

# FLORIDA CROWN WORKFORCE BOARD, INC. POLICY

**POLICY TITLE:** Welfare Transition Program (WTP) and  
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

**POLICY NUMBER:** OPS-011-02      **DATE EFFECTIVE:** April 23, 2003

**DATE REVISED:** **October 6, 2010**

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## **APPLICATION**

Customers, Career Managers/Specialists, Supervisors, Program Managers and Service Providers who work with WTP/TANF program participants.

## **PURPOSE**

For the assurance of compliance with all Federal and State guidelines and regulations, as applicable, to workforce programs.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

**FCWB** – Florida Crown Workforce Board, Inc.

**WIA** – Workforce Investment Act

**WTP** – Welfare Transition Program

**TANF** – Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Program

## **PROGRAM PURPOSE:**

It is the purpose of the WTP to prepare workers for employment.

**1. Referral and Eligibility** - The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) shall determine eligibility for WTP participants, and will refer eligible participants to One-Stop Supervisors through electronic alert. Supervisors will review and assign these alerts (called Case To Do's) on a daily basis. Services will be provided to enable eligible participants to obtain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency. **Although DCF customers residing outside of our four-county region have the option to choose a FCWB One-Stop office within our region, FCWB can only provide universal services (resource room) to these customers. All customers residing within our region will receive a full range of services, including supportive services.**

Timeliness of customer contact after receiving incoming '**Alert**' from the DCF is no later than

five (5) working days.

**2. Orientation** shall be provided to all eligible WTP participants either in a group setting or individually, as circumstances require. The orientation will stress at least four major points: (1) the benefits and advantages of working, (2) personal responsibility, (3) the temporary nature of cash assistance, and, (4) available One-Stop services. The information must include the rules WTP participants must adhere to in order to be eligible to continue receiving cash benefits and in order not to be sanctioned or to have their case closed. The Service Provider shall also describe services available to participants from other Providers and One-Stop Partners. Orientation shall be offered at all One-Stop locations. Orientation shall be provided to customers who obtain employment as well as those referred for more intensive services.

**3. Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP)** – An IRP shall be made available to all Welfare Transition participants. An IRP is required for everyone receiving Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA). IRPs will be initiated, **completed and reviewed** within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the new case, **reopen or transfer “to do” and preferably within fourteen (14) days.** **Steps to Self Sufficiency will be updated at a minimum of once every thirty (30) days and preferably at the time an update becomes necessary.** The IRP will be reprinted for Customer signature every ninety (90) days. **A Case Note is to be entered by the Career Manager after review of the IRP with the participant and additional Case Notes entered when any appropriate updates are made to the IRP.**

- a. The Service Provider shall provide assessment, screening and a review of job readiness criteria to determine whether a WTP participant should be referred for individualized job development and career management or other intensive services. The Service Provider shall ensure that initial assessments are conducted on all individuals to be referred for intensive services. Information collected during the initial assessment shall be recorded in the electronic and/or hard copy files. **Initial assessments must assess all required elements outlined in federal law which are the participant’s skills, employability and work experience and may include TABE testing, Applicant Self-Assessment and Interest Survey for the development of an Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP). E-Choices may be used, if necessary, but is not required.**
- b. Assessment is to be carried out with a specific purpose – the development of customized (IRP’s), or in the case of deferred participants, Alternative Plans. The basic elements required in an IRP are: **identifying the activities the participant is required to complete, identifying the number of hours a participant is required to complete in each activity, identifying the anticipated end dates or completion dates of activities, identifying services provided to participants, education and employment short and long term goals, barriers and steps to self-sufficiency which will be updated monthly.**
- c. A participant in a work activity may also be encouraged to enroll in and attend a course of instruction required to increase literacy skills to a level necessary for obtaining or retaining employment, provided that the combination of activities does not exceed 40 hours per week.

- d. State Reporting System IRP will be used as well as local tools.

