

VINTON COUNTY PRC PROGRAM
JUNE 5, 2009

The Prevention, Retention & Contingency (PRC) Program is assistance or services needed to overcome immediate barriers to achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency and personal responsibility for families with at least one minor child under the age of eighteen living in the home. The PRC Program encourages families to attain and retain employment, prevents dependency, promotes family stability, and protects families from the consequences of catastrophic situations. The PRC program is not ongoing Ohio Work First (OWF/ TANF) assistance. The Vinton County PRC Program is designed to meet the emergent and/or employment-related needs of an eligible assistance group depending upon the availability of funds. The PRC assistance group must demonstrate a specific crisis situation or an episode of need. The PRC Program is:

Any number of individual, short term assistance payments can be made during the twelve (12) month consecutive period as long as the payments are limited to the amount actually required to meet the presenting economic need, up to the cap amount as listed in the County Services and do not exceed the maximum for the PRC assistance group over the twelve-month period. Exception to the one time occurrence within a twelve month period is for disaster assistance. Whenever the county is declared a disaster by the governor, there will be no limitation of receipt of disaster assistance within a twelve month period.

A PRC assistance group is a group of individuals containing at least one minor child and treated as a unit for the purposes of determining eligibility for the PRC Program. A minor child is defined as an individual who has not yet attained eighteen years of age or has not attained nineteen years of age and is a full-time student in a secondary school or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training. A medically-verified pregnant woman with no minor children meets the PRC assistance group requirements; the unborn child is considered a minor child. The minor child must be residing with their parent, a relative caretaker or legal custodian (for purposes of TANF eligibility, legal custody can only occur through court order). A unit for the purpose of determining eligibility for the PRC Program shall be defined as:

1. All individuals residing with the minor child, or pregnant woman, or
2. A family who is in need of assistance to enable the placement of a child, or
3. Employment related services shall be available to non-custodial parents, residing in Vinton County who have a legal obligation of support, and whose minor child resides in Vinton County. A unit for the non-custodial parent will consist of the non-custodial parent and the minor child(ren).

ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION

Vinton County DJFS is responsible for using objective criteria when determining eligibility and approving or denying the PRC application. The PRC application will be processed (approved or denied) within ten (10) business days after completion of the application process; which includes verification of information, in a fair, equitable manner and whether the county determines that provision of PRC will satisfy the need. Eligibility will be carefully evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Immediate needs and whether or not the PRC Program can be of benefit will be determined by the CDJFS. Under this program, an assistance group as defined above and meets the program's eligibility requirements may receive customized assistance, goods, or services as determined by CDJFS. The PRC Program is designed to help people overcome immediate barriers to achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency and personal responsibility, thereby preventing the need for ongoing public assistance. However, the fact that an ongoing Medicaid or Ohio Works First assistance group is active is not a determining factor in the consideration of eligibility for the PRC Program. In addition, the Vinton County DJFS eligibility determiner must inform individuals about other programs (i.e. Medicaid, Food Stamps, CSEA) that are available and about hearing rights that are applicable. Cooperation with these programs may affect future eligibility for the PRC Program.

PRC assistance will be authorized with the expectation that the PRC AG will then be able to function without additional agency help. If the applicant does not have sufficient income to meet an ongoing

expense, PRC cannot be issued. If the PRC maximum dollar amount allowed will not meet the emergent need and the PRC assistance group can make a co-payment and/or arrangements with the provider for the balance due not covered by the PRC Program, written verification is required, then payment will be made. If such arrangements cannot be made, the PRC application must be denied because the need cannot be met. The PRC assistance group must also demonstrate the assistance group will have sufficient funds to meet the need in future months, for example, a payment of rent or mortgage can only be made if the assistance group can make the payment in future months.

Services are provided to a PRC assistance group to help members retain employment and thereby, achieve or continue self-sufficiency. In addition, services are provided to a PRC AG to meet a presenting or contingent need, if not satisfied, threatens the safety, health or well-being of one or more PRC assistance group member. In addition, services are provided to a PRC AG to overcome a presenting emergent economic need which, if not satisfied, threatens the safety, health or decent living arrangement of one or more PRC AG members. PRC assistance for heating fuel and heating utilities may be authorized as long as the applicant has applied for all available HEAP funds.

PRC assistance groups that have a planned emergency will be denied. A planned emergency is an emergency that appears to be contrived and occurs on a regular basis. A regular basis is defined as requesting the same type of service more than one time in the same 12 month period, for example, requesting PRC assistance an electric disconnect than in the same twelve months requesting PRC assistance for another utility disconnect. For PRC Contingency funds (utility shut-offs, rent, deposits, etc), verification will be required to establish the unavoidable or uncontrollable circumstances that occurred to the PRC assistance group. An unavoidable or uncontrollable circumstances are defined as those situation that are beyond the control of the PRC assistance group, such as the loss of earnings due to a lay-off; or reduction of work hours; or lack of child care; or the loss of unearned income that does not involve a sanction or fraud; or a fire; flood; or natural disaster. An unavoidable or uncontrollable circumstance is not a circumstance that the PRC assistance group chose instead paying their utility bill, such as purchasing school clothes, gifts, buying a vehicle, or paying for vehicle repair (unless the adult assistance group member is employed). A PRC assistance group that creates their own emergent need will be denied.

