

PREVENTION, RETENTION, CONTINGENCY PLAN (PRC)

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I. PURPOSE

The Prevention, Retention, Contingency (PRC) program is a special category of assistance offered by Medina County Job and Family Services (MCJFS). It 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. PRC is meant to assist a family through a presenting crisis and not to maintain a family when long term financial expenses exceed the ability of the family to meet those obligations. The main objectives of providing PRC assistance are to prevent loss of paid employment or eliminate a barrier in securing employment; to provide temporary assistance when the retention of a job is in jeopardy due to an unexpected crisis; and to meet a presenting contingency (unforeseen event that, if not satisfied threatens the safety, health or wellbeing of one or more family members).

PRC client services or contract services indicated throughout this PRC plan meets one or more of the **TANF Goals** indicated below:

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

Medina County Job and Family Services reserves the right to amend this plan as deemed necessary due to program and/or funding changes.

Voter Registration

In accordance with section 329.051 of the ORC, the MCJFS makes available a voter registration application to persons applying for or participating in the PRC program. This is also applicable to those entities with whom the county contracts. Contracted agencies can provide the completed voter registration forms to the MCFJS.

II. PRC SERVICES

1. Are services that have no direct monetary value to an assistance group and do not involve implicit or explicit income support; and/or
2. Are short term financial assistance which is limited to the amount actually required to meet an emergent need, up to the maximum payment standard;
3. Are services that help families through a presenting crisis that interferes with keeping or getting a job;
4. Meet unexpected infrequent emergencies that could not be avoided;
5. Divert families from applying for cash assistance;
6. Are available within a 12 month period (from the month of application), up to a maximum of \$1,500.00.

PRC services are not:

1. Ongoing cash assistance.
2. For repetitive delinquent payments of the same crisis... i.e. continual utility shut offs and eviction notices.
3. An entitlement. Services and/or financial assistance are not guaranteed. In many cases an agency panel will review the presenting need and eligibility based on Medina County's PRC policy and then determines the approval or denial of an application.
4. Available categorically. Recipients of other public assistance programs such as Ohio Works First (OWF), Food Assistance, SSI and/or Medicaid are not automatically eligible for PRC.

III. ELIGIBILITY

The PRC program is intended to meet infrequent emergencies of a legitimate nature that could not have been avoided by any other means available to the applicant.

Eligibility for PRC is dependent upon the PRC Assistance Group's (AG's) demonstration and verification of the need for financial assistance and/or services, and whether the county determines that a 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 to meet said need will be determined by Medina County Job and Family Services.

Other requirements include:

1. Applicants must meet one of the Assistance Group definitions. (See IV.)
2. PRC AG household must reside in Medina County at the time of application.
3. PRC AG members must be citizens or meet the OWF qualified alien requirements in OAC rule 5101:1-2-30.
4. Income for the PRC AG must be at or below the current 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG).
5. The maximum PRC available is \$1,500.00 in a 12 month period statewide.
6. Families receiving assistance under other MCJFS programs may receive PRC assistance as long as they are participating and cooperating with all OWF and Food Assistance requirements (i.e., cooperating with Child Support Enforcement Agency, participating and following an OWF/FAET work activity component, fulfilling their self-sufficiency contract). Specified adults who are receiving Social Security Disability, SSI or Medicaid due to age, disability, or blindness and are caregivers of minor children are not required to meet the PRC work requirements.
7. Families not receiving OWF are required to have at least one employed adult household member working no less than 25 hours of paid employment per week. For a two parent household the 25 hours of paid employment per week can be a combination of hours from both parents.
8. Families in receipt of Unemployment Benefits are not required to meet the PRC work requirement.
9. Adult caretakers of minor children who are working at least 20 hours of paid employment per week and attending school and completing study hours for a minimum of 5 hours per week, where study hours are defined as 2 hours for every hour in class. Total hours would equal 25 hours per week.

School is defined as a State Certified for Educational Advancement. It could include internet computer classes, the Career Center, GED classes, Project Learn, short term certification programs, such as real estate or appraisal programs and University studies, etc. Enrollment must be verified.

IV. ASSISTANCE GROUP (AG) DEFINITION

PRC is only available to three specific assistance groups. The definition of each is as follows:

- A. PRC benefits and services are available to a family assistance group (AG) which includes a minor child or pregnant individual. The fetus is not countable in the AG.

- B. PRC benefits and services are also available to a non-custodial parent who is regularly meeting his/her court ordered support obligation for a minor child. The non-custodial parent must be working no less than 30 hours per week. In this situation, the PRC AG will consist of the non-custodial parent, his/or her spouse, plus the child (ren) for whom the non-custodial parent is paying support. The income of all PRC AG members will be used in determining eligibility under this provision. **For soft or supportive services for the non-custodial parent, reference page 20, section titled, TANF Child Support Enforcement Agency, for eligibility criteria.**
- C. An eligible family may also consist of a minor child residing with a parent, caretaker relative, legal guardian, or legal custodian and other family members of the household (who may or may not be related to the minor child) who may significantly enhance the family's ability to achieve economic self-sufficiency. An eligible family can reside with relatives and be considered a separate AG within that household if requesting assistance with car repair.
- D. "Minor child" as defined in 45 CFR 260.30 means an individual who:
- 1) Has not attained eighteen years of age; or
 - 2) Has not attained nineteen years of age and is a full-time student in a secondary school (or the equivalent level of vocational or technical training).
- E. An eligible family may also consist of related or non-related adults. These adults would be included in determining the household size and their income and resources would be included when determining eligibility, unless the assistance is for car repair.

