



Department of
Job and Family Services

Ted Strickland, Governor

Helen E. Jones-Kelley, Director

OFFICE OF FAMILY STABILITY LETTER #79

September 16, 2008

TO: Directors, County Departments of Job and Family Services

FROM: Paul Fraunholtz, Deputy Director
Office of Family Stability

SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 2008 STATEWIDE HIGH WINDS

The purpose of this letter is to describe the funding available for families and certain elderly or disabled individuals affected by the high winds which impacted the state on September 14, 2008. Due to these weather conditions, on September 15, 2008, the Governor declared a state of emergency for all 88 counties.

Due to the extent of the declaration and the limited funding available, the initial amount for each county has been reduced from prior disaster programs. Each county will be allocated **\$55,000 in TANF funds** to provide disaster assistance to eligible families and **\$11,000 in non-TANF funds** to serve eligible elderly or disabled individuals impacted by this weather. We will monitor utilization closely and possibly adjust amounts based on identified need.

It is extremely important for counties to submit weekly reports of families and elderly or disabled served under these programs. We will be monitoring use of TANF and non-TANF funds very closely. The county reporting requirements are included later in this letter.

TANF-PRC Funds for families

Counties can provide up to \$1500 for each family; however, due to the extremely limited funds, counties should determine if it is more appropriate to budget a lower amount in order to serve more families. Counties may supplement the benefit with funds from their local TANF allocation, as long as the county PRC plan reflects the program accurately.

Disaster-related PRC assistance procedures are discussed in the Disaster Plan Resource Guide that was distributed in January 2004 (see pages 5-6). The Guide can be accessed at <http://innerweb.odjfs.state.oh.us/Ofam/pdf/DisasterPlan.pdf>. It may be necessary to amend/revise the PRC plan to access these additional funds if the current plan does not reflect the inclusion of disaster assistance procedures. In order to qualify for PRC services, there are certain conditions

that must be met, including evidence of economic need. It is recommended that counties adopt 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). There may be instances where a standard of need that exceeds 200% of the FPL might be appropriate, but such a determination should be accompanied by a logical explanation or justification explaining why the selected standard of need is appropriate and reasonable in those circumstances.

Payments for families under the 2008 Statewide High Winds program should be entered into CRIS-E as hard services.

Non-TANF funds for elderly and disabled individuals

A one-time cash payment of up to \$750 may be provided to elderly or disabled individuals without a minor child who have been adversely affected by the emergency condition. Due to the extremely limited funds, counties should determine if it is more appropriate to budget a lower amount in order to serve more elderly or disabled individuals.

Only one payment may be made per dwelling. If a disaster-related PRC payment has been made on behalf of a resident of the same dwelling, there is no eligibility for non-TANF assistance under the 2008 Statewide High Winds program.

As described on page 7 of the Disaster Plan Resource Guide, in order to qualify for a payment under the 2008 Statewide High Winds program, the following conditions must be met:

- (1) The individual must be age 55 or over and without minor child(ren), or;
- (2) The individual must be without minor child(ren) and in receipt of disability benefit payments such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability, VA Disability, PERS Disability, Railroad Retirement Disability, Black Lung Benefits, etc., and;
- (3) The individual must be a resident of one of the designated counties, and;
- (4) The individual must have been adversely affected by the emergency condition, and;
- (5) The individual must be in need as defined by the county. For purposes of this provision, need is determined by comparing the household's total available income to the need standard/poverty level set by the county. It is recommended that counties adopt 200% of the federal poverty level as the need standard/poverty level. There may be instances where a standard of need that exceeds 200% of the FPL might be appropriate, but such a determination should be accompanied by a logical explanation or justification explaining why the selected standard of need is appropriate and reasonable in those circumstances.

Payments for disabled or elderly individuals, under the 2008 Statewide High Winds program should not be entered into CRIS-E or the PRC-WRT tracking system but will be tracked weekly as addressed later in this letter.

The 2008 Statewide High Winds program benefits for elderly or disabled individuals are not subject to state hearing regulations; however, the CDJFS will need to provide written notification on application decisions as well as notification to applicants of the right to a county conference. Sample approval and denial notices are attached and may be reproduced on county letterhead.

In order to receive funds, each county must submit a plan outlining the following criteria:

- (1) Categories or types of assistance that will be provided;
- (2) The county's application process; and
- (3) The county's need standard/poverty level.

A sample plan is found in the Appendix section of the Disaster Plan Resource Guide.

The plan should be submitted to:

Karen Ernes, Chief
Cash Assistance Policy Section
Fax number: 614/466-1767
Phone number: 614/644-1122
E-mail: karen.ernes@jfs.ohio.gov

General Requirements

Duration: The program will begin September 16, 2008 and run through close of business on October 17, 2008 contingent upon funding.

Reporting and Tracking: In order to monitor expenditures, we are requiring that each county track the number of individuals and families served under the 2008 Statewide High Winds program and e-mail the numbers to Karen Ernes at karen.ernes@jfs.ohio.gov by noon each Monday until all applications have been processed. Each weekly report should include the number of individuals who were approved for non-TANF funds and the number of families who were approved for TANF-PRC funds during the prior week. There is no required tracking form to complete; the CDJFS just needs to e-mail the number of applications approved for the prior week.

Funding and fiscal coding: each county must also upload a revised Quarterly Budget Forecast to the County Finance Section estimating these additional expenditures and then request the funds on their weekly draw. The CDJFS must use the codes contained in the table below to

report expenditures. These codes may only be used during a Governor-declared state of emergency.

Financial Reporting Form	Program Code	Title	Definition
JFS 02827	159-515003	ADA- Adult Disaster Assistance	Funds distributed as part of the time-limited ADA emergency disaster relief effort.
JFS 02827	158-515003	TANF - Disaster Related Emergency Assistance	Funds distributed as part of the time-limited disaster relief effort.

Attachments

PF: ks

c: Helen Jones-Kelley, Director
Fred Williams, Assistant Director
Mary Ann Drewry, Assistant Director
Sherry Keys-Hebron, Assistant Director
ODJFS Deputy Directors
Tammy Brown, Chief, Bureau of County Finance

Family Stability Staff
Loretta Adams, OJFSDA
Larry Long, CCAO
Kim Newsome, OCDA
Crystal Allen, PCSAO

NOTICE OF APPROVAL OF YOUR APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE

Name	Mailing Date
Street Address	
City, State, and Zip Code	

This notice is to tell you that your application for September 2008 Statewide High Winds assistance dated _____, has been approved in the amount of \$_____.

Additional information:

If you do not understand this notice or you want to talk to your caseworker about it, you may call:

Caseworker	Area	Telephone Number
-------------------	-------------	-------------------------

If you do not agree with this action, you can ask for a county conference within 15 days of the mailing date of this notice. If you want a county conference contact:

NOTICE OF DENIAL OF YOUR APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE

Name	Mailing Date
Street Address	
City, State, and Zip Code	

This notice is to tell you that your application for September 2008 Statewide High Winds assistance dated _____, has been denied because:

If you do not understand this action or you want to talk to your caseworker about it, you may call:

Caseworker	Area	Telephone Number
-------------------	-------------	-------------------------

If you do not agree with this action, you can ask for a county conference within 15 days of the mailing date of this notice. If you want a county conference contact: