

STATE OF VERMONT
AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES

DCF

Department for Children and Families

Signed by:
Miranda Gray
9D28B1253ECC4BA...
FROM: Miranda Gray, Deputy Commissioner
Economic Services Division

BULLETIN NO.: 25-06

DATE: 5/16/25

SUBJECT: Reach Up Program Procedure

CHANGES ADOPTED EFFECTIVE 6/1/25

INSTRUCTIONS

- ☒ **Maintain Manual - See instructions below.**
- ☐ **Proposed Regulation - Retain bulletin and attachments until you receive Manual Maintenance Bulletin: _____**
- ☐ **Information or Instructions - Retain Until _____**

MANUAL REFERENCE(S):

P-2200

P2300

P2201F- Application, clarification provided on what to do if case is denied as verification requested but then information is handed in within 60 days.

P2210A-Household Comp- clarification provided around age range for eligible student (18-22yr old) and being a mandatory household member.

P2214A- Deductions- clarification provided around how to handle housing shelter costs for camping, hotels and GA housing.

P2220A- Change Processing- clarification on how to handle child reported out of the home

P2225B- Recertification- clarification on closures date in relation to recertifications

P2350- Participation code updates with current codes

Manual Maintenance

Significant changes are indicated by highlighting text in gray.

Reach Up Program Procedure

Remove

P-2201F	(23-12)
P2210A	(20-08)
P2214A	(22-06)
P2220A	(20-02)
P2225B	(23-12)
P2350	(23-12)

Insert

P-2201F	(25-06)
P2210A	(25-06)
P2214A	(25-06)
P2220A	(25-06)
P2225B	(25-06)
P2350	(25-06)

P-2201 APPLICATION (continued)

P-2201F Verification (Reach Up rule 2208.3) (6/1/25, 25-06)

Required verifications must be provided before approving the application. Because the Child and Medical Support Authorization, form 137, is assigning child support rights, and because the Initial Family Development Plan, form 614FDP, is where a participant signs when enrolling in the program, these forms cannot be signed and dated before the actual date of the application.

Initial Family Development Plan

The initial Family Development Plan (form 614FDP) is an eligibility requirement and must be signed and received before Reach Up can be approved. A verbal signature is allowable on the 614FDP if needed.

The 614FDP is only required if the parent(s) are included in the Reach Up application and are not receiving SSI. Caretaker households do not need to complete a 614FDP unless they are considered a “needy” caretaker included in the Reach Up household. Two parents can sign the same 614FDP and it can still be considered valid.

Response to Request for Verification

No Contact by Household

If the household does not submit the necessary information and does not indicate that there are any problems in obtaining the information, the application will be denied based on the due date of the ESD 202V.

Allow 2 additional business days past the due date for the scanning and dispatching process through ADPC.

Contact by Household

If the household indicates that they are having difficulty in obtaining any or all the information:

- assist the household in obtaining the verification.
- determine if the household has good cause for not providing the information.

Determining good cause

There may be extraordinary circumstances when verification is unlikely to be available and obtaining it is beyond the control of the household. These reasons are outlined in Reach Up rule 2208.3. In such cases the District Management Team may waive the requirement of verification. If attempts to obtain verification have been made by both the household and the Department and the verification is unable to be collected, the Department can accept the household's self-reported information.

The District Management Team may seek guidance from AOPS to determine good cause.

Verification Received within 60-Days from Application Date

Reopen the application when required verification is received after denial but within 60-days from the original application date. Issue benefits from the date the missing requirements were provided, if eligible. Households are not required to complete a new ESD 202. Utilize Proration Table to determine additional amount of Reach Up owed to household and ask COPS to issue.

Proration Table

Date	%	Date	%	Date	%	Date	%	Date	%
1	100	7	80	13	60	19	40	25	20
2	97	8	77	14	57	20	37	26	17
3	93	9	73	15	53	21	35	27	13
4	90	10	70	16	50	22	30	28	10
5	87	11	67	17	47	23	27	29	7
6	83	12	63	18	43	24	23	30/31	3

Because the intention of this rule is to utilize the original application, if a 137 and/or 614FDP was provided that would have been utilized with the original application, these two forms can continue to be considered valid. A new 137 and/or 614FDP does not need to be requested

This process is more similar to 3SVT. Good cause does not need to be determined to utilize this process.

- **Household applies.**
- **202C is sent.**
- **Interview completed, and verification is required.**
- **202V sent.**
- **Required verifications *not* provided by the 202V due date.**

Reapply the case for the date the verification is received and work with COPS to issue part of the benefit unless approved the date the verification is received.

Use the original application and any verification that was received with it prior to when the late verification was received.

- **Application is denied non-cooperation.**

Household provides all required verifications by the 60th day from the application date.

Example:

Household submits application 7/25/23.

Completes interview on 7/28.

V is due 8/7/23, some verification is received including the 614FDP, but not all.

Application is denied 8/10/23 for not providing all verification.

Rest of verification, including the 137, comes in 8/28/23, less than 60 days from the original application date.

Verification is worked on 8/31/23. The original 614FDP can be utilized. ReAPPL case for 8/28/23 and approve Reach Up. ACCESS will issue benefits as of 8/31/23. Household will be eligible for \$856 per month. ACCESS issues \$25 based on 8/31 date of approval.

Because verification was received on the 28th, household should receive 10% of the benefit (according to Proration Table). 10% of \$856 is \$85 (drop the cents).

\$85 minus \$25 issued = \$60. Ask COPS to issue \$60 for month of August.

