

STATE OF VERMONT
AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES

DCF

Department for Children and Families

Signed by:

Miranda Gray

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FROM: Miranda Gray, Deputy Commissioner
Economic Services Division

BULLETIN NO.: 25-16

DATE: 07/18/25

SUBJECT: Seasonal Fuel Procedure

CHANGES ADOPTED EFFECTIVE 07/01/25

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-2900

The new seasonal fuel procedures manual completely replaces the outdated procedures previously posted online, some of which were over 20 years old. The new manual not only updates old procedures but brings together various training materials, desk aids, and SOPs (standard operating procedures) into one organized and easy-to-read document that cross-references the new program rules adopted last year.

Among other things, the new manual provides detailed procedures for requesting verifications, performing manual benefit calculations, issuing benefits, and entering information into the ACCESS system. Income thresholds, federal poverty levels, and heating cost tables have also been updated for the 2025-26 heating season.

Manual Maintenance

This is an entirely new procedure. Going forward, significant changes will be indicated by highlighting text in gray.

Seasonal Fuel Procedure

<u>Remove</u>		<u>Insert</u>	
P-2900 TOC	(04-09)	Nothing	
Nothing		P-2900	(25-16)
P-2900A	(03-13)	Nothing	
P-2900B	(03-13)	Nothing	
P-2900C	(04-09)	Nothing	
P-2900D-F	(03-13)	Nothing	
P-2900G	(05-29)	Nothing	
P-2900I	(03-13)	Nothing	
P-2900K	(06-40)	Nothing	
Nothing		P-2901	(25-16)
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P-2905A	(09-22)	P-2905	(25-16)
P-2905B	(09-22)	Nothing	
P-2905C	(09-22)	Nothing	
P-2905D	(09-22)	Nothing	
P-2905E	(03-13)	Nothing	
Nothing		P-2906A	(25-16)
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Nothing		P-2908A	(25-16)
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Nothing		P-2908C	(25-16)
Nothing		P-2908D	(25-16)
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P-2910A&B	(09-22)	Nothing	
P-2910C	(03-13)	Nothing	
Nothing		P-2912	(25-16)
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P-2914B (25-16)
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P-2922A (25-16)
P-2922B (25-16)
P-2923 (25-16)
P-2926 (25-16)
P-2927A (25-16)
P-2927B (25-16)
P-2927C (25-16)

P-2900 SEASONAL FUEL PROGRAM PROCEDURES **(Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2900) (7/1/25, 25-16)**

The fuel program procedures are intended to assist ESD workers when accepting and processing applications for seasonal fuel assistance, and to assist ESD workers when issuing seasonal fuel benefits.

Nothing in these procedures is intended to expand or limit the rights of fuel assistance applicants and beneficiaries.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2900 for legal information about the fuel assistance program.

P-2901 FORMS AND NOTICES (7/1/25, 25-16)

The following forms and notices are used by the fuel assistance program:

- 148 – Fuel Supplier Certification Agreement: only for fuel suppliers/fuel team use
- 148SFDOR – Vermont Fuel Supplier Certification Discount off Retail (DOR) Pricing Agreement
- 148SFMOR – Vermont Fuel Supplier Certification Margin over Rack (MOR) Pricing Agreement
- 201SF – Vermont Fuel Assistance Eligibility Review: used to both complete applications for fuel only and for reviews
- 202 – Application for Assistance
- 202H – Shelter Expense Statement: mandatory *if* renter, heating with wood or pellets. Otherwise only if questionable.
- 202RL – Review Reminder Letter: Notifies customers of upcoming review
- 202RL2 – Verification Review Letter
- 202SFH – Verification of Caretaker/Companionship Services: excludes non-mandatory household members for purposes of caretaking/companionship
- 202SFP – Verification of Medically Necessary Services: excludes non-mandatory household member for purposes of medical care of another household member and must be signed by physician
- 202V – Verification Request
- 202VCR – Verification Change Request
- 203SF – Fuel Program Budget Worksheet: used to manually calculate fuel benefits
- 204AN – Account Name / Metered Service Verification: multi-purpose form used if the dealer is not certified and landlord does not allow changes to dealer and/or if landlord bills the client for heat, or if the fuel account is in someone else's
- 220 – Notice of Decision

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2901 for definitions of common words and phrases used by the fuel assistance program.

P-2902 CERTIFIED FUEL OR ENERGY SUPPLIERS **(Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2902) (7/1/25, 25-16)**

The names of fuel suppliers, who have a signed form ESD148 Fuel Supplier Certification Agreement, are available in the ACCESS vendor file (VEND/D). See P-2928C for instructions on finding a fuel dealer in ACCESS.

Every three years, new ESD148 forms are sent to all fuel and energy suppliers that serve customers in Vermont. The certification agreement is valid for three years. At the end of that time, a supplier will be sent a new certification agreement to sign. Suppliers must send a completed Form 148 and either a 148SFDOR (if the supplier has a discount-off-retail pricing agreement) or a 148SFMOR (if the supplier has a margin-over-rack pricing agreement).

An applicant must select a fuel provider from the certified fuel provider list.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2902 for fuel supplier certification requirements.

P-2903 HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2903) (7/1/25, 25-16)

Fuel Household

One or more persons residing in the same living unit as a single economic unit who, in common, purchase energy for home heating fuel, or who in common, make payments for energy for home heating fuel in the form of rent.

Everyone who shares a heat source must be included in the fuel household, and their income must be counted. When ACCESS has income information on members of the household who are active in any ESD program, ACCESS uses that information to calculate the benefit payment.

Head of Household

This is a person, either individually or with other household member(s), who is financially responsible for the cost of occupying the living unit or separate living quarters. Others who claim financial responsibility become mandatory members.

Who is a member of the Fuel Household?

All persons are included in the fuel household based on the presumption they are members of the same economic unit. To rebut the presumption, the head of household must provide reasonable evidence that the person or persons qualifies to be excluded.*

In-Household Member	Mandatory Member	Excludable *
Roomer	NO	YES SF MEMB CODE 6
Caretaker/Companion	NO	YES SF MEMB CODE 4
Medically Necessary Caregiver	NO	YES SF MEMB CODE 3
DCF/Foster Care or DAIL Placement	NO	YES SF MEMB CODE 5
Head of Household	YES SF MEMB CODE 1	NO
Spouse or Civil Union Partner	YES SF MEMB CODE 1	NO
Minor Children of Head of Household	YES SF MEMB CODE 1	NO
Any minor daughter or son of any minor included in the Fuel household	YES SF MEMB CODE 1	NO

***Excludable**

The head of household may **choose** to exclude a non-mandatory person from the Fuel Household by indicating the relationship as medically necessary/personal care attendant, caretaker/companion, roomer, or person(s) in the custody of and placed in the home by

FSD/DCF or DAIL (including people with disabilities in a shared living placement). The policy definition must be met to allow the head of household to exclude the person(s) from the fuel household.

Medically Necessary Caregiver (SF-MEMB CODE 3)

A medically necessary caregiver is a person who is not a mandatory household member and provides medically necessary services to any elderly or disabled head of household (or spouse). (See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2901(a)(7) for the definition of head of household.) A household may, but does not need to, exclude a medically necessary caregiver from the household. A medically necessary caregiver is different from a caretaker who only provides homemaker services. Form 202SFP Verification of Medically Necessary Services is required (but not every year so check CATNs and OnBase before requesting the form).

Only the elderly or disabled head of household can request to have a medically necessary caregiver excluded from the household. If an elderly or disabled applicant has a live-in caregiver who provides medically necessary services for the applicant, do not count the caregiver as a household member and do not count the caregiver's income. Refer to P-2908A for verification of medically necessary services. If a medically necessary caregiver pays room and board to the head of household, that payment is counted as self-employment income of the household. (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2911.3(a)(2))

Only the head A household can only have one medically necessary caregiver, and a household cannot have a medically necessary caregiver AND a companion (Code 4).

Caretaker or Companion (SF-MEMB CODE 4)

A caretaker (or companion) is a person who is not a mandatory household member and who provides homemaker or personal care services to the *elderly or disabled head of household or their elderly or disabled spouse/civil union partner* in exchange for the caretaker's separate living quarters. This exchange of services for living quarters is considered reasonable compensation under the rule. A household may, but does not need to, exclude a caretaker or a companion from the household. A caretaker is different from a medically necessary caregiver. Form 202SFH Verification of Caretaker or Companionship Services is required (but not every year, so check CATNs and OnBase before requesting the form).

Only the elderly or disabled head of household can request to have a caretaker or companion excluded from the household. (See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2901(a)(7) for the definition of head of household.) If an elderly or disabled applicant has a live-in caretaker who provides homemaker or personal services for the applicant, do not count the caretaker as a household member and do not count the caretaker's income. Refer to P-2908A for verification of caretakers or companions. If a caretaker pays room and board to

the head of household, that payment is counted as self-employment income of the household. (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2911.3(a)(2))

A household can only have one companion, and a household cannot have a companion AND a medically necessary caregiver (Code 3).

Individual in Foster Care or Residential Home Care (SF-MEMB CODE 5)

Use this code for a non-mandatory household member placed in the home by DCF, DAIL, or DMH, regardless of whether the person is related to other members of the household. For example, if the household has a foster child placed in the home by DCF-FSD, the child is an individual in foster care and not a mandatory household member. All payments (difficulty of care (stipend) plus room and board) received by the household for caring for someone as a shared living provider are excluded as household income. (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2912(a)(22))

Roomer/Boarder (SF-MEMB CODE 6)

A person who is not a mandatory household member, and who pays reasonable room rent to the head of household or his/her spouse or civil union partner, for *exclusive occupancy of one or more rooms* as separate living quarters in the living unit and meals are not provided.

If a fuel assistance applicant has not received rental assistance from the GA program within 30 days of ESD's receipt of the fuel application, then reasonable room rent would be \$40/week/roomer household (not per person), *regardless of whether the rent is paid to a relative or not*. In-kind payment does not qualify as reasonable room rent.

Fuel Household Member ACCESS Codes

+-----+ Assistance Case Member (SF/Fuel) AS0DDAY2 ----- Blank Not requesting Fuel 1 Member 2 Not a member (generated by Access) 3 Medically Necessary Attendant 4 Caretaker Companion 5 Foster Care 6 Roomer 7 Member in another SF HH 8 Not a member -----+ +-----+	
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- Code 8 should rarely be used. Generally, the code is used when there is a landlord in the roomers 3sqrs/fuel case.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2901 for the legal definitions of all the terms used in this procedure.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2903 for persons who must be counted in a household and persons who may be excluded.

