

P-2922 EXPEDITED FUEL APPLICATION PROCESS

(continued)

P-2922B Worker Responsibilities Under Different Circumstances

(7/1/25, 25-16)

Responsibility of Crisis Fuel Worker and Community Action Agency

Review for income eligibility for Seasonal and Crisis Fuel, use ACCESS system to verify specific information, status of Seasonal Fuel benefit, PERS/D/HIST where appropriate.

Active Seasonal Fuel Client

- If benefit paid as heated renter, wood/pellet benefit, or paid out as a vendor payment, client has “received” seasonal fuel benefit. Follow through with review for crisis fuel eligibility.
- If seasonal fuel benefit paid is \$21, assist the client in completing an application (201SF), ensuring that it is signed. Complete the Expedited Seasonal Fuel Request Form and make a copy for the file. Then email over Expedited Seasonal Fuel Request Form and signed application form (201SF) to the ESD local District Office Management Team.
- If the fuel client has been approved to receive benefits and if no seasonal fuel benefit has been paid yet, the client needs to contact the Benefit Service Center for resolution. If eligibility staff can't resolve the problem, staff should refer the case to the Fuel and Utility Programs Team.

Pending Seasonal Fuel Application

- If no seasonal fuel benefit was paid, check on the status of the case in ACCESS, Read CATN's and determine if crisis fuel worker can assist the client in obtaining needed verification, so application can be processed. If you are able to obtain information, complete the Expedited Seasonal Fuel Request Form and email the form and verification to the ESD local District Office Management Team.
- If benefit paid as heated renter, wood/pellet benefit, or paid out as a vendor payment, complete review of crisis fuel eligibility.

Closed or Denied Seasonal Fuel Status

- Look at INQD to see if a benefit has been issued for the current season.

- If the benefit paid is \$21, complete Expedited Seasonal Fuel Request Form and copy for file. Complete Expedited Request form and the 201SF application and email them to the ESD local District Office Management Team for processing.
- If benefit paid as heated renter, wood/pellet benefit, or paid out as a vendor payment, complete review of crisis fuel eligibility.
- If no benefit has been issued, review ELIG D SF for the denial/closure reason.
- If the reason is Over Income, screen for changes; determine if client should reapply for seasonal fuel assistance.
 - If there is no change in income, proceed with review for crisis fuel eligibility.
 - If income has changed and now falls below 185% FPL, complete the Expedited Seasonal Fuel Request Form and the 201SF application and email them to the ESD local District Office Management Team for processing.
- If Closed/Denied for any reason other than Over Income, refer the client to contact ESD to resolve as appropriate based on the circumstances. This may include the client calling the Benefits Service Center to discuss further the closure or denial. Afterwards, the client may need to complete the 201SF application form as well as an Expedited Seasonal Fuel Request Form. Once completed and reviewed, email them to the ESD local District Office Management Team for processing.

No Seasonal Fuel Application for Current Season

- Complete the Expedited Seasonal Fuel Request Form and the 201SF application and email them to the ESD local District Office Management Team for processing.

District Office Management Team Email Addresses

Dist. Office	Email address
ADO	AHSDCFESDADOManagement@vermont.gov
BDO	AHSDCFESDBDOManagement@vermont.gov
HDO	AHSDCFESDHDOManagement@vermont.gov
JDO	AHSDCFESDJDOManagement@vermont.gov
LDO	AHSDCFESDLDOManagement@vermont.gov
MDO	AHSDCFESDMDOManagement@vermont.gov

NDO	AHSDCFESDNDOManagement@vermont.gov
RDO	AHSDCFESDRDOManagement@vermont.gov
SDO	AHSDCFESDSDOManagement@vermont.gov
TDO	AHSDCFESDTDOManagement@vermont.gov
VDO	AHSDCFESDVDOManagement@vermont.gov
YDO	AHSDCFESDYDOManagement@vermont.gov

Responsibility of Benefit Program Specialist and ESD

Upon receipt of the Expedited Seasonal Fuel Request Form and emailed application, ESD will prioritize processing the application to determine eligibility for seasonal fuel assistance. The application and accompanying form will be processed within one hour by the assigned worker. It is requested that the client wait at the local Community Action Agency for a response in case additional information is needed.

Process for District Office Staff when expedited seasonal fuel eligibility has been reviewed/determined:

- If further information is needed, a 202V Form is provided and emailed to the Community Action Agency to give to the client.
- If seasonal fuel assistance is denied, the ACCESS Notice of Decision should be emailed to the local Community Action Agency to provide it to client. If ACCESS notice doesn't print, provide the client with a verbal explanation of the denial. Contact clients via the phone number provided on their application or call the local crisis fuel worker who is assisting the client if no phone number is provided.
- If seasonal fuel assistance is approved, the ACCESS Notice of Decision should be emailed to the local Community Action Agency to provide it to the client.
- If the client needs further crisis fuel assistance with delivery (electric disconnect, special trip charge, etc.), the Community Action Agency will review eligibility.
- Immediately document the specifics in CASE ACTION NOTES (CATN). This allows the Community Action Agency to further assist the client if necessary and provides a record of reference/resolution regarding the emergency need.

Dispute/Discrepancy Resolution

Staff at the Community Action Agency will refer specific case issues to their immediate supervisor and/or Crisis Fuel Coordinator. If necessary, the Supervisor/Coordinator will communicate with the ESD District Office Supervisor and/or the senior worker at the Benefits Service Center for resolution.

ESD staff will refer specific case issues to the senior BPS or eligibility supervisor. If necessary, the ESD Supervisor or Senior Worker will communicate with the Community Action Agency Supervisor/Crisis Coordinator for resolution.

Should communications between respective offices fail to resolve the dispute, the Fuel and Utility Programs Team must be notified via email at ahs.dcfesdfuelmgmt@vermont.gov.

(See Crisis Fuel Assistance Rule 3112 for a client's appeal rights when the Community Action Agency denies crisis fuel benefits or otherwise issues an adverse decision.)

Expedited Seasonal Fuel Request by email ONLY if a Seasonal Fuel Application is Pending or Active

Applications for seasonal fuel assistance must be signed by the applicant, and ESD usually receives these applications through the mail. If the applicant is unknown to the Department, ESD must verify the applicant's identity.

Unlike the Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rules, Crisis Fuel Assistance Rule 3104(b) requires households to apply for crisis fuel assistance in person unless they meet certain exceptions. This allows the client to sign a seasonal fuel assistance application if one is not already on file with ESD. This rule also allows for verification of the client's identity if the client is not already known to ESD.

However, under certain circumstances, the in-person application requirement can be waived, and an applicant can apply for crisis fuel assistance by telephone, such as when the applicant is sick or elderly.

When a head of household applies for Crisis Fuel Assistance by phone, the crisis fuel worker may request ESD to expedite the processing of the household's seasonal fuel application. However, ESD cannot expedite processing of the seasonal fuel assistance application unless there is a signed application on file with ESD. (SF status in the ACCESS system must be Pending.)

No fuel benefits may be issued unless the applicant's identity has been verified or the applicant is known to ESD. Additionally, no seasonal fuel benefits may be issued unless ESD has a signed application.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2922 for the requirements for expediting seasonal fuel benefits.