P-2210 HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

P-2210A Determining the Reach Up Household (Reach Up rule 2235) (6/1/25, 25-06)

In order to determine the Reach Up Household, follow these steps:

- Identify the dependent eligible child or children.
- Identify the siblings related to the dependent child by blood, marriage (step-siblings), or adoption in the household, who meet age requirements.
- Identify parent(s) of the dependent child or children in the household, and any parent(s) of the related siblings to the dependent child(ren).

These are the required members of the Reach Up Household.

Example: Single Parent, One Child With Income

A mother has three children; ages 18, 15, and 10; by two different fathers, both absent. Her oldest child receives monthly Social Security benefits (SSDI) based on the noncustodial parent's disability. The mother wants to apply for Reach Up for the two other children.

- The two younger children are eligible children, because they are under 18.
- The oldest child, who is 18 and is scheduled to graduate before his 22nd birthday, is a sibling to these two by blood through the mother.
- The mother is the parent in the household, and is related to all the children

The mother and her three children must be included in the Reach Up Household, and the income and resources of all members, including the Social Security (SSDI) received by the eldest child, must be considered as available to the family.

Example: Unmarried Parents; Child-in-Common; Half Siblings

The household consists of two unmarried parents, Mother and Father. The mother has two minor children, Jane and John by a previous marriage. The father, who is working part-time, has a child of his own, Peter, by a previous marriage. The parents, in addition to the children listed above, have a child in common, Mary.

The mother is applying for Reach Up for her two children from her previous marriage.

- Jane and John are eligible children because they are under 18.
- Mary is related by blood to Jane and John. Mary is an eligible dependent child. Therefore, Mary must be included in the Reach Up Household.

- Peter is related to Mary by blood therefore, he must be included in the Household as a sibling of an eligible dependent child.
- Mother is eligible as the parent of Jane, John, and Mary the eligible dependent children.
- Father is eligible as the parent of Mary and Peter.

The Reach Up household is Mother, Father, John, Jane, Mary, and Peter.

Special Circumstances

Termination of Parental Rights

Termination of parental rights does not sever the legal relationship between siblings. The children remain siblings unless they are adopted by different parents.

Example: Caretaker household with half siblings, one with terminated parental rights

Bill has been living with his grandmother, Lena. Lena is receiving a child only Reach Up grant for Bill. Both of Bill's parents have had their parental rights terminated. Jen and Bill have the same birth mother and different fathers. Jen's parents have not had their parental rights terminated. Jen has moved in with Bill and Lena.

Bill and Jen can be on the same Child Only Reach Up grant because they remain siblings.

Children receiving SSI

Siblings of a child receiving SSI do not get pulled into the same household because the SSI child is not in the assistance group (unless their shared parent is in household).

Example: Eric receives SSI and lives with his father, Jim. Jim takes on care of Eric's two half siblings Cecilia and Zoey (shared mother, different fathers than Eric).

Jim is able to receive a Child Only Reach Up grant for Cecilia and Zoey because Eric is not on the grant.

Child in household is between 18-22 year old and full-time student

When there is a child in the household that is between 18-22 years old and is a full-time student, they are considered a mandatory household member and should be included in the Reach Up benefit determination as a member. They would be considered an eligible dependent. This applies to Reach Up and PSE programs ONLY.

The child between 18-22 years old can remain as an eligible dependent for Reach Up and PSE as long as they are attending school full time and will either graduate by the time they turn 22 or have a disability that impacts their ability to graduate by the time they turn 22. If the child is attending an alternative school program as long as they are considered a full-

time student by their program, they are eligible to continue receiving Reach Up benefits. See Procedure [P2201I 18 year old in school letter](#) for more information.

Vermont Parentage Act (VPA)

Vermont Parentage Act (VPA) defines the categories of individuals recognized as parents under Vermont law. Once a Voluntary Acknowledgement of Parentage (VAP) is signed the individual is considered a parent under the Vermont Parentage Act and should be included as a mandatory member in the Reach Up Household. The VPA recognizes the following individuals as parents:

- A person who gave birth to the child
- A person who is the alleged genetic parent of the child
- A person who is an intended parent of the child.
- An intended parent is a person who has manifested an intent to be legally bound as a parent of child resulting from assisted reproduction or surrogacy.
- A person who has adopted the child
- A person who was married to the person who gave birth to the child when the child was born
- A person who was married to the person who gave birth to child and the child was born not later than 300 days after the termination of the marriage
- A person who was married to the person who gave birth to the child after the child's birth and is named as a parent on the birth certificate
- A person who lived in the same household with the child for the first two years of the child's life and, together with the child's other parent, openly acknowledged the child as their child
- A person who has been adjudicated to be a parent of the child (a court has issued an order adjudicating the person as a parent)

NOTE: Sperm, egg, and embryo donors and gestational carriers (surrogates) are not recognized as parents under the VPA and should not be listed as noncustodial parents on the 137.

BPS Support

Entering a PARE panel

See ACCESS Eligibility Training Video: [Entering a PARE Panel](#).

PARE panel

01/14/16 16:04 OTHER PARENT-CHILD QUESTION 06 (PARE . 01)

(ASPADF)

NAME OF PARENT OF CHILD IN HOME (NOT HEAD/SPOUSE)	** FIRST	** I ****	NAME OF CHILD LAST *****	MOD	LAST UPDATE
JEFFREY M STEIN	BRYAN		W EDWARDS		

USER: 084 FNX: STAT MODE: C RPTGRP: XXX XX XXXX PERIOD: 01 16 COMMAND: _____
DO: M IMS: GM1 REPORTING ADULT: VERONICA E EDWARDS 3

P-2214 DEDUCTIONS

P-2214A Shelter Expenses (6/1/25, 25-06)

Shelter expenses may be self-reported, unless questionable. Enter clear case notes (CATN) regarding shelter.

