

AUGLAIZE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES
Amendment to Work Support Program Plan effective dated 10-1-2015

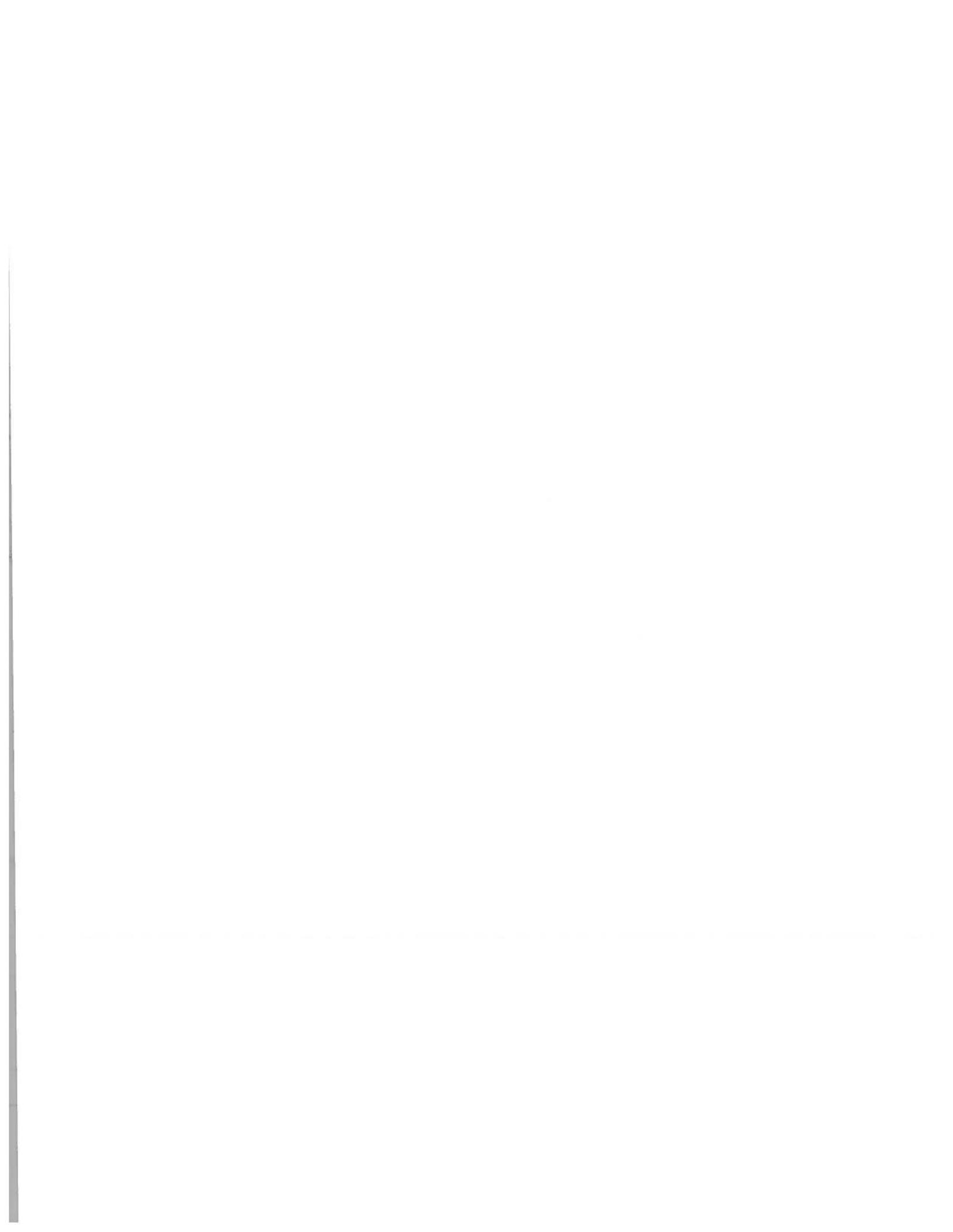


Michael S. Morrow

Director



WSP plan effective October 1, 2015



WORK SUPPORT PROGRAM
FOR
AUGLAIZE COUNTY
EFFECTIVE: October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2017
(Pursuant to ORC 5108.01 through 5208.10)

1. Introduction

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a Federal funding source designed to help needy families achieve self-sufficiency. To carry out this mission, programs have been established to accomplish the four purposes of TANF. These are:

- Purpose #1 Assisting needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes
- Purpose #2 Reduce the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage
- Purpose #3 Preventing out-of-wedlock pregnancies
- Purpose #4 Encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families

The Prevention, Retention & Contingency (PRC) program has been established under Chapter 5108 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) utilizing TANF funding. It is designed to provide benefits and services to needy families and low-income employed families who are in need of help with essential supports to move out of poverty and become self-sufficient. The PRC program provides flexibility for funding a wide variety of employment and training activities, supportive services, and benefits that will enable individuals to obtain employment, maintain employment, and improve their economic circumstances.

The supports provided under the PRC program are limited to non-recurrent, short-term, crisis-oriented benefits and ongoing services which do not meet the federal definition of assistance. Non-recurrent, short-term assistance addresses discrete crisis situations that do not provide for needs extending beyond four months. These benefits and services may encompass more than one payment per year, as long as the payment provides short-term relief and resolves a discrete crisis situation rather than meeting recurrent needs. These benefits and services are consistent with the federal definition of “non-assistance” as found in 45 CFR 260.31(b). The definition of “non-assistance” includes:

- Non-recurrent, short-term benefits that:
 - i. Are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need
 - ii. Are not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs
 - iii. Will not extend beyond four months
- Work subsidies (ie: payment to employers to help cover the cost of employee wages, benefits, supervision, and training)

- Supportive services such as child care and transportation provided to families who are employed
- Refundable earned income tax credits
- Contributions to, and distributions from, Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Services such as counseling, case management, peer support, child care, information and referral, transitional services, job retention, job advancement, and other employment-related services that do not provide basic income support
- Transportation benefits provide under a Job Access or reverse Commute project to an individual who is not otherwise receiving assistance.

2. TANF Exclusions

- Federal TANF funds cannot be used:
 - i. For medical services, except for pre-pregnancy planning services
 1. Medical services include:
 - a. Inpatient medical services
 - b. Outpatient medical services
 - c. Mental Health treatment
 - d. Substance Abuse treatment
 - ii. To supplant spending in the areas of:
 1. Child support enforcement
 2. Foster care
 3. Adoption assistance
 - iii. To satisfy a cost-sharing or matching requirement of another federal program unless specifically authorized by 2 CFR 225, Appendix A
 - iv. To construct or purchase buildings or facilities or to purchase real estate
 - v. For general expenses required to carry out the responsibilities of the county

3. Benefits and/or Services Categories

▪ Direct (also known as “hard”) Services

- i. Direct services are any benefits and/or services that have a direct cash value to the PRC applicant. Such benefits must:
 1. Be designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need
 2. Not be intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs
 3. Must not extend beyond four months

Examples include, but are not limited to, purchase of tools, car repairs, purchase of bedding, appliances, rent, and/or security deposit.

