

CHAPTER 205. STEPS IN VERIFICATION**STEPS IN VERIFICATION PROVISIONS**

Sec.	
205.1.	Policy.
205.2.	Definitions.
205.3.	Requirements.
205.4.	Procedures.

Cross References

This chapter cited in 55 Pa. Code § 285.3 (relating to requirements).

STEPS IN VERIFICATION PROVISIONS**§ 205.1. Policy.**

(a) *General.* Steps in verification generally are as follows:

(1) In Chapter 121 (relating to general intake and redetermination provisions) and Chapter 177 (relating to resources), are set forth which will guide the worker in dealing with the assistance client as a responsible individual, that is, one who must participate actively in proving his need for public assistance. In proving his actual need, he will be required to give complete information about whatever resources he may have or can obtain. To prove the lack of or amount of certain resources he will be asked to obtain documentary evidence whenever possible, and must permit the County Office to verify the evidence as well as oral statements.

(2) This chapter is devoted to a general discussion of the meaning of proof or evidence as it relates to determination of eligibility for assistance. Also included in this section are the methods used to verify a possible resource when it is deemed necessary to use informational sources other than the applicant or recipient. Certain miscellaneous resources not covered in other sections of this part are included as part of this section. This section will also describe methods which may be used in processing requests for investigation of a resource, or lack of one, when the requests are initiated by the social service staff or other designated personnel.

(b) *Methods of operation.* The use of outside sources of information should be planned and selective rather than routine and comprehensive. The manner in which community contacts are established and used will have a direct relationship to the good will or standing enjoyed by the public assistance program not only on a local level but Statewide. Constant efforts should be made to attain and preserve congenial and cooperative relationships with sources of information. One important step in achieving this goal will be a continuing program for improvement of current methods for obtaining information, thereby reducing effort, time and frequency factors to an absolute minimum. Persons contacted will

be justified in expressing their resentment to time-consuming operations which are lengthened because of incomplete identifying information or duplication of requests. Care should be taken to ensure that the source of information understands why the information is necessary and that it will be treated confidentially after it has been received.

§ 205.2. Definitions.

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

Proof—Anything that serves to convince the mind of the truth or falsity of a fact. The establishment of a fact by evidence.

§ 205.3. Requirements.

(a) *The verification process.* The verification process will conform with the following:

(1) The verification of resources, or the lack of them, will be one of the essential steps in the process of establishing eligibility for public assistance. The supplying of information about resources to prove need will be the responsibility of the person applying for or receiving assistance.

(2) Establishing a large portion of the proof during the application process will be routine. The applicant will present documentary evidence such as birth certificates, rent receipts, deeds, insurance policies, pay envelopes and the like. However, the necessity of substantiating other facts will often enter into the process and the worker must then decide what sort of proof must be produced, by whom, and in what manner it is to be proved.

(3) The decision to use a source other than the client will normally be made when the worker is confronted with any of the following situations:

(i) The client has made every reasonable effort to obtain the facts, but without success.

(ii) The facts obtained by the client need clarification and the worker is convinced that direct contact with the source of information, rather than again through the client, would produce better results.

(iii) The worker suspects that the client has either falsified or knowingly withheld essential information and wants to verify his convictions.

(iv) It is known that the required facts cannot be obtained directly by the client.

(b) *Verification responsibilities.* Verification responsibilities of county offices are as follows:

(1) Because of the widespread differences existing in various counties in relation to types of industries and other information contacts, county offices should consider ways and means of adapting the procedures set forth in this chapter to handle efficiently their local situation. However, strict conformity will be requested from all county offices in adhering to the regulations when

contacting specified Federal and state departments, and certain insurance and railroad companies. Contacts with State or Federal departments not mentioned in this procedure should be made through the Central Location and Resources Unit.

(2) In county offices with small caseloads, the responsibility for verifying data may be delegated to one person. In larger counties, a separate unit may perform this function. Whatever organizational structure is used, it should be thoroughly understood by employees that with the exception of the routine verifications which are part of the job of every worker, contacts with outside sources to obtain verifications will be made by the person or unit assigned to this work.

