

Bob Taft
Governor



Jacqueline Romer-Sensky
Director

Ohio Department of Human Services

30 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43266-0423

August 25, 1999

OWF/PRC Guidance Letter No. 6

TO: Directors, County Departments of Human Services
Directors, County Public Children Services Agencies
Directors, Child Support Enforcement Agencies
Regional Account Managers

FROM: Jacqueline Romer-Sensky, Director *JRS/dsw*

SUBJECT: Reunification Policy

Currently, children removed from the home of a parent(s), specified relative or legal guardian may remain eligible for Ohio Works First (OWF) for up to 3 payment months if the Public Children Services Agency (PCSA) anticipates that reunification will likely occur within 90 days. Amended Substitute House Bill 283 increased this time period to 6 months, effective October 1, 1999.

In order to provide a smooth transition for children currently in the custody of the PCSA who will continue to receive OWF past the 3 payment months, we are issuing this guidance letter.

Policy for transitional cases

Children whose 90 days on AEIDC end September 1, 1999 or later may be eligible for up to 6 months total, provided that the provisions of Section 5107.10 (E) of the Revised Code are met. The assistance group must continue to cooperate with the PCSA in the reunification, and the PCSA is required to report this cooperation to the CDHS at the end of the first five months after removal. A copy of section 5107.10 has been attached to this guidance letter.

Children removed under the current 90-day policy, whose 3 months ended on or before August 31, 1999 cannot be extended to 6 months.

CRIS-E

CRIS-E is programmed to allow a 6-month entry date on AEIDC. The CDHS will need to work with the PCSA to determine if children whose 90-day period ends on or after September 1, 1999 can continue to receive an additional 3 months of OWF. Upon verbal or written confirmation from the PCSA that it is anticipated that these children will be reunified within 180 days from removal, the CDHS will need to change the end date on AEIDC to reflect this increase in months.

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To assist the CDHS in identifying these cases, we had requested that a list of children currently receiving OWF assistance under the 90-day provision be generated. Statewide, fourteen cases have been identified as currently being in receipt of OWF due to the 90-day provision. However, upon review of this document, we discovered that the end-date being entered on AEIDC has not always been the last day of the month. It appeared that the date entered was 90 days from the removal date. Section 5107.16 allows for an additional 3 PAYMENT MONTHS (6 PAYMENT MONTHS, effective 10/1). Therefore, the end-date on AEIDC should always be the LAST DAY OF THE MONTH. A copy of the fourteen cases identified by CRIS-E is attached for the county agencies.

Reason Code 706 has been revised to include the new time period and is currently in production.

Any questions regarding this guidance letter should be forwarded to the appropriate Regional Office.

JRS/ke

c: County Commissioners Association
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PCSAO
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Technical Assistance Managers
Bureau of Family Stability