

Bob Taft
Governor



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OFFICE OF FAMILY STABILITY LETTER # 57

September 28, 2006

TO: Directors, County Departments of Job and Family Services

FROM: Jeanne Carroll, Deputy Director
Office of Family Stability

SUBJECT: TANF Allocation To Enhance County Operated Work and Support Programs Targeting the Two-Parent Ohio Works First Caseload

This letter announces the availability of an additional Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding allocation to local county departments of job and family services to enhance county work and support programs targeting two-parent Ohio Works First (OWF) Assistance Groups. This new resource will assist counties and the state in meeting the federally mandated two-parent participation rate requirement of 90%.

Please note that county allocation letters will be forwarded separately by the Office of Fiscal Services.

Background

Since the inception of TANF in 1996, states have been required to meet minimum participation rates established in federal law in order to avoid financial penalties and take advantage of a lower Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funding requirement. States could also decrease the work participation rate requirement by the number of percentage points the assistance caseload fell in comparison to the FFY '95 caseload.

On February 8, 2006, President Bush signed into law the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005 which reauthorized the TANF program through 2010. One of the most significant changes contained in reauthorization is the change of the base year used to calculate the caseload reduction credit. DRA replaced the original FFY '95 base year with FFY '05 for caseload reduction calculation purposes. This change effectively eliminates any significant caseload reduction credit that most states, including Ohio, have relied on to meet the work participation requirements of families in receipt of TANF assistance.

Realizing the tremendous challenge faced by the counties and the state, Governor Taft authorized an additional \$7 million of TANF funding in Executive Order 2006-10T to **“enhance county operated work and support programs targeting the two-parent**

Ohio Works First caseload to meet the 90% two-parent work participation rate established by federal law”.

TANF Two-Parent Allocation

The allocation provides \$7 million in additional TANF funding to county department of job and family services through the end of state fiscal year 2008 (June 30, 2008).

The allocation is based on the county’s percent of the state’s monthly average two-parent OWF assistance groups served from April ’05 through March ’06. Counties that served even a single two-parent OWF AG during this time period are allocated an amount equal to the amount of a county that had served an average monthly caseload of 1 case.

The attached spreadsheet details the funding distribution by county.

Allowable use of funds:

Funds available under the allocation can be used to support any and all allowable TANF non-assistance benefits and services provided on behalf of Ohio Works First (OWF) two-parent assistance groups. Funding can be used for the purchase of work activity and support services that enable two-parent OWF AGs to successfully participate in federally allowable work activities, meet the work participation requirement, and move toward employment and self sufficiency. Funds can also be used for county staff costs in administering programs and services for the two-parent OWF caseload. Counties are encouraged to use this allocation to further implement and enhance work participation strategies developed through the Continuous Improvement Process. This funding allocation is targeted to serve TANF purpose two: “To end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits promoting job preparation, work and marriage”. 42 U.S.C.§ 601.

PRC Plan

Non-assistance benefits and services funded with this allocation and related eligibility requirements must be supported by the county PRC Plan. Any new services not included in an existing PRC Plan will necessitate revising or amending the current plan prior to the start of service delivery.

Availability/Claiming: Allowable costs may be claimed against the allocation for the period October 1, 2006, through June 30, 2008, inclusive. Reimbursement for allowable costs is to be claimed on the JFS 02827.

After receipt of the allocation letter, questions regarding reimbursement should be forwarded to the ODJFS regional fiscal supervisor.

Reporting

Services will be reported in the TANF Web Reporting Tool using existing categories.

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