

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION	TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE MANUAL	
ELIGIBILITY DECISION 209	COMAR 07.03.03.05	APPLICATION 200

## 209.1 Requirements

- A. Case manager must make a decision on case eligibility and payment:
1. As promptly as possible
    - Tell the customer at the interview if the customer is ineligible and then pend and deny the application on the system
      - Send the customer a denial notice
    - Deny the application on the system as soon as you know the customer is not eligible
  2. No later than 30 calendar days from the date the application was filed
    - Do not tell the customer their case will be completed by a specific day
- B. Give applicants at least 10 days to provide verifications and complete other requirements
- Help the applicant when needed to obtain required verifications
- C. Apply policy guidelines after all verifications are provided and make one of the following eligibility determinations:
1. Eligible
    - a. All technical factors of eligibility are met, and
    - b. The family's countable income is within the allowable standards

**Note:** Some individuals in the family who do not meet technical eligibility are excluded from the paid case, although their income may be counted (See Assistance Unit – Basic Requirements)
  2. Ineligible
    - a. At least one technical factor is not met for all individuals applying
    - b. A technical factor is not met which affects the family's eligibility, not just an individual
    - c. The family's countable income is above the standards
    - d. There is insufficient information to make a decision, including instances where the applicant does not provide required verification
    - e. The applicant voluntarily withdraws the application
      - i. Send a notice confirming the voluntary withdrawal

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- ii. Make a note in the case record/narration confirming that the notice was sent
  - f. The applicant cannot be located
  - g. The applicant died
- D. Send the applicant timely and adequate written notice of the decision no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> day from the date the application was filed, unless
- 1. There are unavoidable administrative delays, or the applicant meets the exceptions in E. 2 below, **and**
  - 2. The case manager sends a notice explaining the delay and the expected decision date
- E. Do not extend the decision date when the applicant:
- 1. Fails to provide verification, or
  - 2. Fails to complete application requirements, **except** when:
    - a. The individual is told about the requirements or verifications more than 20 days after the application filing date
    - b. The individual must complete certain requirements to lift a sanction and is not able to do so within 30 days through no fault of his or her own, or
    - c. The individual is making a good faith effort to get verification, but is having a problem obtaining required information

When the 30<sup>th</sup> day is on a week-end, a service reduction day or a holiday, the **TCA** case should be processed on the Friday before the week-end or the day before the service reduction day or holiday.

## 209.2 DELAYS

- A. Code a delay reason (customer delay) on the MISC screen when the customer is making a good faith effort to obtain verification and is not able to get the information within 30 days.
- B. If the delay is caused by the agency, code appropriate
- C. An application can not pend for more than 60 days in CARES. It will automatically deny on the 60<sup>th</sup> day with generic closing code 230
- D. TCA does not provide for additional pending days on the day after the 30<sup>th</sup> day, the application is overdue.

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**Examples** of administrative delays are unscheduled closings due to weather or natural disasters, staff shortages due to colds, flu epidemics, extended absences, or loss of staff.

### **209.3 OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- A. When a TCA case is denied because of technical reasons or overscale income:
  1. Determine eligibility for the Food Supplement Program (FSP) unless the family specifically did not want to apply for that program
  2. Determine eligibility for Medical Assistance for all assistance unit members
  3. If a family is not eligible in the Family and Children (FAC) category, review eligibility for children or pregnant woman in Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP)
- B. When a TCA case is denied because of insufficient information:
  1. Determine if there is sufficient information to establish eligibility for the FSP and Medical Assistance, including MCHP
  2. Make a separate eligibility decision for each program
- C. When a case is denied because the applicant voluntarily withdraws the TCA application:
  1. Ask the family if they want the FSP and Medical Assistance
  2. If one or both benefits are requested:
    - a. Determine if there is enough information
    - b. Tell the applicant immediately if more information is needed
    - c. Make a decision within 30 days of application
- D. When the TCA case is eligible, but an individual in the assistance unit is not:
  1. Process the FSP application including that individual unless he or she is also ineligible for that program
  2. Determine if the individual is eligible for Medical Assistance

### **209.4 NARRATION**

- Narration on CARES and documentation in the case record must support the case manager's decision

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## EXAMPLES

**Example 1.** Mary Marlon applied for TCA for herself and her daughter on May 22. She was interviewed by phone on the same day and mailed a list of what she needed to return by June 5. On June 4, Ms. Marlon sent in social security numbers, documentation of her job search, but did not return proof of compliance with child support (CS) requirements. The case manager contacted CS to obtain the verification. Ms. Marlon did not keep her appointment with CS. Deny the TCA case on June 21 for failure to comply with child support requirements.

- Process medical assistance for the daughter
- Process FS for both

**Example 2.** Alice Long-John applied for TCA for herself, her son, Tyrone, and her nephew, Alex on June 10. She provided all verifications and met the application requirements on July 3, except that she does not have Alex's Social Security number. Her brother, Alex's father, has promised to send it, but has not done so yet. Alex's father does not have a telephone and is unemployed. Alex has never been in an assistance unit. Ms. Long-John has not been able to apply for a replacement card because she does not have all the pertinent data.

- Approve the case no later than July 10 for Alice and Tyrone
- Deny TCA for Alex

<p><b>Note:</b> Ms. Long-John could choose to have the case action delayed beyond 30 days while she continues trying to get Alex's social security number.</p>
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- Tell Ms. Long-John to re-apply for Alex when she has his Social Security number
- Allow Alex to be certified as part of the FSP household – see Food Stamp Manual for details
- Process Medical Assistance (MCHP) for Alex

**Example 3.** Byron Bacon applies for himself and 2 children on August 26 because he and his wife have just separated. He is employed part time, earning \$200 per week and has no child care costs. His net income, using the initial needs test disregard of 20% is \$640. Mr. Bacon's income is over scale.

- Deny the TCA case on August 26, at the time the case is found to be ineligible
- Continue to process the FSP and Medical Assistance applications

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**Example 4.** Carolyn Carpenter applies for herself and 3 children on September 16. She meets the technical and financial factors for all family members on October 3.

- Approve the TCA case on October 3, when all eligibility factors are met

**Example 5.** Diana Divan applies for herself and her son on November 12. The case manager sent her a reminder on November 26 to return all verifications no later than December 5. The letter was returned to the local department on November 30 as not deliverable. The telephone number is also not in service. There is no further contact with Ms. Divan. The case manager made sure that the address in CARES was the address the customer provided.

- Deny the TCA case on December 12 because the family could not be located
- Deny FSP and Medical Assistance applications for the same reason

**Example 6.** Ellen Edwards applies for TCA for herself and her 2 daughters on March 14. Ms. Edwards was sanctioned in January for failure to appear in court for the child support hearing. She is now willing to cooperate and the hearing is scheduled for April 25. All other eligibility is met.

- Do not make the TCA case decision until April 25 because the case cannot be approved until Ms. Edwards appears for the hearing
- When Ms. Edwards complies on April 25, the family is eligible for a full month benefit for April
- No benefits are paid for March because Ms. Edwards could not fulfill the requirement to lift the sanction until April
- The children remained eligible for Medical Assistance while the TCA case was closed due to the sanction
- The FSP case remained open during the sanction period

<b>Note:</b> This case will appear on the overdue report as an agency delay
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#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- Application – Decision Notices
- Application – Payment Date
- Sanctions – Child Support
- Assistance Unit – Basic Requirements
- Income – Ineligible Member Calculation