

Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) Plan
Athens County Department of Job and Family Services
Effective Date 10/1/17 (revised 9/1/17)

Goal

The goal is to provide an assistance program to families while encouraging self-sufficiency and preventing dependency. The program is designed to operate with as much flexibility as possible for the eligibility worker and the family needing assistance.

Services will be designed to meet one of four purposes of TANF:

- 1) To provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;
- 2) To end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage;
- 3) To prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and
- 4) To encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Economic Need

A means-tested individual eligibility determination for any services provided under TANF Purposes 1 & 2 will be conducted. Unless specified otherwise, the total countable income of all members of the PRC assistance group must be equal to or less than the 150% Federal Poverty guidelines based upon family size. Different income guidelines may be set for individual programs as specified in the program description.

Summary of Athens County PRC program policies:

Authorized services will be provided for one-time-only or short-term services and will be issued through vendor pay arrangements only.

The Poverty Level is adjusted annually by the Department of Health and Human Services and takes effect on the date posted by that department. The Monthly Federal Poverty Guideline amount is used to determine income eligibility for PRC. Unless specified otherwise, the total countable income of all members of the PRC assistance group must be equal to or less than the 150% Federal Poverty guidelines based upon family size.

Medical expenses are not eligible for PRC funding with the exception of pre-pregnancy family planning services (PL 104-193).

Family Emergency Assistance (FEA) funds will be utilized for those unavoidable financial crises or disasters that occur and which the family income cannot be expected to cover, contingent upon available funding, under TANF Purpose 1. FEA funds will usually be authorized for necessities that ensure the safety, health and well-being of family members. Examples of necessities might include, but not limited to, housing, utilities, deposits, emergency repairs, replacement of household items lost in a fire or flood, etc. FEA will be targeted to families whose income is at or below 150% Poverty Level.

Need is generally viewed as existing when the circumstances which precede the financial crisis appear to be unavoidable or unexpected. The appearance of contrived or planned financial emergencies will result in denial for PRC services. The PRC payment will be authorized when verified financial eligibility exists along with the determination of emergent need, as defined by the eligibility worker.

Eligibility for PRC services

Individuals prevented from receiving PRC are listed in the attached Addendum A.

The PRC assistance group must be TANF eligible which may include, but not limited to: a household containing a child and relative caretaker (a minor under the age of eighteen years, or under the age of nineteen if the child is still enrolled in high school); a non-custodial parent cooperating with the Child Support Enforcement Agency; households containing a pregnant woman; or an agency serving TANF eligible families. A PRC assistance group is defined as those persons who reside together within a dwelling or household.

For those who are accessing the Family Emergency Assistance (FEA), the income guideline will be 150% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Other special projects that require income guidelines will utilize income guidelines as stated in each project description.

All income received within the household is considered "countable" for PRC purposes. Deductions from income will include: child support paid for a child outside the assistance group; all income that is federally excluded in the determination of eligibility for federal needs-based programs. Federally excluded income includes the following: drug discounts and transitional assistance received under the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act; and monetary allowances for certain children with covered birth defects paid under the Veteran's Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2000. Eligibility will be determined by totaling all income of the household members for the past 30 days. If the assistance group meets this standard, they are considered financially eligible. Written or verbal verification of income may be required.

It is expected that the family's liquid resources (i.e.: cash on hand, savings accounts, etc.) will be utilized to meet the emergent need for the FEA program, prior to or in conjunction with PRC. Other community resources may be explored and whenever possible, utilized for the emergent need.

For services directed to TANF Purpose 3 or 4, services are provided without regard to income, notices regarding adverse action will not apply.

ACDJFS shall use the agency PRC/WIA application form #100.

All PRC applicants/recipients will be offered the opportunity to register to vote.

Each person applying for PRC must provide the county agency with a social security number, or apply for a social security number. Providing a number is a condition of receipt of TANF and is required under Section 1137(a) of the Social Security Act.

In order to receive PRC benefits and services, at least one member of the PRC assistance group (AG) must be a citizen of the United States or a qualified alien as defined in rule 5101:1-2-30 of the Ohio Administrative Code. See also Section 403(a) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996.

Maximum benefits for FEA

The eligibility worker will decide how much assistance will be authorized, up to a maximum of \$500 for FEA expenses, depending on the request and need of the applicant. Benefits may be paid out for one-time assistance in subsequent emergencies during the 12 month period, providing that the maximum benefit is not exceeded. More than one vendor may be paid during an emergency, up to the maximum dollar amount.

The 12 month eligibility period begins with the application date of the authorized application for PRC services.

Approval or denial of FEA

The county determination of eligibility will usually be made within 3 working days of the receipt of an application. In general, assistance will be approved or denied sooner than 3 days, upon receipt of necessary verification. Applicants for PRC assistance will be issued proper notice, i.e., approval/denial, in accordance with program rules with state hearing rights.

Special Projects

Availability of these projects are contingent upon funding. These projects may provide services up to the limits specified by each such project without limitation or regard to the \$500 general FEA and EA maximum benefit caps specified above. A list of special projects follows:

PRC Disaster Assistance Program: To the extent permissible under federal law and/or Ohio statutes and regulations, the CDJFS director may authorize TANF discretionary funding for disaster relief when a State of Emergency has been declared by the federal government, Ohio's Governor or the County Commissioners. This disaster relief will be made available to eligible families with unplanned expenses related to natural disasters. The economic need standard shall not exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Eligibility shall be determined based upon the TANF guidelines in effect at that time including exceptions specified by law or regulations. The application will be the same application used for public assistance benefits or the common resource application as prescribed by ACDJFS or as directed by ODJFS. Up to \$1500 is available per family to cover losses incurred as a result of the disaster. **This program is designed to meet TANF Purpose 1.**

Home Repair Assistance: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, home repairs necessary to maintain safety and health to promote family stability and job retention. Services will be provided by contract through Hocking-Athens-Perry Community Action Agency. Applications will be on a form provided by Hocking-Athens-Perry CAA and approved by ACDJFS. The

200% of the Federal Poverty Level. **This program is designed to meet TANF Purpose 1 and 2.**

Food Assistance: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, food assistance to eligible OWF households as they participate in work activities. Eligibility will be determined by totaling all income of the household members for the past 30 days. If the assistance group meets this standard, they are considered financially eligible. Written or verbal verification of income may be required. The application will be the same application used for public assistance benefits or the common resource application as prescribed by ACDJFS. The economic need standard should not exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. **This program is designed to meet TANF Purpose 2.**

Ohio Youth Works Program: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, subsidized employment assistance or work opportunities to eligible youth age 14-15 under the direction of Family Assistance Letter #159. Participants will gain valuable work experience while earning a paycheck to help meet basic needs. Max hourly rate is \$10.00 per hour and max number of hours is not more than 40 hours per week during the program period. The application will be the same application used for WIOA/CCMEP. The economic need standard shall not exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. **This program is designed to meet TANF Purposes 1 and 2.**

Learning, Earning and Parenting (LEAP) program: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, PRC funds to cover expenses related to supportive services/activities directed to eligible LEAP participants up to a maximum of \$1000 per 12 month period. These services/activities may be directed toward:

- staying enrolled in school or other educational/training programs;
- improved academic performance;
- improved attendance;
- life skills and health improvement, participation in cultural enrichment or extracurricular activities; and
- essential educational materials.

Allowable expenditures may include, **but are not limited to**, costs associated with (clothing needs, personal hygiene items, diapers, school related fee's, books and supplies, drivers education expenses, car repairs, transportation, utility expenses, rent and deposit, on-line (PC) courses etc..) Eligibility for supportive services/activities will follow LEAP eligibility. ACDJFS shall use the agency PRC application. The economic need standard shall not exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. **This program is designed to meet all four TANF Purposes.**

Ohio Works Incentive /PRC Program: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, incentive payments and provide other supportive services to Ohio Works First participants for placement and/or retention in unsubsidized employment under the direction of ODJFS. Eligibility will be based on receipt of Ohio Works First and will use the existing application for public assistance. The program anticipates OWF recipients becoming employed and potentially losing eligibility for OWF based on the increase in income. Therefore, once eligible, an OWF recipient will remain eligible through all potential program payment points. The application will be the same application used for public assistance benefits. Program participants will also be eligible for up to \$1,000.00 every twelve months in supportive services designed to help them obtain and retain

employment. **This program is designed to meet TANF Purpose 2.**

Family Services: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, assistance to families such as bed bug eradication, life skills, health improvement, participation in cultural enrichment, extracurricular activities, other services or monetary help to alleviate the burden on families, etc. The application will be the same application used for public assistance benefits, the PRC application or the common resource application as prescribed by ACDJFS. The economic need standard shall not exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. **This program is designed to meet all four TANF Purposes.**

School Readiness: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, services for school readiness programs throughout the county. These activities may be directed toward:

- improved academic performance;
- improved attendance;
- life skills and health improvement
- participation in cultural enrichment or extracurricular activities; and
- provision of essential educational materials.