During An Interview

When reviewing shelter information during an interview ask for the following:

- landlord's name and mailing address
- mortgage company's name and mailing address
- property tax payment information (due dates and address of town clerk)
- lot rent payment information (name and mailing address of lot owner)
- home insurance company name and mailing address

Difficulty in Money Management

Explore if the household is current on their shelter expense, and if the answer is no, find out details about the situation. **Difficulty in money management** can be explored if the household is more than two months behind on payments. Vendor payments can be offered for any household. More information can be found in the Reach Up Protective Payments **Procedure** on [Difficulty with Money Management P-2231B](#).

Property Tax

Use gross property tax if the household owns their home.

Use net property tax if a household does not own their home but is responsible for paying the net property taxes as part of their rental agreement.

Town Code

Use correct Town Code on the address panel (ADDR) in ACCESS. The code will determine which maximum monthly housing allowance (\$400 outside Chittenden County, \$450 within Chittenden County) is used in the Reach Up budget.

Special Housing Allowance

When determining the Reach Up benefit, a special housing allowance of up to \$90 is added to the Basic Need Standard for households who pay more in shelter costs than the regular housing allowance (\$400 outside Chittenden County, \$450 within Chittenden County).

Example 1:

- Sara's rent is \$750 a month.
- She lives in Burlington, so the maximum shelter allowance is \$450.
- Her rent is \$300 more than the maximum allowance.
- She is eligible for a \$90 special housing allowance.

Example 2:

- Brian's rent is \$460 per month.
- He lives in Rutland, so the maximum shelter allowance is \$400.
- His rent is \$60 more than the maximum allowance.
- He is eligible for a \$60 special housing allowance.

Example 3:

- Sara's rent is \$375 per month.
- She lives in Brattleboro, so the maximum shelter allowance is \$400.
- She is not eligible for a special housing allowance.

Subsidized Housing

Subsidized housing can include:

- Housing Choice Voucher (still referred to as Section 8) housing
- Project Based housing
- Public housing

Other types of housing assistance can be considered subsidized if the assistance offers a utility allowance. For example, New Horizons offers a utility allowance, Vermont Rental Subsidy and the HOME Voucher program do not.

Subsidies may be attached to the person, a unit, a landlord, or a property/structure.

ACCESS allows for the maximum shelter amount if subsidized housing is indicated.

Fuel and Utility Allowance

Reach Up budgets will include \$70 of “unearned income” if the household has a fuel or fuel/utility allowance (subsidy) used in the calculation of their rent by the housing authority or operating program.

Reach Up budgets will include \$30 of “unearned income” if the household has a utility allowance (subsidy) used in the calculation of their rent by the housing authority or operating program.

Allow for the actual amount of allowance or subsidy received if the household indicates theirs is less than the standard amount.

If the Fuel/Utility amount is not indicated on the application or is “Unknown”, find out the actual amount of allowance paid by calling the landlord or the housing authority/operating program.

Verification of Public Assistance

When a Reach Up household applies for subsidized housing, the housing authority sends a "Verification of Public Assistance" form to Economic Services Division (ESD) Central Office to be completed and returned. A budget is completed using the rental maximum, and the resulting grant amount is reported.

Example: A RUFA budget for the Davis family, who have no income other than their RUFA benefit is as follows:

Basic Needs (3)	\$1236.00
Shelter Standard	+ 400.00
(outside Chittenden County)	
TOTAL	1636.00
(Ratable Reduction)	x .496
	\$811.45
Benefit	\$811

The \$811 benefit amount is reported to the local housing authority on the Verification form.

Questionable Subsidized Housing

A Shelter Expense Statement ([form 202H](#)) or statement including the same information can be completed and signed by either the organization that provides the subsidy or the landlord of the participant's housing.

GA/EA Clients and Residents of Shelter/Transitional Housing

Reach Up households receiving General/Emergency Assistance and/or living in a shelter or a transitional housing program may receive the maximum monthly housing allowance (\$400 or \$450 depending on the county where the household is being housed by GA/EA) as long as they are housed by GA/EA for one night of the month.

Example: A family from the Burlington District is found eligible for GA housing at a hotel in Barre. The household's shelter cost should be entered as \$400/month on the RENT panel because the hotel is located outside of Chittenden County.

These types of housing situations are viewed similar to subsidized housing. Counting the full housing allowance gives the family more opportunity to save and move into permanent housing.

Ending full housing allowance

If a household is granted GA/EA Assistance towards the end of the month and their eligibility continues into the following month, enter a future TODO as a reminder to remove the full housing allowance for ongoing months if the GA/EA does not continue.

Example: A household is granted GA/EA Assistance on Thursday 1/27/22 through Sunday 2/27/22. They are eligible for the full housing allowance in January and February. Enter a future TODO for anytime after 1st adverse action in February so the shelter cost can be removed for March in case the household does not return for ongoing housing.

Special Housing Allowance while receiving GA/EA Housing

If the household is paying or required to save more than \$400 or \$450 (depending on county) they may qualify for the special housing allowance as well. This situation is rare.

Hotel stays paid by other organizations

Households being put up in a hotel that is paid by another service organization (such as USCRI) also qualify for the maximum monthly housing allowance, similar to GA/EA and shelters.

Vermont Rental Subsidy

Reach Up households receiving Vermont Rental Subsidy will also receive the full housing allowance (\$400 or \$450 depending on county).

