

## CHAPTER 49.

## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE.

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## GENERAL RELIEF

## 49.01 Definitions. As used in chapter 49:

(1) "Relief" means such services, commodities or money as are reasonable and necessary under the circumstances to provide food, housing, clothing, fuel, light, water, medicine, medical, dental, and surgical treatment (including hospital care), optometrical services, nursing, transportation, and funeral expenses, and include wages for work relief. The food furnished shall be of a kind and quantity sufficient to provide a nourishing diet. The housing provided shall be adequate for health and decency. Where there are children of school age the relief furnished shall include necessities for which no other provision is made by law. The relief furnished, whether by money or otherwise, shall be at such times and in such amounts, as will in the discretion of the relief official or agency meet the needs of the recipient and protect the public.

(2) "Work relief" means any moneys paid to dependent persons entitled to relief who have been required by any municipality or county to work on any work relief project.

(3) "Work relief project" means any undertaking performed in whole or in part by persons receiving work relief.

(4) "Dependent person" or "dependent" means a person without the present available money or income or property or credit, or other means by which the same can be presently obtained, sufficient to provide the necessary commodities and services specified in subsection (1).

(5) "Municipality" means any town, city or village.

(6) "Department" means the state department of public welfare.

(7) "Eligible" or "eligibility" means a dependent person who has continuously resided for one whole year in this state immediately prior to an application for relief except that temporary assistance including medical care may be granted during the initial year to meet an emergency situation pending the negotiations for the return of the applicant and family to the former place of residence or legal settlement outside this state or to meet a medical emergency developing during the initial one year period of residence. Such temporary assistance shall not extend beyond 30 days unless a medical emergency requires further extension. Notwithstanding the foregoing, whenever anyone leaves this

state, and was at the time of his departure eligible as to residential requirements to receive general assistance under this section other than emergency aid, such person upon returning within one year to this state, shall be eligible to receive such general assistance in this state without limitation on the period of relief to be granted so long as the need continues.

**History:** 1961 c. 462.

See note to 52.01, citing *In re Spigner*, 26 W (2d) 190, 132 NW (2d) 242.

**49.02 Relief administration.** (1) Every municipality shall furnish relief only to all eligible dependent persons therein and shall establish or designate an official or agency to administer the same.

(2) Every county may furnish relief only to all eligible dependent persons within the county but not having a legal settlement therein, and if it elects to do so, it shall establish or designate an official or agency to administer the same.

(3) When the settlement of an eligible dependent person is unknown or in doubt relief may be initially administered by the municipality in which such person is found in need, but the matter shall be promptly investigated and reported or referred as the case may be to the county in which the municipality is situated.

(4) Nothing in this section shall prevent any county or municipality from entering into a joint or co-operative agreement under section 66.30.

(5) The municipality or county shall be liable for the hospitalization of and care rendered by a physician and surgeon to a person entitled to relief under this chapter, without previously authorizing the same, when, in the reasonable opinion of a physician, immediate and indispensable care or hospitalization is required, and prior authorization therefor cannot be obtained without delay likely to injure the patient. There shall be no liability for such care or hospitalization beyond what is reasonably required by the circumstances of the case, and liability shall not attach unless, within 7 days after furnishing the first care or hospitalization of the patient, written notices by the attending physician and by the hospital be mailed or delivered to the official or agency designated in accordance with this section, reciting the name and address of the patient, so far as known, and the nature of the illness or injury, and the probable duration of necessary treatment and hospitalization. Any municipality giving care or hospitalization as provided in this section to a person who has settlement in some other municipality may recover from such other municipality as provided in s. 49.11.

(6) Officials and agencies administering relief shall assist dependent persons to regain a condition of self-support through every proper means at their disposal and shall give such service and counsel to those likely to become dependent as may prevent such dependency.

(7) Whenever the authorities charged with the administration of this section have reason to believe that a person receiving relief is engaging in conduct or behavior prohibited in ch. 944, they shall promptly notify the law enforcement officials of the county thereof, including facts relating to such person's alleged misconduct or illegal behavior.

Under 49.02 town, city or village in which a dependent person is present must furnish relief where a county system under 49.03 has not been established and may be held liable for failure to do so, and the municipal officials may be personally liable in some cases. 53 Atty. Gen. 76.

**49.03 Optional county systems.** (1) The county board may, by a resolution adopted by an affirmative vote of a majority of all its members:

(a) Provide that the county shall bear the expense of maintaining all eligible dependents therein and thereupon the county shall relieve all eligible dependents in the county; and all powers conferred and duties imposed by this chapter upon municipalities shall be exercised and performed by the county, or

(b) Abolish all distinction between eligible county dependents and eligible municipal dependents as to medical, surgical, dental, hospital and nursing care and optometrical services; and have the entire expense of such care a county charge.

(2) The county board by a resolution adopted by an affirmative vote of majority of all its members may repeal any resolution adopted under subsection (1).

**49.04 State dependents.** (1) From the appropriation made in s. 20.670 (3) (e) the state shall reimburse the counties for such temporary assistance as may be needed pursuant to s. 49.01 (7) for all dependent persons who do not have a settlement within any county in this state and who have resided in the state less than one year.

(2) The state department of public welfare shall make suitable rules and regulations governing the administration of temporary assistance under s. 49.01 (7) including the notification of reimbursement charges, the relief to be provided, the presentation of claims for reimbursement and other matters necessary to the provision of relief to such state

dependent persons receiving temporary assistance. The observance of such rules and regulations by a county shall be a condition for reimbursement.

(3) The presentation of a claim for reimbursement shall be accompanied by a verified copy of the sworn statement required by s. 49.11 (1), and an affidavit that diligent effort was made to ascertain the facts relating to the dependent's legal settlement and period of residence in the state, and reciting such other facts as the department requires. Any claim for relief furnished after June 30, 1953, shall be filed with the state department of public welfare on the following June 30 or not to exceed 30 days thereafter. If the department is satisfied as to the correctness of the claim it shall certify the same to the department of administration for payment to the county entitled thereto; provided that if the total amount payable to all counties exceeds the amount available under the appropriation made in s. 20.670 (3)(e) the department shall prorate the amount available among the counties according to the amounts due them. Any necessary audit adjustments for any current or prior fiscal years may be included in subsequent certifications.

(4) Any county aggrieved by the disallowance of its claim for reimbursement hereunder may petition the department for a hearing which shall be accorded after due notice. The department may of its own motion order such investigation and hearing as it deems necessary. Such hearing shall be governed by chapter 227.

**History:** 1965 c. 433 s. 121.

**49.046 Relief to needy Indians.** From the appropriation made in s. 20.670 (3)(e) and (o) the department may grant relief to needy Indians not eligible for aid under ss. 49.18, 49.19, 49.20 to 49.38, 49.40 or 49.61 and residing on tax-free lands or may appoint the welfare agency in the county or municipality wherein such needy Indians reside to administer such relief. Any such agency so appointed shall make such reports as are required and such accounting for funds as are made available under this section. The department shall adopt and publish suitable rules and regulations governing eligibility for the amount of and the furnishing and paying of relief under this section. The department may enter into suitable agreements with any appropriate agency of the federal government for provision of relief to needy Indians. The sums appropriated in s. 20.670 (3)(e) and (o) for the purposes of this section shall not become available until released by the board on government operations. Such sums shall be made available by the board on government operations at such times and in such amounts as the board may determine to be necessary to adequately provide for the purposes for which they are appropriated, with due regard for the whole amount available for such purposes. If the provision relating to release by the board on government operations is invalid, the appropriation in s. 20.670 (3)(e) and (o) shall not be invalidated but shall be considered to be made without any condition as to time or manner of release.

**History:** 1965 c. 433 s. 121.

**49.05 Work relief.** (1) Any municipality or county required by law to administer relief may require persons entitled to relief to labor on any work relief project authorized and sponsored by the municipality or county, at work which they are capable of performing. When a work relief project requires the employment of skilled tradesmen, and the number of such tradesmen listed on the relief rolls of the municipality or county sponsoring the project is not sufficient to meet the requirements of the project, the municipality or county may hire tradesmen who are not receiving public relief, and they shall be paid at the prevailing wage for such labor in the municipality or county.

(2) The basis of payment of persons granted work relief shall be determined by the unit of government responsible for the person's relief.

(3) Municipalities or counties may authorize work relief projects for the performance of any work not prohibited by law, provided that such projects are not operated so as to supplant regular employes of the municipality or county or the other municipal or county units hereinafter mentioned. Municipalities or counties may, by mutual agreement, assign persons entitled to work relief to work on work relief projects operated by the state or by other municipalities, counties, school districts, drainage districts, utility districts, metropolitan sewerage areas or other governmental units. Such agreements may or may not provide for full or partial work relief reimbursement to the municipality or county loaning such persons by the municipality or county or unit to which such persons are loaned.

(4) Municipalities or counties granting work relief shall be directly liable to persons granted work relief for any benefits legally recoverable under the workmen's compensation law of Wisconsin, but may contract with another governmental unit, for whose benefit such work relief project is primarily designed, to share such liability or wholly assume the same, and such other governmental unit is hereby authorized to make such contracts of sharing or total assumption of liability.

(5) Municipalities or counties may authorize the sale of products made on any work relief project to governmental units, and to religious, charitable or educational institutions.

(6) Municipalities or counties may operate work relief projects which will serve to rehabilitate disabled persons so as to enable such persons to qualify for employment in public or private industry.

(7) The value of work relief labor shall be deemed to offset the payments made therefor and such payments shall not be recoverable under section 49.11.

**49.06 Home and insurance exempt.** No person shall be denied relief on the ground that he has an equity in the home in which he lives or a cash or loan value not in excess of \$300 in a policy of insurance. No applicant for relief shall be required to assign such equity or insurance policy as a condition for receiving relief. Where persons are not in fact dependent, as defined by this chapter, but who, if they converted their limited holdings, real or personal, would, by reason of a fallen market or by reason of economic or other conditions, be required to suffer a substantial loss, then and in that event such persons shall be permitted, by proper assignments to the county or municipality, to render themselves qualified to receive relief. The county or municipal agency may sell, lease or transfer the property, or defend and prosecute all actions concerning it, and pay all just claims against it, and do all other things necessary for the protection, preservation and management of the property.

**49.08 Recovery from dependents; property in joint tenancy.** (1) If any person at the time of receiving relief under ss. 49.01 to 49.17 or as an inmate of any county or municipal institution in which the state is not chargeable with all or a part of the inmate's maintenance or as a tuberculosis patient provided for in ch. 50 and s. 58.06 (2), or at any time thereafter, is the owner of property, the authorities charged with the care of the dependent, or the board in charge of the institution, may sue for the value of the relief from such person or his estate. In such action the statutes of limitation shall not be pleaded in defense, except that nothing herein shall eliminate the bar of s. 313.08. The court may refuse to render judgment or allow the claim in any case where a parent, wife or child is dependent on such property for support, provided that the court in rendering judgment shall take into account the current family budget requirement as fixed by the United States department of labor for such community or as fixed by the authorities of such community in charge of public assistance. The records kept by the municipality or institution are prima facie evidence of the value of the relief furnished. This section shall not apply to any person who receives care for pulmonary tuberculosis as provided in s. 50.04.

(2) If upon the death of any person any property prior to death was held in joint tenancy, then ss. 230.47 (1m) and (3) and 230.48 (1m) and (3) shall apply and the liability and recovery shall be the same as provided in sub. (1) except that it shall only be for relief furnished under ss. 49.01 to 49.17 and the judge so finds, and if there is no personal property or the personal property is insufficient to pay the debt and obligation and real property remains, the court shall enter judgment which shall constitute a prior lien for the unsatisfied amount as hereafter provided and remain a prior lien until satisfied or until the death of the surviving joint tenant at which time recovery may be had. The authorities or board shall file a copy of the judgment with a description of the property in the office of the register of deeds of every county in which real property of the joint tenant is located. This subsection is authority only to counties having a population of 500,000 or more for relief furnished by such counties and shall apply only to persons resident of such counties at the time of death.

**49.085 No action against members of the Menominee Indian tribe in certain cases.** No action shall be commenced under s. 46.10, 49.08 or 49.25 or any other provision of law for the recovery from assets distributed to members of the Menominee Indian tribe and others by the United States pursuant to P.L. 83-399, as amended, for the value of relief or old-age assistance under this chapter and the value of maintenance in state institutions under ch. 46, furnished prior to termination date (as defined in s. 70.057) to any legally enrolled member of the Menominee Indian tribe, his or her dependents, or lawful distributees of such member under section 3, said P.L. 83-399, as amended. For purposes of this section, "legally enrolled members of the Menominee Indian tribe" shall include only those persons whose names appear on "Final Roll—Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin" as proclaimed by the secretary of the interior November 26, 1957, and published at pages 9951 et seq. of the federal register, Thursday, December 12, 1957.

**49.09 Removal of dependents.** (1) When a dependent person, other than a recipient of old-age assistance, aid to blind, aid to dependent children, or aid to totally and permanently disabled persons is receiving relief elsewhere than at his place of settlement and refuses to return thereto, the officer or agency of the place administering relief or

of the place of settlement may petition the judge of the county court or the judge of any other court of record of the county in which the relief is furnished for an order directing such person to return to his place of settlement. The petition shall state specifically the reasons upon which the order is sought and copies shall be served upon the dependent person, the officer or agency of the place of residence or the place of legal settlement. Notice of hearing shall be served upon the same parties at least 10 days in advance of the hearing. Service may be made personally or by registered mail with return receipt requested.

(2) If the judge finds that return to the place of legal settlement does not substantially reduce the employment and earning opportunities of the dependent person, does not materially disrupt family ties, and does not work any material injustice to him, he may order the dependent person to return to his place of settlement. The order of the judge for removal shall specify a time beyond which no further relief shall be granted the dependent person unless he returns to the place of his legal settlement and shall further specify the conditions to be complied with by the petitioning municipality to provide suitable transportation to the place of settlement. The cost of transportation shall be chargeable to the place of legal settlement and may be recovered as any other relief costs, pursuant to section 49.11. If the place of legal settlement is the petitioner, the entry of such order shall not be a defense to collection of future relief charges unless it can show affirmatively that all conditions as to providing transportation specified in the order were fully complied with. Any such removal order may be suspended by the judge at any time without notice or hearing upon application of the relief agency of the place of residence for authority to issue relief to meet an emergency medical condition, and further the judge may in his discretion at any time entertain an application by the dependent person or either municipality to revoke such removal order and upon giving of notice and hearing as provided in subsection (1), may revoke such order temporarily or permanently. A copy of the order suspending the removal order or a copy of revocation of the removal order shall be served on the place of legal settlement within 10 days of the entry thereof and any and all relief granted pursuant to the suspension of revocation order will be chargeable to the place of legal settlement to the same extent as though no removal order had been entered. Any removal order entered by a judge shall affect and be binding on only those municipalities which have been served with the petition and notice of hearing.