In order for the PRC assistance group to be found eligible, the PRC assistance group must have insufficient liquid assets (resources) to meet their needs and their income must be at or below 150% the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) currently in effect unless otherwise noted in this plan. The Federal Poverty Guidelines are to be updated yearly usually in March. PRC assistance is only available to members who have not received PRC assistance exceeding the established maximum amount during the previous twelve (12) consecutive month period. Families receiving assistance under another program may receive PRC assistance.

All income plus available liquid assets (resources) received or on hand by any member of the PRC assistance group during the thirty (30) day budget period in excess of \$250.00 is considered when determining financial need. The thirty (30) day budget period begins 30 days prior to the date of application and ends on the application date. The income received, as well as available liquid assets (resources) on hand during this period are used in the computation of financial eligibility. All income and/or liquid assets (resources) which are normally exempt or disregarded when determining eligibility for Ohio Works First are included in the budget computation of PRC financial eligibility. Earnings of a child (the child must be a full-time high school student under the age of 19) are excluded in the calculation of the gross monthly income. All child support received by the assistance group is counted in the PRC budget computation. Income/earnings described in Family Stability Letter #28 are excluded in the PRC budget.

The total gross income, both earned and unearned of all PRC assistance group members except as noted above, is counted in the PRC financial budget process. There are no deductions or exclusions allowed from any type of countable income. Written or verbal verifications of income and/or liquid assets are required. Verification obtained by telephone must be documented in the PRC assistance group case record concerning the name and position of the supplier of the information, the date the verification was obtained, the amount of the verified income or assets, and the name of the individual who obtained the verification.

When all the liquid assets (resources) or cash on hand available to the PRC assistance group are insufficient to meet the emergent need and community resources have been exhausted; the gross amount of the PRC assistance group's countable income is totaled and compared to the amount the 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines amount for the PRC assistance group size. If the total PRC assistance group income is equal to or less than 150% of the FPG (unless otherwise noted) amount for the applicable PRC assistance group size, the PRC assistance group meets the income requirements. For an assistance group with no minor children but a medically-verified pregnant woman, the unborn child is considered an assistance group member.

For the purposes of the PRC Program, resource are defined as being both liquid and available during the period which must be applied toward helping the assistance group meet the emergent need. Liquid assets are those resources which are payable in cash upon demand within the budget period in excess of \$500.00. Available liquid assets are those in which the assistance group members have a legal interest and legal ability to use or dispose of them. If both legal interest and ability to use the liquid resource does not exist, the value of the liquid asset is unavailable for the PRC assistance group. In addition, the purposes of PRC, the value of real property, life insurance, and household goods are not included. Two vehicles for each assistance group will be exempt. All vehicles in excess of two will be considered an available resource, unless used by an additional assistance group member for transportation to employment, seeking employment or for furthering education.

Applicants who are ineligible include the following:

- (1) Individuals with any outstanding Ohio Works First or Prevention Retention and Contingency fraud overpayment balance; or
- (2) Individuals ineligible for other program(s) due to deliberate non-compliance terms of their assistance; or
- (3) Assistance groups who are under an Ohio Works First program sanction and/or penalty. The assistance group under sanction and/or penalty may become eligible if the sanctioned/penalized assistance group member or other adult member of the assistance group is employed. An OWF assistance group under a sanction and/or penalty with an employed adult member may receive PRC for prevention and retention episodes of need. Requests for contingency services will be denied unless the request can be considered prevention/ retention; or
- (4) Families who do not use their own resources to help meet their need.

The VCDJFS PRC Plan's format describes each covered service and notes if the covered service is Contingency or Prevention/Retention. Services with the notation of Prevention/Retention are considered employment-related. Prevention/Retention services shall be authorized only if the PRC assistance group contains at least one employed adult member or an adult member with a bona-fide job offer. The aforementioned employed adult member must establish the employment-related service is necessary in order for the employed adult member to retain employment or prevent the employed member from losing the employment. A PRC assistance group without an employed adult member or an adult member with a bona-fide job offer is not eligible to receive employment-related services (Prevention/Retention). A PRC assistance group without an employed adult member has potential eligibility for Contingency services only. PRC assistance groups with an employed adult member however maybe eligible for what is normally considered a contingency service if the requested service will prevent the adult member from losing employment or if the contingency service will assist the employed adult member retain employment.

In addition, the VCDJFS PRC Plan describes services that are provided via a provider contract. Eligibility for the contracted services is described in the provider contract.

A completed PREVENTION RETENTION AND CONTINGENCY (PRC) APPLICATION ODJFS #3800 is needed to request PRC assistance.

In addition to the ODJFS #3800 PRC application, a written referral from a Children's Services worker can serve as an application for PRC if the following information is included in the referral:

- (1) an explanation of the episode of need and the cause of the need;
- (2) a list of all assistance group members;
- (3) a list of each assistance group member's date of birth and Social Security number;
- (4) verification of the cost of the episode of need i.e. shut off notice, clothing order;
- (5) income verification for the thirty (30) days prior to the date of the CSB referral for all PRC assistance group members.

The Children's Services referral must be approved by the Children's Services Supervisor and authorized by the Vinton County DJFS Director or his designee.

