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OFFICE OF FAMILY STABILITY LETTER #23

December 29, 2004

TO: Directors, County Departments of Job and Family Services

FROM: Jeanne Carroll, Deputy Director
Office of Family Stability

SUBJECT: DECEMBER 2004 WINTER ICE STORM

The purpose of this letter is to describe the funding available for families and certain individuals affected by the recent winter ice storm throughout Ohio. Due to these weather conditions, the Governor has declared a state of emergency for twenty counties in Ohio. These counties are being granted additional funding for the December 2004 Winter Ice Storm program. The counties affected by this letter are Auglaize, Butler, Champaign, Clark, Darke, Delaware, Franklin, Greene, Hamilton, Hardin, Holmes, Licking, Logan, Madison, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, Shelby, Warren and Union. Other counties may be added at a later date, if or when declared by the Governor to be in a state of emergency.

PRC Funds for families:

Disaster-related PRC assistance procedures are discussed in the Disaster Plan Resource Guide that was distributed in January 2004 (see pages 5-6). As stated on page 5 of the Disaster Plan Resource Guide, PRC services/benefits up to \$1500 per family dwelling per declared disaster are reimbursed by ODJFS. Counties can elect to provide a higher benefit level with amounts above the state reimbursement coming from the county's PRC program.

It may be necessary for counties to amend/revise their PRC plans 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. Amended PRC plans should be submitted to: Program-Policy@odjfs.state.oh.us. A copy of the plan does not need to be submitted to ODJFS if there are no changes being made to the plan to address this disaster.

In addition to the restrictions discussed in the Disaster Plan Resource Guide, due to the widespread damage in these counties, it is necessary to monitor the usage of TANF funds. Each county will initially receive \$200,000 with an approved PRC plan. Request for amounts above \$200,000 must be approved by the Office of Family Stability.

Payments for families under the December 2004 Winter Ice Storm program should be entered into CRIS-E as hard services.

Non - TANF funds for elderly and disabled individuals:

Non-TANF funds are also available to provide a payment of up to \$750 to elderly and disabled individuals without a minor child who have been adversely affected by the emergency condition. 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 assistance under the December 2004 Winter Ice Storm program.

As described on page 7 of the Disaster Plan Resource Guide, in order to qualify for a payment under the December 2004 Winter Ice Storm program, the following conditions must be met:

- (1) The individual must be age 55 or over and childless, or;
- (2) The individual must be childless 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.

Payments for disabled and elderly individuals, under the December 2004 Winter Ice Storm program should not be entered into CRIS-E or the PRC-WRT tracking system. However, in order to estimate expenditures for future declared disasters involving this population, we are asking that affected counties track the number of individuals served under the December 2004 Winter Ice Storm program and e-mail the numbers to Karen Ernes at ernes@odjfs.state.oh.us by the close of business on Friday of each week until the program ends.

The December 2004 Winter Ice Storm program benefits for elderly and 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.

For non-TANF funds, each county will be authorized up to \$25,000. No additional funding above this amount will be available for this specific disaster episode. In order to receive the non-TANF funds, each affected county must submit a plan outlining the following criteria:

- \$ Categories or types of assistance that will be provided,
- \$ The county's application process,
- \$ 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:

Office of Family Stability
Karen Ernes, Section Chief
Cash Assistance Policy Section
Fax number: 614/466-1767
Phone number: 614/466-9184
E-mail: ernes@odjfs.state.oh.us

General Requirements:

Duration of the December 2004 Winter Ice Storm Program: The program will begin on **Wednesday December 29, 2004** and run through close of business on **Friday January 28, 2005** contingent upon funding.

Funding and fiscal coding: The affected counties must also submit a revised Cash Forecast diskette to the County Finance Section estimating these additional expenditures in order to receive a supplemental draw to the PA-Fund (APM 7353). 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	159-50	ADA- Adult Disaster Assistance	Funds distributed as part of the time-limited ADA emergency disaster relief effort.
JFS 02827	158	TANF - Disaster Related Emergency Assistance	Funds distributed as part of the time-limited disaster relief effort.

Attachments

JC: dr

c: Barbara Riley
Christopher Carlson
China Widener
Carmen Stewart
Suzi Ballinger
Neva Terry
Quentin Potter
Jane Frye
Larry Long, CCAO

Kathryn Nowack
Bruce Madson
Joseph Pilat
Jill Reardon
Bob Mullinax
Karen Ernes
Stan Sells
Loretta Adams, OJFSDA
Kim Newsome, OCDA

Paul Fraunholz
John Trott
Fayette Moore
Jon Allen
Patrick Power
Barbara Edwards
Beth Kowalczyk
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 the December 2004 Winter Ice Storm 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
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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 the December 2004 Winter Ice Storm 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
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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: