§ 65. County commissioners of public welfare. 1. There shall be a county commissioner of public welfare in each county public welfare district who shall administer the public assistance and care for which the county public welfare district is responsible and shall have general supervision and care of persons in need in the territory over which he has jurisdiction.

2. The county commissioner shall be responsible for the administration of all the assistance and care for which the county is responsible.

3. The county commissioner shall act as the agent of the department in all matters relating to assistance and care administered or authorized by the town public welfare officers.

4. The county commissioner shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of section one hundred sixteen of this chapter or other provisions of law relating to the appointment of such commissioner.

6. (a) A county commissioner is authorized and required to provide safety net assistance for persons residing or found in a city or town of the county when in his judgment they are eligible for and in immediate need of such assistance and either: the city or town public welfare officer, as the case may be, is absent from his city or town under circumstances indicating his absence may extend beyond two days and such officer has no deputy or assistant authorized to grant such assistance or his or her deputy or assistant is also absent from such city or town under circumstances indicating his or her absence may also be for a period of more than two days; or, such county commissioner shall have appealed to the department, pursuant to section seventy-four-h, the decision of the social services official of such city or town not to grant the safety net assistance recommended by such commissioner after his or her staff shall have investigated the application for assistance pursuant to the provisions of section one hundred thirty-two. Such county commissioner may continue to grant safety net assistance in the former case until the city or town public welfare officer or his or her deputy or assistant returns to such city or town, and in the latter case until the department shall have decided the appeal of the county

commissioner.

(b) Expenditures of a county for safety net assistance pursuant to this section may be made from county social services funds appropriated or otherwise made available therefor and shall be subject to reimbursement by the state in accordance with and to the extent authorized by section one hundred fifty-three; and the local share of such expenditures shall become a charge on, and shall be reimbursed to the county by the city or town which was otherwise responsible for furnishing the safety net assistance for which the expenditure was made, provided the county commissioner shall give appropriate written notice thereof to the appropriate city or town public welfare officer within thirty days of the date the expenditure was made by the county and provided further that in the case of an appeal to the department that such appeal shall be decided in favor of the county.

7. (a) In the event of a vacancy in the office of county commissioner of social services the appointing authority may, subject to the provisions of paragraph (b) of this subdivision, appoint as acting commissioner of social services any employee of the county social services agency. Such appointment shall be for no longer than one year.

(b) Prior to filling a vacancy in the office of county commissioner of social services the appointing authority shall certify to the state commissioner of social services: (i) that there is an unavailability of qualified candidates; (ii) that the district is making continued efforts to recruit qualified candidates; (iii) that the appointment shall be effective only until a qualified person becomes available; and (iv) that a waiver by the appointing authority of any specific qualification required by section one hundred sixteen of this chapter shall not be effective without the consent of the state commissioner of social services.

(c) The acting commissioner may be paid compensation in addition to his normal salary during the period of time that he serves as acting commissioner.

(d) The acting commissioner shall have the same power as a commissioner during the period of time that he serves as acting commissioner.

(e) Service as an acting commissioner shall in no way affect the

permanent civil service status, or any other employment rights of the appointee.

8. Notwithstanding any other law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, each county commissioner of social services is hereby authorized and directed to ensure that their social services district allows individuals submitting an application or other paperwork relating to public assistance and care to do so electronically.