

Stark County Department of Job and Family Services
PREVENTION, RETENTION and CONTINGENCY PROGRAM
County Plan

The Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) Program provides one-time, short-term goods or services as well as programmatic eligibility for certain purchased services that provide preventative or supportive services to enable the family to move toward self-sufficiency. Requested services must fit into one of three categories in order to be considered for eligibility:

Prevention – To divert an assistance group from ongoing cash assistance to self-sufficiency by helping them through a short-term need.

Retention – To provide services to an assistance group to allow an employed assistance group member maintain employment and, thereby, to achieve or continue self-sufficiency.

Contingency – Services are provided to an assistance group to meet an emergent need that threatens the health and safety of the assistance group.

The PRC program is designed to assist families in overcoming immediate barriers that prevent the achievement of self-sufficiency by promoting work and personal responsibility. PRC provides a wide variety of employment and training activities, supportive services and short-term benefits that will enable individuals to meet their OWF/JOBS work participation requirement, obtain or maintain a job and improve their economic circumstances. Funding is provided by the federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program, which involves time-limited receipt of assistance. To ensure that non-OWF families do not start their eligibility time countdown, in Stark County, benefits will be provided as follows:

1. Non-recurrent, short-term benefits that are for an emergency, defined as a condition requiring prompt action:
 - 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 are not expected to occur annually; and
 - c. will not extend beyond a total of four months
 - d. dependent upon benefit request, approval/denial of such benefits will be based upon the benefits received by applicant within either the last 12 or 24 months
2. Work subsidies (payments to employers or third parties to defray costs of wages, benefits, supervision and training).
3. Supportive services such as transportation and job readiness activities for working families and those job searching or attending education/training programs in preparation for employment.
4. Children Services to maintain children in their own home or to facilitate reunification back into the home.
5. Non-recurrent one-time services or benefits.
6. State-developed programs such as Summer Employment Program for Youth. Services specified within such programs will be provided under approved county contracts or letters of understanding.

The services in this Plan are available only if provided directly by the SCDJFS or under an approved county contract.

A PRC Assistance Group (PRC AG) is a group of individuals living together with at least one minor child and/or a pregnant woman. All adults and children living in the same residence are included in one PRC AG. An individual living in the household does not have the option to be excluded from a PRC assistance group. The PRC AG is treated as a unit for the purpose of determining eligibility for the PRC Program. If the household contains an ineligible member, that person's income is counted as available to the rest of the assistance group, however, their need is not counted when comparing the household income to the standard of need. If the only child in the household is an ineligible applicant, the entire PRC AG is ineligible. PRC benefits and services may be provided to non-custodial parents who live in Ohio but not in the same household as the minor child. PRC benefits and services may also be provided to other members of the household who could significantly enhance the family's ability to achieve economic self-sufficiency. For purposes of this plan, all future references to AG is the PRC AG defined above and should not be confused with any references or definitions of an AG for OWF, Food Assistance, Medicaid or any other program administered by the Department of Job and Family Services (except for Contracted Supportive Services).

ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION

Eligibility for PRC is dependent upon the PRC AG's demonstration and verification of the need and whether the county determines that provision of PRC will satisfy the need. There is no automatic eligibility for PRC benefits and services. Delivery of all benefits and services are contingent upon the availability of funds. The applicant must have a clearly defined need and be able to demonstrate that receipt of the service will assist the assistance group to meet the goal of self-sufficiency. In order for the PRC AG to be found eligible, the PRC AG's gross income must be at or below the specified limit of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) in effect at the time. Those economic eligibility levels are established for each service in the Chart of PRC Services in this Plan.

PRC short term benefits and services are only available to AG's who have not received PRC assistance above the monetary cap during the previous 12 consecutive months and in accordance with any additional sub-limits or cap guidelines for that particular benefit or service. Families must have intent to remain in Stark County prior to receiving short-term PRC benefits. Receipt of PRC in another county in Ohio will be applied toward short-term benefit limits set forth in this plan (however, they may qualify for employment-related or supportive services).

