

ALLEN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN FOR GOOD CAUSE DETERMINATION

Section 5107.18 of the Ohio Revised Code limits participation in Ohio Works First (OWF) to 36 months, (whether consecutive or not). Once the Assistance Group (AG) has ceased to participate in OWF for at least 24 months, whether consecutive or not, the AG may reapply to participate in the program if good cause exists. The County Department of Job and Family Services determines good cause for OWF benefits to be reinstated and establishes the beginning date of eligibility for OWF. Good cause may not be approved for more than 24 months. The Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Law provides for a 60-month time limit for receipt of TANF cash. The 60 months do not have to be consecutive. Each month of receipt of assistance under the state limit, state hardship and state good cause counts toward the federal 60-month time limit. However, the AG can receive benefits beyond the 60-month time limit if the County Department of Job and Family Services determines that a hardship exists and an extension is approved.

Application for Good Cause

At the time the AG applies for good cause, the AG must provide the Allen County Department of Job and Family Services with employment verification for all AG members that were employed and any other sources of income during the period the AG was not participating in OWF to demonstrate that they made reasonable efforts toward self-sufficiency. Gross earnings should be at least equal to the OWF payment standard for twelve (12) of the previous twenty-four months.

The AG member(s) may apply for a good cause determination due to the following:

- Has ceased to participate in OWF due to the 36-month state time limit for at least a 24-month waiting period. Any months in receipt of OWF due to “hardship extension” or TANF benefits received in another state, will reduce the total additional months that can be received under this “good cause” provision.

Good Cause Reasons

- ◆ The single parent or caretaker in an AG has lost employment due to layoff because of lack of work or business closing. The client did not cause his or her own job loss. Verification of lay off and verification of Unemployment Insurance application is required.
- ◆ The single parent or caretaker in an AG is not self sufficient due to a recent divorce or legal separation (within the last three months), has not worked within the last 5 years, has barriers to employment and was supported by the spouse. Verification of divorce and legal separation is required.
- ◆ The capacity of the single parent or caretaker in an AG to retain employment is being disrupted by domestic violence and the parent/caretaker is actively seeking help, as evidenced by residence in a spousal abuse shelter, a current protective court order, a policy report or a sworn affidavit coupled with steps to resolve the situation (such as retention of an attorney).

- ◆ The single parent or caretaker in an AG is unable to work due to verified physical or mental illness, high-risk pregnancy with verification that states working would threaten the life of the mother and/or baby. A licensed physician or psychologist must verify the incapacity. The agency reserves the right to secure and rely upon a second opinion.
- ◆ An AG's youngest parent or caretaker is over age sixty-five (65) years of age and is a caretaker of a child under age six (6).

*Note-In order for a 2-Parent AG to qualify for "good cause", both parents or caretakers must meet at least one (1) of the "good cause" criteria in this plan.