



Ohio Department of Human Services

30 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43266-0423

January 3, 1999

OWF/PRC Guidance Letter No. 11

TO: Directors, County Departments of Human Services
Directors, Child Support Enforcement Agencies
Directors, Public Children Service Agencies
Regional Account Managers

FROM: Jacqueline Romer-Sensky, Director

SUBJECT: OWF: CHILDREN IN THE CARE OF SPECIFIED RELATIVES

As a result of ongoing meetings with the Ohio Grandparents Coalition, some concerns regarding the processing of OWF cases for children in the care of grandparents, have surfaced. The purpose of this guidance is to further clarify the treatment of OWF for children residing in the homes of grandparents and other specified relatives. Regulations pertaining to the treatment of "child only" assistance groups are found in rules 5101:1-23-10 and 5101:1-23-20 of the Ohio Administrative Code (chapter 3000 in the Public Assistance Manual) and section 5107.11 of the Ohio Revised Code.

- Specified relatives are not required members of the standard filing unit. If the relative is in need and chooses to be included in the assistance group with the children, all OWF requirements must be met. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- Use of time-limited benefits;
- Signing and complying with a self-sufficiency contract;
- Participation in work activities;
- Use of the relative's income in determining OWF eligibility.

Specified relatives who indicate need should be fully informed of the requirements and consequences of being included in the assistance group, in order for them to make an informed decision.

- Specified relatives, included in the assistance group with the children in their care, can request to be removed from the assistance group at any time. Upon removal, the following OWF requirements cease:

- Use of time-limited benefits;
- Signing and complying with a self-sufficiency contract;
- Participation in work activities;

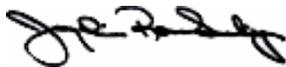
Use of the relative's income in determining OWF eligibility.

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- Children in assistance groups where the specified relative failed a provision of the self-sufficiency contract and has been sanctioned, are eligible for OWF after the minimum sanction period is served. The specified relative who failed remains ineligible for OWF until he/she demonstrates a willingness to comply.
- Children living with specified relatives are not added to an OWF assistance group with the relative and his/her children. Standard filing unit regulations prohibit the inclusion of children unless they are siblings, through blood or adoption.
- Specified relatives are not required to submit proof of their income if they are not requesting to be included in the OWF assistance group with the children in their care or requesting Medicaid for the child. They are required to submit proof of income if applying for food stamps or child care, since these programs require the calculation of all income in the household.
- Specified relatives are not required to have legal custody or guardianship in order to apply for or receive OWF for the children in their care if there is sufficient proof of relationship.
- Specified relatives could also receive benefits and services under the PRC program, if provided for in the county's plan.

Many counties have begun collaborating with Grandparent Support Groups in their community to publish resource guides for grandparents and other relatives with children in their care. Attached to this guidance is a sample guide from Cuyahoga County which has been extremely beneficial for grandparents and other relatives to provide a better understanding of the services available for the children in their care. We strongly encourage other counties to develop a relationship with local Grandparent support groups or senior centers in your community.

If you have any questions regarding this guidance, please contact your regional office. This Guidance letter has also been posted on the ODHS InnerWeb.



JRS:ke

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