V. INCOME/BUDGETING PERIOD

All earned and unearned income received by any PRC AG member within a 30-day budget period, is considered in determining financial need with the exception of the earnings of a minor child. The 30-day budget period begins 30 days prior to the date of application and ends on the application date. The gross income received during this time period is used in the computation of financial eligibility. This includes all gross income, both earned and unearned of the PRC AG members. The only allowable deduction from the countable income is legally obligated child support payments paid via a wage withholding by a member of the PRC AG to or for a non-household member. This wage withholding must be verified.

The following are examples of earned income that must be counted in the 30-day budget period. These are examples only and are not meant to be an all-inclusive list:

- Earnings from work as an employee
- Earnings from Self Employment
- Strike benefits
- Training allowance

Self-employment is to be computed using the last 30 days of income. Self-employment income is to be computed based on TANF rules. Tax returns and necessary verifications must be provided by the AG.

The following are examples of unearned income that must be counted in the 30-day budget period. These are examples only and are not meant to be an all-inclusive list:

- RSDI, SSI Benefits
- Alimony and Child Support
- Veteran Administration Benefits
- Workers' Compensation Benefits
- Unemployment benefits

- Pension and Retirement Benefits
- Strike Benefits
- Investment Income
- Rental Income
- OWF

Written or verbal verification from the income source is required. Any verification that is obtained by phone must be dictated clearly in the PRC AG case record to include the following:

- The name and position of the individual supplying the information
- The date the verification was obtained
- The amount of the verified income
- The name of the individual who obtained the verification

For eligibility purposes, the total PRC AG countable income must be equal to or less than the current 150% of the FPG for the applicable PRC AG size.

VI. RESOURCES

Families must use their own resources to help meet their needs. Resources exceeding \$1,500.00 must be counted as an available resource. The first \$1,500.00 will be excluded as a resource and any overage applied to meet the presenting need (i.e., PRC applicant has \$1,750.00 in available resources, the first \$1,500.00 is excluded and the remaining \$250.00 will be counted as available to meet the need and, therefore, reduce the PRC payment). Resources include those that are liquid and available (such as, cash on hand, money in checking or savings accounts, savings certificates, stocks or bonds). It does not include the value of real property, auto, life insurance, household goods, investments, 401k, loans or scholarships under Bureau of Indian Affairs Student Assistance Program. Verification of resources is required.

A PRC applicant is encouraged to explore and utilize any program, benefit, or support system which may reduce or eliminate the presenting need. County personnel determining eligibility for PRC should be aware of community resources which may be contracted for or otherwise utilized to help meet the need.

VII. INELIGIBLE ASSISTANCE GROUPS

Applicants who are ineligible include:

- Fugitive felons, probation and/or parole violators
- AG's which include individuals who are under a disqualification and are ineligible to participate in the OWF or Food Assistance programs
- Individuals ineligible for other programs due to deliberate non-compliance with the terms of their assistance or have chosen not to receive assistance so as not to participate in the work participation assignment.
- Unmarried, non-graduate minor parent, with a child more than 12 weeks old, and not attending high school or participating in activities aimed at enabling the teen to receive an equivalency degree
- Unmarried minor parent or pregnant minor not living in an approved adult supervised setting
- Individuals found to have fraudulently misrepresented residence in order to obtain assistance in two or more states is ineligible for ten years
- PRC AG's which consist of a household member that is currently serving a sanction or penalty period from any public assistance program, unless the requested service is for vehicle repair to assist a sanctioned PRC AG member in gaining or retaining

employment and for assistance needed due to a personal disaster such as a tornado, flood, or fire. This provision does not apply if there are funds available from the area being declared a disaster by the governor. Any AG subject to this provision will be required to have eligibility for PRC determined by a panel consisting of one (1) supervisor and two (2) caseworkers and must follow all guidelines and criteria set forth in Section XI (E) of this plan for vehicle repair.

- AG who has not signed a repayment agreement for an existing over payment in Medina County.
- AG's which include individuals who are not current on the repayment of an existing overpayment(s) in Medina County.
- AG's with fraudulent (IPV) overpayments for OWF and PRC assistance – must have these overpayments paid in full to be eligible for PRC funds. Eligibility cannot be authorized until it is verified that the fraudulent overpayment is paid in full. If payment is made by a personal check – authorization of PRC funds can't occur until it is verified that the personal check has cleared and not returned as NSF.
- An AG who has not made a payment towards their rent, utility in the last 4 months. Payments made by another organization do not meet this requirement.
- Non-citizens or individuals who do not meet the OWF qualified alien requirements in OAC rule 5101:1-2-30.
- Illegal aliens and/or aliens not authorized to work.

VIII. APPLICATION PROCESS

1. A PRC application must be completed
2. A face-to-face interview is required, unless waived by agency management, and
3. All providers of services for PRC purposes must be willing to accept a voucher from Medina County Job and Family Services.

IX. APPROVAL/DENIAL

The county is responsible for using objective criteria when determining eligibility. Eligibility should be approved or denied within 10 business days. In order to meet the 10 day requirement, applicants must provide all necessary verifications. Failure to provide verifications timely or meet eligibility criteria may result in the PRC application being denied. Eligibility will be carefully evaluated on a case-by-case basis in a fair and equitable manner.

A PRC application may also be denied when it is documented by MCJFS that no attempt by the applicant has been made to prevent a reoccurrence of an emergent need unless the PRC applicant has experienced an extraordinary circumstance or expenses.

X. MISUSE OF PRC FUNDS

Any PRC funds issued inappropriately or incorrectly, based on misrepresentation of facts or a situation by the applicant will be considered an overpayment of funds and will be referred to the Benefit Recovery Unit for recoupment. Additionally, any misuse of PRC funds by the client may also be referred for recoupment.