The PRC eligibility worker will process the Children's Services referral as a PRC application. The PRC assistance group's income must be equal to or below the 200% FPG. All verification including the referral will be retained in the PRC assistance group case record. PRC requests from Children's Services referrals must be an expansion of services not a replacement or duplication of services.

EXPLORING COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Every effort must be made to explore the availability of resources within the local community prior to the authorization of PRC. For the purposes of the PRC Program, the community is defined to include areas beyond the county's boundaries. A PRC assistance group is required to apply for and utilize any program, benefit, or support system which may reduce or eliminate the episode of need. Overage funds received from federal and/or state financial aid for those PRC applicants that are attending post secondary training are not considered a community resource and are not to be considered available to the PRC assistance group in the eligibility process. The Vinton County DJFS PRC eligibility determiner should be aware of community resources which may be contracted for or otherwise utilized to help meet the episode of need. The PRC application provides a section for written documentation of the PRC eligibility determiner's attempt to locate and utilize community resources.

AMOUNT AND TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

PRC payments are limited to the amount actually required to meet the episode of need up to the maximum of:

- o \$250.00 per twelve (12) consecutive month period of eligibility for an assistance group without at least one employed adult member at the time of application; or
- o \$250.00 per twelve (12) consecutive month period of eligibility for an assistance group with at least one employed adult member at the time of application.

Any number of individual payments can be made during the twelve (12) consecutive month period as long as each payment is distinctive, non-ongoing occurrences and do not exceed the maximum stated above. The Vinton County DJFS Director or his designee can make case-by-case exceptions to the maximums.

The items and services provided by the PRC Program are detailed by section. This is an all-inclusive listing of scope of coverage. The amounts designated for each item or service shall follow the schedule above. Any item or service listed is to be available to meet the needs of any eligible PRC assistance group.

RELOCATION SERVICES

A PRC assistance group with an employed adult member that has new employment in an area outside of Vinton County and wishes to relocate to this area is eligible for up to \$500.00 for relocation assistance. "New employment" is defined as employment obtained in the 45 (forty-five) day period prior to the date of

the PRC application. The relocation assistance of \$500.00 is available one-time only (life time). The PRC AG requesting relocation monies will be required to provide verification of moving costs, housing costs, etc. Payments for relocation will be made directly to the providers. The relocation monies of \$500.00 are not included in the \$250.00 limit per twelve (12) month consecutive period. PRC assistance groups that have received relocation monies from other county departments of human services are not eligible for relocation monies from Vinton County DJFS.

NECESSARY CLOTHING and PERSONAL EXPENSES (Contingency)

PRC can be issued for necessary clothing and personal hygiene items in the following situations per episode of need:

- (1) to replace clothing lost or destroyed due to a fire or natural disaster such as a flood, tornado, blizzard, or chemical disaster or due to a state of civil disorder as declared by the Governor of Ohio; or
- (2) when a family member(s) resides or has resided within the last thirty (30) days in a domestic violence shelter; or
- (3) clothing necessary for employment; or
- (4) personal hygiene products including but not limited to soap, shampoo, deodorant, and diapers not to exceed \$100.00; or
- (5) purchase of a child restraint seat.

An itemized list that includes the cost of the necessary clothing and/or personal items as documented by the provider must be presented to the PRC eligibility determiner before the clothing expenses and or personal items are authorized. A copy of the documentation will be retained in the assistance group record. A maximum of \$250.00 is allowed for the purchase of clothing and a maximum of \$100.00 for personal items for Prevention, Retention, and Contingency.

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS AND FURNITURE (Contingency)

The expenditure of PRC funds for household items is limited to bedding, linens, cooking/eating utensils; vacuum cleaners, brooms, and cleaning supplies. PRC expenditures for furniture are limited to beds (bed frame, mattress, box springs) and kitchen tables and chairs. PRC funds for household items and furniture can be issued when the presenting/emergent need is a result of a fire or natural disaster such as a flood, tornado, blizzard, or chemical disaster, or due to a state of civil disorder as declared by the Governor of Ohio. The nature of the disaster must be documented in the assistance group record. When a family member(s) resides or has resided within the last thirty (30) days in a domestic violence shelter, PRC funds can be issued for household items or furniture as specified above.

An itemized list and the cost of the needed household items and furniture as documented by the provider must be presented to the Vinton County DJFS eligibility determiner before PRC funds are authorized. A copy of the documentation must be retained in the assistance group record. A maximum of \$250.00 can be authorized for household items and furniture.

HOME REPAIRS (Contingency)

PRC funds for home repairs, including repair/replacement of the water tank; repair of items affecting basic home structure such as walls, roofing, plumbing, water supply, floors, and the water/sewage system that threaten the health and safety of the PRC assistance group will be assessed/ approved by the Vinton County DJFS Director or his designee on a case-by case basis. The PRC assistance group is required to provide two (2) estimates for the needed home repairs; estimates from the applicant or a relative will not be acceptable. An itemized list which includes labor costs and the cost of the materials needed for the home must be presented to the Vinton County DJFS PRC eligibility determiner before PRC funds for home repair are authorized. Additional documentation may be needed to verify the threat of health and safety of the PRC assistance group.

The PRC amount to be paid for home repair will be the actual cost of the home repair or the PRC maximum not to exceed \$250.00, whichever is less. All documentation must be retained in the PRC assistance group record.