**4. Countable Activities** – Federal law requires that the State meet a specified participation rate each fiscal year in order to receive federal funding. In order to meet the federal work participation rate, each individual must be engaged in a countable work activity for at least the minimum number of hours required per week.

Countable work hours and participation for Welfare Transition Program customers may be waived during a declared emergency.

The Service Provider shall be responsible for the provision of the following WTP approved work activities, as applicable, in accordance with State, Federal and Local rules and regulations:

- a. Work Registration
- b. Orientation and Assessment
- c. Case management and Tracking
- d. Individual Responsibility Plans/Alternative Plans
- e. Job Search Assistance
- f. Job Readiness Assistance/Employment Preparation (Job Club)
- g. Life Skills Enrichment Workshops
- h. Community Service Work Experience (CWEP)
- i. Vocational Education or Training
- j. Unsubsidized or Subsidized Employment
- k. GED Preparation or Literacy Education
- l. Work Supplementation
- m. On-the-Job Training (OJT)
- n. Work Experience Combined with Education
- o. Customized Training /Job Skills Training
- p. Job Development, Job Placement and Follow Up
- q. Coordination with Domestic Violence Agencies on Safety Plans
- r. Relocation Assistance
- s. Post-Employment Services
- t. Education services related to employment for participants 19 years of age or younger (restricted to those who do not have a high school diploma or GED), and the activity shall be coordinated with School-to-Work activities.
- u. Attendance at a high school or GED program for participants 19 years of age or younger; and
- v. Providing child care services for another Welfare Transition participant who is participating in Community Service Work Experience.

In the event a WTP participant is work ready but could simultaneously benefit from job-related seminars, substance abuse counseling, domestic violence counseling or mental health counseling and/or education, these services may be provided in conjunction with work or assignment to a work activity. The Service Provider shall document any such determinations and shall make appropriate referrals for these additional services.

**WTP participants who are work ready shall be placed in Job Search and Employment Preparation as a countable activity is limited to four consecutive weeks in a rolling 12 months or 120 hours in a rolling 12 months if the parent is a single parent with a**

**child under the age of 6 and 180 hours in a rolling 12 months for all other families.**

Job Search and/or Job Readiness, as a countable activity is limited to no more than four (4) consecutive weeks.

WTP Participants who are not “job ready” **shall not be referred to employers**, but rather, shall be assisted in overcoming their identified barriers to employment and will be placed in other countable activities, including training.

**5. Exemptions from Work Activity Requirements** – Individuals are required to participate in a Welfare Transition work activity as a condition of continued eligibility for Temporary Cash Assistance unless they meet an exemption. Provider is to alert DCF when a WAGES exemption is granted upon receipt of required documentation.

Each individual must participate in an appropriate countable activity for no more than the maximum hours allowable under federal law. Deferred participants will be assigned appropriate activities under an Alternative Plan. Medically deferred customers are required to provide an updated Medical Verification form signed by their physician every ninety (90) days. The Medical Verification form is the only acceptable documentation for approved medical deferment within this program. FCWB can require forty (40) hours of participation per week, at the Career Manager/Specialist’s discretion, based upon the activity assigned.

Transportation is not considered a “good cause” deferral for lack of participation in work activity requirements.

Work activity requirements for Welfare Transition Program customers may be waived during a declared emergency.

**6. Supportive Services** - The Service Provider will coordinate and manage the provision of support services welfare transition customers and other customers where a funding source allows. Support Services shall include, but are not limited to childcare, transportation, clothing and car repair (tire limit \$300.00 maximum). Supportive Services will be provided in accordance with the FCWB Supportive Services Policy #OPS-001-02.

**7. Special WT Programs** -The Service Provider is required to develop internal procedures in accordance with the FCWB, State and WTP requirements in order to implement the following mandated programs/policies:

**Up-Front Diversion Program** - For WTP participants not needing on-going temporary cash assistance, but, to meet an immediate need such as unexpected shelter or utility payments, car repairs to continue employment or need for other services to alleviate the emergency and allow the person to retain employment with a benefit paying company.