XI. AMOUNTS AND TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

PRC payments are limited to the amount actually required to meet the need up to the maximum \$1,500.00 payment standard in a 12 consecutive month period of eligibility, unless specifically stated elsewhere in this PRC policy.

PRC total amount for the 12-month period will never exceed the maximum amount of \$1,500.00, unless specifically stated elsewhere in this PRC policy. PRC funds issued in any other county within the 12-month period prior to application will be counted toward the \$1,500.00 maximum limit.

A. SHELTER EXPENSES (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

1. Rent payments may be authorized for the following situations:
 - a. Homeless applicants who have registered with Operation: HOMES, and are cooperating with that program
 - b. Homeless applicants who attempt to register with Operation HOMES and found ineligible for their services.
 - c. Applicants who are residing in a domestic violence center
 - d. Applicants who have a court ordered eviction
 - e. Applicants whose residence is uninhabitable due to natural, chemical or any other type of condition causing it to be uninhabitable as declared by a city, county, township or state agency. Verification of circumstance is required.
 - f. Payment of rent to avoid eviction due to delinquency in rental payments. Verification is required from the landlord indicating the amount of rent that is delinquent. A 3 day notice to leave the premises or an equivalent statement to a 3 day notice to leave the premises is required.
 - g. First month rent for work related relocation. Verification of full time employment is required. PRC will not pay for relocation to another state or county unless the full time employment is viable and offers an opportunity that is not available locally. PRC will not pay relocation costs for any other reason.

If the landlord of the PRC applicant is a relative (i.e., mother, father, brother, etc.), the applicant must provide verification of a rental agreement or history of rent payment before consideration can be determined under the rent provision of the PRC plan.

Payment of condo maintenance fees and lot rent that are in arrears if the applicant has a notice of eviction for non-payment of these items may be covered under this provision of the plan. Payment shall not exceed the maximum shelter payment.

Payment shall not include any type of late or processing fees.

2. Security Deposit:

A security deposit may only be authorized for payment when the applicant who is currently residing in Medina County and has been approved for a Housing Choice voucher through Medina Metropolitan Housing Authority (MMHA) but cannot utilize said housing voucher at their current residence due to one of the following reasons: 1) the current landlord will not accept the housing voucher; 2) the rental unit will not pass the (MMHA) housing quality standards inspection.

3. Emergency Shelter Payment

Emergency shelter payment for applicants who are homeless and have no alternative living arrangement available as referred by Operation: HOMES staff. Payment is limited to the cost of up to \$180.00, at a local motel, and cannot exceed the OWF payment standard for family size.

4. Residents of the Medina County Battered Women's Shelter

A security deposit and first month's rent may be authorized for payment when the applicant is currently residing in the Medina County Battered Women's Shelter and is transitioning into permanent housing.

- The applicant must be cooperating in their case management plan with their Battered Women's counselor.
- The applicant must meet the employment requirement of this PRC plan.
- ~~The applicant must have resided in the Medina County Battered Women's Shelter for a minimum of 30 days.~~
- The rental unit must be located in Medina County, unless approval for out of county location is approved by a MCJFS administrator or the director.

Other items can be covered as approved by a MCJFS administrator or the director (i.e. clothing, household items, etc.).

This shelter cost assistance of \$1,500.00 is not included in the PRC 12 month restricted policy cap of \$1,500.00.

B. HEATING AND OTHER UTILITIES (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Payment for heating and other utilities can be authorized while the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is in operation. The assistance group must provide their current fuel bill and verify they have applied for HEAP /TANF through Community Action during HEAP season.

In order to assist a family in meeting their housing needs, PRC funds can be applied for a prior bill at a former address, if the utility company refuses to reconnect the utility until the delinquent payment is made. Assistance for heating fuel and other utilities are subject to MCJFS PRC policy that limits the maximum amount to \$1,500.00 within a 12 month period (from the month of application).

The utility must be in the name of a household member.

If the assistance group is in receipt of a utility reimbursement and their Percentage of Income Plan (PIP) payment is less than their utility reimbursement amount, the assistance group will not be eligible to receive PRC for that utility.

1. HEATING AND OTHER UTILITY SERVICES REGULATED BY PUCO:

Payment may be authorized to avoid disconnection of heating and other utility services and for re-connection of heating and other utility services, and enrollment of a PRC AG into the percentage of income payment plan (PIP). PRC is not able to pay for utility deposits due to repayment issues. The applicant will be strongly encouraged to enroll in the PIP plan. The PIP plan protects customers from disconnection of service, if prescribed monthly payments are made. Verification is required of a disconnection notice, and indication that the PRC payment will meet the emergent need.

2. NON-REGULATED UTILITIES:

Non-regulated utilities (Wadsworth, Lodi, Seville, etc.) and heating fuel (oil, propane, or wood) payments can be made to prevent disconnection of utility service, to restore service, or to ensure continuation of services. In the case of heating fuel, the application for PRC

funds must be approved before the fuel is delivered by the service provider. Non-Regulated utilities are not HEAP eligible. Verification of need must be obtained as to need.

3. COOKING FUEL, WATER AND SEWAGE:

These utilities are not restricted by the HEAP program provisions and are available year round. Verification the cooking fuel is separate from the home heating source is required.

4. TELEPHONE INSTALLATION:

Payment for telephone installation is permitted due to a health condition of an applicant's household member, or for obtaining or retaining a job as indicated on the self-sufficiency contract for active job seeking activities. The health condition and need must be verified by a physician. Payment is limited to current installation charges only. No back payment fees will be paid.