▪ Indirect (also known as “Soft”) Services

Indirect services are any benefits and/or services that DO NOT have a direct cash value to the PRC applicant. Indirect services may be provided on an ongoing basis.

Direct benefits and/or services will be provided in the form of a payment to a vendor on behalf of a recipient of PRC, not paid directly to the recipient. In no case is payment for PRC direct services made to any member of the assistance group (A/G).

Any number of individual services can be provided or payments can be made during the twelve-month eligibility period following the date of application as long as each is a distinctive, non-ongoing occurrence.

Only the Auglaize County Department of Job & Family Services (ACDJFS) is authorized to provide "direct" benefits and/or services.

APPLICATION – PRIORITY

1. Families with children at risk of removal from the home by Children Services or that have an open case with Children Services.
2. Families with 0 income
3. Families with income at or below 100% of the federal poverty guidelines
4. Families with income between 101% and 150% of the federal poverty guidelines
5. Families with income between 151% and 200% of the federal poverty guidelines

NON-FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

1. Social Security Number

Each person applying for PRC must provide the county agency (or third party providing agency) with a social security number or verify, in writing, application for a social security number.

2. Ineligibility for PRC Services

The following individuals are ineligible for PRC assistance:

- An individual who is a fugitive felon and/or probation/parole violator;
- An individual who is not a U.S. citizen or a qualified alien;
- An Assistance Group (A/G) with any family member who has any outstanding OWF or PRC fraud overpayment balance;
- An A/G with a member who is ineligible for other programs due to deliberate non-compliance with the terms of his/her assistance, such as those stated in the Self-Sufficiency Plan and Contract (exception: Individuals in this group who are employed may receive employment-related PRC assistance.);
- An A/G with an unmarried, non-graduate parent under 18 not attending high school or equivalent;
- An A/G with an unmarried parent under 18 not living in an adult-supervised setting;
- An A/G with a member who has been found to have fraudulently misrepresented residence in order to obtain assistance in two or more states (ineligible for ten years);
- Families giving false or incorrect information;
- An A/G with any family member who is determined by the courts or state hearing to have committed an intentional program violation;

- An A/G with any family member who has not established a current payment plan with the benefit recovery unit for any and all identified overpayments to ODJFS. This includes OWF cash, supplements, work allowances, PRC, and food assistance overpayments;

3. PRC Exclusions

- Applicants may not use PRC benefits:
 - i. To meet a current, demonstrated need that is met through the issuance of benefits under another federal or state program;
 - ii. To directly pay court-ordered child support;
 - iii. To pay any costs associated with the violation of federal, state, and/or local laws. This includes, but is not limited to:
 1. Court costs
 2. Attorney fees
 3. Fines
 4. Parking violations
 - iv. To pay fees associated with the subsidized childcare program including childcare co-payments;
 - v. To pay property taxes;
 - vi. For any item(s) that require additional financing over and above the PRC issuance to meet the current, demonstrated need

4. Assistance Group Composition

The applicant who signs the PRC Application must meet the eligibility requirements listed below to make an A/G eligible for PRC benefits and/or services.

Assistance Group is the technical term used to describe family members that may be served by a PRC program. All A/Gs must, at a minimum, consist of:

- A minor child (as defined in 5108.01, 5108.06, and 5107.02 of the ORC) who resides with a parent, specified relative, legal guardian, or legal custodian;
- Pregnant individuals with no other children;
- A non-custodial parent (defined in 45 CFR 260.30) who lives in the state of Ohio, but does not reside with his/her minor children. Eligibility for PRC benefits and/or services is limited to non-custodial parents who:
 - i. Are currently cooperating with child support:
 - ii. Who establish and who are in the process of establishing responsibility for their child(ren) through the CSEA; and
 - iii. Who have a current child support order and the intent to meet his/her financial obligation; and
- iv. Are ordered into an employment program by a court or referred by the Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) and are also complying with the employment program to find a job; or
- v. Who are employed at least twenty (20) hours per week.

A/G members may be “temporarily absent” yet the individual and his/her family may still qualify for PRC benefits and services. “Temporary absence” has the same meaning for the PRC program as it does for Ohio Works First (OWF) as set forth under Section 5107.10 of the ORC and rule 5101:1-3-04 of Ohio Administrative Code (OAC). 5101:1-3-04 states that the absence of a member of the A/G is temporary if:

- The A/G member has been absent for no longer than 45 consecutive days;
- The location of the absent individual is known;
- There is a definite plan for the return of the absent individual to the home; and
- The absent individual shared the home with the A/G prior to the onset of the absence.

A minor child may be connected to more than one A/G receiving PRC depending upon the service provided and other individuals residing with the minor child. All individuals living in the household that would benefit from the PRC assistance would be counted as an A/G.

Rule 5101:1-3-04 sets forth exceptions to the requirement that the A/G member be absent for no longer than 45 days including a situation where a child is removed by the public children services agency if the agency indicates that there is a reunification plan to return the child to the home within six (6) months.

5. Residence

In order to be eligible to receive PRC benefits and/or services at least one member of the A/G must be a citizen of the United States or a qualified alien as defined in 5101:1-2-30 of the OAC.

PRC benefits and/or services are available only to residents of Auglaize County. Residence is established by living in the county voluntarily with the intent to remain permanently or for an indefinite period of time. Residence is also established by an applicant who is not receiving assistance from another county and entered the county with a job commitment or seeking employment, whether or not currently employed.

PRC benefits and/or services are available to adult applicants on behalf of children in the temporary or permanent custody of the ACDJFS, even when the child is placed/resides in another county. Additionally, PRC benefits and/or services are available to adult participants on behalf of children placed in the custody of a relative (relative placement), facilitated by ACDJFS, including when the relative resides in another county, as long as the provider and child have a current open case in the ACDJFS Social Services division. Benefits and/or services issued on behalf of these children shall not duplicate benefits and/or services received by the adult applicant through the County Department of Job & Family Services in their county of residence.

6. Change in Circumstance

The applicant must be able to demonstrate that a specific change in circumstance occurred within the twelve (12) months immediately prior to the application date for PRC benefits and/or services that has led to, or significantly contributed to, the current demonstrated need. Failure by the applicant to demonstrate the specific change and tie the change into the current need will result in the applicant’s ineligibility for PRC benefits and/or services.