Notes of Decisions

A recipient of food stamps did not properly verify his rent payments since his rent receipts were not signed, the recipient admitted typing the receipts himself and he refused to reveal the names of the principals of his alleged corporate lessor. *Raitport v. Department of Public Welfare*, 399 A.2d 821, 822 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1979).

Since the duty to demonstrate eligibility is on the claimant, the denial of assistance is proper if the claimant fails to return the information forms concerning the income available to her legally responsible relatives. *Dempsey v. Department of Public Welfare*, 404 A.2d 1373, 1375 (1979).

The claimant's own admissions that her boyfriend was living with her, was the father of her unborn child, and regularly provided monies to cover food and other expenses clearly indicate a familial relationship that transcends the status of a mere boarder, and she did not meet her burden of proving lack of resources. *Slay v. Department of Public Welfare*, 406 A.2d 1214, 1215 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1979).

§ 205.4. Procedures.

(a) *General.* Steps in verification procedures will generally be as follows:

(1) Requests for verification of a resource or other specified information will be initiated by designated county office personnel using prescribed forms. The forms may be prepared in pencil or in whatever manner is determined locally. Only one copy will be required. Where no form has been provided to cover a given situation, a Case Message, Form PA 85, or a memorandum will be used. Requests will be sent to the person or unit responsible for verification.

(2) The person initiating the request will be responsible for maintaining a control to prevent duplication of requests. Delays in getting the information will often occur and to make additional requests for the same information may further complicate and delay the process of getting a reply. A copy of the form sent requesting the information will be retained in the current case record until the information is received. If it is necessary later to inquire as to the status of a verification request, the initiator should use a case message or memo and list the identifying information given in subsection (a)(1).

- (3) Upon receipt of the forms from the persons requesting investigation, the employe or unit delegated to obtain the information will do the following:
- (i) Separate them into three groups as follows:
 - (A) Those which may be handled by telephone.
 - (B) Those which will be mailed.
 - (C) Those requiring personal contact.
 - (ii) For those to be handled by telephone or personal contact, the required information will be obtained and the form returned to the originator.
 - (iii) For those to be mailed the employe or unit delegated will do the following:
 - (A) Type the required number of copies which are mailed to the source of information.
 - (B) File the copy of the initiator in a tickler file for follow-up purposes. Be certain that the name and address of the county office appears on forms and that a stamped return-addressed envelope is enclosed, where appropriate.
 - (iv) Upon return of the completed form from the source of information the employe or unit delegate will do the following:
 - (A) Remove the tickler file copy and destroy it, except for recurrent requests.
 - (B) Send the completed form to the employe who originated it.
- (4) The forms and methods contained in this section used for obtaining information are in addition to those which appear elsewhere in Department procedures.
- (5) If attempts to obtain information from a particular source have failed, the central location and resources unit will be notified to explain what efforts have been made and the reasons, if any, for refusal to furnish essential data.
- (6) Files which are essential to efficient operation of the Resource Verification Unit should be maintained. However, constant study should be directed toward the files so that they may be discontinued or modified when their usefulness no longer exists or is lessened.
- (7) Temporary files used to control movement of forms when verifying data will be discussed under the heading pertaining to the situation concerned. Another file which will be useful in certain county offices is the employer card file.
- (8) The maintenance of good contacts with employers will often be dependent upon the efficiency of the methods used to obtain information. The Employer's File Card, PA 75, will be used as a record of the plan agreed upon with employers to obtain information.
- (9) The reverse side of the PA 75 should be used for pertinent information that might be helpful in maintaining a mutually satisfactory relationship with the employer. Although this information may not be necessary to the county

office employe currently contacting employers, it will be very helpful if another employe is designated to handle the contacts.

(10) The forms and methods contained in this section will be used to obtain information.

(b) *Employment.* Employment will be as follows:

(1) *Form PA 78.* Request for Confidential Employment Information, Form PA 78, will be used to obtain information from employers. The following information should be included:

- (i) Full name, or alias.
- (ii) Address.
- (iii) Occupation.
- (iv) Social Security Number.
- (v) Work or badge number.
- (vi) Name and address of shop, section or division of the company where employed.
- (vii) If inquiry is about a person other than client, the exact relationship of the employe to our client will be given.

