

3904 Administration of the Hardship Extension for Hamilton County

A county can declare up to 20% of its average caseload (during a prior Federal Fiscal Year) under “hardship” and continue their assistance indefinitely. Prior to closure, all Assistance Groups due for closure under the 36 month time limit will be reviewed for a possible hardship extension. Hamilton County, at its sole discretion, will extend benefits to no more than 20% of its average caseload and only under these specific circumstances:

Priority A

- ! 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 by a physician on a completed Basic Medical form (ODHS 7302), SSI must be pending and the individual must be participating in an Alternative or Developmental Assignment with WRC or Campus. HCDHS reserves the right to secure and rely upon a second opinion from a medical provider of its choice.
- ! An Assistance Group whose parent or caretaker must provide medically necessary full-time care for an immediate family member (child, spouse, parent or sibling) residing in their home. The medical necessity of remaining in the home to care for the disabled individual must be verified by a physician’s statement on a completed Basic Medical form (ODHS 7302). HCDHS reserves the right to secure and rely upon a second opinion from a medical provider of its choice.

Priority B

- ! An Assistance Group whose adult caretaker is medically verified to be six or more months pregnant or caring for a child under three months of age. Performance of a Developmental Activity is required.
- ! An Assistance Group whose parent or caretaker’s capacity to retain employment is being disrupted by domestic violence and is actively seeking help, as evidenced by residence in a spousal abuse shelter, a current protective court order, a police report or a sworn affidavit coupled with steps to resolve the situation (such as retention of an attorney). This extension is for a period not to exceed six months and the adult caretaker must be performing any self-sufficiency assignment they are given
- ! An Assistance Group whose parent or caretaker’s capacity to retain employment is being compromised by chemical dependency and is actively seeking help, as evidenced by current participation in an approved residential substance abuse treatment program. This extension is for a period not to exceed two months and the adult caretaker must be performing any self-sufficiency assignment they are given.
- ! An Assistance Group whose teen parent is enrolled and in good standing in High School and for up to twelve months after receipt of their HS Diploma/GED. Those who are not attending high school full-time must be assigned to and fulfilling their work activity requirement.

Priority C

- ! An Assistance Group whose parent or caretaker has so many dependent children that employment may not be economically feasible (four or more children aged thirteen and under). The parent or caretaker must be assigned to and fulfilling their work activity requirement.
- ! An Assistance Group whose only or youngest parent/caretaker is 55 or more years of age. The parent or caretaker must be assigned to and fulfilling their work activity requirement.
- ! An Assistance Group whose parent or caretaker is enrolled and in good standing in an education or training program that, by itself or in combination with other assignments, meets their work participation requirement. The participant must have completed at least 50% of the program. The maximum extension allowed is one year.

Priority D

- ! An Assistance Group whose parent or caretaker did not receive the benefit of participation in the county self-sufficiency plan as evidenced by the fact that, although the Assistance Group received OWF at some time during the period of October 1997 through March 1999, they were not assigned to a Work Activity by HCDHS. This extension applies to individuals who do not meet any of the extension criteria listed above and is for a period not to exceed six months. The adult caretaker must be performing any self-sufficiency assignment they are given.

If and when ODHS notifies HCDHS that exceeding the 20% tolerance is imminent, continued assistance will be given first to those with a "Priority A;" second to those with a "Priority B;" third to those with a "Priority C" and finally to those with "priority D." When not all Assistance Groups in any priority group can be given an extension due to the operation of the 20% limitation, priority within that group will be given to those who have received the lesser number of months of OWF assistance since October 1, 1997.