.090. 98-16-044, § 388-412-0005, filed 7/31/98, effective 9/1/98.]

WAC 388-412-0010 Endorsing the warrant. (1) Clients must endorse their warrants unless they have executed a power of attorney. If a client has given someone else a power of attorney, the client must give the department a copy.

(2) If a client is unable to sign the warrant, it must be endorsed by the client's mark or thumb print witnessed by two people. The witnesses must give their names and addresses to the person that cashes the warrant.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and 74.08.090. 98-16-044, § 388-412-0010, filed 7/31/98, effective 9/1/98.]

WAC 388-412-0015 General information about your food assistance allotments. (1) Your monthly allotment under the Washington Basic Food program, food assistance program for legal immigrants (FAP), Washington combined application project (WASHCAP), or the transitional food assistance (TFA) programs is the total dollar value of benefits your assistance unit (AU) receives for a calendar month.

(2) **How we determine monthly allotments:**

(a) We calculate your monthly allotment as described under WAC 388-450-0162 if your AU has income;

(b) If your AU does not have countable income you receive the maximum allotment for the number of eligible people in your AU under WAC 388-478-0060.

(3) **Prorated benefits in the first month** - If we determine you are eligible for food assistance, your first month's benefits are calculated from the date you applied through the end of the month of your application. This is called proration and is based on a thirty-day month:

(a) If your prorated benefits for the first month are under ten dollars, you will not receive an allotment for the first month.

(b) If there was a delay in processing your application, we determine when your benefits start under WAC 388-406-0055.

(4) **Combined allotment for first and second month's benefits** - If you apply for benefits on or after the sixteenth of the month, and we determine you are eligible for food assistance, we issue both the first and second months benefits in one allotment if you are eligible for both months.

(5) **Minimum allotment** - If your AU has one or two members, your monthly allotment will be at least sixteen dollars unless:

- (a) It is the first month of your certification period;
- (b) Your AU is eligible for only a partial month; and

(c) We reduced your first month's allotment below sixteen dollars based on the date you became eligible for food assistance under WAC 388-406-0055.

(6) **Use of food assistance benefits** - Your food assistance benefits may only be used to buy eligible food items as described under WAC 388-412-0046. If you use your benefits in any other way, it is an intentional program violation under WAC 388-446-0015 and could result in fines, imprisonment, disqualification from receiving food assistance benefits, or any combination of these penalties.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.08.090, 74.04.510, 74.04.770, 74.12.260, 74.08.580, 9.91.142, 7 C.F.R. 273.16, the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 as amended and 42 U.S.C. 601a; and 2011 c 42, 11-19-047, § 388-412-0015, filed 9/13/11, effective 10/14/11. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.510, 74.08.090, 74.04.500, 74.08A.120, and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. 09-14-018, § 388-412-0015, filed 6/22/09, effective 7/23/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.510, 74.08.090. 08-24-051, § 388-412-0015, filed 11/25/08, effective 12/26/08. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.08.090. 05-02-016, § 388-412-0015, filed 12/27/04, effective 1/27/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.510. 03-22-038, § 388-412-0015, filed 10/28/03, effective 12/1/03. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.510 and 74.08.090. 01-18-054, § 388-412-0015, filed 8/30/01, effective 9/30/01; 99-16-024, § 388-412-0015, filed 7/26/99, effective 9/1/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and 74.08.090. 98-16-044, § 388-412-0015, filed 7/31/98, effective 9/1/98.]

WAC 388-412-0020 When do I get my benefits? (1) If you get your cash benefits on an electronic benefits card (EBT), you get your cash benefits deposited on the first of each month.

(2) If you get your cash benefits deposited directly to your bank account, electronic funds transfer (EFT); your money is deposited on the first working day of the month. When the first of the month is a federal holiday or a Sunday, the benefits are deposited the following day.

(3) If you get Basic Food, your benefits are issued by the tenth day of each month. The day you get your benefits is the same as the last number of your assistance unit (AU) number for Basic Food. If the last number of your AU number is zero, you get your benefits on the tenth.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.510. 03-22-038, § 388-412-0020, filed 10/28/03, effective 12/1/03. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.510 and 74.08.090. 02-18-105, § 388-412-0020, filed 9/3/02, effective 10/4/02; 01-18-054, § 388-412-0020, filed 8/30/01, effective 9/30/01. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.510, 74.08.090, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and S. 825, Public Law 104-193, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. 99-02-039, § 388-412-0020, filed 12/31/98, effective 1/31/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and 74.08.090. 98-16-044, § 388-412-0020, filed 7/31/98, effective 9/1/98.]