(3) When a dependent person without a legal settlement in a county or municipality in this state applies for relief and is found in need, the relief agency may furnish temporary assistance including emergency medical care but shall immediately correspond with the state in which such person formerly resided or had a legal settlement. If such other state admits that the dependent person is there eligible for relief on the basis of residence, then the relief agency in this state shall offer to the person requesting relief transportation for such person, and for his dependents if necessary, to the municipality of former residence or legal settlement. If the person declines to accept such offer no further relief to him or his dependents shall be granted except for temporary assistance to meet a medical emergency. In the event the dependent person has resided less than one whole year in this state immediately prior to application for relief then the temporary assistance shall not extend beyond 30 days unless a medical emergency requires further extension. If the dependent person is a married woman the fact that the husband cannot be found shall be no bar to such married woman's right to receive relief. In the discretion of the department, however, she may be required to swear out a warrant for non-support against her husband before receiving relief.

**49.10 Legal settlement; how determined.** (1) A wife has the settlement of her husband, if he has any within the state, but if he has none, she has none. A wife living separate from her husband shall, if criminal proceedings have been instituted under s. 52.05, or support proceedings commenced under s. 52.10, begin to acquire legal settlement in her own right as of the date of instituting the criminal proceedings or commencing the support proceedings.

(2) (a) Legitimate minor children have the settlement status of their father if living, or of the mother if their father is deceased, or if their mother has acquired settlement in her own right under sub. (1) and has actual custody of the children; if the parents are divorced, the children have the settlement status of the parent who has legal custody awarded by a court of competent jurisdiction. If no award of legal custody is made, the children have the settlement status of the parent having actual custody but if custody is awarded to other than a parent, such children have no settlement.

(b) Illegitimate children have the settlement of their mother; and if her settlement is lost, theirs is lost.

(c) If parental rights are terminated, notwithstanding any disposition of custody in the same or companion proceedings, the child has no settlement.

(3) (a) Any person, except as otherwise provided in this section, without a settlement in any municipality in a county (which is not operating on the county system), who voluntarily resides in that county one whole year without the receipt of aid, public or private, as a dependent person, gains a settlement in the county. That which interrupts residence toward the gaining or losing of settlement in a municipality likewise interrupts residence toward the gaining or losing of a county settlement. Every such settlement continues until it is lost by acquiring a new one in this state or by so residing for one whole year elsewhere than the county of settlement or by so residing one whole year in a municipality within the county of settlement, and the residence which went toward gaining the county settlement shall, if voluntarily in the municipality, be included toward the gaining of settlement in the municipality.

(b) Any person who has a settlement in any municipality in a county (which is not operating on the county system) who resides elsewhere than said municipality for one whole year so as to lose his settlement in the municipality, but does not gain a settlement in another municipality in the county, and does not reside outside the county for one whole year, so as to lose settlement, has a settlement in the county.

(c) Time spent by any person while residing on land owned, operated or controlled by another municipality or county, shall not be included as a part of the year necessary to acquire a settlement in the town, city, village or county, wherein such lands are located, but shall be included as a part of the year necessary to acquire a settlement in such other municipality or county.

(4) Every person (except as otherwise provided in this section) who voluntarily resides in any municipality or county operating on the county system one whole year without receiving aid, either public or private, as a dependent person, gains a legal settlement therein. Residence by a person within this state under the following circumstances shall not be considered as voluntary and shall be considered as interrupted, and no settlement status shall be changed:

(a) While supported as a dependent person by other than a spouse, parent or child.

(b) While employed on any governmental program as a needy person.

(c) While an inmate or under the control and supervision of any public institution or an inmate of a private institution.

(d) While residing or while employed on any Indian reservation land which is not subject to taxation by the municipality or county wherein such land is located.

(e) While under confinement or on probation or parole under the state or federal criminal statutes.

(f) While supported in whole or in part in any institution or foster home as a public charge.

(5) Time spent in the armed forces on active duty exceeding 30 days in the aggregate per annum shall not be included as part of the year necessary to change settlement status.

(6) Marriage emancipates minors so that they may acquire legal settlement in their own right.

(7) Every settlement continues until it is lost by voluntarily acquiring a new one in this state or by voluntarily residing for one whole year elsewhere than the municipality or county in which such settlement exists; and upon voluntarily acquiring a new settlement or upon voluntarily residing one whole year elsewhere than the municipality or county of settlement, all former settlements are lost.

(8) Where a divorce has been granted, the date from which a new settlement may be acquired by a married woman is the day on which the divorce is granted and not the termination of the period when the divorce judgment becomes final.

(9) When any territory is organized into or attached to any municipality, every person having a settlement in such territory, and who actually dwells or has his home, or if absent, has his last dwelling place or home therein, thereafter has a settlement in such new municipality or the one to which such territory is so attached. The organization into or attachment to any municipality of any territory shall not prevent any person from acquiring a legal settlement therein within the time and by the means by which he would have gained it there if no new municipality had been organized or such territory had not been attached.

(10) This section shall not affect any commitments to institutions, payments or decisions made or actions, proceedings or petitions pending or causes of action existing on the basis of legal settlement before January 1, 1960.

(11) When this section is applied to any county operating under the county system of administering public assistance the term "municipality" as used herein means such county unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(12) In addition to the definitions in s. 49.01, the following definitions apply to this section:

(a) "Settlement status" includes persons with or without a legal settlement in this state.

(b) "Legitimate child" includes children born or conceived in wedlock or legitimated pursuant to law or legally adopted.

(c) "Residence" is the voluntary concurrence of physical presence with intent to remain in a place of fixed habitation. Physical presence shall be prima facie evidence of intent to remain.

(d) "Voluntary" means according to a person's free choice, if competent, or by choice of a guardian if incompetent.

(e) "Confinement" means legal detention of a person after imposition of sentence in any prison, jail, house of correction, prison camp or similar correctional facility, and includes the provisions of s. 56.08.

(f) "Institution" means a facility within this state for congregate care or correction and includes the following:

1. Public. Wisconsin state prison; Wisconsin correctional institution; Wisconsin state reformatory; Wisconsin home for women; Wisconsin school for boys; Wisconsin school for girls; county jails or houses of correction; Wisconsin child center; northern Wisconsin, southern Wisconsin and central Wisconsin colonies and training schools; Mendota, Winnebago and Central state hospitals; Wisconsin school for visually handicapped; Wisconsin school for the deaf; federal, state, county or municipal hospitals, asylums, infirmaries, tuberculosis sanatoriums or homes for the aged; veterans' hospitals, domiciliaries and homes.

2. Private. Private or denominational centers, schools or homes for neglected, dependent or delinquent children; foster homes (licensed); nursing homes (licensed); lodge, society or benevolent homes; tuberculosis sanatoriums; mental hospitals.

Discussion of legal settlement of husband, wife, child, relative to probation and parole and effect on child in foster home. 50 Atty. Gen. 86. has been transferred to the state welfare department have no legal settlement after termination of parental rights, whether or not transfer and termination occur at the same time. 53 Atty. Gen. 205.

Under (2) (c) children whose custody same time. 53 Atty. Gen. 205.

**49.105 Legal settlement in Menominee county.** Every person who on termination date as defined in s. 70.057 would have legal settlement in Menominee county as determined under s. 49.10 but for the exception contained in s. 49.10 (4) for time spent while residing or while employed on an Indian reservation, shall be deemed to have legal settlement in Menominee county on termination date.

**49.11 Legal settlement, collection from.** (1) **SWORN STATEMENT OF SETTLEMENT.** When relief is furnished to a dependent person, either he, if able, or some other person who has knowledge of the facts, shall be required to make a sworn statement of facts relating to his residence and settlement, which statement shall be incorporated into the nonresident notice.

(2) **RIGHT TO COLLECT FROM PLACE OF SETTLEMENT.** The county or municipality in which the relief recipient has his settlement shall be chargeable with relief furnished. If the relief recipient has no settlement in this state, then the county wherein the relief is furnished shall be chargeable with such relief; and the state shall reimburse for relief charges when the person has no settlement and until such person has had residence in this state for a period of one year, pursuant to s. 49.04.

(a) *When the furnishing municipality is without the county of settlement.* 1. When the relief recipient claims to have settlement outside of the county in which relief is furnished, the relief furnished shall be a charge against the county in which the relief is furnished. Such charge shall be audited by a committee designated for such purpose by the county board and shall be paid by the county of the municipality furnishing the relief within 60 days of the receipt of the voucher or claim. Thereafter such county may recover from the county of settlement, and the latter county may, except when operating under the county system of relief, recover from the municipality of settlement.

2. If the county wherein the aid is furnished fails to pay the charge to the granting municipality within 60 days after it is filed with its clerk, the municipality may proceed against said county under this section to recover for such relief furnished.

(b) *When furnishing municipality is within county of settlement.* When operating under the municipal system and the relief recipient claims to have settlement in a municipality within the same county, the relief furnished shall be a charge against such municipality and may be recovered by the furnishing municipality directly.

(c) *When county settlement or no settlement.* When the relief recipient claims to have county settlement or no settlement, the charges for the relief furnished may be recov-

ered by the furnishing municipality directly from the county wherein the relief is furnished, and if such recipient has no settlement and has not resided in this state for at least one year, the county may, in turn, recover from the state under s. 49.04.

(3) DEFENSES AVAILABLE. The defenses available to any municipality or county in a proceeding under s. 49.11 for reimbursement, shall be as follows:

- (a) That the settlement is not in the municipality or county as claimed.
- (b) That the relief recipient was not a dependent person as defined in s. 49.01 (4) and was not in need of the relief furnished.
- (c) That the notices required to be served or filed were defective to the prejudice of the municipality or county.
- (d) That the limitations as prescribed in this section had expired.

(4) PROCEDURES FOR RECOVERY. When the municipality furnishing relief is not the municipality of settlement, a nonresident notice shall be served upon the municipality of claimed settlement as hereinafter provided. Such nonresident notice shall be on a standard form prescribed by the department and shall contain the following: The name of the municipality or county furnishing relief; the name, residence and birth dates of the persons receiving relief and of all the members of his household; the name of the county or municipality in which settlement is claimed and the facts upon which such claim is based; the date on which relief was first furnished; a copy of the sworn statement as described in s. 49.11 (1). The effect of this nonresident notice shall lapse when there is no general relief furnished to the person or his family for a period of 6 months. The effect of the nonresident notice may be reinstated, at any time, by notice (on forms prescribed by the department) by certified mail by the furnishing municipality or county to the municipality or county chargeable, within 30 days after the new relief is furnished, after such lapse of 6 months, and forwarded in the same manner as the original nonresident notice.

(a) *Reply to nonresident notice.* The municipality or county of claimed settlement shall either deny or acknowledge settlement within 20 days after receipt of the nonresident notice, and if denied, such denial shall contain all the facts upon which the denial is based. Failure to deny shall be considered as an acknowledgment of settlement as claimed until such denial shall be filed.

(b) *Transmittal of notices, replies and claims.* 1. When settlement is claimed in a county or a municipality in other than the furnishing county, the nonresident notice shall be completed by the furnishing municipality or county, and transmitted to the county clerk of the county wherein the relief was furnished (except in counties on the county system, wherein the county clerk is the initiating agent), who shall in turn, transmit said notice to the county clerk of the county in which settlement is claimed. In counties operating under the municipal system of relief, it is the duty of the county clerk to forward such nonresident notice to the clerk of the municipality of claimed settlement.

2. Denials or acknowledgments of responsibility shall be mailed directly to the municipality or county furnishing relief with copies being sent to all forwarding agencies.

3. When verified claims are received by the county clerk from the municipality furnishing relief and payment to the municipality is made under sub. (2) (a) 1, such clerk shall, within 75 days from the date he first receives such claim forward a verified claim, on forms prescribed by the department, to the clerk of the county wherein settlement is claimed. In counties operating under the municipal system, it is the duty of the county clerk to forward such claim to the clerk of the municipality of claimed settlement within 7 days after the receipt thereof. When operating under the county system of relief verified claims received from the county relief agency pursuant to par. (e) 3 shall be forwarded within 75 days from the date such claim is received, on forms prescribed by the department, to the clerk of the county wherein a settlement is claimed.

4. Allowances or disallowances shall be sent to the clerk of the furnishing county with a copy to the clerk of the county of claimed settlement. The municipality or county of claimed settlement shall, upon receipt of the claim for reimbursement, either allow or disallow such claim. Failure to allow such claim for the period hereinafter indicated shall be deemed a disallowance thereof.

(c) *Transmittal of notice, replies and claims between units in same county.* When the furnishing municipality and the municipality of claimed settlement are within the same county, all nonresident notices, denials or acknowledgments, claims and allowances or disallowances shall be filed directly with the clerks of the respective municipalities.

(d) *Transmittal of notice, replies and claims when person has no settlement or county settlement.* When claim is made that responsibility rests with the furnishing municipality's county because the recipient has no settlement or has a county settlement, all filing shall be done directly with the county clerk and the municipal clerk. When settlement is claimed as county settlement in a county other than the county of the furnishing

municipality the transmittal shall be in the same manner as if such county of claimed settlement were operating under a county system of relief.

(e) *Time and limitations for filing.* 1. All filings and mailings shall be done by certified or registered mail. The nonresident notice and statement concerning residence shall be initially filed and transmitted within 20 days of the date of furnishing relief. The forwarding agents shall forward such notices within 7 days of the receipt thereof.

2. The acknowledgment or denial of settlement shall be transmitted within 20 days of the receipt of the nonresident notice.

3. Claims for reimbursement shall be filed with the county clerk of the furnishing county within one year of the date on which the relief is furnished.

4. Disallowance or allowance of claims by the municipality or county of claimed settlement shall be transmitted within 60 days of receipt of the claim for reimbursement, and failure to allow or disallow within such period shall be deemed a disallowance.

(f) *Penalty for failure to timely file.* 1. Failure to timely initiate or transmit a nonresident notice or an acknowledgment or denial shall be a bar to recovery or a right to deny recovery until such notices are received. If the furnishing municipality or county claims settlement of a relief recipient to be in a municipality in a county operating under a municipal system, and later discovers that settlement is in another municipality within the same county, an amended nonresident notice may be filed, and if done within 40 days of the date on which relief is furnished, the effect of such nonresident notice shall revert to the date on which such relief was first furnished.

2. Failure to timely initiate and transmit a claim for reimbursement shall be a complete bar to recovery on such claim not timely filed.

(5) GENERAL LIMITATIONS. In addition to the other limitations and penalties hereinbefore stated, recovery of relief granted shall be barred unless a proceeding is commenced before the department:

(a) Within 6 months after receiving written notice of a disallowance of a claim.

(b) Within one year after disallowance by failure to allow a claim.

(c) Under any other circumstances within 2 years of the date relief is first furnished under the nonresident notice which is the basis for the claim, including claims against the state.

(6) WHO MAY SUE. (a) *County.* Upon receipt of notice of the disallowance of the claim of any county, its clerk shall forthwith notify the district attorney of his county, who may institute a proceeding in the name of the county for the recovery of so much of the claim as has been disallowed, and in such action the county shall not be required to give bond.

(b) *Municipality.* Upon receipt of notice of disallowance of the claim of any municipality against another municipality within the same county the clerk receiving such notice shall notify the governing body of his municipality which may thereupon institute a proceeding under sub. (7).

(7) PROCEDURE. (a) *Jurisdiction and practice.* The department is vested with exclusive original jurisdiction to hear all proceedings brought under this section on claims that have been disallowed or which have not been acted upon as required by statute. A county which has furnished relief or paid a municipality for the relief furnished shall be plaintiff, except where the suit is between municipalities within the same county or where a municipality is suing its own county for failure to pay, and shall join as parties defendant all municipalities or counties liable presently or ultimately. The parties have a right to be present at any hearing, by attorney or any other authorized agent approved by the department, and to present pertinent testimony and argument. The department shall appoint examiners to conduct such hearings. The department or an examiner thereof, for the purpose of carrying out such powers and duties, may issue subpoenas. The department may make such regulations and adopt such rules of practice not inconsistent herewith or with ch. 227 as will enable it to effectually perform its duties hereunder. The order of the department shall determine the ultimate liability of all parties in the proceeding and may grant to the prevailing party and against the losing party witness fees of \$5 per day and 5 cents per mile for travel.

(b) *Pleadings and hearing.* Such proceedings shall be commenced by complaint which shall be entitled "Before the state department of public welfare of Wisconsin." The complaint shall contain the names of the parties and matters and prayers as in complaints generally. It may be served, with sufficient copies, upon the department by registered or certified mail; the department shall then note such service upon the original complaint and so notify the claimant. The department shall immediately transmit a copy by registered or certified mail to the defendant county or municipality, which shall have 20 days from the time of the mailing of such copy by registered or certified mail to serve an answer, with sufficient copies, upon the department. The department shall acknowledge such serv-

ice and mail a copy of the answer to the claimant. When the department has determined that the matter is at issue, it shall notify the parties of the time and place of hearing thereon and in its discretion may continue or adjourn such hearing for a reasonable period. The department shall make its findings and order and transmit copies thereof to the parties by registered or certified mail as soon as possible after such hearing.

(c) *Judicial review.* Such order shall be subject to review under ch. 227, except that such review shall be instituted in the circuit court in one of the following counties: Douglas, Eau Claire, Marathon, Brown, La Crosse, Dane or Milwaukee, and may be heard at a regular or special term.

(d) *Service by mail.* The mailing within such 20 days, of any notice herein provided shall be by registered or certified mail with return receipt requested.

(e) *State special charge.* When a matter is finally determined on appeal, or if no appeal is taken within the prescribed time, the amount owing by a county or municipality shall be certified by the department to the department of administration and shall thereafter be collected as are other special state charges against counties and municipalities, with interest at the rate of 6 per cent per annum to be computed to March 22 following. The state treasurer shall remit to the prevailing county or municipality such amount, as soon after March 1 of each year, as may be, upon order of the department of administration.

**History:** 1961 c. 204.

**49.12 Penalties; evidence.** (1) Any person who, with intent to secure public assistance under any provision of ch. 49, whether for himself or for some other person, wilfully makes any false representations shall, if the value of such assistance so secured does not exceed \$100, be imprisoned not more than 6 months; if the value of such assistance exceeds \$100 but does not exceed \$500, be imprisoned not more than one year; if the value of such assistance exceeds \$500, be imprisoned not more than 5 years, and if the value of such assistance exceeds \$2,500, be punished as prescribed under s. 943.20 (3) (c).

(2) Any person who wilfully does any act designed to interfere with the proper administration of public assistance shall be fined not less than \$10 nor more than \$100 or be punished by imprisonment for not less than 10 nor more than 60 days. The acceptance of any supplies or articles furnished to any person as general relief in exchange for or in payment for any intoxicating liquor or fermented malt beverage shall be deemed to be a violation of this subsection, but violations of this subsection shall not be limited to such acts.

(3) Any dependent person who sells or exchanges supplies or articles furnished him as assistance or who disposes of such supplies or articles in any other way than as directed, with intent thereby to defraud the county or municipality furnishing him assistance, and any person who purchases any article knowing it to have been furnished to another person as assistance shall be punished as provided in subsection (2).

(4) Any person who without legal authority sends or brings, causes to be sent or brought, or advises any dependent person to go to any municipality for the purpose of making him a charge upon such municipality shall be punished as provided in subsection (2).

(5) Any person in charge of public assistance or any of his assistants who receives or solicits any commission or derives or seeks to obtain any personal financial gain through any purchase, sale, disbursement or contract for supplies or other property used in the administration of public assistance shall be punished as provided in s. 946.13.

(6) Where a person is originally eligible for assistance and receives any income or assets or both thereafter and fails to notify the officer or agency granting such assistance of the receipt of such assets within 15 days after such receipt and continues to receive aid, such failure to so notify the proper officer or agency of receipt of such assets or income or both shall be considered a fraud and the penalties in sub. (1) shall apply.

(7) Any dependent person who uses money, checks, vouchers or any other thing of value furnished him as relief for purposes other than as directed by the county or municipality furnishing such relief shall be punished as provided in sub. (2).

(8) Any person who makes any statement in a written application for aid under this chapter shall be considered to have made an admission as to the existence, correctness or validity of any fact stated, which shall be taken as prima facie evidence against the party making it in any complaint, information or indictment, and in any action or proceeding brought for the enforcement of any provision of this chapter.

(9) If any person obtains for himself, or any other person or dependents or both, assistance under this chapter on the basis of facts stated to the authorities charged with the responsibility of furnishing assistance and fails to notify said authorities within 7 days of any change in the facts as originally stated and continues to receive assistance

based on the originally stated facts such failure to notify shall be considered a fraud and the penalties in sub. (1) shall apply. The negotiation of a check received in payment of such assistance by the recipient after any change in such facts which would render him ineligible for such assistance shall be prima facie evidence of fraud in any such case.

(10) Any person who accepts a relief voucher granted as relief and fails to tender the commodities authorized by the relief authorities to the relief recipient but in lieu thereof refunds to the relief recipient cash or substitutes any intoxicating liquor or malt beverage or cigarettes not authorized by the relief voucher shall be considered to have committed a fraud and the penalties provided in sub. (1) shall apply to said person.

**History:** 1961 c. 167; 1965 c. 78.

**49.14 County home; establishment.** (1) Each county may establish a county home for the relief and support of dependent persons pursuant to section 46.17.

(2) In all counties whose population is less than 250,000 such county home shall be governed pursuant to sections 46.18, 46.19 and 46.20.

(3) No county in which a county home is established shall contract to conduct the same or to support and maintain the inmates thereof; and all agreements in violation of this subsection are void.

(4) The trustees or any person employed by the county board pursuant to subsections (1) and (2), may administer oaths concerning any matter submitted to him or them, in connection with their functions.

**49.15 County home; commitments; admissions.** (1) When it appears to the satisfaction of any court of record upon petition that a person is without a home or necessary care or is living in a state of filth and squalor likely to induce disease, the court, after affording such person an opportunity to be heard in person or by someone in his behalf, may commit such person to the county home of his county, if there be one therein, otherwise to the county home of some other county, for an indefinite time subject to further order. If the person sought to be committed has a legal settlement, the petition for commitment shall be signed by the relief officer of the municipality of settlement and the cost of care and maintenance shall be a charge against such municipality; but if the person has no legal settlement or the county in which he has settlement operates on the county system of relief the petition shall be signed by the relief officer of the county and the cost of care and maintenance shall be a charge against the county. Any order or process issued by the court may be served and such commitment may be made by the petitioning officer.

(2) Any person upon application to the board of trustees may be admitted to the county home upon such terms as may be prescribed by the board. If such person or his relatives are unable to pay for his care and maintenance he may be admitted as a charge of the municipality of his legal settlement or the county if he has no settlement, but no municipality or county shall be bound without the written approval of its relief officer or agency, except as provided in subsection (3).

(3) The actual cost for care and maintenance rendered a relief recipient who has legal settlement in another county shall be a proper relief charge and a liability against the place of settlement and recoverable pursuant to section 49.11.

(4) The county board of any county may by resolution provide that the county shall bear the expense of maintaining all dependent persons committed or admitted to the county home, and may repeal any resolution adopted under this subsection.

**49.16 County hospital; establishment.** (1) Each county may establish a county hospital for the treatment of dependent persons, pursuant to section 46.17.

(2) In counties with a population of 250,000 or more such institution shall be governed pursuant to section 46.21, but in all other counties it shall be governed pursuant to sections 46.18, 46.19 and 46.20.

**49.17 County hospitals; admissions.** (1) Any person upon application to the board of trustees may be admitted to the county hospital upon such terms as may be prescribed by the board. If such person or his relatives are unable to pay for his care and maintenance he may be admitted as a charge of the municipality of his legal settlement or the county if he has no settlement, but no municipality or county shall be bound without the written approval of its relief officer or agency, except as provided in subsection (2).

(2) The actual cost for hospitalization and treatment rendered a relief recipient who has legal settlement in another county shall be a proper relief charge and a liability against the place of settlement and recoverable pursuant to section 49.11.

(3) The county board of any county may by resolution provide that the county shall bear the expense of maintaining all dependent persons admitted to the county hospital, and may repeal any resolution adopted under this subsection.

**49.171 County infirmaries; establishment.** (1) Each county, or any 2 or more counties jointly, may establish, pursuant to section 46.17 or 46.20 a county infirmary for the treatment, care and maintenance of the aged infirm.

(2) In counties with a population of 500,000 or more, such institution shall be governed pursuant to section 46.21, but in all other counties it shall be governed pursuant to sections 46.18, 46.19 and 46.20.

(3) As used in sections 49.171 to 49.173:

(a) An aged infirm person is a person over the age of 65 years so incapacitated mentally by the degenerative processes of old age, or so incapacitated physically, as to require continuing infirmary care.

(b) A county infirmary is a county institution created pursuant to subsection (1) or (2) under the general supervision and inspection of the state department of public welfare pursuant to sections 46.16 and 46.17 as to adequacy of equipment and staff to treat, care for and maintain the physical and mental needs of aged infirm persons.

**49.172 County infirmaries, admissions; standards.** (1) The following standards shall apply to admissions to a county infirmary:

(a) The primary standard shall be need of infirmary care, rather than ability to pay for such care, and no person shall be excluded from an infirmary solely because of his ability or inability to pay for his care.

(b) The person admitted must be an aged infirm individual, and it must be reasonably apparent that unless admitted he will be without care adequate for his needs.

(c) Except as provided in par. (d), any person who has resided in this state for at least one year, and who meets the other standards for admission, is eligible for admission, and no person shall be excluded solely on the ground that he has no legal settlement in the county or counties which operate the infirmary. The time spent by any person in a county infirmary either as a voluntary or a committed patient shall not be included as time necessary to acquire or lose a legal settlement in any municipality.

(d) An applicant who has removed his residence to Wisconsin from a state which requires that one who has removed his residence from Wisconsin to such state, reside in the latter more than one year before being eligible for a similar type of care, shall be required to reside in this state for a like period before becoming eligible for admission.

(2) The board of trustees of a county infirmary (subject to regulations approved by the county board) shall establish rules and regulations governing the admission and discharge of voluntary patients.

(3) When it appears to the satisfaction of the county court of the county in which an infirmary is located, upon petition for commitment, that a person meets the standards set forth in sub. (1), it may, after affording such person an opportunity to be heard in person or by someone on his behalf, commit him to a county infirmary. The power to commit includes persons who entered an infirmary voluntarily. The court may also, on petition and after a hearing, order the discharge of any patient, upon a showing that he is no longer in need of infirmary care, or that he can be adequately cared for elsewhere.

(4) The board of trustees on receipt of an application for voluntary admission, or the county court on the filing of a petition for commitment, shall appoint a person licensed to practice medicine and surgery in this state to examine personally the applicant or the subject of the petition and to advise the board or court whether such person meets the standard prescribed by sub. (1) (a).

(5) The state department of public welfare shall prescribe and prepare the forms to be used for the voluntary admission or commitment of patients.

(6) The county court in the case of a commitment, and the board of trustees in the case of a voluntary admission, shall pass on the economic status of the patient at the time of commitment or admission, and in all cases in which the patient has legal settlement in another county shall notify the county of legal settlement of the fact of such commitment or admission.

**49.173 County infirmaries; cost of treatment, care and maintenance of patients.**

(1) In the first instance the county or counties operating an infirmary shall defray the actual per capita cost of treatment, care and maintenance. To the extent that a patient is a public charge, such county or counties shall be reimbursed for such expenditures on the following basis as determined from annual infirmary reports filed with the state department of public welfare under section 46.18 (8), (9) and (10):

(a) By the state, 100 per cent of the actual cost for each patient who has no legal settlement in this state;

(b) By the state, 50 per cent of such cost for every other patient;

(c) If a patient has a legal settlement in some other county of this state, 50 per cent

of such cost, by the county of his legal settlement. The procedure for making such reimbursement shall be as provided by section 46.106.

(2) To the extent that a patient is not a public charge, such cost shall be charged and paid in advance for each calendar month, and payment may be enforced by the board of trustees.

(3) The state department of public welfare may at any time examine any patient, the cost of whose care is charged in whole or part to the state, to determine if he is still in need of infirmary care. If the department determines such care is no longer needed, the state's liability for such cost ceases upon notice to the infirmary.

