



State of New Mexico Health Care Authority **Register**

I. DEPARTMENT

NEW MEXICO HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

II. SUBJECT

ANNUAL ADJUSTMENTS TO INCOME LIMITS

III. PROGRAM AFFECTED

NEW MEXICO WORKS (NMW) CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
SUPPORT SERVICES
EDUCATION WORKS PROGRAM
GENERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

IV. ACTION

FINAL RULE

V. BACKGROUND SUMMARY

The Health Care Authority (HCA) Income Support Division (ISD) is finalizing and adopting regulations that were proposed in Health Care Authority Register (HCA) [Vol. 48 No. 39 COLA](#).

The proposed amendments were outlined in 8.102.500 NMAC and 8.106.500 NMAC. These amendments were due to the changes to federal Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA), the income and resource eligibility standards as well as the deduction amounts available to otherwise eligible households. These amounts are determined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services (FNS). The Authority made the adjustments effective for benefit month October 2025 for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2026 to comply with federal law and regulations.

Section 9-8-6 NMSA 1978, authorizes the Department Secretary to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the duties of the Authority and its divisions.

VI. CONCISE EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Regulations issued pursuant to the act are contained in 45 CFR Parts 200-299. Administration of the Health Care Authority (HCA), including its authority to promulgate regulations, is governed by Chapter 9, Article 8, NMSA 1978 (Repl. 1983).

This Final HCAR is to address any public comments received. An amended public hearing was held on February 12, 2026, there were no attendees. The Authority did not receive any comments, written or verbal.

VII. RULE

The Health Care Authority Register Vol. 48 No.49 outlining the final rule regulations is available on the HSD's website at: [Income Support Division Registers – New Mexico Health Care Authority](#). If you do not have internet access, a copy of the final register and rules may be requested by contacting HCA Office of the Secretary at (505) 827-7750.

VIII. PUBLICATION DATE

March 24, 2026

IX. EFFECTIVE DATE

March 25, 2026

X. PUBLICATION

Publication of this rule is approved by:

DocuSigned by:



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KARI ARMIJO, SECRETARY
NEW MEXICO HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

TITLE 8 SOCIAL SERVICES
CHAPTER 102 CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
PART 500 ELIGIBILITY POLICY - GENERAL INFORMATION

8.102.500.1 ISSUING AGENCY: New Mexico Health Care Authority.
[8.102.500.1 NMAC - Rp 8.102.500.1 NMAC, 07/01/2001; A/E 10/1/2025; A, 03/25/2026]

8.102.500.2 SCOPE: The rule applies to the general public.
[8.102.500.2 NMAC - Rp 8.102.500.2 NMAC, 07/01/2001]

8.102.500.3 STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

A. New Mexico Statutes Annotated 1978 (Chapter 27, Articles 1 and 2) authorize the state to administer the aid to families with dependent children (AFDC), general assistance (GA), shelter care supplement, the burial assistance programs and such other public welfare functions as may be assumed by the state.

B. Federal legislation contained in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 abolished the AFDC program. The federal act created the temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) block grant under Title IV of the Social Security Act. Through the New Mexico Works Act of 1998, the New Mexico works program was created to replace the aid to families with dependent children program.

C. Under authority granted to the governor by the federal Social Security Act, the health care authority is designated as the state agency responsible for the TANF program in New Mexico.

D. Effective April 1, 1998, in accordance with the requirements of the New Mexico Works Act and Title IV-A of the federal Social Security Act, the department is creating the New Mexico works program as one of its cash assistance programs.

E. In close coordination with the NMW program, the department administers the food stamp employment and training program (E&T) pursuant to the Food Security Act of 1985 and federal regulations at Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations.

[8.102.500.3 NMAC - Rp 8.102.500.3 NMAC, 07/01/2001; A, 11/15/2007; A/E 10/1/2025; A, 03/25/2026]

8.102.500.4 DURATION: Permanent.
[8.102.500.4 NMAC - Rp 8.102.500.4 NMAC, 07/01/2001]

8.102.500.5 EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2001, unless a later date is cited at the end of a section.
[8.102.500.5 NMAC - Rp 8.102.500.5 NMAC, 07/01/2001; A/E, 10/01/2017; A, 2/01/2018]

8.102.500.6 OBJECTIVE:

A. The purpose of the New Mexico works (NMW) program is to improve the quality of life for parents and children by increasing family income, resources and support. The further purpose of the program is to increase family income through family employment and child support and by utilizing cash assistance as a support service to enable and assist parents to participate in employment.

