

Hardin County Job and Family Services
Prevention, Retention and Contingency Program

Effective October 1, 2009

(Revised: December 3, 2010)

The Hardin County Prevention, Retention and Contingency Program (PRC) provides services which, in general, are of no direct monetary value to an individual or family, nor, implicit or explicit income support, with the exception of a limited wage subsidy program that is intended to assist individuals who have recently secured employment to maintain said employment and continue the transition from assistance to employment. These services are one time, short term assistance which is limited to the amount actually required to meet the presenting need.

Assistance Group Composition

To be eligible for services an individual must be part of an Assistance Group (AG) in which there is at least one minor child who resides with a parent, specified relative, legal guardian or legal custodian; or a pregnant individual; or a non-custodial parent who lives in Hardin County or has a minor child who resides in Hardin County. The AG includes everyone who has lived in the home for the past 30 days.

Minor child is defined as an individual who has not yet attained the age of 18, or, who has not attained age 19 and is still a full-time student in secondary education.

In shared parenting situations a copy of the court order granting shared parenting must be provided. If the order grants custody equally (50/50) and does not name a primary custodian, either parent's household may be eligible. If there is no court order or the court order does name a primary custodian, only the primary custodian household may include the child for purposes of PRC eligibility.

A child may be temporarily absent from the home for up to six months and the AG may still qualify for PRC. The child must return to the home by the end of the six-month period to continue to be eligible. In these instances, the AG shall include the temporarily absent child and all others in the home they would live in if they were not temporarily absent.

Eligibility

Eligibility is dependent upon the AG's demonstration and verification of the need for financial assistance and/or services, and, whether the CJFS determines provision of the service will meet the objective of this plan and meet the needs of the applicant. Services must be for non-recurring short term needs, not to extend beyond four months, that address a specific, identified crisis situation or episode of need. Any benefits or services received as a result of a misunderstanding on the part of the applicant must be re-paid in full prior to any future consideration of benefits. Any applicant or recipient who knowingly provides false information or withholds information will be subject to provisions of the HCJFS fraud plan. Any benefits or services received fraudulently must be re-paid in full and the persons involved will not be considered for benefits for at least twelve months from the date the fraudulently received benefits are re-paid in full.

An assistance group may be eligible for no more than one service in a twelve month period based on state fiscal year July through June.

Non-custodial parents without other minor children in the home are only eligible for services under Job Preparation and Transportation sections of this plan.

HCJFS reserves the right to deny PRC services to any applicant who has demonstrated a pattern of PRC actual or attempted misuse or abuse.

Any applicants that falsify their application or documents related to their eligibility for PRC will be referred to the Fraud Unit of the agency.

In all cases, the amount of the PRC issued must meet the emergent need of the household. The amount needed must be within the appropriate maximum payment caps of this plan. If the amount of PRC available can not prevent the onset or continuation of the emergent situation, there is no eligibility for payment. Example: If the amount available from PRC can pay the major portion of the amount needed to avoid a utility shut off and the applicant and the utility company set up a written agreement for payment of the balance, PRC can be issued. If, however, an agreement can not be made and the amount available through PRC can not meet the total needed to prevent the shut off, no PRC may be issued.

Income

The income of the AG household must be less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. The total gross income, both earned and unearned of all members of the AG household shall be counted except for gross earnings of a minor child. Income of a minor child will not be included in the eligibility determination. All income which is received by all members of the AG household will be used to determine prospective income. If the AG household's income has ceased, the prospective income or lack thereof for the next 30 days will be considered. Income will be converted to a monthly amount in accordance with OAC rule 5101:1-23-20 (F) (2). In the event verification or documentation appears questionable, the CJFS may request up to six months of income and expenditure verification prior to the application date.

Current child support paid by an AG member for a child who is not an AG member will be deducted from the gross income of the AG.

The following types of income are excluded as income and resources in determining financial eligibility for PRC benefits and services.

(A) Child support payment distributions made by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) pursuant to division (C) of Section 1 of Am. S.B. 170 of the 124th General Assembly (10/25/2001) and rules 5101:1-29-31.1 and 5101:1-29-31.2 of the Administrative Code.

(B) 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 (C) and (D) of this rule.

(C) 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.

(D) 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.

Written or verbal verification of the income is required. For any verification that is obtained by telephone, there must be clear documentation in the AG record concerning the name and position of the provider of the information, the date the information was provided and the amount of income verified.

Ineligible Family AGs

- Individuals who are not US citizens or qualifying aliens. Any AG members who are US citizens or qualifying aliens may be eligible as long as the ineligible members are in the US legally.
- Fugitive felons or persons in violation of probation or parole.
- Individuals currently under a penalty of any kind, including Intentional Program Violations.
- Persons under sanction or pending sanction until compliance is met. This will be waived for soft services such as family coach when the service is required by a Children's Service, IM or other agency sponsored service organization case plan. To qualify for hard services the person must come into compliance and be meeting program requirements for 30 days prior to the PRC application.
- Unmarried non-graduate parent less than 18 not attending high school or equivalent.
- Unmarried parent less than 18 not living in an adult supervised setting.
- Persons found to have fraudulently misrepresented their residence in order to obtain assistance in two or more states are ineligible for ten years.
- Individuals who have quit a job within sixty (60) days without good cause, or who have caused their discharge from a job.
- Individuals on strike.
- Individuals who do not reside in Hardin County, except for non-custodial parents who have a minor child living in Hardin County and caretakers of children temporarily placed by Children's Service case plan.
- Failure to follow through on guidance or referral to community services designed to promote self sufficiency will disqualify an AG for services.
- AG's with income insufficient to meet ongoing shelter and utility costs on a monthly basis. AG must be able to meet recurring obligation(s).
- Any AG with a member who misrepresented information in order to obtain PRC benefits is ineligible for 24 months from the date of infraction.

Standard of Promptness

The agency will use objective criteria when determining eligibility. The HCJFS will approve or deny the application in a fair and equitable manner within 30 days of receipt of the application.

Community Resources

An applicant AG is required to apply for and utilize any program, benefit or support system that may reduce or eliminate the request for financial assistance and/or services. For example, this may include a requirement to attend budget counseling or make contact and keep appointments with another agency prior to approval of services.

The availability of resources within the community shall be explored prior to authorization. The AG shall apply for and utilize any program, benefit or support system which may reduce or eliminate the presenting need. This includes applying for and cooperating with requirements of public assistance programs and Food Assistance Program.

For the purposes of PRC, community may be defined to include areas beyond the county's borders.

Applicant Responsibility

An applicant must identify the specific, identified crisis situation or episode of need they have experienced which prompted the PRC request. The agency reserves the right to require verification if the crisis situation or episode of need is questionable. An applicant 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 in meeting the presenting need. This includes ongoing assistance programs such as OWF, DA, SSI and Food Assistance, as well as unemployment compensation, social security, and the special energy programs. There is no eligibility if the AG fails to make use of available income or fails to exhibit financial responsibility.

Application

The HCJFS Community Support Services Information and Application Form must be completed by each applicant assistance group or agency representative. A sample application form is attached.

Eligibility factors, time restraints, and availability of the various benefits and services covered under this plan will be explained. In addition, information about, referral to, and access to Medicaid, Food Assistance, child care assistance and other programs that provide benefits that could help the AG successfully transition to work will be provided. All applicants will be advised of their hearing rights.

Notice of Approval /Denial

If it is determined that an application is approved, the ODJFS 4074, “Notice of Approval of Your Application For Assistance” shall be mailed or otherwise delivered. If it is determined that an application is denied, the ODJFS 7334, “Notice of Denial of Your Application For Assistance” shall be mailed or otherwise delivered.

Denial is appropriate in situations where it can be documented that no attempt has been made to prevent the occurrence of the emergent need and the applicant can show no evidence that the household has experienced any extraordinary circumstances or expenses. Situations include (1) making no payment towards the obligation (2) making only minimal payments with the knowledge that such an amount would not prevent the occurrence.

Privacy Laws

Each person applying for PRC must provide the CDJFS (or contracted agency) a social security number, or apply for a social security number. Providing a number is a condition of receipt of assistance.

The collection of this information, including the social security number of each household member, is authorized under Section 1137(a) of the Social Security Act.

The social security number will be used to check information provided by the individual against information held by other federal, state, and local governments; computer matching systems; and program reviews or audits to ensure eligibility for PRC or, to the extent permitted by federal law, to assist in determining eligibility for any other state, federal, or federally assisted program that provides cash or in-kind assistance or services directly to individuals based on need or for the purpose of protecting children. This information will also be used to monitor compliance with program regulations and for program management. The social security number will be used when contacting appropriate persons or agencies to determine eligibility and verify information that has been provided for the PRC program; for example, income, financial resources, disability benefits or other similar benefits and programs. Such information may affect household eligibility. The social security number may be used for a felony warrant match; a match of persons in violation of probation or parole by law enforcement agencies; or for purposes of investigations, prosecutions, and criminal or civil proceedings that are within the scope of law enforcement agencies’ official duties.