The PRC AG's members must complete the Prevention, Retention, and Contingency Program (PRC) Application (IM 756) to request PRC (unless only applying for supportive services in which the application is separately defined). The county will use objective criteria when determining eligibility and approving or denying the application. The eligibility determination will be made within 10 business days after completion of the application process. The application process will include verification of information by the applicant. Eligibility will be carefully evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Immediate needs and whether the PRC Program will meet the goal will be determined by the CDJFS. The CDJFS and providers will inform individuals about other available programs, such as Child Day Care, Medicaid and Food Assistance. Applicable hearing rights will be explained. The CDJFS shall enter the PRC AG into CRIS-E for statewide clearance and short-term benefits PRC authorization.

INCOME DETERMINATION

All gross income that has been received by any member of the PRC AG during the 30-day budget period is considered when determining financial need. The 30-day period begins 30 days prior to the date of application and ends on the application date. The income received during this period (as long as it is representative) is used in the computation of financial eligibility. The exceptions to included income are child support payments made through CSEA and payments issued to a child support payee on or after March 1, 2001 by the State of Ohio as reimbursement for child support in accordance with the provisions set forth in Amended Substitute Senate Bill 170 of the 124th General Assembly and with approval by the Governor. The other disregarded income for OWF, Food Assistance or Disability Assistance is not excluded from calculations of the monthly gross income for the PRC program. In addition, the applicant will provide an estimation of the income projected to be received within the next two weeks. The applicant and the agency representative will discuss how that income will be used and if there will be any available resources to meet the presenting need. If the agency determines there will be available resources, the need will be reduced by the available amount.

The total gross income, both earned and unearned, of all the PRC AG members, must be counted. The only deduction allowed is the actual payment of child support as verified through an employer or CSEA and payments issued to a child support payee on or after March 1, 2001 by the State of Ohio as reimbursement for child support in accordance with Amended Substitute Senate Bill 170. Otherwise, there are no deductions or exclusions allowed from any type of countable income. Documentation method of verification of income is required for short-term benefits. For Supportive Services, the documentation method is allowable with the understanding that any application and documented eligibility standards maintained on a means-tested program may be specified and used by a contracted Provider of supportive services. The applicant shall be responsible to obtain any needed written verification. If it is not possible for the verification to be received in writing, there must be clear documentation in the PRC AG record concerning 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. When a Provider is referencing another means-tested program to establish eligibility for services, the Provider must establish a verbal or written verification method with the holder of the eligibility information and the consumer.

The gross amount of the PRC AG's countable income is totaled and compared to the established level of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (in effect at the time of application) for the PRC AG size for the applicable benefit or service. If the total PRC AG income is equal to or less than the established level of the FPG amount for the applicable PRC AG size, the PRC AG meets the income requirement. If the household contains an ineligible member listed below, the income of the ineligible member shall be included in the countable income; however, their need shall not be included when comparing their income to the eligibility standard.

Applicants who are ineligible include: 1) families without a minor child or families whose children have been out of their custody for 6 months or more (until within 1 month of reuniting with family); 2) single individuals unless such individual is pregnant; 3) no medical services may be provided except for pre-pregnancy family planning services; 4) individuals who are not a citizen of the United States or a qualified alien; 5) individuals with any outstanding OWF, PRC, or Food Assistance fraud overpayment balance (except for contracted supportive services); 6) families who do not use their own resources to

help meet their need; 7) individuals who are currently under an OWF or FSET work activity sanction (applies only to services provided directly by the HS Division of SCDJFS).

EXPLORING COMMUNITY RESOURCES

County personnel determining eligibility for PRC may refer applicants to other community resources if available to help meet the need. The agency may deny the application if referral to another community resource was made and the service is available.

CDJFS staff will provide case management services to Stark County residents in need of assistance. Staff will consult with and assist all customers, regardless of type of benefits received, with referral services to any potential community resources. Staff will assist TANF eligible customers by any of the means listed above to accomplish any of the four TANF purposes as stated in federal law, 42 U.S.C.601. The four purposes include:

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.

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

Purpose 3: To prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

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

AMOUNT AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE

Non-recurrent Short-Term Benefits:

PRC payments are limited to the amount actually required to meet the presenting need, up to \$1,000.00 per 12 consecutive month period of eligibility (some categories have different or additional limitations as identified in Appendix II, i.e. housing category can be used only once per 24-month period and home repairs are limited to one repair per 12-month period).

The categories and sub-limits of assistance, goods, and services to be provided by the PRC program are in Appendix II. Eligible services must fit into one of the listed categories. Any payments for Children Services and/or contracted supportive services are not included in this financial limit.

The household is required to provide verification of the need before eligibility can be determined. In the case of a disconnection, the shut-off notice must be viewed in addition to a contact with the utility company.

Two written, detailed estimates are required for home repairs. The agency shall not pay for estimates.

The director or his designee has the authority to amend the caps, sub-limits or services in special situations when good cause exists. The director's decision is final and binding.

Supportive Services:

This special PRC eligibility does not conflict with any other PRC dollar limits or terms of eligibility as this program eligibility is for these groups to receive non-monetary, service-only benefits provided under contract or directly by Stark CDJFS. If a service is designated as provided by contract and the contract has exhausted its funding, then the service will not be available.

SCOPE OF SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The Supportive Services chart details the assistance groups served. Economic eligibility shall use the standards for each supportive service charted and the documentation method of eligibility is to be used. The caps on benefits or services and the targeted groups (used to customize service delivery specific to each family's circumstances) are used to provide services without starting the OWF "benefits" time countdown and develop services to meet the needs of families. The listed PRC Supportive Services are only available if there is a current purchase of service contract in place.

Monthly Federal Poverty Guideline (Appendix I)

Monthly Federal Poverty Guideline amounts are used to determine income eligibility for the PRC programs. The total gross countable income of all members of the assistance group must be equal to or less than the Monthly Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG) set for the appropriate Assistance Group Size and PRC short term benefit or supportive service. The Monthly Federal Poverty Guidelines will become effective the first of the month following Stark County Department of Job and Family Services receipt of new poverty guidelines.

FRAUD

Suspected PRC recipient fraud will be referred to the Benefit Recovery Unit for an overpayment determination. Suspected PRC Provider fraud will be investigated by the Fiscal Division of Stark CDJFS.

**Monthly Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG) Measure -
Effective 3-1-09***

Assistance Group size	50% Monthly FPG	100% Monthly FPG	135% Monthly FPG	150% Monthly FPG	175% Monthly FPG	185% Monthly FPG	200% Monthly FPG	250% Monthly FPG	300% Monthly FPG	Annual FPG
1	452	903	1219	1354	1580	1670	1805	2257	2708	10830
2	608	1215	1640	1822	2125	2247	2429	3036	3643	14570
3	763	1526	2060	2289	2671	2823	3052	3815	4578	18310
4	919	1838	2481	2757	3216	3400	3675	4594	5513	22050
5	1075	2150	2902	3224	3762	3976	4299	5373	6448	25790
6	1231	2461	3323	3692	4307	4553	4922	6153	7383	29530
7	1387	2773	3743	4159	4852	5130	5545	6932	8318	33270
8	1543	3085	4164	4627	5398	5706	6169	7711	9253	37010
9	1698	3396	4585	5094	5943	6283	6792	8490	10188	40750
10	1854	3708	5006	5562	6489	6859	7415	9269	11123	44490
11	2010	4020	5426	6029	7034	7436	8039	10048	12058	48230
12	2166	4331	5847	6497	7579	8013	8662	10828	12993	51970
13	2322	4643	6268	6964	8125	8589	9285	11607	13928	55710
14	2478	4955	6689	7432	8670	9166	9909	12386	14863	59450
15	2633	5266	7109	7899	9216	9742	10532	13165	15798	63190
16	2789	5578	7530	8367	9761	10319	11155	13944	16733	66930
17	2945	5890	7951	8834	10307	10895	11779	14723	17668	70670
18	3101	6201	8372	9302	10852	11472	12402	15503	18603	74410
19	3257	6513	8792	9769	11397	12049	13025	16282	19538	78150
20	3413	6825	9213	10237	11943	12625	13649	17061	20473	81890
21	3568	7136	9634	10704	12488	13202	14272	17840	21408	85630
22	3724	7448	10055	11172	13034	13778	14895	18619	22343	89370
23	3880	7760	10475	11639	13579	14355	15519	19398	23278	93110
24*	4036	8071	10896	12107	14124	14932	16142	20178	24213	96850

* For each additional person, add (3,740)

Cash Asst. Policy 1/09

*Revised FPG chart w/effective date of 1-23-09 was received 2-2-09. In accordance with PRC Plan, actual FPG effective date is 3-1-09.

Appendix II

Stark County Department of Job and Family Services List of PRC Non-recurrent Short Term Benefits

These benefits have a maximum combined CAP of \$1000 per year (except Contracted Services); any other limitations are specified in the CAP section.

Effective Dates	PREVENTION/ RETENTION Services and Benefits	Cap	Assistance Group/Application	Economic Need Standard	Target
12-9-10	<p><i>No new agreements until further notice.</i></p> <p>Stark County Subsidized Employment Program (SEP) - For part-time or full-time (20 hours per week or greater) positions.</p> <p>SEP agreement between SCJFS and employer required.</p> <p>Payments to be made directly to employer.</p> <p>SEP agreements effective 9-1-10 or after:</p> <p>Reimbursement of base wages only (as provided by employer) per participant per month for a maximum of 7 months as follows:</p> <p>75% for first 3 months.</p> <p>50% for 4th & 5th month</p> <p>25% for 6th & 7th month</p> <p>SEP agreements current and active prior to 9-1-10 AND the participant's employment has been less than 3 months under current agreement (Addenda to SEP agreement between SCJFS and employer required):</p> <p>Reimbursement of base wages only (as provided by employer) per participant per month for a maximum of 7 months as follows:</p> <p>Up to 3 months @ 75%</p> <p>Next 2 months @ 50%</p> <p>Final 2 months @ 25%</p>	<p>See 'Services and Benefits' at left.</p> <p>All payments dependent upon availability of funds.</p>	SEP Application	200% Federal Poverty Guideline	TANF eligible unemployed or under-employed individuals.
1/31/11 until inventory is depleted	<p>Car Seat or Booster</p> <p>Limited to inventory transferred to Family Council. Eligibility to be determined by, and Car Seats or Booster Seats to be distributed through, the Help Me Grow Program</p> <p>NOTE: Car Seat/Booster Seat program is EXEMPT from \$1,000 per 12-month limit</p>	1 car seat or booster seat per eligible child in household	PRC Car Seat/Booster Seat Eligibility Form provided by SCJFS to be used as application and for tracking. At time of application, program eligibility is exclusive to Help Me Grow participants who are Medicaid or Food Assistance recipients or those at or below 200% of Federal Poverty Guidelines.	200% Federal Poverty Guideline	TANF eligible families with a pregnant woman or who have children thru 7 years of age or less than 4'9" tall.

Supportive Services Any contracts must be funded and in place for the services to be provided.