Camping while experiencing homelessness

Reach Up households that are camping while experiencing homelessness and have incurred monthly shelter expenses may claim those expenses, even if it is only temporary. If the camp involves a shared space/facilities, for example bathroom or kitchen space, consider the shelter expense room rent rather than rent.

Shared Housing

Households that share a home and shelter expenses with people other than those in their household, can each claim their share of the shelter costs if the sum of the shares is not more than the total shelter expenses. This is true if the households are all receiving separate Reach Up benefits, or if only one of the households is receiving Reach Up benefits.

Example: Sarah receives Reach Up. She and her kids share an apartment with her friend Brad. Brad is not the parent of any of the kids, and Brad and Sarah are not married, so he is not a mandatory Reach Up household member. The apartment is in Barre and rent is \$950 with utilities included. Sarah and Brad both pay \$475 each directly to the landlord. Sarah can

claim the \$475 she pays for rent, with \$400 allowed for the maximum shelter allowance, and \$75 as the special housing allowance.

The same would be true if Brad had children and receives his own Reach Up benefit.

If the other people receive benefits through ESD programs and one household pays the other household for shelter expenses, consider notification in one household and ask for verification or adjust benefits as needed in the other household.

Room Rent vs. Room and Board Expense vs. Board Expense

When a household claims a room and board expense, clarify if meals (board) are included or not. The inclusion of meals in room and board can impact the amount of Reach Up benefit the household is eligible to receive.

Room Rent paid (does not include meals)

A household that pays for a room in someone else's home can claim the amount they pay as a shelter expense. The household also qualifies for the basic needs standard when determining the Reach Up benefit amount.

Room and Board paid (includes meals)

If the room also includes board, meaning meals are included in the expense paid (this situation is rare), then the household will not be able to claim a shelter expense, and instead will only qualify for the room and board and other basic needs allowances found in Reach Up [rule 2246.3](#) Room and Board Standards.

These standards are currently less than the Reach Up Basic Need Standards (Reach Up [rule 2244.1](#); Reach Up Procedure [2230A](#)).

Board paid (includes meals, but not room rent)

If the household only pays for board (meals), and does not pay a room rent (this situation is even more rare), then the household will not be able to claim a shelter expense, but will qualify for the Reach Up Basic Need Standards (Reach Up [rule 2244.1](#)).

BPS Support

Watch the ACCESS Eligibility Training Videos ([HOME](#)) [Entering and Updating a Home Panel](#), ([RENT](#)) [Entering a Rent Panel](#) and ([RBEX](#)) [Entering a Room and Board Expense Panel](#).

Entering Property Taxes on HOME panel

For households applying for 3SVT, enter the net property tax on a HOME panel coded T (T-

Taxes)

Add a second HOME panel that shows the difference between the net property taxes and the gross property taxes. This panel must be coded as R (R-RUFA REPAIRS ALLOWED FOR).

```
10/29/18 11:57 HOMEOWNER EXPENSE QUESTION 32 ( HOME . 01 )
(LAST UPDATED: / / : ; ASPAGG )

NAME OF PERSON EXPENSE EXPENSE AMT EXPENSE
PAYING MORTGAGE, TAXES OR INSURANCE TYPE $$$$ $
MONTHLY EXPENSE AMT
$$$$ $

HOMEOWNER EXPENSE TYPE: EXPENSE-FREQ:
M - MORTGAGE M - MONTHLY
T - TAXES Q - QUARTERLY
R - RUFA REPAIRS ALLOWED FOR S - SEMI-ANNUAL
L - TRAILER LOT RENTAL A - ANNUAL

USER: 034 FNX: STAG MODE: C RPTGRP
DO: T IMS: ST2 REPORTING ADULT: 3
```

Example: Net property taxes are \$2000 annually. Gross property taxes are \$3000 annually. Add HOME panel for \$2000 annually as countable property taxes. Add a second HOME panel for \$1000 annually, for R-RUFA REPAIRS ALLOWED FOR. This way, 3SVT budget will show \$2000 annually for property taxes and the RUFA budget will show \$3000 annually for property taxes.

Add a WARN to the case. Example: RUFA counts gross prop taxes. Workaround HOME panel has been added.

Entering HOME Expenses for Non-Home Owners

If household does not own the home but is responsible for taxes and lot rent in lieu of or in addition to a monthly rent amount, include the total monthly amount on a RENT panel, rather than using HOME panels. Write a clear CATN indicating how RENT amount was determined.

Entering Subsidized Housing Fuel and Utility Allowance

If an "S" or a "P" is entered in TYPE and the RENT panel indicates heat and utilities are not included or utilities only are included (household may or may not pay for utilities, but definitely pays their own heat) ACCESS enters \$70 automatically in budget.

If an "S" or a "P" is entered in TYPE and the RENT panel indicates heat only is included (household does not pay for heat but pays for their own utilities) ACCESS enters \$30 automatically in budget.

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10/29/18 14:37 RENTAL EXPENSE          QUESTION 31 ( RENT . 01 )
                                         (LAST UPDATED: 04/12/18 15:33 ; ASPAGF )

NAME OF PERSON WHO PAYS THE RENT      INCL IN RENT      RENT AMT      MONTHLY
T                                     FUEL  UTIL      $$$$$$  ++      $$$$$$  ++
                                     Y    N          150 00      150 00

*** SUBSIDIZED/PUBLIC HOUSING ***
Y/N TYPE BDRMS  RUFA SUBSIDY          FS / SF      FS / SF      FS / SF
Y  P          STD  ACT    HH  USED  INKIND      RENT AMT      MONTHLY
                                     30          M          150 00      150 00
***** R V P   D A T A *****

RVP CODE: C          RENT AMT: $ 00150 00          ARREARAGE
*****
LANDLORD NAME: BRISTOL FAMILY HOUSING
LANDLORD C/O:
LANDLORD STREET: 142 MERCHANTS ROW
CITY, STATE, ZIP: RUTLAND VT 05701
TOTAL ARREARS: 00000 00
AMT TO BE PAID: 00000 00
BALANCE LEFT:

USER: 934 FNX: STAT MODE: D RPTGRP:
DO: Y IMS: GY1 REPORTING ADULT:

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GA/EA Clients and Residents of Transitional Housing

Enter a RENT panel for the Head of Household.

In the “INCL IN RENT” section of the RENT panel, enter “N” under “FUEL” and “Y” under “UTIL”. This will prevent the client from getting the heated renter SF benefit. They will get the \$21 Fuel benefit, and if/when they move into an apartment they can get the difference in SF benefits.

In the “RENT AMT” section of the RENT panel, enter the maximum shelter amount (\$400 or \$450 depending on county).

If the household is not paying anything towards their rent (i.e., all housing costs are covered by EA), enter \$0.01 in the “COMPLETE BELOW IF DIFFERENT” section, so that the rent is correctly accounted for in 3SVT and Fuel budgets.

In the “SUBSIDIZED/PUBLIC HOUSING” section enter “N”.

Do not enter a UTIL panel for these households.

Vermont Rental Subsidy

Follow the [VRS in ACCESS Desk Aid](#) on SharePoint.

The HOME Voucher Program follows the VRS process.

Questionable Room Rent

- If lease agreement is between the room renter and the person receiving the rent, the person that is receiving the room rent can complete the shelter form or statement.
- If the lease agreement is between the room renter and landlord, but the room renter pays their portion of rent to a roommate who then pays the landlord, the landlord should be

completing the form.

Questionable Shelter at Recertification

For a review application, if shelter is questionable remove the shelter from the budget and send out a request for information (RL2) to the participant stating: "If the shelter verification is not returned, a shelter allowance will not be included and your benefits will not be increased [to the higher amount it was prior to the removal of shelter]."

P-2220 CHANGE PROCESSING (continued)

P-2220A Action on Unscheduled Changes (Reach Up rule 2221) **(6/1/25, 25-06)**

Unscheduled changes are those that are reported outside of the Interim Report or Recertification.

Allow the household ten days from the date the change is reported to provide required verifications.

The date a change is reported is the date:

- the household reports the change by telephone,
- the household reports the change in-person,
- information is received from another source regarding a household change, or
- a written notice is received in the office, including a change report form ([200](#)).

Inform the participant in writing that their grant will be closed if they do not provide necessary verification without good cause within those ten days.

CATN the date the change is reported and the actions taken.

Act on changes within ten days of the date the verification was received.

ACCESS generates a Notice of Decision, to inform the household of the effect of the change on their benefits.

If a notice is not computer generated, the manual notice must contain the old and new amounts of income, expenses, or household members used to compute the benefit amount.

Adding a New Household Member

A new ESD 202 is required and an interview must be completed when adding an additional parent, spouse or civil union partner of a parent, or a Reach Up essential person to the household, except if the additional parent receives SSI and their needs will not be included on the grant.

Death of Head of Household

If the Head of Household of a Reach Up household dies, and there is another parent or caretaker in the household, benefits may be switched to the other parent or caretaker without a new application if the benefit would not change other than possibly decreasing due to the death of the HOH.

- Use the same recertification period as the original household.
- Ask that current documents be mirrored into the new Head of Household SSN in OnBase.
- After the case is transferred, send a VCR asking for a new child support authorization form (137) for any absent parents.

This is the process if the deceased Head of Household was a member of the Reach Up household or not (parent receiving SSI or caretaker).

Child is reported to be out of home

If an eligible dependent, a child that is a mandatory Reach Up Household member, is reported to be out of the home the following steps would be followed to determine if they would remain as an eligible dependent.

Reported by other person who is not applying for Reach Up for the child:

Attempt to contact household by phone and confirm if child is in the home 50% of the time or not. If unable to reach, send VCR to household asking for clarification if child remains in household 50% of the time or more. Add clarifying question—if child is out of home, is there a plan to reunite within 180 days/6 months?

- If **YES**—accept households' statement—enter clear CATN and check in at next review. If ESD finds questionable, PR&R and/or collateral statements can be collected.
- If **NO**—determine if eligible for temp absence see [P2270 Temporary Absence](#)
- If no response—remove the child, or close the benefit if they are the only child in the household

Reported by other person who is claiming child lives with them and they are applying for Reach Up for the child (there is an application on file):

Explain that the child is already actively receiving Reach Up in another household, but do not provide any other details of the other household's information.

Ask for verification of custody—PR&R or temporary guardianship paperwork, etc from household. Explain that if custody paperwork is not available collateral statements can be provided (or records from childcare, school, medical providers).

- If verification IS NOT provided then do not remove child and allow the case to remain the same. If ESD finds it questionable then you can request collateral statements from the household that is active Reach Up.
- If PR&R agreement verification **IS** provided showing that the other household has more than 50% custody then the other parent is the eligible parent. There is no requirement to obtain further verification. Remove the child from the current Reach Up grant and allow other household to receive Reach Up if they are otherwise eligible.