Activities may also include student intervention programs as outlined by the ODE/ODJFS and scholarships for preschool programs i.e. public preschool, ELI or other early childhood education programs.

School Readiness services designed to meet TANF purposes 3 and/or 4 may be provided without regard to income to any Athens County school district, unless otherwise specified in a county procedure letter or contract for services.

School Readiness services designed to meet TANF purposes 1 and/or 2 may use the same application used for public assistance benefits, free or reduced lunch, the PRC application or the common resource application as prescribed by ACDJFS. The economic need standard shall not exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

This program is designed to meet all four TANF Purposes.

economic need standard should not exceed 150% of the Federal Poverty Level. **This program is designed to meet TANF Purposes 1 and 2.**

Outreach: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, information and referral services to families, without regard to income. Information and referral services will be available for social, medical, employment, educational and financial assistance services. **This program is designed to meet all four TANF Purposes.**

Workforce and Job Development Activities: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, assistance to families to:

- a) promote job preparation;
- b) remove barriers to employment;
- c) provide basic education and skill training;
- d) assist in job search and matching;
- e) provide work experience; and
- f) other services as prescribed by the agency.

In order to assure the availability of adequate workforce opportunities for families, the Athens County Department of Job and Family Services may provide TANF funding for workforce development services to local workforce development agencies subject to the availability of funding. This service may be utilized up to a maximum of \$10,000 per individual per 12 months, providing that TANF funding is available

The application will be the same application used for public assistance benefits or the common resource application as prescribed by ACDJFS. The economic need standard should not exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Job Development Activities may be conducted as an administrative function. **This program is designed to meet TANF Purpose 2.**

Domestic Violence: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, short-term emergency services for victims of domestic violence who are experiencing a crisis situation as defined by ACDJFS. These activities may be directed toward ensuring the safety, health and well-being of family members. Services may include: Clothing, household supplies, housing, rent or deposit, utility connections or deposits, re-locations expenses or other items as needed up to \$1500 in a 12 month period. Eligibility will be determined by totaling all income of the household members for the past 30 days. If the assistance group meets this standard, they are considered financially eligible. Written or verbal verification of income may be required. The application will be the same application used for public assistance benefits. The economic need standard should not exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. **This program is designed to meet TANF Purpose 1 and 2.**

Family Clothing Assistance: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, clothing assistance to eligible families. Eligibility will be determined by totaling all income of the household members for the past 30 days. If the assistance group meets this standard, they are considered financially eligible. Written or verbal verification of income may be required. The application will be the same application used for public assistance benefits or the common resource application as prescribed by ACDJFS. The economic need standard should not exceed

Addendum "A"

Persons excluded from PRC eligibility by law include:

Individuals with outstanding fraud overpayments (HB 408). Pursuant to section 5101.83 Revised Code and rule 5101:1-23-75 of the Ohio Administrative Code, PRC benefits and services may not be provided to a family that fraudulently received benefits under the OWF and/or PRC programs until a member of the assistance group repays the cost of the fraudulent assistance.

The Athens County Department of Job & Family Services will check each application to ensure that the above exclusion does not apply.

The Athens County Department of Job and Family Services will provide PRC services in a manner which is fair and impartial and does not violate State and Federal law.

Addendum “B”

All relevant County Procedure Letters on file with the Athens County Department of Job & Family Services.

SIGNATURE PAGE

This is to certify that the Athens County Department of Job and Family Services has complied with ORC Chapter 5108 in adopting and amending this policy.

G. T. Zielinski

Executive Director, Athens County
Department of Job and Family Services

9-19-17

Date

Date reviewed by Athens County Job and
Family Services Planning Committee

9-18-17

Date

Date approved by Athens County Commissioners

9-19-17

Date