

Huron County Job and Family Services Children Services

Procedure	Section(s)	Effective Date	Approved by	Person Responsible
Requests for Hardship Exemptions	Family Support/Workforce Development	3/26/08	Family Support and Workforce Development Administrators	Family Support and Workforce Development Administrators

Purpose

State law permits the county Job and Family Services to exempt up to 20% of OWF assistance groups who have participated in the program for the allotted 36 month time frame. Every attempt shall be made to help the participant to overcome the employment/self-sufficiency barriers prior to the exhaustion of the 36 month time limit. The extensions of the time limit shall be based on sufficient documentation that a hardship exists. The purpose of this procedure is to outline the steps to take when a request for hardship exemption has been received.

Procedure Steps

Criteria for Hardship Exemption

The conditions listed below are the criteria that Huron County Department of Job and Family Services (DJFS) will use to determine hardship exemptions:

- Seriously ill individuals and seriously ill children age 18 or younger: Seriously ill is defined as a life threatening condition. Those exempt must fulfill all medical requirements as defined by a physician. The Huron County DJFS reserves the right to request a second opinion.
- Families involved with child protective services: A case plan is required and families must be actively working to resolve the identified problem(s). Ongoing communication between the eligibility worker, JOBS worker, and Children Services caseworker must occur.
- Domestic violence: The assistance group includes someone who is unable to work (temporarily or permanently) because the individual has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty based on the fact that the individual has been subjected to:
 - physical acts that result in injury;
 - sexual abuse of the individual or a depend child;
 - threats of or attempts of physical or sexual abuse;
 - mental abuse; and/or
 - neglect or deprivation of medical care.

Those exempt must provide documentation or self-attestation in the absence of other verification. Referrals for supportive services must be made and documented, but the

individual may decline. If the domestic violence involves a dependent child, a referral must be made to child protective services.

Processing Hardship Exemption Requests

All requests for hardship exemptions shall be submitted to the assigned Family Support eligibility worker. It shall be the eligibility worker's responsibility to notify his/her supervisor of the request and to convene a meeting of the Hardship Exemption Committee within three (3) business days from the date the request is received. The Hardship Exemption Committee shall consist of the assigned Family Support eligibility worker, the assigned Workforce Development JOBS worker, Family Support supervisor, Workforce Development supervisor, and any other appropriate agency staff member.

The committee shall meet and review the request and determine if the criteria for hardship exemption have been met. Note:

- No exemption from the OWF time limits can be granted more than 30 days prior to the expiration of the initial 36 month eligibility period.
- Hardship shall not be considered if there has been a self-sufficiency contract failure in the previous twelve (12) months.

If criteria are met:

- the committee shall approve the exemption;
- the assigned eligibility worker shall process the benefits; and
- the assigned JOBS worker shall update the self-sufficiency contract.

If criteria are not met:

- the committee shall deny the exemption;
- the Family Support administrator shall, prior to the processing of the denial, review the request; and
- the assigned eligibility worker shall process the request denying benefits.

Review

Participants who have been granted an exemption shall be subject to review no less than once every six (6) months. During the exemption, the participant shall continue to work with their assigned JOBS worker in order to prepare for self-sufficiency. The assigned JOBS worker will be responsible for monitoring the review date. The assigned JOBS worker shall request all supporting documentation from the participant prior to the review date and, when received, shall request a review by the Hardship Exemption Committee. Should the participant not provide the required supporting documentation, the committee shall proceed to meet and deny the hardship exemption accordingly.

Documentation

All decisions by the committee regarding hardship exemptions shall be documented on the Hardship/Good Cause Exemption Form. The supervisors shall ensure that a copy of each

participant's form is provided to their respective administrator.

Additional

It shall be the responsibility of the Family Support and Workforce Development administrators to ensure that no more than 20% of OWF assistance groups are approved for hardship exemption. If it becomes apparent that exceeding the maximum allowable percentage may be imminent, the administrators shall review each hardship extension to determine how to proceed to ensure compliance.

Associated Forms

Hardship/Good Cause Exemption Review Form - Compass

REVISION DATE:	2/1/2012
NEXT REVIEW DUE:	2/1/2013