(2) *Recurrent requests about employment.* Procedures for recurrent requests about employment will be as follows:

(i) Under certain circumstances it may be necessary to obtain a report of the earnings of an employe over an extended period. This might apply when the Department is supplementing the income of an employe and his wage is not static for each pay.

(ii) To control the periods when a recurrent check of income is required, the worker must list on the Form PA 78 the exact pay periods to be covered and the duration of the period for which recurrent income verification is necessary. Requests of this nature should not exceed three months. A new Form PA 78 will be submitted requesting information for an additional period. If the case is closed or the information is no longer necessary, the person initiating the request must promptly notify the Resource Verification unit or employe to cancel the request for verification.

(iii) Upon receipt of the worker's copy of the Form PA 78, a typed Form PA 78 will be prepared and sent to the employer requesting information for the first pay period desired. The date the Form PA 78 is mailed to the employer will be entered on the copy of the worker which will then be filed alphabetically by name of employe in a folder labeled recurrent check.

(iv) If there are a number of Form PA 78's for recurrent checks and the periods vary, the file may be broken down according to pay periods.

(v) Correct Social Security number, work or badge number, name and location of the shop, division or section of the company, and the like will be most important. When required by an employer, a Form PA-4 will be completed and attached as a rider to the Form PA 78 with the following notation:

“We have on file an Authorization from the employe named on the attached form to obtain financial and employment information.”

Signature _____

Title _____

(vi) Unless otherwise instructed, only one copy of the Form PA 78 will be sent to the employer.

(vii) When the Form PA 78 is returned by the employer, the date of return will be entered on the rough copy of the worker. The copy returned by the employer will be sent to the worker and the rough copy returned to file pending the next required check. This process will then be repeated until the final check is made or three months have elapsed. The rough copy of the worker will then be destroyed.

(3) *Public employment.* Information about employment of persons with the State or local highway departments, or public work projects, will be handled in the same way as private employment. When necessary to obtain payroll information from departments, boards, commissions, and the like in Harrisburg, the Form PA 78 will be sent in duplicate to the central location and resources unit.

(4) *Employment of school-age minors.* Information about employment of school-age minors may be arranged through contact with the local school superintendent or other school official who will be required to record the names and addresses of each pupil for whom a work certificate is issued as well as the place of employment. The person initiating the request will send a memo or case message listing the name of the minor and the name and address of the school he attends.

(c) *Information from financial institutions.* Regulations for obtaining information from financial institutions are as follows:

(1) Requests for investigation of possible accounts in banks, building and loan associations, and the like will be initiated on Request for Financial Information, Form PA 76.

(2) Some financial institutions and postal savings may require the presentation of the Form PA 4 or similar document. For postal savings, the local postmaster will usually compare the signature of the client or relative with the signature on record in the post office.

(3) Accounts in closed banks may be cleared with the receivers or trustees. Problems in connection with assignment of closed bank accounts should be reported, in full detail, to the Department's Claim Settlement Division.

(d) *Public records or legal documents.* The county office should establish satisfactory working relationships with public officials to permit search of records and the county office employe assigned to make searches should acquire a working knowledge of local systems of recording. Courthouse officials should not be asked to search or copy information requested by the county office.

(1) *Courthouse records.* Request for Legal Information, Form PA 79, will be used to obtain information about real estate, inheritance, marriage, divorce, nonsupport, prosecutions and the like. To expedite search of courthouse records, specific information will be essential. When it is necessary to initiate a request of this type, the worker must obtain as much information as possible from the client which will aid in the search as follows:

(i) *Real estate.* If there is a deed, the worker will get the volume number and page number of the volume in which it is recorded in the courthouse. These numbers will be stamped or written on the deed. The same information should be obtained if there is a mortgage filed against the property. A judgment against the property will be on record in the office of the prothonotary. If there is no deed, the worker will get the name of the prior owner and the way in which the property was obtained. If the property was inherited, the worker will determine whether there was a will, who formerly owned the property, and when the person died. If possible, the worker will obtain the will book volume and page numbers. If applicable, this information may be entered under "INHERITANCES" on the Form PA 79 with a reference to the "REAL ESTATE" block.

(ii) *Other courthouse records.* When data on marriage, divorce, court orders, criminal or civil court actions are wanted, the worker should get from the client the date the action occurred and, if appropriate, the court or judge who heard the case. If a definite date cannot be obtained, the approximate date will be given.

