

Ross County Department of Job & Family Services
OWF Extended Benefits Hardship Criteria
08/28/00

Ross County Department of Job & Family Services (RCDJFS) herein defines the procedures and criteria for OWF recipients to apply for an extension to the 36 month time limit for receipt of benefits. The RCDJFS reserves the right to re-review exemptions granted. Such review will occur every 90-180 days based upon the recommendation of the review committee. Continuation of exemption for extended benefits is subject to the availability of exemption slots to RCDJFS and upon the participant in OWF complying with the recommendations of the review committee.

Procedure

A review committee will determine if the OWF assistance group meets the hardship criteria. One committee member will be permanent (Workforce Development Supervisor) and one will be the Employment Services Counselor assigned to the family. The IM Administrator will convene and preside over the exemption review committee. OWF participants may bring advocates with them i.e., lawyer, friend, relative or staff from other community providers, who may assist them in presenting their circumstances. County decision-making in hardship criteria and exemptions is subject to the State Hearing process through the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services.

Areas of First Consideration:

- Hardship will not be considered if there has been a self-sufficiency contract failure in the previous 12 months.*
- If the OWF participant's household income exceeds the OWF benefit amount, hardship will only be considered if shelter and basic utilities cannot be met with the other sources of income.

Special consideration will be given to:

- The teen parent who has received less than 18 months of OWF cash assistance, after the teen parent's receipt of a high school diploma or GED.
- The caretaker (of minor children) who is over 60 years of age.

*At the discretion of the committee, previous sanctions for non-compliance may be reviewed and disregarded if good cause would have been granted (per Ross County Self-Sufficiency Contract) if the agency had known the circumstances at the time the sanction was imposed.

Score the weight of the obstacle listed below; i.e. the extent to which each item is an employment barrier to the family.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Moderate			Significant				Severe			
Barriers easily worked through			Restrictions from obstacle allow 50% goal attainment				Likely to result in Health or Safety problems			
a) On-going case with Children's Services										_____
b) Care* is unavailable for a dependent (any age) immediate family member										_____
c) Legal problems										_____
d) Special Need Child										_____
e) Impairment (physical, mental, emotional) of self or immediate family										_____
f) Domestic Violence										_____
g) Transportation										_____
Total										_____

The 2 committee members will score their sheets and reach a consensus for each item (a-g). If the total exceeds 10, hardship may be granted.

Hardship will be granted if the individual agrees to a time-limited plan of barrier reduction. The length of the extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis using the barrier reduction plan as a guideline for review. Common length of review will be 6 months.

*as determined by Ross County Department of Job & Family Services