B. The objective of education works program (EWP) is to provide cash assistance to a benefit group where at least one individual is enrolled in a post-secondary, graduate or post-graduate institution. Education and training are essential to long-term career development. The applicant or participating benefit group would be otherwise eligible for NMW cash assistance, but chooses to participate in EWP.

[8.102.500.6 NMAC - Rp 8.102.500.6 NMAC, 07/01/2001; A, 11/15/2007]

8.102.500.7 DEFINITIONS: [RESERVED]
[8.102.500.7 NMAC - Rp 8.102.500.7 NMAC, 07/01/2001]

8.102.500.8 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

A. Need determination process: Eligibility for NMW, state funded qualified aliens and EWP cash assistance based on need requires a finding that:

(1) the benefit group's countable gross monthly income does not exceed the gross income limit for the size of the benefit group;

(2) the benefit group's countable net income after all allowable deductions does not equal or exceed the standard of need for the size of the benefit group;

(3) the countable resources owned by and available to the benefit group do not exceed the

\$1,500 liquid and \$2,000 non-liquid resource limits;

(4) the benefit group is eligible for a cash assistance payment after subtracting from the standard of need the benefit group's countable income, and any payment sanctions or recoupments.

B. Gross income limits: The total countable gross earned and unearned income of the benefit group cannot exceed eighty-five percent of the federal poverty guidelines for the size of the benefit group.

(1) Income eligibility limits are revised and adjusted each year in October.

(2) The gross income limit for the size of the benefit group is as follows:

- (a) one person \$1,109
- (b) two persons \$1,499
- (c) three persons \$1,888
- (d) four persons \$2,278
- (e) five persons \$2,667
- (f) six persons \$3,057
- (g) seven persons \$3,447
- (h) eight persons \$3,836
- (i) add \$390 for each additional person.

C. Eligibility for support services only: Subject to the availability of state and federal funds, a benefit group that is not receiving cash assistance but has countable gross income that is less than one hundred percent of the federal poverty guidelines applicable to the size of the benefit group may be eligible to receive services. The gross income guidelines for the size of the benefit group are as follows:

- (1) one person \$1,305
- (2) two persons \$1,763
- (3) three persons \$2,221
- (4) four persons \$2,680
- (5) five persons \$3,138
- (6) six persons \$3,596
- (7) seven persons \$4,055
- (8) eight persons \$4,513
- (9) add \$459 for each additional person.

D. Standard of need:

(1) The standard of need is based on the number of participants included in the benefit group and allows for a financial standard and basic needs.

(2) Basic needs include food, clothing, shelter, utilities, personal requirements and the participant's share of benefit group supplies.

(3) The financial standard includes approximately \$111 per month for each participant in the benefit group.

(4) The standard of need for the NMW, state funded qualified aliens, and EWP cash assistance benefit group is:

- (a) one person \$327
- (b) two persons \$439
- (c) three persons \$549
- (d) four persons \$663
- (e) five persons \$775
- (f) six persons \$887
- (g) seven persons \$999
- (h) eight persons \$1,134
- (i) add \$112 for each additional person.

E. Special needs:

(1) **Special clothing allowance:** A special clothing allowance may be issued to assist in preparing a child for school, subject to the availability of state or federal funds and a specific allocation of the available funds for this allowance.

(a) For purposes of determining eligibility for the clothing allowance, a child is considered to be of school age if the child is six years of age or older and less than age 19 by the end of August.

(b) The clothing allowance shall be allowed for each school-age child who is included in the NMW, TBP, state funded qualified aliens, or EWP cash assistance benefit group, subject to the availability of state or federal funds.

(c) The clothing allowance is not allowed in determining eligibility for NMW, TBP, state funded qualified aliens, EWP cash assistance, or wage subsidy.

(2) **Layette:** A one-time layette allowance of \$25 is allowed upon the birth of a child who is included in the benefit group. The allowance shall be authorized by no later than the end of the month following the month in which the child is born.

