

VAN WERT COUNTY

Prevention Retention & Contingency Plan

Effective

05/20/2024

114 E. Main Street

Van Wert, OH 45891



INTRODUCTION

The Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) Program has been established under Chapter 5108 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) utilizing TANF funding. The PRC Program is designed to assist families in overcoming immediate barriers to achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency and personal responsibility. This is accomplished by providing necessary benefits and services that will enable individuals to obtain employment, keep employment, and improve their overall economic circumstances and stability.

The PRC program provides for non-recurring, short-term, crisis-oriented benefits and ongoing services that are directly related to one of the four purposes of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. PRC assistance will be authorized with the expectation that the PRC assistance group (AG) will then be able to function without additional agency help for the presenting need. The services and benefits provided fall into three categories:

Prevention Services: designed to divert families from ongoing cash assistance by providing short-term non-assistance.

Retention Services: provided to assist an employed member of the family in maintaining employment.

Contingency Services: provided to meet an emergent need which, if not met, threatens the safety, health, or well-being of one or more family members.

PRC funds must be used to meet one of the four purposes of TANF (45 C.R.F. 260.20). These are:

- Purpose 1: To provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own home or in the homes of relatives;
- Purpose 2: To end dependence of needy parents on governmental benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
- Purpose 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,
- Purpose 4: To encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

PRC funds may only provide benefits and services which are not considered "assistance" (45 C.F.R. 260.31). This definition includes non-recurrent, short-term benefits that are designed to deal with a specific crisis or episode of need, are not intended to meet recurrent/ongoing needs, and will not exceed beyond four (4) months. Non-recurrent benefits and services may encompass more than one payment per calendar year, as long as payment provides short-term relief and addresses a crisis situation rather than meeting an ongoing or recurrent need and does not exceed the assistance group benefit cap/limit.

The PRC program is designed to help people overcome immediate barriers to achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency; thereby, preventing or reducing the need for ongoing public assistance, yet receipt of other program assistance does not preclude eligibility for receipt of benefits and services within the PRC program.

The federal definition of "non-assistance" includes: 1) Non-recurrent, short-term benefits that are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need; are not intended to meet recurrent or

ongoing needs; and, will not extend beyond four months; 2) Work subsidies (i.e., payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employee wages, benefits, supervision, and training); 3) Supportive services such as child care and transportation provided to families who are employed; and 4) refundable earned income tax credits; 5) Contributions to, and distributions from, Individual Development Accounts (IDA's); 6) Services such as counseling, case management, peer support, child care information and referral, transitional services, job retention, job advancement, and other employment-related services that do not provide basic income support; and 7) Transportation benefits provided under a Job Access or Reverse Commute project, pursuant to section 404(k) of the Act, to an individual who is not other receiving assistance.

A. TANF EXCLUSIONS

Federal TANF funds cannot be used for:

1. Medical services, except for pre-pregnancy planning services, medical services include inpatient medical services, outpatient medical services, mental health services, and substance abuse treatment;
2. To supplant spending in areas of Child Support Enforcement, Foster Care, and Adoption Assistance;
3. To satisfy a cost-sharing or matching requirement of another federal program unless specifically Authorized by 2 CFR 225, Appendix A;
4. To construct or purchase buildings or facilities or to purchase real estate;
5. For general expenses required to carry out the responsibilities of the county.

B. BENEFITS & SERVICES CATEGORIES

Direct Services (also known as "Hard" services)

Direct services are any benefits and/or services that have a direct cash value to the PRC applicant. Such benefits must:

- Be designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need
- Not be intended to meet recurrent or ongoing -needs
- Must not extend beyond four (4) months
 - (Examples include the purchase of tools, car repairs, purchase of bedding, appliances, rent, and/or security deposit).

Indirect Services (also known as "Soft" Services)

- Indirect Services are any benefits and/or services that **DO NOT** have a direct cash value to the PRC applicant. Indirect services may be provided on an ongoing basis.

Direct benefits and/or services will be provided in the form of a payment to a vendor on behalf of a recipient of PRC, not paid directly to the recipient. In no case is payment for PRC direct services made to any member of the assistance group (AG) or a relative of the assistance group.

Any number of individual services can be provided, or payments can be made during the twelve (12)-month eligibility period following the date of application as long, as each is a distinctive, non-ongoing occurrence.

1. Non-Financial Eligibility

- A. Social Security Number:** Each person applying for PRC must provide the county agency (or third party providing agency) with a social security number or verify in writing, application of a social security number.
- B. Ineligibility for PRC Services:** The following applicants are ineligible for PRC assistance in Van Wert County:
- Non-Van Wert County resident
 - An individual who is a fugitive felon and/or probation/parole violator;

 - Individuals who are not citizens of the United States and do not meet the definition of qualified aliens;
 - An Assistance Group with any family member who has an outstanding OWF or PRC fraud overpayment balance); If verified with benefit and recovery unit that current on payment plan, then the assistance group would be eligible.
 - A PRC AG that is discovered to fraudulently received or improperly disposed of PRC benefits or services will be required to reimburse VWCDJFS the full cost of the benefits or service and may be subject to prosecution.
 - An AG member who is ineligible for other public assistance programs due to deliberate non-compliance with the terms of his/her assistance, such as those stated in the Self-Sufficiency Plan and Contract/Individual Opportunity Plan (IOP) (exception: individuals in this group are ineligible for Contingency Services only.
 - An AG with an unmarried parent under the age of eighteen (18) not attending high school or equivalent;
 - An AG with an unmarried parent under the age of eighteen (18) not living in an adult-supervised setting;
 - An AG with any family member who is has committed an intentional program violation (IPV);
 - An applicant refuses to use available resources or excess income to help meet their need.
 - An applicant or assistance group member is on strike
 - A person found to have fraudulently misrepresented residence in order to obtain assistance in two or more states is ineligible for ten (10) years.
- C. PRC Exclusions:**

Applicants may **not** use PRC benefits:

- To meet a current, demonstrated need that is met through the issuance of benefits under another federal or state program;
- To directly pay court-order child support;
- To pay any court-ordered child support;
 - Pay any costs associated with the violation of federal, state, and/or local laws. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Court costs
 - Attorney Fees
 - Fines
 - Parking violations
- To pay fees associated with childcare including childcare co-payments, with the exception of the Kinship Caregiver Program.
- To pay property taxes;

D. Assistance Group Composition

The applicant who signs the PRC Application must meet the eligibility requirements listed below to make an AG eligible for PRC benefits and/or services.

Assistance Group (AG) is the technical terms used to describe family members that may be served by a PRC program. All AG's must at a minimum, consist of:

- A minor child (as defined in 5108.01, 5108.06, and 5107.02 of the ORC) who resides with a parent, specified relative, legal guardian, or legal custodian and other 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;
- Pregnant individuals with no other children;
- A non-custodial parent (defined in 45 CFR 260.30) who lives in the state of Ohio, but does not reside with his/her minor children. Minor child or children must live in the state of Ohio. Eligibility for PRC benefits and/or services are limited to non-custodial parents who:
 - Are currently cooperating with Child Support;
 - Who establish and who are in the process of establishing responsibility for their child(ren) through the CSEA; and
 - Who have a current child support order and the intent to meet his/her financial obligation; and
 - Are ordered into an employment program by a court or referred by the Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) and are also complying with the employment program to find a job; or
 - Who are employed at least twenty (20) hours per week.

AG members may be "temporarily absent" yet the individual and his/her family may still qualify for PRC benefits and services. "Temporary absence" has the same meaning for the PRC program as it does for Ohio Works First (OWF) as set forth under Section 5107.10 of the ORC and rule 5101:1-3-04 of Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) which states that the absence of a member of the AG is temporary if:

- The AG member has been absent for no longer than 45 consecutive days;
- The location of the absent individual is known;
- There is a definite plan for the return of the absent individual to the home; and
- The absent individual shared the home with the AG prior to the onset of the absence.

A minor child may be connected to more than one AG receiving PRC depending upon the service provided and other individuals residing with the minor child. All individuals living in the household that would benefit from the PRC assistance would be counted as an AG.

Rule 5101:1-3-04 sets forth exceptions to the requirement that the AG member be absent for no longer than 45 days including a situation where a child is removed by the public children services agency (PCSA) if the agency indicates that there is a reunification plan to return the child to the home within six (6) months.

E. Residence

PRC benefits and/or services are available to adult applicants on behalf of children in the temporary or permanent custody of the VWCDJFS, even when the child is placed/resides in another county. Additionally, PRC benefits and/or services are available to adult participants on behalf of children placed in the custody of a relative (relative placement) facilitated by VWCDJFS, including when the relative resides in another county, as long as the provider and child have a current open case in the VWCDJFS Social Services division.

Benefits and/or services issued on behalf of these children shall not duplicate benefits and/or services received by the adult applicant through the County Department of Job and Family Services in their county of residence.

F. Change in Circumstance

For Contingency Services only the applicant must be able to demonstrate that a specific change in circumstance occurred within the twelve (12) months immediately prior to the application date for PRC benefits and/or services that has led to, or significantly contributed to, the current demonstrated need. Failure by the applicant to demonstrate the specific change and tie the change into the current need will result in the applicant's ineligibility for PRC benefits and/or services.

The change in circumstance leading to the current needs must be an unexpected, life-altering event which may include such things as: job loss or job gain, domestic violence, divorce, natural disaster or fire, individual providing monetary support leaves the household, death of a household member, new children services involvement resulting in the removal or threatened removal of child from the home, homelessness, accident resulting in the client not being able to work, addition of a child or other family member into the household, and prolonged illness.

The change in circumstance does not include routine or expected changes such as voluntary move (not precipitated by an unexpected change in circumstance), change of seasons, start of a school year, inflation, holidays, sanction, legal infractions (including intentional fraudulent acts by the client such as intentionally breaking a lease), temporary (pre-defined end date or lasting less than six months) or seasonal employment, and voluntarily terminating employment.

Written verification of the change of circumstance is only required when the VWCDJFS worker has reasonable suspicion to doubt the truthfulness of the claim.

G. Mitigation

The PRC applicant must be able to demonstrate that they have attempted to mitigate the current, demonstrated need, when applicable. Failure to attempt to mitigate the need will result in the denial of the PRC application. A PRC application must demonstrate an attempt has been made to prevent the occurrence of the emergent need. Situations that demonstrate a failure to mitigate may include, but is not limited to:

- Making no payment toward the obligation;
- Making only minimal payments with the knowledge that such an amount would not prevent the occurrence;
- Failing to follow through with the previous PRC plan.

H: Non- Administrative Program Activities

Non-Administrative program operational activities certain benefits and services do not require an application or certification for PRC benefits and/or services as they do not provide a direct service linked to an individual family. Such activities could include employer recruitment, outreach, information and referral, websites, billboards, and public service announcements which are considered non-administrative program operation costs

FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

For Prevention and Retention Services, the AG must have a combined gross monthly income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) updated annually. In order for the eligibility of the AG to be determined, the gross earned and unearned income of the AG must be determined and must meet the standard for that service.

Gross earned income examples include, but are not limited to:

- Earnings from work as an employee
- Earnings from self-employment, less the cost of doing business
- Training allowance
- Commission

Gross unearned income examples include, but are not limited to:

- Income as stated in OAC 5101:1-24-20
- RSDI benefits
- Alimony and child support
- Workers' Compensation
- Unemployment Benefits
- OWF and SSI payments

VWCDJFS is responsible for determining, using its best judgment, whether income available to the applicant should be, or should have been, used to pay for the need. The AG is responsible to submit their last 30 days of gross income to determine eligibility for the Prevention Retention and Contingency Program. For Prevention/Retention services, if an adult child resides in the home their income will not count towards the family's gross income and will not be considered part of the AG. For Contingency services only, the income of all household members will be considered with the exception of minor children attending secondary school full time all will be considered part of the AG.

For cases in which the income cannot be accurately obtained, the implementation of practices that are reasonable and prudent shall occur when determining countable income. A signed Release of Information should be obtained from the applicant for an inquiry. Once the signed release is received, verification may be obtained. If the information is obtained by telephone, this verbal information must be clearly documented in the PRC AG's case record including:

- The name of the person supplying the information;
- The position title of the person supplying the information;
- The date the verification was received;
- The amount of income received in the budget period;
- The name of the VWCDJFS staff person obtaining the information.

More stringent verification is required when PRC benefits and services involve a direct monetary gain by the applicant and opportunities for fraud are prevalent.

The applicant must use all available income and resources in meeting the current, demonstrated need.

A. Indirect Services

PRC applicant/re-applicant is responsible for completing all necessary documents, furnishing all available facts and information, and cooperating to the fullest extent in the eligibility determination process.

- The applicant does not have to demonstrate:
 - That a change in circumstance occurred
 - That community resources were explored
 - That mitigation attempts were made
 - Resources over \$200.00 limit do not have to be used
- The applicant must verify residency in Van Wert County;
 - PRC is available to non-Van Wert County residents on behalf of a child in the temporary or permanent custody of the VWCDJFS;
 - PRC is available to non-Van Wert County residents when VWCDJFS has facilitated placement of a child to a relative only when the case remains active in the VWCDJFS social services division.
- The applicant must provide a social security number or verification of application for a social security number;
- The applicant must verify U.S. citizenship or Qualified Alien status;

The PRC recipient must reapply for PRC indirect services semi-annually, within six (6) months of the original date of application.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Voter Registration

In accordance with 329.051 of the Ohio Revised Code:

- The VWCDJFS shall make voter registration applications available to all applicants for PRC at the time of application;
- All contracted providers funded, in whole or in part, with TANF funds shall make voter registration applications available to all applicants for PRC benefits and/or services at the time of application.

B. Charitable Choice and Faith-Based Initiatives

Charitable Choice provisions apply when Van Wert County contracts with faith-based organizations to provide benefits and/or services with TANF funds (including PRC).

Federal regulations (45 CFR 260.34) require that AG's have the right to request an alternative provider and that the AG be notified of this right.

- The notice must clearly explain the right to be referred to an alternative provider and services that reasonably meet timeliness, capacity, accessibility, and equivalency requirements.
- Any AG that objects to a faith-based provider must be provided with an alternative provider of services within a reasonable amount of time.
 - The alternative provider must be reasonably accessible and be able to provide comparable services.

APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Application Filing

Any adult has the right to apply for PRC benefits and/or services. An individual requesting direct or indirect PRC benefits and/or services must complete a PRC application. At the time of application, the PRC applicant shall be provided with his/her rights as an applicant.

B. Case Records/Retention

Case records must be maintained for all PRC applicants. The VWCDJFS determines eligibility for direct services and may or may not contract with community providers to determine eligibility for indirect services. Providers contracted to determine/re-determine eligibility for indirect services must maintain case files that are readily available for monitoring and audit in accordance with OMB Circular A-133 and A-87, even if the provider ceases to exist.

- A separate PRC case record shall be created by the VWCDJFS and maintained. The application and all required verifications gathered during the PRC eligibility determination shall be kept in it.
- If the PRC applicant is applying for benefits and/or services through a contracted provider (whether or not the applicant is/was in receipt of public assistance), a separate case record shall be created and maintained and the application and all required verification gathered during the PRC eligibility determination process shall be kept in it.
- Direct services provided must be entered in the PRC Reporting Tool

C. Standard of Promptness

The application for PRC benefits and/or services is an application for public assistance benefits. The timelines for determining eligibility and rendering a final decision established in 5101:1-2-01 of the OAC shall be adhered to by the VWCDJFS and all contracted providers. Additionally, the VWCDJFS will make every effort to determine eligibility for direct services with ten (10) business days of receipt of the application and all required verifications.

D. Notice Requirements

The PRC applicant shall receive notice of the decision regarding the PRC benefits and/or services in accordance with OAC chapter 5101:6. The following apply:

- Approval
 - The notice of Approval/Denial shall be forwarded, in person or via U.S. Mail, to the applicant within two (2) business days from the day on which the decision was rendered.
 - The "Approved" box shall be marked
 - The notice shall be signed and dated by a VWCDJFS or contracted provider representative.
- Denial
 - The notice of Approval/Denial shall be forwarded, in person or via U.S. Mail, to the applicant within two (2) business days from the day on which the decision was rendered.
 - The "Denied" box will shall be marked.
 - The notice shall be accompanied by Notice of the Right to a State Hearing;

- The notice shall be signed and dated by a VWCDJFS or contract provider representative.
- Denial is required when an application has been withdrawn, either verbally or in writing.

SCOPE OF COVERAGE

A. Maximum Issuance

In all cases, the amount of PRC issued may not exceed, the current, demonstrated need of the AG. The amount of PRC issued must be within the appropriate maximum payment amount. If the amount of PRC available cannot prevent the onset of continuation of current, demonstrated need, there is no eligibility for payment.

- Example:
 - If the amount available from PRC can pay the major portion of the amount needed to avoid a utility shut-off and the applicant and the utility company set up a written agreement for payment of the balance, PRC can be issued.
 - If an agreement cannot be made or the amount available through PRC cannot meet the total necessary to prevent the shut-off, no PRC may be issued.
- Example:
 - If the cost of the car repair exceeds the value of the car, as determined by a licensed, qualified mechanic or other agency-approved vendor, the request would be denied.

The AG may receive more than one item/service per event and may apply and receive PRC assistance multiple times within a twelve (12)-month period; but, the total amount of PRC assistance cannot exceed the maximum limits and applicable sub-limits. The twelve (12)-month period begins on the date of the initial application for PRC.

- **Direct Services**

- Parents, specified relatives, legal guardians, legal custodians, pregnant individuals with no other children and other 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:
 - PRC applicants who meet all eligibility criteria may be eligible per service limits (see charts pages 12-14) for short-term, ongoing, and contingency service in each year (beginning with the initial date of application) for direct goods and/or services;
 - PRC assistance issued in another county during the twelve (12)-month period immediately prior to the month of the date of application shall count as being received in Van Wert County and applied to the maximum issuance limit.
 - For Child Welfare/ Family Well Being services, the AG will complete the Van Wert County Child Welfare PRC application. If the PRC AG receives any of the following means-tested benefits, they are automatically considered to be financially eligible for PRC assistance as long as their gross monthly income is at or below 200% FPG. Cannot exceed \$10,000 of direct services in a 12-month period.
 - Ohio Works First (OWF) Cash Assistance
 - Food Assistance
 - Medicaid
 - Women, Infant and Children (WIC)

- Non-Custodial parents:
 - PRC assistance issued in another county during the current calendar year shall count as being received in Van Wert County and applied to the maximum issuance limit.

- **Indirect Services**

- Parents, specified relatives, legal guardians, legal custodians, pregnant individuals with no other children and other 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.
 - There is no maximum issuance for PRC applicants who met all eligibility criteria as there is no direct monetary value attributable to individuals for indirect services received.
 - Any monetary value of indirect services shall not count toward the maximum issuance for direct services
 - For Child Welfare/ Family Well Being services, the AG will complete the Van Wert County Child Welfare PRC application. If the PRC AG receives any of the following means-tested benefits, they are automatically considered to be financially eligible for PRC assistance as long as their gross monthly income is at or below 200% FPG.
 - Ohio Works First (OWF) Cash Assistance
 - Food Assistance
 - Medicaid
 - Women, Infant and Children (WIC)
- Non-custodial parents
 - There is no maximum issuance for PRC applicants who met all eligibility criteria as there is no direct monetary value attributable to individuals for indirect services received.
 - Any monetary value of indirect services shall not count towards the maximum issuance for direct services

Prevention & Retention: Short-Term Services

- All General Eligibility & Application Requirements apply
- \$1500 per consecutive 12-month period not to exceed the amount required to meet the presenting need or the amount listed below for that service.
- If the application is approved, the consecutive 12-month period shall begin the day the application was signed.
- May reapply any number of times during a 12-month period- as long as maximum dollar amount has not been exceeded.

| TANF Purpose | Service | Additional Requirements | Cap |
|--------------|--|---|---------|
| #2 | Bicycle for Employment or WEP Assignment | Must show proof of employment. | \$200 |
| #2 | Uniforms, work shoes, safety glasses, tools required for employment or WEP assignment. | 3 quotes required for all purchases and verification from employer that item(s) is required. | \$500 |
| #2 | Testing fees, fingerprinting expenses, fees for state licenses, Driver's Education, License plates for vehicles, board certification, Driver License, State ID, Birth Certificate all related to employment or job search, required training for employment. | For job search and employment purposes only. | \$1,000 |
| #2 | Automobile Insurance | Applicant must be employed 45 days and show ability to pay succeeding months. Monthly budget sheet required. 3 quotes required. | \$500 |
| #2 | Automobile Repairs | Applicant must be employed 45 days. 3 quotes required. Must have verification of odometer reading, year, make, model, and condition of vehicle, check Kelly Blue Book to check that repair doesn't exceed value of the car. | \$800 |
| #1 | YMCA Family Membership | Must be referred by a community agency. | \$1000 |
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Prevention & Retention: Ongoing Services

- All General Eligibility & Application Requirements apply.
- \$10,000 per consecutive 12-month period not to exceed the amount required to meet the presenting need. If the application is approved, the consecutive 12-month period shall begin the day the signed application was signed.

| TANF Purpose | Service | Additional Requirements | Cap |
|--------------|---|---|----------|
| #2 | Life 180 Class | n/a | |
| #2 | Literacy and GED programs & Test fees associated with these programs. | n/a | \$200 |
| #2 | Educational/Training expenses (must successfully complete Life 180 prior to educational and training request approvals. | Must follow WIOA guidelines. | \$8,000 |
| #2 | Vocational Assessment or Testing | n/a | \$200 |
| #2 | Gasoline Vouchers for employment, job search assistance, or education/training | Daily or weekly gas voucher will be issued at \$.28 per mile. Must have valid driver's license, insurance, and vehicle registration documented. Not to exceed 90 round trips in a 12-month period | \$1,500 |
| #2 | On the Job Training (OJT) | Not to exceed 4 months. Employers will be reimbursed up to 50% of the eligible trainee's wages during the established training period. Must follow WIOA guidelines. | \$10,000 |
| #1 & #2 | Child Welfare Service/Family Well Being- Domestic Violence Services, Home Based Services, Parent Education Services, Respite Care Services, Alcohol and drug counseling services, emergency housing, rent assistance, transportation/gas vouchers, children's clothing, diapers, bedding, child specific furniture items, stove, refrigerator, washer, dryer, trash removal services, dumpster rental, exterminating services, baby items (crib, mattress, blankets, bottles, etc.) | Must have an open case with Children Services and Child Welfare PRC approval within the last 6-months. | \$5,000 |

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|-----------|--|--|---------------|
| <p>#2</p> | <p>Van Wert County Employment Incentive Program-Incentives for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Eligible applicants will receive a \$700 incentive upon verifying that they gained or increased employment hours that reduces or eliminates their food assistance. ➤ Eligible applicants who retain employment for 4 months will receive a \$400 incentive ➤ Eligible applicants who retain employment for 8 months will receive a \$400 incentive ➤ Eligible applicants who retain employment for 12 months will receive a \$1,000 incentive | <p>Eligible applicants will receive incentives upon verifying that they gained or increased employment hours that reduces or eliminates their food assistance. Must be employed a minimum of 20 hrs./week, no breaks in employment unless documented medical reason. Can only receive once per lifetime. Ohio Means Jobs assigned caseworker will work with eligible applicant with budgeting education.</p> | <p>\$2500</p> |
|-----------|--|--|---------------|

