

Clermont County Department of Job and Family Services
PRC Plan
Effective 09/01/11

The Clermont County Dept. of Job and Family Services (CCDJFS) has designed this Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) Plan to provide benefits and services to low income families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives and to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage. These benefits include non-recurrent short-term, crisis-oriented benefits, and ongoing services that are directly related to the four purposes of the TANF program (reference 45 CFR 260.20) which do not meet the federal definition of assistance. Non-recurrent, short-term assistance addresses discrete crisis situations which do not provide for needs extending beyond four months. These non-recurrent benefits and services may encompass more than one payment a year, as long as the payment provides short-term relief and addresses a discrete crisis situation rather than meeting ongoing or recurrent needs. These benefits and services are consistent with the federal definition of non-assistance as found in 45 CFR 260.31(b). The definition of non-assistance includes, but is not limited to:

1. Non-recurrent, short-term benefits that:
 - a. Are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need;
 - b. Are not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs; and
 - c. Will not extend beyond four months;
2. Work subsidies (i.e., payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employer wages, benefits, supervision, and training);
3. Supportive services such as child care and transportation provided to families who are employed;
4. Contributions to, and distributions from, Individual Development Accounts (IDA);
5. Services such as counseling, case management, peer support, child care information and referral, transitional services, job retention, job advancement, and other employment-related services that do not provide basic income support.

Voter Registration

In accordance with section 329.051 of the ORC, the CCDJFS makes available a voter registration application to persons applying for or participating in the PRC program. This is also applicable to those entities with whom the county contracts. Contracted agencies can provide the completed voter registration forms to the CCDFJS.

Assistance Group Composition

Based on title IV-A federal regulations and state law, an eligible family assistance group must, at a minimum, consist of:

- A minor child who resides with a parent, caretaker relative, legal guardian or custodian, or
- A pregnant individual with no other children, month of pregnancy is not a factor, or

A child may be temporarily absent from the home in accordance with the timeframes established in rule 5101:1-3-04 of the Ohio Administrative Code and still qualify for PRC. During the temporary period, the child is considered to be residing with the parent or caretaker relative. An eligible family may also consist of a minor child residing with a parent, caretaker relative, legal guardian or legal custodian and other members of the household (who may or may not be related to the minor child) who may significantly enhance the family's ability to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Eligibility

In order to receive PRC benefits and services a member of the AG must be a citizen of the United States or a qualified alien as defined in Section 5506(d) of Public Law 105-33 (the Balanced Budget Act of 1997) and a resident of the county where the application is filed or the service provided.

Eligibility for PRC is dependent upon the AGs demonstration and verification of need for financial assistance and/or support services. In order for eligibility to be determined, the income of the AG must be compared to the economic need standard established for the benefits and services requested. The economic need standards are based upon federal poverty guideline measures which shall be updated annually, generally in March, when the guidelines are released. In determining eligibility for PRC for an AG to receive benefits or services, the AG's income must be equal to or less than the appropriate economic need standard. See Scope of Coverage Chart.

In certain situations where **all** members of a family assistance group are in receipt of OWF, Food Assistance, subsidized child care assistance, or Medicaid, the family assistance group will be determined to have met the PRC economic need standard requirements of this plan. The associated PRC application must note the qualifying assistance program connection. This categorical determination is intended to streamline administrative processes and reduce the need for duplicate eligibility determinations and collection of verifications, unless there has been a change in the household's circumstances that would potentially affect eligibility for the public assistance benefits that connected the assistance group to categorical financial eligibility for PRC.

Excluded Income

The following types of income are excluded as income and resources (per OAC 5101:1-24-20) in determining financial eligibility for PRC benefits and services:

(A) All income that is federally excluded in the determination of eligibility for federal needs-based programs. Federally excluded income includes the income sources identified in paragraphs (B) and (C) of this rule.

(B) Drug discounts and transitional assistance received under the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act, at Section 1860D-31(g)(6) of the Social Security Act

(12/08/2003). The language in Section 1860D-31(g)(6) of the Social Security Act, states that the availability of negotiated prices or transitional assistance under this section shall not be treated as benefits or otherwise taken into account in determining an individual's eligibility for, or the amount of benefits under any other federal program.