P-2904 INELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2904) (7/1/25, 25-16)

The following households are ineligible for fuel assistance:

1. Residents and operators of institutional homes and centers where the living space is heated by the institution.
2. Residents and operators of other congregate living arrangements, regardless of who is responsible for heating the living space, including but not restricted to:
 - Residents of college dormitories or other housing units provided by the college
 - Transitional Living Centers/Units
 - Hospitals
 - Retirement Homes
 - Rest Homes
 - Boarding Houses or Commercial Rooming Houses
 - Homeless Shelters
 - Communes
 - Jails and Correctional Facilities
 - Halfway Homes
 - Fraternity or Sorority Houses
 - Community Care Homes
 - Drug, Alcohol and Rehab Centers
 - Maternity Homes
3. People living in Long-Term Care Facilities, including:
 - Assisted Living Residences
 - Hospice Care Homes

- Nursing Homes
 - Therapeutic Treatment Centers
 - Residential Care Homes
4. People living in hotels, motels, and short-term rentals, including:
- An Airbnb or Vrbo
 - An Inn
 - A Bed and Breakfast
5. People living in temporary living quarters or movable structures, including:
- travel trailers
 - semitrailers
 - truck campers
 - motor homes
 - boats
 - campers
 - recreational vehicles (RV)
 - railroad cars
 - vans, cars, or buses
 - tents
 - sheds
 - garages/shops, and
 - fishing shacks

If a household lives in a movable structure that has been modified to be a permanent living unit, such as a camper attached to a foundation on the ground, contact the Fuel and Utility Programs Team at ahs.dcfesdfuelmgmt@vermont.gov.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2904 for a full list of excluded living arrangements that are ineligible for fuel assistance.

P-2905 APPLICATION PROCEDURES (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2905) (7/1/25, 25-16)

General Procedures

Fuel applications may be received year-round, and ESD usually pays fuel benefits once a year to eligible households. No interview is necessary to apply for fuel assistance. When an application includes a request for fuel assistance and other ESD benefits, the fuel application may be processed without the interview required for other programs and should not be delayed.

In ACCESS, always enter the application date as the date the application was received by ESD.

The last day of the heating season to apply for benefits is the last day of February. If ESD receives an application from an eligible household on or after March 1, the household will be paid benefits during the following payment cycle, which begins July (for wood/pellet issuance), and continues through the end of April of the following year.

In January or February each year, the Fuel and Utility Programs Team will provide a list of pending Fuel cases to the respective District Offices or another BPS for priority processing until all pending applications are processed.

Data Entry and Application Processing

All applications (forms 202 or 201SF) are scanned into OnBase through the ADPC.

Applications can be submitted through mail, the uploader, filled out online (202 only), or dropped off at the district office.

Applications are entered in ACCESS and assigned by the ADPC to local district offices based on current ESD procedures (P-2110 General Application Procedures).

Pending Applications for other ESD Benefits

When the applicant has applied for assistance from another ESD program (Reach Up, 3SquaresVT, General Assistance (GA), or Essential Person (EP)), and the eligibility determination is pending because ESD is waiting for some verification or documentation, then the fuel application can be processed if ESD has all the information needed by the fuel program, *unless* the applicant has applied for Reach Up or EP benefits. The Reach Up or EP benefit amount must be counted as unearned income when calculating fuel benefits.

Fuel applications can be processed if ESD has all the information that the fuel program requires, even if an interview is needed for another ESD program. This is because no interview is necessary to apply for fuel assistance.

Processing Codes

- Q (Questionable) – When fuel eligibility or verification is pending the VERIFIED field on FUEL/C is Q. (Q can be entered anytime during the year, not just during fuel season and will prevent a benefit from being issued.)
- V (Verified) – When the information or verification is received change the Q to V in the VERIFIED field on FUEL/C.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2905 for application requirements.

P-2906 REVIEWS

P-2906A Eligibility Reviews (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2906) (7/1/25, 25-16)

Reviews – Generally

- All active fuel cases must have a “contact” every 12 months, except those cases on 24-month or 36-month certifications.
 - For fuel-only eligibility reviews, use Form 201SF
 - For 3SquaresVT, RUFA, or EP eligibility reviews, use the Form 202
 - Fuel reviews are mailed as a “Six Week Reminder” just like 3SquaresVT
- Always align the review with the RUFA, EP and 3Squares (in that order).
 - The ONLY time fuel can be 24 months or 36 months is when the client is active and eligible for a 3SquaresVT 24-month certification or 3SquaresVT in a SNAP! (3SNP).
- When re-applying Supplemental Fuel, always double check the review date to make sure that it is lined up, if not, update it with ELIG C SF-REV.

Returned Forms

- If the review form (201SF or 202) is not returned before the first day of the month of review, the case is automatically set to close in ACCESS on the “adverse action approval deadline,” which is about ten days before the last day of the month of review. This deadline varies a little each month to ensure ten-day closure notices are timely sent.
- If the review form is returned before the first day of the month of review:
 - If the review form is completed, and no additional information or verification is needed, process the application, and a new certification period is issued.
 - If an incomplete form is returned and more information (or verification) is needed, then send a Form 202RL2 – Verification Review Letter to the client. (See P-2908B for when and how to verify information.) Timely applications will not be automatically closed while ESD is waiting for necessary verifications. See “Verification Required” to

- If a review form is received on or after the first day of the month of review:
 - If possible, and if no verification is needed, try to process the late form as a timely application for the month of review.
 - If the form comes too late for staff to timely process it, or if the late form needs verification, the late form must be processed like a new application for seasonal fuel benefits. The new application date is the date that the late form was received. Use P-2908B for when verification is needed.

Verification Required

Process for when verification is needed to complete the processing of a *timely* review form (201SF or 202):

- When the client provides timely information as requested, the BPS must update the appropriate STAT panels in ACCESS, process fuel eligibility, and write CATN. A new certification period will be issued.
- If a Verification Review Letter is sent after ESD receives a timely review form, and the client does not provide the information within the specified time frame, the case will be automatically set to close in ACCESS on the “adverse action approval deadline.”
- If ESD receives a late verification, after the case is closed, but within 30 days of the date ESD received the form, then ESD must reopen the case using an application date of the first day of the following month, meaning the month after the case is closed.
- If ESD receives a late verification more than 30 days after the date the application is received, the client must reapply for fuel assistance.

Extended Certification Period (ECP)

- ECP Fuel allows some households that are on 3SNP to also have a 36-month certification period if all members of the fuel household are aged or disabled and have no earned income.
- Fuel households may have different members than 3SNP households, so not all 3SNP households are eligible for ECP.
- These cases will not have to review their fuel benefits for three years.
- Verification for ECP fuel is the same as for other fuel households.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2906 for more information about eligibility reviews.

P-2906 REVIEWS (continued)

P-2906B Desk Reviews (7/1/25, 25-16)

Desk reviews are run on every case multiple times throughout the calendar year when income levels or payment rates change. These changes will not affect seasonal fuel benefits that have already been issued for the heating season. The changes will affect benefits for the following heating season.

See All Programs Procedure P-2150 for more information on desk reviews.

P-2908 REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR VERIFICATION (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2908)

P-2908A Mandatory Verifications (7/1/25, 25-16)

Information that Must Always Be Verified

- Self-Employment Income: Federal Taxes, including all forms and schedules, should be requested and used.
 - If taxes are unavailable or not reflective, use the 204B, 204R, etc. These forms must be supported with some other verification such as quick books, receipts, etc.
 - Self-declared income is not acceptable.
- Citizenship Status: Immigration documents must be requested & SAVES run.
 - Eligible non-citizens include: Parolees, Refugees, Asylees, Cuban/Haitian Entrants, Lawful Permanent Residents, Conditional Entrant, Iraqi & Afghan Special Immigrants, Victims of Trafficking, Immigrant with withheld deportation and Battered non-citizens.
 - There is no five-year waiting period for fuel assistance.
- ID: Identification if not known to ACCESS
- Anything Questionable: You may request further information on anything you deem questionable, however you must CATN why you find the information questionable.

Use Relevant Forms for Verification

- 202H – Shelter Expense Statement: mandatory *IF* household rents and claims heat wood or pellets. Otherwise only use this form if the information provided is questionable.
- 204AN – Account Name / Metered Service Verification: This is a mandatory form for the following situations:
 - FOR RENTERS ONLY: If the dealer is not certified and landlord does not allow changes to dealer. The landlord must sign the form stating that they will not change their dealer and why. Once received these cases should be sent to the Fuel team for review.

- If the landlord bills the client for heat, or if the Fuel Account is in someone else's name. The landlord must sign off stating that they added the tenants name to the fuel account.
- 202SFH – Verification of Caretaker/Companionship Services: form used to verify Caretaker/Companionship in order to exclude a non-mandatory household member. This form is ONLY used to exclude a companion for the head of household (HOH) or his/her spouse or civil union partner, if either are elderly or disabled.
 - This form is only required once for the specific caretaker as long as the case stays active.
 - If the case closes, a new form is required if the household reapplies for fuel benefits.
- 202SFP – Verification of Medically Necessary Services: form used to verify a medically necessary caretaker in order to exclude that non-mandatory household member. This form can be used to exclude a medically necessary caregiver for ANY household member who is elderly or disabled.
 - This form is only required once for the specific caretaker as long as the case stays active.
 - If the case closes, a new form is required if the household reapplies for fuel benefits.

Documentation and Fuel

Make sure to CATN any actions taken and any decisions made.

P-2908 REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR VERIFICATION (continued)

P-2908B When and How to Verify Information (7/1/25, 25-16)

Requests

Interviews are not required, but staff may contact applicants by phone or mail to clarify questionable or confusing information or to obtain additional information.

Applicants are allowed no less than ten days to respond to a request for information or verification. The ten-day count begins the day following the date the notice was issued.

Use these verification request forms as follows:

- 202V – for a new or pending application
- 202RL2 – for verification required for a review
- 202VCR – for verification needed for changes on active cases between reviews

Processing Verification Requests in ACCESS

If all information necessary to determine Fuel eligibility is available, process Fuel immediately. If information is required to determine eligibility or continuing eligibility for Fuel, request the appropriate verification form above. In ACCESS:

- SPEC/C/FORMS select the right Verification Request Form <enter>
- On line 1. Enter text FOR PURPOSES OF DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY FOR SEASONAL FUEL ONLY:
- Enter documentation/information needed on lines 2-7.
- Enter date due – ten days from today's date
- Check ONLY the Seasonal Fuel box with an X.
- Do not request information for any other program on this Form 202.