An ODJFS 04059 Explanation of State Hearing Procedures and a summary of PRC applicant rights are attached to each Community Support Services Information / Application for PRC services.

Charitable Choice and Faith-Based Initiatives

An applicant for or recipient of OWF or PRC may object to the religious nature of an agency serving as a worksite or providing a PRC service. The CDJFS must ensure that an assistance group that objects to a faith-based provider has access to another provider. The assistance group must be provided with an alternative provider of services within a “reasonable period of time” (as defined by the CDJFS). The alternative provider must be reasonably accessible to the assistance group member and have the capacity to provide comparable services to the assistance group member. The alternative provider need not be a secular organization, just one to which the assistance group member has no objection. The CDJFS is not required to have ongoing contracts with alternative providers, but simply locate one if needed.

Applicants or recipients of OWF or PRC who are assigned to a religious agency as a provider of services or as a work site must receive notice of the right to request alternative services. A copy of the “Notice of Right to Request Another Worksite or Provider of Services” is attached.

VOTER REGISTRATION

A voter registration application is available to each PRC applicant in the reception area of HCJFS.

JOB PREPARATION SERVICES, BENEFITS AND EMPLOYMENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

SERVICE OR BENEFIT	CAP	ECONOMIC NEED STANDARD	TARGETED GROUP	SUGGESTED VERIFICATIONS
<p><u>Job Readiness</u></p> <p>Assessments per contractor’s/IM supervisor guidelines</p> <p>Training (work habits, attitude, dress, literacy, tutoring, resume preparation)</p> <p>Job development</p> <p>Job coaching</p>	<p>No cap on services</p> <p>Services provided through agency contract</p>	<p>200 % FPL</p>	<p>Recently employed individuals</p> <p>Under-employed individuals</p> <p>Individuals between jobs</p> <p>Individuals who are unemployed</p>	<p>Must have a referral from Agency Supervisor and meet eligibility requirements of provider</p>
<p>Living expense/wage subsidy</p>	<p>Cap of \$1200. per state fiscal year.</p>	<p>200 % FPL</p>	<p>Recently Employed</p> <p>If employed at current job for the past 3 months each employed individual shall receive</p>	<p>Employment must be for a minimum of 30 hours a week for each employed adult. Individuals Self-employed are</p>

			<p>an amount based on \$100 per month and number of months remaining in current state fiscal year, up to six months. Each employed individual will receive another installment if a completed 6 month review form is received by the due date on original notification of approval.</p> <p>If employed less than 3 months, subsidy will be issued for 1 month (\$100). Each employed individual will receive another \$100 if a completed review form is received by the due date (30 days from approval). Another completed review form will be due in another 30 days if individual is still employed. If above is completed individual will have worked for 3 months and could receive an additional amount for the next 6 months. Application can be made for additional months that may remain in the SFY</p> <p>Dollar amounts will vary depending on date of application and months remaining in the state fiscal year.</p>	not eligible unless they verify monthly net income in the amount of \$1000 or more.
SERVICE OR BENEFIT	CAP	ECONOMIC NEED STANDARD	TARGETED GROUP	SUGGESTED VERIFICATIONS
<u>Contingency Services:</u>	Dependent on Service	200% FPL	AG must have experienced an	Must demonstrate verifiable income

<p>An emergent need that threatens the health, safety, or decent living arrangement to the extent that it prohibits children from being cared for in their own home or inhibits job preparation, work and marriage.</p> <p>For all contingency services, the applicant AG must show a pattern of good faith effort to maintain payment to the best of their ability.</p> <p>The AG must identify the specific, identified crisis situation or episode of need which prompted the request for PRC</p>	(see below)		<p>unforeseen circumstance which places a documented financial hardship on the AG.</p> <p>Adults in AG must be employed, awaiting UCB, or have other income such as, but not limited to, disability payments. An AG whose only income is that of minor children shall not be eligible for PRC contingency services.</p>	to meet rent/mortgage and utility expenses in succeeding months
Utility Payments including bulk fuel.	\$500 paid to one utility provider as long as the service has not been disconnected		No payment can be made for bulk fuel past due account balances. PRC must be approved prior to delivery of bulk fuel.	AG must provide a current utility bill with the account number, service address and account holder's name
Rent or mortgage payment and late fees. No payment will be made for extra fee for pets unless the pet is also a service animal.	Two months rent or mortgage, rounded up to the next \$100, up to \$1000 payment to the landlord or mortgage company.			<p>For rent, AG must have landlord complete and return the agency rent verification.</p> <p>For mortgage payments AG may have mortgage holder complete the agency rent</p>