C. MEDICAL (meets TANF Goal #3)

The only medical expenses covered are pre-pregnancy family planning services not to exceed the OWF payment standard for family size. Exploration of available community resources must be utilized before authorization of benefits (i.e., Planned Parenthood).

D. HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Payment for appliances is limited to the repair or replacement of cooking stoves, heating stoves, hot water tanks, or refrigerators. Replacement of any of these appliances can be approved only if repair is not cost effective. A maximum of \$500.00 in a 12 month period is allowed for purchase from a retail store (new or used) or repair of any of the above items. A written estimate of the repair for the appliance from a legitimate repair source must be provided. A relative is not a legitimate repair source unless employed or trained as a repairperson. Review of lease is required for all rental property to determine if repair or replacement of an appliance is the assistance group's responsibility.

E. MOTOR VEHICLE EXPENSES: (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Vehicle Repairs - Payment is limited to PRC applicants who are:

- Employed 25 hours per week or more, or
- Participating in a required OWF or Food Assistance work activity for 20 hours per week or more, or
- In compliance and fulfilling their self-sufficiency contract.

PRC AG must:

- Have no other working vehicles titled to the PRC AG members, unless the other vehicles are being used for employment or education.
- Have at least one estimate from a legitimate repair source, and
- Submit an application for vehicle repairs prior to the repair services being conducted, and
- Have an operable vehicle after the repair, and
- Be the titled owner or lessee of the vehicle requiring repair

A relative or self-repair is not a legitimate repair source unless the person completing the repair is employed as a mechanic at an Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified repair facility. If a relative or self-repair is utilized, PRC can be authorized for parts purchased.

Auto repair must be completed by a certified ASE repair facility. The repair or parts source must be willing to accept a MCJFS voucher. If the estimate is questionable, the PRC AG may be required to get additional estimates. PRC funds may be used to tow a vehicle to an ASE certified automotive

repair shop. MCJFS requires applicants to have vehicles repaired within Medina County unless there are extenuating circumstances. The following must be provided before payment of transportation expenses can be authorized:

- Verification of valid driver's license for applicant
- Proof of car insurance
- Verification of ownership of the vehicle or the lease agreement

F. TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES: (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Taxi service or Medina County Transit-Service is available for no more than 20 one-way trips to fulfill work related activity.

- Transportation costs for working individuals up to \$100 to help defray transportation expenses for beginning employment (i.e., gasoline purchase, oil change, etc.). The vendor must be willing to accept a MCJFS voucher.

This transportation cost assistance of \$100.00 is included in the PRC 12 month restricted policy cap of \$1,500.00.

G. VEHICLE FUEL ALLOWANCE (entire section updated effective 12/22/08) (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

As funds are available, MCJFS will provide gas cards in various amounts (\$10, \$15, \$20, \$25, etc.) to assist eligible working OWF/FS clients. This program is in effect when PRC funds or TANF incentive funds are available.

This special provision is outside of the PRC annual \$1,500.00 policy cap.

Eligibility will be determined on a case by case basis and authorized by a supervisor. Eligible AGs can receive no more than \$100.00 in a PRC or TANF incentive gas allowance in a 12 month period.

Lost or stolen cards will not be replaced. Each recipient will sign an "acknowledgement of amount received receipt" letter.

Ineligible Assistance Groups include the following:

- Self- Employed individuals
- Adult only households
- Families receiving Medicaid only
- Individuals who are not citizens of the United States or Qualified Aliens.
- Households serving a sanction

Eligibility Criteria

1. Applicants must be residents of Medina County
2. Economic need must be at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. All household earned and unearned gross income within a 30-day budget period will be considered in determining financial need. The 30-day budget period begins 30 days prior to the date of application. Written or verbal verification from the income source will be required.
3. The assistance group must include, at a minimum, a pregnant woman or minor child living with a parent, specified relative, legal guardian, or legal custodian.
4. Approval for this program requires an authorization form completed by the caseworker and a supervisor.
5. A face to face interview is not required.
6. Required employment hours and weeks must be verified by an employer statement.

Eligibility workers must check for funds availability via the voucher data base.

H. WORK ALLOWANCE (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Gas cards or approved public transportation to qualified individuals applying for OWF benefits to complete their Work Activity.

MCJFS will provide one gas card in the amount of \$20.00 to assist eligible OWF clients, providing their own transportation to complete their Work Activity, while their Work Allowance through CRISE is processed. Clients must own their own vehicle to receive a gas card.

MCJFS will cover the cost of public transportation through Medina Transit to assist eligible OWF clients to complete their Work Activity.

Those individuals receiving OWF will have their eligibility based on their current public assistance application (7200). An individual can not apply specifically for this program through the regular PRC program.

This special provision is outside of the PRC annual \$1,500.00 policy cap.

Lost or stolen cards will not be replaced. Each recipient will sign an “acknowledgement of amount received receipt” letter.

I. MOTOR VEHICLE PAYMENTS (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Car payments, lease payments, or insurance payments (up to 3 months) may be made not to exceed \$500. The vehicle must be titled to a PRC AG member. The car must be used for transportation to work or to comply with an OWF or Food Stamp program work activity component. PRC AG members must be in compliance with the self-sufficiency contract, if applicable. This payment for assistance is included within the \$1,500.00 maximum PRC payment standard.

PRC cannot pay any fines incurred by the applicant, reinstatement fees for a driver’s license, or impounding fees.

J. SHORT TERM EDUCATION EXPENSES (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Short term education, school application, entry, or registration fees and testing expenses (ex. Commercial driver’s license, state boards, certification, or driver license), as required by prospective or current employer to secure or maintain employment. Payment is limited to \$500. This payment for assistance is included within the \$1,500.00 maximum PRC payment standard. Applicants must first pursue other available funding sources for short term education. Short term is defined as nine months or less.

