

WYANDOT COUNTY JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES OWF TIME LIMITS AND HARDSHIP CRITERIA

OWF HARDSHIP DETERMINATIONS

Section 5107.18 of the revised code limits participation in Ohio Works First (OWF) to 36 months. This section also provides that Wyandot County may exempt not more than 20% of the average monthly number of OWF participants from the time limit due to hardship. This determination of hardship will be made by Wyandot County Job and Family Services.

The assistance group members must not have failed without good cause to participate as assigned, and must not have been sanctioned within the previous six months.

OWF State and Federal Laws Related to Time Limits

Am.Sub.h.b. 408 adopted time-limited assistance that is more limited than the maximums allowed by federal law. Section 5107.18 of the Revised Code makes an assistance group ineligible for OWF if an assistance group includes an adult who has participated in OWF for 36 months, regardless of whether those months were consecutive. There may be some months that are excluded from the counting of the 36 months. Those exceptions are set forth in divisions (c) and (d) of section 5107.18 of the Revised Code and in rule 5101:1-23-01 of the Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C.)

In addition to the Ohio 3-year clock ticking, there is also a federal 5-year clock ticking. Under federal law, states are prohibited from using federal TANF funds to provide assistance to a family that includes an adult who has received assistance for more than five years. As in state law, there are exceptions based on hardship or if the family includes an individual who has been battered or subject to extreme cruelty. The number of families receiving one of these exemptions may not exceed 20% of the state's average caseload. The federal provisions are found at 45 C.F.R. section 264.1. A discussion of this regulation is found in the preamble to the federal regulations at pages 17845 to 17858 of the April 12, 1999 Federal Register, Vol. 64, No. 69.

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Demographic Criteria

The individual is providing care for a disabled family member, and other acceptable arrangements for the disabled member's care are not available.

The individual is a single custodial parent with a child less than three (3) months of age (an assignment must be made shortly after the child turns three months old, and the exemption cannot become permanent).

Physical, Social, or Psychological Criteria

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. A second opinion will be obtained.

The individual has significant barriers to employment due to homelessness. The individual must be actively working with the agency to overcome these barriers..

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.

Employment Related Criteria

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.).

The individual has significant barriers to employment such as local labor surplus, high unemployment, underemployment and/or lack of available support and/or transportation services.