				verification form or can provide current mortgage statement.
<p>Home adaptation and repair</p> <p>PRC will not pay for repairs made or services provided prior to the approval date of PRC except when a disaster has been declared and waiting for an approval would jeopardize the health, safety and well being of children in the home.</p>	\$2,000 cap		<p>Applicant must own the home.</p> <p>Adaptation and repair must be necessary to safely maintain children in the home.</p>	Must provide three estimates.
<p>Crisis Benefits – Services to address a specific situation or episode of need. This is not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs and will not extend beyond 4 months.</p> <p>These services may only be approved in amounts necessary to meet the minimum health and safety requirements and basic needs that are cost effective and reasonably related to the number of individuals being served.</p>	\$3000 cap	200 % FPL	<p>AG must have experienced an unforeseen circumstance which places a documented financial hardship. i.e. recent loss of home due to fire, etc.</p> <p>Does not include evictions for non-payment of rent or mortgage.</p>	<p>Adults may be a displaced worker due to layoff , downsizing or short term illness. If adults in the AG have not been employed, they must provide verification of disability and status of SSD application.</p> <p>Must have verification of loss or case plan indicating reason for temporary shelter or Family Assistance</p>
SERVICE OR BENEFIT	CAP	ECONOMIC NEED STANDARD	TARGETED GROUP	SUGGESTED VERIFICATIONS
<p><u>Juvenile Court Mediation</u></p> <p>Mediation on issues such as visitation,</p>	<p>No cap on services</p> <p>Services</p>	200 % FPL	Unmarried couples with children	Referred by court, CSEA, or self-referred to contract provider

tax deductions and other issues to encourage engagement of both parents in children's lives	provided through agency contract			
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SERVICE OR BENEFIT	ECONOMIC NEED STANDARD	SUGGESTED VERIFICATIONS
<p><u>Child Welfare Services:</u> Services may be approved as indicated in Children's Services case plan. Services may also be approved as indicated in a Family Plan through IM or other agency sponsored service organization. AG must be cooperating with the Case or Family Plan and be satisfactorily meeting the goals and objectives of the case or family plan.</p> <p>Potential services designed to strengthen the family unit, prevent the removal of a child from his or her home, or to make reunification possible including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Home Based Services ○ Respite ○ Home Health Aide services ○ Homemaker Services ○ Parent and child Education Services ○ Tutoring ○ Mentoring ○ Transitioning services ○ Home Based services ○ Lice prevention and eradication ○ Enrichment and support programs ○ Mediation services ○ Parenting services <p>Other services which in the judgment of HCJFS Director or his</p>	200% FPL	Family must complete the application process and provide all necessary documentation. PSW or IM worker may assist in process including completing application and providing documents.

designee will prevent the need to remove a child from his or her home or to facilitate reunification of a child to his or her home.		
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SERVICE OR BENEFIT

Family Preservation/Access to Better Care Services :

Access to Better Care (ABC) program provides “non behavioral” services targeted to multi-need children who do not have substance abuse or mental health conditions. Allowable services include:

- Non-behavioral assessments
- Non-behavioral direct services
- Non-behavioral service coordination Funding may be utilized for families and children eligible for services identified as needed by the Family Preservation Team in this plan as well as additional exceptional or highly specialized services required.

