

Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) Plan
Athens County Department of Job and Family Services (ACDJFS)
Effective Date 11/16/2021 (revised 10/26/2021)

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, contingent upon available funding.

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 200% of the 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, unless specified elsewhere.

The poverty guidelines are adjusted annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and takes effect on the date posted by that department. The monthly federal poverty guideline is used to determine income eligibility for PRC.

Medical expenses are not eligible for PRC funding, with the exceptions of pre-pregnancy family planning services.

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, insurance (excluding medical), emergency repairs, replacement of household items lost in a fire or flood, etc.

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

Persons excluded from PRC eligibility by law include:

Individuals with outstanding fraud overpayments. 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.

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.

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 and all income that is federally excluded in the determination of eligibility for federal needs-based programs. Per OAC 5101:1-24-20, 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 or anticipated income for the next 30 days, whichever is lower. If the assistance group meets this standard, they are considered financially eligible. Written or verbal verification of income may be required. This determination is used for all FEA and special projects unless specified.

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 same application used for public assistance benefits, free or reduced lunch, PRC/WIOA/CCMEP/EIP application form #100, the common resource application as prescribed by ACDJFS or as directed by ODJFS.

When authorized by ODJFS, ACDJFS will use verbal self-attestation or electronic signature for all Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) programs to verify eligibility. This is limited to the duration allotted by ODJFS. Once lifted, verbal self-attestation will no longer be allowed.

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.

To receive PRC benefits and services, at least one member of the PRC assistance group 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.

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. Eligibility must be determined within 30 days.

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 maximum benefit caps specified above. Additional information on special projects may be found in county procedure letters on file with ACDJFS. 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 expenses related to natural disasters. Eligibility shall be determined based upon the TANF guidelines in effect at that time including exceptions specified by law or regulations. Up to \$1500 is available per family to cover losses incurred as a result of the disaster or as otherwise directed by federal, state, or local authorities.

This program is designed to meet TANF Purpose 1.

COVID-19 2020 Pandemic PRC: Athens County Department of Job & Family Services (ACDJFS) may authorize up to \$1000 per year to vendors of eligible households affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds will 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, household supplies, etc. The program will run from March 26, 2020 through December 31, 2021 or until funding is exceeded, whichever comes first.

This program is designed to meet TANF Purpose 1.

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.

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

Services designed to meet TANF purposes 1 and/or 2 will require eligibility determination from application.

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
- f) assist employers with talent recruitment and retention; and
- g) other services as prescribed by the agency.

Services may be utilized up to a maximum of \$10,000 per individual per 12 months.

Job development activities may be conducted as an administrative function.

This program is designed to meet TANF Purpose 2.

Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, short-term emergency services for victims of domestic violence/sexual assault who are experiencing a crisis as defined by ACDJFS. These activities may be directed toward ensuring the safety, health, and well-being of family members. Services may include, but are not limited to: 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.

This program is designed to meet TANF Purpose 1 and 2.

Employment Incentive Program (EIP): ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, incentive payments and other supportive services to Ohio Works First/ SNAP E & T work required participants for placement and retention in unsubsidized employment. Eligibility will be based on receipt of OWF/SNAP. The program anticipates work required OWF/SNAP recipients becoming employed and losing eligibility for OWF/SNAP based on the increase in income. Therefore, once eligible, an OWF/SNAP recipient will remain eligible through all potential program payment points. After income from employment has been verified to stop OWF/SNAP, the participant will be issued \$1500 in the first month, \$1000 in the second month, and \$500 in the third month of transitioning from public assistance to unsubsidized employment. Program participants will also be eligible for up to \$1,000.00 in supportive services, within the first three months following the closure of cash/food assistance, designed to help them obtain and retain employment. EIP is a one-time benefit.

Participants who are not eligible for TANF will utilize funding made possible through ODJFS FAL#195.

This program is designed to meet TANF Purpose 2.

Family Services: ACDJFS may provide, by direct or contract services, assistance to families such as, but not limited to, food, personal hygiene items, bed bug eradication, clothing, school supplies, life skills, health improvement, participation in cultural enrichment, other services or monetary help to alleviate the burden on families, etc.

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

Services designed to meet TANF purposes 1 and/or 2 will require eligibility determination from application.

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; 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.

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

Services designed to meet TANF purposes 1 and/or 2 will require eligibility determination from application.

This program is designed to meet all four TANF Purposes.

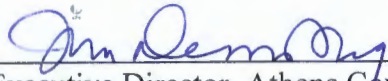
Kinship Caregiver Program (KCP): Contingent upon available funding, ACDJFS may provide by MOU with Athens County Children Services, a variety of services to kinship caregivers. The purpose of the KCP is to provide reasonable and necessary relief of child caring functions through family stabilization and caregiving services so that kinship caregivers can provide and maintain a home for a child in place of a child's parents.

Certification of services will be for 12 months, contingent upon available funding. Eligibility for the program will be established by ACDJFS.

This program is designed to meet TANF Purpose 1.

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.



Executive Director, Athens County
Department of Job and Family Services

11/16/2021
Date

Date reviewed by Athens County Job and
Family Services Planning Committee

N/A
Date

Date approved by Athens County Commissioners

11/16/2021
Date