The change in circumstance leading to the current need must be an unexpected, life-altering event which may include, but is not limited to, such things as: job loss or job gain, domestic violence, divorce, natural disaster or fire, individual providing monetary support leaves the household, death of a household member, new Children Services involvement resulting in the removal or threatened removal of child from the home, homelessness, accident resulting in the client not being able to work, addition of a child or other family member into the household, and prolonged illness.

The change in circumstance does not include routine or expected changes such as: a voluntary move (not precipitated by an unexpected change in circumstance), change of seasons, start of a school year, inflation, holidays, sanction, legal infractions (including intentional fraudulent acts by the client such as intentionally breaking a lease), temporary (pre-defined end date or lasting less than six months) or seasonal employment, and voluntarily terminating employment.

Written verification of the change of circumstance is only required when the worker has reasonable suspicion to doubt the truthfulness of the claim.

7. Community Resources

The availability of resources within the community shall be explored prior to the authorization of PRC for direct benefits and/or services. A PRC A/G, within reason (as defined by the ACDJFS), is required to apply for and utilize any program, benefit, or support system that reduce or eliminate the current, demonstrated need.

The PRC application shall include a section to identify the community resources that must be explored prior to authorization for PRC benefits and/or services. The applicant must provide written verification from the provider that the community resources identified were explored/utilized prior to the issuance of PRC benefits and/or services.

8. Mitigation

The PRC applicant must be able to demonstrate that they have attempted to mitigate the current, demonstrated need, when applicable. Failure to attempt to mitigate the need will result in the denial of the PRC application. A PRC applicant must demonstrate an attempt has been made to prevent the occurrence of the emergent need. Situations that demonstrate a failure to mitigate may include, but is not limited to:

- Making no payment toward the obligation;
- Making only minimal payments with the knowledge that such an amount would not prevent the occurrence;
- Failing to follow through with the previous PRC plan.

9. Sanctioned Individuals

OWF sanctioned individuals/assistance groups are eligible to receive PRC benefits and/or services. PRC benefits issued to sanctioned individuals/assistance groups must be directly related to assisting the sanctioned A/G member to comply with the provisions of his/her Self-Sufficiency

Contract. If, at the time of application, the applicant is within thirty (30) days of the sanction or penalty period ending, he/she must sign a new Self-Sufficiency Contract or waive OWF eligibility if OWF is no longer desired.

FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

1. Need Standard

PRC applicants applying for direct services, indirect services meeting TANF purpose #1, and indirect services meeting TANF purpose #2 must demonstrate the need for financial assistance and/or services. The gross monthly income of all A/G members must be equal to or less than **200%** of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) (see Appendix A) except for services related to removal of child or reunification or meet the means-tested program eligibility listed in the next paragraph. The gross monthly income of all A/G members applying for direct services, indirect services meeting TANF purpose #1, and indirect services meeting TANF purpose #2 must be equal to or less than **200%** of the Federal Poverty Guidelines to be eligible for services to prevent the removal of a child or facilitate reunification or meet the means-tested program eligibility listed in the next paragraph. The FPG threshold for services to prevent the removal of child or facilitate reunification was set at higher level as the families served are generally not means-tested. Additionally, the additional cost of services will facilitate cost-savings overall as placement costs far exceed the value of PRC services issues at this higher income threshold.

If the PRC A/G receives any of the following means-tested benefits, they are automatically considered to be financially-eligible for PRC Assistance as long as their gross monthly income is at or below 200% FPG.

- OWF Cash Assistance
- Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- Women, Infant and Children (WIC)

All earned and unearned income received by any adult member of the PRC A/G during the budget period shall be counted. Income shall be reduced by child support, alimony, and child care payments made by any adult member of the A/G to individuals/entities outside of the home. This includes all income which is normally disregarded when determining eligibility for Ohio Works First or Disability Assistance. All income which is received or expected to be received during the thirty-day budget period is considered when determining financial need.

Self-employment income shall be calculated in accordance with OAC 5101:1-23-20(F). Self-employment gross earnings are defined as the total profit from the self-employment enterprise. The total profit from the self-employment enterprise is determined by deducting the self-employment expenses (i.e., the business expenses directly related to producing the goods or services) or the prescribed standard deduction from the gross receipts.

For cases in which the income cannot be accurately obtained, the implementation of practices that are reasonable and prudent should occur when determining countable income. A signed Release of Information should be obtained from the applicant for an inquiry. Once the release is received, verification which is obtained by phone must contain clear documentation in the PRC A/G 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. More stringent verification is required when PRC benefits and services involve a direct monetary gain by the applicant and opportunities for fraud are prevalent.

The applicant must use all available income and resources in meeting the current, demonstrated need. This includes ongoing assistance programs including, but not limited to, OWF, Disability Assistance, SSI, Food Assistance, unemployment compensation, social security benefits, and the special energy assistance programs.

Rule 5101:1-24-20 of the Administrative Code address there are some income and benefits which are federally required to be excluded from all assistance programs when determining income eligibility

2. Liquid Assets/Resources

PRC applicants requesting direct services with liquid assets greater than \$200.00 are required to use any amount over the \$200.00 as a co-payment to meet the current, demonstrated need unless it can otherwise be documented that the personal liquid assets are needed to prevent another PRC episode. There is no PRC eligibility if the assistance group fails to make use of the available income or resources that are in an amount sufficient to meet a portion of, or the entire amount of, the current, demonstrated need.

Liquid assets are those resources that are in cash or payable in cash upon demand. Liquid assets are those that can be converted to cash so that the funds are available to help meet the current, demonstrated need. The most common types of liquid assets are cash on hand, savings accounts, checking accounts, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and promissory notes. Available liquid assets are those in which any A/G member has a legal interest and the legal ability to use or dispose of them. If both legal interest and availability to the use the liquid assets does not exist, the value of the liquid assets is unavailable for PRC purposes.

Resources to be considered for PRC purposes are those that are both liquid and available during the budget period to help the A/G to meet the current, demonstrated need. Resources do not include the value of real property, motor vehicles, life insurance (term or whole life), and household goods.

Resources owned by any A/G member are considered available to the entire A/G. If ownership of a resource is shared by A/G members and a person who is not in the A/G, the liquid asset/resource is considered to be available on a pro-rated basis unless evidence exists to show otherwise.

Example: David applies for PRC. He has three children. David reports owning a savings account with a balance of \$500. Additionally, David reports

having a joint checking account with his mother. The balance in this account is \$250. Available assets to be considered for David are \$625 (\$500 from his account and half of the \$250 in the joint account (\$125).