APPLIANCES (Contingency)

PRC funding for appliances is limited to the repair or replacement of cooking stoves, heating stoves and refrigerators. An air conditioning unit is an allowable appliance if considered medically necessary (physician's statement is required). A washing machine and /or dryer may be repaired or replaced only if it is needed due to medically-verified disability of a PRC assistance group member. Replacement of any of the noted appliances can be approved only if the repair is not cost effective. A maximum of \$250.00 is allowed for the purchase or repair of any of the listed items or a combination of purchase/repair needs for more than one item. The PRC applicant must provide written estimate of repair for the appliance from a legitimate repair source. An estimate by the PRC applicant or relative is not acceptable. The \$250.00 maximum does include the cost of the estimate and/or delivery charge.

PRC for appliances may be approved disregarding the repair or replacement requirement if the assistance group has moved from an apartment or home, rented or owned where appliances were furnished to a home where the appliances are not furnished. When the PRC assistance group lives in a rented apartment or home where the appliances are furnished, it is solely the landlord's responsibility to make the needed repairs or replacements.

PRC for appliances may be approved disregarding the repair or replacement requirement providing that a family member(s) reside or have resided within the last thirty (60) days in a domestic violence shelter. Disregarding the repair or replacement requirement does not occur when the family member(s) return to their original residence. An appliance that has been repossessed for any reason can not be replaced.

RENT (Contingency)

PRC funds can be utilized to make rent payments only when there is a legal court-ordered eviction pending or when the conditions of the home are considered uninhabitable.

Due to eviction: PRC can be issued for payment of delinquent rent to prevent eviction due to legal, court ordered eviction. A written court-order notice of such eviction or proposed eviction action, showing the date of any scheduled court appearance, is a necessary verification. A copy of the eviction notice/schedule is to be retained in the case record. The PRC payment must be an amount sufficient to prevent the eviction. The amount paid is the actual rent cost necessary to prevent eviction (no court or late payment charges included) up to a maximum of two month's delinquent rent or the VCDJFS PRC maximum of \$250.00 for contingency services, whichever is less. Written documentation must be received from the landlord specifying the monthly rent amount, the total amount due in order to prevent the eviction, and verification that the payment will actually prevent eviction. A copy of the documentation must be retained in the case record.

Uninhabitable conditions: PRC funds can be issued for rent payment when a family is in need of new living arrangements because of the uninhabitable condition of their home due to a natural or chemical disaster, or uninhabitable conditions as certified by a city, county, township, or state agency that has the legal authority to declare a residence uninhabitable. If this certification is unobtainable or untimely and this delay would not be in the best interest of the PRC assistance group, an uninhabitable household determination from the Vinton Co DJFS Children Services unit is acceptable.

The amount paid for a rent payment in the situation of the housing being uninhabitable is limited to one month's rent or the VCDJFS PRC maximum (\$250.00), whichever is less. The assistance group record must contain written documentation of the cause(s) and extent of the uninhabitable conditions of the home and the appropriate agency's certification of the situation. In addition, the PRC assistance group must be

able to verify how the assistance group will continue to meet the rental payments; PRC requests for rent will be denied if the PRC assistance group can not meet its monthly rent obligations.

PRC funds can be authorized for application fees required for housing not to exceed \$100.00 per application.

MORTGAGE (Contingency)

PRC funds can be authorized to eligible families for delinquent payment owed on the home mortgage. The assistance group member make application must be the adult responsible for the purchase of the home and the PRC assistance group must living in the home at the time of the application.

PRC funds for the payment amount must serve to forestall foreclosure on the home. The PRC assistance group record must contain written documentation that the PRC payment will prevent foreclosure. The amount of the payment is limited to the least payment accepted to forestall foreclosure, up to a maximum of \$250.00. No PRC payment toward delinquent or current taxes on the property is allowed. No court costs or late payment charges is allowed.

EMERGENCY SHELTER (Contingency)

A PRC payment for emergency shelter may be issued only in extreme situations when a PRC family is homeless and has no alternative living arrangements available. The PRC payment differs from rent payments because in this situation, the assistance group must actually be without a place to live. The payment for emergency shelter must be for an amount covering the shortest period of time necessary to meet the episode of need. The payment is limited to the amount of one (1) month's rent or the VCDJFS PRC maximum of \$250.00, whichever is less. There are two situations in which emergency shelter can be paid:

Temporary Housing: PRC funds can be authorized for payment of rent in temporary housing when a family is homeless. Payment may be made to an agency or a landlord to provide living arrangements on a temporary basis until permanent living arrangements can be made. For examples, a woman and two children become homeless when her husband deserts them, leaving no money and a pending eviction. She applies for PRC assistance on the day of the eviction, requesting shelter. If all eligibility factors are met, a PRC payment could be made for temporary housing arrangement until the family can become establish eligibility for ongoing assistance and/or make other permanent arrangements.

Payment is made for the shortest period of time necessary, not to exceed one (1) month's rent up to the VCDJFS PRC maximum of \$250.00. The amount needed must be verified by the agency of landlord and the verification must be retained in the case record.

Prior to a temporary shelter arrangement, the VCDJFS eligibility determiner and PRC assistance group adult member should discuss the housing options available and agree on what would be the best arrangement for the PRC assistance group.

