

18.

Whenever a [county board] *local unit* receives an application for assistance under this subtitle, an investigation and record shall promptly be made of the circumstances of the applicant to ascertain the facts supporting the application made under this subtitle and such other information as may be required by the rules of the State [Board.] *Department*.

19.

Upon the completion of such investigation, the [county board] *local unit* shall decide whether the applicant is eligible for public assistance under the provisions of this subtitle, and determine, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the State Department, the amount of such assistance and the date on which such assistance shall begin. The [county board] *local unit* shall notify the applicant of its decision. Such assistance shall be paid upon order of the [county board] *local unit* from funds allocated to the [county board] *local unit* for this purpose. Should the fund or funds available be insufficient to make payments in accordance with the amount of assistance established to be needed, the State Department shall, by rule and regulation, provide for a uniform method of adjusting individual payments.

20.

On the death of the recipient, reasonable funeral expenses, not exceeding two hundred dollars (\$200.00), may be paid by the [county board] *local unit*, if the estate of the deceased is insufficient to pay the same and the persons legally responsible for the support of the deceased are unable to pay the same. The cost of any such payments shall be charged two thirds to State funds and one third to local funds. The provisions of this section are subject to the requirements of Section 18A of Article 88A of this Code.

22.

If an application is not acted upon by the *local unit* [county board] within a reasonable time after the filing of the application, or is denied in whole or in part, or if an award of assistance is modified or cancelled under any provision of this subtitle, the applicant or recipient may appeal to the State Department in the manner and form prescribed by the State Department. The State Department shall, upon receipt of such appeal, give the applicant or recipient an opportunity for a fair hearing. The State Department may also, upon its own motion, review any decision of a [county board] *local unit* and may consider any application upon which a decision has not been made by the [county board] *local unit* within a reasonable time. The State Department may make such additional investigation as it may deem necessary, and shall make such decision as to the granting of public assistance and the amount of assistance to be granted as in its opinion is justified and in conformity with the provisions of this subtitle. Applicants or recipients affected by such decisions of the State Department shall, upon request, be given reasonable notice and opportunity for a fair hearing by the State Department. If the applicant or recipient shall feel aggrieved by any decision of the State Department in respect to