

EES Policy No. 25-10-05	RE: Shelter Expense Verification
Policy Memo	Contact Persons: Elizabeth Ahumada and Sarah van Straaten
From: Dr. Carla Whiteside-Hicks, EES Director	KEESM Reference: 1322.2, 1322.3, 9122.6, 9121.2, 9220.
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Primary DCF Areas Affected: EES	Where Posted on Web: http://content.dcf.ks.gov/ees/KEESM/Policy_Memo/policy_memo_list.htm

Effective **October 1, 2025**, the obligation for shelter expenses shall be verified at the time of initial application, review and at the time of a change (including changes reported at Interim Report or 12-Month Report). Shelter expenses include rent, mortgage (including second mortgages, non-occupancy and disaster costs), lot rent, real estate taxes, and homeowner's insurance.

If verification of expense(s) cannot be verified at the time of processing, a 10-day request must be provided before determining eligibility. If the verification of the cost may delay the household's approval (and no other information is needed), the worker shall advise the household that eligibility and benefit level may be determined without providing a deduction for the claimed but unverified shelter expense obligation. If the expense cannot be verified within 30 days of the date of the application, the agency shall determine the household's eligibility without providing a deduction for the unverified shelter expense.

If the household has verified a portion of the actual shelter costs, the worker shall use the actual verified amounts. If the household subsequently provides the missing verification during the review period, the household's benefit level shall be redetermined. The household shall be entitled to the restoration of any benefits lost as a result of the disallowance of the expense only if the agency failed to allow the household 10 days to verify the expense. Any increase in benefits shall be provided the month following the month the missing verification is provided.

NOTE: Homeless Shelter Expense and Utility Standards are not affected by this change and will remain verified, if questionable.

Time of Action	Verification/Action
Application/Review	Verification of shelter expense(s) is mandatory to allow expense(s). If verification of an expense(s) is not provided, allow zero shelter expense(s).
Interim Report/12-Month Report	Verification of shelter expense(s) is not mandatory, <u>unless a change is reported</u> . If verification of shelter expense(s) is not provided, benefits shall be determined by allowing zero shelter expense(s).
Change Reported (other than at Interim Report/12-Month Report or Review)	<p>Verification of shelter expense(s) is mandatory. If verification of an expense(s) is not provided, benefits shall be determined by allowing the previously verified amount. (i.e., do not change shelter amount)</p> <p>**A change reported, that is not mandatory to be reported per simplified reporting requirements, is fewer than 60 days old, and unclear is to be held until the next Interim Report/12-Month Report or Review.</p>

Example: The applicant reports on the initial non-expedited application that the household has a mortgage of \$1000 per month, which includes real estate taxes and homeowner's insurance. During the interview, the applicant is unable to provide mortgage verification along with out of state child support income. Request for information is sent to the applicant allowing 10 days to provide the information. The applicant provides child support income but does not provide mortgage verification. Eligibility determination shall be made without allowing the mortgage expense.

Example: The applicant reports on the initial expedited application that the household has a rental obligation of \$500 per month. During the interview, the applicant is unable to provide verification of the rental obligation and collateral contact to the landlord is unsuccessful. Per KEESM 1415.3(1), all verification rules for processing an initial application apply to expedited services, however, the worker shall, if necessary, postpone any required verification except identity. The worker is able to verify identity and processes the expedited month using client statement, postponing ongoing months for verification of the rental obligation.

- If the applicant provides verification, ongoing months are processed using the verified expense.
- If the applicant does not provide verification, expense is removed, and ongoing months are processed without the expense.

Example: The applicant reports on the initial non-expedited application that the household owns the trailer in which they live, but they pay lot rent of \$250 per month. The applicant states they do not have verification of this on hand but can get that information. Collateral contact is made to verify but is

unsuccessful. This is the only information that is needed to process the application. The applicant states that they are in need of benefits as soon as possible and asks if benefits can be processed today. The worker informs the applicant that the application can be processed without the expense, if they would prefer. The applicant states, yes, they would like it processed today without the expense. The application is processed without the expense and the action is journaled in the case file. The Notice of Approval is appended and the standard copy and paste text is added. The worker informs the applicant that at any time they can provide that verification and the expense can be added to benefit case.

Standard Copy and Paste Text:

- *Your Food Assistance application was approved without <<shelter expense(s)>> per your request. Expense verification can be provided at any time and be added to your assistance case.*
- *Su solicitud de asistencia alimentaria ha sido aprobada sin incluir los <<gastos de alojamiento>>, tal y como usted solicitó. La verificación de gastos se puede proporcionar en cualquier momento y agregar a su caso de asistencia.*

Example: The recipient reports on the annual review application that the household's rental expense is \$800 per month and there is no change to the address. The worker reviews the case file and finds that the recipient's current lease agreement is available in the file and will not expire for 6 months. No other information is needed, and the review application is processed.

Example: The recipient reports on the annual review application that the household's rental obligation has changed from \$500 per month to \$600 per month. All adult household members are disabled with no earned income. The different amounts in shelter expenses with no change to address do not constitute a change that would require an interview. The interview is waived and the change in rental obligation will need to be verified. Attempts to contact the recipient are unsuccessful. Request for verification is sent allowing 10 days to provide the information.

- If the recipient provides information to verify expense, the review is processed allowing the expense.
- If the recipient does not provide information, zero expense will be allowed.

Example: The recipient reports on the annual review application that the household's real estate taxes have increased, and the homeowner's insurance has remained the same as previously verified. The worker notices that the homeowner's insurance verification provided prior is expired and asks the recipient during the interview if they could provide verification of real estate taxes and homeowner's insurance. The recipient cannot provide that information during interview. Request for verification is sent allowing 10 days to provide the information.

- If the recipient provides information to verify expense(s), the review is processed allowing expense(s).
- If the recipient does not provide information, zero expense(s) will be allowed.

Example: The recipient reports on the Interim Report that real estate taxes and homeowner's insurance have increased. Real estate taxes increased from \$3000 annually to \$3500 annually and homeowner's insurance increased from \$1200 annually to \$1500 annually. Collateral contact is attempted to obtain this information but is unsuccessful. Request for verification is sent allowing 10 days to provide the information.

- If the recipient provides information to verify expense(s), the Interim Report is processed allowing expense(s).
- If the recipient does not provide information, zero expense(s) will be allowed.

Example: The recipient reports no changes on the 12-Month Report form. The worker compares reported information on 12-Month Report form to information in the eligibility system, finds no changes and has all information necessary to process. The 12-Month Report form is processed.

Example: The recipient reports during the certification period that the household's rent has increased from \$800 per month to \$900 per month. The recipient does not have verification of this change on hand and would need to obtain that information and provide it later. The worker offers to contact the recipient's landlord, but the recipient would prefer to provide that information themselves. This information would be considered unclear as it is not information that must be reported per simplified reporting requirements and needs further verification to act on the change. A *Message from Your Local DCF Office* (V808) form is sent informing the recipient of information needed. If the information is received, the change will be made the month following the month the verification is received.

Shelter Expense Verification Q&A