Lump sum payments (excluding tax refunds) are considered income in the month received and any unspent balance is considered as a resource thereafter.

VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Direct Services

A PRC applicant is responsible for completing all necessary documents, furnishing all available facts and information, and cooperating to the fullest extent in the eligibility determination process.

- The applicant must provide written verification of the need, whenever possible;
 - The applicant must provide written verification of the change in circumstance, whenever possible;
 - The applicant must provide written verification of their mitigation attempts, whenever possible;
 - The applicant must provide written verification of the exploration of community resources, whenever possible;
 - The applicant must verify residency in Auglaize County;
- i. PRC is available to non-Auglaize County residents on behalf of a child in the temporary or permanent custody of the ACDJFS
 - ii. PRC is available to non-Auglaize County residents when the ACDJFS has facilitated placement of a child to a relative only when the case remains active in the ACDJFS Social Services division
 - The applicant must provide a social security number or verification of application for a social security number;
 - The applicant must verify U.S. citizenship or qualified alien status;
 - Verification of all A/G income is required
- i. Written verification from the source of the income must be obtained, whenever possible
 1. Examples of acceptable written verification are:
 - a. Pay stub;
 - b. Letter from the employer;
 - c. Child Support statement;
 - d. Award letter;
 - e. Self-employment records
 - ii. If the applicant fails to provide all required verifications, the ACDJFS shall give the applicant ten (10) business days to provide the requested verification. Verbal verification, with the applicant's signed Release of Information form may be obtained by the ACDJFS in lieu of written verification.
 1. Verbal verification must be clearly documented in the case record including:
 - a. The name of the person supplying the information;
 - b. The position title of the person supplying the information;

- c. The date the verification was received;
- d. The amount of income received in the budget period;
- e. The name of the ACDJFS staff person obtaining the information
 - Verification of all available assets and resources to the A/G is required. If unable to obtain actual verification due to emergent timeframes, notarized self-declaration can be accepted.
- i. Written verification must be obtained, whenever possible
 - 1. Examples of acceptable written verification are:
 - a. Passbooks;
 - b. Monthly bank statement;
 - c. Any written notice provided on company letterhead with an original signature
 - 2. If the applicant fails to provide all required verifications, the ACDJFS shall give the applicant ten (10) business days to provide the requested verification
- ii. Verbal verification, with the applicant's signed Release of Information form may be obtained by the ACDJFS in lieu of written verification
 - 1. Verbal verification must be clearly documented in the case record including:
 - a. The name of the person supplying the information;
 - b. The position title of the person supplying the information;
 - c. The date the verification was received;
 - d. The amount of available resources/assets in the budget period;
 - e. The name of the ACDJFS staff person obtaining the information
 - Verification of any required A/G contribution is required:
 - i. Before the PRC benefit is issued;
 - ii. When the PRC benefit is less than the amount required to meet the current, demonstrated need
 - 1. Example: While assistance for car repair may not exceed \$XXXX the customer may be permitted to negotiate a co-payment with a local vendor, when the total cost of the repair exceeds \$XXXX and the customer is willing to pay the difference directly to the vendor. In such cases, the customer will pay the vendor directly. Payments to the vendor will only be made by the ACDJFS after the repair has been completed, and after the vendor verifies that the customer has paid the difference between the total cost of the repair and the \$XXX limit.

2. Indirect Services

A PRC applicant/re-applicant is responsible for completing all necessary documents, furnishing all available facts and information, and cooperating to the fullest extent in the eligibility determination process.

- The applicant does not have to demonstrate:
 - i. That a change in circumstance occurred
 - ii. That community resources availability was explored
 - iii. That mitigation attempts were made
 - iv. Resources over the \$1,000 limit do not have to be used
- The applicant must verify residency in Auglaize County
 - i. PRC is available to non-Auglaize County residents on behalf of a child in the temporary or permanent custody of the ACDJFS

- ii. PRC is available to non-Auglaize County residents when the ACDJFS has facilitated placement of a child to a relative only when the case remains active in the ACDJFS Social Services division
 - The applicant must provide a social security number or verification of application for a social security number
 - The applicant must verify U.S citizenship or Qualified Alien status
 - A signed, written self-declaration of income meets the verification requirement
 - A signed, written self-declaration of available assets and resources meets the verification requirement

The PRC recipient must reapply for PRC indirect services annually.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Voter Registration

In accordance with 329.051 of the Ohio Revised Code:

- The ACDJFS shall make voter registration applications available to all applicants for PRC at the time of application.
- All contracted providers funded, in whole or in part, with TANF funds shall make voter registration applications available to all applicants for PRC benefits and/or services at the time of application.

2. Charitable Choice and Faith-Based Initiatives

Charitable Choice provisions apply when Auglaize County contracts with faith-based organizations to provide benefits and/or services with TANF funds (including PRC).

Federal regulations (45 CFR 260.34) require that A/Gs have the right to request an alternative provider and that the A/G be notified of this right.

- The notice must clearly explain the right to be referred to an alternative provider and services that reasonably meet timeliness, capacity, accessibility, and equivalency requirements.
 - Any A/G that objects to a faith-based provider must be provided with an alternative provider of services within a reasonable amount of time.
- i. The alternative provider must be reasonably accessible and be able to provide comparable services.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Application Filing

Any adult has the right to apply for PRC benefits and/or services. An individual requesting direct or indirect PRC benefits and/or services must complete a PRC application. At the time of application, the PRC applicant shall be provided with his/her rights as an applicant.

Recipients of indirect PRC benefits and/or services whose services extend beyond one year, must submit a new application before the end of the tenth month of service and ever year

thereafter. The re-applicant must demonstrate that all eligibility requirements continue to be met at each annual redetermination.

A PRC application made by a person who died before the decision was reached shall be denied. Additionally, any application made on behalf of a deceased A/G member shall be denied whether the application was made before/after his/her death. If the remaining A/G members are in need of PRC benefits and/or services a new application must be filed and their eligibility will be considered in a manner consistent with this policy.

Eligibility for other public assistance programs is not a factor in the eligibility determination, except for meeting financial eligibility standards, for PRC benefits and/or services. All PRC applicants shall be informed of other public assistance programs (i.e., Medicaid and Food Assistance) that are available.

2. Case Records/Retention

Case records must be maintained for all PRC applicants. The ACDJFS determines eligibility for direct services and may or may not contract with community providers to determine eligibility for indirect services. Providers contracted to determine/re-determine eligibility for indirect services must maintain case files that are readily available for monitoring and audit in accordance with OMB Circular A-133 and A-87, even if the provider ceases to exist.

