

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

### **Ohio Works First (OWF) Hardship Criteria (4-1-03) Amended**

In compliance with Section 5107.18 (E) of the Ohio Revised Code, the Summit County Department of Job & Family Services is responsible for establishing hardship criteria for those assistance groups (AG) within the Ohio Works First program who will exhaust their 36-months of eligibility for cash assistance. The Department will advise the applicants at least forty-five (45) days prior to the anticipated expiration of their cash assistance that they may apply for a hardship and outline what the hardship criteria is for Summit County.

To be considered for a hardship exemption severe deprivation must exist. The AG must have complied fully with the terms and conditions of their Self-Sufficiency Contract. The hardship criteria established by the Department does not represent any guarantees of future assistance, continued assistance or future right to review once the hardship exemption is lost.

Each hardship exemption will be granted up to a maximum of six (6) months. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis. Hardship exemption requires continued participation in an OWF work activity.

The hardship application will be processed within thirty (30) days from the date the application is received.

The following criteria will be utilized in the determination of a hardship exemption for each required individual in the assistance group.

- Head of household is a victim of domestic violence within the last six (6) months. Verification is required that the individual is unable to work, and unable to participate in education, training or other work activities, and is currently receiving counseling/treatment from a social service agency.
- Individual is a single custodial parent who is pregnant. Verification is required by a county approved physician that the individual is unable to work **and** unable to participate in education, training, or other work activities.
- Each required individual is currently enrolled and satisfactorily participating in an approved education or training program, with an anticipated graduation date within six (6) months from the expiration of the thirty-six (36) month time limit.
- Each required individual is providing care for a disabled household member, and is unable to participate in education, training, or other work activities due to the unavailability of other arrangements for the disabled member's care. Documentation must be provided from a county approved physician that indicates both the length of time that such care is needed, and that only the individual requesting the hardship is able to provide care.
- Individual is homeless and has not been given the opportunity to participate in a work activity within the last twelve (12) months of receiving OWF cash assistance.
- Each required individual is not employable **and** is not able to participate in education, training, or other work activities, for up to six (6) months, due to a physical or mental incapacity that is verified by a county approved physician.
- Each required individual is not employable **and** is not able to participate in education, training, or other work activities due to a physical or mental incapacity that is verified by a county approved physician. If the incapacity is expected to last more than twelve (12) months, the individual must have an active claim (SSI/SSD) with the Social Security Administration.