Mandatory Information

A new 201SF form may be used to gather this information:

- Household composition (can be verified by phone)

- Non-Citizenship Status (immigration documentation needed)
- ID, if not known to ACCESS, for everyone over age 2 (documentation needed, see rule 2908.1)
- Gross income – paystubs 30 days prior to the application date for JINCs and Federal Taxes for BUSI. Receipts are needed for other income not captured by these means.
- Date application received by ESD
- Type of housing – Single family, multi-family, mobile home, or camper, etc. (info can be verified by phone but follow guidance questions. If questionable, send it to the fuel team.)
- Number of bedrooms (can be verified by phone)
- Type of Fuel – Wood, Pellets, Oil, Propane, Kerosene, Natural Gas, Electricity, Coal, etc. (can be verified by phone)
- Public or subsidized housing: yes or no (can be verified by phone)
- Pay for heat or heat included in rent (info can be verified by phone)
- Correct Fuel & Electric Account Numbers (Electric account number is needed if applicant pays an electric bill, *even if home is not heated by electricity*. Fuel supplier's account number is needed unless the applicant does not pay a supplier for heat.) (account # can be verified by phone)
- Fuel Dealer name and account number – The Certified Fuel Dealer List should be utilized to assure the correct fuel dealer location for those fuel dealers with multiple branches (can be verified by phone)
 - Non-certified dealer uses form 204AN (for RENTERS ONLY)
- Name on the Fuel Account – Must be client's name or have a 204AN
- Physical Address – found on ADDR panel (can be verified by phone)

If a client moves, all mandatory information must be reviewed. Most of this information should be gathered again as it is directly linked to their living situation.

Any applications or reviews for any other ESD program need to be treated as a change report for fuel.

Verifications Specific to Fuel Program Only

When information is questionable, clarification may be provided verbally, and you should attempt to contact the applicant by phone. If the applicant cannot be reached by phone or a written response is required, send a 202V – Verification Request form, with a deadline for providing the information or verification. Then enter a Q in the VERIFIED field on the STAT panel in ACCESS. (See P-2905 for processing codes)

If the applicant does not provide the information by the deadline in 202V, the application can be denied for non-coop by entering N on non-coop field for SF in STAT panel. A notice will be automatically generated.

Income Verification

Applicants' income must be verified. If an applicant receives benefits through another ESD program, then income information should be in ACCESS.

To the extent that ESD collects and maintains income information within its automated ACCESS data system on recipients of ongoing programs, such income information will be used for the determination of eligibility and benefits for the Fuel Program if the income information is less than 30 days old.

If income information in ACCESS is different and more recent than what is reported on the Fuel application, the information in ACCESS will be used to determine Fuel eligibility. If income information in ACCESS is more than 30 days old, then send a 202V verification request form requiring the applicant to give income documentation. A self declaration of income cannot be used without other documentation, unless the applicant has been without income for more than 60 days. Regardless, if the absence of income is questionable, request additional verification.

Information reported on a fuel application should be reviewed for possible changes to other ESD programs in accordance with those programs' current procedures. Workers need to review and address all conflicting information according to the program rules for each individual program.

If the income information on the Fuel application is different and more recent than what is on ACCESS, the Fuel BPS will request verification for all active programs. A 202V Verification Request will be sent, checking off all active programs *except 3SquaresVT*. (See 3SquaresVT manual for verification procedures just for that program.) The verification request must have a deadline allowing the applicant no less than ten days to respond. A questionable code Q will be entered in the VERIFIED field on STAT/C in ACCESS.

If income reported is "new," and has not been reported or recorded in the ACCESS system, the BPS will send a 202V requesting the client to have their employer complete an

Employment Information form (218E) and to submit all pay stubs received in the last 30 days.

If the applicant indicates termination of employment, which has not been reported or recorded in the ACCESS system, the BPS will send a 202V requesting the client have their former employer complete an Employment Termination form (218ET).

Verification of Medically Necessary Services for Caretaker or Companions

An elderly or disabled applicant whose live-in caretaker has income (other than payment from the applicant for services provided in the home) may be asked to provide proof that the caretaker provides homemaker or personal care services that the applicant cannot or should not perform.

ESD can send one of these verification forms to the applicant:

- Form 202SFP (Verification for Medically Necessary Services) to be completed by the applicant's physician
- Form 202SFH (Household Verification for Caretaker or Companionship Services) must be completed by the applicant and signed by both applicant and caretaker or companion.

If proof is not provided, the live-in caretaker must be included as a household member, and his or her income must be included when determining eligibility.

NOTE: No verification is needed if the applicant receives Essential Person benefits.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2908 for verification requirements, including rule 2908.1 for verification of identity, and rule 2908.2 for verification of immigration status.

P-2908 REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR VERIFICATION (continued)

P-2908C Eligibility Determinations After Verification is Requested (7/1/25, 25-16)

When Verification is Provided

When the applicant provides timely information as requested, the BPS will update the appropriate STAT panels in ACCESS, process fuel eligibility, and write CATN. Notice is automatically generated to the applicant by ACCESS.

When Verification is Not Provided

If the applicant does not provide the information within the specified time frame, the BPS will deny the case by entering N in the non-coop field or SF on the STAT panel. The application for fuel assistance will be denied, and a notice will be generated the following morning. The BPS should also CATN. (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2908(a)(3))

For new applicants, if ESD receives a late verification, after the application is denied, but within 30 days of the date ESD received the application, then ESD must reprocess the application using the date the application was initially received. (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2908(a)(4))

If a case is closed and the requested verification is received more than 30 days after the date the application is received, then the household must reapply for fuel benefits. (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2908(a)(5)) Send a 201SF Fuel application form to the client.

For an existing household reapplying for fuel benefits, ESD must accept late verifications that are received before the actual closure date, i.e., the last day of the month. However, the application should be entered for the first day of the month after the month of closure.

P-2908 REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR VERIFICATION (continued)

P-2908D Waste, Fraud, and Abuse (7/1/25, 25-16)

Fraud Definition

Fraud occurs when someone:

- Purposely fails to disclose facts (or changes in circumstances), relevant to determining eligibility, in order to obtain or continue to receive benefits for which the person is not eligible, including benefits in an amount greater than they are eligible for.
- Purposely provides (or attempts to provide) false information relevant to determining eligibility, in order to obtain or continue to receive benefits for which the person is not eligible, including benefits in an amount greater than they are eligible for.
- Assists another person for the purpose of obtaining or continuing to receive benefits for which the other person is not eligible, including benefits in an amount greater than they are eligible for.

Questionable Changes or Situations

Below are some situations that may require collateral contacts and then may need to be discussed further with the DCF Fuel Team.

Household Composition

- Applicant or recipient gives suspect or contradictory information regarding the identity and/or whereabouts of the absent parent (AP).
- Absent Parent's address is consistent with the recipient's after separation is reported.
- The recipient is sanctioned for failure to cooperate with the Office of Child Support (OCS) but doesn't take actions to have the sanction lifted.
- AP has an occupation that would normally require absence from the residence for extended periods of time (such as a truck driver, salesperson, etc.).
- AP is reported to live at another address but provides care and support for the child on practically a daily basis. This in itself is okay but could indicate the AP is actually living in the home.

- Situations where the recipient may be concealing the marriage or common children with a person residing in client's household.
- Suspicion that a child(ren) do(es) not reside with the applicant or recipient.
- Recipient reports a household member has left the home after this member obtains countable income.
- Recipient adds a household member when this member loses income or resources.
- Household consisting of several adult members with no income.
- Varying reports of household member's SSN, date of birth, or relationships

Income

- Households where expenses are higher than reported income.
- Household has a member(s) with suspected self-employment income not available on computer matches (such as construction, agriculture, domestic work, childcare, etc.).
- The recipient presents employment wage verification that appears to have been altered. Unsigned or not authentic or fails to report tips or gratuities when such sources of income are routinely part of their compensation (such as waitress, bartender, dancer, hair stylist, taxi driver, bell-boy, delivery person, etc.).
- Recipient reports Unemployment Compensation (UC) will cease before (UC) is exhausted, but does not report employment, or reports the loss of steady employment, but does not apply for UC.
- Suspicion that child support is being paid directly to the recipient.

Residency

- The recipient presents verification of residency that appears to have been altered or completed by someone other than the appropriate verifier. Document has scribbled out information or areas have been written over.
- Suspicion that a recipient has moved out of the state.
- Suspicion that recipient is currently receiving benefits from another state.
- Recipient provides shelter statement signed by relative or AP is landlord.
- A shelter statement is unsigned, and recipient continually claims to be unable to reach the landlord or makes other excuses for not being able to provide the form.

Contact DCF Fuel Team

If after reviewing any of these questionable items you feel the application needs further review, then please contact the fuel team to discuss: ahs.dcfesdfuelmgmt@vermont.gov. The fuel team can make a referral to the Investigations Unit or do a “Front End Verification” or a “Suspected Fraud Investigation.”

P-2910 INCOME (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2910)

(7/1/25, 25-16)

- Fuel Assistance uses the 185% of FPL test.
- Fuel begins with the new income guidelines in March.
- Any case that has not been updated based on the new standards will have them applied at the time of the 3SQ/FUEL Desk Review in October.
 - If edits are delaying eligibility, the worker will receive a prompt on their daily.
- Every household member's income counts unless they are an excluded member, such as a caretaker or foster child.
 - However, if the member is ineligible, e.g., undocumented immigrant, then that member's income is counted, but the person is not counted in the total number of household members.
- Use the income 30 days prior to the date of application.
- Fuel has no deductions for income. Countable vs. excludable income follows 3SquaresVT.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rules 2910–2912 for more information about gross income, income sources, and excluded income.

P-2912 STUDENT AID INCOME EXCLUSIONS (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2912) (7/1/25, 25-16)

Student Financial Assistance

Like 3SquaresVT, the fuel program excludes certain income when it calculates a household's monthly income. Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2912(a)(7) excludes from income all student financial aid under Title IV of the Higher Education Act and the Bureau of Indian Affairs student assistance programs. Those financial aid programs include:

- Federal Pell Grants
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants
- Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship
- TEACH Grant
- Federal Stafford Loans
- William D. Ford Federal Direct Loans, including
 - Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (Federal PLUS Loans)
 - Federal Consolidation Loans
- Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL)
- Health Education Assistance Loans (HEAL)
- Federal Perkins Loans
- Grants for Federal Work-Study Programs

Money from these grants and programs cannot be counted when calculating household income for fuel assistances. If you are unsure whether certain financial aid can be excluded from income, contact the Fuel and Utility Programs Team.

Households that receive any form of educational or student financial assistance, regardless of whether the income is excluded, must submit a Form 216 – Student Self Declaration of Financial Aid and Expenses.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2912 for other income exclusions.

P-2913 INCOME GUIDELINES (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2913) (7/1/25, 25-16)

Effective March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2026

Persons in Household	185% of Federal Poverty Guideline
1	\$2,412
2	\$3,262
3	\$4,109
4	\$4,956
5	\$5,805
6	\$6,653
7	\$7,500
8	\$8,349
9	\$9,196
10	\$10,044
11	\$10,891
12	\$11,738
13	\$12,586
14	\$13,433
15	\$14,280

Add \$847 for each additional person

Eligibility for fuel assistance benefits is based on a household's gross income. A fuel household is not eligible for seasonal fuel benefits if the household's gross income exceeds 185% of the federal poverty guidelines.

The Fuel and Utility Programs Team must update these guidelines every year based on federal poverty guidelines. (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2913)

P-2914 CALCULATION OF BENEFITS (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2914) (7/1/25, 25-16)

P-2914A Percentage of Poverty (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2914(a)(4))

2025-2026 Household Income per Month as a Percentage of Poverty Based on Household Size

HH Size	0	To	<75%		75%	To	84%
1	\$ -	To	\$ 965		\$ 966	To	\$ 1,096
2	\$ -	To	\$ 1,305		\$ 1,306	To	\$ 1,481
3	\$ -	To	\$ 1,644		\$ 1,645	To	\$ 1,866
4	\$ -	To	\$ 1,983		\$ 1,984	To	\$ 2,251
5	\$ -	To	\$ 2,323		\$ 2,324	To	\$ 2,636
6	\$ -	To	\$ 2,662		\$ 2,663	To	\$ 3,021
7	\$ -	To	\$ 3,000		\$ 3,001	To	\$ 3,406
8	\$ -	To	\$ 3,340		\$ 3,341	To	\$ 3,791
9	\$ -	To	\$ 3,679		\$ 3,680	To	\$ 4,176
10	\$ -	To	\$ 4,018		\$ 4,019	To	\$ 4,561
11	\$ -	To	\$ 4,357		\$ 4,358	To	\$ 4,946
12	\$ -	To	\$ 4,696		\$ 4,697	To	\$ 5,330
13	\$ -	To	\$ 5,035		\$ 5,036	To	\$ 5,715
14	\$ -	To	\$ 5,374		\$ 5,375	To	\$ 6,100
15	\$ -	To	\$ 5,713		\$ 5,714	To	\$ 6,484
HH Size	85%	To	94%		95%	To	104%
1	\$ 1,097	To	\$ 1,226		\$ 1,227	To	\$ 1,357
2	\$ 1,482	To	\$ 1,658		\$ 1,659	To	\$ 1,834
3	\$ 1,867	To	\$ 2,088		\$ 2,089	To	\$ 2,310
4	\$ 2,252	To	\$ 2,519		\$ 2,520	To	\$ 2,787
5	\$ 2,637	To	\$ 2,950		\$ 2,951	To	\$ 3,264
6	\$ 3,022	To	\$ 3,381		\$ 3,382	To	\$ 3,740
7	\$ 3,407	To	\$ 3,811		\$ 3,812	To	\$ 4,217
8	\$ 3,792	To	\$ 4,243		\$ 4,244	To	\$ 4,694
9	\$ 4,177	To	\$ 4,673		\$ 4,674	To	\$ 5,170
10	\$ 4,562	To	\$ 5,104		\$ 5,105	To	\$ 5,647
11	\$ 4,947	To	\$ 5,534		\$ 5,535	To	\$ 6,123
12	\$ 5,331	To	\$ 5,965		\$ 5,966	To	\$ 6,599
							page 1/3

13	\$ 5,716	To	\$ 6,395		\$ 6,396	To	\$ 7,076
14	\$ 6,101	To	\$ 6,826		\$ 6,827	To	\$ 7,552
15	\$ 6,485	To	\$ 7,256		\$ 7,257	To	\$ 8,028

HH Size	105%	To	114%		115%	To	124%
1	\$ 1,358	To	\$ 1,487		\$ 1,488	To	\$ 1,617
2	\$ 1,835	To	\$ 2,010		\$ 2,011	To	\$ 2,187
3	\$ 2,311	To	\$ 2,532		\$ 2,533	To	\$ 2,755
4	\$ 2,788	To	\$ 3,055		\$ 3,056	To	\$ 3,322
5	\$ 3,265	To	\$ 3,578		\$ 3,579	To	\$ 3,892
6	\$ 3,741	To	\$ 4,100		\$ 4,101	To	\$ 4,460
7	\$ 4,218	To	\$ 4,622		\$ 4,623	To	\$ 5,027
8	\$ 4,695	To	\$ 5,145		\$ 5,146	To	\$ 5,597
9	\$ 5,171	To	\$ 5,667		\$ 5,668	To	\$ 6,165
10	\$ 5,648	To	\$ 6,190		\$ 6,191	To	\$ 6,732
11	\$ 6,124	To	\$ 6,712		\$ 6,713	To	\$ 7,300
12	\$ 6,600	To	\$ 7,234		\$ 7,235	To	\$ 7,868
13	\$ 7,077	To	\$ 7,756		\$ 7,757	To	\$ 8,436
14	\$ 7,553	To	\$ 8,278		\$ 8,279	To	\$ 9,004
15	\$ 8,029	To	\$ 8,800		\$ 8,801	To	\$ 9,572
HH Size	125%	To	134%		135%	To	144%
1	\$ 1,618	To	\$ 1,748		\$ 1,749	To	\$ 1,878
2	\$ 2,188	To	\$ 2,363		\$ 2,364	To	\$ 2,539
3	\$ 2,756	To	\$ 2,977		\$ 2,978	To	\$ 3,199
4	\$ 3,323	To	\$ 3,590		\$ 3,591	To	\$ 3,858
5	\$ 3,893	To	\$ 4,205		\$ 4,206	To	\$ 4,519
6	\$ 4,461	To	\$ 4,819		\$ 4,820	To	\$ 5,179
7	\$ 5,028	To	\$ 5,433		\$ 5,434	To	\$ 5,838
8	\$ 5,598	To	\$ 6,048		\$ 6,049	To	\$ 6,499
9	\$ 6,166	To	\$ 6,662		\$ 6,663	To	\$ 7,159
10	\$ 6,733	To	\$ 7,275		\$ 7,276	To	\$ 7,818
11	\$ 7,301	To	\$ 7,889		\$ 7,890	To	\$ 8,478
12	\$ 7,869	To	\$ 8,503		\$ 8,504	To	\$ 9,137
13	\$ 8,437	To	\$ 9,117		\$ 9,118	To	\$ 9,797
14	\$ 9,005	To	\$ 9,730		\$ 9,731	To	\$ 10,456
15	\$ 9,573	To	\$ 10,344		\$ 10,345	To	\$ 11,116
							Page 2/3

HH Size	145%	To	154%		155%	To	164%
1	\$ 1,879	To	\$ 2,009		\$ 2,010	To	\$ 2,139
2	\$ 2,540	To	\$ 2,716		\$ 2,717	To	\$ 2,892
3	\$ 3,200	To	\$ 3,421		\$ 3,422	To	\$ 3,643
4	\$ 3,859	To	\$ 4,126		\$ 4,127	To	\$ 4,394
5	\$ 4,520	To	\$ 4,833		\$ 4,834	To	\$ 5,147
6	\$ 5,180	To	\$ 5,538		\$ 5,539	To	\$ 5,898
7	\$ 5,839	To	\$ 6,244		\$ 6,245	To	\$ 6,649
8	\$ 6,500	To	\$ 6,951		\$ 6,952	To	\$ 7,402
9	\$ 7,160	To	\$ 7,656		\$ 7,657	To	\$ 8,153
10	\$ 7,819	To	\$ 8,361		\$ 8,362	To	\$ 8,904
11	\$ 8,479	To	\$ 9,066		\$ 9,067	To	\$ 9,655
12	\$ 9,138	To	\$ 9,772		\$ 9,773	To	\$ 10,406
13	\$ 9,798	To	\$ 10,477		\$ 10,478	To	\$ 11,157
14	\$ 10,457	To	\$ 11,182		\$ 11,183	To	\$ 11,909
15	\$ 11,117	To	\$ 11,888		\$ 11,889	To	\$ 12,660
HH Size	165%	To	174%		175%	To	185%
1	\$ 2,140	To	\$ 2,269		\$ 2,270	To	\$ 2,412
2	\$ 2,893	To	\$ 3,068		\$ 3,069	To	\$ 3,262
3	\$ 3,644	To	\$ 3,865		\$ 3,866	To	\$ 4,109
4	\$ 4,395	To	\$ 4,662		\$ 4,663	To	\$ 4,956
5	\$ 5,148	To	\$ 5,461		\$ 5,462	To	\$ 5,805
6	\$ 5,899	To	\$ 6,258		\$ 6,259	To	\$ 6,653
7	\$ 6,650	To	\$ 7,054		\$ 7,055	To	\$ 7,500
8	\$ 7,403	To	\$ 7,853		\$ 7,854	To	\$ 8,349
9	\$ 8,154	To	\$ 8,650		\$ 8,651	To	\$ 9,196
10	\$ 8,905	To	\$ 9,447		\$ 9,448	To	\$ 10,044
11	\$ 9,656	To	\$ 10,244		\$ 10,245	To	\$ 10,891
12	\$ 10,407	To	\$ 11,041		\$ 11,042	To	\$ 11,738
13	\$ 11,158	To	\$ 11,838		\$ 11,839	To	\$ 12,586
14	\$ 11,910	To	\$ 12,635		\$ 12,636	To	\$ 13,433
15	\$ 12,661	To	\$ 13,432		\$ 13,433	To	\$ 14,280
							page 3/3

P-2914 CALCULATION OF BENEFITS (continued)

P-2914B Payment Rate (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2914(b)) **(7/1/25, 25-16)**

The payment rate, or RATABLE, is subject to change with every season and/or every batch benefit issuance.

Funding is anticipated to be insufficient to meet 100 percent of the calculated benefit. ESD will pay each season's fuel benefits at a percentage of the calculated benefit. ESD will determine this percentage before seasonal benefits are issued. In unusual circumstances, the ratable percentage can be adjusted, if necessary, based on eligible applications submitted after the initial benefit issuance.

This payment rate changes every year based on funding availability. After the fuel program determines the payment rate, right before issuing payments to fuel suppliers, the program will email this rate to the district offices to use when manually calculating benefits.

Because the ratable can change at any time during the heating season:

- Use ACCESS Code/D/FR to find the current payment rate; OR
- Contact the Fuel and Utility Programs Team for the ratable.

See Benefit Control Record in ACCESS for the client in the month that payment is issued.

FNX: FUEL MODE: D Screen 3

P-2914 CALCULATION OF BENEFITS (continued)

P-2914C Types of Benefits (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2914(c)) (7/1/25, 25-16)

\$21 Benefits

This benefit covers three groups of people:

- People who have heat included in their subsidized rent.
- People who rent a room.
- People who receive 3SquaresVT benefit but who did not apply for fuel assistance or were not eligible.*

*If a client is approved for 3SquaresVT, and the client pays for heat or air conditioning (in UTIL panel 01), that client will **NOT** get a \$21 benefit. The client must apply for fuel assistance to get any benefit.

These households will receive a \$21 benefit from the State, referred to as “Heat and Eat,” primarily so that people receiving 3SquaresVT benefits can receive the maximum Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) in their budget. This benefit is issued once every 12 months. If a client already receives fuel assistance, then the client will not get a “Heat and Eat” benefit because the person already receives the maximum SUA.

Under federal law, any client who receives more than \$20 or more in fuel assistance per year is eligible for the full SUA. Therefore, until the law changes, there will never be an active 3SquaresVT case that does not have the full SUA.

Heated Renters

This benefit is for people who live in unsubsidized housing and whose heat is included in their rent. These people get 30% of what they would have received if they were responsible for heating costs.

