

## **SCOTT COUNTY BENEFITS PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

The Benefit Program provides payee services to individuals determined unable to manage monetary benefits by the U.S. Department Veterans Affairs, Social Security Administration, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, and other federal monetary programs.

### INITIAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

1. The client accepted into the Scott County Benefit Program must meet the following requirements:
  - a. The person must be a resident of Scott County.
  - b. Required by Social Security, Veteran Affairs, OPM, and other federal monetary programs to have a payee. (Referral Letter/Documentation Required)
2. The client must agree to inform the Case Aide of the following:
  - a. Current residence
  - b. Current landlord name, address, and telephone number
  - c. Any sums of money received from any source
  - d. Any checking, savings, bank accounts, stocks, bonds, CDs or other assets
  - e. Any insurance policies or burial contracts
  - f. Any changes in household living arrangements
  - g. Any bills that need to be paid
3. The client must agree to sign release forms and necessary documents.
4. The client must agree to inform the Case Aide of any major changes that will affect their benefit status with Social Security. Changes include but are not limited to:
  - a. Changes in marital status
  - b. Other individuals living at the same residence and their income resources
  - c. Incarceration more than 30 days
  - d. Plans to move out of Scott County and/or the State of Iowa.
  - e. Starting or stopping employment

### GENERAL PROCEDURES:

The first priority of the Benefit Program is to ensure the client's basic living expenses are paid. Prior to authorization for payment for monthly bills, the client will need to provide an actual copy of each bill (excluding the ongoing rental agreement established with the first payment). The rent and utility costs are divided equally. The number of adults and beneficiaries living in the household determines this.

For example: if a client lives with two other adults, the amount of rent paid by the Case Aide on our client's behalf would be one third of the total rent.

Additional duties the Case Aide may assist clients with is applying for food assistance, heating/utility assistance, rent rebates, Medicaid applications/reviews, Medicaid for Employed Persons with Disabilities, and Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver Programs.

The Benefit Program has prioritized expenditures to be paid as follows:

1. Rent
2. Utilities
3. Medicine/Medical Bills
4. Personal Allowance/Food
5. Insurance (Car/Home/Renters/Life)
6. Telephone
7. Cable
8. Other Obligations

Rent checks are paid directly to the property owner or management company during the first three days of the month. After all the bills are paid, the Case Aide will determine a reasonable weekly allowance to be used for groceries, transportation, laundry, and miscellaneous needs over the entire month. This is done to ensure the client has money throughout the month.

Monthly budgets are set up with clients. **Receipts are required for all transactions.** Receipts need to indicate cash or a Scott County Community Services check utilized as the payment method. Receipts listing payment made by food stamps, credit cards or bank debit cards will not be considered as a valid receipt within the Benefit Program. Hand written receipts are approved on a case-by-case basis. Clients will be asked to bring in receipts for purchases made from a gift card if funds were used to purchase a gift card.

Clients who borrow money or pawn items for money must make their own arrangements to repay those debts. Any debts not pre-approved with the Case Aide will have to be handled without this office's involvement.

Prior to a client moving, he/she must inform the Case Aide in writing. The Case Aide will need a copy of the signed and dated lease/rental agreement. If the Case Aide is not notified by the 24<sup>th</sup> of the month, no changes will be made and the rent amount and landlord/ property owner will remain the same. If any of the client's belongings are in the previous apartment/house on the first of the month, that landlord/ property owner is entitled to the rent for that month. It is the client's responsibility to provide the landlord/ property owner a 30 day notice prior to moving and to complete a "Rent Request" form with the Case Aide.

Clients must agree to have bills sent to the Community Services Department. If bills are not brought in or mailed to this office, the office reserves the right not to pay them. The Community Services Department will not be responsible for late fees if bills are brought in late.

The Community Services Department operates the Benefit Program through the RPM computer software. All deposits and disbursements are entered into individual accounts within the computer program. If the account is closed for any reason, the remaining funds are sent back to the Social Security office, Veteran Affairs, Office of Personnel Management, or appropriate pension office.

Documents such as bills, requests, and Social Security letters will be scanned and stored electronically in the client's file. The Scott County Benefit Program will maintain these records for seven years.

The Case Aide will be available to meet with clients in the office from **8:00 am to 11:00 am and 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm Monday through Friday. On Social Security deposit days, usually the first and third of each month, clients will be seen from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.** Clients who want to make a request for funds above their personal allowance amount must complete a "Request for Funds" form and meet with their Case Aide. No disbursements will be made without proper documentation.

All approved requests made before 11:00 am will be available after 2:00 pm the same day requested. All requests made after 11:00 am will be available after 2:00 pm the next business day. Scheduled personal allowance checks will be available at 8:00 am. However on Social Security deposit days, personal allowance checks will not be available until 2:00 pm due to the change of the month and review of benefits. Funds have to be deposited before a check can be issued.

The Case Aide will discuss with the client any old, outstanding checks and their whereabouts. Those checks will be voided from the system after 6 months.

In the event of a lost or stolen check the party the check was issued to will be responsible for the \$35.00 stop payment fee.

Scott County charges a monthly fee for the Representative Payee services. This fee is currently 10% of the current month's deposit(s) made into the individual's account with a maximum fee of 40.00 per month. The fee is subject to change. Clients will be notified in advance of any changes in fees.

Clients will be asked to sign off on a monthly statement showing what checks were issued on their behalf and that they benefited from the funds.

Another county office will be responsible for the download of direct deposits from Wells Fargo Bank and posting these amounts into the system. That office will also post all other cash/income sources into the system. The Community Services office will only enter requested disbursements into the system. Each month a random audit will be conducted.

#### REASONS FOR INELIGIBILITY:

A client will be ineligible for the Benefit Program and have their account closed if he/she exhibits any of the following behaviors:

- Verbal or physical threats toward anyone in the office
- Physical aggression toward anyone in the office
- Obscene language
- Harassing telephone calls and/or emails

The Case Aide will give the client a verbal warning for unacceptable behavior. A written warning will be issued if the behavior continues. If the behavior continues after the written warning, the account may be closed. The Case Aide Supervisor and the Director will make this decision. Extremely severe behavior will result in immediate closing of the account.

Clients whose accounts have been closed because they moved from Scott County must meet the residency guideline outlined in 1.A. before Community Services will reapply to be payee again. Community Services reserves the right to refuse to become payee a second time for clients whom previously displayed unacceptable behaviors.

## SCOTT COUNTY BENEFIT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

I have read and reviewed the guidelines with the Case Aide. I understand my responsibilities and the procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client Signature

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Case Aide Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Revised 12/17/2021

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