- If the PRC applicant is/was in receipt of public assistance benefits the application and all required verification gathered during the PRC eligibility determination process shall be kept in the OWF, Medicaid, or Food Assistance case record if eligibility is determined by the ACDJFS.
- If the PRC applicant is/was not in receipt of or applying for OWF, Food Assistance, or Medicaid and applies for PRC benefits and/or services through the ACDJFS, a separate case record shall be created and maintained and the application and all required verification gathered during the PRC eligibility determination process shall be kept in it.
- If the PRC applicant is applying for benefits and/or services through a contracted Provider (whether or not the applicant is/was in receipt of public assistance), a separate case record shall be created and maintained and the application and all required verification gathered during the PRC eligibility determination process shall be kept in it.
- If the PRC applicant is a non-custodial parent, the application and all required verification must be maintained in a separate case record.

3. Standard of Promptness

The application for PRC benefits and/or services is an application for public assistance benefits. The timelines for determining eligibility and rendering a final decision established in 5101:1-2-01 of the OAC shall be adhered to by the ACDJFS and all contracted providers. Additionally, the ACDJFS will make every effort to determine eligibility for direct services within ten (10) days of receipt of the application and all required verification.

4. Notice Requirements

The PRC applicant shall receive notice of the decision regarding the PRC benefits and/or services in accordance with OAC Chapter 5101:6. The following shall apply:

▪ **Approval**

- i. The Notice of Approval/Denial shall be forwarded, in person or via U.S. Mail, to the applicant within two business days from the day on which the decision was rendered.
1. The "Approved" box shall be marked
2. The notice shall be signed and dated by an ACDJFS or contracted provider representative.

▪ **Denial**

- i. The Notice of Approval/Denial shall be forwarded, in person or via U.S. Mail, to the applicant within two business days from the day on which the decision was rendered.
 1. The "Denied" box will be marked.
 2. The notice shall be accompanied by Notice of the Right to a State Hearing.
 3. The notice shall be signed and dated by a ACDJFS or contract provider representative.
- ii. Denial is required when an application has been withdrawn, either verbally or in writing.

SCOPE OF COVERAGE

1. Maximum Issuance

In all cases the amount of PRC issued must meet, but may not exceed, the current, demonstrated need of the A/G. The amount of PRC issued must be within the appropriate maximum payment amount. If the amount of PRC available cannot prevent the onset or continuation of current, demonstrated need, there is no eligibility for payment.

▪ **Example:**

- i. If the amount available from PRC can pay the major portion of the amount needed to avoid a utility shut-off and the applicant and the utility company set up a written agreement for payment of the balance, PRC can be issued.
- ii. If an agreement cannot be made or the amount available through PRC cannot meet the total necessary to prevent the shut-off, no PRC may be issued.

▪ **Example:**

- i. If the cost of the car repair exceeds the value of the car, as determined by a licensed, qualified mechanic or other agency-approved vendor, the request would be denied.

The A/G may receive more than one item/service per event and may apply and receive PRC assistance multiple times within a 12-month period; but, the total amount of PRC assistance cannot exceed the maximum limits and applicable sub-limits. The 12-month period begins on the date of the initial application for PRC.

All direct supportive services issued to a participant in the Comprehensive Case Management & Employment Program through CCMEP Supportive Services issued in the 12-month period prior to the date of the PRC application shall count toward the PRC maximum issuance and all sub-limits, as applicable.

▪ **Direct Services**

- i. Parents, specified relatives, legal guardians, legal custodians, and pregnant individuals with no other children
 - 1. PRC applicants who meet all eligibility criteria may be eligible for up to \$1,500 per service in each year (beginning with the initial date of application) for direct goods and/or services.
 - 2. PRC assistance issued in another county during the 12-month period immediately prior to the month of the date of application shall count as being received in Auglaize County and applied to the maximum issuance limit.
- ii. Non-custodial parents
 - 1. PRC applicants who meet all eligibility criteria may be eligible for up to \$500 in each year (beginning with the initial application date) for direct goods and/or services.
 - 2. PRC assistance issued in another county during the current calendar year shall count as being received in Auglaize County and applied to the maximum issuance limit.

▪ **Indirect services**

- i. Parents, specified relatives, legal guardians, legal custodians, and pregnant individuals with no other children
 - 1. There is no maximum issuance for PRC applicants who meet all eligibility criteria as there is no direct monetary value attributable to individuals for indirect services received.
 - 2. Any monetary value of indirect services shall not count toward the maximum issuance for direct services
- ii. Non-custodial parents
 - 1. There is no maximum issuance for PRC applicants who meet all eligibility criteria as there is no direct monetary value attributable to individuals for indirect services received.
 - 2. Any monetary value of indirect services shall not count toward the maximum issuance for direct services

2. Direct Services Sub-limits

▪ **Prevention, Employment, and Retention Assistance- \$750.00 per 12-month period**

- i. The primary focus of the PRC program in Auglaize County is to provide assistance which will help applicants obtain employment, retain jobs and/or prevent the need for ongoing assistance. This includes:
 - 1. Individuals/families that are seeking employment (active in an approved job search program);
 - 2. Individuals/families participating in an assigned WEP activity;
 - 3. Individuals/families beginning employment;
 - 4. Individuals/families attempting to maintain current employment;
 - 5. Individuals/families in need of short-term assistance to support their employment to prevent them from further or ongoing OWF assistance;
 - 6. Individual/families in need of short-term assistance for educational expenses, including tuition cost
- ii. Issuance may include, but is not limited to:
 - 1. Tools;
 - 2. Work Clothing, including uniforms;
 - 3. Cost of text books and school/work supplies.

iii. If a person requests assistance with education/training-related items they must complete an assessment and evaluation process following the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act criteria. This will demonstrate an ability to succeed in the education/training program. Applicants for education/training may be required to complete activities to prepare them for the initial education/training request (i.e. require a GED before entering a more advanced program; require basic skill review before entering a more advanced program; have childcare and transportation arranged; have ability to meet all financial obligations).

▪ **Contingency Assistance- \$750.00 per 12-month period**

- i. The secondary focus of the PRC program is to provide assistance to meet a contingency, a need which if not satisfied may threaten the health, safety (this includes instances of domestic violence), or well-being of one or more household members. Issuance is limited to the following:
 - 1. Shelter Costs
 - a. Rent
 - i. To prevent eviction if a Notice to Leave the Premises (3-Day Notice to Evict) is presented. Landlord or Housing Manager signature is required on Notice to Leave Premises.
 - 1. The amount paid is the actual amount necessary to prevent the eviction up to a maximum of two months delinquent rent.
 - 2. Signed, written documentation must be received from the landlord specifying the monthly rent, the total amount due in order to prevent the eviction, and verification that the payment will actually prevent eviction.
 - ii. To alleviate homelessness, including instances of court-ordered eviction where the applicant has no other resources.
 - iii. When an A/G has lost its place of residence and has moved in with others.
 - 1. One month's rent may be authorized.
 - 2. The applicant must verify that continued occupation of the current/original residence would violate the lease or create a serious overcrowding situation.
 - 3. Only the income of the A/G will be used when determining eligibility for permanent housing.
 - b. Security Deposit
 - i. May be paid only when a landlord will not waive the requirement.
 - ii. The need for a security deposit must exist due to one of the situations listed above (2)(i)(1)(a)(i-iii).
 - iii. The amount is limited to one month's rent and must be verified by the landlord.

