



Family Assistance Letter # 94
OFFICE OF FAMILIES AND CHILDREN
May 25, 2010

TO: Directors, County Departments of Job and Family Services

FROM: Trudie J. Bormann, Assistant Deputy Director
Family Assistance, Office of Families and Children

**SUBJECT: Ohio Works First and Refugee Cash Assistance One-Time \$100
Supplemental Cash Payment**

The Office of Families and Children is pleased to announce that Ohio has received approval for additional funds from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Contingency Fund to allow the state to issue a one time \$100 cost of living supplemental payment to Ohio Works First (OWF) families.

Background

The TANF Emergency Contingency Fund was created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, otherwise known as the "stimulus bill." The TANF Emergency Contingency Fund is available to states for increases in three categories of TANF spending: cash assistance, nonrecurring short term benefits, and subsidized employment. Ohio has been able to take advantage of the fund because the state has experienced increases in subsidized employment and cash assistance expenditures. Included in allowable expenditures for the TANF Emergency Contingency Fund cash assistance category are supplemental or short term grant increases.

The Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) program provides eight months of cash assistance to refugees who are not eligible for other state and federal programs, including TANF. Ohio's RCA program is operated consistent with the rules pertaining to the OWF program. As a result, and pursuant to 45 CFR 400.66, the state will be providing the same supplemental payment to RCA recipients as OWF families. RCA is 100% federally funded through the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Why issue a one-time supplemental payment?

In calendar year 2010, OWF families did not receive the annual cost of living increase in benefits that is required under state law because the increase is tied to the cost of living increase determined by the Social Security Administration for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and because there was no cost of living adjustment for SSI for 2010, there was no corresponding increase to OWF payments. The lack of a cost-of-living adjustment comes at a time of greatest need for an increasing number of families struggling to make ends meet due to the poor

30 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
jfs.ohio.gov

economy. The TANF Emergency Contingency Fund allows the state to provide additional cash benefits to the most vulnerable Ohioans. This supplemental payment will provide an immediate help to the neediest Ohio families and an immediate stimulus to the economy.

Who will receive the one-time \$100 payment?

Assistance groups receiving an OWF or RCA benefit in the month of May 2010 (both initial prorations or recurring payments) will receive the one-time supplemental cash payment in June 2010. In the following circumstances, the OWF or RCA assistance group will not receive the one-time supplemental payment:

- The assistance groups do not receive a recurring benefit because they are eligible for less than the minimum payment of \$10 or the grant has been reduced to \$0 to recoup an overpayment;
- The assistance groups have a 'failed but issued' (FBI) status for the May 2010 recurring benefit. Cases will have an 'RE' in the TY field with reason code '102' as well as an 'RB' in the TY field with reason code '104' with a \$0 amount on IQCH.

How will this one-time supplemental payment affect other benefits?

The supplemental payment is considered a non-recurring lump sum for Medicaid, Child Care, cash and food assistance. Since the supplemental payment is considered a non-recurring lump sum it is not considered 'countable income' and will have no impact for any of the above program benefits.

The one-time supplemental payment will also not impact the number of hours for which a work-eligible recipient is required to participate for OWF or Food Assistance Employment and Training.

How will this payment be issued?

The payment will be issued to eligible OWF and RCA assistance groups by CRIS-E in the same way the assistance group receives the monthly recurring cash assistance benefits, either through direct deposit or on the EPPICard™.

County agencies will receive an exception report listing which assistance groups did not receive the supplemental payment. The attached ad hoc notice will also be sent to all assistance groups that will be receiving the supplemental payment.

For further information about the one-time supplemental cash payment, please contact Program Policy Services either by email at TANF-FSTA or by calling 1-866-886-3537 (option 6).

c: Douglas E. Lumpkin, Director
Anthony Trotman, Chief of Staff
Michael McCreight, Deputy Chief of Staff

Families and Children staff
Joel Potts, OJFSDA
ODJFS Deputy Directors