(2) *Vital statistics.* Information on dates of births and deaths may be obtained from the Division of Vital Records, Department of Health. Requests will be forwarded directly to the Director, Division of Vital Records, Post Office Box 1528, New Castle, Pennsylvania, 16103. The Executive Director must adhere carefully to the following instructions:

(i) *Births during 1906 and thereafter.* The initial request will be submitted by the worker on the Request for Verification of Birth, Form PA 84-V. A typed Form PA 84-V will be prepared and the original and one copy sent to the Division of Vital Records. The form must include the return address of the county or district office of the worker, as the Division of Vital Records will return the information directly to that office.

(ii) *Births between 1870 and 1906.* For persons born between 1870 and 1906, births were not routinely registered. However, records are sometimes on file in the county courthouse. The request will be initiated by memorandum or case message, giving the full name of the person, where born and name of father and mother. Arrangements should be made to obtain information in whatever manner is suitable to the county official in charge.

(iii) *Children born out-of-wedlock.* For children born out-of-wedlock, a signed authorization will be obtained from the mother, permitting the disclosure and it will be submitted with the request.

(iv) *Age verification through the United States Bureau of Census.* The United States Bureau of Census will not be considered as a source of age verification because the fees charged for such service will not be paid by the Department.

(v) *Deaths.* Record of Death, Department of Health Form H-105.161, will be used to initiate a request for verifying a date of death. Information about deaths will be obtained through arrangements with the State Bureau of Vital Records.

(3) *Motor vehicle registration.* Use of Form PA 84-M will be as follows:

(i) Request for Information, Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Form PA 84-M, will be used to obtain information about ownership of a motor vehicle.

(ii) Check marks will be placed opposite the information wanted. As an example, if the ownership of a car is to be verified, the name and address will be entered under information concerning and the appropriate items will be checked under title information.

(iii) If the registration, or license plate, number is known and the name of the owner is desired, the registration number will be entered in the space under registration information and names and address will be checked. If information about motor vehicle registration cannot be obtained locally through State Police Barracks or police stations, inquiries may be sent to the Department of Transportation, Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Harrisburg, on Request for Information, Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Form PA 84-M. No accompanying memorandum will be necessary.

(iv) When preparing the Form PA 84-M, the County Office address will be stamped or typed in the space "Return Completed Form To." The addresses will be spaced so that window envelopes may be used for sending and returning the form.

(e) *Insurance.* Insurance will conform with the following:

(1) *General.* The methods of verification or adjustment of life insurance policies set forth in this subsection have the approval of the insurance companies concerned and must be followed carefully. It should be noted that the methods will vary according to the purpose for which the information is required. The employe or unit responsible for processing requests of this nature should become familiar with the methods agreed upon with the insurance companies concerned. Accurate policy numbers will be essential when requesting information or advice from insurance companies. Different methods and forms will be used for the following situations:

(i) For obtaining data necessary to complete Item 43 on the Form PA 743, the Request for Insurance Data, Form PA 83-Z, will be used as set forth in subsection (e)(2) of this section.

(ii) For obtaining advice about adjustment of policies the Request for Insurance Data, Form PA 83-Z, will be used as set forth in subsection (e)(3).

(iii) For obtaining information on death claim payments, reference should be made to subsection (e)(4).

(2) *Obtaining information necessary to complete Item 43 on the Form PA 743.* The Form PA 83-Z will be used to obtain from all insurance companies, except under the circumstances set forth in this subsection, the information needed to complete Item 43. The county office will indicate the information wanted by entering check marks in the appropriate blocks under the columns headed "POLICY NUMBER." If information is wanted on the amount of the cash surrender value the insurance company paid a client and the date it was paid, the County Office will enter, in the space provided, the date assistance first began. One copy of Form PA 83-Z will be sent to insurance companies when information is required to complete the Form PA 21-H. In reply, the insurance company will enter a cash surrender amount paid within 1 year before assistance first began.

(3) *Advice regarding adjustments on policies.* Advice on adjustment of an insurance plan obtained from an insurance company will be used as follows:

(i) When advice on adjustment of an insurance plan is requested, the insurance company will analyze each case separately on the basis of data given on the appropriate form submitted by the county office, supplemented where necessary by information from the records of the company. In considering an adjustment plan, it must be remembered that a paid-up whole life policy cannot be offered when adjustment is requested on a policy of the endowment plan type.