Utility Assistance

To prevent disconnect of services. Utility disconnect notice is required and the bill for service must be in the AG's name.

Transportation Assistance- \$1200.00 per 12-month period

- i. Lack of reliable transportation has been identified as one of the most frequent barriers to self-sufficiency. Many entry level workers have difficulty reaching jobs during evening and weekend shifts when transit services are not offered. Similarly, destinations in the county—areas not served by the transit authority—are also difficult to reach. Providing new transportation options for low-income workers, especially those who are receiving or who have recently received cash benefits, increases the likelihood that those workers will get jobs and keep them.

- ii. PRC assistance may be authorized for the purposes of providing transportation to/from places of employment.
- iii. Such assistance may be in the form of:
 - 1. Bus passes
 - 2. Gas Cards / Vouchers
Gas cards can only be used for gasoline purchase for employment related transportation and issued sparingly. The AG will be required to bring the card back to the agency with a receipt showing that all the money on the gas card was used. The agency will keep a record of issued and returned cards. The unredeemed portions on gas cards will be returned to the TANF agency and treated as a rebate or credit. The returned amount will only be spent for an allowable TANF purchase
 - 3. Car repairs performed through a licensed, qualified mechanic or other agency-approved vendor. Two estimates required from a qualified mechanic or other agency-approved vendor.
 - a. When car repair assistance is provided, all such repairs must be recommended by a licensed, qualified mechanic or other agency-approved vendor.
 - b. The PRC applicant must:
 - i. Have employment of at least thirty hours per week or provide verification from an employer that they will be starting employment within the next week; and
 - ii. Have a current, valid driver's license; and
 - iii. Have state-required minimum insurance coverage.
 - iv. While assistance for car repair may not exceed the maximum sub-limit, the customer may be permitted to negotiate a co-payment with a local vendor, when the total cost of the repair exceeds the maximum sub-limit and the customer is willing to pay the difference directly to the vendor.
 - 1. The customer must pay the vendor directly
 - a. Payments to the vendor will only be made by the ACDJFS after the repair has been completed, and after the vendor verifies that the customer has paid the difference between the total cost of the repair and the maximum sub-limit.
 - v. Regular and routine maintenance of cars (oil changes, tire rotation, etc.) may be authorized if, during the course of a non-routine car repair, a licensed, qualified mechanic or other agency-approved vendor makes the determination if that in the best interest of the longevity of the car, those services will be performed as part of the assistance.

▪ **Family Stability Services- \$1,000 per 12-month period**

- i. PRC assistance can be provided to offer an array of Family Stability Services designed to strengthen the family unit, prevent the removal of a child from his/her home, facilitate placement of children with relative caregivers who have been removed by the Department, or to make reunification possible.
- ii. A requirement of eligibility for Family Preservation and Reunification/TANF Services is that the A/G has active involvement with the Children Services division of the Department. An adult family member, his or her designee, or a Public Children Services Agency representative

applying on behalf of a child may make application. A self-declaration of income by the customer will be used to determine the income eligibility.

- iii. Assistance may include:
 - 1. Bedding
 - 2. Furniture (child-specific) item excluding entertainment items.
 - 3. Children's clothing
 - 4. Appliances (non-entertainment)- once in a five-year period
 - a. Stove
 - b. Refrigerator
 - c. Washer
 - d. Dryer
- iv. The Assistance Group may receive more than one item/service per event and may apply and receive assistance multiple times within a 12-month period.

▪ **Disaster Assistance- \$1,000 per 12-month period**

- i. PRC assistance to assist families who have sustained losses as a result of a declared (by the Governor or Auglaize County Emergency Management) natural disaster. These include:
 - 1. Flood, tornado, or blizzard
 - 2. Chemical disaster
 - 3. Fire
 - 4. Civil Disorder

3. Indirect Services

Indirect services have no monetary value to the PRC A/G. Therefore no sub-limits apply. Any benefits and/or services issued do not count, in any way, toward the maximum issuance limits defined in this policy. The following indirect services may be offered through TANF-PRC funded contracts:

▪ **Training, Employment, and Career Advancement Services (TANF Purpose #2)**

- i. Employability Assessments;
 - ii. Transportation;
- 1. Authorization to use a ACDJFS-contracted transportation service only when referred to the service by the ACDJFS for a maximum of three (3) months.
- a. Out-of-county employment-related transportation will be provided only upon the approval of the ACDJFS Director or his/her designee and will be determined on a case-by-case basis
- iii. Job skills training and re-training, including college tuition for a maximum of twelve (12) months
- iv. Job retention services or post-employment follow-up services such as counseling, employee assistance, and other supportive services;
- v. Linguistic and other culturally appropriate services that assist TANF-eligible refugees obtain employment or participate in work activities;
- vi. Outreach activities to encourage employers to hire TANF recipients

▪ **Food Assistance and /Medicaid Outreach Activities (TANF Purpose #1)**

Food Assistance along with other work supports often makes the difference in low-income workers transitioning into the workforce. Since the de-linking of Food Assistance and Medicaid from the OWF program, Auglaize County may fund programs designed to improve community outreach around the Food Assistance and Medicaid programs.

▪ **Community and Economic Development (TANF Purpose #2)**

The community planning process provides an opportunity for collaboration among stakeholders that include employers as well as economic development experts. In order to be allowable under PRC, economic development activities must meet the purposes of TANF, serve TANF-eligible families, and/or have an evident benefit to TANF-eligible families. PRC programs centered around economic development should be used to supplement existing economic development funds and programs. TANF-PRC funds may be used by Auglaize County to provide the following:

- i. Economic development activities that support the expansion and/or retention of employers;
- ii. Collecting and distributing information about job opportunities and/or prospective changes in demand for specific occupations;
- iii. Providing information for job seekers of new job prospects and employers of available personnel;
- iv. Providing job skills and remedial skill training for employees and potential employees through local community colleges;
- v. Planning and development financing for local organizations or community development corporations that employ TANF recipients

▪ **Substance Abuse and Mental Health (TANF Purposes #1, 2, or 4)**

Substance abuse and mental illness constitute major barriers for participants in the programs of the ACDJFS. It is estimated that approximately 70% of adults served by our agency experience one or both problems.