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|-------|---|---|---|
| #2 | Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Child Care Provider application fees & equipment expenses. | Childcare provider application fee costs for future ODJFS childcare providers. Necessary equipment expenses for childcare providers that have received licensing number from state of Ohio. | \$600 maximum lifetime |
| #2 | Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Childcare Provider Incentive. | Childcare provider incentive after 30-days of providing verified subsidized childcare services. | \$600 maximum lifetime. |
| #3 #4 | Housing Coordination Services | Provides outreach to identify, address, and educate the community on homelessness | NOCAC Contract exempt from \$10,000 limit |

| | | | |
|----|------------------------|---|---------|
| #1 | Trash removal services | Assist with trash removal expenses for a 4-month period | \$1,000 |
|----|------------------------|---|---------|

Contingency Services

- All household income counted for contingency services.
- Not to exceed \$1,800 per consecutive 12-month period, not including disaster assistance services
- The applicant must be able to demonstrate that a specific change in circumstance occurred within the twelve (12) months immediately prior to the application date for PRC benefits and/or services that has led to, or significantly contributed to, the current demonstrated need.

| TANF Purpose | Service | Additional Requirements | Cap |
|--------------|---|---|---------|
| #1 | Shelter for back rent, rent assistance, mortgage assistance, must be considered homeless for assistance with a rent deposit | For back rent, rent assistance, mortgage assistance verification from property owner or mortgage company required. For rent deposit applicant must document that they are homeless. Vendor must agree to accept payment from VWCDJFS. Applicant must show ability to pay succeeding months. Monthly budget sheet required. Rent/Mortgage must be brought current. | \$1,000 |
| #1 | Utilities- Electric, Natural Gas, Propane, Fuel Oil, Water/Sewer. | The total amount up to \$800 may be spread over multiple utility providers. Utility must be in the name of the applicant. Applicant must show ability to pay succeeding months. Monthly budget sheet required. Utility(ies) that household are receiving assistance with must be brought current. AG must show a payment on account prior to 60 days of application to receive eligibility. | \$800 |
| #1 | Disaster Assistance Services | Determined by available State or Federal Funds | n/a |

Van Wert County PRC Plan Appendix

Employment Incentive Program (EIP)- GRF

Effective 10/1/2021 or as funding available

Van Wert County Department of Job and Family Services Ohio Means Jobs office will be accepting applications for the Employment Incentive Program (EIP) effective 10/1/2021, or as funding is available for eligible Van Wert County residents that do not have minor children in their household.

- Eligible applicants will receive a \$700 incentive upon verifying that they gained or increased employment hours that reduces or eliminates their food assistance in the last 90-days.
- Eligible applicants who retain employment for 4 months will receive a \$400 incentive
- Eligible applicants who retain employment for 8 months will receive a \$400 incentive
- Eligible applicants who retain employment for 12 months will receive a \$1,000 incentive

Individuals who are eligible for the EIP meets the following criteria to receive the initial \$700 incentive:

- Last 30 days of applicant's household income must be at or below the 200% federal poverty level.
- Applicant has gained employment or increased employment hours that reduces or eliminates the applicant's Food Assistance.
- Applicant's wage is consistently increasing from when they started the job through the 12-month period of the program.
- Applicant is employed a minimum of 32 hours per week
- Applicant has not had a break in employment unless for documented medical reason.

Applicants that are ineligible for this program include:

- Non- Van Wert County residents
- Fugitive felon, probation or parole violator
- Fraudulently obtained assistance in two or more states
- Individuals with outstanding OWF or PRC fraud (IPV) overpayment balance
- Individual under 18 years of age

Individuals who are eligible for the 4, 8, and 12 month employment retention EIP include: Must attend in-person meeting with their case manager and submit verification of employment to be eligible for each EIP payment.

The EIP program can also assist with the following services to help the participant be successful with retaining employment:

| <u>Service</u> | <u>Additional Requirement</u> | <u>Cap</u> |
|--|--|------------|
| Gasoline Vouchers for employment, job search assistance, or education/training | Daily or weekly gas voucher will be issued at \$.28 per mile. Must have valid driver's license, insurance, and vehicle registration documented. Not to exceed 60 round trips in a 6-month period | \$1000 |
| Bicycle for Employment or WEP Assignment | Must show proof of employment. | \$200 |
| Uniforms, work shoes, safety glasses, tools required for employment or WEP assignment. | 3 quotes required for all purchases and verification from employer that item(s) is required. | \$500 |
| Testing fees, fingerprinting expenses, fees for state licenses, Driver's Education, License plates for vehicles, board certification, Driver License, State ID, Birth Certificate all related to employment or job search, required training for employment. | For job search and employment purposes only. | \$1000 |
| Automobile Insurance | Applicant must be employed 45 days and show ability to pay succeeding months. Monthly budget sheet required. 3 quotes required. | \$500 |
| Automobile Repairs | Applicant must be employed 45 days. 3 quotes required. Must check Kelly Blue Book to check that repair doesn't exceed value of the car. | \$800 |
| | | |

**Van Wert County PRC Plan Addendum
Effective 5/1/2024 through 9/30/2024**

2024 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Summer Youth Employment Program

Van Wert County Department of Job and Family Services will be accepting PRC applications starting on May 1st, 2024. Program runs until September 30th, 2024 or as funding remains available for the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program. This program will enable TANF-eligible Van Wert County youth 14 through 18 years of age to gain valuable work experience while earning a paycheck. Eligible youth will earn the current federal minimum wage of \$10.10 per hour while participating in the program. To be eligible for this program gross monthly family income must be at or below the 200% federal poverty level and follow Van Wert County's current PRC plan guidelines.

Individuals interested in the program can call Ohio Means Jobs Van Wert County at 419-623-4437 or applications can be picked up in the lobby at Ohio Means Jobs Van Wert County and an appointment will be made with the youth and his or her parent or guardian. Eligibility for this program will not count toward the family's eligibility for other PRC assistance contained in this plan.

Eligibility - A TANF Summer Youth Employment Program funded through PRC shall only serve persons from a TANF-eligible family. The types of persons that may be served are:

- Youth age 14-18, enrolled in secondary school, as long as the youth is in a needy family and in school.

The youth served may be non-custodial parents as long as they are considered "needy" and have a minor child. "Needy" is not specifically defined by state or federal regulation but may be no greater than income at 200% of the federal poverty level.

Family is defined in federal and state law and regulations as follows: a minor child who resides with a parent, specified relative, legal guardian or legal custodian (a child may be temporarily absent from the home provided certain requirements are met); a pregnant individual with no other children; or a non-custodial parent who lives in the state, but does not reside with his/her minor child(ren).

Foster Care: Youth in a foster care setting age 14 to 18 years of age if they are a full-time student in a secondary school may be served under the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program. The United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF) has provided guidance respective to the Youth Employment Program. **This guidance is only applicable to the**

**TANF Summer Youth Employment Program and no other TANF or PRC program.
LIMITS FOR WAGE SUBSIDIES**

Wages for the Van Wert County TANF Summer Youth Employment Program are capped at **\$10.45** per hour for this allocation. Performance bonuses or lump sum payments are not allowed. Further, a county agency may not pay the youth directly because the funds are wage subsidies, which HHS has defined as payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employee wages, benefits, supervision, and training. A county agency paying the youth directly, rather than reimbursing the employers, who would pay wages to the youth, would too closely resemble payments for cash assistance and engagement in work activities. Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

OHIOMEANSJOBS.COM REQUIREMENT

All youth participating in the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program must be registered on the OhioMeansJobs website. Upon registration in OhioMeansJobs.com, youth will be issued a virtual backpack in which they can store documents, career plans, assessments, a career profile, and other information from their career exploration and job searches. From the virtual backpack, the youth will have access to many career exploration and planning tools. A confirmation of their registration will need to be incorporated into the county agency reporting. Parental or legal guardian consent is required for youth to register in OhioMeansJobs. It is recommended that the general application for this program be modified to obtain consent.

COUNTING OF INCOME FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Food Assistance: Pursuant to rule 5101:4-4-19 of the Ohio Administrative Code, income received from the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program by the 14-18-year old participant enrolled in secondary school is not considered countable earned income for the food assistance program.

Cash Assistance: Pursuant to rule 5101:1-23-20.1 of the Ohio Administrative Code, earnings received from participation in the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program by the 14-18-year-old participant enrolled in secondary school are not countable in determining Ohio Works First eligibility and level of benefits for the family.

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

The TANF Summer Youth Employment Program funding does not include TANF administrative funding. Federal regulations define what is considered TANF administration and they are also set forth in rule 5101:9-6-08.8 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

The following activities and/or expenses are considered TANF administration and cannot be charged to this allocation:

- Costs associated with eligibility determination activities;
- Salaries and benefits of staff performing administrative and coordination functions;
- Preparation of program plans, budgets, reports, schedules and the monitoring of program and projects;
- Fraud and abuse units;
- Services related to accounting, litigation, audits, management property, payroll, personnel, procurement and public relations;
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
- Costs of goods and services and travel costs required for official business and the administration of the program unless excluded under paragraph (A) of rule 5101:9-6-08.8 of the Administrative Code; and
- Management information systems not related to the tracking and monitoring of the program.