(C) Monetary allowances paid under Section 401 of the Veteran's Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2000, effective December 1, 2000. Payments authorized and made by the Veteran's Administration (VA) to provide certain benefits, including a monthly monetary allowance for children with covered birth defects who are the natural children of women veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam from February 28, 1961 through May 7, 1975.

Countable Income

The total gross income, both earned and unearned of all members of the PRC AG shall be counted except for gross earnings of a minor child as defined in Section 5101:1-23-20(c)(i) of the Administrative Code. This includes all income which is normally exempt or disregarded when determining eligibility for Ohio Works First (OWF) or Disability Assistance (DA). All income which is received or expected to be received during the thirty (30) day budget period is considered when determining financial need. The 30-day budget period begins 30 days projected from the date of the PRC application unless this period of time does not accurately reflect expected income. In this situation, income received 30 days prior to the date of application may be utilized. For cases in which the income verification cannot be accurately obtained, the implementation of practices that are reasonable and prudent will occur when determining countable income. A signed ODHS 7341, Applicant/Recipient Authorization for Release of Information, form should be obtained from the applicant for an inquiry. Once the release is received, verification which is obtained by phone must be clearly documented in the PRC AG record regarding the name and position of the supplier of the information, the date the verification was obtained, the amount of the verified income and the name of the individual who obtained the verification. More stringent verification is required when PRC benefits and services involve a direct monetary gain by the applicant.

Unearned Income

The following are examples of unearned income which must be counted. These are examples only and are not meant to be considered an all inclusive list:

- Retirement, Survivors, Disability Insurance Benefits
- Alimony and Child Support
- Veteran Administration Benefits
- Worker's Compensation Benefits
- Lump-sum payments (including tax refunds)
- Unemployment Benefits
- Pension and Retirement Benefits
- Strike Benefits
- Investment Income
- Rental Income
- OWF, DA or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments

Earned Income

Earned income is income in which the AG member must perform some type of labor or service for pay. The following are examples of earned income. This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list:

- Earnings from work as an employee
- Earnings from self-employment
- Strike benefits if striker is required to perform services for receipt
- Training allowances

The following earned income deductions are to be subtracted from the total gross income before comparing to the appropriate need standard for PRC:

- Child Care expenses
- Child support payments

Resources

Available liquid resources in excess of \$500.00 must be utilized to meet the emergent need prior to, or in combination with, the issuance of PRC funds.

Residence

PRC benefits and services are available to residents of the county in which they reside (i.e. Clermont County). Residence is established by living in the county voluntarily with the intent to remain permanently or for an indefinite period. Residence is also established by an applicant who is not receiving assistance from another county and entered the county with a job commitment or seeking employment, whether or not currently employed.

Ineligible Family AGS

Federal and State law must be adhered to when providing PRC benefits and services. Listed below are federal and state prohibitions based upon 42 U.S.C.608, Section 431 of PRWORA (as amended by the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 and the Balanced Budget Act of 1997), and the Ohio Revised Code:

No benefits or services for families without a minor child (minor child is defined as an individual under the age of 18 or up to age 19 if child is full-time high school student).

No medical services except for pre-pregnancy family planning services and those indicated in the scope of coverage as provided in OWF/PRC Letter #12.

No benefits or services to an individual who is not a citizen of the United States or a qualified alien.

No benefits or services to individuals who are fugitive felons, as referenced in 5101.26 of the ORC.

No financial benefits for families that fraudulently received assistance under the OWF and/or PRC programs since 10/01/97 until repayment occurs. Ref. 5101.83 of the ORC.

No financial benefits for families that are currently under OWF sanction.

Program Operation

To ensure fair and equitable treatment of families applying for PRC, the program shall be continuously in operation according to the standards of policy and procedure as set forth within this document. The covered benefits or services, or the amounts specified for the benefits and services listed in the section detailing the scope of coverage, may not be reduced, limited or restricted unless the program is amended.

