

**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES**  
**Division of Medicaid Services**  
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To: Caretaker Supplement (CTS) Handbook Users

From: Rebecca McAtee, Bureau Director  
Bureau of Enrollment Policy and Systems

Re: **Caretaker Supplement (CTS) Release 19-01**

Release Date: 09/10/2019

Effective Date: 09/10/2019

<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	The following policy additions or changes are <b>effective 09/10/2019</b> unless otherwise noted. <b>Underlined text denotes new text. Text with a strike through it denotes deleted text.</b>
<b>POLICY UPDATES</b>	
<b>3.1.2 Standard Filing Unit (SFU)</b>	Clarified determination of the target child when establishing a Standard Filing Unit.
<b>3.1.11 Dependent 18-Year-Olds</b>	Clarified the definition of a dependent 18-year-old.
<b>4.4 Eligibility Review</b>	Removed reference to a grace month before a case would close due to the lack of an eligibility review.
<b>4.5 Notices</b>	Clarified the number of days that must be given as notice to SSI parents.

The information concerning the Caretaker Supplement program provided in this handbook release is published in accordance with Section 49.775 of the Wisconsin Statutes and Chapters HA 3 and DHS 2 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

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### 3.1 Nonfinancial

#### 3.1.2 Standard Filing Unit (SFU)

When determining whether a possible CTS assistance group exists for any application, CARES configures a standard filing unit (SFU). This is a methodology for determining which members of a household must be taken into consideration when determining whether the non-financial and financial requirements of CTS are met. This methodology was first used when [AFDC](#) was available to residents of Wisconsin, and is used for CTS today, because CTS eligibility is built on the former requirements for the now defunct AFDC.

The SFU process will build a CTS case around a specific child, identifying the adults and other children who are also part of the CTS case and potentially able to garner CTS benefits that will be added to the parent's SSI payment.

To establish the SFU, determine whether the household contains at least one SSI parent caring for at least one minor child. Often, several children fit this criterion in a single household, so identify the "target child" around whom the CTS case will be built. Use either one of the following choices to determine which child in a household should be the target child:

1. First Choice for Target Child: The oldest minor [or dependent 18-year-old \(see Section 3.1.11 Dependent 18-Year-Olds\)](#) child-in-common for parents in the household.
2. Second Choice for Target Child: The oldest child [or dependent 18-year-old \(see Section 3.1.11\)](#) of the person identified by CARES as the Primary Person, when there are no dependent children-in-common or the only dependent children-in-common receive SSI, themselves.

Whenever the Primary Person in a case does not have any dependent children, or when all of the primary person's children receive SSI, it is not possible for a household to receive CTS.

The most typical family configuration seen among CTS applicants consists of a single parent with minor children or [dependent](#) 18-year-old offspring who meet the AFDC criteria for dependence. The second most common CTS family configuration occurs when two recipients of SSI live in a household with their minor children, some or all of whom do not receive SSI, themselves. There are many family configurations that include CTS recipients, however. See [Section 5.4 Illustrations](#) for twelve examples.

After determining the target child, the SFU process requires that the natural or adoptive parents of the target child are included in the filing unit, along with any minor siblings or half-siblings of the target child. Parents of half-siblings are also included in the filing unit. Finally, minor siblings who have been married, but whose marriages were annulled, are included in the filing unit.

Some members of a household are not included in the SFU. Currently married or divorced persons under the age of 18 are not considered minor children for CTS purposes and are not included in the SFU. Step-siblings, step-parents, any children of the target child, and all other relatives and non-relatives who live in the household are excluded from the SFU.

SSI parents are not permitted to voluntarily exclude any person from the SFU who would otherwise be automatically included. For instance, a parent may not opt to exclude a minor child who has income from wages from the SFU, when this income will cause the rest of the group to be income ineligible for CTS.

After determining which members of the household are in the SFU, determine which members are potentially eligible for CTS cash assistance. At this point, begin to refer to the people who have become members of the SFU as the assistance group, or "AG."

### 3.1.11 Dependent 18-Year-Olds

State statute defines CTS eligible children as minors or dependent 18-year-olds. ~~Dependent 18-year-olds are young adults who reside with at least one parent and who have not yet reached their 19th birthday. Furthermore, A dependent 18-year-old s must be~~ is an 18-year-old who:

1. Is enrolled in high school and or an equivalent level of vocational or technical training; and
2. Is expected to graduate prior to attaining age 19. It is very important that both SSI parents and local agency workers anticipate the change high school or get a GED before turning 19.

The 18-year-old does not have to be enrolled full time in status when CTS-eligible children attain the age of 18 years, high school in order to prevent unnecessary CTS payment termination be considered a dependent 18-year-old. When a dependent 18-year-old is ~~are~~ home-schooled, the parent must provide written documentation of expected graduation date from the home-schooling association or agency. It is irrelevant to CTS eligibility whether minor children are enrolled in school.

Children who graduate from high school before they are 18 years old may remain eligible until they turn 18.

To prevent unnecessary CTS payment termination when a child turns 18, request verification of school enrollment and expected date of graduation at the renewal when the child is still 17.

#### 4.4 Eligibility Review

Eligibility for CTS must be reviewed and reconfirmed every 12 months. The local agency worker is responsible for this process. The CARES system will automatically identify when a CTS case needs review and will trigger notice of the impending review for the worker and SSI parent. Reviews may be face-to-face, by phone, or by mail, and the signature of the SSI parent on any review documents does not need to be witnessed.

A 12-month certification period will be set at application and renewal. When a FoodShare or Health Care renewal is completed, the agency should also collect the asset and school enrollment information needed to consider it a CTS renewal as well.

~~Every SSI parent is granted one grace month of eligibility before a CTS case will close due to lack of an eligibility review.~~

## 4.5 Notices

Any SSI parent who applies for CTS must be notified about the status of his or her application (approved, denied, or pending the receipt of additional information), in writing, within 30 days of application for benefits. ~~Twenty~~Ten days notice must be given to SSI parents when any action or event occurs that will adversely affect their ongoing CTS benefits. These notices must cite applicable statute, include reason for any adverse action, and state the benefit month and amount granted. Notices must also identify the responsible local agency worker, provide contact information, and identify appeal rights and mechanisms.

Generally, the CARES system will electronically produce and mail notices appropriate to each activity; (i.e., eligibility, review, verification required, change in benefits-). Workers can view these system-generated notices by logging into the CARES system. However, when a worker has undertaken a manual eligibility determination or made a case change for CTS, notices must be created manually; also. Manual notices must contain all of the elements required included in CARES system-generated notices.