This is a cash benefit that goes on the household’s EBT card or is electronically deposited directly into their bank account. These benefits are disbursed in December or at the time of approval if the application is approved after the mid-December disbursement. EBT cash ages off after 90 days; contact the fuel team for review if the client requests that ESD return the funds to the card.

Wood and Pellet Users

This benefit is for people who heat with either wood or pellets. These benefits are issued as cash either to their EBT card or direct deposited into their bank. EBT cash ages off after 90 days; contact the fuel team for review if the client requests that ESD return the funds to the card.

Wood and pellet benefits usually go out in the summer, and a second benefit run happens in late September to catch households that are now active but weren't previously issued a fuel benefit. If a fuel assistance application is approved after the September disbursement, benefits will be issued at the time of approval. Wood and pellet benefits are issued earlier in the heating season to allow household to purchase and dry wood before the winter months.

Fuel Dealer Benefits

This benefit is for people who are responsible for their heating costs, and whose fuel type is not wood or pellets. This benefit must be used for the household's primary heating fuel type, such as kerosene, oil, coal, propane, natural gas, or electricity to heat their homes. These benefits are issued as an EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer) directly to the household's fuel dealer or energy supplier. These benefits **MUST** be issued by November 30th or at the time of approval if the application is approved after the November disbursement.

P-2914 CALCULATION OF BENEFITS (continued)

P-2914D Manual Budget Calculations (7/1/25, 25-16)

Fuel Program Budget Worksheet (Form 203SF)

Vermont Department for Children and Families Economic Services Division		203SF																											
Fuel Program Budget Worksheet																													
Name _____		SSN _____																											
Household Heating Information		I. Maximum gross income test																											
Pay for Heat (y/n) _____		a. Total earned income for past 30 days \$ _____																											
Housing Type _____	Annual Heat cost Part II #1	b. Total unearned income for the past 30 days \$ _____																											
# of Bedrooms _____		c. Public assistance (Reach Up, EP, or PSE) \$ _____																											
Fuel Type _____		d.. Total income (a. + b. + c.) \$ _____																											
Subsidy (y/n) _____																													
Maximum gross income for a household size of _____ = _____		If household passes maximum gross income test (I), complete section (II) to determine benefit amount.																											
		II. Benefit Amount Determination																											
Line of credit (Percentage of Benefit) based on date application received: circle one & enter on Part II #4		Household Income % of poverty range : _____																											
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"><thead><tr><th>Date of Application</th><th>Season</th><th>%</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Ongoing Elig Review</td><td></td><td>100 %</td></tr><tr><td>March 1 thru November 30</td><td></td><td>100 %</td></tr><tr><td>December</td><td></td><td>80 %</td></tr><tr><td>January</td><td></td><td>60 %</td></tr><tr><td>February</td><td></td><td>40 %</td></tr></tbody></table>		Date of Application	Season	%	Ongoing Elig Review		100 %	March 1 thru November 30		100 %	December		80 %	January		60 %	February		40 %										
Date of Application	Season	%																											
Ongoing Elig Review		100 %																											
March 1 thru November 30		100 %																											
December		80 %																											
January		60 %																											
February		40 %																											
☐ HEAT INCLUDED paid to applicant																													
☐ WOOD/PELLET paid to applicant																													
☐ EFT to FUEL DEALER																													
Fuel Dealer Name: _____																													
Vendor No: _____																													
Check One if Applicable:*																													
☐ \$21 Roomer ☐ \$21 heat incl subsidy benefit																													
* If they pass the Maximum Gross Income test no further calculation is needed.																													
		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"><tbody><tr><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td>Annual heating fuel cost (Heat Cost Tables)</td><td>\$ _____</td></tr><tr><td style="text-align: center;">2</td><td>Heat Cost Percentage (Fuel Pgm Table II)</td><td>X _____</td></tr><tr><td style="text-align: center;">3</td><td>Base Benefit</td><td>= _____</td></tr><tr><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td>Season % (date of appl left)</td><td>X _____</td></tr><tr><td style="text-align: center;">5</td><td>Reduced Benefit</td><td>= _____</td></tr><tr><td style="text-align: center;">6</td><td>Benefit % = 100% unless: Housing is subsidized = 55% Heat incl in housing = 30%</td><td>X _____</td></tr><tr><td style="text-align: center;">7</td><td>Reduced Benefit</td><td>= _____</td></tr><tr><td style="text-align: center;">8</td><td>Current Rateable Percent</td><td>X _____</td></tr><tr><td style="text-align: center;">9</td><td>Net Benefit (drop cents)</td><td>= _____</td></tr></tbody></table>	1	Annual heating fuel cost (Heat Cost Tables)	\$ _____	2	Heat Cost Percentage (Fuel Pgm Table II)	X _____	3	Base Benefit	= _____	4	Season % (date of appl left)	X _____	5	Reduced Benefit	= _____	6	Benefit % = 100% unless: Housing is subsidized = 55% Heat incl in housing = 30%	X _____	7	Reduced Benefit	= _____	8	Current Rateable Percent	X _____	9	Net Benefit (drop cents)	= _____
1	Annual heating fuel cost (Heat Cost Tables)	\$ _____																											
2	Heat Cost Percentage (Fuel Pgm Table II)	X _____																											
3	Base Benefit	= _____																											
4	Season % (date of appl left)	X _____																											
5	Reduced Benefit	= _____																											
6	Benefit % = 100% unless: Housing is subsidized = 55% Heat incl in housing = 30%	X _____																											
7	Reduced Benefit	= _____																											
8	Current Rateable Percent	X _____																											
9	Net Benefit (drop cents)	= _____																											

IMPORTANT! The manual budget MUST be done based on correct client information in the month the benefit was paid!

Form 203SF has three main parts:

- A. Household Heating Information: (primarily gathered from application)
- B. Maximum Gross Income Test: All income and income calculations follow 3Squares VT rules.
- C. Benefit Amount Determination: This information is gathered from the four Fuel Income Guidelines & Tables updated annually. You will need to refer to them while using the budget worksheet.
 1. Seasonal Fuel Program Income Guidelines (P-2913)
 - This is the 185% of federal poverty line (FPL) income test.
 2. Heat Cost Percentage Tables (P-2915)
 - Once the total income is determined, use the Percentage of Poverty Table (P-2914A) to find what range the client falls in, and then find the range on the chart and its corresponding Heating Cost Percentage.
 3. Standard Heating Cost Tables (P-2916)
 - This chart provides an estimate of the annual heating cost based on housing type, number of bedrooms, and fuel type.
 - It will be used in the Benefit Determination section of the manual budget with information listed in the Household heating information on the 203SF.
 4. Percent of Poverty Table (P-2914A)
 - This table provides income ranges and percentages and is used in conjunction with the "Heat Cost Percentage Table" in P-2915.
 - Once you find the Gross Income in the Maximum Gross Income section, use the total income from line D to look the percentage up on this chart.

Complete the Household Heating Information Section

Household Heating Information		
Pay for Heat (y/n)	<u> a </u>	
Housing Type	<u> b </u>	} Annual Heat cost Part II #1
# of Bedrooms	<u> c </u>	
Fuel Type	<u> d </u>	
Subsidy (y/n)	<u> e </u>	
Maximum gross income for a household size of	<u> f </u>	= $\frac{\text{f}}{185 \% \text{ FPL}}$

- a. Does the client pay for heat or is it included in the rent?
- This information is gathered from question 5 on the 201SF application or question 42 on Form 202.
- b. What type of housing?
- Single Family (1), Mobile Home (2), or Multi-Family (3). This can be found on question 6 of Form 201SF or question 42 of Form 202.
- c. How many Bedrooms?
- This can be found on question 7 of Form 201SF or question 42 of Form 202.
- d. What is the fuel type?
- (Wood, Pellets, Oil, Kerosene, Propane (gas), Natural Gas, Electricity and Coal.) This can be found on question 8 of Form 201SF or question 42 of Form 202.
- e. Is the housing subsidized?
- This can be found on question 9 of Form 201SF or question 39 of Form 202.
- f. What is the Maximum gross income for their household size?
- List the number of household members in the first blank and the income limit in the second blank. Household members can be determined by who is listed on the first

page of Form 201SF or question 6 of Form 202. The income limit can be found on the Fuel Program Income Guidelines (P-2913).

g. "Line of Credit"

- Circle the appropriate "Season %" (100%, 80%, 60%, 40%) based on the application date. (We will be putting the circled percentage on Section II line 4.)

Line of credit (Percentage of Benefit) based on date application received: circle one & enter on Part II #4	
Date of Application	Season % g
Ongoing Elig Review	100 %
March 1 thru November 30	100 %
December	80 %
January	60 %
February	40 %

- h. Check off if heat is included, if applicant has a wood/pellet benefit, or if it will be an electronic fund transfer (EFT) to the fuel dealer. (If it is EFT indicate dealer name and vendor number.)
- i. If the client is a roomer or has heat included AND subsidized rent, check the appropriate \$21 benefit box.

☐ HEAT INCLUDED paid to applicant	h
☐ WOOD/PELLET paid to applicant	
☐ EFT to FUEL DEALER	
Fuel Dealer Name: _____	
Vendor No: _____	
Check One if Applicable:* i	
☐ \$21 Roomer	☐ \$21 heat incl subsidy benefit
* If they pass the Maximum Gross Income test no further calculation is needed.	

If you check off one of these two options AND the client is income eligible, you're done. Complete the bottom portion of form, submit to your supervisor for review, and then e-mail to Fuel and Utility Team: ahs.dcfesdfuelmgmt@vermont.gov.

Complete Maximum Gross Income Test Section (Section I Parts a-d)

I. Maximum gross income test	
a.	Total earned income for past 30 days \$ _____
b.	Total unearned income for the past 30 days \$ _____
c.	Public assistance (Reach Up, EP, or PSE) \$ _____
d.	Total income (a. + b. + c.) \$ _____
If household passes maximum gross income test (I), complete section (II) to determine benefit amount.	

- Calculate the total earned income for the past 30 days and put it on line **a**. All calculations follow 3SquaresVT income process. Ex: Weekly income is averaged and then multiplied by 4.3.
- Enter total gross unearned on line **b**.
- Enter the monthly amount of public assistance income on line **c**.
- Total all types of income for a gross monthly amount, and enter that amount on line **d**.
- Compare line **d**. to the maximum gross income for the household size.
 - This information was entered in the household heating information section line **f**.
 - Remember, this is all income received for all mandatory household members the month the benefit was paid! This could easily be different than 3Squares.

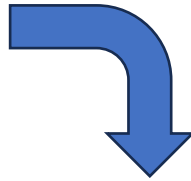
If the household is over income, the household is ineligible, and you are done.

If the household is income eligible, continue to Section II of the manual budget sheet, Benefit Amount Determination.

Benefit Amount Determination (Section II)

- Fill in the first blank Household income % poverty range by using the percentage of poverty table.
 - For Example: a household of 1 with \$893.04 total income would be in the 75%-84% range.

B. Household Income per		
Household Size	0% TO <75%	75% TO 84%
1	0 TO \$839	\$ 840 TO \$ 952



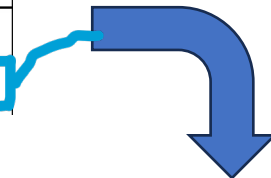
II. Benefit Amount Determination

Household Income % of poverty range : 75-84%

- b. Enter the “Annual heating fuel cost” by using the Standard Heating Cost Table and the household heating information section on line 1. (This will use Fuel type, housing type, and number of bedrooms)
- For Example, a household living in an apartment (multi-family) with 3 bedrooms that heats with propane has an expected heating cost of \$2,347/year.

Multi Family Homes

Fuel Type	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3 Bedrooms
Natural Gas	\$ 923	\$ 1,148	\$ 1,373
Propane	\$ 1,109	\$ 1,728	\$ 2,347



II. Benefit Amount Determination

Household Income % of poverty range : 75-84%

1	Annual heating fuel cost (Heat Cost Tables)	\$ <u>\$2,347</u>
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- c. Enter the “Heating Cost Percentage” on line two by using the range listed on the top line and the Heat Cost Percentage Tables.
- For Example, the household from example a above, with income 75%–84% of the poverty range, would have 87% as their “Heating Cost Percentage.”

<i>Table I HH Income as Percentage of Poverty</i>	<i>Table II Heating Cost Percentage</i>
175-185%	27%
165-174%	30%
155-164%	33%
145-154%	66%
135-144%	69%
125-134%	72%
115-124%	75%
105-114%	78%
95-104%	81%
85-94%	84%
75-84%	87%

II. Benefit Amount Determination		
Household Income % of poverty range : 75-84%		
1	Annual heating fuel cost (Heat Cost Tables)	\$ \$2,347
2	Heat Cost Percentage (Fuel Pgm Table II)	X 87%

d. Determine the Base Benefit by taking Annual Heating Fuel Cost (line 1) and multiplying it by the Heat Cost Percentage (line 2).

- For Example: the \$2,347 from **b** X the 87% from **c**.
 $2347 * 0.87 = 2041.89$

1	Annual heating fuel cost (Heat Cost Tables)	\$ \$2,347
2	Heat Cost Percentage (Fuel Pgm Table II)	X 87%
3	Base Benefit	= \$2,041.89

e. Enter the Season % determined in the Heating Information section by the date applied chart.

application received: circle one & enter on Part II #4			
Date of Application	Season %	1	Annual heating fuel cost (Heat Cost Tables)
Ongoing Elig Review	100 %		\$ \$2,347
March 1 thru November 30	100 %	2	Heat Cost Percentage (Fuel Pgm Table II)
December	80 %		X 87%
January	60 %	3	Base Benefit
February	40 %		= \$2,041.89
		4	Season % (date of appl left)
			X 80%

f. Enter Reduced Benefit amount (Base Benefit [line 3] x Season % [line 4])

- From our example: $\$2,041.89 * 0.8 = \$1,633.51$

3	Base Benefit	= <u>\$2,041.89</u>
4	Season % (date of appl left)	X <u>80%</u>
5	Reduced Benefit	= <u>\$1,633.51</u>
6	Benefit % = 100% unless: Housing is subsidized = 55% Heat incl in housing = 30%	X <u>100%</u>

g. Enter the Benefit % 100% unless:

- Housing is subsidized= 55%
- Heat is included in housing = 30%

h. Calculate the Reduced Benefit and enter it. Line 5 X Line 6

- In this example, the client does NOT have subsidized housing, and he does NOT have heat included in rent, and so we use 100%.
1633.51 * 100% = 1633.51

7	Reduced Benefit	= <u>\$1,633.51</u>
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i. Find the ratable reduction (P-2914B) and write it on Line 8.

- In ACCESS, under FNX: Code Mode: D, Blank SSN, leave month alone, and then in CMD, type FR. The ratable is always the top number.
- For training purposes, we are using 29% as the ratable reduction. This amount may fluctuate throughout the season depending on expected costs.

8	Current Rateable Percent	X <u>29%</u>
9	Net Benefit (drop cents)	= <u>\$ 473</u>

j. Calculate the Net benefit (Line 7 X Line 8)

- For this example, that would be $\$1,633.51 \times 0.29 = 473.72$
Drop cents = \$473

II. Benefit Amount Determination

Household Income % of poverty range : 75-84%

1	Annual heating fuel cost (Heat Cost Tables)	\$ <u>\$2,347</u>
2	Heat Cost Percentage (Fuel Pgm Table II)	X <u>87%</u>
3	Base Benefit	= <u>\$2,041.89</u>
4	Season % (date of appl left)	X <u>80%</u>
5	Reduced Benefit	= <u>\$1,633.51</u>
6	Benefit % = 100% unless: Housing is subsidized = 55% Heat incl in housing = 30%	X <u>100%</u>
7	Reduced Benefit	= <u>\$1,633.51</u>
8	Current Rateable Percent	X <u>29%</u>
9	Net Benefit (drop cents)	= <u>\$ 473</u>

Finally: Fill in the Bottom of Form 203SF

Net Benefit Amount (line 9 above):	\$ <u>473</u>
Benefit Paid To Date:	\$ <u>21</u>
Adjusted Amount Due:	\$ <u>452</u>

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2914 for more information about the calculation of benefits.

P-2915 HEAT COST PERCENTAGE TABLE (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2915) (7/1/25, 25-16)

Table I HH Income as Percentage of Poverty	Table II Heat Cost Percentage
175-185%	27%
165-174%	30%
155-164%	33%
145-154%	66%
135-144%	69%
125-134%	72%
115-124%	75%
105-114%	78%
95-104%	81%
85-94%	84%
75-84%	87%
0-74%	90%

This table establishes the percentage of fuel benefits that a household is eligible for based on the household's percentage of poverty. (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2915(d))

**P-2916 STANDARD HEATING COST TABLES(Seasonal
Fuel Assistance Rule 2916) (7/1/25, 25-16)**

FOR 2025-26 HEATING SEASON

Multi-Family Homes

<i>Fuel Type</i>	<i>1 Bedroom</i>	<i>2 Bedrooms</i>	<i>3 Bedrooms</i>	<i>4 + Bedrooms</i>
Natural Gas	\$ 923	\$ 1,148	\$ 1,373	\$ 1,599
Propane	\$ 1,109	\$ 1,728	\$ 2,347	\$ 2,966
Oil	\$ 2,124	\$ 2,839	\$ 3,553	\$ 4,268
Kerosene	\$ 1,610	\$ 2,223	\$ 2,831	\$ 3,435
Electricity	\$ 967	\$ 1,060	\$ 1,152	\$ 1,244
Firewood, Wood Pellets and Coal	\$ 1,085	\$ 1,231	\$ 1,343	\$ 1,437

Single Family and Mobile Homes

<i>Fuel Type</i>	<i>1 Bedroom</i>	<i>2 Bedrooms</i>	<i>3 Bedrooms</i>	<i>4+ Bedrooms</i>
Natural Gas	\$ 1,228	\$ 1,454	\$ 1,679	\$ 1,904
Propane	\$ 2,141	\$ 2,760	\$ 3,379	\$ 3,998
Oil	\$ 2,408	\$ 3,123	\$ 3,837	\$ 4,552
Kerosene	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,897	\$ 3,494	\$ 4,091
Electricity	\$ 1,692	\$ 1,785	\$ 1,877	\$ 1,970
Firewood, Wood Pellets and Coal	\$ 1,550	\$ 1,604	\$ 1,658	\$ 1,711

Primary Heating Fuel Costs

The annual primary heating fuel cost is based on the following standard heating cost tables (referred to as “proxy tables”). The tables were derived from the actual home heating consumption of fuel assistance recipients and developed in consultation with experts in the home energy field. The tables provide only the cost of fuel or energy for home heat. The tables are revised no less frequently than every three years based on data supplied by certified fuel suppliers, the Department of Public Service and other industry sources.

Counting Rooms

Rooms may be counted as bedrooms, even though they are not presently being used for such purposes, provided that they would likely be counted as bedrooms in any advertisement for the sale or rental of the home or unit.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2916 for how Standard Heating Cost Tables are developed.

P-2917 BENEFIT ISSUANCE (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2917) (7/1/25, 25-16)

P-2917A Benefit Delivery

Benefits are issued according to the schedule in Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2918. At the time of payment, ACCESS-generated lists are sent to the fuel or energy suppliers. The list provides the names of each supplier's eligible customers and the amount of each line of credit. When the head of household's name is not the name on the account, both names (the head of household and the fuel account holder) must appear on the list. Funds are transferred electronically (EFT) to the fuel suppliers' bank accounts.

Households with heat included in their rent and households that pay room rent receive their benefit payments through EBT, direct deposit, or check according to the benefit schedule in rule 2918. Payments can be issued in any form, but checks should only be issued if EBT and direct deposit are unavailable.

To receive direct deposit, eligible customers must receive a cash benefit and have a bank account. Direct deposit is preferred over EBT because EBT cash ages off after 90 days. If the client requests that ESD return the funds to their EBT card after cash ages off, then contact the fuel team. Cases should be checked to ensure there is an active EBT card before a benefit is issued.

In rare cases, ESD releases a second disbursement of funds, and households may receive additional fuel benefits. This chart details what situation changes warrant a second benefit after the initial \$21 is sent. (See P-2914C for clients who receive \$21 benefits.)

New Approval Situation	New Benefit Type	New Issuance?	Additional Action?
No Change (still \$21)	Fixed \$21	No	No
Now	Vendor EFT	Yes	Deduct \$21 & issue remainder
Heat included in rent (not subsidized housing)	EBT Cash or Direct Deposit	Yes	Deduct \$21 & issue remainder
Wooder – Heats w/ Pellets	EBT Cash or Direct Deposit	Yes	Deduct \$21 & issue remainder
Wooder – Heats w/ Wood	EBT Cash or Direct Deposit	Yes	Deduct \$21 & issue remainder

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2917 for information about how ESD may issue benefit payments.

P-2917 BENEFIT ISSUANCE (continued)

P-2917B Voiding and Reissuing EBT Payments (7/1/25, 25-16)

When Error is Found on Same Day – Before Benefit Issued

To correct any error for an EBT transaction on the day the error is made:

- BPS must email Supervisor or Sr. BPS with case information.
- Supervisor must send email to Fuel Team requesting to void the transaction under INQD and update the Benefit Control Record (BCR).
- Shred any notice attached to inaccurate eligibility.
- Fuel Team then emails back to Supervisor or Sr. BPS who initiated the process, informing them that both actions (voiding and updating) have been completed.
- BPS processes eligibility using correct information.
- CATN case of all actions taken.