K. COUNSELING (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

If services are not available through other community agencies or resources, and counseling is required as stated in a self-sufficiency contract, PRC funds may be authorized not to exceed \$1,500.00. This payment for assistance is included within the \$1,500.00 maximum PRC payment standard.

All counseling services must be billed at the current Medicaid reimbursement rates by the provider.

L. FOOD ASSISTANCE (effective 12/22/08) (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Grocery cards will be purchased when there is available PRC or TANF incentive funds available. These cards will be used for eligible OWF and/or Food Assistance clients as one-time assistance.

This special provision is outside of the PRC annual \$1,500.00 policy cap.

This Food Assistance Program is available once in a 12 month period. This assistance is a non-recurrent, short term benefit that is designed to address a specific crisis situation or episode of need.

Eligibility Criteria

1. Applicants must be residents of Medina County
2. Economic need must be at or below 130% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. All household earned and unearned gross income within a 30-day budget period will be considered in determining financial need. The 30-day budget period begins 30 days prior to the date of application. Written or verbal verification from the income source will be required. Client statement will be accepted.
3. The assistance group must include, at a minimum, a pregnant woman or minor child living with a parent, specified relative, legal guardian, or legal custodian.
4. Approval for this program requires an authorization form completed by the caseworker and a supervisor.
5. A face to face interview is not required.
6. Voucher must state "For Food Only" - No Alcohol, Tobacco Products, Paper or Cleaning Products.

The following current PRC policy requirements do not apply to this emergency food program:

Work requirements, sanction and resource limitations, OWF, Child Support, food stamp participation and cooperation requirements, and ineligible assistance groups except for fugitive felons, probation and/or parole violators.

M. JOB RELATED EXPENSES (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

1. Payment can be authorized on behalf of an eligible PRC AG for purchase of tools, safety equipment, or uniforms (maximum of 5 uniforms) as required by an employer or as deemed necessary per a self-sufficiency contract. Payment under this provision is not to exceed \$750.00. This payment for assistance is not included within the \$1,500.00 maximum PRC payment standard.

Verification from employer is required.

2. PRC may also be authorized to purchase clothing for employment purposes. MCJFS can provide PRC funds for the purchase of work appropriate clothing to clients assigned to job search activities involving job interviews, new employment, career changes or as required by current employer. This program is in effect until the current supply of gift cards are exhausted.

This special provision is outside of the PRC annual \$1,500.00 policy cap. Decisions regarding need and style of clothing will be determined by the Work Activity Staff or MCJFS management. A MCJFS contracted staff member or MCJFS case manager will accompany the client to ensure proper expenditure of funds.

Qualified individuals are:

- Receiving Food Stamps and/or OWF for their families and are actively involved with MCJFS Work Activities Coordinator, in a job search/job interview capacity.
- **or**
- Referred for this assistance by MCJFS management for special consideration.

Benefits:

- Those qualified individuals who are in a job search/job interview capacity, or new employment or are in need of clothing as a requirement by the current employer are eligible to receive up to \$200.00 in a Kohl's or Wal-mart gift card for the purchase of appropriate work clothing and/or shoes.

This special provision is outside of the PRC 12 month restricted policy cap of \$1,500.00 however as a hard service, gift cards reflect a form of "cash assistance" and is a one-time only benefit to a work eligible recipient.

Application:

- The MCJFS Work Activities Coordinator, career counselor, intensive case manager, or MCJFS management must file a PRC application on behalf of the work eligible recipient. In addition, a voucher will need to be typed to track the issuance of the Kohl's or Wal-mart card. The voucher will be printed and filed (or scanned) in the client case file.

Ineligible Assistance Groups include the following:

- Self- Employed individuals
- Adult only households
- Individuals who are not citizens of the United States or Qualified Aliens.

Eligibility Criteria:

1. Applicants must be residents of Medina County.
2. The assistance group must include, at a minimum, a pregnant woman or minor child living with a parent, specified relative, legal guardian, or legal custodian.
3. A signed and completed PRC application is required.
4. A face to face interview is not required.
5. Required employment hours and weeks must be verified by an employer statement.
6. Eligibility workers must check for funds availability via the voucher data base.

N. FOOD AND EMERGENT NEEDS (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Purpose

- Cards may be approved for families new to the Food Assistance program and need a benefit card, which takes 7 to 10 days to receive.
- Cards may be approved for families with lost cards, or other circumstances where the family will have to wait 7 to 10 days for a new card.
- The program would be effective August 1, 2012 to December 31, 2013 or until the cap of \$75,000 is reached. MCJFS will purchase \$75,000 in gift cards in increments of \$25.

Eligibility

- Eligibility will be tracked with the voucher system. Voucher must be signed by client to verify their receipt of the gift card.
- Benefits will not be included in the general PRC caps.
- Income must be below 150% of poverty.
- \$50.00 in gift cards will be issued for each eligible household.

Approval

- Receipt of gift cards must be approved by an administrator.

O. SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Drug and/or alcohol assessments may be considered under this provision on a case-by-case basis to be determined by a panel consisting of one (1) supervisor and two (2) caseworkers. Payment under this provision is not to exceed \$1,500.00. This service does not authorize employment-related medical treatment. The purpose of the assessment would be to establish an OWF client's ability to do a work assignment. The assessment can also recommend services and assignments that would address the barriers preventing the OWF client from attaining self-sufficiency.

P. LEAP SERVICES (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Products and services can be covered for eligible LEAP clients. The client(s) must be eligible for and receiving LEAP program services in order to receive needed supportive services and/or products, no application process will be required as long eligibility is documented.

Q. DRIVER'S LICENSE FEE (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Driver's license fee can be covered for financially eligible AG members who meet the employment requirements defined in section III (Eligibility) – bullet 6 on page 4 of this PRC plan.

R. TANF SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

The TANF Subsidized Summer Employment Program for Youth will enable Medina County Job and Family Services to provide a program to low income TANF-eligible Medina youth to gain valuable work experience while earning a paycheck to help meet basic needs. The program will offer the opportunity to youth to develop a work history and have a current reference from an employer.

This program will be contracted to provide Case Management Services for participants.

This TANF Subsidized Summer Employment Program for Youth will run May 1st through October 31st of each calendar year or until all allocated funds are used.

Employers employing youth shall receive an employer subsidy paid directly to them, by the contractor.

Eligibility Requirements

1. 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);
2. Youth ages 18 - 24, as long as they are in a needy family that also has a minor child; or
3. Youth ages 18 – 24 that have a minor child and are considered needy.
4. Applicants must meet one of the two Assistance Group definitions. (See IV.)
5. PRC AG household must reside in Medina County at the time of application.
6. PRC AG members must be citizens or meet the OWF qualified alien requirements in OAC rule 5101:1-2-30.

7. Income for the PRC AG must be at or below the current 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG).
8. Youth receiving TANF, Food Assistance or Medicaid benefits meet the eligibility criteria.
9. Youth not receiving TANF, Food Assistance or Medicaid may be potentially eligible as long as the PRC AG meets the current 200% Federal Poverty Guidelines.
10. Youth in the temporary or permanent custody of a Children Services, placed in a licensed foster care setting, between the ages of 14 to 17 years of age or 18 years of age if they are a full time student in a secondary school, are potentially eligible to participate in the program.
11. Financial eligibility will be determined by Medina Job and Family Services staff. A Business Intelligence Channel (BIC) report will be used to identify youth receiving TANF, Food Assistance or Medicaid.
12. For youth not receiving TANF, Food Assistance or Medicaid, a PRC application must be completed. If under the age of 18, the application must be completed by a parent or guardian. Citizenship and household income must be verified.
13. All youth participating in the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program must be registered on the OhioMeansJobs website. The youth will be able to access the tools necessary for participation by going to www.ohiomeansjobs.com and a confirmation of their registration will need to be incorporated in the MCJFS reporting.
14. Approval for this program requires authorization by an employee of the contractor.
15. Required employment hours and weeks must be verified by an employer statement or pay stubs.

Wages received from the TANF Subsidized Summer Employment Program for Youth are a special provision and are outside of the PRC annual \$1,500.00 policy cap.

S. TANF Disaster Assistance (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Disaster Assistance will be made available when the county has been declared a state of emergency by the State of Ohio or the Federal Government.

PRC Disaster Relief funds will be issued in an amount not to exceed \$750.00 to families whose income does not exceed 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. In order to qualify, the PRC assistance group's dwelling must have been adversely affected by the declared disaster.

The PRC Disaster Funds may be used for necessary clothing expenses; household items and furniture; home repairs; tree and limb removal; rent; emergency shelter and utilities. This assistance will be available effective immediately with the date of the declared disaster and shall remain in effect for 30 days.

This special provision is outside of the PRC annual \$1,500.00 policy cap.

All ineligibility criteria as defined in section VII, do not apply.

T. CONTRACT SERVICES (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Services are for OWF and FAET clients receiving assistance and participating in the employment program with a contracted vendor.

The following services are accessible as long as funds are available:

1. Medina County Transit Services, Taxi Services or Transit Tokens for working individuals to help defray transportation expenses for beginning employment. Each client is eligible for up to 40 tokens or 20 rides.

2. Medina County Transit Services, Taxi Services or Transit Tokens to assist individuals in job search activities. Each client is eligible for up to 40 tokens or 20 rides.
3. Drug Screening to assist clients in becoming employed.
4. Payments can be made for reinstatement fees and license plate fees, except for individuals who have DUI convictions.
5. Background checks to assist clients in becoming employed. Clients will sign a release of information so an authorized contracted vendor staff member could then share this information with a potential employer.
6. Funding of Certificates of Qualification for Employment applications to overcome criminal background barriers to employment.
7. Clients participating in the Ohio Works First Program will be eligible to receive work related incentives. Verification of employment is required, except for job search and/or job interviews.
 - a. MCJFS or the vendor can provide a onetime \$200.00 Kohl's or Walmart gift card for the purchase of work appropriate clothing to clients assigned to job search activities involving job interviews, new employment, career changes or as required by current employer. Decisions regarding need and style of clothing will be determined by the Work Activity Staff, contracted vendor staff or MCJFS management. A MCJFS contracted staff member or MCJFS case manager will accompany the participant to ensure proper expenditure of funds.
 - b. Clients will be eligible to receive \$100.00 in gas cards upon the start of new employment to help defray employment related transportation costs.
 - c. When a participant has completed 30 calendar days of employment they will receive \$100.00 in gas cards to assist them with job retention and defray employment related transportation costs.
 - d. When a participant has completed 60 calendar days of employment they will receive \$100.00 in gas cards to assist them with job retention and defray employment related transportation costs.

These special provisions are outside of the PRC annual \$1,500.00 policy cap.

Eligibility will be determined on a case by case basis and authorized by a contracted vendor staff member.

Lost or stolen cards will not be replaced. Each recipient will sign an "acknowledgement of amount received receipt" form.

A PRC application is not needed to access these services.

If employment is lost and new employment is gained, clients may access these services again.