Any specialized emergency shelter facilities within the community should be utilized whenever possible prior to the issuance of PRC funds. PRC payment for emergency shelter cannot be authorized for families living in treatment centers such as substance abuse facilities. PRC payments can be made to domestic violence and homeless shelters if necessary.

Arranging Permanent Housing: PRC funds may be authorized for payment of rent to arrange a permanent living arrangement for a family who is homeless. The PRC payment for rent is made in an amount not to exceed one month's rent or the VCDJFS PRC maximum of \$250.00 whichever is less. The amount needed must be verified by the landlord and the verification retained in the case record. In the situation where a family is arranging for permanent housing with an individual whom is in a leasehold situation and is willing to act as a sub-lessor, verification of the shelter cost being charged to the family must be secured from either the individual acting as the sub-lessor or from his landlord and retained in the case record.

Emergency shelter payments are not to be routinely issued to a family currently living in a place where they can remain while waiting to receive an ongoing assistance payment. When a family has lost their residence and temporarily moves in with others, PRC funds can be issued if the PRC assistance group provides the necessary verifications. The verification must establish that the family's continued presence in the residence violates the lease or creates a serious overcrowding situation. Possible overcrowding situations should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Areas of greatest concern are adequate and proper sleeping arrangements for the family members, access to bathing facilities and food preparation areas. The VCDJFS Social Service unit may assist in assessing a possible overcrowded situation. Emergency shelter may not be issued to a child under the age of eighteen (18) who has moved or is planning to move out of his/her parents' home.

SECURITY DEPOSITS (Contingency)

PRC funds can be issued for a security deposit when the landlord will not waive it. The need for the security deposit for a rental property must exist because the family is homeless due to one of the following situations:

- (1) A legal court-ordered eviction or foreclosure, a written court-ordered notice of eviction or proposed eviction action showing the date of any scheduled court-ordered appearance.
- (2) The uninhabitable conditions of the previous home due to a natural or chemical disaster, or as certified by a city, county, township, or state agency having the legal authority to declare a residence uninhabitable. If the certification is unobtainable or untimely, an uninhabitable household determination from the VCDJFS CSB unit is acceptable.
- (3) The PRC assistance group is receiving a temporary housing payment from another agency and the security deposit will ensure permanent housing for the PRC assistance group.
- (4) Homeless due to being forced to reside in a domestic violence center.

Documentation that verifies the court order, the uninhabitable certification, or the family's receipt of emergency shelter must be retained in the case record.

An exception to the homeless requirement is a situation where a security deposit is required by Metropolitan Housing or Housing and Urban Development (HUD). A security deposit is allowed in the situation if it is advantageous for the PRC assistance group to move into that type facility.

The amount of the security deposit is limited to one month's rent up to the VCDJFS PRC maximum of \$500.00, whichever is less. The amount must be verified by the landlord and retained in the case record. A security deposit is subject to repayment provisions established by VCDJFS. The PRC assistance group requesting both rent payments and security deposits must choose between the rent payment and the security deposit; only one of the requests will be authorized per episode of need; not both.

UTILITIES (Contingency)

Utility and heating fuel payments can be made to prevent a shut-off of service, to restore service, or to ensure a continuation of service when there is a serious threat to the safety and health of the PRC household members. Restoration of service includes the cost to reconnect, if necessary. Verification must be obtained stating that the cost to reconnect cannot be waived. The PRC assistance group member making application must have been the consumer of the incurred heating fuel or utility costs. The PRC assistance group member must be living in the home where the service is being threatened at the time of the application.

The PRC payment is limited to the amount necessary to prevent shut-off or to restore service not to exceed the VCDJFS PRC maximum of \$250.00. Heating and cooking fuel is limited to the minimum amount the provider will deliver; PRC funds can not be authorized for heating and cooking fuel that has been delivered prior to a PRC application/approval.

A deposit for heating fuel or utility service can be paid if it is required by the heating fuel or utility provider

can not be waived. The deposit must be necessary to establish, maintain, or restore service.

A deposit amount may be paid in combination with an amount authorized for the purpose of preventing a shut-off or to restore service not to exceed the VCDJFS PRC maximum of \$250.00. This also includes payments for cooking fuel, water and/or sewage. PRC funds can only be used on current utility accounts. Any unpaid balances on previous accounts cannot be paid.

Any available home heating assistance must be utilized before PRC funds can be issued. The PRC assistance group is required to apply for and accept benefits from all utility programs including but not limited to HEAP and the PIP Program available with PUCO-regulated utility companies. The case record must contain written verification of any eligibility or ineligibility that the PRC AG has for such programs as well as for any community resource that may be available for home heating and utility assistance.

PRC assistance groups that have a planned utility emergencies will be denied. A planned utility emergency is an emergency that appears to be contrived and occurs on a regular basis. A regular basis is defined as requesting the same type of service more than one time in the same 12 month period, for example, requesting PRC assistance an electric disconnect than in the same twelve months requesting PRC assistance for another utility disconnect. For PRC Contingency funds (utility shut-offs, rent, deposits, etc), verification will be required to establish the unavoidable or uncontrollable circumstances that occurred to the PRC assistance group. Unavoidable or uncontrollable circumstances are defined as those situation that are beyond the control of the PRC assistance group, such the loss of earnings due to a lay-off, reduction of work hours or lack of child care; loss of unearned income that does not involve a sanction or fraud; fire; flood; or natural disaster. An unavoidable or uncontrollable circumstance is not a circumstance that the PRC assistance group chose instead paying their utility bill, such purchasing school clothes, gifts, buying a vehicle, or paying for vehicle repair (unless the adult assistance group member is employed). A PRC assistance group that creates its own emergent need will be denied.

FOOD ASSISTANCE

PRC funds can be authorized for food assistance to meet the needs of the assistance group if the family has suffered an unavoidable or uncontrollable circumstance in the ten days prior to the date of application and Food Stamp assistance is not available or has been delayed for reasons out of the control of the assistance group. The assistance group can not receive PRC food assistance if they received Food Stamps in the month unless approved by the Director or his designee. The food assistance will be in the form of a food voucher to be used at a community grocery store determined by the VCDJFS. The amount of food assistance voucher is to be determined on a case by case basis considering the number of people in the assistance group and the period of time before the crisis will end or food stamp assistance begins. The minimum amount of a food voucher is \$100.00 but can not exceed \$200.00 per episode of need. Food assistance does not count toward the PRC limits.

MEDICAL EXPENSES

Medical expenses shall not be authorized using funds from the Vinton County PRC Program except for pre-pregnancy family planning services.

JOB-RELATED-SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (Employment Related - Prevention/Retention)

PRC funds can be authorized for employment-related purposes to provide goods and/or services needed to attain or retain employment for the PRC assistance group employment-seeking adult member. Employment-related services can not be authorized to a PRC assistance group that does not have at least one employed adult member or an adult member with a bona-fide job offer. All other requests for Employment-related services (Prevention/Retention) will be denied. The following services are considered employment-related services and are subject to the \$250.00 limit unless otherwise specified:

- (1) tools, uniforms, clothing, safety equipment; with a maximum of \$250 per PRC AG;

- (2) short-term educational expenses that will assist the adult PRC member obtain or retain employment. Short-term educational expenses include but are not limited to: the cost of a skills training program that does not exceed one year; the costs of books, fees, transportation costs but not vehicle repair, and other supportive services deemed necessary by the provider. The short-term training program must lead to employment in a “demand” occupation determined by Labor Exchange and/or by the local area need and must be approved by the VCDJFS Director or his designee. There is a \$250.00 per PRC AG per episode of need for educational expenses;
- (3) comprehensive vocational assessment as arranged by the Vinton County DJFS eligibility determiner;
- (4) pre-employment drug screening for employers;
- (5) testing fees for state licenses, board certification, Commercial Driver’s License, etc;
- (6) educational expenses for a two or four year program as approved on a case-by-case basis by the Vinton County DJFS Director or his designee. The adult PRC member must be eligible for the PELL and/or OIG funds; these funds must be used for the cost of tuition. PRC funds can be authorized to assist the adult PRC member with the costs of books, fees, transportation and other educational expenses necessary for the completion of the educational program. The two or four educational program must be approved by the Vinton County DJFS Director or his designee;
- (7) short-term child care costs as approved by the Vinton County DJFS Director or his designee with the assistance of the VCDJFS Social Services unit;
- (8) other employment-related services as approved by the Vinton County DJFS Director or his designee;
- (9) gas vouchers issued as needed on a weekly basis with a maximum of four (4) weeks per PRC assistance group. Each week’s voucher will be determined by the distance round trip from the PRC employed adult assistance group member’s home to his/her place of employment at \$0.31 per mile with a maximum of \$250.00 per PRC assistance group (\$50.00 per week). Gas vouchers will not be authorized to eligible PRC adult assistance group member who is an OWF recipient in the month of employment if the work participation allowance is available. The OWF work participation allowance must be explored before PRC funds. The PRC adult assistance group member must be: newly employed (employment beginning the past thirty days); or been on a temporary layoff and returning to former employment with a delay in pay; or returning to employment with a delay in pay because of sick/disability leave;
- (10) marriage counseling services;
- (11) telephone installation;
- (12) school participation fees for elementary and secondary education students;
- (13) school workbook fees for elementary and secondary education students;
- (14) suitable attire for a job interview (clothing would include: one shirt or blouse; pants; a dress, a pair of shoes); with a maximum of \$200 per PRC assistance group;

- (15) hair cut and/or style for job interview;
- (16) cost of job resumes preparation;
- (17) PRC funds may be utilized for the payment of license plates fees and driver's training courses as a requirement for a PRC adult assistance group member to gain or retain employment. Driver's training costs are limited to first time license holders. Requests for payment as a result of traffic violations including court fees, fines and reinstatement costs are not to be authorized with PRC funds;

PRC payments for employment-related goods and services will be made directly to the provider and the PRC payment maximum of \$250.00 will apply or the actual cost of the goods and/or services whichever is less. The PRC adult employment-seeking member must seek assistance through all available local, state and federal programs. The PRC adult member who is currently employed must verify the employment by providing the name and address of the current employer. The PRC adult member who is newly hired must provide verification of the beginning date of employment. The verification shall include an employer statement verifying the projected start date of employment. A copy of the documentation for any item or service requested will be retained in the case record in addition to all employment verification.