WAC 388-412-0025 How do I get my benefits? (1) We send your cash benefits to you by either:

(a) Electronic benefit transfer (EBT), which is a direct deposit into a DSHS account that you access with a debit card called the Washington EBT Quest card;

(b) Electronic funds transfer (EFT), which is a direct deposit into your own bank account;

(c) A warrant (check) to a payee who is not approved for direct deposit; or

(d) A warrant (check) to you if you get:

(i) Diversion cash assistance (DCA) that cannot be paid directly to a vendor;

(ii) Additional requirements for emergent needs (AREN) that cannot be paid directly to a vendor;

(iii) Ongoing additional requirements (OAR) that cannot be paid directly to a vendor;

(iv) Clothing and personal incidentals (CPI) payments; or

(v) State supplemental payment (SSP) and you do not receive your benefit through EFT.

(2) We send your **Basic Food** benefits to you by EBT.

(3) We set up an EBT account for the head of household of each AU that receives benefits by EBT.

(4) You use a Quest debit card to access your benefits in your EBT account. You select a personal identification number (PIN) that you must enter when using this card.

(5) You must use your cash and Basic Food benefits from your EBT account. We do not convert cash or Basic Food benefits to checks.

(6) We deposit your Basic Food benefits into your EBT account by the tenth day of the month based on your Basic Food assistance unit number as described in WAC 388-412-0020.

(7) **Unused EBT benefits:** If you do not use your EBT account for three hundred sixty-five days, we cancel the cash and Basic Food benefits on your account.

(a) **Replacing Basic Food benefits:**

(i) We **can replace** cancelled benefits we deposited **less than three hundred sixty-five days** from the date you ask for us to replace your benefits.

(ii) We **cannot replace** cancelled benefits deposited **three hundred sixty-five or more days** from the date you ask us to replace your benefits.

(b) **Replacing cash benefits:** We **can replace** cancelled cash benefits for you or another member of your assistance unit. Cash benefits are not transferable to someone outside of your assistance unit.

(8) **Replacing cash warrants:** If we issued you cash benefits as a warrant we can replace these benefits for you or a member of your assistance unit. Cash benefits are not transferable to someone outside of your assistance unit.

(a) If we issued the benefits as a warrant one hundred sixty or fewer days ago, your local office can replace the warrant.

(b) If we issued the benefits as a warrant more than one hundred sixty days ago, the Office of Accounting Services can replace the warrant.

(9) **Correcting your EBT balance:** When you make a purchase with your EBT card a system error can occur where the purchase amount is not deducted from your EBT account. When the error is discovered the following will happen:

(a) You will be notified in writing of the system error before the money is removed from your account; and

(b) You will have ninety days to request an administrative hearing. If you ask for an administrative hearing within ten calendar days, the money will not be removed from your EBT account unless:

(i) You withdraw your administrative hearing request in writing;

(ii) You do not follow through with the administrative hearing process; or

(iii) The administrative law judge tells us in writing to remove the money.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.500, 74.04.510, 74.04.005, 74.08.090, 74.08A.020, 7 C.F.R. 274.12 and Quest operating rules. 09-21-071, § 388-412-0025, filed 10/16/09, effective 11/16/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.500, 74.04.510, 74.04.515, 74.08.090, and 7 C.F.R. 274.12. 07-04-029, § 388-412-0025, filed 1/29/07, effective 3/1/07. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.510, 74.08.090. 05-17-089, § 388-412-0025, filed 8/12/05, effective 9/12/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.510. 03-22-038, § 388-412-0025, filed 10/28/03, effective 12/1/03. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.510 and 74.08.090. 02-18-105, § 388-412-0025, filed 9/3/02, effective 10/4/02; 01-18-054, § 388-412-0025, filed 8/30/01, effective 9/30/01. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and 74.08.090. 98-16-044, § 388-412-0025, filed 7/31/98, effective 9/1/98.]

WAC 388-412-0030 Returning a warrant. (1) A person who has possession of a warrant payable to a deceased payee must return the warrant to the department for cancellation.

(2) A person who has possession of a warrant payable to an assistance unit payee who has left the home and is not likely to return during the month to endorse the warrant, must return the warrant to the CSO. The warrant may be reissued to another eligible payee for the assistance unit.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.510, 74.08.090, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and S. 825, Public Law 104-193, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. 99-02-039, § 388-412-0030, filed 12/31/98, effective 1/31/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and 74.08.090. 98-16-044, § 388-412-0030, filed 7/31/98, effective 9/1/98.]

WAC 388-412-0035 Loss, theft, destruction or non-receipt of a warrant issued to clients and vendors. The following applies to replacements of warrants issued to clients and to vendors.

(1) The department does not replace a warrant or the cash proceeds from a warrant which was endorsed by a client or vendor.

(2) Clients or vendors asking for a replacement of a warrant which was not endorsed by them must:

(a) Complete a notarized affidavit;

(b) Provide all facts surrounding the loss, theft, destruction or nonreceipt of the warrant; and

(c) File a report with the police or the post office, as appropriate.

(3) If a client is eligible to receive a replacement, the warrant is issued:

(a) On or before the tenth of the month in which the warrant was due; or

(b) Within five working days of the date the decision is made to replace the warrant, whichever is later.

(4) A client or vendor is issued the full amount of the original warrant if the warrant is replaced.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.510, 74.08.090, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and S. 825, Public Law 104-193, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. 99-02-039, § 388-412-0035, filed 12/31/98, effective 1/31/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and 74.08.090. 98-16-044, § 388-412-0035, filed 7/31/98, effective 9/1/98.]

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WAC 388-412-0040 Can I get my benefits replaced?

Under certain conditions, we may replace your benefits.

(1) You may get your EBT cash and/or food assistance benefits replaced if:

(a) We make a mistake that causes you to lose benefits;

(b) The EBT card mailed to you is stolen from the mail; you never had the ability to use the benefits; and you lost benefits;

(c) You left a drug or alcohol treatment facility on or before the fifteenth of the month and the facility does not have enough food assistance benefits in their EBT account for one-half of the allotment that they owe you;

(d) Your EBT benefits that were recently deposited into an inactive EBT account were canceled by mistake; or

(e) The food that your household purchased with food assistance benefits was destroyed in a household disaster or misfortune.

(i) For us to replace your benefits, you must report the loss to the department within ten days from the date of the loss.

(ii) We replace the amount of your loss, up to a one-month benefit amount.

(2) We will not replace your benefits if your loss is for a reason other than those listed in subsection (1) above if:

(a) We decided that your request is fraudulent;

(b) Your food assistance benefits were lost, stolen or misplaced after you received them;

(c) You already received two replacements for food destroyed in household disaster or misfortune within the last five months; or

(d) You received disaster supplemental nutrition assistance program (D-SNAP) benefits for the same month you requested a replacement for food assistance.

(3) **EBT cards.** It is your responsibility to keep track of your household's EBT card.

(a) If you have multiple EBT cards replaced, we may suspect you to be trafficking benefits as described under WAC 388-412-0046 (2)(d).

(b) If we suspect trafficking, we will refer your case for investigation by the office of fraud and accountability. Persons trafficking in food assistance benefits may be subject to fines, disqualification from food assistance, and legal action including criminal prosecution.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.08.090, 74.04.510, 74.04.770, 74.12.260, 74.08.580, 9.91.142, 7 C.F.R. 273.16, the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 as amended and 42 U.S.C. 601a; and 2011 c 42. 11-19-047, § 388-412-0040, filed 9/13/11, effective 10/14/11. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.510, and 74.08.090. 09-21-009, § 388-412-0040, filed 10/8/09, effective 11/15/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, and 74.04.510. 08-14-047, § 388-412-0040, filed 6/24/08, effective 7/25/08; 03-22-038, § 388-412-0040, filed 10/28/03, effective 12/1/03. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.510 and 74.08.090. 01-18-054, § 388-412-0040, filed 8/30/01, effective 9/30/01. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and 74.08.090. 98-16-044, § 388-412-0040, filed 7/31/98, effective 9/1/98.]

WAC 388-412-0046 What is the purpose of DSHS cash and food assistance benefits and how can I use my benefits? (1) What is the purpose of DSHS cash benefits?

(a) DSHS cash assistance benefits are provided to low-income residents who qualify for public assistance programs. These benefits are intended to help pay for basic living expenses as described under RCW 74.04.770. TANF cash

grants must be used for the sole benefit of the children, and we may require proof that you are using your TANF cash assistance to benefit your children as allowed under RCW 74.12.260.

(b) Your electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card or cash assistance benefits may only be used by you, an eligible member of your household, or an authorized representative/protective payee for the purposes of your cash assistance program. You are not allowed to sell, attempt to sell, exchange, or donate your EBT card or benefits to any other person or entity.

(c) You may use your cash benefits to pay a reasonable amount of basic living expenses such as:

- (i) Shelter;
- (ii) Utilities such as heating, telephone, water, sewer, garbage, and recycling;
- (iii) Food;
- (iv) Transportation;
- (v) Clothing;
- (vi) Household maintenance;
- (vii) Personal hygiene;
- (viii) Employment or school related items; and
- (ix) Other necessary incidentals and items.

(d) It is not legal to use electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards or cash obtained with EBT cards to:

- (i) Gamble. Gambling includes:
 - (A) The purchase of lottery tickets;
 - (B) The purchase of pull tabs;
 - (C) Use of punch boards;
 - (D) Purchase of bingo cards;
 - (E) Betting on horse racing;
 - (F) Participating in casino games; and
 - (G) Participating in other games of chance as found in chapters 9.46, 67.16 and 67.70 RCW.

(ii) Participate in or purchase any activities located in a tattoo, body piercing, or body art shop licensed under chapter 18.300 RCW;

(iii) Purchase cigarettes as defined in RCW 82.24.010 or tobacco products as defined in RCW 82.26.010;

(iv) Purchase any alcoholic items regulated under Title 66 RCW;

(v) Purchase or participate in any activities in any of the following locations:

- (A) Taverns licensed under RCW 66.24.330;
- (B) Beer/wine specialty stores licensed under RCW 66.24.371;
- (C) Nightclubs licensed under RCW 66.24.600;
- (D) Contract liquor stores defined under RCW 66.04.010;
- (E) Bail bond agencies regulated under chapter 18.185 RCW;
- (F) Gambling establishments licensed under chapter 9.46 RCW;

(G) Adult entertainment venues with performances that contain erotic material where minors under the age of eighteen are prohibited under RCW 9.68A.150;

(H) Any establishments where persons under the age of eighteen are not permitted.

(e) If you use your electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card or cash obtained from your EBT card illegally we may:

(i) Assign a protective payee to manage your cash assistance benefits under WAC 388-460-0035;

(ii) For households receiving TANF, require proof that your benefits are being used for the benefit of the children in the household;

(iii) Terminate your cash benefits; or

(iv) Pursue legal action, including criminal prosecution.

(2) What is the purpose of DSHS food assistance benefits?

(a) DSHS food assistance benefits including those from the Basic Food program, state funded basic food program for legal immigrants (FAP), Washington state combined application project (WASHCAP), and transitional food assistance (TFA) help low-income individuals and families have a more nutritious diet by providing food assistance benefits through EBT cards for eligible households to buy groceries.

(b) You, members of your household, or an authorized representative may use your food assistance benefits to buy food items for your household from food retailer authorized to accept supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) benefits by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS).

(c) You can use your food assistance benefits to buy items such as:

- (i) Breads and cereals;
- (ii) Fruits and vegetables;
- (iii) Cheese, milk, and other dairy products;
- (iv) Meats, fish, poultry, and eggs;
- (v) Most other food items that are not prepared hot foods; and
- (vi) Seeds and plants that produce food.

(d) It is not legal to:

(i) Give your EBT card or benefits to anyone who is not in your food assistance household or your authorized representative.

(ii) Use food benefits on your EBT card for any purpose other than to buy food for eligible household members.

(iii) Exchange your food benefits for anything of value (trafficking). Examples of illegal trafficking include exchanging food benefits for cash, drugs, weapons or anything other than food from an authorized retailer.

(iv) Sell, attempt to sell, exchange, or donate your EBT card or any benefits to any person or entity.

(v) Sell or trade any food that was purchased using your food assistance benefits for cash, drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, firearms, or anything of value.

(vi) Use food benefits to buy nonfood items such as cigarettes, tobacco, beer, wine, liquor, household supplies, soaps, paper products, vitamins, medicine, or pet food.

(e) If you intentionally misuse your food assistance benefits, you may be:

(i) Disqualified for an intentional program violation under WAC 388-446-0015 and 388-446-0020. If you are disqualified you will lose your benefits for at least one year and up to a lifetime. The disqualification continues even if you move to another state.

(ii) Subject to fines.

(iii) Subject to legal action, including criminal prosecution. DSHS will cooperate with state, local and federal prosecuting authorities to prosecute trafficking in food assistance/SNAP benefits.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.08.090, 74.04.510, 74.04.770, 74.12.260, 74.08.580, 9.91.142, 7 C.F.R. 273.16, the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 as amended and 42 U.S.C. 601a; and 2011 c 42. 11-19-047, § 388-412-0046, filed 9/13/11, effective 10/14/11.]