Accordingly, PRC assistance may be authorized to provide allowable substance abuse and mental health services to eligible ACDJFS customers and all clients of the Social Services Division. TANF-PRC funds may be used by Auglaize County to provide the following:

- i. Information and referral;
- ii. Outreach and awareness campaigns;
- iii. Education;
- iv. Early intervention;
- v. Family therapy;
- vi. Wrap-around services;
- vii. Anger management counseling

▪ **Child Development Activities (TANF Purposes #2 or 4)**

Early Childhood is a critical period of a person's development. It is critical to developing skills, emotional attachments, and intellect necessary to be a successful adult. A significant

percentage of young children in Ohio live in poor families. The development of these children may be at risk because the families lack resources and information necessary for healthy child development. Failure to address these issues may result in school failure, health problems, and future welfare dependency.

i. TANF- PRC funds may be used by Auglaize County to provide the following:

1. Help Me Grow Services (300% of the FPG)
2. Developmental and behavioral screenings;
3. Parent education including assistance with behavioral/parenting problems;
4. Linkages to existing programs;
5. Case management and service coordination;
6. Family Support;
7. Individual family service plans;
8. Information and referral to other services;
9. Home visits

▪ **Family Stability/Child Protection Services (TANF Purposes #1, 3, or 4)**

PRC assistance may be provided to offer an array of Family Stability Services designed to strengthen the family unit, prevent the removal of a child from his/her home, or to make possible reunification.

i. TANF-PRC funds may be used by Auglaize County to provide the following:

1. Case management;
2. Home-based services for families;
3. Wraparound services;
4. Family preservation;
5. Family reunification services/supports;
6. Kinship Care;
7. Respite care;
8. Enrichment and support programs for youth;
9. Mediation services;
10. Parenting services;
11. Services to pregnant women and their partners;
12. Mentoring services;
13. Community Outreach.

▪ **Housing Services (TANF Purposes #1 and 2)**

Activities designed to promote self-sufficiency and find permanent housing options may be provided, including case management and provisions for food and daily living necessities.

In response to the increasing number of current or prospective homeowners who request financial literacy education or counseling, TANF-PRC funds may be used by Auglaize County to provide the following:

- i. Homebuyer education;
- ii. Financial fitness;
- iii. Predatory lending seminars;

- iv. Home maintenance courses;
- v. Financial counseling to prevent or respond to foreclosure;
- vi. Prevention services;
- vii. Outreach to the community

- **Prevention Programs (TANF Purposes #1, 2, 3, or 4)**

PRC assistance may be provided with the goal of preventing the need for OWF cash assistance in the future. The ACDJFS provides support to a number of activities that are not associated with an application for direct services but are instead intended to address the causes of poverty with the goal of creating healthier environment in Auglaize County in which our citizens can overcome the barriers that keep them from attaining self-sufficiency. TANF-PRC funds may be used by Auglaize County to provide the following:

- i. Programs designed to create and preserve affordable, quality housing and strong neighborhoods through partnerships of residents, business, and government;
- ii. Programs that use the arts to engage individuals in community life and promote student success;
- iii. Programs that address the causes of poverty and educate low-income people and social services workers;
- iv. Programs that support partnerships with employers and educators, promoting self-sufficiency by helping school-age children understand economics of life;
- v. Programs that support the Job Access program (allowable under section 3037 of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (Pub. L. 105-178)).

- **Domestic Violence (TANF Purpose #1)**

Many low-income individuals with children experience domestic violence. Domestic violence disrupts the safety and stability of the family. In addition to both the emotional and physical violence, these families' problems are compounded by all the other poverty-related issues. Research indicates that a substantial number of individuals and families known to child welfare and public assistance systems are past or current victims of domestic violence. The services provided through Auglaize County using TANF-PRC funds includes, but is not limited, to:

- i. Screening and referral services;
- ii. Personal and family supports including domestic violence counseling;
- iii. Community outreach.

- **Youth Education and Support Services (TANF Purposes #1, 2, 3, or 4)**

Youth education and support services can help communities prevent public assistance dependency among future generations. TANF-PRC funds may be used by Auglaize County to provide the following:

- i. Early childhood education;
- ii. Teen pregnancy prevention:
 - 1. Family planning (including birth control);

2. Abstinence education programs;
 3. Pregnancy planning services;
 4. Teen pregnancy prevention campaigns.
- iii. Stay-in-school programs;
 - iv. After school programs;
 - v. Truancy prevention;
 - vi. Mentoring and counseling;
 - vii. Peer support;
 - viii. Youth workforce preparation and employment programs.

▪ **Family Formation (TANF Purpose #4)**

Research studies support the belief that family formation and maintenance of two-parent families can play a crucial role in reducing many poor families' dependence on public assistance. Additionally, findings from several studies have reported that children growing up in household without two parents are at greater risk of academic, physical, emotional, and behavioral problems. TANF-PRC funds may be used Auglaize County to provide the following:

- i. Parenting skills training;
- ii. Premarital and marital counseling and mediation services;
- iii. Programs that encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families by enlisting multiple community partner, including faith-based organizations in effort to provide pre-marital counseling and support;
- iv. Activities to promote parental access and visitation;
- v. Initiatives to promote responsible fatherhood and increase the capacity of fathers to provide emotional and financial support for their children;
- vi. Paternity Establishment Counseling;
- vii. Crisis intervention services;

▪ **Legal Education and Assistance (TANF Purposes #1 or 4)**

PRC assistance may be authorized to provide assistance to homeowners who are delinquent on their mortgages or who have been victims of predatory lending. TANF-PRC funds may be used by Auglaize County to provide the following:

- i. Legal education;
- ii. Legal analysis of loan documents;
- iii. Litigation of predatory lending claims and/or bankruptcy to avoid foreclosure

▪ **TANF Summer Youth Employment Program (TANF Purpose #2)**

The purpose of this program, funded with a special allocation of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds, is to provide "wage subsidies." These dollars will enable the ACDJFS to create a program that enables low income TANF-eligible Auglaize County youth to gain valuable work experience while earning a paycheck to help meet basic needs. This program will operate only when a special TANF Summer Youth Employment Program allocation is made available to Auglaize County. The TANF Summer Youth Employment Program meets the first two purposes of TANF:

- i. To provide assistance to needy families so that the children may be cared for in their homes or the homes of relatives;
- ii. To end dependence of needy parents on governmental benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.