In the event that a WTP participant is **placed in unsubsidized employment by the Service Provider through up-front services**, the Service Provider shall continue to work with the participant through post-placement follow-up contacts and retention services.

**Relocation Program:**

- Total reimbursement will not exceed \$3,000;
- Be a recipient of Temporary Cash Assistance who meets relocation eligibility criteria;
- Not likely achieve economic self-sufficiency in the current community or residence;
- Has secured a job in the community s(he) wants to relocate to which will provide increased wages or improved benefits or has a family support network that will contribute to job retention in another community;
- Wage rate must be comparable to the Lower Living Standard as defined by the Federal Guidelines
- Is a victim of domestic violence who will experience reduced incidents of further violence due to relocation; and/or
- Can obtain education or training directly related to the individual's employment or career advancement;
- Customer must relocate within twenty-one (21) days of payment except when domestic violence is claimed. In cases where domestic violence has been claimed, relocation is to be immediate;
- Relocation Assistance is not limited but subsequent relocation applications must be evaluated.

**Transitional Childcare:** Transitional Childcare is a support service available to Welfare Transition participants who leave the WT program with employment, to applicants of TCA who are diverted from on-going cash assistance through Up-Front Diversion, and to Relocation Assistance recipients. Former recipients of TCA, Relocation Assistance recipients and diverted applicants of TCA must meet general eligibility criteria to receive TCC:

- Individuals must be employed;
- A child under the age of 19, included in the grant calculation, must remain in the home. This includes children who would be included in the grant except the child receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI); and
- The family's income must remain below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level at all times.
- The family has a need for TCC.

**It is the customer's responsibility to follow up on Childcare Referrals. Under no circumstances will a Childcare referral be backdated.**

**Relocation Assistance and TCC:**

Florida Statute 445.021 states families receiving Relocation Assistance may obtain TCC. Obtaining employment is a critical component of the Relocation Assistance process. Once the individual arrives in the receiving community and has requested services from the receiving One-Stop Career Center, (s)he may receive 30 days of job search childcare if (s)he is not employed. The individual who receives Relocation Assistance and is not employed may receive TCC only if employment is obtained within 90 days after receipt of the Relocation Assistance.

All requests for Upfront Diversion, Severance and Relocation are forwarded to the Executive Director for adjudication.

**Transitional Education and Training** – In order to assist former recipients of temporary cash assistance who are working or actively seeking employment in continuing their training and upgrading their skills, education, or training, support services may be provided for up to two (2) years after the family is no longer receiving temporary cash assistance. This does not constitute an entitlement to transitional education and training. If funds are not sufficient to provide services under this section, the FCWB may limit or stop transitional education and training benefits.

While Transitional Education and Training must be job-related, it does not have to be related to the current employment. It may include training to improve job skills in an existing area of employment or may include training to prepare for employment in another occupation.

**Transitional Transportation** - Transitional Transportation can be used to assist former recipients of Temporary Cash Assistance in maintaining and sustaining employment. If funds permit, transportation may be provided for up to two (2) years after the participant is no longer in the program. This does not constitute an entitlement to transitional transportation. Transitional transportation assistance must be work or education related.

**Transitional Child Care** - Transitional child care is available for up to two (2) years, subject to funding, for former welfare recipients after a participant has left the program due to employment, or for individuals redirected through up-front diversion, and whose income does not exceed 200% of the poverty level at any time during that 2-year period. One-Stop Career Manager/Specialists will provide the referral to authorized child care providers.

**8. Individuals with Disabilities Program** - The One-Stop staff shall refer WTP participants who may have disabilities that limit their work activity compliance to Vocational Rehabilitation. This service begins at Orientation with information provided by a representative from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), which is located at the One-Stop centers. Appointments can be immediately scheduled for a confidential interview to pre-screen the participant's potential need for specialized services that will assist them with identifying their capacity for obtaining economic self-sufficiency. DVR may require assessments to be completed to ascertain participant limitations. WTP participants must participate in these activities or comply with work activity requirements. The One-Stop career management staff must work closely with DVR to ensure those participants receive the appropriate services, including application to the Social Security Administration for benefits.

## **9. Request for Sanctions**

The Service Provider will counsel welfare transition customers in accordance with State guidelines, prior to making any recommendations to the DCF to apply sanctioning.

- a. Non-compliance without good cause must be reported to the DCF through the One-Stop System Tracking (OSST) System in a timely manner.

- b. The DCF will take action to impose the penalty based on the penalty level entered under the Alternative Plan section of OSST.
- c. Notice of Failure to Participate and Possible Sanction WFI Form 2290 will then be generated and must be mailed to the participant to let them know what they failed to do and when they failed to do it. This form must be mailed within (2) working days after the failure.
- d. The participant must be given ten (10) calendar days after the dated mailed on the Form 2290 to respond, with oral contact to be attempted, annotated in record, during the conciliation period.
- e. If there is no response to the 2290 within ten (10) calendar days a sanction must be requested.
- f. If the participant responds to the 2290 within ten (10) calendar days the Service Provider must counsel the individual regarding the consequences of noncompliance. A discussion regarding barriers to participation and needed services to remove these barriers should also take place. The counseling session can take place over the phone; however it must be documented in the case notes in the OSST System. A determination of good cause must be made at this time. An entry must be made in the case notes, which clearly states whether the Service Provider accepted their reason as good cause or not.

#### **10. Reporting Suspected TANF Fraud:**

Federal regulations and Florida Statutes describe the process for reporting complaints and/or reports of criminal fraud and abuse.

Pursuant to Section 409.325/414.41, Florida Statutes, fraud is described as, “Any person who knowingly fails by false statement, misrepresentation, impersonation, or other fraudulent means, to disclose a material fact used in making a determination as to such person’s qualifications or receive aid or benefits under any state or federally funded assistance program, or fails to disclose a change in circumstances in order to obtain or continue to receive under such program aid or benefits to which he is not entitled..., or who knowingly aids and abets another person in the commission of any such act...”.

If it is suspected or becomes apparent that fraud has been committed, DCF shall be immediately notified as well as the Department of Law Enforcement at (850) 410-7001, when applicable.

#### **11. All Family Participation Rate:**

For the family to be included in the numerator of the all-family participation rate,

- At least one work-eligible parent must complete at least 130 hours in a combination of countable work activities. At least 87 hours in the month must be in a core or combination of core activities;
- **UNLESS**

- The family is a single parent family with a child under the age of six. The family will be included in the numerator of the all-family participation rate if the work-eligible parent completes at least 87 hours in a core or combination of core activities during the month.
- The family is a single parent family with a teen parent head of household that does not have a high school diploma or a GED. The single parent will be included in the numerator if (s)he participates satisfactorily in a secondary program or 87 hours in education directly related to employment during the month.
- The family is a two-parent family with two teen heads of households that do not have a high school diploma or equivalency. The parents will be included in the numerator if the parents attend 87 hours per month in either education directly related to employment or in a secondary educational program.

A new Section 12, Two-Parent Family Participation Rate, is added to read:

## **12. Two-Parent Family Participation Rate:**

If the family has two work-eligible parents, the family will be included in the denominator of the two-parent participation rate in addition to the all-family participation rate. *This does not include a two-parent family where one of the parents has a documented limitation to participation that will last greater than thirty (30) days and the documentation is indicated in the Department of Children and Families data entry system or the One-Stop Service Tracking (OSST) system.* The indicators in OSST are:

- Medical Deferral – Greater than 90 days; and
- Alcohol, Drug, Mental Health Deferral – Greater than 90 days.

The family will be included in the numerator as “participating” if the family complies for the minimum number of required hours based on the receipt of childcare and teen parent status. Hours of participation recorded for the two parents are combined for credit towards the two-parent participation rate.

- If the two-parent family receives subsidized childcare, the family must comply in at least 238 hours per month combined (shared between the parents) in countable work activities. At least 217 hours must be in a core or combination of core activities.
- If the two-parent family does not receive subsidized childcare, the family must comply in at least 152 hours per month combined (shared between parents) in countable work activities. At least 130 hours must be in a core or combination of core activities.
- If the two-parent family is made up of teen head of households (no high school diploma or GED), the family is considered complying if **each** parent (regardless

of the receipt of childcare) participates in at least 87 hours per month in education directly related to employment or in a secondary education program.

It should be remembered that two-parent families are included in the all-family participation rate as individuals. So, at least one of the parents must meet the minimum work participation requirements for the all-family rate.

### **13. Speakers of Other Languages:**

Speakers of Other Languages - All assessments and tests are available in Spanish and Spanish-speaking personnel are on staff.

Translation Services shall provide for competent translation of written documents in a timely manner. Methods for providing these services include, but are not limited, to:

- a. Utilizing standard forms translated into the most regularly encountered languages for the service area.
- b. Accessing an Internet site containing standard forms translated into the languages most regularly encountered statewide.
- c. Utilizing computer translation programs when used and/or checked by a competent translator.
- d. By providing personal translators in the same manner as providing interpreters in Section VI(4)(A)(i-iv) subject to the same conditions stated in Section VI(4)(B-H). However this does not mean using interpreters as translators. Translator skills are different than interpreter skills and the provider should not assume that a competent interpreter is a competent translator. Before using an interpreter to translate, the provider should confirm that the interpreter is competent in translation skills.
- e. The extent of the provider's obligation to provide translation services can vary according to several factors, including, but not limited to, the nature of the services or benefits provided, the provider's size and resources, the number of LEP language groups and the size of each LEP language group within its service area, the nature and length of the document, the objectives of the program, the frequency with which translated documents are needed, and the cost of translation. The provider will be considered in compliance if it provides the following levels of translation services:
  - (i) LEP language group ratio is 10% or greater: For each LEP language group in which the eligible LEP clients constitutes ten percent or greater (<10%) or 3,000, whichever is less, of the total population in its service area of eligible clients likely to be served, it is desirable, though not mandatory, to translate all relevant written materials for LEP groups, including vital documents. At a minimum, all vital documents shall be

translated. Translation of other documents may be done orally, at the provider's discretion, if needed. (However, see the exception in subparagraph 5(E)(iii) for groups equaling <10% but numbering less than 100.)

- (ii) LEP language group ratio is 5% or greater: For each LEP language group in which the eligible LEP clients constitutes between five percent (5%) and less than ten percent (>10%) or 1,000, whichever is less, of the total population in its service area of eligible clients likely to be served, translate at a minimum, vital documents. Translation of other documents may be done orally, at the provider's discretion, if needed. (However, see the exception in subparagraph 5(E)(iii) for groups equaling 5%>10%, but numbering less than 100.)
- (iii) LEP language group less than 100: Notwithstanding subparagraphs 5(E)(i & ii), for each LEP language group with fewer than 100 eligible clients within its service area likely to be served, no translation services need to be provided. However, the provider still needs to provide written notice in the languages of regularly encountered LEP language groups of the opportunity to receive competent spoken translation of vital documents. For infrequently encountered languages, LEP clients may be noticed orally of their opportunity to receive spoken translation of vital documents at the time interpreter services are initially provided or according to the exception found in subparagraph (4)(H)(iii)(c). Staff will ensure that an appropriate referral is made in the absence of translation services via the One-Stop.

f. One-Stop staff will receive annual training as to the community resources available to address LEP as well as other limitations due to a disability (see Consultation Paper 2-1-1).

### **ACTION**

All customers, Career Managers/Specialists, Supervisors, Program Managers and Service Providers who work with WTP/TANF program participants will adhere to this policy.

Approved: *John Chastain*  
John Chastain, Executive Director