

Sandusky County
Department of Job and Family Services

Ohio Works First (OWF) “Good Cause” Plan
Effective October 1, 2002

Section 5107.18 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 family is determined to have good cause. The Sandusky County Department of Job and Family Services (SCDJFS) has the responsibility to determine good cause.

The receipt of a state hardship extension does not interrupt the 24-month waiting period or delay an assistance group’s potential eligibility for a good cause extension. Any OWF assistance received due to state hardship does, however, reduce the number of months available under the good cause extension. OWF benefits received through both good cause and hardship extension count toward the federal 60-month time limit. Assistance groups who are determined eligible for good cause extensions are OWF recipients and subject to all OWF eligibility requirements.

APPLICATION FOR A GOOD CAUSE EXTENSION

The assistance group may apply for a good cause extension by submitting a Good Cause Extension Application. The OWF case manager will review this application and case record to ensure the assistance group has exhausted their 36-month OWF time limit, there has been 24 months since the termination of the assistance group’s 36 months of OWF, and the assistance group has not exceeded the federal 60-month time limit of TANF cash assistance.

Upon the filing of a Good Cause Extension Application, the assistance group will be required to provide acceptable verification of whether any members of the assistance group had employment during the period the assistance group was not participating in OWF and the amount and source of the assistance group’s income during that period. The assistance group will also need to provide verification of their claim for good cause as requested by the SCDJFS.

When the SCDJFS receives an application for a Good Cause extension consideration, a committee comprised of management and the case manager will review the application and family circumstances in order to determine if the applicant meets the criteria for the Good Cause extension. SCDJFS will make a determination on the application within 15 business days and will notify the applicant of the decision (approval/denial) in writing. State Hearing rights will be offered for all decisions. The SCDJFS Director’s approval is needed for all cases that are granted a Good Cause Extension.

Once eligibility under good cause is established, no subsequent determination of good cause will be made unless the assistance group becomes ineligible for OWF for another reason. When an assistance group becomes ineligible for OWF (for a reason not related to the good cause approval), a new good cause determination will be made with the following two exceptions:

1. When an assistance group loses OWF eligibility during a good cause extension due to the imposition of a sanction due to a failure to comply with the provisions of the self-sufficiency contract.
2. When an assistance group loses OWF eligibility during a good cause extension for any reason other than a self-sufficiency contract failure AND there is not at least a one-day interruption in receipt of benefits.

OWF “Good Cause” Extension Criteria

In accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 5101:1-23-01, the Sandusky County Department of Job and Family Services has developed the following Good Cause criteria:

- Loss of employment due to plant closing or terminating business operations. TLGI code 0101
- There is a labor surplus or a high unemployment rate or other economic condition that prevents the parent from obtaining employment. TLGI code 0201
- The assistance group has lost financial support due to death, separation or divorce. TLGI code 0301
- The assistance group is a victim of domestic violence and is engaging in supportive services to assist in establishing family stability. TLGI code 0401
- The assistance group is experiencing a unique personal circumstance as determined by the county department of job and family services. TLGI code 0501
- The assistance group is satisfactorily participating in an active Child Protective Services case plan and reunification or prevention of removal is reliant upon continued OWF benefits. TLGI code 0701
- Any other reason Sandusky County DJFS determines to be good cause. TLGI code 1801
- Intercounty transfer case for which Sandusky County DJFS does not have a corresponding good cause extension code. TLGI code 9001