(ii) When requests for advice on adjustments have been sent to more than one company, the replies should be held in file until requests have been answered. When the final reply is received, all will be turned over to the worker.

(4) *Inquiries about death claim payments.* First it should be determined that the beneficiary has, in fact, filed a formal claim. Otherwise, a no payment reply may be received from the insurance company. A Form PA 83-Z will be sent to the home office of the insurance company concerned.

(5) *Industry owned or sponsored insurance plans.* Many industries today either sponsor or own insurance plans for their employees. This source should be investigated if the deceased person was employed immediately prior to his death.

(f) *Benefits, compensation and retirement.* Benefits, compensation and retirement will be as follows:

(1) *Industrial benefits and the like.* Industrial benefits and the like will be as follows:

(i) The number of private employers who either operate or sponsor health insurance, retirement pensions and the like for their employees is increasing. Group insurance in many industries covers hospitalization, surgical, medical, pregnancy and death benefits not only for the worker but mem-

bers of the immediate family. The pension plans may be in addition to Social Security benefits or in conjunction with the benefits. Some company plans provide for payment of life insurance premiums after the employe has retired. Other industries have a severance or displacement pay which may be considered a partial refund of the amount paid by the employe.

(ii) Other companies may provide for the return of contributions plus interest. The severance pay or refund of contributions should warrant special interest when considering applications for assistance because of loss of employment.

(iii) It will be important that the person or unit responsible for verification be familiar with the various benefits offered by local companies. Contacts for information should be made in whatever manner is agreeable to the employer concerned.

(iv) Certain union contracts provide for cash benefits to eligible employes to supplement UC benefits. These benefits, known as Supplemental Unemployment Benefits (SUB), coupled with the benefits paid by UC, are designed to provide a certain percentage of normal take-home pay up to certain maximums and for certain limited periods of time.

(v) Plans will be subject to the terms of the agreement between the employer and the bargaining unit and will vary in details relating to effective date of the plan, eligibility, amount and duration of benefits, financing and other matters.

(vi) In general, an employe with 2 years or more service will become eligible for SUB when he begins to receive UC. SUB benefits will be paid by the employer, and the employe must present whatever substantiation is required by the employer. This will usually consist of the UC check, but in lieu of the check, under certain circumstances, the employes will be able to receive other verification from the Bureau of Employment Security.

(vii) If the client cannot produce verification of the receipt of SUB, the caseworker will request the verification by means of a Form PA 78. The blank at the bottom of the form will be checked and a statement will be entered regarding the specific information needed.

(2) *Workmen's Compensation.* Workmen's Compensation will be as follows:

(i) Under the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1915 (77 P. S. §§ 1—1024) employers will be required to pay damages to an employe who is injured in the course of employment with such employer, and to his dependents in case of death resulting from that injury. Coverage will be mandatory for all but self-employed and domestic workers. The employer may either set up his own insurance funds for this purpose or provide the protection through an insurance carrier. However, the law will establish the minimum and maximum amounts which must be paid in either instance.

(ii) Compensation to an injured worker for partial or total disability will be administered under the Bureau of Workmen's Compensation regulations. Benefits will be payable every 2 weeks for the duration of total disability after the seventh day of total disability. Partial disability payment may not extend beyond 350 weeks after the seventieth day of such disability. If total or partial disability lasts more than 6 weeks, then compensation will be paid for the first 7 days also. The compensation described thus far will be in addition to the payment of medical services and supplies, subject to specified maximums.

(iii) If the worker dies as a result of his work-connected injury or disease, compensation payments will be made to the worker's dependent widow, widower, children under 18 years of age, parents, brothers or sisters under 18 years of age, in that order or priority. Whether or not there are dependents, the reasonable expense of burial up to a stated maximum will be paid by the employer or insurance carrier directly to the undertaker.

(iv) Under the Occupational Disease Act of 1939 (77 P. S. §§ 1201—1603) compensation payments similar and parallel to provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1915 (77 P. S. §§ 1—1024) will be made for disability or death resulting from occupational disease except that the maximum payment for burial may be less. An occupational disease is defined as follows:

- (A) One to which the claimant is exposed by reason of his employment.
- (B) One which is peculiar to the industry or occupation.
- (C) One which is not common to the general population.

(v) In most instances, sufficient information about compensation payments may be obtained from correspondence which the claimant has had with the carrier of the compensation insurance. If this information is not available, a Request for Workmen's Compensation Information, Form PA 84-W, will be prepared. The Form PA 84-W will be prepared in a single copy and sent to the Central Location and Resources Unit, Harrisburg. Available information will be entered in the spaces above the first double line. If specific information not included on the form is desired, the remarks space will be used.

(vi) Upon receipt of the Form PA 84-W, the Central Location and Resources Unit will clear with the appropriate agency and will route the replies to the initiating county.

(vii) The Bureau of Workmen's Compensation cannot give actual dates and amounts of payments. This can be obtained only from the carrier, or from the employer if self-insured. However, the Bureau can supply the name and address of the carrier or employer if self-insured.

(3) *Refund of United States Civil Service retirement deductions.* Former civil service employes of the Federal government, or their survivors, will be entitled to refunds or annuities, dependent upon the circumstances given as follows:

(i) *Former Civil Service employes.* Eligibility of former civil service employes will be as follows:

(A) *With less than 5 years service.* Eligible only for refund of contribution.

(B) *With more than 5 but less than 20 years service.* May choose between a refund and a deferred annuity.

(C) *With at least 20 years service.* No refund. Will receive an annuity at 62 years of age, or at age of separation if beyond 62 years of age.

(ii) *Survivors of United States Civil Service employes.* A refund will be paid to the survivors in the following order of priority if the employe dies before he has 5 years of service or, having worked 5 years, leaves no survivors entitled to an annuity:

(A) To the beneficiary designated by the employe in writing to the Commission prior to his death.

(B) To the widow or widower.

(C) To the child or children.

(D) To the parents.

(E) To the appointed executor or administrator of estate.

(iii) *Obtaining information about refunds.* A Request for Information, Form PA 73, will be prepared to obtain information from the United States Civil Service Commission. The addresses of the county office and the Commission are spaced so that window envelopes may be used by both agencies.

(4) *Refunds from retirement systems of Commonwealth employes or public school employes.* When the past employment history of a client shows Commonwealth employment since 1924 or public school employment since 1917, the possibility of accumulated retirement deductions should be explored. It may be that the former Commonwealth or public school employe neglected to withdraw the deductions made from his pay for retirement purposes. When required, verification may be made with either or both retirement systems through the DPA State Office. A memo or case message will be prepared including the full name of the client, name of department, school, and the like where employed and the dates of employment. The memorandum will be sent to the Chief, Employment and Resources Division. The State Office will clear the request with either or both the State Employees' Retirement Board or the Public School Employes.

(g) *Inquiries to military installations about civilian employes.* Information about civilian employes at military installations may be obtained in the same manner as for private employment. Form PA 78 will be used and addressed to the commanding officer of the installation concerned.

(h) *Locating absent parent or parents.* Locating absent parent or parents will conform with the following:

(1) *General.* The local sources most likely to be productive in obtaining information about the location of an absent parent will be as follows:

- (i) Friends.
- (ii) Relatives.
- (iii) Employers.

(iv) Labor, social or church organizations. The county office will make use of these sources only if the efforts of the client have been unproductive or seem likely to be unproductive.

(v) Telephone or city directories.

(2) *Missing Relative Summary, Form PA 72.* A Missing Relative Summary, Form PA 72, will be used to assemble in an organized manner information about the absent parent. This information has been found to be most helpful in planning what steps should be taken to locate the missing relative. When and who will prepare the Form PA 72, and how it will be used will depend on county office practice and procedures.

Source

The provisions of this § 205.4 amended May 19, 1978, effective May 20, 1978, 8 Pa.B. 1413. Immediately preceding text appears at serial page (29366).

APPENDIX A

[Reserved]

Source

The provisions of this Appendix A reserved July 11, 1986, effective July 12, 1986, 16 Pa.B. 2524. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (29374) to (29375).

[Next page is 225-1.]

205-14

(278364) No. 320 Jul. 01

Copyright © 2001 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania