

Ross County Department of Job and Family Services
Good Cause Extension Criteria
Effective October 1, 2002

Policy

Section 5707.18(B) of the Ohio revised Code provides that an assistance group that has ceased to participate in Ohio Works First (OWF) due to the 36-month state time limit for at least a 24-month waiting period may be eligible to participate in OWF if the assistance group is determined to have a good cause. There is a 24-month durational limit for good cause extensions, which means that a good cause extension may be provided to an OWF assistance group for no more than a total of 24 months whether consecutive or not. Any months of receipt of state hardship after the 36 month time limit count toward the federal 60-month limit, and reduce the amount of potentially available months under good cause. Receipt of OWF under a good cause extension cannot result in the assistance group receiving more than the federal 60-month time limit. However, the assistance group can receive benefits beyond the 60-month time limit if the county Department of Job and Family Services determines that the federal time limit is a hardship and an extension is approved.

Procedure

1. An applicant for OWF cash assistance extension will be provided with the appropriate application by a Department of Job and Family Services worker (either Good Cause or Hardship - depending on their eligibility and time factors.)
2. Upon reapplication for OWF after the 24-month waiting period, the assistance group will be required to provide acceptable verification of both:
 - \$ whether any members of the group had employment during the time the assistance group was not participating in OWF and
 - \$ the amount and sources of the assistance group's income during that period
3. The OWF caseworker, the Workforce Investment Network (WIN) caseworker, and a Job & Family Services supervisor or administrator will review with the assistance group:
 - \$ the steps they have taken over the 24-month waiting period toward self-sufficiency. The review will explore:
 - \$ reasons for sanctions imposed against the assistance group for self-sufficiency contract failures and
 - \$ trends that may be attributed to chronic health, mental health, or reasons of limited functional capacity and
 - \$ what prompted the application and
 - \$ how they managed during their time off cash assistance and
 - \$ any changes in circumstances that have precipitated the application
4. Provided the assistance group has supplied acceptable verification required in paragraph 1 and the Department of Job & Family Services is satisfied that the assistance group has taken

constructive steps toward self-sufficiency as stated in paragraph 2, the following additional criteria will be considered in determining a good cause for reapplication for OWF.

Criteria

1. Domestic violence considerations
 - a. case pending; pretrial and/or trial dates pending
 - b. residing in a safe house or other safe place
 - c. actively working with a local domestic violence service or safe house
2. Unique personal circumstances
 - a. Pending decision re application or appeal for SSI or SSD
 - b. Individual is over 60 years of age and the caretaker of a dependent child
3. Child Protective Services plan
 - a. Ongoing case with the Children's Division: verification required from the Children's Division that the individual is satisfactorily participating in his or her case plan
4. Dependent care barriers
 - a. Care is unavailable for a dependent immediate family member of any age, and the individual is required in the home full-time: requires verification by a physician's statement or other acceptable verification
 - b. Impairment of an immediate family member for physical, mental, or psychological reasons that prevents the individual from participating in work activities, LEAP, or employment
 - c. There is a special needs child in the assistance group for whom child care is not available
5. Disability/medical condition

Individual suffers from a physical, mental or psychological impairment which prevents him or her from participating in work activities or LEAP: requires verification that the individual has been keeping treatment appointments and is complying with treatment recommendations - unless the impairment and/or a lack of adequate/accepted insurance coverage make ongoing treatment impractical or inaccessible
6. Education barriers/training
 - a. Individual is enrolled full time in an educational or training program of which 50% has been completed and from which he or she will graduate or achieve program completion within the next 12 months
 - b. Individual has a documented learning disability and is willing to enroll in a short-term vocational training program for up to 12 months.
7. Felony/criminal barriers
 - a. Criminal situation renders individual unable to participate in a work activity or LEAP: legal documentation is required to verify
 - b. Other legal barriers: legal documentation required to verify
8. Pregnancy/childbearing

Single, custodial parent of a child younger than 3 months
9. Teen parents

Teen parent who has received fewer than 18 months of OWF cash assistance after receipt of GED or high school diploma

10. Transportation barriers

11. Extenuating circumstances

a. A reason not otherwise specified in these criteria that results from extreme, acute, chronic, or unusual circumstances (including but not limited to such conditions as being underemployed, having exhausted several different employment opportunities, recent unemployment)

b. Intercounty transfer for reason not covered in Ross County's Good Cause Policy

Policy - continued

5. Based on the criteria, Ross County Job & Family Services will determine if there is good cause for the assistance group to receive good cause extension.

6. If good cause is determined, the assistance group may not participate in OWF for more than 24 additional months, which takes into consideration the 60-month federal time limit. Any month of OWF receipt under the county hardship criteria for extension beyond the 36 month time limit will count toward the 24 additional months granted under good cause criteria.

7. Once eligibility under good cause is established, no subsequent determination of good cause shall be made as long as all other OWF eligibility requirements are met, unless an assistance group loses OWF eligibility for any reason other than a self-sufficiency contract failure or there is a minimum one-day interruption in assistance.

8. A new good cause determination (or federal hardship determination, if time limits apply) must be made if the assistance group reapplies to participate in OWF

Attachments:

Good Cause Application

Good Cause Scoring Grid

Good Cause CRISE Codes

Family Assistance Operational Procedure – Good Cause Application Processing

Ross County Job and Family Services State OWF Good Cause Exemption Application

I want to make application for the Ross County Department of Job and Family Services OWF Good Cause exemption.

Signature: _____ Social Security # _____

Date: _____

For Agency use:

Date received: _____

Received by: _____

Case Name: _____

Case Number: _____

Months County Hardship: _____

Verification of employment during period when not participating in OWF _____

Documentation of amount and source of income while not participating in OWF _____

Ross County Job and Family Services State Good Cause Determination Grid

SCORE THE WEIGHT OF EACH OBSTACLE LISTED BELOW ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING SCALE:

DETERMINATION WILL BE MADE FOR CONSIDERATION OF TOTAL CONSENSUS SCORES OF 10 OR MORE.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Moderate				Significant					Severe	

The extent to which an item is a self-sufficiency barrier for the assistance group.

Barriers easily worked through	Restrictions from obstacle allow 50% goal attainment	Likely to result in health or safety problems
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- _____ 1. Domestic violence considerations
 - a. case pending; pretrial and/or trial dates pending
 - b. residing in a safe house or other safe place
 - c. actively working with a local domestic violence service and/or shelter
- _____ 2. Unique personal circumstances
 - a. Pending decision re application or appeal for SSI or SSD
 - b. Individual is over 60 years of age and the caretaker of a dependent child
- _____ 3. Child Protective Services plan
 - a. Ongoing case with the Children's Division: verification required from the Children's Division that the individual is satisfactorily participating in his or her case plan
- _____ 4. Dependent care barriers
 - a. Care is unavailable for a dependent immediate family member of any age, and the individual is required in the home full-time: requires verification by a physician's statement
 - b. Impairment of an immediate family member for physical, mental, or psychological reasons that prevents the individual from participating in work activities or LEAP
 - c. There is a special needs child in the assistance group for whom child care is not available
- _____ 5. Disability/medical condition

Individual suffers from a physical, mental or psychological impairment which prevents him or her from participating in work activities or LEAP: requires verification that the individual has been keeping treatment appointments and is complying with treatment recommendations
- _____ 6. Education barriers/training
 - a. Individual is enrolled full time in an educational or training program of which 50% has been completed and from which he or she will graduate or achieve program completion within the next 12 months
 - b. Individual has a documented learning disability and is willing to enroll in a short-term vocational training program for up to 12 months
- _____ 7. Felony/criminal barriers
 - a. Criminal situation renders individual unable to participate in a work activity or LEAP: legal documentation is required to verify
 - b. Other legal barriers: legal documentation required to verify
- _____ 8. Pregnancy/childbearing

Single, custodial parent of a child younger than 3 months
- _____ 9. Teen parents