VEHICLE EXPENSES (Employment-related - Prevention/Retention)

PRC funds for vehicle expenses are limited to the replacement of batteries, repair or replacement of tires, vehicle repairs, and one month's delinquent car payment to avoid repossession solely for the prevention and retention purposes to assist PRC adult assistance group member in gaining and/or retaining employment. To qualify for the vehicle repair for gaining employment, the PRC-eligible adult assistance group member must have a verifiable bona-fide job offer and must provide a written statement from the employer that includes the beginning date of employment, number of employment hours per week and the hourly rate of pay before vehicle repair will be authorized. PRC assistance groups without an employed adult PRC member will not be eligible for employment-related services which include vehicle expenses and repairs. There must be at least one adult in the assistance group with a valid driver's license before vehicle repair can be authorized.

Participation in Work Experience Program as a condition of eligibility for Ohio Works First or FSET is not considered employment and therefore, vehicle repair is not allowed.

Authorization for vehicle expenditures will be made providing the vehicle to be repaired is the only available transportation for employment-related purposes and owned by the PRC assistance group. Also, authorization of the vehicle repair is dependent upon whether the cost of the vehicle repair is cost-effective. The VCDJFS eligibility worker will review each request for vehicle repair to verify that the vehicle to be repaired has a market value equal to or more than the cost of the repair. Market value will be determined by the retail value listed in the current N.A.D.A. Official Used Car Guide.

The PRC adult employed assistance group member must provide two (2) written estimates of the needed repair from a legitimate repair source (the provider must have a valid vendor's license). An estimate by the applicant or a relative is not acceptable. The cost of vehicle repair is limited to \$250.00 per episode of need. The provider must agree to provide a thirty (30) day written guarantee of the vehicle repair. The guarantee must be retained in the case record; copy to the PRC eligible assistance group member. The VCDJFS PRC maximum of \$250.00 for Prevention and/or a PRC maximum of \$250.00 for Retention per period of eligibility apply to transportation (vehicle) expenses.

The VCDJFS eligibility worker is to review the cost of the repair and accept the estimate that best meets the needs of the applicant. If Provider A's estimate is less than Provider B's estimate Provider A's estimate generally will be authorized. An exception to this policy may occur when the applicant needs to expedite the vehicle repair to avoid a loss/termination of employment. The VCDJFS eligibility worker shall contact

both providers and determine which provider can expedite the repair of the vehicle. If the provider with the more costly estimate can expedite the repair and the other provider can not, the more costly estimate may be authorized with approval of the Supervisor or Director or his designee. All documentation shall be retained in the case record.

PRC funds may be authorized to avoid the repossession of a vehicle by a financial lending institution for non-payment by the PRC eligible employed adult. One month's vehicle payment up to the PRC maximum of \$250.00 will be made directly to the financial lending institution if the lending institution agrees to stop the repossession activity. A written statement from the lending institution is required and shall be retained in the case record.

TRANSPORTATION SUBSIDY (Employment Related - Prevention/Retention)

The Vinton County Department of Job and Family Services PRC Program will provide a transportation subsidy to offset transportation expenses to a PRC eligible assistance group member that is employed at least twenty (20) hours per week if the following conditions are met:

1. The employed PRC eligible assistance group member does not have a driver's license; and/or
2. The PRC assistance group does not own a vehicle; and
3. The employed PRC eligible assistance group member's home is not within walking distance of his/her place of employment (walking distance is greater than two (2) miles).

The transportation subsidy is determined by the employed PRC assistance group member's cost of transportation: \$.31 per mile up to the maximum of \$100.00 per month. The PRC assistance group member must provide a written statement verifying the costs of transportation which includes the number of miles to work from the PRC assistance group member's home to his/her place of employment and the number of days per week the PRC member is employed. Travel to the child care provider is also considered in the mileage. Payment of the transportation subsidy will be made directly to the provider of transportation on a bimonthly or monthly basis as billed. The request for payment must sign and dated by both the provider and the PRC employed assistance group member. The transportation subsidy is available for as long as needed up to the \$250.00 retention limitation per twelve (12) month period.

The transportation subsidy can be provided only if there is not a contracted transportation service available to the PRC employed assistance group member. The subsidy is allowed for the cost of transportation from the PRC employed assistance group member to the pick-up site of the contracted transportation service.

The transportation subsidy requires a new PRC eligibility determination every three (3) months.

CHILD PROTECTIVE PROVISION

PRC funds may also be used for a child protection services. The Vinton County PRC Program funds can be used to provide assistance to family involved with the child protective services. The Vinton County DJFS has designed a program to help alleviate a family crisis that could lead to the removal of children from their home and/or to help a family so the children can be safely returned to the home. Certification by the Vinton County Children Services unit that PRC funds are necessary to prevent the removal of a child from the child's home, or to help a family so a child can be safely returned to the home is required before the Vinton County DJFS will authorize a PRC payment the amount not to exceed \$500.00. Based on the circumstances described in this paragraph, services are not limited to those detailed in the scope of coverage sections, but will be determined by the Vinton County DJFS Director or his designee on a case-by-case basis. The authorization of PRC funds for child protection will not be counted toward the PRC limits.