- If verification is provided that **IS NOT** the PR&R agreement (collateral statements, records from childcare, school, medical providers) send a VCR to the Reach Up household letting them know information has been received that confirms the child is out of the household and ask if they have custody documentation to dispute this. Add clarifying questions- if child is out of the household, ask if there is a plan in place to reunite the child in the household within 180 days and if there is a plan to reunify, ask why the child is not staying household at this time.
 - If the active Reach Up household provides a copy of the custody paperwork, then compare to the verification provided by the other household. If unsure, then send to AOPS for review. If child is absent from the active Reach Up household, consider if temporary absence is appropriate.
 - If the active Reach Up household does not provide custody documentation to show the household has more than 50% custody, then remove the child and allow the other household to receive Reach Up if otherwise eligible.

Reported by household themselves that child is no longer living with them.

If speaking to household on phone or in person, explore with household why they are not in the household. Consider if a temporary absence should be approved [P2270 Temporary Absence](#).

If change is reported when not interacting with participant directly then attempt to reach out to household to determine if temporary absence could be approved.

If unable to reach then coordinate with the Reach Up Case Manager/Career Coach to see if they have information to provide and if not send a VCR asking if there is a plan in place to reunite with their child within 180 days. Additionally, if there is a plan to reunify ask why the child is not staying in the home at this time.

Change of Address

Households reporting a change of address must also report the shelter expenses for the new address. Verification of shelter expenses is not required unless questionable.

Act within ten days to change the address and determine the new benefit amount based on the shelter expenses for the new address, when all information is provided.

Shelter Expense Information Needed

If shelter expense information is not provided with the address change:

- Call the household to get the needed information about the new shelter expenses.

- If the household cannot be reached or the information provided is questionable, send the household a verification change request form ([202VCR](#)), to request the shelter expense information. Allow the household ten days to respond.
- Keep the existing shelter expenses while waiting for the household to respond to the VCR.

Budget the shelter expenses for the new address within ten days from the date the information is provided.

Household Fails to Provide Shelter Expense Information

Change the shelter expense to \$0 if the household fails to provide the requested information by the VCR due date.

Minimum wage increase

Participants are responsible to report a change in their income. If we become aware a participant has received an increase in pay, we would request updated paystubs. If necessary, process an overpayment.

When Changes in Benefits are Disbursed

Increases in benefits

Increases are effective as soon as the action is taken in ACCESS, except for certain situations listed under “Other effective dates” below. A notice will be mailed.

Other effective dates

- For adding a new household member, including through childbirth or adoption, the arrival date or birthdate, if the change is reported within 10 days.
- For increased shelter costs, the first of the month in which the change occurred.
- For decreased income, the first of the month.

In most cases, if action cannot be taken on the change within the same month, approve the benefit change for the first full month after the change. If the addition of a household member will cause an increase in the benefit, an underpayment may need to be issued (see BPS support below).

Decreases in benefits

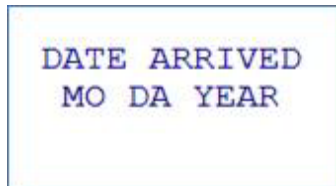
Decreases are effective on the 1st or the 16th of the payment month. Action must be taken and a notice mailed at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the change.

BPS Support

Adding a new household member to a Reach Up household

Change reported timely

If the change is reported timely (within 10 days), the household member should be added to the household's benefit as of the date of arrival--enter this date as DATE ARRIVED on MEMB panel.



DATE ARRIVED
MO DA YEAR

Change not reported timely

If not reported timely (more than 10 days), the household member will be added to the household's benefit as of the date reported—enter the date reported as the DATE ARRIVED on MEMB panel.

Change to benefit in current month

If the entered date of arrival is within the current month, ACCESS will prorate the benefit for the correct number of days.

Change to benefit in previous month

If the entered date of arrival is in the previous month, districts will have to determine what the benefit amount should have been in the previous month and submit form to the Claims Unit for an underpayment.

P-2225 RECERTIFICATION (continued)

P-2225B Response to Request for Verification (Reach Up rule 2208.3, 2210) (6/1/25, 25-06)

Outright Refusal

If the household says they will not provide necessary information, tell them that their Reach Up benefit will close (or remove the shelter expense if shelter is questionable and that is the missing verification) unless the required verification is provided. Document the refusal in CATN and close the grant. ACCESS will issue a Notice of Decision.

No Contact by Household

If the ESD 202RL2 is not returned with the other requested information by the due date the benefit should be closed. The RL2 due date may be beyond the end of the certification period, but the closure date should remain the end of the recertification period.

Document the lack of response in CATN. A Notice of Decision will be created by ACCESS.

Contact by Household

If the household says they are having difficulty in obtaining any or all the information, you should

- assist the household to get the verification.
- determine if the household has a good reason for not providing the information.

Determining good cause

There may be extraordinary circumstances when verification is unlikely to be available and obtaining it is beyond the control of the household. These reasons are outlined in Reach Up rule 2208.3. In such cases the District Management Team may waive the requirement of verification. If attempts to obtain verification have been made by both the household and the Department and the verification is unable to be collected, the Department can accept the household's self-reported information.

The District Management Team may seek guidance from AOPS to determine good cause.

Verification received after certification period expires

If a household provides requested verification within 30 days of the end of the certification period, and the benefit has closed, utilize the original recertification application to determine eligibility.

If eligible, benefits will be issued from the date the missing verification requirements were received.

Proration Table

Date	%	Date	%	Date	%	Date	%	Date	%
1	100	7	80	13	60	19	40	25	20
2	97	8	77	14	57	20	37	26	17
3	93	9	73	15	53	21	35	27	13
4	90	10	70	16	50	22	30	28	10
5	87	11	67	17	47	23	27	29	7
6	83	12	63	18	43	24	23	30/31	3

This process aligns more with 3SVT and does not require determination of good cause.