Teen parent who has received fewer than 18 months of OWF cash assistance after receipt of GED or high school diploma
- _____ 10. Transportation barriers
- _____ 11. Extenuating circumstances
 - a. A reason not otherwise specified in these criteria that results from extreme, acute, chronic or unusual circumstances (eg: underemployed; several different employments; recently unemployed)
 - b. Intercounty transfer for reason not covered in Ross County's Good Cause Policy

Ross County Job and Family Services OWF Good Cause CRISE Codes

State # Explanation	Ross Co # Ross explanation
0400 Domestic Violence Considerations	0401 Case pending: pretrial and trial dates pending 0402 Residing in safe house
0500 Unique personal circumstances	0501 Pending decision re application or appeal for SSI or SSD 0502 Individual is over 60 years of age and the caretaker of a dependent child
0700 Child Protective Services plan	0701 Ongoing case with Children's Division: verification required from Children's Division that individual is satisfactorily participating in case plan
0800 Dependent care barriers	0801 Care is unavailable for a dependent immediate family member (any age) and individual is required to be in home full time - as verified by a physician's statement 0802 Impairment of an immediate family member (physical, mental or psychological) that prevents the individual from participating in work activities or LEAP 0803 Special needs child for whom child care is not available
0900 Disability/medical condition	0901 Individual suffers from a physical, mental or psychological impairment which prevents him or her from participating in work activities or LEAP: requires verification that individual has been keeping treatment appointments and is compliant with treatment recommendations
1000 Education barriers/training	1001 Is enrolled full time in an educational or training program of which 50% has been completed and from which he or she will graduate or achieve program completion within the next 12 months
1100 Felony/criminal barriers	1101 Criminal situation renders individual unable to participate in a work activity or LEAP: 1102 Other legal barriers
1300 Pregnancy/childbearing	1301 Single, custodial parent of a child younger than 3 months
1600 Teen parents	1601 Teen parent who has received less than 18 months of OWF cash assistance after receipt of GED or high school diploma
1700 Transportation barriers	1701 Transportation barriers
1800 Any other reason the CDFS determines	1801 (Inter county transfer code) Reason not otherwise specified in this county's codes

**Family Assistance Operational Procedure
Good Cause Application Processing
April 15, 2003**

POLICY

It is the policy of Ross County Department of Job and Family Services to ensure that those with extreme, unusual, acute or chronic problems are enabled to apply for and receive cash assistance in addition to their original 36 month allotment when 24 months have intervened since they reached the end of their regular 36 months on OWF cash assistance.

PROCEDURE

1. Clients for whom at least 24 months has elapsed (whether or not they received OWF State Hardship Extension during some of those months), are eligible to apply for a Good Cause OWF extension.
2. Interested clients go to the WIN Office to complete an application for Good Cause. During that visit, they are first encouraged to explore employment opportunities and then given a Good Cause extension application and a copy of the OWF Extension Policy.
3. When a completed Good Cause application is submitted to the WIN office, it is forwarded to Carolyn Dunn who identifies the last Workforce Development worker and sends the application with a notation of the worker's name to Nancy Kutschbach on the Family Assistance Unit.
4. Nancy Kutschbach schedules a Good Cause hearing in the Hearing Room at the Service Center, sends a letter to the applicant and notice of the hearing with a copy of the application and the hearing letter to: the Workforce Development Worker, the AG's last Family Assistance Caseworker, and the Family Assistance Administrator.
5. All Good Cause hearings are scheduled for Wednesdays from 9 to 10 am.
6. During the hearing, staff discusses with applicant his or her current situation and their means of previous support as well as any events that have led up to the application for Good Cause extension.
7. Staff rate each application along the parameters contained in the Hardship policy and inform the applicant of their decision the same day.
8. If an application is approved, the Workforce Development Worker completes an assessment after the hearing, and the individual is scheduled to go through the OWF application process. If all eligibility requirements are met, the individual's cash assistance continues for up to 24 months or the remainder of 24 months he or she was not previously on State Hardship extension.
9. The CRIS-E extension codes contained in the Extension Policy are used to identify reason for award of Good Cause cash extension.