(3) **Special circumstance:** Dependent upon the availability of funds and in accordance with the federal act, the HSD secretary, may establish a separate, non-recurring, cash assistance program that may waive certain New Mexico Works Act requirements due to a specific situation. This cash assistance program shall not exceed a four month time period, and is not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs.

F. **Non-inclusion of legal guardian in benefit group:** Based on the availability of state and federal funds, the department may limit the eligibility of a benefit group due to the fact that a legal guardian is not included in the benefit group.

[8.102.500.8 NMAC - Rp 8.102.500.8 NMAC, 07/01/2001; A, 10/01/2001; A, 10/01/2002; A, 10/01/2003; A/E, 10/01/2004; A/E, 10/01/2005; A, 07/17/2006; A/E, 10/01/2006; A/E, 10/01/2007; A, 11/15/2007; A, 01/01/2008; A/E, 10/01/2008; A, 08/01/2009; A, 08/14/2009; A/E, 10/01/2009; A, 10/30/2009; A, 01/01/2011; A, 01/01/2011; A, 07/29/2011; A/E, 10/01/2011; A/E, 10/01/2012; A/E, 10/01/2013; A/E, 10/01/2014; A, 10/01/2015; A, 10/01/2016; A/E, 10/01/2017; A, 02/01/2018; A/E, 10/01/2018; A, 03/01/2019; A/E, 10/01/2019; A, 03/01/2020; A/E, 10/01/2020; A, 03/01/2021; A/E, 10/01/2021; A 04/01/2022; A/E, 10/01/2022; A, 04/01/2023; A/E 10/1/2023; A, 3/1/2025; A/E 10/1/2025; A, 03/25/2026]

8.102.500.9 PROSPECTIVE BUDGETING:

A. Eligibility for cash assistance programs shall be determined prospectively. The benefit group must meet all eligibility criteria in the month following the month of disposition. Eligibility and amount of payment shall be determined prospectively for each month in the certification period.

B. **Simplified reporting:** A benefit group subject to simplified reporting shall be subject to income methodology as specified in Subsection E of 8.102.120.11 NMAC.

C. **Changes in benefit group composition:** A person added to the benefit group shall have eligibility determined prospectively beginning in the month following the month the report is made.

D. **Anticipating income:** In determining the benefit group's eligibility and benefit amount, the income already received and any income the benefit group expects to receive during the certification period shall be used.

(1) Income anticipated during the certification period shall be counted only in the month it is expected to be received, unless the income is averaged.

(2) Actual income shall be calculated by using the income already received and any other income that can reasonably be anticipated in the calendar month.

(3) If the amount of income or date of receipt is uncertain, the portion of the income that is uncertain shall not be counted.

(4) In cases where the receipt of income is reasonably certain but the amount may fluctuate, the income shall be averaged.

(5) Averaging is used to determine a monthly calculation when there is fluctuating income within the weekly, biweekly, or monthly pay period and to achieve a uniform amount for projecting.

E. **Income received less frequently than monthly:** The amount of monthly gross income that is received less frequently than monthly is determined by dividing the total income by the number of months the income is intended to cover. This includes, but is not limited to, income from sharecropping, farming, and self-employment. It includes contract income as well as income for a tenured teacher who may not actually have a contract.

F. **Contract income:** A benefit group that derives its annual income in a period of less than one year shall have that income averaged over a 12-month period, provided that the income is not received on an hourly or piecework basis.

G. **Using exact income:** Exact income, rather than averaged income, shall be used if:

(1) the benefit group has chosen not to average income;

(2) income is from a source terminated in the month of application;

(3) employment began in the application month and the income represents only a partial

month;

(4) income is received more frequently than weekly.

H. **Income projection:** Earned income shall be anticipated as described below.

(1) Earned income shall be anticipated based on income received when the following criteria are met:

(a) the applicant and the caseworker are reasonably certain the income amounts received are indicative of future income and expected to continue during the certification; and

(b) the anticipated income is based on income received from any consecutive 30-day period that includes 30 days prior to the date of application through the date of timely disposition of the application.

(2) When the applicant and the caseworker determine that the income received is not indicative of future income that will be received during the certification period, a longer period of time may be used if it will provide a more accurate indicator of anticipated income.

(3) Provided the applicant and the caseworker are reasonably certain the income amounts are indicative of future income, the anticipated income shall be used for the month of application and the remaining months of the certification period.

I. Unearned income:

(1) Unearned income shall be anticipated based on income received when the following criteria are met:

(a) the applicant and the caseworker are reasonably certain the income amounts received are indicative of future income and expected to continue during the certification; and

(b) the anticipated income is based on income received from any consecutive 30-day period that includes 30 days prior to the date of application through the date of timely disposition of the application.

(2) When the applicant and the caseworker determine that the income received is not indicative of future income that will be received during the certification period, a longer period of time may be used if it will provide a more accurate indicator of anticipated income.

(3) Provided the applicant and the caseworker are reasonably certain the income amounts are indicative of future income, the anticipated income shall be used for the month of application and the remaining months of the certification period.

J. Use of conversion factors: Whenever a full month's income is anticipated and is received on a weekly or biweekly basis, the income shall be converted to monthly amount as follows:

(1) income received on a weekly basis is averaged and multiplied by 4.0;

(2) income received on a biweekly basis is averaged and multiplied by 2.0;

(3) averaged income shall be rounded to the nearest whole dollar prior to application of the conversion factor; amounts resulting in \$0.50 or more are rounded up; amounts resulting in \$0.49 or lower are rounded down.

[8.102.500.9 NMAC - Rp 8.102.500.9 NMAC, 07/01/2001; A 02/14/2002; A, 01/01/2004; A, 11/15/2007; A, 04/01/2010; A/E, 10/01/2017; A, 2/01/2018]

8.102.500.10 DIVERSION PAYMENTS TO A NMW BENEFIT GROUP:

A. Purpose: The diversion payment is a one-time cash assistance payment, that is intended to assist the benefit group alleviate a specific short-term need: to accept a bona fide offer of employment, retain employment, remedy an emergency situation or an unexpected short-term need.

B. Eligibility criteria:

(1) **Applicant:** Eligibility for a diversion payment shall be limited to an applicant making an initial application for cash assistance. Initial application shall not include a NMW cash assistance case which is within a six-month mandatory closure because of a third sanction. For the purposes of diversion payments, an initial applicant is one who has never received cash assistance, or one whose cash assistance case has been closed for one or more calendar months.

(a) An applicant for NMW cash assistance who meets all NMW eligibility criteria may volunteer to accept a NMW diversion payment in lieu of monthly cash assistance payments if there is no need for long-term cash assistance to meet basic needs.

(b) The caseworker shall explain the diversion program is not a supplement to other assistance but is in place of it and screen the applicant for eligibility for a diversion payment.

(c) Final approval for all diversion payments shall be made by the county director and documentation submitted to income support division central office.

(2) **NMW eligibility is established:**

(a) The applicant must be otherwise eligible for NMW cash assistance, except that

the applicant demonstrates that monthly cash assistance to meet basic needs is not required by the benefit group because there is a means of on-going financial support, and the applicant chooses to accept a diversion payment in lieu of cash assistance to meet ongoing needs.

(b) An applicant who cannot demonstrate that monthly cash assistance to meet basic needs is not needed shall not be eligible for a diversion payment.

(3) Specific need: The applicant must make an informed choice whether cash assistance is needed to meet a specific short term need. The applicant may demonstrate a need for a specific item or type of assistance which will allow the applicant to keep a job or accept a bona fide offer of employment, remedy and emergency situation or alleviate a short term need. Such assistance may include, cash, support services, housing, transportation, car repairs, and uniforms.

(4) Eligibility for support services: A recipient of a diversion payment shall remain eligible for support services such as child care and transportation until the end of the 12-month lock-out period, until closure of the case is requested or the participant moves out of state. A referral to the NMW work program service provider and to CYFD shall be made after the applicant signs the agreement to accept a diversion payment and payment is authorized.

(5) Verification and documentation:

(a) The applicant shall be required to provide verification of the specific item or type of assistance which will allow the applicant to meet the basic short-term need.

(b) Documentation shall be required to establish that a diversion payment may be authorized in lieu of cash assistance to meet ongoing needs. An agreement signed by the applicant shall include a description of a diversion payment, terms and conditions, lifetime limitations, availability of work program services, reason for accepting a diversion payment, any prior assistance received in or out of the state.

