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OFFICE OF FAMILY STABILITY LETTER #42
November 18, 2005

TO: Directors, County Departments of Job and Family Services
Directors, Public Children Services Agencies

FROM: Jeanne Carroll, Deputy Director 
Office of Family Stability

SUBJECT: *Title IV-A Funded Home Energy Assistance Program*

This letter is being issued to provide information about the Title IV-A (TANF) funded Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) recently announced by Governor Taft. This letter includes information about the relationship of this program to the existing HEAP program, and the eligibility requirements, payment amounts and application process for the program.

In response to the projected increases in home heating costs for the upcoming winter heating season, Governor Taft has issued Executive Order 2005-23T. The executive order authorizes ODJFS to enter into an interagency agreement with the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) to transfer TANF funds to supplement the existing Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). The TANF funds will be used to reimburse HEAP expenditures that are made for TANF-eligible families, while ODOD funds will be used to cover expenditures for families and individuals who are not TANF eligible. The HEAP application and program guidelines will primarily be used to determine eligibility, however ODOD will also be required to document that applicable TANF requirements are met. HEAP applications are available by calling HEAP toll-free at 1-800-282-0880 (TDD 1-800-868-1557) or at:
<http://www.odod.state.oh.us/CDD/OCS/heap.htm>

By combining the TANF funds with existing HEAP funding, ODOD will be able to provide a 10% increase to the average benefits Ohioans received through HEAP in 2004 and will also be able to increase income eligibility from 151% to 175% of the federal poverty level. Families whose income falls at or below 150% of the federal poverty level may qualify for an average of \$430 per household to help pay increased heating bills this winter. Families whose income falls between 151% and 175% of the federal poverty level may qualify for an average of \$391 to be applied toward their heating bill.

To summarize, the Title IV-A HEAP program is simply an enhanced form of HEAP that is being administered entirely through the Ohio Department of Development's HEAP program. This program has no relation to county PRC programs. Nevertheless, in some instances, the amount of

HEAP benefits issued may not fully address the family's total needs. In these instances, County Departments of Job and Family Services are not precluded from providing additional utility assistance to TANF-eligible families provided such assistance is a covered service in the county's current PRC plan.

JC:jf

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