(4) Beginning with the fiscal year ending June 30, 1952, the records and accounts of each county infirmary shall be audited annually. Such audits shall be made by the department of state audit as provided in section 15.22 (12) (d) and (e) as soon as practicable following the close of the infirmary's fiscal year. In addition to other findings, such audits shall ascertain compliance with the mandatory uniform cost record-keeping system requirements of section 46.18 (8), (9) and (10), and verify the actual per capita cost of maintenance, care and treatment of patients. Any resulting adjustments to settlements already made under sections 49.173 and 46.106 shall be carried into the next such settlement.

**49.174 Fees and expenses of proceedings.** The fees of examining physicians, witnesses and guardians ad litem and other expenses of proceedings under ss. 49.171 to 49.173 shall be governed by s. 51.07.

**History:** 1963 c. 6.

#### AID TO THE BLIND

**49.18 Aid to the blind.** (1) (a) Any needy person who is blind shall receive aid from the county of his residence as provided in this section. The amount granted shall be determined on the basis of need taking into consideration all income and resources as well as ordinary and special expenses incidental to blindness, except that the first \$85 plus one-half of the excess over \$85 of payments made to or on behalf of any person for or with respect to any month under Title I or II of the federal economic opportunity act of 1964 or such payment made to or in behalf of any person and any excess remaining after this exclusion shall be considered as income for any other individual only to the extent made available to or for the benefit of such other individual and except that as permitted or required for federal aid in making such determination of need, the first \$85 per month of earned income together with one-half of any earned income in excess of the first \$85 shall be disregarded in determining such amount. Any amount of earned income so disregarded in determining the amount of aid to the blind a recipient of such aid is eligible for, shall not be taken into consideration in determining the need of any other individual for aid to the blind, old-age assistance, aid to dependent children or aid to totally and permanently disabled persons. Under a plan approved by the department a recipient may during a period not in excess of 12 months accumulate additional amounts of other income and resources for the purpose of achieving self-support through self-activity as set out in the approved plan. The maximum aid per month shall not exceed \$75.

(b) For the purposes of this section, the term "aid to the blind" means money payments to, or medical care in behalf of or any type of remedial care recognized under this section or s. 49.40 in behalf of blind individuals who are needy, but does not include any such payments to or care in behalf of any individual who is an inmate of a public institution (except as a patient in a medical institution) or any individual (a) who is a patient in an institution for tuberculosis or mental diseases, or (b) who has been diagnosed as having tuberculosis or psychosis and is a patient in a medical institution as a result thereof, except that the exclusion of money payments to needy individuals described in clause (a) or (b) shall, in the case of any such individuals who are not patients in a public institution, be effective July 1, 1952. Beginning July 1, 1953, no payment of aid to the blind shall be made to any individual in a private or public institution unless a standard-setting authority has been designated or established which shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining standards for such institution. Such individuals shall not be barred from receiving general aid under ss. 49.02 and 49.03. Aid to the blind shall also be granted to blind dependent persons residing voluntarily in county or city homes and the department shall make claim for federal reimbursement therefor when federal funds are made available for that purpose and pay the same to the county.

(c) The department shall by rule establish a definition of blindness in terms of ophthalmic measurements.

(e) An applicant for aid to the blind shall not be eligible for such aid if his property exceeds:

1. A homestead (regardless of value) which is used as a place of abode by such applicant.

2. A total of \$500 in cash and liquid assets for emergency use; provided that such \$500 exemption shall not be subject to control by the county agency; and provided further that withdrawal for other than emergency purposes from such \$500 emergency fund shall be regarded as income.

3. Tangible personal property of reasonable value in actual use including, but not in limitation thereof, wearing apparel, household goods, personal belongings, stock-in-trade, tools of a trade, and retailing, manufacturing or farming equipment.

4. An insurance policy not in excess of \$1,000 cash value, provided that such insurance policy shall not be subject to control by the county agency.

5. An insurance policy not in excess of \$1,000 cash value, provided that if such recipient of aid to the blind requests the county agency to provide for payment of premiums thereon he shall name the county agency as beneficiary of the policy, and in naming the county agency as beneficiary shall provide that the beneficiary so named cannot be changed nor such policy cashed without the written consent of said beneficiary. From the proceeds of such policy, the county agency shall first make an allowance for the recipient's funeral expenses in an amount which, combined with other funds of the recipient, shall not exceed \$300. After payment of funeral expenses, the proceeds from the policy shall be retained by the county agency named as beneficiary in payment of aid paid under this section furnished by such agency or other county agencies (on a pro rata basis if insufficient to pay in full) and any proceeds in excess of the amount needed to pay the claim for aid to the blind shall be disposed of as provided by the insured. Any net amount recovered pursuant to this subsection shall be paid to the United States, the state and its political subdivisions in the proportion in which they respectively contributed to such aid to the blind. The county agency granting aid to the blind to a person who has named the county agency beneficiary of a life insurance policy under this subdivision shall provide for the payment of the premiums on the policy, which premiums may be included in the grant of the recipient within the maximum limitations of par. (a) or paid directly to the insurance company without regard to the maximum limitations imposed by par. (a). For any payment made directly to the insurance company, the county agency shall be entitled to recover and retain the amount of such premiums so paid before prorating with the United States and the state as above provided.

6. Income or other resources in excess of the amount permitted under this paragraph held pursuant to par. (a) for the purpose of a plan for achieving self-support.

(1a) On the death of a recipient of such aid, if the estate of the deceased is insufficient to defray the funeral and burial expenses, such reasonable amount not exceeding \$200 shall be paid for such expenses as the county agency directs, exclusive of and in addition to the actual cemetery charges which shall also be paid by the county responsible for the burial of the recipient.

(2) To entitle an applicant to such aid:

(a) He must have resided in this state at the time he lost his sight, or for one year preceding his application. An applicant who has resided less than one year in Wisconsin may be granted aid to the blind if the state from which he removed his residence to Wisconsin grants such aid to any resident of Wisconsin who has moved to such state and lived there less than one year; provided that aid to the blind may not be continued to exceed one year to any recipient who removes his residence to another state;

(b) He must not be in attendance at any state, county or municipally owned school for the blind or deaf wherein instruction, room and board and other incidentals are furnished free, except the summer school of the Wisconsin school for the visually handicapped;

(c) He must not while receiving aid to the blind be publicly soliciting alms;

(d) He must not have relatives legally responsible for his support and able to support him as provided in s. 52.01.

(4) All applicants for aid to the blind shall be examined by a physician skilled in diseases of the eye who shall keep such records and render such reports as the department prescribes. If it be a requirement for federal aid the applicant shall be given the opportunity to select an optometrist to make the examination and such report as the department prescribes. Reexamination shall also be made when necessary. A reasonable fee for each examination shall be established by the department. An applicant for a peddler's license shall pay for his own examination, not to exceed \$2, and obtain a certificate showing whether he is blind.

(5) Any person believing himself to be eligible for aid to the blind under this section shall be entitled to file an application made by himself, his parent or his legal guardian with the county agency of the county in which he resides, in such manner and form and containing such information as the department prescribes.

(6) (a) The county agency shall promptly make such further investigation of the conditions and circumstances of the applicant as may be necessary or as is required by the rules and regulations of the department. Eligibility and need shall be reinvestigated as often as necessary and at least once each year. All investigations shall be reported in writing and appropriately filed. Every applicant shall be promptly notified in writing of the disposition made of his application. Aid to the blind shall be furnished with reasonable promptness to any eligible individual.

(b) If the county agency finds a person eligible for aid under this section, it shall on a form to be prescribed by the state department of public welfare, direct the payment of such aid by order upon the county clerk or county treasurer of the county. Payment of aid shall be made monthly, except that the director of the county agency may, in his discretion for the purpose of protecting the public, direct that the monthly allowance be paid in 2 or more instalments.

(c) The decision of the agency shall be final unless a proceeding for review by the department is taken under s. 49.50 (8) or (9). The agency may, however, after affording a fair opportunity to the recipient to be heard, revoke or modify any aid, as warranted by new information or altered conditions.

(7) Any person receiving aid shall submit to a reexamination as to his blindness and furnish other information whenever requested so to do by the county agency.

(8) No aid to the blind shall be payable under this section to any person for any period with respect to which he is receiving aid to dependent children under section 49.19, old-age assistance under sections 49.20 to 49.39 or aid to totally and permanently disabled persons under section 49.61.

(9) The county board shall annually levy a property tax sufficient to pay the aid provided by this section, taking into account the available state and federal aid.

(10) The county treasurer and county agency administrator of each county shall monthly certify under oath to the department in such manner as the department prescribes, the claim of the county for state and federal reimbursement under this section, and if the department approves it, it shall certify to the department of administration for reimbursement to the county 30 per cent of the approved amount paid by the county for blind aid pursuant to this section, plus federal aid received for such expenditure plus 30 per cent of any amount paid to an eligible recipient in excess of the amount which the federal government will take into account in making reimbursement but not in excess of \$75, as provided in sub. (1). The department shall certify to the department of administration 100 per cent of the approved amount paid by each county to eligible persons pursuant to sub. (11) or in behalf of such eligible persons as medical aid pursuant to s. 49.40, which certified amount shall include any federal aid received for such expenditures. To facilitate prompt reimbursement the certification of the department may be based upon the certified statements of the county officers, provided that any necessary audit adjustments for any month of current or prior fiscal years may be included in subsequent certifications. If the total amount due all counties exceeds the sum appropriated by s. 20.670 (3)(d) and (e), the appropriation shall be prorated by the department among the counties according to the amounts due them. To facilitate prompt reimbursement, the certification of the department may be based upon the certified statements of the county officers, provided that any necessary audit adjustments for any month of current or prior fiscal years may be made and included in subsequent certifications. The department of administration shall draw its warrant forthwith for reimbursement to the respective counties in accordance with the certification of the department.

(11) Persons who are members of the Grand Army home for veterans at King may be granted aid to the blind if they are otherwise eligible for such aid pursuant to this chapter. The provisions of s. 45.37 (9) shall not apply to money payments of aid to the blind paid to or in behalf of such members.

**History:** 1961 c. 462, 524, 543, 578; 1963 c. 170; 1965 c. 78, 138, 433 ss. 67, 121.

#### AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN

**49.19 Aid to dependent children.** (1) (a) A "dependent child" as used in this section means a child under the age of 18, who has been deprived of parental support or care by reason of the death, continued absence from the home, or incapacity of a parent, and who is living with his father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, brother, sister, stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, stepsister, uncle, aunt, first cousins, nephews or nieces in a residence maintained by one or more such relatives as his or their own home, or living in a residence maintained by one or more of such relatives as his or their own home because the parents of said child have been found unfit to have its care and custody, or who is living in a foster home having a license under s. 48.62, when a license is required under such section and placed in such home by a county agency pursuant to ch. 48.

(b) Any individual wishing to make application for aid to dependent children shall have opportunity to do so. Application for aid shall be made on forms prescribed by the department. Any person having knowledge that any child is dependent upon the public for proper support or that the interest of the public requires that such child be granted aid may bring the facts to the notice of an agency administering such aid in the county in which the child resides.

(c) "Aid to dependent children" means money payments with respect to, or medical care in behalf of or any type of remedial care recognized under subs. (1) to (9) or s. 49.40 or necessary burial expenses as defined in sub. (5) in behalf of, a dependent child or dependent children including such aid to meet the needs of the relative with whom any dependent child is living and the spouse of such relative if living with him and if such relative is the child's parent and the child is a dependent child by reason of the physical or mental incapacity of a parent or payments made to another individual not a relative enumerated under par. (a), pursuant to federal regulations, when such individual has been appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction as a legal representative of the dependent child or when such individual who may be a caseworker has been designated by the county welfare department to receive payment of the aid.

(2) A prompt investigation of the circumstances of the child shall be made (which shall include a visit to its home) before granting aid. A report upon such investigation shall be made in writing and become a part of the record in the case. Every applicant shall be promptly notified in writing of the disposition of his application. Aid shall be furnished with reasonable promptness to any eligible individual.

(3) (a) After the investigation and report and a finding of eligibility, aid as defined in sub. (1) shall be granted by the county welfare department as the best interest of the child requires. No such aid shall be furnished any person for any period during which he is receiving old-age assistance, aid to the blind or aid to totally and permanently disabled persons.

(b) If the county agency finds a person eligible for aid under this section, such agency shall on a form to be prescribed by the state department of public welfare, direct the payment of such aid by order upon the county clerk or county treasurer of the county. Payment of aid shall be made monthly, except that the director of the county agency may, in his discretion for the purpose of protecting the public, direct that the monthly allowance be paid in 2 or more instalments.

(4) The aid shall be granted only upon the following conditions:

(a) There must be a dependent child who is living with the person charged with its care and custody and dependent upon the public for proper support and who is under the age of 18 years. Aid may also be granted for minors other than to those specified.

(b) Each child to be eligible for aid shall have resided in the state for one year immediately preceding the application for such aid or if born within one year immediately preceding the application the parent or other relative as described in sub. (1) (a) with whom the child is living shall have resided in the state for one year immediately preceding the birth of the child. Notwithstanding the foregoing whenever anyone leaves the state and was at the time of his departure eligible for aid to dependent children on the basis of residence, such person upon returning within one year to this state shall be eligible to receive such aid.

(c) The person having the care and custody of such dependent child must be fit and proper to have the same. Aid shall not be denied by the county agency on the grounds that a person is not fit and proper to have such care and custody until the agency has obtained a finding substantiating such fact from a juvenile or other court of competent jurisdiction; but in appropriate cases it is deemed to be the responsibility of the county agency to petition under ch. 48 or refer the case to a proper child protection agency.

(d) The period of aid must be likely to continue for at least 3 months except as hereinafter provided with respect to the wife of a husband committed to the department pursuant to s. 959.15. Aid may not be granted to the mother or stepmother of a dependent child unless such mother or stepmother is without a husband, or is the wife of a husband who is incapacitated for gainful work by mental or physical disability, likely to continue for at least 3 months in the opinion of a competent physician, or is the wife of a husband who has been sentenced to a penal institution for a period of at least 3 months, or is the wife of a husband who has been committed to the department pursuant to s. 959.15 irrespective of the probable period of such commitment, or is the wife of a husband who has continuously abandoned or failed to support her for at least 3 months, if the husband has been legally charged with abandonment under s. 52.05 or with failure to support under s. 52.055 or in proceedings commenced under s. 52.10 (1) to (31), or if the mother or stepmother has been divorced or legally separated from her husband for a period of at least 3 months, dating either from any temporary order under s. 247.23,

or in the absence thereof, then from the granting of the judgment in court, and unable through use of the provisions of law to compel her former husband to support the child for whom aid is sought, or if proceedings have been instituted under s. 247.08 to compel support and a determination has been made by the court requiring the payment of a certain sum which is either insufficient to adequately meet the needs of the child or is unenforceable to the extent of adequately meeting the needs of the child.