Prohibited ABC Services:

- Foster Care and Out of home maintenance payments
- Juvenile justice services
- Any costs associated with children who do not live with a custodial parent or other adult caretaker relative, legal guardian or legal custodian, except for the provision concerning temporary absence and reunification within 180 days.
- Services available through other federal funding sources
- Medical services

SERVICE OR BENEFIT	ECONOMIC NEED STANDARD
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<p><u>Food Assistance and Medicaid Outreach:</u> To assure that families are aware of work support services such as Food Assistance, Medicaid and Child Care, the PRC program may be used to support the following FA and Medicaid outreach activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Billboards and signs • Radio and TV public service ads • Presentations at workplaces or community events • Promotional Items • Recruitment activities • Educational programs and activities • Information referral • Call Center • Food and clothing provided to TANF eligible families through agency contract with non-profit organization 	200% FPL
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<u>Adoption Finalization Services: PCSA case file must document</u>	
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1. The circumstances that are presented by the applicant including a discussion of why these circumstances are creating a need for assistance, and why that need for assistance, if allowed to go unmet, imperils maintenance of the adoption.
2. The services the applicant is seeking
3. An analysis and determination by the PCSA if the services requested will in fact act to remediate the need for assistance
4. A service plan detailing the services to be delivered, the duration of service delivery, service providers to be used, the outcomes expected
5. For each service to be delivered, and all responsibilities, including any co-payments, that are being assumed by the applicant, and;
6. The results of periodic evaluations undertaken by the PCSA to determine the effectiveness of the services delivered and any adjustments undertaken to improve the effectiveness of future services to achieve the stated outcomes and any alterations made to the service plan.

The case record must also affirmatively document and evidence the existence of the applicant's financial need.

200% Federal Poverty Level

Based on 01-23-09 Federal poverty guidelines

Will be amended upon revision of FPL by Federal Government

FAMILY SIZE	FPL 200%
1	\$1805
2	\$2429
3	\$3052
4	\$3675
5	\$4299
6	\$4922
7	\$5545
8	\$6169

**NOTICE OF RIGHT TO REQUEST ANOTHER WORKSITE OR
PROVIDER OF SERVICES**

Assistance Group Name	Case / Cat. / Seq.	Date Notice Given

Read all of this information before you sign your name. If you do not understand any part of this document, ask for help before signing. A copy of this information will be given to you for your records.

The Hardin County Department of Job and Family Services (HCJFS) has agreements with other agencies to provide services to families who may be receiving Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) or act as worksites to families receiving Ohio Works First (OWF). Some of the services or worksites may be held at religious agencies, such as churches.

If you do not want to go to a religious agency for services or as your worksite, tell your worker at HCJFS. Your worker must provide you with another agency for your worksite or to provide services. Your caseworker will tell you how long it will take to find another agency.

If you do not understand this notice, contact your caseworker.

I received a copy of, and I have read, my Notice of Right to Request Another Worksite or Provider of Services, or it has been read to me, and I understand it.

Signature of Applicant or Authorized Representative	Date

NONDISCRIMINATION

Federal laws require that any agency administering federally funded programs and activities, cannot discriminate against you on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, political beliefs, disability, and age.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

If you have a physical or mental condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities, you may have rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Physical or mental conditions include, for example, a learning disability, mental retardation, a history of drug or alcohol addiction, depression, a mobility impairment, or a hearing or vision impairment. You can let us know if you have a disability. If you cannot do something we ask you to do, we can help you do it or we can change what you have to do.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

If your primary language (spoken or written) is not English, we can help you. Let us know if your primary language is not English.

INFORMATION ON CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION STATUS

If you are applying for PRC benefits, you must tell us about the citizenship and immigration status of only those persons you are seeking the benefits for. We may decide that certain members of your family are not eligible for PRC because, for example, they do not have the right immigration status. If that happens, other family members may still be able to get PRC if they are otherwise eligible.

INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

Generally, if you are applying for PRC benefits, you must provide the social security number of only those persons you are seeking the benefits for. However, there may be instances where we need the social security numbers of members of the household to verify income or other eligibility criteria to determine eligibility even though they are not seeking PRC benefits themselves. We may decide that certain members of your family are not eligible for PRC because, for example, they do not have the right immigration status. If that happens, other family members may still be able to get PRC if they are otherwise eligible.

Social security numbers may be used when contacting appropriate persons or agencies to determine your eligibility and verify information you have given for PRC; for example, income, disability benefits or other similar benefits and programs. Such information may affect your household eligibility for PRC. Your social security number may be used for a felony warrant match; a match of persons in violation of probation or parole by law enforcement agencies; or for purposes of investigations, prosecutions, and criminal or civil proceedings that are within the scope of law enforcement agencies' official duties.

HOW DO I FILE A DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT?

