

## Highland County Department of Job and Family Services Prevention, Retention, and Contingency Program Plan

*Effective October 1, 2009*

The Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) program is designed to serve low income assistance groups. By utilizing these services the Highland County Department of Job and Family Services (HCDJFS) will encourage families to attain, retain, or enhance employment, prevent dependency and promote family stability by meeting their need through services there by preventing the need for OWF cash assistance. All applicants will be informed of other programs which would promote self-sufficiency such as food stamps, Medicaid, and child care. HCDJFS has made every attempt to anticipate the needs of all assistance groups. However, as we know, unusual circumstances may appear. Therefore, HCDJFS reserves the right to allow exceptions to this PRC Plan when deemed necessary. All other viable options will be explored before an exception is made.

A PRC assistance group is a pregnant woman, a non custodial parent who lives in the county and who does not live in the same household as his/her minor child and who is cooperating with the CSEA (the minor child [ren] for whom child support payments are ordered are considered household members for the purposes of determining eligibility), or a group of individuals containing at least 1 minor child and treated as a unit for the purpose of determining eligibility for PRC. A minor child is defined as a person who has not yet attained 18 years of age or has not attained age 19 and is a full time student in a secondary school or the equivalent vocational or technical training.

A child may be "temporarily absent" from the home for up to 6 months in accordance with ORC 5107.10 and still qualify for PRC. During the temporary period the child is considered to be residing with the parent, specified relative, legal guardian, or legal custodian. The child must return to the home by the end of the 6 month period. Otherwise, the child no longer resides with the parent, specified relative, legal guardian, or legal custodian.

The maximum total amount of benefits payable through PRC is **\$2,000** within a 12 month period. Within the overall maximum of **\$2,000.00**, the limit for contingent needs is **\$2,000**. A maximum of two contingent needs for two different services can be authorized within a 12 month period. For prevention and retention services, any number of individual payments can be made during the 12 month period as long as they are distinctive, non-ongoing occurrences and do not exceed the **\$2,000** maximum. HCDJFS will not duplicate PRC benefits issued in another county within the 12 month period. However, the HCDJFS may issue benefits to an assistance group who received

PRC in another Ohio county up to the **\$2,000** maximum minus the amount received in the 12 month period. If a PRC AG has already exceeded the **\$2,000** cap in the past 12 months, the application will be denied. This limit does not apply to contracted services.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

The PRC applicant must complete the Prevention, Retention, and Contingency Program Application to request PRC services.

Certain PRC services require that a budget be completed. Budgets are completed for recurring expenses to determine if the PRC applicant can continue his own payments after PRC assistance. The HCDJFS staff person will complete a budget with the PRC applicant as necessary, unless the budget is waived by a DJFS supervisor.

## BUDGET PERIOD AND INCOME

With the exception of income exclusions indicated in OAC 5101:1-24-20 and the income of minors in the household, all other income which has been received by any member of the PRC AG during the 30 day budget period shall be considered when determining financial need. The 30 day period begins 30 days before and ends on the application date. The countable income received during this period is used in the computation of financial eligibility. The total gross income, both earned and unearned, of all of the PRC AG members must be included (with the exception of income exclusions indicated in OAC 5101:1-24-20 and earned income from minors in the household). The only deduction from any income is for self-employment. The same self-employment deductions that are allowed for OWF eligibility are allowed for PRC eligibility.

Written or verbal verification of income is required. For any verification that is obtained by phone, there must be clear documentation in the PRC AG record giving the name and position of the supplier of the information, the date that the verification was obtained, the amount of verified income, and the name of the person who obtained the verification.

## EMPLOYMENT

Applicants must have a connection with work, training, or the OWF Work Activity Program by having completed the appraisal assessment **and have a work activity assignment to one of the allowable assignment types listed in the section titled “Eligibility” below**. The AG meets the definition of connection with work if at least one adult member of the household is working an average of 30 hours per week, or has weekly earnings equal to the federal minimum wage (that is in effect at the time the PRC application is filed) multiplied by 30. If a member of the AG has received an offer

of employment, the AG must provide verification of the hours to be worked and must demonstrate that the employment opportunity is expected to last a minimum of 30 days. In addition, for PRC requests other than work related needs or gas vouchers, the applicant who has not been employed in the last 30 days must work at least 14 days before services will be authorized.

If a 2 parent household is unable to meet their ongoing expenses, the second adult member can be required to obtain employment (as defined above) before PRC services will be authorized.

There are two exceptions to the connection with employment: 1. PRC may be used to provide contingent needs to a family involved with the child protective services system. 2. PRC may also be used to provide contingent needs to a family receiving severance pay as a result of a mass layoff or down sizing, Unemployment Compensation or have employer verification that job loss is the result of a lay-off within the last 30 days.

Services and goods may be provided through PRC for the following reasons:

- To help alleviate a family crisis that could lead to the removal of the children from their home.
- To help a family so that the children can be safely returned to their family.
- For services as indicated by Children Services that are in the best interest of the child and will allow that child to remain in a stable family environment.
- A Children Services Safety Plan or Case Plan, which identifies the PRC services needed, is required.

## ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for PRC is dependent upon the AG's demonstration and verification of the need for financial assistance, goods, and services. The HCDJFS will evaluate the need(s) of the AG, whether the PRC program can address those needs and prevent recurrence. **Supportive services provided to OWF Work Activity participants through the PRC program will be evaluated to determine the most cost efficient service to provide, if more than one service option exists. The services are intended to support active participation in work activities, therefore OWF applicants and recipients must currently be either meeting their participation requirements through employment or be assigned to one of the following: WEP, Community Service, Vocational Education, Job Search & Readiness, or LEAP Education Assignments (GED or High School attendance). If an OWF assistance group with employment is not meeting their participation requirements with the employment alone, additional assignments to one of the above will be required before services can be authorized.** The decision regarding appropriate and allowable services is solely the decision of HCDJFS. All PRC applicants have the right to a state hearing if they feel they were wrongly denied PRC services.

In order for eligibility to be determined, the income of the AG must be compared to the economic need standard established for the benefits and services requested. The need standards are based upon Federal Poverty Guideline measures which are updated annually. When determining eligibility for PRC, their income must be equal to or less than the standard established for the service. Effective 10/01/05, the income standard for Prevention, Retention, and Contingency services is 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

In order to receive PRC benefits and services at least one member of the AG must be a citizen of the United States or a qualified legal alien as defined in Section 5506(d) of Public Law 105-33 (the Balanced Budget Act of 1997).

The PRC application must include the names, dates of birth, and social security numbers of all household members. If any of the information is questionable, the agency will then require verification as a condition of eligibility.

#### INELIGIBLE ASSISTANCE GROUPS

The following AG's are not eligible for PRC:

- Individuals with any outstanding CDJFS program fraud overpayment balance.
- Families who have requested contingency services and have failed to make scheduled payments on that service prior to PRC application and upon completion of the budget would have had the ability to make those payments.
- Individuals not cooperating with establishing paternity or child support (other than applicants applying for contracted services).
- Individuals currently ineligible due to Intentional Program Violation (IPV). This ineligibility does not apply to those currently in receipt of Ohio Works First and are participating in work activities and/or are employed.

#### AGENCY PROCEDURE

The HCDJFS is responsible for using objective criteria when determining eligibility and approving or denying the application within 10 business days after completion of the application process, which includes verification of information.

Once eligibility for PRC is determined, if the determination is an approval, the HCDJFS shall mail or otherwise deliver the ODJFS 04074, Notice of Approval of Your Application for Assistance. If the determination is a denial the HCDJFS shall mail or otherwise deliver the ODJFS 07334, Notice of Denial of Your Application for Assistance.

Any applicant who was initially approved for PRC services and then failed to follow through with PRC requirements could be denied future PRC services.

Once eligibility for PRC is approved the HCDJFS director or designee will authorize and generate payment for the assistance, goods, or services. Authorization may occur at any time during a period beginning on the date that PRC is approved. As long as

payment is authorized within the appropriate period, actual payment may be made to vendors according to the procedures in place at HCDJFS. All PRC payments are made by the HCDJFS to the vendor. The county must ensure that its policies meet all auditing requirements. The county will pursue repayment of PRC assistance received fraudulently, and assistance groups who have fraudulently received assistance and have an outstanding unpaid balance under TANF/OWF/PRC/Food Stamps or Child Care programs will not be eligible for any assistance until repayment occurs. *Ref. 5101.83 Ohio Revised Code*

Procurement: Two price quotes must be obtained for car repair requests until such time that HCDJFS has a contract in place with selected vendor(s) for car repairs. The concept of reasonableness is to be used when authorizing PRC expenditure. HCDJFS has the right to refuse to authorize requests which are unreasonable in cost and/or scope. Price quotes may be requested for services other than car repairs if, in the opinion of the HCDJFS the cost of goods or services appear to be too costly or inappropriate.

Supervisor may waive the two estimate requirement if deemed impractical to obtain two quotes (e.g., the car is not in running order and needs towed to get an estimate).

#### CONTRACTED SERVICES

HCDJFS has entered into agreements with providers to provide services to TANF eligible AG's. Payments will be based on a unit cost per eligible individual or actual cost as stipulated in the contract. HCDJFS will determine appropriate services and authorize payment. Providers will bill HCDJFS for services rendered to eligible PRC AG's who the Department has authorized for services.

Applicants need not have a connection with employment in order to be eligible for contracted services.

**The Highland County Department of Job and Family Services agrees to implement the Prevention, Retention, and Contingency Program Plan as written effective October 01, 2009.**

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Deborah Robbins, Date  
Director of Highland County Job & Family Services

Certification by the Board of Highland County Commissioners in support of the Highland County Department of Job and Family Services Prevention, Retention, and Contingency

Plan.

The Board of Highland County Commissioners, Shane Wilkin, Gary Heaton, and Tom Horst, in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Section 5108.07 (as amended by AM. Sub H.B. 95) does hereby make the following certifications in support of the Highland County Department of Job and Family Services (HCDJFS) Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) Plan:

1. The HCDJFS has a written statement of policies governing the PRC program for Highland County (i.e., PRC Plan). The initial Plan was ratified by the Board of Highland County Commissioners on 10/01/97, and has subsequently been amended. The PRC Plan specifies information pertaining to benefits and services that will be provided, the restrictions on the amount, duration and frequency of the benefits and services and the eligibility requirements for the benefits and services. The HCDJFS will continue to monitor and maintain the PRC Plan, administer the Plan according to ORC Section 5108 and update the Plan at least every two years.
2. The HCDJFS will provide the PRC Plan to the Highland County Family and Children First Council (designated as the county planning committee) for review prior to the Director's signature. The Council will be given opportunity to comment and make suggestions regarding the administration and scope of the PRC Plan.
3. The HCDJFS Director will sign and date the statement of policies and amendments to it.
4. Neither the statement of policies nor any amendments to it will have an effective date prior to the date of the HCDJFS Director's signature.
5. The HCDJFS will provide ODJFS with a written copy of the PRC Plan and any amendments no later than ten (10) calendar days after the statement or amendments effective date.

Approved by the Board of Highland County Commissioners:

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Shane Wilkin, President

Date

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Gary Heaton

Date

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Tom Horst

Date

Certification of opportunity to review Plan by Highland County Family and Children First Council:

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Julia Wise, Council Chair

Date

## **2009 PREVENTION, RETENTION, AND CONTINGENCY PLAN**

**INCOME GUIDELINES\***  
**as of 2/03/09**

<b>FAMILY SIZE</b>	<b>185 %GROSS MONTHLY INCOME</b>	<b>200 % GROSS MONTHLY INCOME</b>
1	\$1,670.00	\$1,805.00
2	\$2,247.00	\$2,429.00
3	\$2,823.00	\$3,052.00
4	\$3,400.00	\$3,675.00
5	\$3,976.00	\$4,299.00
6	\$4,553.00	\$4,922.00
7	\$5,130.00	\$5,545.00
8	\$5,706.00	\$6,169.00
9	\$6,283.00	\$6,792.00
10	\$6,859.00	\$7,415.00*

\* For each additional person add \$3,740

\*\*To be used for PRC eligibility determinations effective 10/01/09

# LIST OF SERVICES AND BENEFITS

SERVICE OR BENEFIT PREVENTION AND RETENTION	ASSISTANCE GROUP	INCOME STANDARD	CAP	OTHER REQUIREMENTS
<p><b>Transportation Expenses</b></p> <p>Car repairs</p> <p>Gas vouchers</p> <p>Car payments and lease payments</p> <p>Car insurance payments (the car insurance payment will be for no more than 3 months).</p> <p>Driver license reinstatement fee. <i>Requirements: No reinstatement will be paid if the offense was related to operating a vehicle under the influence of alcohol, drugs or a combination of both. No fines will be paid. Only ONE (1) payment made in a lifetime-NO EXCEPTIONS</i></p>	<p>Assistance groups with minor children</p> <p>Pregnant women</p> <p>Non-custodial parents</p>	<p>200% FPG</p>	<p>\$2,000.00</p>	<p>Applicant must have valid drivers license for all vehicle related expenses.</p> <p>Car must be titled to PRC AG.</p> <p>Applicants requesting payments for new insurance will need to sign insurance application with insurer before payment will be authorized.</p> <p>Repairs completed by a certified mechanic.</p>
SERVICE OR BENEFIT PREVENTION AND RETENTION	ASSISTANCE GROUP	INCOME STANDARD	CAP	OTHER REQUIREMENTS
<p><b>Education and Training</b></p> <p><b>GED testing fee. Will pay up to 4 testing sessions per person.</b></p>	<p>Assistance groups with minor children</p> <p>Pregnant women</p>	<p>200% FPG</p>	<p><b>\$300</b></p>	<p><b>Prior to approval of GED testing fee, check to see if any other funding sources available for this</b></p>

# LIST OF SERVICES AND BENEFITS

	Non-custodial parents			service.
<p><b>Job Related Expenses</b></p> <p>Tools or Safety Equipment.</p> <p>Clothing Expenses For interview, work clothing or basic needs.</p>	Same as above.	200% FPG	\$2,000.00	
<p><b>OWF EMPLOYMENT RELATED BONUS</b></p> <p>An eligible adult in an Ohio Works First (OWF) assistance group who gains employment while in receipt of OWF can be eligible for an Employment Retention Bonus of \$500.</p> <p>A PRC application must be filed within 3 calendar months of the OWF termination date. The applicant must meet the connection to work as defined in the Highland County PRC plan.</p> <p>If there are 2 eligible adults in an OWF assistance group and both meet all criteria, each can receive the Employment Retention Bonus.</p>	Adults in assistance groups who were in receipt of OWF.	Participants must have been in receipt of OWF cash assistance at most 3 months prior to application for bonus related employment	\$500 per adult who meet all criteria for Employment Related Bonus	File a PRC application within 3 months of the OWF termination date. The applicant must meet the connection to work as established in the Highland County PRC Plan and not currently in receipt of OWF.



# LIST OF SERVICES AND BENEFITS

CONTRACTED SERVICES	ASSISTANCE GROUP	INCOME STANDARD	TYPE OF APPLICATION & PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY	EXPLANATION
Child Welfare Services	<p>Assistance groups with minor children</p> <p>Pregnant women</p> <p>Non-custodial parents</p>	200% FPG	<p>Two page application with verification that child is on Medicaid, Food Stamps, or WIC. If not on one of the above, then verification that family is under the 200%FPG is required.</p> <p>Once application is approved, the period of eligibility is the remainder of the state fiscal year.</p>	<p>Any child welfare activity that relates to family stability with the exception of placement costs for residential, out of home, emergency shelter, substitute care services, foster care and out of home maintenance payments. Services available through other federal funding, such as Title IV E and Medicaid.</p> <p>Allowable Services:                      Emergency Housing                      Domestic Violence Services                      Home Health Aide Services                      Homemaker Services                      Home Based Services                      Parent Education Services                      Post Adoption Finalization Services                      Respite Care Services                      Special Services for Alcohol and Drug Abusers                      Transportation Services</p> <p>In all instances the safety plan must document that the services provided relate to the risk of staying dependent.</p>

# LIST OF SERVICES AND BENEFITS

CONTRACTED SERVICES	ASSISTANCE GROUP	INCOME STANDARD	TYPE OF APPLICATION & PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY	EXPLANATION
Turning Point Applied Learning Center	OWF Assistance Groups	OWF Income Guidelines	OWF assistance groups will be served. Groups remain eligible as long as eligible for OWF and meeting Self Sufficiency contract requirements.	Program designed to provide training and educational services while developing work skills.
Transportation	OWF Assistance Groups	OWF Income Guidelines	An application is not needed if a current OWF recipient and meeting self sufficiency contract requirements.	Transportation to and from work site and/or training, to and from child care services while in route to one of the above, as long as child care is within a reasonable distance. Transportation only provided when there are no alternatives.

# LIST OF SERVICES AND BENEFITS

CONTRACTED SERVICES	ASSISTANCE GROUP	INCOME STANDARD	TYPE OF APPLICATION & PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY	EXPLANATION
SSI Case Management	OWF Assistance Groups	OWF income guidelines	No application needed if current OWF recipient and meeting self sufficiency contract requirements. JFS staff will refer appropriate clients to this service.	Project is to assist participants in navigating the SSI application and appeal processes.
Southern Ohio Pregnancy Center	Students in grades 6 through 10 who attend 1 of the school districts in Highland County	This is a TANF project under purpose #3; therefore no income guidelines have been established.	No Application is required for this project	The purpose of this project is to provide an abstinence education program to school students in grades 6 through 10 attending 1 of the 5 school districts in Highland County