The vendor will invoice MCJFS for any direct expenditures made on behalf of participating clients.

U. SCHOOL SUPPLIES (meets TANF Goal #1)

- The purpose is to assist households with school supplies for their children.
- The program will be effective June to September to purchase school supplies when TANF Regular funds are available.
- Medina County Job and Family Services will purchase school supplies and local agencies will assist in putting school supplies together and distribute these to eligible households.

Eligibility

- Household must have a dependent child
- School age student must be age 5 to age 18
- School age student is defined as entering Kindergarten through 12th grade
- School student must be a resident of Medina County
- No duplicate supplies for any child
- No application is necessary
- Eligibility will be determined with the household completing a PRC Statement of Eligibility form to document household members and monthly income
- This program will not be included in the general PRC caps

OTHER PRC/TANF SERVICES THROUGH CONTRACTING OR CHILD WELFARE

Client eligibility for Contract Services

- ❖ AG's gross monthly income without regard to available resources must be considered (pay stubs, employer statement, child support and Social Security Administration print-outs, CRISE budget screens, etc). Also, the "PRC Statement of Eligibility" form (for self-declaration of income) can be completed by the AG to verify the gross monthly income for all AG members. The total monthly gross income is then compared to the chart on the back of the current "PRC Statement of Eligibility" form for services meeting TANF goals #1, #2, and #4. Income eligibility must be reviewed and re-determined once every 12 months or as income changes occur to determine continual eligibility. *Income verification or a signed copy of the "PRC Statement of Eligibility" form signed by the applicant must be documented in the client case file.*
- ❖ Verification of birth date and citizenship of all AG members. These items can also be verified via the "PRC Statement of Eligibility" form (for self-declaration). Non-citizens are not eligible for services unless they meet the OWF qualified alien requirements in OAC rule 5101:1-2-30. When in doubt, it is required that the contractor obtain a copy of the alien registration card and to contact MCJFS to further verify eligibility. This is required for all TANF goals (1-4). *Birth date and citizenship verification or a signed copy of the "PRC Statement of Eligibility" form signed by the applicant must be documented in the client case file.*
- ❖ TANF goal #3 to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies does not require the verification of income. Age limit for these services based on the MCJFS PRC policy is up to the individual's 22nd birthday. After the individual turns age 22, they no longer qualify for contract services that meet TANF goal #3 as defined above. *Pregnancy prevention services must be documented in the individual case file.*
- ❖ TANF funded contracts require state hearing forms (approval, denial, termination of services) and the opportunity for AG members age *17 and over to register to vote, and a referral of the AG to MCJFS for possible help through need based programs. *Copy of state hearing forms, the JFS referral form and proof of meeting the voter registration requirement must be documented in the client case file.*

*Per the Board of Elections, an individual age 17 must be age 18 by October 8th in order to vote in the general election.

DRUG SCREENINGS (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

Drug screening is necessary to determine if the OWF client has a barrier to securing employment. Most employers require a drug screening before hiring a potential employee. Drug screening is included in MCJFS OWF Work Activity plan as a standard procedure and is included in the self-sufficiency contract.

JOB DEVELOPMENT (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

To provide work activity and job development services which will assist food assistance and/or TANF eligible individuals in obtaining and retaining employment therefore allowing them to become self-sufficient and take personal responsibility for their own lives and future. Eligibility for these services will be determined by MCJFS for households at or below 200% of the FPL. Eligible individuals will then be referred to the contracted vendor(s).

KINSHIP COVERED SERVICES (meets TANF Goal #1)

Initial services, in the judgment of MCJFS staff, will be provided to children who are removed from their homes and placed with kinship caregivers. The initial services through the PRC Program, may be used to provide assistance to a family involved with the child protective services system to alleviate a family crisis that could lead to the removal of children from their home, or to help a family so that the children can be safely returned to their family.

Eligibility exists for any child who meets PRC citizenship requirements and the child's gross monthly AG (assistance group) income does not exceed 200% of the FPL. Such services are considered separate from the specialized Family Preservation and Reunification categories. These PRC benefits do not include caregiver income and are excluded from the caregiver's eligibility for PRC services. On-going foster or residential services are specifically excluded. Eligible items must be obtained within their first four months of placement of a 12 month period.

Initial Services

Items not to exceed \$1,000.00 per child

- Clothing (including coats, hats, boots, shoes, car seats, diapers and formula, beds including mattress/cribs, bedding, high chairs and school supplies)
- Home safety items and baby proofing items, which are not permanently attached to real property may be purchased (fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, door alarms and locks, baby gates, electric outlet plugs and cabinet door latches)

Food

Not to exceed \$1,000.00 per household

Home Services

- Appliances (including washer/dryers) – not to exceed \$1,000.00 per household
- Services (amount to be determined)
 - Bed Bug Treatment, eradication and prevention
 - Lice Treatment, eradication and prevention

Applications and eligibility determinations for Kinship Covered Services will be handled by staff in the Children Services division of MCJFS. Expense code: 455-510050.

LITERACY (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

To provide literacy and GED services to TANF eligible individuals/families for Job Readiness. Eligibility for services will be determined by the contractor who will need to follow all appropriate TANF requirements.