Costs considered to be TANF administration may be charged to county TANF Administration allocations pursuant to rule 5101:9-6-08.8 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

ALLOWABLE COSTS

Allowable costs under this program include:

- Payments to employers for wages (no higher than \$13.00 per hour) and fringe benefits;
- Payments to third parties to operate the program;
- Recruitment and development of employers for the program;

• Other ancillary services which are offered by the employer to the summer youth employment participants, including:

○ Work related items such as uniforms, tools, licenses or certifications; ○ Case management activities related to the program; and ○ Job coaches and mentors.

• Worker compensation expenses;

• Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA);

• Direct supervision and training costs; and

• Transportation costs to and from the work site.

Costs, such as, other subsidized employment wages, child care, etc. must adhere to time limits contained in 45 CFR 260.31, and can only be offered to a youth for a period of four months or less. The cost of health insurance for youth may not be charged against this allocation; however, the cost of health insurance for staff employed by a third party to operate the program can be charged against this allocation. Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

THIRD PARTY PROGRAM OPERATION

A county agency may enter into a contract or grant with a third party provider. In the agreement, the county agency may pay for the third party's costs to administer or operate the program so long as those costs do not include the items considered as TANF administrative costs pursuant to rule 5101:9-6-08.8, which includes eligibility determinations.

Any questions concerning procurement and contracting should be referred to the ODJFS Fiscal Supervisor assigned to your agency or to the Technical Assistance Section in the Office of Fiscal and Monitoring Services, Bureau of County Finance and Technical Assistance. Several options may exist for a county agency concerning selection of partnering agencies. For further guidance on procurement, please refer to the Fiscal Administrative Procedure Manual under Local Administration: The manual can be accessed at: <http://emanuals.odjfs.state.oh.us/emanuals/>. Under Local Administration - click on Fiscal Administrative Procedure Manuals: Ohio Administrative Code Rule 5101:9-4-07 and 5101:9-4-07.1.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

ORC 4141.01(B)(3)(aa) and OAC 4141-5-05 state that services must be provided for a nonprofit organization, the state or its instrumentalities to be excluded for unemployment purposes. Therefore, wages paid to youth in a work-relief or work-training program by a for-profit organization are covered wages and must be reported, and contributions paid, for those individuals in the work-relief or work-training programs. In addition, the wages paid to these individuals may be used in determining an unemployment claim.

The key decision point is determining who "is the employer of record". For unemployment purposes, the employer of record is the entity that has direction and control over the participating individuals in the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program or more simply put; hires and/or would dismiss any individual whose performance was unsatisfactory. The next key point is determining if the employer of record is a non-profit or governmental entity. Here are some examples that should guide your agency in determining whether or not the wages paid to the youth are covered for unemployment compensation purposes:

- If the employer of record is a "For Profit" entity, then the services performed by and wages paid to the youth would be covered for unemployment and reported to ODJFS.
- If the employer of record is a "Not for Profit" entity, then the services performed by and wages paid to the youth would be excluded for unemployment and should not be reported to ODJFS.
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
- If the employer of record is a "Governmental or Public" entity, then the services performed by and wages paid to the youth would be excluded for unemployment and should not be reported to ODJFS

Van Wert County PRC Plan Addendum
School Spirit Wear Project

Effective 5/20/2024 through 8/30/2024

We will be accepting applications for school spirit wear packs starting Monday, May 20, 2024 for families below the 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines and have a minor child(ren) in the home who are attending school (Preschool through 11th grade 2023-2024 school year. School spirit wear packs include the following: t-shirt, hoodie, long sleeve t-shirt, shorts, and a lightweight jacket. Eligible families must meet all PRC program eligibility rules.

Verifications needed: I.D of parent guardian, Social Security Cards for all household members, Income verification for all family member for the last 30 days (i.e. pay stubs, SSI award letter, child support, etc.)

Applications with the list of required documents can be picked up at OhioMeansJobs Van Wert County, 120 East Main Street, Van Wert, OH 45891 beginning on Monday, May 20, 2024 through June 14, 2024. Completed applications must be turned in along with required verifications by 4:30 p.m. on June 14, 2024.

In the event State and Federal funds become unavailable, the Van Wert County Department of Job and Family services, in coordination with the Van Wert County Planning Committee, reserves the right to implement a priority of service procedure and establish a plan to prioritize TANF authorization and expenditures.

Van Wert County Department of Job and Family Services agrees to implement the County TANF PRC as outlined herein. This plan becomes effective on **May 20, 2024** and will remain in effect until otherwise modified or terminated.

The Van Wert County Prevention, Retention, and Contingency Plan is hereby approved by


Erinn Sellers, Director

5-16-2024
Date