Though foster placements are not an allowable PRC expenditure; request for respite care will be considered for PRC payment if the respite care is an expansion of services and not a duplication of services. Services are not limited to those detailed in the scope of the coverage sections, but will be determined by the Vinton

County DFJS Director or his designee on a case-by-case basis.

SOCIAL SERVICES AND ADMINISTRATION

The following social services and administration activities related to OWF and PRC assistance groups are available to those that are less than 300% of the FPG:

- (1) information and referral;
- (2) protective services for children;
- (3) continuing protective services;
- (4) case management;
- (5) transportation;
- (6) referral for special services (including alcohol and drug counseling and other counseling services);
- (7) education and training activities;
- (8) pregnancy and parenting services for young parents;
- (9) prevention and intervention services.

Social services and administration activities must be included in the OWF self-sufficiency contract. For the PRC assistance group not receiving OWF cash assistance that have documented income at or below the 300% FPG and in some cases, regardless of income (see MOU/Child Welfare and PRC) will be eligible for the aforementioned services with documentation of the service request and income verification placed in the case record.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES (Contract)

The Vinton County Department of Job and Family Services has entered into a purchase of service contract with Vinton County Local School District to provide supplemental educational services to PRC eligible children and their families to meet the TANF goals of family stability; the prevention of dependency; and to assist families retain employment. **The contract period is effective 2-01-09 through 6-30-09.** The authorization of PRC funds for supplement educational services does not count toward the assistance group's PRC limits and payments will be made directly to the Vinton County Local School District.

DISASTER RELATED PRC ASSISTANCE SUPPLEMENTS

When a state of emergency is declared by the Governor of Ohio for Vinton County; PRC funds will be available in excess of the Vinton County PRC Program maximums. The PRC assistance group must reside in Vinton County at the time of the disaster, contain at least one minor child, and must have been adversely affected by the emergency condition. Disaster Relief funding assistance will be considered one-time cash payments and/or goods/services up to \$500.00 per family unless otherwise determined by the Governor of Ohio.

HELP ME GROW (Contract)

The Help Me Grow Program shall be provided to pregnant women and families with children under the age of three who reside in Vinton County and whose income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

The Provider will use the designated PRC Supportive Service Application Form which documents the family's income either by self-declaration, enrollment in either OWF cash assistance, food stamps, Medicaid or actual pay stubs.

Applications will be completed annually. Help Me Grow shall not count toward the assistance group's eligibility limit for PRC assistance. Continued receipt of Help Me Grow services does not prohibit the assistance group from making a separate application for other goods or services.

The Help Me Grow Contract will end 6/30/2009 due to loss of funding.

TANF KINSHIP NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

To provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in own home or in the home of relatives.

Services include:

1. Case management
2. Supportive services

Eligible assistance groups for these projects must have income at or below the 200% Federal Poverty Level.

KINSHIP PERMANENCY INCENTATIVE PROGRAM

The Kinship Permanency Incentive Program or KPI, as it is referred to, is designated to promote permanency for a minor child in the legal and physical custody of a kinship caregiver. The program provides an initial one time incentive payment to the caregiver to defray the cost of initial placement. Additional payments may be provided for the minor child at six months intervals for a period not to exceed thirty six months. The child must remain in the legal and physical custody of the caretaker. A maximum of \$3,500. has been established per child. Eligibility shall be at or below 300% of the poverty level.

The Kinship Permanency Incentative Program will end 6/30/2009.

PRC - TRANSFER CASES:

The county in which the PRC applicant is residing is the county responsible for determining eligibility for and issuing PRC assistance.

If a PRC application is made in Vinton County, the Vinton County DJFS eligibility determiner will verify whether or not any member of the PRC assistance group received PRC in any other county or state within the past twelve (12) consecutive month period of eligibility. If so, the PRC assistance group will be eligible for the difference between the amount the PRC assistance group received in the other county and/or state and the Vinton County PRC Program maximum providing the Vinton County PRC Program maximum is higher. If the PRC assistance group has previously received in the past twelve (12) consecutive month period of eligibility a PRC amount in excess of the Vinton County PRC program maximum, the application will be denied.

FINAL PROCESS - APPROVAL/DENIAL

When eligibility for PRC is established, the Vinton County DJFS eligibility determiner with the approval of the Vinton County DJFS Director or his designee will authorize and generate payment for the assistance, goods and/or services. Authorization may occur at any time during the period beginning on the date the PRC funds are approved. Payments are to be authorized within the appropriate periods. PRC payments will be made to vendors in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Vinton County DJFS. The Vinton County DJFS will ensure that its policies meet all auditing requirements.

Notices of Approval and/or Denials: The Vinton County DJFS eligibility determiner shall mail or otherwise deliver the ODJFS 4074 - Notice of Approval of Your Application for Assistance if the PRC assistance group is determined eligible for PRC funds/goods/services. The Vinton County DJFS eligibility determiner shall mail or otherwise deliver the ODJFS 7334 - Notice of Denial of Your Application for Assistance if the PRC assistance group is determined not to be eligible for PRC funds/goods/services.

The Vinton County DJFS agrees to implement the PRC Model Worksheet.

The Vinton County Department of Job and Family Services Prevention, Retention, and Contingency Program Plan is effective 6-5-09

Jody Walker, VCDJFS Director