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OFFICE OF FAMILY STABILITY LETTER #13
August 28, 2003

TO: Directors, County Departments of Job and Family Services

FROM: Jeanne Carroll, Deputy Director
Office of Family Stability

SUBJECT: CHANGES TO THE PRC PROGRAM REQUIRED BY AM. SUB. H.B. 95

As you are aware, the biennial budget bill (Am. Sub. H.B. 95) enacted changes to many of the department's programs, including the PRC program. The purpose of this letter is to highlight some of the most significant changes that each county department of job and family services (CDJFS) must implement for the PRC program and to assist counties in their efforts to comply with the statutory requirements. A copy of the changes to Revised Code Chapter 5108 has been included with this guidance.

Am. Sub. H.B. 95 makes changes in the PRC plan process and creates new procedures and timelines for the CDJFS to follow. **The CDJFS should examine the new requirements to ensure that it is implementing all of the required changes.**

Some of the more significant changes that are in ORC Chapter 5108 include the following:

- ORC Section 5108.04 requires each CDJFS to adopt an initial written statement of policies governing the PRC program for the county (i.e., PRC plan).
 - This initial statement of policies must be adopted not later than October 1, 2003, and must be updated at least every two years thereafter (i.e., biennial update). Once adopted, the initial statement of policies can be amended at any time.
 - The CDJFS director shall sign and date the statement of policies and any amendment to it.
 - Neither the statement of policies nor any amendment to it may have an effective date prior to the date of the CDJFS director's signature.
 - Each CDJFS must provide ODJFS a written copy of the initial statement of policies and any amendments not later than ten calendar days after the statement or amendment's effective date.

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- ORC Section 5108.05 eliminates the requirement of ODJFS to provide a state PRC model and outlines certain requirements that each county must follow in adopting a statement of policies.
 - In its statement of policies, the CDJFS must specify certain information such as the benefits and services that will be provided; the restrictions on the amount, duration, and frequency of the benefits and services; and the eligibility requirements for the benefits and services.
 - This section also contains language regarding a new requirement for the CDJFS to either provide the public and local government entities at least thirty days to submit comments on, or have the County Family Services Planning Committee review, the initial statement of policies (or biennial update) before the CDJFS director signs and dates the statement of policies. Note that this requirement does not apply to amendments to the statement of policies.
- ORC Section 5108.07 requires that each statement of policies (or biennial update) must include the Board of County Commissioners' certification that the CDJFS complied with ORC Chapter 5108 in adopting the statement of policies.

Federal regulations have a similar requirement for the TANF State Plan process. The Governor's Certification of Ohio's TANF State Plan can be found on the ODJFS Internet at: <http://www.state.oh.us/odjfs/owf/Tanf/2002StatePlan.pdf>.

- Section 5108.10 describes other requirements for benefits or services contained within the CDJFS statement of policies.

Counties must submit their initial statement of policies (and any subsequent amendments) electronically to the GroupWise mailbox Program-Policy@odjfs.state.oh.us. In the e-mail title, please indicate the County name and notate that it's concerning a PRC Plan, with the effective date. For example, the title in the e-mail from Adams County would read "Adams PRC Plan 10/1/03." When submitting amendments in the future, please indicate the amendment effective date in the e-mail title. For instance, if Adams County amends their PRC Plan 6/7/04, the e-mail title would read "Adams PRC Plan Amendment 6/7/04". This will assist staff in quickly identifying PRC Plans, since this mailbox is also used for County Good Cause and Hardship plans. Counties will be notified by e-mail when their plans have been received and will be notified when the plan has been reviewed.

For the initial statement of policies, the new statutory changes do not require that counties amend their current PRC plans. However, regardless of whether a change is made to the existing plan, counties must provide either a thirty-day comment period or have the County Family Services Planning Committee review the plan and must provide a certification by the County Commissioners' for the initial statement of policies. The certification must be faxed to:

Karen Ernes, Section Chief
Cash Assistance Policy Section
Fax - (614) 466-1767
Phone - (614) 466-6024
E-mail - Ernesk@odjfs.state.oh.us

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If counties are not making a change to their existing PRC plan, please indicate this in an e-mail to the GroupWise mailbox Program-Policy@odjfs.state.oh.us. It is not necessary to resend your unchanged PRC plan if we already have that version on the website. However, the County Commissioners' certification must be faxed to the above number.

If counties' have not yet provided their PRC plans electronically or if counties are changing their existing plan, please forward them after the comment or review period to the Program-Policy mailbox along with an explanation of the changes made. The explanation can be done as an e-mail attachment or as part of the e-mail. As stated above the County Commissioners' certification must be faxed to the above number.

The issuance of this guidance letter obsoletes OWF/PRC Guidance Letters # 3 and #52.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Attachments

JC:ke

c: Tom Hayes
China Widener
Melissa DeLisio
Bob Blair
Deputy Directors
Family Stability staff
OJFSDA
CCAO