Department Error Found After Benefit is Issued

To correct a Department error for an EBT transaction after the benefit is issued:

- BPS must check EBT Edge to see if any of the Fuel benefit has been used.
- If any of the benefit has been used, follow the procedure for manual budget calculation (P-2914D).
- If none of the benefit has been used, BPS must email Supervisor or Sr. BPS with case information, including status of benefit on EBT card.
 - Supervisor must email the Fuel Team requesting to void transaction and update the BCR.
 - Fuel Team then emails back to Supervisor or Sr. BPS who initiated the process, informing them that both actions (voiding and updating) have been completed.
 - BPS refigures eligibility using correct information.
 - CATN case of all actions taken.

Client Error Reported After Benefit is Issued

If an error made by a client is found after the benefit is issued through an EBT transaction:

- CATN case of error in ELIG screen and update STATS.
- No additional benefits will be issued, and changes won't affect benefits already issued.
- Advise client that benefit must be used to pay for heating expenses.
- Changes in ELIG will be in effect for future benefit issuances.

P-2917 BENEFIT ISSUANCE (continued)

P-2917C Voiding and Reissuing Direct Deposit Payments (7/1/25, 25-16)

When Error is Found on Same Day

To correct any error for a direct deposit transaction before 4:00 p.m. on the day the error is made:

- BPS must email Supervisor or Sr. BPS with case information.
- Supervisor must send email the Fuel Team requesting to void the transaction under INQD and change the Benefit Control Record (BCR).
- Shred any notice attached to inaccurate eligibility.
- Fuel Team then emails back to Supervisor or Sr. BPS who initiated the process, informing them that both actions (voiding and updating) have been completed.
- BPS reprocesses eligibility using correct information.
- CATN case of all actions taken.

Department Error Found After Benefit is Issued

To correct a Department error for a direct deposit transaction after the benefit is issued:

- BPS must update STATS and CATN case.
- BPS must calculate a manual budget (P-2914D) and subtract the amount of the benefit that has already been issued.
- BPS must have Supervisor or Sr. BPS review and approve the changes.
- Supervisor or Sr. BPS must email manual budget to the Fuel Team.

Client Error Reported After Benefit is Issued

If an error made by a client is found after the benefit is issued through a direct deposit:

- CATN case of error in ELIG screen and update STATS.
- No additional benefits will be issued, and changes won't affect benefits already issued.

- Advise client that benefit must be used to pay for heating expenses.
- Changes in ELIG will be in effect for future benefit issuances.

Direct Deposit Rejected by Bank

If a bank or other financial institution rejects a direct deposit payment to a client, the payment must be reissued as follows:

- BPS must update bank information in ACCESS and CATNs case.
- BPS must email Supervisor or Sr. BPS with case information.
- Supervisor must email the Fuel Team, advising that funds were rejected by bank.
- Fuel Team voids benefit (unless business office has already voided it) and updates the BCR.
- Fuel Team then emails back to Supervisor or Sr. BPS who initiated the process, informing them that case is now set to be reprocessed.
- BPS makes sure all information is accurate, approves Fuel eligibility, makes sure new record under INQD accurately shows that payment was switched to EBT Cash.
- CATN case of all actions taken.

P-2917 BENEFIT ISSUANCE (continued)

P-2917D Voiding and Reissuing Payments to Fuel Dealers (7/1/25, 25-16)

When Error is Found on Same Day – Before Benefit Issued

To correct any error before payment is issued to a fuel dealer, on the day the error is made:

- BPS must email Supervisor or Sr. BPS with case information.
- Supervisor must email the Fuel Team requesting to void transaction under INQD and change the Benefit Control Record (BCR).
- Any client notice with inaccurate eligibility information must be shredded.
- Fuel Team then emails back to Supervisor or Sr. BPS who initiated the process, informing them that both actions (voiding and updating) have been completed.
- BPS re-determines eligibility in ACCESS using correct information.
- BPS must enter CATN of all actions taken.

Department Error Found After Benefit is Issued

To correct a Department error after the benefit is issued to a fuel dealer:

- BPS re-determines eligibility in ACCESS using correct information.
- BPS must email Supervisor or Sr. BPS with case information.
- Supervisor or Sr. BPS must send information to the Fuel Team.
- Fuel Team will determine appropriate steps to resolve issue. For example:
 - Transfer funds between dealers
 - Create manual budget
- The Fuel Team will follow up with the Supervisor or Sr. BPS, advising next steps to be taken.
- CATN case of all actions taken.

Client Error Reported After Benefit is Issued

If an error made by a client is found after the benefit is issued to fuel dealer:

- CATN case of error in ELIG screen and update STATS.
- No additional benefits will be issued, and changes won't affect benefits already issued.
- Notify the Fuel Team of the error.
- Advise client that changes will be in effect for future benefit issuances.
- If client provided incorrect information about the fuel dealer, then advise client who is still paying for heat that the benefit may be transferred to the new certified supplier.

P-2922 EXPEDITED FUEL APPLICATION PROCESS

(Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2922) (7/1/25, 25-16)

P-2922A Goals and General Procedure for Expediting Applications

Goals of Expedited Seasonal Fuel Assistance for Clients Facing a Home Heating Crisis

Expediting a client's seasonal fuel benefit for a consumer with a home heating crisis has three goals:

1. To solve the client's home heating crisis.
2. To enroll the client in ongoing eligibility for seasonal fuel.
3. To preserve the client's single crisis fuel benefit.

Over-Arching Process

1. Based on the intake, the Community Action Agency must determine that the applicant is eligible crisis assistance and income eligible for seasonal fuel benefits before an expedited seasonal fuel request is submitted to the local ESD District Office.
2. The crisis fuel worker's and the client's responsibility is to make every effort to obtain seasonal fuel assistance in time to prevent the client's loss of heat.
3. In some instances, the client may be required to submit an application to the local ESD office or meet ESD program and/or procedural requirements.
4. Program and procedural requirements cannot be waived by the ESD District Office.
5. When, in the opinion of the crisis fuel worker, a client is unable to send over a completed application to the ESD District Office, a crisis fuel benefit can be given to solve the home heating crisis.
6. But the crisis fuel worker and the client must agree and document the client's responsibilities for obtaining seasonal fuel assistance.
7. When a client's seasonal fuel benefit cannot be expedited by the ESD District Office, the Community Action Agency should issue a crisis fuel benefit to solve the client's home heating crisis.

8. However, the crisis fuel worker MUST take into account the reason(s) why ESD could not expedite seasonal fuel assistance and re-determine if the client still meets eligibility criteria for crisis fuel assistance.

Criteria for Expediting Application

A seasonal fuel application may be expedited if:

1. The household completes the application and provides all documents to verify eligibility;
2. The household is eligible for seasonal fuel benefits;
3. The household hasn't received benefits during the heating season; and
4. The household has a home heating emergency, such as:
 - the fuel tank is at 25% or less of its full capacity, or
 - there is one week's supply (or less) of firewood, wood pellets, or coal (if those are the primary sources of heating in the home), or
 - the household has received a disconnect notice from a metered utility.
 - The utility must provide heat to the home or must operate a necessary part of home heating equipment, like a furnace.

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.

P-2923 CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCES (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2923) (7/1/25, 25-16)

Effect on Eligibility or Benefits

The household is required to report any changes in circumstances within ten days. Any changes reported for other programs will not affect eligibility or the benefit level once the household's eligibility and benefit amount have been approved and the fuel benefit has been issued.

If the household receives any other benefits from the Department, and a worker makes changes to the STAT panels for those other programs before the fuel benefit amount is set and the benefit has been issued, then a new version of FUEL/ELIG may be created based on this new information. Changes before payment MAY change the eligibility for the current season depending on the date the change is reported and the particular change in circumstance.

If the household fails or refuses to provide verification of circumstances for other ESD programs, and benefits for those other programs are denied or closed, eligibility for the fuel program will not be affected if the fuel benefit has already been issued for the heating season. Once a household has been granted fuel assistance, eligibility continues without change, except as stated below.

Death or Change in Residency

If the head of household—

- Dies, or
- Moves out of state, or
- Moves to an excluded living arrangement (e.g., jail or long-term care),

and if this information has been entered into ACCESS before the fuel benefit is issued, then the benefit will not be issued. In which case, another adult household member may apply for fuel benefits.

Information Needed When Circumstances Change

Moves

- When someone moves, gather all of the information related to their living situation: address, household members, fuel type, account numbers, housing type, number of

bedrooms, fuel dealer (including which office, if appropriate), and whether they pay for heat and electricity.

- Determine whether the cost of heat is now included in their rent payment.
- This information can be gathered by:
 - getting a new 201SF for, as it encompasses all this information, or
 - getting a verbal statement providing all required information.

Dealer Changes

- A dealer change can be made in ACCESS at any time.
 - Be sure to gather the fuel dealer's name and location and any new account numbers.
- If the benefit has already been issued, clients are responsible for contacting their previous dealer to request a transfer to their new supplier.
- Make the change in ACCESS and advise the client to contact both dealers.
- Fuel dealers must contact the fuel team if they have any questions.

Fuel Type Changes

- This follows the same process as Dealer changes. Be sure to gather the fuel dealer's name and location and any new account numbers.
- Update the information in ACCESS, but this will not change what they received.
- They will need to contact the dealer to have it transferred if they have a new dealer. If not, they will need to notify the new dealer of the fuel type change and any questions or concerns from the dealer will be directed to the fuel team.

Household Member Changes

- If a client was active in another household when a fuel benefit was issued, they have received fuel for that season and cannot receive it separately until the following season.
 - They can be removed as normal but will not be able to be approved until the current fuel season ends.

- All other changes are treated the same as usual. Update the information and approve the changes. It will never affect a fuel benefit that has already been issued.

For special circumstances or case queries first consult a Senior BPS or a Supervisor to determine if an email should be sent to the Fuel and Utility Programs Team at ahs.dcfesdfuelmgmt@vermont.gov.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2923 for more information about how changes in household circumstances affect fuel assistance benefits.

P-2926 NOTIFICATIONS (Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2926) (7/1/25, 25-16)

If an application is approved, a notice of decision is generated with the pertinent fuel information. This notice is sent to the client for review to make sure the factors used are correct. Notices that list the actual benefit amount are sent out when the benefit is issued.

ESD must send a notice to all eligible households when the Department issues payments, either to the household or to their fuel suppliers. ESD must send these notices according to the benefit schedule in rule 2918. All notices are generated in batch, via ACCESS, indicating the annual benefit amount, the period that the benefit covers, and whether payment is made to the household or the fuel supplier.

Ineligible households receive denial notices as their applications are processed. These notices print overnight on a printer in the district office and are mailed daily. File copies of notices are not printed and do not appear in OnBase, but denial notices can be seen through the notice system.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2926 for appeal rights which must appear in each notice.

P-2927 ACCESS PANELS (7/1/25, 25-16)

P-2927A Common Panels

The most important ACCESS panels for fuel are the member (MEMB) panels, income panels, and Utility (UTIL) panel. If those are coded correctly, the benefit should always be correct. Make sure to add account numbers for fuel supplier and electric utility.