Effective Date	PREVENTION/ RETENTION/ Supportive Services	Cap	Assistance Group/Application	Economic Need Standard	Target
7-1-01	<p>Children Services -- To maintain children in their own home or to facilitate reunification back into the home. The services may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Shelter • In-home services • Parent Education Services • Transportation Services • Respite Care Services • Kinship Care Services • Mediation • Family Preservation/Support Services • Family Reunification Services 	None	<p>At the point of service initiation, OWF, Medicaid, Food Stamp or Publicly Funded Child Care recipients or those at or below 200% FPG. Provider's PRC Eligibility Form and Children's Services' Action Plan or Case Plan will be used as the application and must state the specific service(s) that are needed to maintain the child(ren) in his (their) own home or to facilitate reunification of the child(ren) back into the home.</p>	<p>OWF, Food Stamps, Publicly Funded Child Day Care, Medicaid, or 200% FPG</p>	<p>Families in need of supportive Children Services to maintain children in their own homes or to facilitate reunification of the children back into their homes. Families whose child(ren) is (are) not in the home are only eligible if the children have been out of the home less than 6 months, or if within 30 days of reunification.</p>
11-10-10 or upon approval of Board of Stark Cty. Comm. (whichever is later) thru 9-30-11	<p>CSEA – job preparation to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits,^{1,2,3,4} Goodwill Industries of Greater Cleveland and East Central Ohio, Inc. Parental Court Program, consisting of the following as applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job Club - Job Development services - Transitional employment <p>Dependent upon availability of funds.</p>	None	<p>PRC Application to be completed by non-custodial parent referred by Stark County Family Court as a possible participant. Eligibility determined by GIGCECO. Only TANF-eligible non-custodial parents will participate.</p>	<p>Household at or below 200% FPG</p>	<p>TANF eligible non-custodial parents who reside in Stark County and are behind in child support payments.</p>

Effective Dates	PREVENTION/RETENTION Supportive Services	Cap	Assistance Group/Application	Economic Need Standard	Target
12-15-08	CSEA case management services designed to support individuals and track, monitor and report outcomes. Employment and training support activities designed to obtain or retain employment or improve employment activities.	Limited to allocation or contract amounts	Non-custodial parent with a minor child. Non-custodial parent must be an Ohio resident. The Court or Administrative Seek Work Order will serve as the application.	OWF, Food Stamps, Publicly Funded Child Care, Medicaid, or 200% FPG	Non-custodial parent with a minor child in the Child Support Enforcement system who has court or administrative ordered child support obligation. Individual is an unemployed or under-employed Ohio resident.
12-15-08	SCDJFS Human Services Division Case Management Services designed to provide supportive services to assist individuals and families to find employment, succeed at work, improve their economic circumstances and end dependence on governmental benefits (TANF Purposes 1 - 4).	Limited to the TANF Allocation	Applicants or recipients of Public Assistance and related application form/process.	OWF, Food Stamps, Publicly Funded Child Care, Medicaid, WIC, Free & Reduced Lunch or 200% FPG or below.	Low income families and individuals in need of supportive services to assist them to improve their lives and end the dependence on governmental benefits.

Non-recurrent One-time Services or Benefits

Effective Dates	PREVENTION/ RETENTION Supportive Services	Cap	Assistance Group/Application	Economic Need Standard	Target
	Nothing currently available				

STATE DEVELOPED PROGRAMS

Effective Dates	PREVENTION/RETENTION	Cap	Assistance Group/Application	Economic Need Standard	Target
	Nothing currently available				

PRC PROCEDURES

Once eligibility for PRC is established, the CDJFS director or designee will authorize and generate payment for the assistance, goods, and/or services. Authorization may occur at any time during a 14 day period beginning on the date that PRC is approved. As long as payment is authorized within the appropriate period, actual payment may be made to vendors according to the procedures in place at the CDJFS. All PRC payments are made by the CDJFS to the vendor or PRC AG.

Notice of Approval/Denial: If it is determined that an application for direct assistance under PRC is approved, the CDJFS shall mail or otherwise deliver the ODJFS 4074, "Notice of Approval of Your Application For Assistance." If it is determined that an application for direct assistance is denied, the CDJFS shall mail or otherwise deliver the ODJFS 7334, "Notice of Denial of Your Application For Assistance."

Stark County Department of Job and Family Services establishes the rules written above for the implementation of the Prevention, Retention and Contingency Program effective October 1, 1997 and revised and rewritten effective January 31, 2011. The agency retains the right to adjust any part of the plan whenever deemed necessary. When an adjustment or change takes place, the agency shall notify the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services of the change and will file a revised copy of the plan or plan amendment.