

**WAC 388-450-0005 How does the department decide if I own a type of income and if this income is available to meet my needs?** This section applies to cash assistance and food assistance.

(1) We count all available income owned or held by people in your assistance unit under chapter 388-408 WAC to decide if you are eligible for benefits and calculate your monthly benefits when:

(a) You get or expect to get the income in the month.

(b) We must count the income based on rules under chapter 388-450 WAC.

(c) You own the income. We use state and federal laws about who owns property to decide if you actually own the income. If you are married, we decide if income is separate or community income according to chapter 26.16 RCW.

(d) You have control over the income, which means the income is actually available to you. If you have a representative payee, protective payee, or other person who manages your income for you as described in chapter 388-460 WAC, we consider this as you having control over this income.

(e) You can use the income to meet your current needs. We count the gross amount of available income in the month your assistance unit gets it. If you normally get the income:

(i) On a specific day, we count it as available on that date.

(ii) Monthly or twice monthly and your pay date changes due to a reason beyond your control, such as a weekend or holiday, we count it in the month you would normally get it.

(iii) Weekly or every-other week and your pay date changes due to a reason beyond your control, we count it in the month you would normally get it.

(2) If income is legally yours, we consider the income as available to you even if it is paid to someone else for you. For example, the father of your child has a court order to pay you two hundred fifty dollars per month in child support. Instead of giving the money directly to you (as required in the court order), he gives the money to your landlord to pay part of your rent. We still count the two hundred fifty dollars as income even though you never actually got the money.

(3) We may also count the income of certain people who live in your home, even if they are not getting or applying for benefits. Their income counts as part of your income.

(a) For cash assistance, we count the income of ineligible, disqualified, or financially responsible people as defined in WAC 388-450-0100.

(b) For food assistance, we count the income of ineligible assistance unit members as defined in WAC 388-408-0035.

(4) If you have a joint bank account with someone who is not in your AU, we count any money deposited into that account as your income unless:

(a) You can show that all or part of the funds belong **only** to the other account holder and are held or used **only** for the benefit of that holder; or

(b) Social Security Administration (SSA) used that money to determine the other account holder's eligibility for SSI benefits.

(5) Potential income is income you may be able to get that can be used to lower your need for assistance. If we determine that you have a potential source of income, you must make a reasonable effort to make the income available in order to get cash assistance.

(a) We do not count that income until you actually get it; and

(b) You can choose whether to get TANF/SFA or supplemental security income (SSI) benefits.

(6) If your assistance unit includes a sponsored immigrant, we consider the income of the immigrant's sponsor as available to the immigrant under the rules of this chapter. We use this income when deciding if your assistance unit is eligible for benefits and to calculate your monthly benefits.

(7) You may give us proof about a type of income at anytime, including when we ask for it or if you disagree with a decision we made, about:

- (a) Who owns the income;
- (b) Who has legal control of the income;
- (c) The amount of the income; or
- (d) If the income is available.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.500, 74.04.510, 74.08.090, 74.08A.120, and 2011 1st sp.s. c 15. WSR 13-18-007, § 388-450-0005, filed 8/22/13, effective 10/1/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.005, 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.510, and 74.08.090. WSR 06-07-078, § 388-450-0005, filed 3/13/06, effective 5/1/06. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 74.08A.100, 74.09.080, and 74.09.415. WSR 02-17-030, § 388-450-0005, filed 8/12/02, effective 9/12/02. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090 and 74.04.510. WSR 99-16-024, § 388-450-0005, filed 7/26/99, effective 9/1/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057 and 74.08.090. WSR 98-16-044, § 388-450-0005, filed 7/31/98, effective 9/1/98. Formerly WAC 388-505-0590 and 388-506-0610.]