(e) The ownership of a home and the lands used or operated in connection therewith or, in lieu thereof, a house trailer, if such home or house trailer is used as the person's abode, by a person having the care and custody of any dependent child shall not prevent the granting of aid if the cost of maintenance of said home or house trailer does not exceed the rental which the family would be obliged to pay for living quarters.

(f) Whenever better provisions, public or private, can be made for the care of such dependent child, aid under this section shall cease. Prompt notice shall be given to the appropriate law enforcement officials of the county of the furnishing of aid under this section in respect of a child who has been deserted or abandoned by a parent.

(g) Aid shall be granted to a mother who is otherwise eligible under this section during the period extending from 6 months before to 6 months after the birth of her child, providing she has resided in the state for one year immediately preceding the birth of the child or in the case of an unborn child for one year immediately preceding the application, if her financial circumstances are such as to deprive either the mother or child of proper care. Notwithstanding the foregoing a mother who has resided in this state for one year immediately preceding her departure from this state and has returned to this state within one year may be granted such aid if otherwise eligible. The aid allowed under this paragraph may be given in the form of supplies, nursing, medical or other assistance in lieu of money.

(5) The aid shall be sufficient to enable the person having the care and custody of such children to care properly for them. The amount granted shall be determined by a budget for the family in which all income except as provided by s. 49.18 (1) (a), as well as expenses shall be considered. Such family budget shall be based on a standard budget, including the parents or other person who may be found eligible to receive aid under this section. Medical and dental aid may be granted to a minor child, to the person having his care and custody and to the incapacitated father when he is in the home, as necessary. Not to exceed \$200 shall be allowed to cover the funeral and burial expenses of a dependent child or its parents, exclusive of and in addition to the actual cemetery charges which shall also be paid by the county responsible for the burial of the recipient. No aid shall continue longer than one year without reinvestigation. This subsection does not prohibit such public assistance as may legitimately accrue directly to persons other than the beneficiaries of this section who may reside in the same household.

**Note:** Sub. (5) is printed as amended by Chapter 450, Laws 1965. Earlier amendments by Chapters 138, 157 and 433, Laws 1965, are not mentioned in Chapter 450. See section 6 of the Preface as to the printing rule in such case.

(6) The county agency may require the mother to do such remunerative work as in its judgment she can do without detriment to her health or the neglect of her children or her home; and may prescribe the hours during which the mother may work outside of her home.

(7) The county board shall annually appropriate a sum of money sufficient to carry out the provisions of this section. The county treasurer shall pay out the amounts ordered paid under this section.

(8) (a) The county treasurer and the county agency administrator shall certify monthly under oath to the department in such manner as the department prescribes, the claim of the county for state and federal reimbursement for aid under this section, setting forth separately the amount paid in cases for which no federal aid is recoverable, and the amount paid in all other cases.

(b) If the department is satisfied that the amount claimed is correct and that the aid allowed has been granted in compliance with the requirements of this section it shall certify to the department of administration one-third of the amount paid by the county plus federal aid received for such expenditures. If the total amount due to counties from the state under this section is more than the amount appropriated from state funds for aid to dependent children, the department shall prorate among the various counties according to the amounts due them. To facilitate prompt reimbursement the certification of the department may be based upon the certified statements of the county officers, provided that any necessary audit adjustments for any month of current or prior years may be included in subsequent certifications. The department of administration shall draw its warrant forthwith for reimbursement to the respective counties in accordance with the certification of the department. In determining the amount available for distribution to

the counties, one-half of the annual appropriation from state funds shall be allotted to each half year.

(9) If the head of a family is a war veteran and is hospitalized or institutionalized because of disabilities in a county other than that of his residence or settlement at time of admission, aid shall be granted to the dependent children of such veteran by the county wherein the head of the family had his residence or settlement at the time of admission so long as he remains hospitalized or institutionalized.

(10) Aid under this section may also be granted to a nonrelative who cares for a child dependent upon the public for proper support in a foster home having a license under s. 48.62, regardless of the cause or prospective period of dependency. The state shall reimburse any county for one-half of the amount of aid granted under this subsection except that if the child does not have legal settlement in the granting county, state reimbursement shall be at 100 per cent. The county agency shall determine the legal settlement of the child. The county treasurer and the county agency administrator shall certify monthly in the manner provided in sub. (8) to the department the claim of the county for state reimbursement under this subsection, setting forth the entire amount granted by the county under this subsection. If the department is satisfied that the aid was granted under this subsection it shall certify to the department of administration for payment to the county one-half of such entire amount from the appropriation for state aid made under s. 20.670 (3)(d) and if there is federal reimbursement for such aid then such certification shall also include for payment to the county the amount allowed as federal aid to be paid out of the appropriation made by s. 20.670 (3)(o). A child under one year of age shall be eligible for aid under this subsection irrespective of any other residence requirement for eligibility within this section.

**History:** 1961 c. 379, 462, 505, 576; 1963 c. 412; 1965 c. 138, 157, 361, 433 ss. 68, 121; 1965 c. 450.

Children committed to the department of public welfare as dependent or neglected under 48.35 and placed by the department in a home of a relative of the children are eligible for aid under 49.19 provided all other conditions are met. 49 Atty. Gen. 18.

Discussion of (4) (b) relative to aid to dependent children. "Resided" as used in the statute is not synonymous with "domicile" and one year limitation is to prevent abuses of statute. 51 Atty. Gen. 54.

Discussion of eligibility status of dependent children when mother or step-

mother changes marital status. 51 Atty. Gen. 61.

A child is eligible for aid under (1) (a) if either natural parent is absent from the home, provided other statutory conditions are met. 51 Atty. Gen. 170.

The department cannot determine that a woman is without a husband within the meaning of 49.19 (4) (d) in situations contrary to 245.03 (2) and 245.10, and where marriage has not been annulled or held void. 52 Atty. Gen. 175.

#### OLD-AGE ASSISTANCE

**49.20 County old-age assistance.** (1) For the more humane care of aged, dependent persons a state system of old-age assistance is hereby established. Such system of old-age assistance shall be administered in each county by the county agency, under the supervision of the state department of public welfare. The cost of old-age assistance shall in the first instance be borne by the county, but the county shall be entitled to state and federal aid as provided in s. 49.38.

(2) The term "old-age assistance" means money payments to or medical care in behalf of or any type of remedial care recognized under ss. 49.20 to 49.38 or s. 49.40 in behalf of needy individuals who are 65 years of age or older (or 60 years or older in the event of the change in the federal law as provided in s. 49.22 (1)) but does not include any such payments or care in behalf of any individual who is an inmate of a public institution (except as a patient in a medical institution) or any individual (a) who is a patient in an institution for tuberculosis or mental diseases, or (b) who has been diagnosed as having tuberculosis or psychosis and is a patient in a medical institution as a result thereof, except that the exclusion of money payments to needy individuals described in clause (a) or (b) shall, in the case of any such individuals who are not patients in a public institution, be effective July 1, 1952. Beginning July 1, 1953, no payment of old age assistance shall be made to any individual in a private or public institution unless a standard-setting authority has been designated or established which shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining standards for such institutions. Such individuals shall not be barred from receiving general aid under ss. 49.02 and 49.03. Old-age assistance shall also be granted to aged dependent persons residing voluntarily in county or city homes and the department shall make claim for federal reimbursement therefor when federal funds are made available for that purpose and pay the same to the county.

**49.22 Persons eligible.** (1) Any needy person who complies with ss. 49.20 to 49.38 shall be entitled to financial assistance in old age. The amount granted shall be determined by a budget in which all income and resources, except that the first \$85 plus one-half of the excess over \$85 of payments made to or on behalf of any person for or

with respect to any month under Title I or II of the federal economic opportunity act of 1964 or such payment made to or in behalf of any person and any excess remaining after this exclusion shall be considered as income for any other individual only to the extent made available to or for the benefit of such other individual and except as provided by s. 49.18 (1) (a), as well as expenses shall be considered and the aid per month shall not exceed \$75, the payment of the aid to be made monthly, except that the director of the county agency may, for the purpose of protecting the public, direct that the monthly allowance be paid in 2 or more instalments. Old-age assistance may be granted to a person only if:

- (a) He is dependent;
- (b) He has attained the age of 65 years. This minimum age shall be reduced to 60 years whenever the federal government makes aid available to the states for old-age assistance to persons between 60 and 65 years of age;
- (c) He has resided in the state continuously during the year immediately preceding the date of application or if he has left the state but returned before being absent for one year and was eligible on the basis of residence at the time he left the state. An applicant who has resided less than one year in Wisconsin may be granted old-age assistance if the state from which he removed his residence to Wisconsin grants assistance to any resident of Wisconsin who has moved to such state and lived there less than one year; provided that an applicant who has removed his residence to Wisconsin from a state which requires that an applicant who has removed his residence from Wisconsin to such state, reside in such state more than one year before he is eligible for old-age assistance be required to reside in this state for a like period before becoming eligible for old-age assistance in this state; and provided that old-age assistance may be continued when a recipient removes his residence to another state until he satisfies the residence requirements for eligibility for old-age assistance in such state;
- (d) He has no person responsible for his support and able to support him as provided in s. 52.01;
- (e) He has not conveyed or transferred any property in contemplation of such assistance or to avoid the provisions of ch. 49. Any transfer of property made after old-age assistance has been granted or within 2 years prior to application for assistance and without an adequate and full consideration in money or money's worth shall, unless shown to the contrary, be presumed to have been made in contemplation of such assistance, or to avoid the provisions of ch. 49.

(2) A person shall be considered dependent within the meaning of this section even though he or his spouse owns property if the property owned either by him or his spouse is not in excess of the following:

(a) A home and the lands used or operated in connection therewith or, in lieu thereof, a house trailer, if such home or house trailer is used as the person's abode. Ownership of a life estate in a home by the dependent person or his spouse does not disqualify such person for old-age assistance even though the home is not used by him as his place of abode.

(b) Tangible personal property of reasonable value and in actual use.

1. \$500 in liquid assets which may be retained by the recipient free of the control of the county agency.

2. Any sum which a recipient of old-age assistance shall have on deposit with the county treasurer for payment of his funeral expenses under s. 49.22 (2) (c) 1, statutes of 1953, shall be returned to the recipient.

(3) (a) Any person who applies for old-age assistance after March 31, 1955 and who owns an insurance policy with a cash value not to exceed \$1,000 the premiums of which have been paid by some person other than the applicant may continue to own such policy without restriction or control by the county welfare agency provided the applicant does not request payment of the premiums of the policy by the welfare agency.

(b) Any person applying for or receiving old-age assistance who owns an insurance policy with a cash value not to exceed \$1,000 and requests the county welfare agency to provide for payment of premiums thereon shall name the county welfare agency as beneficiary of the policy and in naming the county welfare agency as beneficiary shall provide that the beneficiary so named can not be changed nor such policy cashed without the written consent of said beneficiary. From the proceeds of such policy, the welfare department shall first make an allowance for recipient's funeral expenses in an amount which combined with other funds of recipient shall not exceed \$300. After payment of funeral expenses, the proceeds from the policy shall be retained by the county agency named as beneficiary in payment of aid paid under ss. 49.20 to 49.40 furnished by such agency or other county agencies (on a pro rata basis if insufficient to pay in full) and any proceeds in excess of the amount needed to pay the claim for old-age assistance shall be disposed of as provided by the insured.

(c) The county agency granting old-age assistance to a person who has named the county agency beneficiary of a life insurance policy under par. (b) shall provide for the payment of the premiums on the policy. Such premiums may be included in the grant of the recipient within the maximum limitations of sub. (1) or paid directly to the insurance company without regard to the maximum limitation imposed by sub. (1) and if paid directly to the insurance company the county agency shall be entitled to deduct and retain as reimbursement for the amount so expended as premiums from the recovery made from the policy before reporting the balance as a recovery under s. 49.25.

(d) Any insurance policy heretofore assigned to county agencies by old-age assistance recipients under s. 49.22 (2) (c) 3, statutes of 1953, shall be reassigned to the old-age assistance recipients.

**History:** 1961 c. 22, 462; 1965 c. 133, 433.

**49.235 Members of Grand Army Home.** Persons who are members of the Grand Army Home for Veterans at King may be granted old-age assistance if they are otherwise eligible for such aid pursuant to the provisions of ch. 49. The provisions of s. 45.37 (9) shall not apply to money payments of old-age assistance paid to or in behalf of such members.

**49.25 Assistance recovered.** On the death of a person who has received old-age assistance, the total amount of such assistance paid (including aid paid under sections 49.30 and 49.40 as old-age assistance) shall be a claim against his estate, but such claim shall not take precedence over the allowances under section 313.15 or over any claim for care or maintenance furnished by the state or its political subdivisions. The court may disallow such claim or any part thereof if satisfied that such disallowance is necessary to provide for the maintenance or support of a surviving spouse or minor or incapacitated adult children, and thereupon the claim shall be waived to the extent of the amount disallowed and that amount assigned to such spouse or children for maintenance or support. The net amount recovered pursuant to this section or section 49.26 shall be paid to the United States, the state and its political subdivisions, in the proportion in which they respectively contributed to such old-age assistance. The county agency of the county from which the deceased beneficiary received old-age assistance shall file the claim herein provided.

**49.26 Transfer of property; liens on real property.** (1) **PERSONALTY AND FOREIGN REALTY.** If the county agency deems it necessary, it may require as a condition to a grant of assistance that all or any part of an applicant's personal property (except that mentioned in s. 49.22 (2) and real property not situated in Wisconsin be transferred to the county agency. The property shall be managed by the county agency who shall pay the net income to those entitled thereto. The county agency may sell, lease or transfer the property, or defend or prosecute all actions concerning it, and pay all just claims against it, and do all other things necessary for the protection, preservation and management of the property.

(2) **RETURN OF EXCESS.** If old-age assistance is discontinued during the life of the beneficiary and the property thus transferred exceeds the total amount of assistance paid (including medical expense paid as old-age assistance), the excess of such property shall be returned to the beneficiary; and in the event of his death such excess, less funeral expenses paid as old-age assistance, shall be considered the property of the beneficiary for administration proceedings. The county agency shall execute and deliver all necessary instruments to give effect to this subsection.

