

Bob Taft  
Governor



Jacqueline Romer-Sensky  
Director

## Ohio Department of Human Services

30 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43266-0423

May 12, 2000

### **OWF/PRC Guidance Letter No. 20**

TO: Directors, County Departments of Human Services  
Directors, County Public Children Services Agencies  
Directors, Child Support Enforcement Agencies

FROM: Jacqueline Romer-Sensky, Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JR-Sensky".

SUBJECT: **OWF WORK ACTIVITY DEFINITIONS**

This guidance letter provides counties the OWF work activity definitions that are contained in Ohio's TANF state plan. Federal regulations mandate that states submit a TANF state plan to the Department of Health and Human Services every two years. Section 265.1 of the TANF regulations mandates that states submit a definition of their work activities to the Department of Health and Human Services either as part of the state plan or with a required annual report. Ohio chose to submit the work activity definitions as part of the state plan. As a result of the submission of the state plan, some changes were made to existing work activities and the remaining activities were defined. The work activities are broadly defined so that counties have flexibility in how activities are defined at the local level.

When developing the state plan, it was decided that the On-the-Job Training (OJT) activity code was redundant with other work activity codes. Therefore, effective May 1, 2000, the OJT activity code cannot be entered on CRIS-E. On-the-job training may continue; however, it will be coded differently on CRIS-E depending on what work activity definitions apply. Depending on the type of activity in which the individual is engaged, on-the-job training may be coded as Work Experience (WEP), Subsidized Employment (SEP), ETWA (Education and Training) or employment. Any OJT activity codes that are entered into CRIS-E prior to May 1 may continue until the end-date of the assignment. Beginning May 1, the worker will not be able to use the OJT activity code for new assignments.

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 5107.42, county departments of human services must assign each minor head of household and adult participating in Ohio Works First to one or more work activities or developmental activities. Individuals are appraised and assigned a work activity based upon their education, previous work history, skills, and abilities. As described in OWF/PRC Guidance Letter # 15, assignment to education may be an appropriate work activity. Research shows that the factor most correlated with job advancement is developing basic skill levels and obtaining education beyond high school.

**Federal Work Activity Definitions**

The following federal work activities are contained in Ohio's TANF state plan. These definitions are solely for the purpose of OWF work activities and are guidelines to be used when the county defines their work activities.

***Employment*** means an individual receives compensation for services performed. This also includes activities that the CDHS deems to be legitimately entrepreneurial. Employment is picked up for the participation reports from the AEIEI or AEISE screens.

***Work Experience Program (WEP)*** means the program in which individuals work without pay at a job site in a public, private-non-profit or private-for-profit organization in order to gain work experience and training. It may also include activities ensuring that participants become familiar with workplace expectations and exhibit work behavior and attitudes necessary to compete successfully in the labor market. WEP may include specific hands-on training in a classroom or laboratory setting. WEP may include child care service activities in which a participant provides child care for another participant's child. WEP may include Community Service activities including a program under which a participant of OWF who is responsible for a minor child enrolled in grade twelve or lower is involved in the minor child's education on a regular basis. An individual who is assigned to be involved with the minor child's education would be required to attend academic home enrichment classes that provide instruction for parents in creating a home environment that prepares and enables children to learn at school as well as a work assignment at the school that the child attends. The worker enters the Work Experience Program on the CRIS-E Work Program Assignment Screen (WPAS) as activity code WEP.

***Subsidized Employment Program (SEP)*** means the program in which individuals work with pay at job sites in public, private non-profit or private-for-profit organizations in order to gain specific occupational training. As part of the on-the job training a subsidy is provided to the employer for a specified period of time. The worker enters the Subsidized Employment Program on the WPAS screen as activity code SEP.

***Job Search and Job-Readiness Activities*** means the programs which assist individuals in acquiring the strategies and skills to be used in obtaining, retaining or improving employment; and those activities to seek and secure employment as directed and approved by the CDHS. The worker enters Job Search activities on the WPAS screen as JBSRCH. Job Readiness activities are entered on the WPAS screen as JOBRDY.

***Vocational Education*** means a program of education and training with a goal of enabling an individual to obtain employment. Vocational education includes college, technical or vocational or other course work leading toward a degree, certificate or license. Study time may be included as part of this activity. Vocational Education is entered on WPAS as Activity code ETWA with subcode 170 (vocational) or 124 (postsecondary).

***Job Skills Training*** means a program designed to increase an individual's employability potential. It may include college, technical, vocational or other course work. It may also include activities ensuring that

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participants become familiar with workplace expectations and exhibit work behavior and attitudes necessary to compete successfully in the labor market. Various types of structured programs would qualify, e.g., rehabilitation services, counseling, personal development and pre-employment classes. Study time may be included as part of this activity. Job Skills Training is entered on WPAS as activity code ETWA with subcode 133.

***Education Related to Employment*** means any educational program provided to someone who does not have a high school diploma or GED. Study time may be included as part of this activity. Education Related to Employment is entered on WPAS as activity code ETWA with subcode 180.

***Basic Education Activities*** means a program provided to an individual who does not possess basic literacy skills whether or not they have obtained a high school diploma or equivalent. Basic education may include high school or equivalent education and adult basic and literacy education. Study time may be included as part of this activity. Basic Education Activities are entered on WPAS as activity code ETWA with subcodes 111 (English as a Second Language), 112 (Adult Basic and Literacy Education, or 113 (high school classes).

In addition to the federal activities that are defined in Ohio's OWF state plan, there are two state activities, **Developmental and Alternative**, that are found in Ohio Revised Code Sections 5107.62 and 5107.64. Developmental and alternative activities are county defined. Please refer to OWF/PRC Guidance Letter #5 for further discussion of these activities.

If you have any questions about this guidance letter, please contact your state Work Activity Coordinator.

JRS:bn

cc: County Commissioners Association  
PCSAO  
Wayne Sholes  
Account Managers  
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