Your complaint can be filed with:

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Office of Employee and Business Services

Bureau of Civil Rights and Labor Relations

150 E. Gay St., 18th floor

Columbus, Ohio 43125-3130

(614) 644-2703 or toll free 1- 866- 227-6353

TTY hearing impaired: 1-866-221-6700

Fax: (614) 752-6381

Robert Norman, HCJFS Director

____/____/____
Date

Hardin County Commissioner

____/____/____
Date

Hardin County Commissioner

____/____/____
Date

Hardin County Commissioner

____/____/____
Date

Appendix I: TANF Summer Youth Employment Program (effective: May 21, 2010)

TO: Hardin County Board of Commissioners

FROM: Robert Norman, Director

SUBJECT: Agency Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) Program

The State of Ohio received more than \$47 million from the federal government under the Stimulus Program, specifically from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act's (ARRA) Temporary Assistance for Needy Family's Contingency funding, to create and expand a subsidized employment program. Of that total, approximately \$206,156.00 is available to Hardin County, if we amend our PRC plan to include a subsidized employment program. Initially informed of this program in late April, and not provided with details of the program until May 19, we considered not accepting the funding. That, however, would not save taxpayer dollars as the funds would be redistributed to other counties. The net effect of non-participation would be only to deprive Hardin County youth an opportunity for employment and the local economy an infusion of outside funds. In consideration thereof, effective today, I am hereby amending, assuming your consent, our current PRC Plan to include a subsidized employment program to be funded to the level of the grant we receive from the state.

The program differs from previous such programs in significant ways. Participants will not be paid by a government agency. Rather, a participating employer will be reimbursed monthly, up to \$10.00 an hour, for wages paid to qualifying youth. Clothing or uniform costs are also reimbursable, if necessary for employment. At a recent meeting, other counties discussed how to identify youth and work sites to which participants could be assigned. We are not adopting that model. If the intent of the program is to prepare youth to enter the workforce, the first lesson they need to learn is how to find a job. As such it will be the responsibility of participating youth to engage potential employers to request employment. We will provide eligible youth who request pre-approval with documentation verifying eligibility. Also, employers may refer prospective employees who do not have pre-approval documentation to HCJFS for eligibility determination. HCJFS will promptly advise employers of eligibility, normally within 24 hours of the youth providing requested information. No obligation for wage subsidy is incurred by HCJFS without a specific signed contract identifying individual employee(s). All hiring/separation decisions are solely the purview of the employer.

We are looking to partner with employers, frankly with as many as possible, and look to conclude participation agreements as soon as possible. We have no preconceived profile for selecting employer partners: manufacturers, retailers, professional offices, service providers, even individual farms and others can apply to participate.

Participant eligibility will be determined in accordance with existing PRC eligibility requirements. Given the nature of the program, participation will not effect an individual's ability to apply for other PRC services during the year.



December 3, 2010

TO: Hardin County Board of Commissioners

FROM: Robert Norman, Director

SUBJECT: Agency Prevention, Retention and Contingency Program

Prompted by recent audits of programs in other counties, we recently conducted a review of our Agency's Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) program. Included in our program is a "Job Readiness Benefit" that provides for up to \$1200.00 a year in "gasoline cards" to individuals who have recently obtained employment (at least 30 hours a week) but are still below 200% of federal poverty guidelines. Since there are no local gasoline stations that sell cards that can be used exclusively for gasoline, we have been using local gift cards from retailers who do sell gasoline. Similar programs in other counties have been criticized because those Agencies had no controls in place to ensure the resources were used for gasoline – and only for gasoline.

Given that our program suffers from a similar defect, we believe it is prudent to institute an amendment. As such, rather than refer to the assistance as a "gasoline benefit," I propose that it henceforth be termed a "living expenses/wage subsidy." I recommend no further change in the operation of this aspect of the program beyond that of terminology. It is essential that we maintain the ability to offer such assistance to encourage people to seek and accept employment. There are expenses associated with working and, as recent news stories suggest, many low income positions are not being filled because unemployment compensation benefits exceed the low wages currently being offered on the job market.

While it may be true that an individual did not spend \$100.00 a month on gasoline, I find it difficult to believe an inspector would question whether a beneficiary incurred less than \$100.00 a month in living expenses (shelter, food, clothing and transportation). Furthermore, the vendor for our gift cards is a major local merchandiser of food, fuel and clothing.

Therefore, in light of the foregoing, effective Wednesday, December 8, unless directed to the contrary, this will implement the changes to our PRC program out-lined above.

cc: ODJFS: program-policy@jfs.ohio.gov