Scope of Benefits/Services

The attached chart contains the scope of benefits and services provided under the Clermont County Department of Job and Family Services PRC program. The chart also contains the assistance groups served, the economic need standards for the particular benefit/service, caps on benefits/services and the definitions of targeted groups. The "targeted groups" are used to customize service delivery specific to the family's circumstances. Service delivery can be extended beyond the target group but cannot be more restrictive for delivery of hard services.

Standard of Promptness

The focus of this program is to provide and authorize benefits and services within ten (10) days of the receipt of a signed application. In some instances, this timeframe will not be met due to unavoidable delays on the part of the applicant or the agency.

The ten-day standard of promptness is a suggested timeframe to stress the importance of dealing with PRC applications in an appropriately efficient manner. The denial of a PRC application due only to the expiration of the ten-day period is not acceptable eligibility determination practice as the application is valid for a period of thirty (30) days. The application may be denied at the end of the thirty (30) day period if the household fails to provide sufficient documentation or abandons the application. The AG record shall contain sufficient documentation of the case activity on the PRC application, including an explanation of unexpected or unavoidable delays in processing the application.

Community Resources

The availability of resources within the local community shall be explored prior to the authorization of PRC. A PRC AG shall apply for and utilize any program, benefit or support system which may reduce or eliminate the presenting need.

Personnel authorizing PRC should be aware of any community resources that could assist a family in need of immediate services. The knowledge of those resources that are available is necessary to determine if any other means within the community may meet or help the presenting needs. Local contracts with other entities may be initiated to provide services which may meet or help meet requested needs (i.e., planning transportation services). The PRC application provides a section for written documentation of agency attempts to locate and utilize resources within the community.

Applicant Responsibility

An applicant for PRC is responsible for completing all necessary documents, furnishing all available facts and information, and cooperating in the eligibility determination process. An applicant must

utilize available income and resources in meeting the presenting need. This includes ongoing assistance programs such as OWF, DA, SSI and food stamps, as well as Unemployment Compensation, Social Security and special energy programs. There is no PRC eligibility if the AG fails to make use of available income or resources that are in an amount sufficient to meet a portion of, or the entire amount of, the presenting need.

Application

The ODHS 3800, Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) Program Application, must be completed when a family is applying for PRC hard benefits. The application and any other information gathered during the eligibility determination process shall be kept in the ongoing OWF, Medicaid, and/or Food Stamp AG record. If the AG is not in receipt of ongoing OWF, Medicaid, and/or Food Stamp assistance, a separate case record shall be maintained for the PRC application and related verifications.

Specific Self-Declaration documents have been designed to establish eligibility for PRC specific services. Those documents are maintained by the service and/or contracted providers and available to the CCDJFS upon request. These documents are subject to the retention and destruction schedule of the local CCDJFS.

Eligibility factors, time restraints and amounts available to pay for the various benefits and services covered are explained in the List of Services and Benefits. Anyone applying for PRC services shall receive appropriate information about referrals to, and access to, Medicaid, Food Assistance, Child Care assistance and other programs that provide benefits that could help them successfully transition to work. Voter registration applications, as prescribed by the secretary of state under section 3503.10 of the ORC, shall be available to persons who are applying for, receiving assistance from, or participating in the PRC program. (Reference Section: 329.051 of the ORC.)

PRC assistance will be authorized with the expectation that the PRC AG will be able to function without additional agency help. Services and benefits shall be provided which directly lead to, or can be expected to lead the family in becoming self-sufficient by accomplishing one of the four purposes of TANF:

Purpose 1: "To provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives."

This purpose covers only needy families so children may live with their parents or other relatives. A needy family is one that meets the income and/or resource standards established by the state in its TANF plan. A state may establish a variety of income and resource standards for "assistance" and other services and benefits.

This purpose is limited to benefits that are within the regulatory definition of "assistance". A state may provide other services in support of this purpose. For example, funding home repairs for needy families would be consistent with this purpose.

Purpose 2: "To end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage."