(3) **DISTRICT ATTORNEY, DUTIES AND FEES, COLLECTIONS, PROBATE OF ESTATES.** (a) The district attorney shall take the necessary proceedings and represent the county in respect to any matters under this section. Out of the amount collected on any claim for old-age assistance, the county court in which the estate is probated may authorize the payment of a collection fee of 10 per cent but not in excess of \$50 for the services of the district attorney in estates where the district attorney does not act as the attorney for the administrator or executor unless collection is made from sources other than the estate which fee shall be paid into the county treasury, but any part-time district attorney acting as the attorney for the administrator of an estate in probate shall be entitled to receive and retain any reasonable fee allowed to him by the court as attorney for the administrator subject only to the limitation set out in s. 49.26 (5). The district attorney shall report to the county board at its November meeting concerning collections made, fees allowed and estates pending. The county board may authorize the district attorney to act for the county generally to collect old-age assistance liens and claims for hospitalization, institutional care and general poor relief. It may authorize him to compromise the payment of such claim, with the approval of such judge, officer or agency or of such committee of the county board as the board designates, but such compromise shall be made only when

the collection of the full amount would produce undue hardship upon the debtor or the debt is uncollectible.

(b) If no qualified person shall apply for administration of the estate of a beneficiary of old-age assistance within 60 days after death, the county agency shall so apply. Any fee allowed a full-time or part-time employe of the county welfare department as administrator of such estate shall be paid by him into the county treasury to be credited to the agency's appropriation as a reduction in cost. The agency shall report to the county board at the November meeting concerning collections so made, fees allowed employes and pending probate proceedings.

(c) After probate or administration proceedings have been initiated and notice to creditors is given, as required by s. 313.03, and it appears from the inventory filed in said estate that the county claim for old-age assistance exceeds the value of estate assets, after deducting such expenses as provided in sub. (5) (b) and (c), the court may order summary closing proceedings under s. 311.05 and assign the real estate, if any, to the county agency which has the claim against the estate.

(4) CERTIFICATE OF LIEN, FILING. All old-age assistance paid to any beneficiary (including aid paid under sections 49.30 and 49.40 as old-age assistance) constitutes a lien as hereafter provided and remains a lien until satisfied. When old-age assistance is granted, the name and residence of the beneficiary, the amount of assistance granted, the date when granted, the name of the county, and such other information as the department requires, shall be entered on a certificate, the form of which shall be prescribed by the department. The county agency shall file such certificate, or a copy thereof, in the office of the register of deeds of every county in which real property of the beneficiary is situated.

(5) LIEN, COVERAGE, EXCEPTIONS; JOINT TENANCY. (a) Upon such filing the lien herein imposed attaches to all real property of the beneficiary including a house trailer used as an abode presently owned or subsequently acquired (including joint tenancy and homestead interests) in any county in which such certificate is filed for any amount paid or thereafter paid under ss. 49.20 to 49.38 and 49.40, and remain such lien until satisfied. Such lien shall not sever a joint tenancy nor affect the right of survivorship except that the lien shall be enforceable to the extent that the beneficiary had an interest prior to his decease. The county court may order sale of such realty free and clear of the lien and the lien shall attach to the net proceeds of such sale after taxes, prior encumbrances and the costs of the sale have been deducted.

(b) Such lien shall take priority over any lien or conveyance subsequently acquired, made or recorded except tax liens and except that the amounts allowed by court in the estate of any deceased beneficiary and remaining unpaid after all funds and personal property in the estate have been applied according to law, for administration, cost of terminating joint tenancies, or cost of proceedings to establish descent of real estate or to establish heirship, and for hospitalization, nursing and professional medical care furnished such decedent during his last sickness, not to exceed \$400 in the aggregate, shall be charges against all real property of such deceased upon which an old-age assistance lien has attached, and which in such order shall be paid and satisfied prior to such lien out of the proceeds derived from such real property upon liquidation of such old-age assistance lien. The certificate need not be recorded at length by the register of deeds, but upon the filing thereof all persons are hereby charged with notice of the lien and of the rights of the county.

(c) The amount allowed by the court in any such estate for funeral expenses not to exceed \$300 shall be a charge against all real property of such deceased upon which an old-age assistance lien has attached and shall be paid and satisfied before such lien out of the proceeds derived from such real property upon liquidation of such lien.

(d) When the proceeds from such property are insufficient to pay the amounts allowed under par. (b) and the amount of the funeral expenses allowed under par. (c), such amounts shall be reduced proportionately. For the purposes of such reductions the amounts allowed under par. (b) shall be considered in the aggregate.

(5m) SALE BY BENEFICIARY; EXPENSES OF SALE. Where the agency is satisfied that the sale of property other than the homestead, subject to the county's lien, is necessary and to the interest of the county, it may permit the beneficiary to sell the property pursuant to a duly executed contract approved by the agency, between the beneficiary and a broker; and from the proceeds of any sale thereunder, the broker's commission and attorney's fees in connection with the sale, and any taxes, shall be paid prior to the application of any proceeds on the county's lien.

(6) REGISTER OF DEEDS, INDEX, FEES. The register of deeds shall keep a separate book, properly indexed, in which shall be entered an abstract of every certificate so filed which shall show the time of filing, the name and residence of the beneficiary, the date of the

certificate, the name of the grantor county, and a record of releases and satisfactions. No fee shall be charged for filing such certificate, release or satisfaction or the entry of the abstract thereof except in counties wherein the register of deeds is compensated otherwise than by salary, and in such counties a fee of 25 cents shall be paid to the register of deeds by the county filing the certificate, release or satisfaction.

(7) LIENS, ENFORCEMENT. Such liens shall be enforceable by the county filing the certificate after transfer of title of the real property by conveyance, sale, succession, inheritance or will, in the manner provided for the enforcement of mechanics' liens upon real property; provided, however, that in any action to foreclose such a lien the statute of limitations shall not be pleaded in defense. No such lien and no claim under section 49.25 shall be enforced against the homestead of the beneficiary while it is occupied by a surviving spouse or by any surviving minor children, or any incapacitated adult children of the beneficiary.

(7a) NONPRIORITY OF LIEN. The old-age assistance lien shall not take precedence over any claim for care or maintenance furnished by the state or its political subdivisions, but all such public claims when allowed by the court shall share pro rata.

(8) LIENS, RELEASE. When the county agency of the lienor county is satisfied that collection of the amount paid as old-age assistance will not thereby be jeopardized or that the release of the lien in whole or in part is necessary to provide for the maintenance of the beneficiary, his spouse, or minor children, or incapacitated adult child, it may release the lien as to all or any part of the real property of the beneficiary (including a house trailer as in sub. (5)), which release shall be filed in the office of the register of deeds of the county in which the certificate is filed. The beneficiary, his heirs, personal representatives or assigns may discharge such lien at any time by paying the amount thereof to the treasurer of the proper county who, with the approval of the county agency, shall execute a satisfaction which shall be filed with the register of deeds.

(9) LIENS, LIQUIDATION. The county board may authorize any county agency or official to bid in property at foreclosure under this section at a price not to exceed the amount of the claim for assistance, which claim or any part thereof may be applied as a credit on such a bid, or such agency or official may accept a conveyance in lieu of foreclosure. Title to property acquired under this section vests in such agency for the purpose of liquidation, and may be sold and title transferred by it without regard to s. 59.07 (1) (c). In the event the county acquires such property, payment as provided by s. 49.25 shall not be made until the property is sold and payment thereon shall be based on the sale price.

(10) LIENS, TAXES, REPAIRS, LAND CONTRACTS. The county agency with the consent of the county board may from its appropriation for old-age assistance make and pay for necessary and essential repairs, pay taxes or purchase tax certificates or pay balances due on land contracts so as to enable a recipient of old-age assistance to receive a deed, or pay and cause to be satisfied existing mortgages or any other prior liens on property on which the county has an old-age assistance lien, or procure insurance against loss by fire or wind on the buildings on property on which the county has an old-age assistance lien, or pay fees to appraisers, court fees, and similar fees arising in relation to enforcing and collecting old-age assistance liens on property, and such expenditures shall be deducted and returned to the appropriation as a priority in determining the net amount recovered to be shared by the federal, state and county governments under s. 49.25.

(11) CHECKS NOT CASHED BEFORE DEATH; SPECIAL ADMINISTRATION. (a) When a person receiving such assistance shall die not having cashed his old-age assistance checks issued immediately prior to death, the director or employe of the county agency shall have authority to do so upon being appointed special administrator for the sole purpose to disburse the proceeds of such checks without bond as herein provided upon order of the county court of his county. Such money shall be used to pay for expenses incurred by such old-age recipient for his room, board, lodging, care, medical service, nursing home care, hospitalization or necessities during the period for which such checks were issued. All persons having such claims shall file same, upon the usual claim form, with such county court within 2 months of the date of the order for the hereinafter provided notice of the date or forfeit any claim to the proceeds of such checks. Such notice shall contain the name of the recipient as shown on such old-age assistance checks, and require all persons having such claims to file same within 2 months of the date of the order therefor. Such notice shall be published as a class 1 notice, under ch. 985, in such county within 15 days of the date of such order. From the proceeds of such checks the cost of such publication, if any, shall first be paid; next there shall be paid any filing fee required under s. 253.34 (1); if the remainder is not sufficient to pay all of the above enumerated claims then nursing home care shall next be paid and the balance prorated among the other claimants. Any such unpaid claimant shall have the right otherwise provided by law to file a claim

for any unpaid balance against the estate of such deceased person. The unclaimed portion of the proceeds of such checks shall be refunded to such county, except that where there is probate, general or special administration proceedings pending then such balance shall be paid to the administrator or executor. Such notice shall be in substantially the following form:

STATE OF WISCONSIN

County Court: . . . . County.

All persons having claims for room, board, lodging, care, medical service, nursing home care, hospitalization, or necessities furnished to . . . . ., an old-age assistance recipient of . . . . county, which were incurred from and after . . . . shall be presented to said court, at the court house, in the city of . . . ., in said county, on or before the . . . . day of . . . ., A.D. 19. . ., or be forever barred from making any claim to the proceeds of certain old-age assistance checks of said deceased.

All said claims will be heard and adjusted by said court, at said court house, on the first Tuesday of . . . ., A.D. 19. . . .

Dated . . . ., 19. . . . By the court:

.....  
Judge

(b) If such special administrator is not satisfied with the justness of any such claim he may object thereto and the matter shall be heard before the court upon proper notice. No money shall be disbursed hereunder without court order. If any such recipient was under guardianship such guardian as such shall have the authority to disburse the proceeds of such checks as provided in paragraph (a). If probate, or administration (whether general or special) shall be granted of such recipient's will or estate, the proceeds of such checks shall be disbursed by such administrator or executor upon the above claims pursuant to general probate or administration practice except that in the case of special administration the notice provided for in paragraph (a) shall be given.

(c) In the event that probate, general or special administration is granted prior to the time of the disbursement of the proceeds of such checks then the special administrator appointed under paragraph (a) shall, upon order of the county court, pay the amount of such pension checks unpaid, less the cost of publication, to such personal representative of such deceased person.

**History:** 1961 c. 566, 622; 1963 c. 114; 1965 c. 252.

When realty subject to old-age assistance lien under (5) is sold in administration proceedings, proceeds may not be used for payment of administration and funeral expenses until all personalty of decedent has been exhausted. Funeral expenses may not be allowed in excess of \$300 where any debts of the estate are paid from such proceeds. 49 Atty. Gen. 115.

Costs of sale may be deducted from proceeds from a sale of property subject to old-age-assistance lien, and claims enumerated in (5) (b), not to exceed \$400, may be allowed after such deduction. 52 Atty. Gen. 346.

Under (3) (c) the only county agency authorized to receive property subject to old-age-assistance lien is the county welfare agency. 52 Atty. Gen. 349.

**49.27 Application for assistance; continued eligibility; county liability.** (1) An applicant for old-age assistance shall file an application in writing made by himself or his legal guardian with the county in which he resides, in such manner and form as the department prescribes. Any individual wishing to make application for old-age assistance shall have opportunity to do so. Every applicant shall be promptly notified in writing of the disposition made of his application. Old-age assistance shall be furnished with reasonable promptness to any eligible individual.

(2) If a person eligible for or receiving old-age assistance, aid to the totally and permanently disabled or aid to the blind goes to another county to reside in a private tax-exempt, charitable, benevolent or fraternal institution or home for the aged, or a county home, or a municipal home, or a private nursing or convalescent home, and continues to be eligible for old-age assistance, aid to the totally and permanently disabled or aid to the blind as defined in this chapter while therein residing, he shall receive such assistance, including care given under s. 49.40, from the county from which he moved, or continue to receive his assistance from the county paying the same at the time he moved, respectively, unless he has a legal settlement under s. 49.10 in the county in which the institution or home is located, in which case such county shall make payment of such assistance as he is eligible to receive. As used herein a private nursing or convalescent home means a place not public, admitting 3 or more unrelated persons for indefinite residence for the purpose of furnishing them board, room, laundry and care because of prolonged illness or defect or during recovery from injury or disease, including the procedures commonly employed in waiting on the sick, such as administration of medicines, preparation of diets, bedside care, application of dressings and bandages and treatments prescribed by a physician.

(3) If a person eligible for or receiving old-age assistance, aid to totally and permanently disabled or aid to the blind who resides in any of the facilities enumerated in sub. (2) goes to another county to reside and within the period of 6 months thereafter takes residence in any of said facilities and continues to be eligible for old-age assistance, aid to totally and permanently disabled or aid to the blind as defined in this chapter while therein residing, he shall receive such assistance, including care given under s. 49.40, from the county from which he moved, or continue to receive his assistance from the county paying the same at the time he moved, respectively, unless he has a legal settlement under s. 49.10 in a county in which the facility is located in which case such county shall make payment of such assistance as he is eligible to receive.

**History:** 1965 c. 78.

Discussion of 49.61 and 49.27 (2) and (3) disabled person when recipient moves from relative to county responsible for aid to one county to another. 51 Atty. Gen. 186.

**49.28 Investigation.** Every application shall be promptly investigated. Grants shall be reinvestigated as often as necessary and at least once each year. All investigations shall be reported in writing and appropriately filed.

**49.29 Certificate, conditions, revocation, recovery of excess.** (1) A certificate shall be issued to each applicant when old-age assistance is allowed stating the date upon which payments shall commence and the amount allowed for each month.

(2) Each beneficiary shall file such reports as the department may require. If it appears at any time that the beneficiary's circumstances have changed his certificate may be modified or revoked. Any sum paid in excess of the amount due shall be returned to the county and may be recovered as a debt due the county.

**History:** 1961 c. 462.

**49.30 Funeral expenses.** On the death of a beneficiary, if the estate of the deceased is insufficient to defray the funeral and burial expenses, such reasonable funeral and burial expenses shall be paid to such persons as the county agency directs; provided, that these expenses do not exceed \$200, exclusive of and in addition to the actual cemetery charges which shall also be paid by the county responsible for the burial of the recipient.

**49.33 Special inquiry.** If there is a reason to believe that a certificate has been improperly obtained a special inquiry shall be made, and payment may be suspended pending the inquiry. If on inquiry it appears that the certificate was improperly obtained, it shall be canceled; but if it appears that it was properly obtained the suspended instalments shall be paid.

**49.34 Frauds punished.** Any person who by means of a wilfully false statement, representation, impersonation or other fraudulent device, obtains, or attempts to obtain, or aids or abets any person to obtain a certificate to which he is not entitled, a larger allowance than that to which he is justly entitled, payment of any forfeited instalment grant, or aids or abets in buying or in any way disposing of the property of a beneficiary without the consent of the county agency, shall be fined not more than \$500, or imprisoned not more than one year, or be punished by both such fine and imprisonment.

**49.35 General penalty.** (1) Any person who violates any provision of ss. 49.22 to 49.38, for which no penalty is specifically provided, shall be subject to a fine not exceeding \$500 or to imprisonment not exceeding one year, or both.

(2) When a beneficiary is convicted under this section his certificate may be canceled.

**49.36 Effect of conviction of offense.** If a beneficiary is convicted of any offense, punishable by imprisonment for one month or longer, payments shall not be made during the period of imprisonment.

**49.37 County appropriation, disbursement of funds.** (1) The county board shall annually appropriate a sum of money sufficient to carry out the provisions of ss. 49.20 to 49.38, taking into account the money expected to be received during the ensuing year as state and federal aid. Upon the orders of the county agency, the county treasurer shall pay out the amounts ordered to be paid as old-age assistance.

**History:** 1965 c. 117.

**49.38 State aid; reimbursement to county.** (1) The county treasurer and county agency administrator shall monthly certify under oath, to the department, in such manner as the department prescribes, the claim of the county for state and federal reimbursement of aid paid under ss. 49.20 to 49.38. If the department is satisfied that the amount claimed has actually been expended in accordance with ss. 49.20 to 49.38, it shall certify

to the department of administration 30 per cent of the approved amount paid by each county plus federal aid received for such expenditures plus 30 per cent of any amount paid to an eligible recipient in excess of the amount which the federal government will take into account in making reimbursement but not in excess of \$75, as provided in s. 49.22; provided that the department shall certify to the department of administration 100 per cent of the approved amount paid by each county to eligible persons pursuant to s. 49.235 or in behalf of such eligible persons as medical aid pursuant to s. 49.40, which certified amount shall include any federal aid received for such expenditures. To facilitate prompt reimbursement the certification of the department may be based upon the certified statements of the county officers, provided that any necessary audit adjustments for any month of current or prior fiscal years may be included in subsequent certifications.

(2) The department of administration shall forthwith draw its warrant for reimbursement to the counties in accordance with the certification of the department. If the total amount payable to all counties exceeds the amount available under the appropriations made in s. 20.670 (3)(d), the department shall prorate the amount available among the counties according to the amount paid out by each. Whenever the department prorates the amount available to the various counties, the counties in the next following month may prorate to the recipients of old-age assistance such proportion of the amount allowed as the amount paid by the state bears to the full amount due from the state.

(3) Whenever the amount certified by the county treasurer and county agency administrator under s. 49.38 (1) shall include old-age assistance under ss. 49.20 to 49.38 and 49.40 furnished to a person who would otherwise be eligible for relief under s. 49.045 [Stats. 1955] the department shall include in the certification under s. 49.38 (1) to the department of administration 100 per cent of such approved amount paid by the county which amount shall include any federal aid received for such expenditures.

**History:** 1965 c. 433 s. 121.

**49.39 State aid to counties.** Any county which is financially unable to fully perform its duties under ss. 49.18 to 49.38 and 49.61 after having received payments under ss. 20.670 (3)(d) and 49.395 may make application to the department for financial assistance to enable it to perform such duties. Before making a determination upon the application, the department shall hold hearings, investigate and obtain or receive proof as to total indebtedness, and tax levy limitations, cash on hand, anticipated revenues from all sources, reasonableness of amounts of its expenditures and necessity therefor, tax delinquencies, reasonableness of valuation for taxation purposes and such other factors not enumerated which are probative on the applicant's financial condition. If the department is satisfied that the applicant's financial condition is such that it cannot provide money for such forms of public assistance, the department shall certify to the department of administration for payment to the applicant out of the appropriations provided by s. 20.670 (3)(d) an amount which will, together with money that the applicant can provide, be sufficient to enable the applicant to properly perform its duties. No such payment shall be made unless the department's certification is approved by the board on government operations. The department shall fix the time and place of hearing, issue subpoenas, take testimony and make reasonable rules and regulations which are necessary to enable it to effectively perform its duties under this section.

**History:** 1965 c. 433 s. 121.

**49.395 Additional aid to certain counties.** Where the required total mill levy in any county for costs of old-age assistance including payments under s. 49.40 made in behalf of such recipients exceeds the average mill levy (the mill levy for all counties being based on the total valuation of personal and real property in such counties as determined by the department of taxation pursuant to s. 70.57) for such welfare purposes in all counties in the state by 50 per cent or more but is insufficient to pay the county's share of the cost thereof, the state shall bear 60 per cent of such costs in that county which are in excess of the amount which would be produced by a levy in the county of one and one-half times the average state mill levy for such welfare purposes. The department shall certify to the department of administration for payment to the counties out of the appropriations provided by s. 20.670 (3)(d) such amounts as they shall be entitled to receive under the terms of this section. The department may so certify on an estimated basis subject to audit and adjustment at the end of each year.

**History:** 1965 c. 433 s. 121.

**49.40 Medical care.** (1) The county agency administering aid to the blind, aid to dependent children, old-age assistance and aid to totally and permanently disabled persons may provide for medical care needed by recipients of such aids. A person shall be considered a recipient if at the time such care is authorized aid to the blind, aid to de-

pendent children, old-age assistance or aid to totally and permanently disabled persons is being granted to him. The provisions of s. 49.11 shall not apply to this section. Medical care shall, as necessary, be authorized by such county agency and allowed within money payments to the recipient under ss. 49.18 (1) (a), 49.19 (5), 49.22 and 49.61 (6) (a) or paid by the county agency in addition to or in lieu of such money payments; provided that the method of payment for any medical service either by money payment or vendor payment shall be determined by the department for the purpose of obtaining maximum federal participation. Medical care provided under this section includes hospitalization, home care when prescribed by a physician and nursing home care; physicians', dentists', podiatrists', and nurses' services; drugs, medical supplies and equipment; prosthetic appliances and other medical service as each is prescribed by a physician; optometrical services; transportation to obtain medical care; and prepayment of medical care.

(2) Upon forms prescribed by the department claims by counties for reimbursement for vendor medical payments made in behalf of recipients shall be made at the same time and in the same manner as other claims for aid to the blind, aid to dependent children, old-age assistance and aid to the totally and permanently disabled and if approved by the department 50 per cent as to old-age assistance recipients and 35 per cent as to recipients of aid to the blind, aid to dependent children and aid to the totally and permanently disabled, of such expenditures after deduction of any federal aid that may be received for such expenditures shall be certified by the department to the department of administration as reimbursement to the counties. Any federal aid that may be received for such expenditures shall be certified by the department to the department of administration as reimbursement to the counties. To facilitate prompt reimbursement the certification of the department may be based upon the certified statements of the county officers, provided that any necessary audit adjustments for any month of current or prior years may be included in subsequent certifications.

**History:** 1961 c. 410.

**49.41 Assistance grants exempt from levy.** All grants of old-age assistance, aid to dependent children, aid to the blind, and aid to totally and permanently disabled persons shall be exempt from every tax, and from execution, garnishment, attachment and every other process and shall be inalienable.

#### STUDENT LOANS

**49.42 Loans to students.** (1) The legislature finds that loans to needy students are for a public purpose in that the development of human resources is vital to a healthy state economy and that qualified residents of the state who are unable to continue their education may become additions to the number of unemployed. From the appropriation provided by s. 20.670 (4), the department shall make loans to qualified residents of the state who have good academic records to that point, are in financial need and possess qualities of leadership, and are desirous of attending or currently are attending the university, the state colleges, or other educational institutions in this state of like rank above the high school, county teachers' colleges, full-time post high school, vocational and technical programs in schools of vocational, technical and adult education and any full-time state accredited professional nurses training program.

(2) Such loans shall be made to students who would otherwise be unable to continue their education.

(3) Loans shall be made on the student's application indorsed by the principal of the high school from which the student will or has received his diploma or by the authorities of the institution which the applicant desires to attend or is attending. The terms of the loans shall be prescribed by the department, which may adopt and enforce all necessary rules to carry out this section.

(4) Loans may be made to minors; and minority shall not be a defense to the collection of the debt.

**History:** 1961 c. 506; 1963 c. 53; 1965 c. 98, 433 s. 121.

(1) extends eligibility for student loans students in private technical schools. 52 to students in technical schools established Atty. Gen. 330. by sec. 41.15 et seq. but does not include

#### ADMINISTRATION OF SECURITY AIDS

**49.50 State supervision.** (2) **RULES AND REGULATIONS, MERIT SYSTEM.** The department shall adopt rules and regulations, not in conflict with law, for the efficient administration of aid to the blind, old-age assistance, aid to dependent children and aid to totally and permanently disabled persons, in agreement with the requirement for federal aid, including the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards on a merit basis. The provisions of this section relating to personnel standards on a merit basis

supersede any inconsistent provisions of any law relating to county personnel; provided that the provisions of this subsection shall not be construed to invalidate the provisions of s. 46.22 (6).

(3) **PERSONNEL EXAMINATIONS.** State-wide examinations to ascertain qualifications of applicants in any county department administering old-age assistance, aid to dependent children, aid to the blind or aid to totally and permanently disabled persons shall be given by the state bureau of personnel. The bureau shall be reimbursed for actual expenditures incurred in the performance of its functions under this section from the appropriations available to the department for administrative expenditures.

(4) **PERSONNEL LISTS.** All persons who are qualified as a result of examinations shall be certified to the counties in which they reside at the time of examination; if there are no resident qualified persons for any class of positions on the list certified to the county, appointments shall be made from available lists without regard to residence within the county.

(5) **COUNTY PERSONNEL SYSTEMS.** In counties having a civil service system, the department may delegate to the civil service agency in such county responsibility for determining qualifications of applicants by merit examination, provided the standards of qualifications and examinations have been approved by the department and the department of administration. The personnel in such counties shall be exempt from such re-examination provided such personnel has qualified for present positions by examinations conducted pursuant to standards acceptable to the department.

(6) **DEPARTMENT TO ADVISE COUNTIES.** The department shall advise all county officers charged with the administration of such laws of these requirements and shall render all possible assistance in securing compliance therewith, including the preparation of necessary blanks and reports. The department shall also publish such information as it deems advisable to acquaint persons entitled to public assistance and the public generally with the laws governing the same.

(8) **FAIR HEARING AND REVIEW.** Any person whose application for aid to the blind, old-age assistance, aid to dependent children and aid to totally and permanently disabled persons is not acted upon by the county agency with reasonable promptness after the filing of the application, or is denied in whole or in part, or whose award is modified or canceled, or who believes his award to be insufficient, may petition the department for a review of such action. The department shall, upon receipt of such petition, give the applicant or recipient reasonable notice and opportunity for a fair hearing. The department may make such additional investigation as it deems necessary. Notice of the hearing shall be given to the applicant and to the county clerk; and the county shall be entitled to be represented at such hearing. The department shall render its decision as soon as possible after the hearing and shall send a certified copy of its decision to the applicant, the county clerk and the county officer charged with administration of such assistance. The decision of the department shall have the same effect as an order of the county officer charged with the administration of such form of assistance. Such decision shall be final, but may be revoked or modified as altered conditions may require. Whenever any municipality or county receives a nonresident notice pursuant to s. 49.11 and there is reasonable basis for belief that the recipient of such relief may be eligible for assistance under s. 49.18, 49.19, 49.20 to 49.40 or 49.61, such municipality or county may after 60 days request the county department of public welfare of the county wherein the recipient of relief is residing to investigate the possible eligibility of such relief recipient for assistance under one of said sections and if the latter county refuses to grant such assistance, the municipality or county wherein liability for paying the relief ultimately rests may petition the department for a hearing hereunder to determine eligibility of the relief recipient for such assistance. Copies of the petition shall be sent to the county wherein the dependent person may be residing or receiving relief by the county or municipality liable for ultimately paying said relief. The aforesaid procedure or any subsequent decision of the department shall not bar recovery of any claim under s. 49.11 to the date of the final decision.

(9) **HEARING TO INSURE PROPER ADMINISTRATION.** The department may at any time terminate payment of state or federal aid on any grant of old-age assistance, aid to dependent children, aid to the blind or aid to totally and permanently disabled persons which may have been improperly allowed or which is no longer warranted due to altered conditions. Such action shall be taken only after thorough investigation and after fair notice and hearing. Such notice shall be given to the recipient of the assistance, the county clerk, and the county officer charged with the administration of such assistance, and their statements may be presented either orally or in writing, or by counsel. Any decision of the department terminating the payment of state and federal aid shall be

transmitted to the county treasurer, and after receipt of such notice he shall not include any payments thereafter made in such case in the certified statement of the expenditures of the county for which state or federal aid is claimed.

**History:** 1961 c. 460.

**49.51 County administration.** (2) COUNTY DEPARTMENTS OF PUBLIC WELFARE. (a) *Administration in counties having a population of 500,000 and others.* In counties having a population of 500,000 or more or in counties electing to be under s. 46.21, the administration of welfare services shall be vested in a department of public welfare under the jurisdiction of the county board of public welfare as provided in s. 46.21 and in conformity with s. 49.50. The director of county institutions and departments shall appoint a director of public welfare and such director of public welfare shall appoint his assistants, provided that the director of public welfare acting on July 13, 1951, shall continue as such director during the balance of his legal tenure. The civil service status of persons presently appointed to the several welfare services hereinafter listed as of July 3, 1949, is continued. The county department of public welfare shall have the following functions, duties and powers, and such other welfare functions as may be delegated to it:

1. To make investigations relating to relief or welfare administration and admissions to state and county institutions upon request of court, superintendent, district attorney, veterans' service commission or any other county official.
2. Furnishing services to families or persons other than the granting of financial or material aid where such services may prevent such families or persons from becoming public charges or restore them to a condition of self-support.
3. To make certification or referral of eligibles for state or federal works or other assistance programs, eligibility for which is based on need, when designated to perform such certification or referral services, and to certify eligibility for and distribute surplus commodities and foodstuffs.
4. Making investigations which relate to welfare services upon request by the state department of public welfare.
5. The maintenance of administrative and reporting relationships with all pertinent state departments.
6. The administration of relief under sections 49.02 and 49.03 in the event that the county administers relief under those sections.
7. The administration of aid to dependent children under section 49.19.
8. The administration of aid to the needy blind under section 49.18.
9. The administration of old-age assistance under sections 49.20 to 49.38.
10. The administration of aid to permanently and totally disabled persons under section 49.61.
11. To administer child welfare service under and subject to the provisions of ss. 48.56 and 48.57, thereby administering the functions otherwise administered by county children's board and licensed child welfare agencies and the authority to accept permanent care and custody and guardianship of any child upon the order of a competent court to this effect and to place children for adoption and to give consent to the adoption of such child pursuant to the statutes regulating adoption proceedings.
12. To make such investigations as are provided for in s. 48.88 (2) (a), if the court having jurisdiction so directs.

(3) REIMBURSEMENT. (a) *Federal aid.* The state shall reimburse the counties for their expenditures in the administration of old-age assistance, aid to dependent children, aid to the blind and aid to totally and permanently disabled persons, in accordance with the amount earned by each county for such administration and such aid shall be paid from the appropriation made by s. 20.670 (3) (o).

(b) *State aid.* The state shall also reimburse the counties, starting July 1, 1964, 15 per cent of their expenditures which are eligible for federal reimbursement in the administration of old-age assistance, aid to dependent children, aid to the blind, and aid to totally and permanently disabled persons, and 45% for such other welfare services as are performed by a county agency in co-operation with or at the request of the state department pursuant to express authorization; provided, that if the appropriation in s. 20.670 (3) (d) is insufficient for the payment in full of the amounts due the counties under this provision such appropriation shall be prorated. In no event shall reimbursement to any county under this subsection exceed its total expenditures for administration and if any reduction is necessary to avoid payments over such total, the amount available under this paragraph shall be reduced.

(c) *Reimbursement made monthly.* Payment of the state aid for administration under this section shall be made monthly on certification of the state department of public

welfare, at the same time and in the same manner as state and federal aid for old-age assistance, aid to dependent children, aid to the blind and aid to totally and permanently disabled persons.

(4) PRORATION WHEN STATE APPROPRIATIONS ARE INSUFFICIENT. Whenever the state prorates the appropriations for state aid for old-age assistance, aid to dependent children, aid to the blind and aid to totally and permanently disabled persons among the counties, the counties may reduce the amounts allowed to the beneficiaries in the following month, by the amount of the state and federal aid unpaid. Such reduction shall be made on a pro rata basis and shall apply until the state and federal aid is paid in full. The amount unpaid by the state as determined with respect to amounts actually expended by the counties for any of these forms of public assistance shall remain as a charge against the state.

History: 1963 c. 265, 571; 1965 c. 433 s. 121.

**49.53 Limitation on giving information.** (1) The use or disclosure of information concerning applicants and recipients for any purpose not connected with the administration of aid to dependent children, aid to the blind, old-age assistance and aid to totally and permanently disabled persons, except as provided under sub. (2), is prohibited. Any person violating this section shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$500 or by imprisonment not less than 10 days nor more than one year or both.

(2) (a) Each county agency administering aid to the blind, aid to dependent children, old-age assistance or aid to totally and permanently disabled persons shall monthly maintain a report at its office showing the names and addresses of all persons receiving such aids together with the amount paid during the preceding month, provided that nothing herein contained shall be construed to authorize or require the disclosure in such report of any information (names, addresses, amounts of aid or otherwise) pertaining to adoptions, to aid furnished to or in behalf of unmarried mothers pursuant to s. 49.19 (4) (d) and (g), or to aid furnished for the care of children in foster homes pursuant to s. 49.19 (10).

(b) Such report shall be open to public inspection at all times during regular office hours and may be destroyed after the next succeeding report becomes available. Any person except any public officer, seeking permission to inspect such book shall prove his identity and shall be required to sign a statement setting forth his address and his reasons for making such request and indicating that he understands the provisions of par.

(c) with respect to the use of the information obtained. The use of a fictitious name is a violation of this section. Within 72 hours after any such record has been inspected, the agency shall mail to each person whose record was inspected a notification of that fact and the name and address of the person making such inspection. The agency shall keep a record of such requests.

(e) It is unlawful to use any information obtained through access to such report for political or commercial purposes. The violation of this provision is punishable upon conviction as provided in sub. (1).

**49.61 Aid to totally and permanently disabled persons.** (1) DEFINITION. As used in this section a totally and permanently disabled person is a person who has a medically demonstrable impairment which is permanent and which substantially prevents such person from engaging in a useful occupation within his competence.

(1m) DEFINITION OF AID; INSTITUTION INMATES. In this section, "aid to the totally and permanently disabled" means money payments to, or medical care in behalf of, or any type of remedial care recognized under this section or s. 49.40 in behalf of, needy individuals more than 18 and less than 65 years of age who are totally and permanently disabled, but does not include any such payments to or care in behalf of any individual who is an inmate of a public institution (except as a patient in a medical institution) or any individual who is a patient in an institution for tuberculosis or mental diseases, or who has been diagnosed as having tuberculosis or psychosis and is a patient in a medical institution as a result thereof. No payment of aid to totally and permanently disabled persons shall be made to any individual in a private or public institution unless a standard-setting authority has been designated or established which is responsible for establishing and maintaining standards for such institutions. Such individuals shall not be barred from receiving general aid under ss. 49.02 and 49.03. Aid to the totally and permanently disabled shall be granted to totally and permanently disabled dependent persons residing voluntarily in county or city homes and the department shall make claim for federal reimbursement therefor when federal funds are made available for that purpose and pay the same to the county.

(2) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS. Aid under this section shall be granted only to an applicant:

(a) Who is more than 18 and less than 65 years of age;

(b) Who has resided in Wisconsin continuously for one year or more preceding the date of making application or of being granted aid and such aid may be continued for a period of one year to any recipient who removes his residence to another state, provided that the other state similarly reciprocates by granting aid to the disabled for a period of at least one year to persons moving from that state into Wisconsin;

(d) Who has no relatives able to support him and responsible for his support under s. 52.01;

(f) Whose property does not exceed a home of reasonable value together with ownership of other property such as cash, securities and insurance with a cash surrender value in an amount not to exceed \$1,000 to provide a reasonable reserve for expenses of burial, last sickness and other emergency needs not covered by this section;

(g) Who is by certification of a licensed physician or panel of physicians on forms to be prescribed by the state department of public welfare found to be totally and permanently disabled, provided that such certification of disability shall be subject to review by a panel of physicians advisory to the department.

(h) Persons who are members of the Grand Army home for veterans at King may be granted aid to the permanently and totally disabled if they are otherwise eligible for such aid pursuant to this chapter. The provisions of s. 45.37 (9) shall not apply to money payments of aid to the permanently and totally disabled paid to or in behalf of such members.

(3) APPLICATION. Application may be made by an agent or the legal guardian of a person believing himself to be eligible. Application shall be made on forms prescribed by the state department of public welfare to the welfare agency of the county in which he resides. Any individual wishing to make application for aid to the totally and permanently disabled shall have opportunity to do so.

(4) DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY. The county agency shall promptly make an investigation to ascertain all pertinent facts as to the applicant's eligibility. Eligibility and need shall be reinvestigated as often as necessary and at least once each year. All investigations shall be reported in writing and appropriately filed.

(5) NOTIFICATION TO APPLICANT. The county agency shall promptly notify the applicant, his agent or his legal guardian, in writing, as to whether or not he has been found to be eligible for this form of aid and the amount, if any, which he will be granted, provided that any applicant dissatisfied with the decision of the county agency upon his application or whose application is not acted upon with reasonable promptness may file a petition for review as provided in section 49.50 (8). Aid shall be furnished to any eligible individual with reasonable promptness.

(6) AMOUNT OF AID. (a) The amount of aid which a person may receive under this section shall be according to his need but shall not exceed \$80 per month. The agency shall, in determining need, take into consideration any other income and resources, but when permitted by federal regulation the first \$50 of earned income shall be disregarded in determining the amount of the grant and the earned income exemption provided in s. 49.18 (1) (a) shall not be considered in computing a grant of disabled aid when the disabled person is a member of the family of a recipient of blind aid and except that the first \$85 plus one-half of the excess over \$85 of payments made to or on behalf of any person for or with respect to any month under Title I or II of the federal economic opportunity act of 1964 or such payment made to or in behalf of any person and any excess remaining after this exclusion shall be considered as income for any other individual only to the extent made available to or for the benefit of such other individual. Any person receiving aid under this section shall not be eligible for old-age assistance, aid to the blind or aid to dependent children.

(b) On the death of a recipient of such aid, if the estate of the deceased is insufficient to defray the funeral and burial expenses, such reasonable amount not exceeding \$200 shall be paid for funeral and burial expenses to such persons as the county agency directs, exclusive of and in addition to the actual cemetery charges which shall also be paid by the county responsible for the burial of the recipient.

(7) ORDER DIRECTING PAYMENT. If the county agency finds a person eligible for aid under this section, such agency shall, on a form prescribed by the state department of public welfare, direct the payment of such aid by order upon the county clerk or county treasurer of the county; all payments of aid shall be made monthly, except that the director of the county agency may, in his discretion for the purpose of protecting the public, direct that the monthly allowance be paid in 2 or more instalments.

(8) COUNTY APPROPRIATION. The county board of each county shall annually appropriate a sum of money sufficient to carry out the provisions of this section taking into account the money expected to be received during the ensuing year as state aid.

(9) STATE AID REIMBURSEMENT TO COUNTY. The county treasurer and county agency administrator of each county shall monthly certify under oath to the state department of public welfare in such manner as the department prescribes, the claim of the county for state and federal reimbursement under this section, and if the department approves such claim, it shall certify to the department of administration for reimbursement to the county 30 per cent of the approved amount paid by each county for aid to totally and permanently disabled persons pursuant to this section, plus federal aid received for such expenditures, plus 30 per cent of any amount paid to an eligible recipient in excess of the amount which the federal government will take into account in making reimbursement but not in excess of \$80, as provided by sub. (6) (a). The department shall certify to the department of administration 100 per cent of the approved amount paid by each county to eligible persons pursuant to sub. (2) (h) or in behalf of such eligible persons as medical aid pursuant to s. 49.40, which certified amount shall include any federal aid received for such expenditures. To facilitate prompt reimbursement the certification of the department may be based upon the certified statements of the county officers, provided that any necessary audit adjustments for any month of current or prior fiscal years may be included in subsequent certifications. If the total amount due all counties exceeds the sum appropriated by s. 20.670 (3) (d) and (o) the appropriation shall be prorated by the department among the counties according to the amounts due them. To facilitate prompt reimbursement, the certification of the department may be based upon the certified statements of the county officers, provided that any necessary audit adjustments for any month of the current or prior fiscal years may be made and included in subsequent certifications. The department of administration shall draw its warrant forthwith for reimbursement to the respective counties in accordance with the certification of the department.

**History:** 1961 c. 370, 462, 524, 542, 565, 573, 682; 1965 c. 138, 362, 433 s. 121.

See note to 49.27, citing 51 Atty. Gen. 186.

**49.70 Menominee Enterprises, Inc., bonds, acquisition.** (1) The department is authorized to exercise options to purchase securities assigned to the state of Wisconsin under s. 231.45 at par value, or to accept an assignment of such securities, for the purpose of providing relief, public assistance or welfare aid under this section.

(2) The department shall exercise the options to purchase such securities or accept an assignment of such securities when it finds that the owner of the securities is a resident of this state as provided in s. 49.01 (7) and is in need of relief, public assistance or welfare aid, or who but for the ownership of such securities would qualify for relief, public assistance or other welfare aid. If the department exercises an option to purchase such security, the purchase price shall be paid out, at par value, as relief, as defined in s. 49.01 (1). Where the department accepts an assignment of such security as provided in this section it shall pay out as relief, as defined in s. 49.01 (1), an amount equal to the par value of the security assigned. The relief furnished, whether by money or otherwise, shall be at such times and in such amounts as will in the discretion of the department meet the needs of the recipient and protect the public. The department is authorized to exercise the options to purchase assigned to it in whole or in part, or to accept an assignment of such securities in whole or in part. The department is granted such authority as may be necessary and convenient to enable it to exercise the functions and perform the duties required of it by this section, including without limitation because of enumeration the authority to adopt and publish suitable rules governing eligibility and the furnishing and paying of relief under this section, the authority to enter into suitable agreements with the owner of the security or other appropriate persons for the purpose of carrying out this section, and the authority to sell or transfer the securities or defend and prosecute all actions concerning it and pay all just claims against it and do all other things necessary for the protection, preservation and management of the securities.

(3) If the relief, public assistance, or other welfare aid provided pursuant to this section is discontinued during the life of the person receiving such aid and the value of the securities transferred to the department exceed the total amount of assistance paid under this section, the excess of such property shall be returned to such person; and in the event of his death such excess shall be considered the property of such person for administration proceedings.

(4) The department may make loans to the owner of such securities for relief and welfare purposes which loans shall be secured by pledges of the securities to the state. The department may by rule establish the purposes for which loans may be made, permissible interest rates and fees, time and manner in which the loan is paid out, time and manner of repayment, general procedures to be followed in making loans, the action which shall be taken if a borrower defaults on a loan, maximum amount which may be

loaned to any one borrower, and any other rules necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

(5) Nothing in s. 49.70 of the statutes as created by chapter 2, laws of Special Session of 1963, is in derogation of other rights and remedies provided by law.

(6) Where the owner of such security is a minor child, such security shall be an exempt asset under the welfare law and shall not disqualify such minor child from receiving welfare assistance.

**History:** Spl. S. 1963 c. 2.

*[The following text is extremely faint and largely illegible due to low contrast and scan quality. It appears to be a series of numbered sections or paragraphs, possibly detailing regulations or administrative procedures related to the public assistance statute mentioned above. The text is too light to transcribe accurately.]*