C. Amounts: Diversion assistance is a one time, lump sum payment. The amount of the diversion payment is as follows:

(1) one to three benefit group members: may be entitled to an amount of up to \$1,500 non-recurring payment; or

(2) four or more benefit group members: may be entitled to an amount of up to \$2,500 non-recurring payment.

D. Countable assistance: The effects a diversion payment on other categories of assistance is as follows:

(1) the receipt of a diversion payment shall be excluded from income considerations in the medicaid program; and

(2) categorical eligibility is extended to the food stamp benefit group for the lockout period, unless the benefit group requests closure or moves out of New Mexico; and

(3) an applicant who accepts a diversion payment shall be eligible for TANF funded child care assistance for the lockout period, unless the benefit group requests closure or moves out of New Mexico.

E. Limitations and conditions: An applicant may receive a diversion payment a maximum of two times during a participant's 60-month term limit.

(1) Receipt of a diversion payment does not count toward the NMW 60-month term limit for any adult included in the benefit group, unless the benefit group also receives monthly NMW cash assistance during the period covered by the diversion payment.

(2) The acceptance of a diversion payment does not reduce the number of months in a participant's 60-month lifetime limit; however, a diversion payment can only be authorized a maximum of two times during the 60-month lifetime limit. The 60-month lifetime limit began on July 1, 1997 for any adult or minor head of the benefit group, or spouse of the minor, who received TANF since July 1997.

(3) A participant who has reached the 60-month lifetime limit is not eligible for a diversion payment. A participant who has never received a month of TANF is eligible for a diversion payment.

(4) Cash assistance lockout period:

(a) Acceptance of a diversion payment: An applicant who accepts a diversion payment shall be prohibited from participating in the NMW cash assistance program for a period of 12 months beginning in the month the diversion payment is authorized. A written agreement that defines the terms and expectations of the diversion grant; documents the reason why cash assistance to meet basic needs is not required; identifies the need for a specific type of short-term assistance; and describes the support services available to diversion participants must be signed by the participant.

(b) Receipt of a diversion payment from another state: An applicant who has accepted a diversion payment in any other state shall be prohibited from receiving NMW cash assistance or a

diversion payment in New Mexico for a period of 12 months, beginning in the month the diversion payment in the other state was authorized, or for the length of the lockout period in the other state, whichever is shorter.

(5) A participant of a diversion payment is not required to comply with work program or child support enforcement requirements.

F. Re-application: A participant may apply for cash assistance during the lockout period based on the following criteria.

(1) **Applying during lock-out period:** An applicant who determines an inability to adhere to the terms and conditions for receipt of a diversion payment may apply for cash assistance to meet ongoing basic needs.

(a) An applicant is ineligible for cash assistance payment regardless of good cause within the first four months of receiving a diversion payment.

(b) An applicant is eligible for cash assistance payment if good cause is met at least five months after receipt of diversion payment.

(2) **Good cause:** Good cause must apply in order for an applicant to re-apply for cash assistance during the lockout period. Good cause can only be considered for applicants applying at least five months after initial receipt of a diversion payment. Good cause is not considered to exist for the first four months from initial receipt of a diversion payment. Good cause must be approved by the department and may include, loss of employment, but not a voluntary quit or dismissal due to poor job performance or failure to meet a condition of employment; or use of an illegal substance or other drug; catastrophic illness or accident of a family member which requires an employed participant to leave employment; a victim of domestic violence; or another situation or emergency that renders an employed family member unable to care for the basic needs of the family.

G. Claims:

(1) A benefit group that receives monthly cash assistance within the 12-month lock out period shall not be subject to an overpayment if the household meets good cause.

(2) A benefit group may be subject to an overpayment if the diversion payment was issued in error and subject to recoupment as specified in 8.102.640 NMAC.

[8.102.500.10 NMAC - Rp 8.102.500.10 NMAC, 07/01/2001; Repealed, 7/17/2006; 8.102.500.10 NMAC - N, 11/15/2007; A, 08/14/2009; A, 07/01/2013]

History of 8.102.500 NMAC:

Pre-NMAC History: The material in this part was derived from that previously filed with the State Records Center and Archives:

ISD FA 420, Standard of Need, 2/10/1988.