A state could help any needy parent, including a non-custodial parent or a working parent, by providing employment, job preparation or training services. Examples of potential services include job or career advancement activities, marriage counseling, refundable earned income tax credits and employment services designed to increase the non-custodial parent's ability to pay child support. Activities that promote any one of the objectives – job preparation, work and marriage- would be consistent with this purpose.

Purpose 3: "To prevent and reduce the incidence of out of wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies."

This purpose is not limited to needy families or individuals. However, the state must establish objective criteria for the delivery of services to the non-needy. Potential activities that would be reasonably calculated to accomplish this purpose include family planning, clinical and follow-up services, abstinence programs, visiting nurse services and programs and services for youth such as counseling, teen pregnancy prevention campaigns and after-school programs that provide supervision when school is not in session.

Purpose 4: To encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families."

A significant share of TANF families consists of unmarried mothers with low skills who live with their children apart from low skilled, underemployed fathers. Many of these fathers are involved in the lives of their children and provide some financial support, but would like to do much more. Historically, the fathers have found limited employment opportunities, and welfare rules have worked to discourage family formation and fuller involvement of these fathers in the lives of their children.

Some activities that are reasonably calculated to accomplish this purpose might include parenting skills training, premarital and marriage counseling and mediation services; activities to promote parental access and supervision; job placement and training services for non-custodial parents; initiatives to promote responsible fatherhood and increase the capacity of fathers to provide emotional and financial support for their children; and crisis or intervention services.

Notice of Approval/Denial

If PRC benefits or services are approved, the ODJFS 4074, "Notice of Approval of Your Application for Assistance" shall be provided to the customer. If PRC benefits or services are denied, the ODJFS 7334, "Notice of Denial of Your Application for Assistance" shall be provided to the customer.

Once eligibility for PRC is established, CCDJFS will authorize payment for benefits or services in a timely manner. Payment to a vendor will occur within 30 days, according to the procedures established with the Clermont County Auditor's Office. Policy has been written to ensure all auditing requirements are maintained.

This PRC program plan may be amended at any time upon written notification to the ODJFS.

The Clermont County Department of Job and Family Services agrees to implement the PRC program as indicated above.

PRC PROGRAMS AND CONTRACTED SERVICES

Per Category, direct financial assistance will not be provided more than once in a 12 month period unless otherwise stated.
 Continuation of Services or Benefits Is Contingent Upon Availability of TANF Funding.

SERVICE OR BENEFIT AND TANF PURPOSE	CAP	ASSISTANCE GROUP	ECONOMIC NEED STANDARD	TARGETED GROUP
<p><u>Child Welfare TANF Purposes 1 and 2</u> Family preservation and family stability services Intervention Services Preventive Placement Case Management activities Family reunification Child & Family Counseling Respite care Vocational & education counseling Home Based Services Emergency Shelter/Housing Prevention of disconnection of utility services Clothing for children in care</p>	<p>Limited to contract amounts. \$1000.00 for direct customer issuance. Need and number of issuances at the discretion of CPS.</p>	<p>Parents or specified relatives with minor children pregnant women</p>	<p>200% of FPL</p>	<p>Families with open/active cases in the Children's Protective Services system</p>

SERVICE OR BENEFIT AND TANF PURPOSE	CAP	ASSISTANCE GROUP	ECONOMIC NEED STANDARD	TARGETED GROUP
<p>Family Stability Services: TANF Purposes 1 and 2</p> <p>Family preservation and family stability services Intervention Services Family reunification Emergency and/or ongoing Shelter/Housing Necessary personal and household provisions Prevention of disconnection of utility services Establish new utility services</p>	<p><u>\$800.00</u> per family Uncapped for contracted services.</p>	<p>Parents or specified relatives with minor children Pregnant women</p>	<p>200% FPL</p>	<p>Families at risk: "the existence of or potential for a disruption to the health, safety or decent living arrangement of the family." Families with children at risk of abuse or neglect Victims of domestic violence</p>
<p>Employment Support Services Purpose 1 and 2</p> <p>Purchase of uniforms required for employment Purchase of tools required for employment Tests and assessments required for employment Medical exams or immunizations required for employment</p>	<p>\$250.00 per individual</p>	<p>Parents or specified relatives with minor children</p>	<p>200% FPL</p>	<p>Unemployed families in receipt of OWF who actively participated in their work activity and have obtained new employment and/or training opportunities</p>