Make sure ALL information on the utility panel is accurate as this information drives the benefit.

```
10/20/22 10:28 MAJOR UTILITY EXP Question 32 ( UTIL . 01 )
( Last Updated: / / : | ASQAGH2
Name of Person Utility Uses Paid For (Y-N)
Paying for Fuel or Utilities Heating Hot Water Cooking Lights A/C
HRIS GA Y Y Y Y Y
***** SEASONAL FUEL *****
Fuel Type Housing Number Subsidized/
Primary Type Bedrooms Public Vendor to be Paid
K 2 3 N 11005281010
Account Name: CHRIS GA FRED'S PLUMBING HEATING INC
Account Number: 25921200 ANGEL GRAVES
328 MAIN ST
DERBY VT
05829 Tel: 802-766-4949
***** ELECTRICITY ACCOUNT INFO *****
Name on Elec Bill: CHRIS GA Electricity Provider/Compan
Account Nbr on Elec Bill: 33166869 11000931010
GREEN MOUNTAIN POWER CORP
```

Member Panel

SF member codes are the most important for fuel. All members must either have an "X" under "assistance asked" and a SF Code "1" OR no "X" and the applicable Excluded member code (3-8). See P-2903 for household member ACCESS codes.

```
09/17/15 08:40 HOUSEHOLD MEMBER QUESTION 01 ( MEMB . 01 )
(LAST UPDATED: / / : | ASPADA )

** FIRST ** I ** LAST ** MOD RU ME FS EP SF PS N MO DA YEAR *** SSN *** S
HOMER J SIMPSON X X X 01 01 1976 009 84 5613

*PROGRAM CASE MEMBER* *CITIZEN*
*** RELATION *** REL RUFA ME FS SF PSE US CTZ ID VET SEX MS GRD ETH RACE
SELF 01 1 1 1 Y M M 12 N W

RUFA REACH UP WORK FS REGISTRATION * IMMIGRANT STATUS DATA *
DEDUCT CODE CAT PART SSU/DET EXP CODE EFF DATE CODE / NBR STATUS
05 07 09 17 2015

WORK READY CODE RUFA TYPE WRK QRTS ENTRY DATE
```

Rent

Utility answers and subsidized housing answers must match the UTIL panel in order to process. (An edit will appear if they do not.)

08/28/15 15:27 RENTAL EXPENSE				QUESTION 31 (RENT . 01)			
				(LAST UPDATED: 08/28/15 15:27 ASPAGE)			
NAME OF PERSON WHO PAYS THE RENT				INCL IN RENT		RENT AMT	MONTHLY
CLIENT L LASTNAME				FUEL UTIL		\$\$\$\$\$ ¢¢	\$\$\$\$\$ ¢¢
				Y Y		M 750 00	750 00
**** SUBSIDIZED/PUBLIC HOUSING **** (COMPLETE BELOW IF DIFFERENT)							
Y/N	TYPE	BDRMS	RUFA	SUBSIDY	FS / SF	FS / SF	FS / SF
Y	S		STD	ACT	HH USED	INKIND	
				00070			
***** R V P D A T A *****							
RVP CODE:		RENT AMT: \$ 00000 00				ARREARAGE	

Utility Panel

The utility panel must be completed in full as it drives the fuel benefit calculation. Accuracy Is Imperative! There should only ever be ONE UTIL panel per case. Confirm the correct location for the dealer.

- If heat and electricity are included in the rent, put an N under lights and heat and no-account number is needed.
- ESD collects the electricity account information for federal reporting purposes. It has no impact on eligibility determination for any program, but it is still important to collect.
- If heat is included in the rent or room rent, then the fuel vendor and electricity account information fields *should be left blank*.
- There should never be a UTIL panel and RBEX panel in the same case.

10/20/22 10:28		HEATING FUEL TYPE ASODGHNC		FUEL HOUSING TYPE ASODGHYJ		UTIL . 01)	
Name of Person		C = Coal		1 = Single family home		/ / : ASQAGH2	
Paying for Fuel		E = Electricity		2 = Mobile home		s Paid For (Y-N)	
CHRIS GA		G = Gas (Propane)		3 = Multi-family home		ter Cooking Lights A/C	
		K = Kerosene				Y Y Y	
		N = Natural Gas					
		O = Oil					
		P = Pellets					
		W = Wood					
***** PERSONAL FUEL *****							
Fuel Type	Housing	Number	Subsidized/	Vendor to be Paid			
Primary	Type	Bedrooms	Public	11005281010			
K	2	3	N	FRED'S PLUMBING HEATING INC			
Account Name: CHRIS GA				ANGEL GRAVES			
Account Number: 25921200				328 MAIN ST			
				DERBY VT			
				05829 Tel: 802-766-4949			
***** ELECTRICITY ACCOUNT INFO *****							
Name on Elec Bill: CHRIS GA				Electricity Provider/Company			
Acct Nbr on Elec Bill: 33166869				11000931010			
				GREEN MOUNTAIN POWER CORP			

Eligibility Screens

ALWAYS check your budget and ELIG screens in *all* available months. If the case is ineligible for one month, the household may be eligible in the following month. Unlike 3SquaresVT, you must reappl for the 1st of the following month if prompted. If you see the message shown below make sure to reapply for the first of the month following.

- This is **ONLY** for cases that become eligible in the following month. Ex: ineligible in May and eligible in June. It does not apply to applications who become ineligible.

89595	Supplemental Fuel Eligibility Results	ASQ6VA1A
Reporting Period: 10-22	Processed: 10 20 2022 10:31	Ver: 1 of 1
SF Eligibility Result: Ineligible	Method: Computed	
Gross Earned Income: +\$	Season Percentage:	
	Pay for Heat: Y	
RUFA, EP Benefit: +\$	Main Fuel Type: Kerosene	
Other Unearned Income: +\$ 5000.00	Number of Bedrooms: 3	
	Type of Housing: Mobile	
	Subsidized Housing: N	
Household Size: 1	Benefit Group:	
GROSS Fuel Income: =\$ 5000.00	Pay Method:	
Action Required		
Approval of Denial however next months results are eligible		
Approve denial, then reenter appl date as 1st of next month		
Approval Code: ? By:		

Order of Approval (Check all available months)

When approving or reapproving a case with multiple active programs, always try to approve them in this order: RUFA/EP, SF, & FS (3SquaresVT).

Edits/Dailies (Check all available months)

- Always check your edits and that the STAT panel has the V for verified under SF prior to approving.
- Edits will appear for many different reasons, and issue must be resolved ASAP because edits on daily will prevent payment from being issued until the issue is resolved.

P-2927 ACCESS PANELS (continued)

P-2927B Shelter Information (7/1/25, 25-16)

Types of Housing

All housing must meet the definition of a living unit under Rule 2901(a)(12). There are three housing codes in the UTIL panel.

1 = Single Family Home (including modular homes)

2 = Mobile Home a.k.a. Manufactured Home (single or double wide)

3 = Multi-Family Home (such as duplex, apartment, condo, townhouse)

Form 202H – Shelter Expense Statement

This form is REQUIRED for applicants who rent and heat with wood/pellets.

Form 204AN – Account Name/Metered Service Verification

The 204AN is a multi-purpose form to capture specific information when the landlord bills the tenant for heat. The 204AN should accompany a 202V request for verification.

When Landlord Bills Tenant for Heat

- Seasonal Fuel Assistance benefits are paid directly to the fuel supplier, and benefits are issued in the name of the head of household. Use Form 204AN to identify the name on the fuel account when it is someone other than the head of household.
- Enter the name of the account holder on the UTIL panel. This gets transmitted to the supplier at benefit issuance, so they know what account to apply the funds to.
- If a landlord bills the tenant for heat, the fuel supplier needs to know what account to apply the funds to. Therefore, the landlord must complete the 204AN form so the tenant's name can be added to the account at the fuel supplier.
- If the 204AN form is not returned, the application must be denied for failure to provide verification. Except if the landlord checks "yes" on the form, but does not initial it or refuses to add tenant's name to the account, do NOT deny the fuel application. Instead, enter info on UTIL panel same as above.

When Landlord Uses Uncertified Fuel Supplier

- Because some fuel benefits for some renters are paid to CAPSTONE, Form 204AN is also used to identify a renter whose landlord uses a fuel supplier that is not certified with the Fuel Program and who is unwilling/unable to change suppliers.
- When the supplier is not certified, leave the UTIL panel vendor section as “?” and email the form to the Fuel and Utility Programs Team for review:
ahs.dcfesdfuelmgmt@vermont.gov.
- In these situations, the form *must be reviewed by the Fuel Team*. If approved, the fuel team will enter Capstone as the vendor and respond with further instruction for processing eligibility. Only the Fuel Team may enter CAPSTONE as the supplier.

P-2927 ACCESS PANELS (continued)

P-2927C Certified Fuel & Utility Suppliers (7/1/25, 25-16)

Important Dealer Information

- For households that pay for heat (other than firewood or pellets) shelter must include their fuel/utility supplier.
- Seasonal fuel benefits may only be paid to suppliers who are certified with the Fuel Assistance Program.
- Certification takes place every 3 years and is managed by the Fuel and Utility Programs Team.
- ESD posts a list of certified fuel dealers on DCF's website: <https://dcf.vermont.gov/benefits/fuel>. The following website links directly to this publicly available list: <http://tiny.cc/b86vzz>.
- To locate a vendor number for a certified dealer, refer to the Certified Fuel Dealer BPS Desk Aid on the ESD's SharePoint site: <http://tiny.cc/327vzz>.

Enter a Vendor Number for Fuel Dealer into ACCESS

1. Open the UTIL panel.
2. Place your Cursor in the Fuel Dealer entry field.

***** SEASONAL FUEL *****				
Fuel Type	Housing	Number	Subsidized/	Vendor to be Paid
Primary	Type	Bedrooms	Public	
K	2	3	N	1005281010
Account Name: CHRIS GA				FREDS PLUMBING HEATING INC (
Account Number: 25921200				ANGEL GRAVES
				328 MAIN ST
				DERBY VT
				05829 Tel: 802-766-4949
***** ELECTRICITY ACCOUNT INFO *****				
Name on Elec Bill: CHRIS GA				Electricity Provider/Company
Acct Nbr on Elec Bill: 33166869				11000931010
				GREEN MOUNTAIN POWER CORP

3. Cut and paste the vendor number from the BPS Desk Aid on the ESD's SharePoint site: <http://tiny.cc/327vzz>. By entering this number, other dealer information will be auto-filled.
4. Do **NOT** use Shift + F12 to locate a vendor number for a fuel supplier. Use the vendor number from Desk Aid.

Trouble Finding a Dealer in ACCESS

Follow the Standard Operating Procedure which includes opening the Certified Fuel Dealer list and using CTRL + F (Find) to search based on dealer name, fuel type, phone number, address and more. Check with Senior BPS or supervisor, who will contact the Fuel and Utility Programs Team, if unable to determine the correct fuel dealer.

See Seasonal Fuel Assistance Rule 2902 for fuel supplier certification requirements.