ISD FA 440, Determination of Eligibility and Grant, 2/10/1988.

ISD FA 440, Prospective Eligibility and Budgeting, 4/30/1992.

ISD FA 460, Special Payments, 2/10/1988.

History of Repealed Material: 8 NMAC 3.FAP, Financial Assistance Program - Repealed, 07/01/1997.

8.102.500 NMAC Eligibility Policy - General Information, - Repealed, 07/01/2001.

State TITLE 8 SOCIAL SERVICES
CHAPTER 106 STATE FUNDED ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
PART 500 ELIGIBILITY POLICY - GENERAL INFORMATION

8.106.500.1 ISSUING AGENCY: New Mexico Health Care Authority.
[8.106.500.1 NMAC - Rp, 8.106.500.1 NMAC 3/1/2025; A/E 10/1/2025; A, 03/25/2026]

8.106.500.2 SCOPE: The rule applies to the general public.
[8.106.500.2 NMAC - Rp, 8.106.500.2 NMAC 3/1/2025]

8.106.500.3 STATUTORY AUTHORITY: New Mexico Statutes Annotated 1978 (Chapter 27, Articles 1 and 2) authorize the state to administer the aid to families with dependent children (AFDC), general assistance (GA), shelter care supplement, the burial assistance programs and such other public welfare functions as may be assumed by the state.
[8.106.500.3 NMAC - Rp, 8.106.500.3 NMAC 3/1/2025]

8.106.500.4 DURATION: Permanent.
[8.106.500.4 NMAC - Rp, 8.106.500.4 NMAC 3/1/2025]

8.106.500.5 EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1, 2025, unless a later date is cited at the end of a section.
[8.106.500.5 NMAC - Rp, 8.106.500.5 NMAC 3/1/2025]

8.106.500.6 OBJECTIVE:

A. The objective of general assistance is to provide financial assistance to dependent needy children and disabled adults who are not eligible for assistance under a federally matched financial assistance program such as New Mexico works (NMW) or the federal program of supplemental security income (SSI). The general assistance program is not intended to be an unemployment or general relief program.

B. The objective of the supplement for residential care program is to provide a cash assistance supplement to SSI recipients who reside in licensed adult residential care homes.

C. The objective of the burial assistance program is to assist in payment of burial expenses for an individual who was a low-income individual at the time of death.

[8.106.500.6 NMAC - Rp, 8.106.500.1 NMAC 3/1/2025]

8.106.500.7 DEFINITIONS: [RESERVED]

8.106.500.8 GA - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

A. Limited state funds may result in a suspension or reduction in general assistance benefits without eligibility and need considered.

B. Need determination process: Eligibility for the GA program based on need requires a finding that the:

(1) countable resources owned by and available to the benefit group do not exceed either the \$1,500 liquid or \$2,000 non-liquid resource limit;

(2) benefit group's countable gross earned and unearned income does not equal or exceed eighty-five percent of the federal poverty guideline for the size of the benefit group; and

(3) benefit group's countable net income does not equal or exceed the standard of need for the size of the benefit group.

C. GA payment determination: The benefit group's cash assistance payment is determined after subtracting from the standard of need the benefit group's countable income and any payment sanctions or recoupments.

D. Gross income test: The total countable gross earned and unearned income of the benefit group cannot exceed eighty-five percent of the federal poverty guidelines for the size of the benefit group.

(1) Income eligibility limits are revised and adjusted each year in October.

(2) The gross income limit for the size of the benefit group is as follows:

(a) one person \$1,109

(b) two persons \$1,499

(c) three persons \$1,888

- (d) four persons \$2,278
- (e) five persons \$2,667
- (f) six persons \$3,057
- (g) seven persons \$3,447
- (h) eight persons \$3,836
- (i) add \$390 for each additional person.

E. Standard of need:

(1) As published monthly by the department, the standard of need is an amount provided to each GA cash assistance benefit group on a monthly basis and is based on availability of state funds, the number of individuals included in the benefit group, number of cases, number of applications processed and approved, application approval rate, number of case closures, IAR caseload number and expenditures, and number of pending applications.

(2) Basic needs include food, clothing, shelter, utilities, personal requirements and an individual benefit group member's share of supplies.

(3) **Notice:** The department shall issue prior public notice identifying any change(s) to the standard of need amounts for the next quarter, as discussed at 8.106.630.11 NMAC.

F. Net income test: The total countable earned and unearned income of the benefit group after all allowable deductions cannot equal or exceed the standard of need for the size of the GA benefit group. After the countable net income is determined it is rounded down prior to the comparison of the household's income to the standard of need to determine the households monthly benefit amount.

G. Special clothing allowance for school-age dependent children: A special clothing allowance may be issued to assist in preparing a child for school, subject to the availability of state or federal funds and a specific allocation of the available funds for this allowance.

(1) For purposes of determining eligibility for the clothing allowance, a child is considered to be of school age as defined by PED.

(2) The clothing allowance shall be allowed for each school-age child who is included in the GA cash assistance benefit group, subject to the availability of state or federal funds.

(3) The clothing allowance is not counted in determining eligibility for GA cash assistance.

H. Supplemental issuance: A one-time supplemental issuance may be distributed to recipients of GA for disabled adults based on the sole discretion of the secretary of the health care authority and the availability of state funds.

(1) The one time supplemental issuance may be no more than the standard GA payment made during the month the GA payment was issued.

(2) To be eligible to receive the one time supplement, a GA application must be active and determined eligible no later than the last day of the month in the month the one time supplement is issued.

I. Minimum Benefit Amount: Benefits less than ten dollars (\$10.00) will not be issued for the initial month or subsequent months. ISD shall certify household beginning the month of application. [8.106.500.8 NMAC - Rp, 8.106.500.8 NMAC 3/1/2025; A/E 10/1/2025; A, 03/25/2026]

8.106.500.9 PROSPECTIVE BUDGETING:

A. Initial eligibility: Eligibility for cash assistance programs shall be determined prospectively. The benefit group must meet all eligibility criteria in the month following the month of application. Eligibility and amount of payment shall be determined prospectively for each month in the certification period.

B. Changes in benefit group composition: A person added to the benefit group shall have eligibility determined prospectively, beginning in the month following the month the report is made.

C. Anticipating income: In determining the benefit group's eligibility and benefit amount, the income already received and any income the benefit group expects to receive during the certification period shall be counted.

(1) Income anticipated during the certification period shall be counted only in the month it is expected to be received, unless the income is averaged.

(2) Actual income shall be calculated by using the income already received and any other income that can reasonably be anticipated in the calendar month.

(3) If the amount of income or date of receipt is uncertain, the portion of the income that is uncertain shall not be counted.

(4) In cases where the receipt of income is reasonably certain but the amount may fluctuate, the income shall be averaged.

(5) Averaging is used to determine a monthly calculation, when there is fluctuating income within the weekly, biweekly or monthly pay period and to achieve a uniform amount for projecting future income.

D. Counting income in the certification period:

(1) For the purposes of cash assistance eligibility and determination of benefit amount, income is money received by or available to the benefit group in each month of the certification period.

(2) Only income which is actually received, or can reasonably be expected to be received, is counted for financial eligibility and benefit calculation.

(3) The benefit group must take appropriate steps to apply for and receive income from any other source to which the group may potentially be entitled.

(4) A benefit group may be found ineligible for failing or refusing to apply for or pursue potential income or assets from other sources.

(5) A benefit group member who is 62 years of age or older must apply for and take all necessary steps to receive a reduced OASDI benefit from the SSA.

E. Income availability:

(1) The availability of income to the benefit group is determined by who must be included in the benefit group and whether income must be deemed available to the benefit group.

(2) The earned and unearned income of an individual who is not a mandatory benefit group member shall not be considered available to the benefit group.

(3) Income belongs to the person who gains it, either through the person's own efforts, as in the case of earnings, or as a benefit, as in the case of a beneficiary of SSA benefits.

(4) Unearned income, such as child support or social security survivor's benefits and other similar payments for a child, are considered as belonging to the benefit group in which the child is included.

(5) Alien sponsors: The gross income belonging to an individual who is the sponsor of an alien included in the cash assistance benefit group, and the income belonging to the sponsor's spouse, shall be counted in its entirety to determine the eligibility and benefit amount if the sponsor has executed an affidavit of support pursuant to Subsection 213-A of the Immigration and Nationality Act. The income of the alien sponsor and spouse shall be counted until the sponsored alien achieves citizenship or can be credited with 40 qualifying quarters under title II of the federal Social Security Act.

F. Unavailable income: In some situations, individuals who are included in the benefit group, either in applicant or recipient status, have a legal right to income but do not have access to it. Such income is not counted as available income for purposes of cash assistance eligibility and benefit calculation.

G. Ineligible alien: The countable income belonging to an ineligible alien who is a mandatory benefit group member is deemed available to the benefit group. The countable income shall be prorated according to the size of the benefit group to determine the eligibility and benefit amount for the benefit group.

H. Income received less frequently than monthly: The amount of gross income that is received less frequently than monthly is determined by dividing the total gross income by the number of months the income is intended to cover. This includes, but is not limited to, income from sharecropping, farming and self-employment. It also includes contract income as well as income of a tenured teacher who may not actually have a contract.

I. Contract income: A benefit group that derives its annual income in a period of less than one year shall have that income averaged over a twelve-month period, provided that the income is not earned on an hourly or piecework basis.

J. Using exact income: Exact income, rather than averaged income, shall be used if:

(1) the benefit group has chosen not to average income;

(2) income is from a source terminated in the month of application;

(3) employment began in the application month and the income represents a partial month; or

(4) income is received more frequently than weekly.

K. Income projection for earned income:

(1) Income from the four-week period prior to the date of initial interview is used to project monthly income, provided that the income is expected to continue. If a determination is made that the prior income is not indicative of income anticipated to be received during the certification period, then income from a longer period of past time may be used. If the longer period is not indicative of income anticipated to be received, then verification of anticipated income shall be obtained from the income source.

(2) The methods described above may not give the most accurate estimate of monthly earnings due to unique circumstances that may occur. In such cases, the caseworker shall use whichever method provides the most accurate estimate of earnings.

(3) An income projection shall be considered valid for the certification period unless changes

are made that affect eligibility or benefit amount.

L. Unearned income: For purposes of anticipating future income, unearned income from the four-week period prior to the date of interview shall be used, provided that the income is expected to continue.

M. Use of conversion factors: Whenever a full month's income is anticipated and is received on a weekly or biweekly basis, the income shall be converted to monthly amount as follows:

(1) income received on a weekly basis is averaged and multiplied by 4.0;

(2) income received on a biweekly basis is averaged and multiplied by 2.0;

(3) averaged income shall be rounded to the nearest whole dollar prior to application of the conversion factor; amounts resulting in \$0.50 or more are rounded up; amounts resulting in \$0.49 or lower are rounded down.

[8.106.500.9 NMAC - Rp, 8.106.500.9 NMAC 3/1/2025]

8.106.500.10 PAYMENTS TO ADULTS IN RESIDENTIAL CARE:

A. Conditions: Subject to the availability of state funding for the program, a payment may be made to an individual who resides in a shelter care home. The individual must be a recipient of supplemental security income (SSI) under title XVI of the Social Security Act.

B. Licensing of the shelter care home: The shelter care home must be licensed pursuant to regulations of the New Mexico department of health.

C. Payment: A cash payment may be made to an SSI recipient when the recipient resides in a licensed shelter care home because the recipient needs help with personal care, such as bathing, dressing, eating or taking prescribed medication.

(1) The payment shall be allowed only if the SSI recipient resides in a residential shelter care facility that is licensed by the New Mexico department of health.

(2) The payment made to an SSI recipient living in a licensed residential shelter care facility is \$100 per month.

[8.106.500.10 NMAC - Rp, 8.106.500.10 NMAC 3/1/2025]

8.106.500.11 [RESERVED]

HISTORY OF 8.106.500 NMAC: [RESERVED]

History of Repealed Material: 8.106.500 NMAC, Eligibility Policy - General Information filed 6/17/2004, Repealed effective 3/1/2025.

Other: 8.106.500 NMAC, Eligibility Policy - General Information filed 6/17/2004, Replaced by 8.106.500 NMAC, Eligibility Policy - General Information effective 3/1/2025.