SERVICE OR BENEFIT AND TANF PURPOSE	CAP	ASSISTANCE GROUP	ECONOMIC NEED STANDARD	TARGETED GROUP
<p>Family Disaster Assistance Purpose 1 Benefits to assist with damage or loss sustained as a result of natural disaster (i.e., fire, flood, tornado, etc.) All families are potentially eligible for this category of assistance regardless of OWF sanction status. PRC issued in this category will not apply toward the yearly cap per family. If applicant has homeowners insurance that can address the emergent need, it must be accessed prior to the issuance of PRC. The following list is not all inclusive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Shelter Assistance</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rent ▪ Rent Deposits ▪ Mortgage payments ▪ Emergency shelter/temporary shelter(excluding hotel charges) ▪ Payment of moving expenses ➤ <i>Utility Assistance</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Payments for initial hook up ▪ Purchase bulk fuel destroyed or damaged by disaster ▪ Installation or repair of telephone (when medically necessary with dr. statement) ➤ Home repair or replacements affecting basic structure (provided to the homeowner only) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appliances or fixture repairs or replacements ▪ Repair or purchase of furnace, air conditioning, or water heater (provided to the homeowner only) ▪ Purchase or replace essential household contents ➤ <i>Personal items</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Essential clothing for members of the Assistance Group ▪ Essential non-consumable products, excluding tobacco products and alcohol ➤ Vehicle repair for damage caused by the disaster provided the automobile is necessary for employment or medical condition 	<p>\$800 per family</p>	<p>Parents or specified relatives with minor children Pregnant women</p>	<p>200% FPL</p>	<p>Families sustaining disaster related damage or loss</p>

SERVICE OR BENEFIT AND TANF PURPOSE	CAP	ASSISTANCE GROUP	ECONOMIC NEED STANDARD	TARGETED GROUP
<p><u>Heating Assistance: Purposes 1 and 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Electric shut-offs and disconnections that affect the families heat source. If available, must enroll in PIP. ▪ Connection of new service for victims of domestic violence only ▪ Purchase of bulk heating fuel (gas, propane, kerosene, wood, etc.). ▪ Note: Invoice/bill/expense must be in the eligible applicant's name. 	<p>Maximum of \$600 and 1 issuance per household per heating season: 11/1 through 03/31. Will never issue more than the minimum amount needed to prevent disconnection.</p> <p>Applicant must have at least made 1 payment within the 3 months prior to filing a PRC application to be considered for assistance.</p>	<p>Parents or specified relatives with minor children</p> <p>Pregnant women</p>	<p>200% of FPL</p>	<p>Employed and unemployed families experiencing a temporary need.</p> <p>Victims of domestic violence</p>
<p><u>Transportation Services Purpose 1 and 2</u></p> <p>Gas Cards CTC Bus Passes</p>	<p>Bulk purchases limited to contract amounts.</p> <p>Gas Cards and bus passes capped at \$100 issuance, not more than once every 6 months for newly employed OWF recipients.</p> <p>Uncapped for OWF Work Activity participants and CPS families.</p>	<p>Parents or specified relatives with minor children</p> <p>Pregnant women</p>	<p>200% of FPL</p>	<p>Newly Employed OWF Recipients: No application needed</p> <p>OWF Work Activity Participants: No application required</p> <p>CPS Families: Child visitation to meet reunification plan: No application required</p> <p>Victims of domestic violence</p>

**Monthly Federal Poverty Guideline Measure
Effective February 11, 2011**

Monthly Federal Poverty Guideline amounts are used to determine income eligibility for PRC. The total gross income of all members of the assistance group must be equal to or less than 150% or 200% of the Monthly Federal Poverty Guideline amount for the appropriate assistance group size.

Assistance Group Size	150% Monthly FPG	200% Monthly FPG
1	1362	1815
2	1839	2452
3	2317	3089
4	2794	3725
5	3272	4362
6	3749	4999
7	4227	5635
8	4704	6272