BPS Support

Recertification – Scenario #1	Reopen the Application?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household applies. Interview completed, and verification is required. 202RL2 sent with 10 day due date. Required verifications <i>not</i> provided. Recertification is closed non-cooperation after the RL2 due date or adverse action has passed—whichever is earlier. <p>Household then provides all required verifications before the end of their certification period.</p>	<p>Reapply the case for the date of the recertification application.</p> <p>*If the case is reAPPLed within the original month the recertification was due, but not processed until after the 1st of the following month, ACCESS should issue a full month of benefit and would not see this as a break in benefits.</p>

Example #1:

Household is due for January recertification.

Submits recertification 1/15/25

Completes interview 1/17/25

RL2 is due 1/27/25

At adverse action, benefit set to close 1/31/25 for not providing verification.

Verification received 1/28/25. Case is reAPPLed back to 1/15/25 when original recertification application was received. Case is worked 1/29/25 and benefits are reopened. Full month of February benefits will be issued.

Recertification – Scenario #2

Reopen the Application?

- Household applies.
- 202C and NOMI sent with due date of end of certification period.
- Household does *not* complete an interview.
- Case closed for failure to review on adverse action.

Household then completes the interview before end of certification period. Case is reAPPLed for original 202 date. RL2 is sent with 10 day due date.

Household provides any needed verification before the end of their certification period. [Click this sentence to go to the Reach Up Recertification Procedure 2225.](#)

Reapply the case for the date of the recertification application.

*Same note as above—
ACCESS should issue full month of benefit and not see a break in benefits.

Example #2:

Household is due for January recertification.

Submits recertification 1/15/25

Interview is not completed by adverse, and case is set to close for 1/31/25.

Interview is then completed 1/25/25 and case is reAPPLed 1/15/25. RL2 is due 2/4/25.

Verification is received 1/30/25. Case is worked 2/4/25 and benefits are reopened. Full month of February benefits will be issued.

Recertification – Scenario #3

Reopen the Application?

- Household applies.
- Interview completed, and verification is required.
- 202RL2 sent.
- Required verifications *not* provided.
- Recertification is closed non-cooperation after the RL2 due date has passed.

APPLed for the date the verification was received, approve benefits when verification is received and work with COPS to issue part of the benefit unless approved the date the verification is received.

Household provides all required verifications within 30 days from the end of the certification period. (i.e. January is review month and household completes the recertification process in February)	
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<p>Example #3:</p> <p>Household is due for January recertification.</p> <p>Submits recertification 1/15/25</p> <p>Completes interview 1/17/25</p> <p>RL2 is due 1/27/25</p> <p>At adverse action, benefit set to close 1/31/25 for not providing verification.</p> <p>Verification is then received 2/3/25. Case is worked 2/4/25 and APPLed 2/3/25. ACCESS will issue benefits as of the 4th. (90% of \$781 = \$702).</p> <p>Work with COPS to issue remaining benefits. Because verification was received on the 3rd, household should receive 93% of \$781 = \$726.</p> <p>\$726 minus \$702 issued = \$24. Ask COPS to issue \$24 for February.</p>

Recertification – Scenario #4	Reopen the Application?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household applies. 202C and NOMI sent. Household does <i>not</i> complete an interview. Case closed for failure to review on adverse action. <p>Household completes the interview before the end of the certification period. Case is reAPPLed for original 202 date. RL2 is sent with 10 day due date.</p> <p>Household provides required verifications after the last day of the original recertification month, but before the due date of the RL2 (which is also within 30 days from the end of the original certification period).</p> <p>(i.e. January is review month and household provides the verification in February)</p>	<p>Case will need to be denied again if verification is received after the last day of the recertification month and then reAPPLed for the date the verification was received. Approve benefits when verification is received and work with COPS to issue part of the benefit unless approved the same date the verification is received.</p>

<p>Example #4:</p>

Household is due for January recertification. Eligible for \$781 per month.

Submits recertification 1/15/25

Interview is not completed by adverse, and case is set to close for 1/31/25.

Interview is then completed 1/25/25 and case is reAPPLed 1/15/25. RL2 is due 2/4/25.

Verification is then received 2/3/25. Case is worked 2/4/25—1/15/25 APPL will have to be denied and then reAPPLed again for 2/3/25. ACCESS will issue benefits as of the 4th. (90% of \$781 = \$702).

Work with COPS to issue remaining benefits. Because verification was received on the 3rd, household should receive 93% of \$781 = \$726.

\$726 minus \$702 issued = \$24. Ask COPS to issue \$24 for February.

Recertification- Scenario #5

Reopen the Application?

- Household applies.
- 202C and NOMI sent.
- Household does *not* complete an interview.
- Case closed for failure to review on adverse action.

Household completes the interview before the end of the certification period. Case is reAPPLed for original 202 date. RL2 is sent with 10 day due date.

Application is denied (again) when RL2 due date passes.

Verification is received after RL2 is due but within 30 days from the end of the original certification period.

(i.e. January is review month and household provides the verification in February)

APPLed for the date the verification was received, approve benefits when verification is received and work with COPS to issue part of the benefit unless approved the date the verification is received.

Example #5:

Household is due for January recertification. Eligible for \$781 per month.

Submits recertification 1/15/25

Interview is not completed by adverse, and case is set to close for 1/31/25.

Interview is then completed 1/25/25 and case is reAPPLed 1/15/25. RL2 is due 2/4/25.

Verification is not received and case is denied again on 2/4/25.

Verification is then received 2/13/25. Case is worked 2/16/25—within 30 days of end of January certification period.