A summer youth employment program funded through PRC shall only serve persons from a TANF-eligible family. The population that may be served is:

- i. Youth ages 16-17, as long as the youth is a minor child in a needy family and is in school (youth may be 18 if they are a full time student in a secondary school);
- ii. Youth ages 18-24, as long as they are in a needy family that also has a minor child; or
- iii. Youth ages 18-24 that have a minor child and are considered needy.
- iv. Youth in the temporary or permanent custody of a Public Children Services Agency (PCSA) who are placed in a licensed foster care setting, that are between the ages of 16 to 17 years of age or 18 years of age if they are a full time student in a secondary school
- v. The youth served may be non-custodial parents as long as they are meet PRC program eligibility requirements and have a minor child.

Allowable costs under this program include:

- i. Payments to employers for wages (at no higher than \$10.00 per hour) and fringe benefits;
 - 1. Payments to third parties to operate the program;
 - 2. Recruitment and development of employers for the program;
 - 3. Other ancillary services which are offered by the employer to the summer youth employment participants including:
 - i. Work-related items such as uniforms, tools, licenses, or certifications;
 - ii. Case management activities related to the program; and
 - iii. Job coaches and mentors.
 - 4. Workers' compensation expenses;
 - 5. FICA;
 - 6. Direct supervision and training costs;
 - 7. Work clothing if it is necessary for employment at the specific job placement; and
 - 8. Transportation costs to and from the work site.

Non-allowable costs include:

- i. The cost of health insurance for youth (however, the cost of health insurance for staff employed by a third party to operate the program is allowable);
- ii. Meals;
- iii. Laptops;
- iv. Performance bonuses or lump sum payments to participant.

- **School Clothes Program (TANF Purpose #1)**

The ACDJFS will provide school clothes for families in Auglaize County. Eligible children must be:

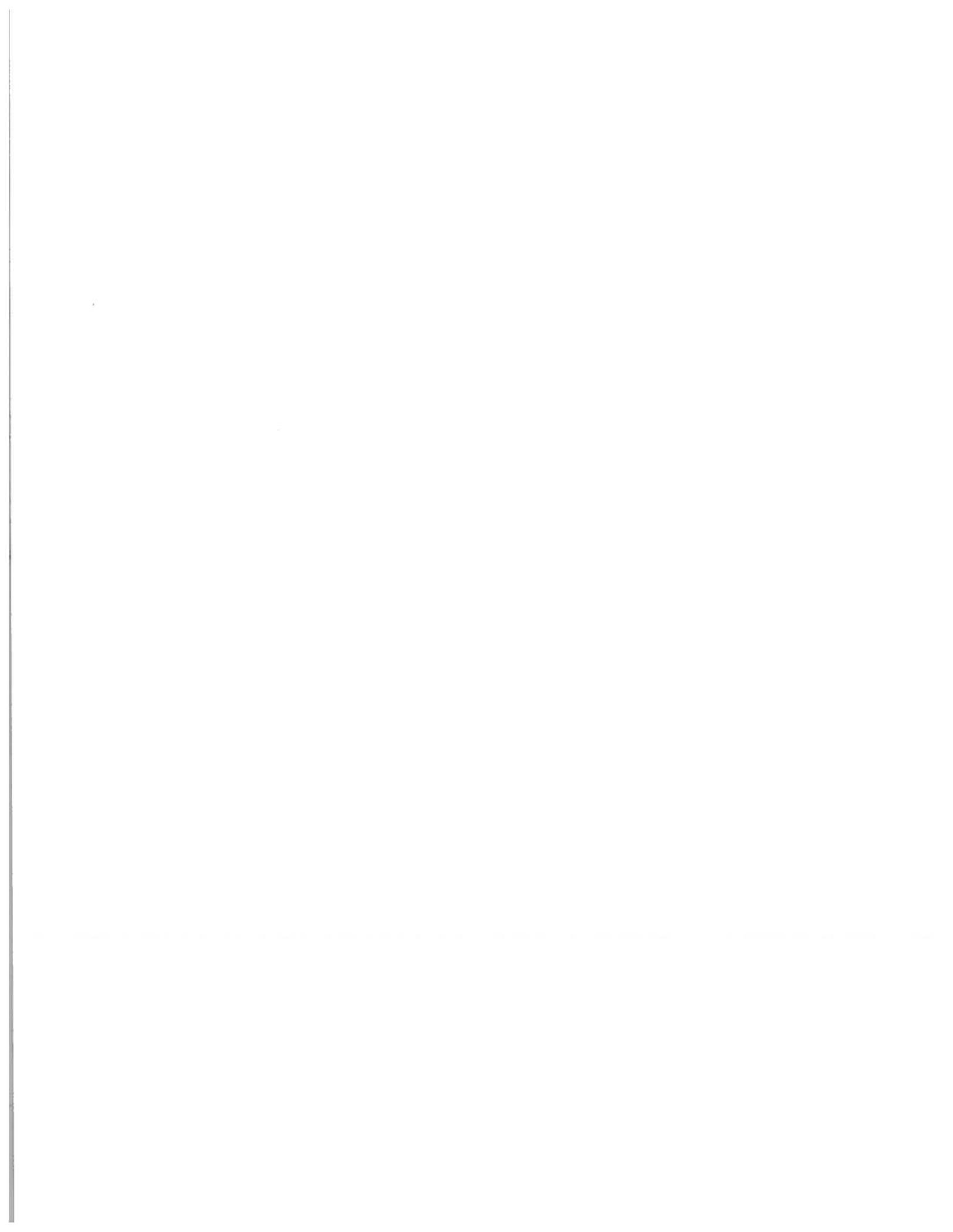
- i. School age defined as ages 5 to 17 years
- ii. An Auglaize County residents having received Food Assistance benefits or OWF Cash Assistance for a specified time period as defined by the ACDJFS.

Notification letters with detailed instructions are mailed to each identified potentially- eligible family.

Eligible families are required to come into the ACDJFS to pick up vouchers which shall be redeemed for clothing.

- **Comprehensive Case Management & Employment Program (CCMEP) (TANF Purpose #2)**

The ACDJFS may use TANF funds to provide indirect services through the CCMEP in accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 5101:14-1-02 (E)(1-14) and 5101:14-1-05 (C)(1-32).



In the event State and Federal funds become unavailable, Auglaize County, in coordination with the Auglaize County Planning Committee, will establish a plan to prioritize WSP authorization and expenditures.

Auglaize County Department of Job and Family Services agree to implement the County WSP Program as outlined herein. This plan becomes effective on October 1, 2015 and will remain in effect until otherwise modified or terminated.

[Redacted Signature]

County Commissioner Date

[Redacted Signature]

Director Date

[Redacted Signature]

County Commissioner Date

[Redacted Signature]

County Commissioner Date

