

**VAN WERT COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES  
GOOD CAUSE CRITERIA TO EXTEND OHIO WORKS FIRST**

**PURPOSE:**

In accordance with ORC section 5107.18, an assistance group (AG) is ineligible to participate in Ohio Works First (OWF) when the assistance group that includes an adult has participated in the program for thirty-six months. Section (B) of ORC 5107.18 provides that an assistance group that has ceased to participate in OWF due to the thirty-six month state time limit for at least a twenty-four month waiting period may be eligible to participate in OWF if the family is determined to have “good cause”. The good cause extension may be given for no more than a total of twenty-four months, whether consecutive or not. Any months of receipt of OWF cash due to “hardship extension” or TANF benefits received in another state after the thirty-six month time limit count toward the federal sixty-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 sixty-month time limit. A hardship extension granted to an AG does not interrupt the twenty-four month waiting period or delay the subsequent determination for good cause. Every month of receiving cash assistance under the county hardship criteria does count toward the twenty-four additional months of OWF granted under good cause. The time limit applies regardless of whether the twenty-four months are consecutive. Assistance Groups may receive no more than sixty months of Federal lifetime cash assistance.

**THE GOOD CAUSE PROCEDURE:**

Assistance groups shall submit their request for a good cause extension upon submitting a completed 7200 application. If an individual is on a sanction when they apply for a good cause extension, they must sign and meet compliance before they can be eligible to receive an extension.

The assistance group’s face-to-face interview will be conducted within five days of the date of application, at which time the assistance group and Agency representative(s) will discuss the circumstances why they are requesting good cause to reapply for Ohio Works First. In two-parent households, both parents or caretakers must meet at least one of the “good cause” reasons in this plan.

The CDJFS director or designee will determine whether good cause exists. Assistance groups not considered eligible under a good cause extension will be advised of the Agency’s decision in writing using a Notice of Denial and will be afforded all Ohio Department of Job and Family Services State Hearing Rights.

The application will be processed within 30 days of the filing date. The assistance group seeking the good cause extension must provide the County with any required documentation and cooperate with the self sufficiency plan as long as the good cause extension is granted. The assistance group must provide verification of whether any members of the assistance group had

employment during the period the assistance group was not participating in Ohio Works First and the amount and source of the assistance group's income during that period.

After eligibility under Good Cause is established, no further determination of good cause will be made as long as all other OWF eligibility factors continue to be met. If an assistance group loses OWF eligibility while receiving a good cause extension due to a failure to comply with the terms of the Self-Sufficiency Contract, no new application, nor determination of good cause is necessary to re-establish OWF eligibility due to good cause once the assistance group complies and the minimum sanction period has expired. If the assistance group loses OWF eligibility while receiving a good cause extension for any reason other than a self-sufficiency contract failure and there is at least a one-day interruption in assistance a new determination of eligibility for OWF under good cause must be made if the assistance group subsequently reapplies to participate.

Assistance groups who are determined to be eligible for OWF due to a good cause extension are OWF recipients and as such are subject to all OWF eligibility and reporting requirements.

#### **GOOD CAUSE REASONS:**

- Verified assistance group employment of 12 or more months of 30 or more hours per week since reaching the OWF 36 month time limit.
- Verified receipt of unemployment compensation benefits by the assistance group since reaching the OWF 36 month limit and evidence that the assistance group is seeking services to gain employment.
- Domestic violence victim receiving recovery services.
- Assistance group's current PCSA case plan is reliant upon additional OWF months for reasonable progress in achieving stability and self-sufficiency.
- Individual is pending SSI/SSD and has been unable to participate in a work activity due to that disability as verified by a licensed physician. The county reserves the right to a second opinion.
- Consideration of extraordinary circumstances where the Van Wert CDJFS director or designee determines that additional OWF benefits are an integral part of joint case planning with other departments or agencies that will lead to self-sufficiency for the assistance group.
- Good Cause extension case – intercounty transfer.

**APPROVAL:**

This plan becomes effective on April 14, 2005 and shall remain in effect until otherwise modified or terminated.

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Director, VWCDJFS                      Date

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County Commissioner                      Date

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County Commissioner                      Date

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County Commissioner                      Date