



GALLIA COUNTY

DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES

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OHIO WORKS FIRST TIME LIMITS and HARDSHIP CRITERIA

Ohio Works First (OWF) assistance groups who have reached the 36 month time limit for participation in the OWF program may be exempted from the time limit if a hardship exists. The family must meet one or more of the hardship criteria described in Section A. The policy in Section B addresses limits on the number of months an OWF assistance group may receive benefits due to a hardship. Section C addresses the treatment of an OWF transfer case. Section D explains the Gallia County Department of Job and Family Services (GCDJFS) procedure for informing OWF assistance groups about the hardship exemption criteria.

- A. 36 Month Time Limits: Section 5107.18 of the Ohio Revised Code limits Ohio Works First (OWF) to thirty-six (36) months for families that include an adult head-of-household, minor parent head-of-household, or spouse of such head-of-household.
- B. 20% Exemption Criteria: Section 5107.18 of the Ohio Revised Code allows the local county department of job and family services to exempt up to 20% of the average monthly number of families receiving OWF from the time limit if it is determined the family suffers from a “hardship”. The county department of job and family services defines hardship and determines if the OWF assistance group meets the criteria. The Ohio Works First adult assistance group member or the minor head-of-household subject to the 36-month time limit must meet one or more of these criteria in order for a hardship exemption to be considered.

SECTION A

The Ohio Works First adult assistance group member or the minor head-of-household subject to the 36-month time limit must meet one or more of these criteria, and provide verification of such, in order for a hardship exemption to be considered:

- 1. An assistance group whose parent or caretaker is enrolled and in good standing in a GCDJFS approved Full-Time education or training program that commenced at least six (6) months prior to the expiration of the original 36-months of OWF eligibility. This exemption criteria is allowable for no more than the estimated date of completion in the declared field of study at the time of hardship application (undecided declaration is not acceptable). Participants must maintain a 2.0 GPA per grading period.

Ohio Works First
Time Limits and Hardship Criteria
(Continued)

SECTION A (Continued)

2. An assistance group whose parent or caretaker must provide necessary Full-Time (24 hour) care for an immediate family member (child, spouse, parent, or sibling) residing in the home. The medical necessity of remaining in the home to care for the disabled individual must be verified by a physician on the GCDJFS approved form (refer to Attachment A for sample forms).
3. An assistance group whose parent or caretaker has a serious physical/mental illness or condition rendering them incapacitated for employment. The incapacity must be verified with a completed basic medical or completed mental functional capacity assessment by a GCJFS medical provider of its choice. An application for Social Security disability and SSI must have been made prior to ending of 36 or 60 month time limit expiration. A CMS determination will be pursued. Eligibility continues through CMS or Social Security determination and limited to the first appeal of whichever determination occurs first.
4. An assistance group whose adult care giver is medically verified to be six or more months pregnant and medically verified that the adult is unable to work, or caring for a child under six (6) weeks.
5. An assistance group member is 60 years of age or older.
6. An assistance group member has an active case with any Children's Services agency and is satisfactorily participating with the case plan. This includes an OWF assistance group whose assistance is continuing because of the 180 day reunification plan.
7. An assistance group member residing in a domestic violence shelter.
8. An assistance group may receive short term hardship if an immediate household family member (child, spouse, parent, or sibling) requires 24 hour care due to illness or injury verified by a physician's statement that will last at least 30 days but no more than 90 days. An assistance group may receive short term hardship during the waiting period for return of the basic medical or mental functional capacity assessment being pursued under Section A(3) not to exceed 3 months. **SHORT TERM HARDSHIP IS LIMITED TO ONE-TIME ONLY.**

Ohio Works First
Time Limits and Hardship Criteria
(Continued)

SECTION B

The Hardship Exemptions that are granted based upon Section A are subject to the same time periods and review process specified in this section. The OWF assistance group's hardship exemption will be reviewed a minimum of every three (3) months to determine if the assistance group continues to meet the exemption criteria. The OWF assistance group exemption may be reviewed by GCDJFS staff prior to the required three months as needed. **THE HARDSHIP EXEMPTION SHALL NOT EXCEED TWENTY-FOUR (24) MONTHS.** If the number of OWF assistance groups receiving benefits due to a hardship exemption exceeds the allowable 20% as defined in ORC 5107.18; the OWF assistance group with the highest number of months of OWF hardship benefits issued will be terminated.

SECTION C

Ohio Works First assistance groups that transfer to Gallia County from another county shall have their hardship exemption reviewed. Continued eligibility for benefits will be determined by the hardship criteria defined in Sections A and B. Exemptions status will no longer be determined by the previous county's criteria.

SECTION D

Each Ohio Works First assistance group receives ODJFS notices explaining the 36-month time limit regulation; how many months of OWF eligibility have been used and how many OWF eligibility months are remaining. In addition, as part of the interview process for cash assistance (i.e., initial and re-determination interviews), GCDJFS Income Maintenance Staff will discuss the time regulations and hardship criteria. They will also discuss the plan for self-sufficiency. The OWF assistance group can apply for continuing OWF benefits based on meeting the hardship criteria after their assistance has been terminated. The OWF assistance group will be responsible for contacting the agency to make an appointment to have their exemption criteria determined.

This GCDJFS policy is effective 05/01/2007

Dana L. Glassburn, GCDJFS Director

Attachment