TANF – CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AGENCY (CSEA) (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

TANF funds can be used to:

- Meet goal #2 to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage for families with gross monthly income at or below 200% of the FPG.
- Through the RMS process (activity code 994), allowable TANF activity for a child support case that is not represented by another 900 series activity code.
- **Soft supportive services include the “Seek Work Program” so the non-custodial parent can gain income to pay their child support obligation.**
- **Eligibility will be determined as follows:**
 - 1) **Looking at the non-custodial parent’s monthly countable income, and**
 - 2) **Looking at the countable income of the assistance group in which the child where paternity has been established and there is a support obligation, and**
 - 3) **Both 1 and 2 above are each under 200% of FPL.**

TANF – CHILD WELFARE

TANF – Child Welfare funds can be used to:

- Provide administrative (via SSRMS).
- To meet TANF Goal #1 through family stability services for families with gross monthly income at or below 200% of the FPG.
- TANF Goal #2 to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage for families with gross monthly income at or below 200% of the FPG.
- Services and/or products that meet TANF Goal #3 to prevent or reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies with no income eligibility requirements as long as the needed service and/or product is for a child involved with the MCJFS Children Services’ division.
- TANF Goal #4 to encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families for families with gross monthly income at or below 200% of the FPG.
- Bereavement Services – these services are not a Medicaid covered service. Bereavement services are available through Hospice of Medina County and can be covered for financially eligible AG members whose medical insurance does not cover this service and whose gross monthly income is at or below 200% of the FPG. These covered services are for family stability and not to exceed \$1,500.

TANF – EMERGENCY SERVICES ASSISTANCE (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

TANF – Emergency Services Assistance (ESA) can be used to prevent child abuse or neglect; prevent removal of a child from his/her home; prevent placement of a child away from his/her kinship family care; safely return a child to his/her parent, guardian or custodian. Services include: pre-placement preventative services; reunification services; and/or life skill services as defined in O.A.C. 5101:9-6-36 and 5101:9-6-36.1 to a child or his parent, guardian, or custodian as the agency determines necessary. Payment for services may not be made to the family. Service shall not include the cost of substitute care. Eligibility for services will be based on AG incomes at or below 200% of the FPG. For any other need, the Eligibility Services worker, Family & Children Services worker and a Supervisor will need to meet and discuss the need. TANF is to be utilized to help alleviate a family crisis that could lead to the removal of children from their home, or to help a family so the children can be safely returned to their family. These qualified emergency services do not have any yearly limitations.

TANF – TITLE XX

Same as TANF-Child Welfare as indicated above.

TUTORING SERVICES (meets TANF Goal #1 and #2)

- a. General Public Tutoring Services for TANF eligible individuals whose family’s income is at or below 200% of the FPG.
- b. Children Services Tutoring for individuals with no income requirements that are referred for tutoring services by MCJFS staff under goal three(3) of the TANF requirements.

YOUTH SERVICE COORDINATION

- To meet goal #1 through family stability services for families with gross monthly income at or below 200% of the FPG. Supportive services to include, but not limited to: parent education, mentoring and respite services, parent advocacy and service coordination.
- Services and/or products that meet goal #3 to prevent or reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies. Supportive services to include, but not limited to: In home parent/child coaching skills, social and recreational activities and activities to improve family functioning.

XII. AUTHORIZATION

Once eligibility for PRC is established the MCJFS Director or designee will authorize and generate payment for the assistance, goods, and/or services. Authorization may occur at any time during a period beginning on the date that PRC is approved. As long as payment is authorized within the appropriate period, actual payment may be made to vendors according to the procedures in place at MCJFS. All PRC payments are made by MCJFS to the vendor. MCJFS must ensure that its policies meet all auditing requirements.

XIII. APPROVAL OR DENIAL

Notice of approval or denial: if it is determined that an application for PRC is approved, the MCJFS shall mail or otherwise deliver the ODJFS 4074, Notice of Approval of Your Application for Assistance. If it is determined that an application for PRC is denied, MCJFS shall mail or otherwise deliver the ODJFS 7334, Notice of Denial of Your Application for Assistance.

Medina County Job and Family Services agree to implement the Prevention, Retention Contingency Plan as written above.

[Redacted Signature]

Medina JFS Director

[Redacted Date]

Date

**Medina County Job and Family Services
Prevention, Retention and Contingency
Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) (effective 3/2/2016)**

PRC AG SIZE	100% STANDARD	135% STANDARD	150% STANDARD	185% STANDARD	200% STANDARD
1	\$990	\$1,337	\$1,485	\$1,832	\$1,980
2	\$1,335	\$1,803	\$2,003	\$2,470	\$2,670
3	\$1,680	\$2,268	\$2,520	\$3,108	\$3,360
4	\$2,025	\$2,734	\$3,038	\$3,747	\$4,050
5	\$2,370	\$3,200	\$3,555	\$4,385	\$4,740
6	\$2,715	\$3,666	\$4,073	\$5,023	\$5,430
7	\$3,061	\$4,133	\$4,592	\$5,663	\$6,122
8	\$3,408	\$4,601	\$5,112	\$6,304	\$6,815
9	\$3,755	\$5,069	\$5,632	\$6,946	\$7,509
10	\$4,101	\$5,537	\$6,152	\$7,587	\$8,202

ACRONYMS CONTAINED IN THE BODY OF THE PLAN

ASE – Automotive Service Excellence
AG – Assistance Group
CSEA – Child Support Enforcement Agency
CWC – Cornerstone Wellness Center
ESA – Emergency Services Assistance
FPG – Federal Poverty Guidelines
HEAP – Home Energy Assistance Program
HMG – Help Me Grow
IJS – Individual Job Search
MCJFS – Medina County Job & Family Services
McWRADP – Medina County Work Release and Diversion Program
ODJFS – Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
OWF – Ohio Works First
MMHA – Medina Metropolitan Housing Authority
PRC – Prevention, Retention & Contingency Plan
PIP – Percentage of Income Program
SEP – Subsidized Employment Program
SSI – Supplemental Security Income
TANF – Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
WIA – Workforce Investment Act