ReAPPL case for 2/13/25 and approve on 2/16/24. ACCESS will issue benefits as of the 16th. (50% of \$781 = \$390).

Work with COPS to issue remaining benefits. Because verification was received on the 13th, household should receive 60% of \$781 = \$468.

\$468 minus \$390 issued = \$78. Ask COPS to issue \$78 for February.

Recertification – Scenario #6

Reopen the Application?

- **Household applies.**
- **202C and NOMI sent.**
- **Household does *not* complete an interview.**
- **Case closed for failure to review on adverse action.**

Household calls to complete an interview after the end of the certification period and the due date of the NOMI.

(i.e. January is review month and household completes the interview in February)

Household must reapply.

*If information remains the same from the original application, a newly signed signature page could be provided, and the rest of the original application could be used.

Determine eligibility for the new certification period using [initial application \(P2100s\)](#) procedures. All initial application verifications must be received including 614FDP and 137 if applicable.

Recertification – Scenario #7

Reopen the Application?

Household applies after the certification has ended and the case has been closed but submits the application within 30 days of the closure.

(i.e. January review and household submits a review application in February)

Considered a new application. APPL the case for the date the application is received.

Determine eligibility for the new certification period using [initial application \(P2100s\)](#) procedures. All initial application verifications must be received including 614FDP and 137 if applicable.

Recertification – Scenario #8	Reopen the Application?
Household applies more than 30 days from the end of the certification period.	Treat the application as an initial application.

P-2350 Case Management Procedures for Households with 60 or more months of Reach Up/Timelimits (6/1/25, 25-06)

Federal time limits on TANF

Federal rules limit families to 60 countable months of Temporary Aid for Needy (TANF) cash assistance in a lifetime.

Certain family and benefit situations determine whether a month “counts” toward this 60-month limit.

See Reach Up Eligibility [procedure 2202](#) for more information about Vermont Time Limits.

Once a participant reaches their lifetime limit of 60 countable months on Reach Up, Vermont has slightly different rules in order to continue receiving Reach Up benefits.

If the person is not engaging with Reach Up services, and attempts have been made to re-engage with them, the family’s Reach Up may need to close. See Reach Up Services procedure 2350A for more information.

How Reach Up programs do and do not count towards the 60-months limit

This is based on whether they are funded by federal TANF money, or State of Vermont money.

Reach Up	YES
Reach First	NO
PSE	NO
Reach Ahead	NO

Participation codes that don't count towards 60-month limit

Within Reach Up, certain months don't count towards the 60-month limit (such as months in which someone could not work due to medical conditions).

Needed in the Home (11)

Medical (34, 35)

Young Child (45) – only the first 12 months are non-countable

Domestic Violence (54)

60-Month limits do not apply to certain types of Reach Up households:

- Minor Parents (parents under the age of 18). Both parents must be 18 or older before months' start counting for either parent. Example: 17-year-old parent and 18-year-old parent in the same household--months don't count for either.
- Child only households including:

Non-needy caretaker grants

Single parents who receive SSI

Two parent households where both receive SSI

Ongoing case management for households with 60 or more countable months

For the most part, case management is the same for families that have received more than 60 countable months and those that have received less than 60 countable months.

Time Limit Appointment

In participant's 58th month of Reach Up, send participants a Reach Up Time Limits letter (form [609](#)) with an appointment. The purpose of the letter and the appointment is to remind participants that they are approaching 60 countable months of Reach Up and to discuss the participant's responsibilities as they reach their time limit on Reach Up. If a case closes and reopens, and there is any question if the letter went out, send it again.

The letter can be sent through a macro in ACCESS or the Reach Up Time Limits letter in the Forms Library.

At the time limit appointment, review with the participant their goals and their recent progress on their goals. Use the goal achievement process and motivational interviewing techniques to determine if the participant's goals remain the same or if they should be updated. Revise and have participant sign new FDP if necessary. Explore and evaluate whether the participant may qualify for a participation code and follow the steps necessary if so [P2320 Time Limits-Stopping the Clock](#)

Explain the difference if a household that has received over 60 countable months does not engage with Reach Up services—rather than having their benefit sanctioned, the benefit could close. On occasion while working with families that have received over 60 countable months, remind them of this difference.

Newly assigned households with more than 60 countable months

When a new family applies for and is approved Reach Up, the Reach Up case manager should review the Reach Up program, and specifically point out the difference of what it means to have met their time limits.

2nd parent joins active household receiving Reach Up

When a second parent joins an active household that receives Reach Up and the second parent has at least 60 countable cumulative months, but the head of household has not yet reached their time limits, consider the family as a newly assigned household with more than 60 countable months.

Schedule a case management meeting with both parents within three business days of the reported change. Explain the difference of what it means to have met their time limits. If the second parent is assigned to a different Reach Up Case Manager/Career Coach then coordinate with that other staff member to communicate to both parents.

Household is sanctioned

Active sanction and 2nd parent with over 60 countable months joins

If a Reach Up household is sanctioned when a second parent that has at least 60 countable cumulative months of Reach Up joins, the sanction must be lifted because households that have received over 60 countable months are not eligible for sanction. End the sanction as soon as administratively possible.

Schedule a case management meeting with both parents as soon as administratively possible after becoming aware of the reported change. During the meeting explain the difference of what it means to have met their time limits. Work with both parents to determine goals and create plans with both parents.

Active sanction and household is approaching 60 countable months

If a Reach Up household is sanctioned and is approaching 60 countable months, follow the chart below to determine next steps. See Reach Up Services procedure 2350A for more information about closures. Make sure to explain during the time limits appointment what will happen when household reaches 60th month