

# **Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services**

## **Hardship Criteria**

**July 27, 2000**

## Hardship Criteria

Revised 7/27/00

The Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services (MCDJFS), in accordance with state law, is permitted to exempt 20% of its Ohio Works First (OWF) assistance groups that include an adult caretaker from the thirty-six (36) month time limit. The exemption from the 36 month time limit is based upon the County's established "Hardship Criteria." MCDJFS, in cooperation with community stakeholders, has developed the County's Hardship Criteria listed below in priority order.

The assistance group member(s) must not have failed without good cause to participate in assigned activities and must not have been sanctioned within the previous six (6) months.

1. The individual is providing care for a disabled family member, and other acceptable arrangements for the disabled member's care are not available, as determined by consultation with the Abilities Assessment program. Status is reviewed every six (6) months.
2. The individual has not been able to participate in an assigned work activity due to a physical or mental incapacity that was verified by a licensed physician. Referral to Disability Advocacy Program is mandatory. Status is reviewed every six (6) months.
3. The individual is actively pursuing SSI eligibility and is working with the Disability Advocacy Program (DAP) Unit as well as participating in the Abilities Assessment Work Activity. Status is reviewed every six (6) months. (Review may be more frequent with DAP intervention.)
4. The individual is a caretaker who is more than sixty (60) years of age.
5. The individual is a single custodial parent in the third trimester of her pregnancy or has a child less than three (3) months of age. Review required the month the child reaches 3 months of age.
6. The individual is a victim of domestic violence. Requires referral to community agencies providing service to victims of domestic violence and active case management follow-up. The individual will be required to participate in an assessment and rehabilitation evaluation and must apply and accept any supportive services leading to self-sufficiency. Status is reviewed every six (6) months.
7. The individual is a teen parent head of household and has not received twenty-four (24) months of OWF cash assistance following the teen's receipt of a high school Diploma or equivalent. Maximum exemption is twenty-four (24) months; status is reviewed every six (6) months.
8. The individual has significant barriers to employment due to homelessness. The individual must be actively cooperating with case management services to secure

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- permanent housing. Maximum exemption period is six (6) months with mandatory thirty (30) day status reviews.
9. The individual is a single custodial parent caring for a child who is less than six (6) years old and appropriate child care has not been available. Exemption will be granted only after all resources have been explored (including those of the Employment Specialist, Case Manager, and Purchase Services Unit). Status is reviewed every three (3) months.
  10. The individual is actively participating in a certified residential treatment facility for alcohol and substance abuse. Periodic attendance and progress reports will be required. Once it has been determined that the individual has successfully completed the treatment program, eligibility for OWF cash assistance shall not exceed six (6) months.
  11. The individual has significant barriers to employment as a result of previous felony convictions. The individual must be actively working with the Case Manager to overcome these barriers. Maximum exemption period is twelve (12) months with status reviewed every three (3) months.
  12. The individual is not employed and has not been given an opportunity to participate in a work activity for at least twelve (12) months (a work assignment should be made once the individual is identified). Status is reviewed every six (6) months.
  13. The individual is enrolled in an education or training program directly related to employment which will not be completed by the expiration of the thirty-six (36) month time limit (not to exceed twelve (12) months). Status is reviewed every six (6) months.
  14. The individual has significant barriers to employment such as local labor surplus, high employment, underemployment, and/or lack of available support and/or transportation services. The individual must actively seek employment opportunities. Status is reviewed every three (3) months.

Supervisory approval is needed to grant a hardship exemption. The Supervisor will dictate in Running Record Comments the Hardship Criteria met for the assistance group.

The elements of the Hardship Criteria must be verified in accordance with standards of 5101:1-2-20.

The priority for exemptions will be reviewed at any point in time when the number of hardship exemptions approaches the number of slots available for exemption. At that time, Hardship Exemptions will be rescinded in order of priority to ensure that total exemptions remain below the 20% cap.