

FLORIDA CROWN WORKFORCE BOARD, INC. POLICY

**POLICY TITLE: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
Non-Assistance Program**

POLICY NUMBER: OPS-015-05

DATE EFFECTIVE: May 18, 2005

DATE REVIEWED: July 20, 2010

APPLICATION

Career Specialists, Supervisors, Program Managers, Customers and Service Providers engaged in implementing programs under Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and the Welfare Transition Program (WTP).

PURPOSE

Pursuant to TANF purposes, the Non-Cash Assistance Program (NCA) is to help end the dependence of needy families on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

OVERVIEW OF TANF FUNDING

According to Federal legislation, states are authorized to use TANF funds to serve one of the four (4) purposes of TANF, which are to:

1. Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;
2. End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
3. 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. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Purpose Number 2 defines "family" as anyone whose needs, income or resources are considered in providing the non-cash assistance and determining eligibility. This includes the minor child, custodial parent, caretaker relative, spouses, persons who have the minor child in common and persons who reside together like a family.

DEFINITION OF NON-ASSISTANCE

Individuals being served under TANF Purpose Number 2 can only be served with “non-assistance”, which is defined as:

- ❖ 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 (4) months;
- ❖ Work subsidies (payments to an employer or third party to help cover the cost of employee wages, benefits, supervision and training);
- ❖ Earned Income Tax Credits;
- ❖ Contributions to and distributions from an Individual Development Account (IDA);
- ❖ Supportive services such as childcare and transportation provided to families who are employed.

Other support services include counseling, case management, peer support, child care information, transitional services, job retention, job advancement, and other employment-related services that do not provide basic income support.

Transportation needs will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Executive Director.

NOTE: Transitional support services are not considered assistance if the services are provided to employed eligible individuals.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT (NCP) NON-ASSISTANCE ELIGIBILITY

There are three key terms associated with TANF Purpose Number 2; “needy”, “parents” and “non-assistance.” To determine eligibility for TANF purpose number 2, the family must meet the definition of needy. The family is not applying for assistance. The Federal Regulations require a definition of needy from each state for the purpose of providing “assistance”, but the Federal Regulations allow the State to provide a different definition of “needy” for “non-cash assistance” and “non-assistance” programs. “Needy” is defined in the TANF State Plan for non-assistance as below two hundred percent (200%) of the Federal Poverty Level. This program will serve TANF eligible non-custodial parents (NCP) and/or youth to serve Purpose Number 2. The families must qualify as needy according to the eligibility criteria established in the TANF State Plan, below two hundred percent (200%) of the Federal Poverty Level. TANF Purpose Number 2 only allows for the provision of non-assistance.

This program will serve all non-custodial parents by offering non-assistance in obtaining/keeping employment and lead the family toward an end to dependency.

Applicant eligibility requirements are as follows:

- Be a US citizen or qualified non-citizen;
- Provide an SSN or proof that the NCP has applied for an SSN. If the NCP does not have an SSN and needs help applying for one, the program will provide requested help;
- Both the non-custodial parent and custodial family non-custodial parent and custodial family (related child) must live in the State of Florida;
- Have an income below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level;
- Agree to a provision of child support;
- Meet the definition of “family” as spelled out on the Eligibility Form (see Attachment 1);
- Completion of Self-Attestation form attesting that all income and eligibility statements are true and correct.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT PROGRAM

Critical elements of the non-custodial parent programs include:

- ❖ Referral Process: Courts and Child Support Enforcement (CSE) will issue a Referral to every non-custodial parent required to participate, who will then have seven (7) working days to contact the FCWB One-Stop. Once the non-custodial parent attends his/her appointment with Service Provider’s Career Manager as explained in the appointment letter, the Referral will be signed and the non-custodial parent will be responsible for its return to Child Support Enforcement and/or the Court. Group orientations will be implemented if needed. If a non-custodial parent fails to comply by attending the appointment or orientation, if required, a Notice of Failure will be mailed to the non-custodial customer, the Courts and CSE.
- ❖ Eligibility is based on the following criteria:
 1. Income eligibility is established at 200% below poverty level;
 2. UC recipient;
 3. Food Stamp Recipient;
 4. Self-Attestation;
 5. Lives in the State of Florida;
 6. Has a related child in the State of Florida;
 7. Related child, based on “related family” size, is within the income requirements.

Both custodial and non-custodial parents will follow the same eligibility guidelines. Documents reflecting household Income, pay stubs, W-2 forms, etc. may be used to determine eligibility.

- ❖ Engagement of Program: Non-custodial parent must be In compliance with all CSE rules and regulations. If referred to the Non-Custodial Parent Program by the Courts or CSE, it will be mandatory for the non-custodial parent to participate in unassisted job searches, assisted job searches, Job Club and/or other activities assigned by the Service Provider's Career Manager.
- ❖ Program Goals: The primary goal of the NCP program is for the non-custodial parent to become gainfully employed and be in compliance with Child Support Enforcement. A secondary goal, when applicable, is the attainment of a GED.
- ❖ Documentation: A valid Florida driver's license, Social Security card, referral from CSE or the Courts, and completed Self-Attestation form are required. Additionally, Verification of Employment, proof of Unemployment Compensation or Food Stamp documentation will be required where applicable.
- ❖ Support Services: Assistance may be given for obtaining licenses (hardship or regular) and for reinstatement fees. In no instance will assistance be given for levied fines and legal penalties. Automobile expenses will be determined on a case by case basis and will be approved by FCWB's Executive Director.

The non-custodial parent program must include the documented process for the non-custodial parent to provide or begin providing child support. Eligibility determination should outline how income is documented for both the non-custodial parent and custodial parent's family. This should include how the income that is removed from the non-custodial parent's paycheck for child support, unavailable income, is used or applied for income calculation.

Unemployed or underemployed non-custodial parents will be provided with case management, mentoring, employment services such as resume development, interview skills, job referrals, etc. They may also receive short-term (up to 4 months) aid such as transportation, car repairs, tools, uniforms and licensing assistance.

Assistance for levied fines and legal penalties may not be given, but the participant may receive assistance for reinstatement fees. Additionally, assistance may not be given for child support arrears, childcare parent fees and medical services.

Employed participants will be provided with post employment services to help the non-custodial parent retain employment and increase earnings.

Cash incentives may be considered, but will be reported to DCF which may determine that they are income.

Relocation is not an allowable non-cash assistance service.

PREGNANCY PREVENTION PROGRAM

Pursuant to TANF Purpose Number 3, non-cash assistance may be given to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of the pregnancies.

There are no limitations and no requirements of “needy family”.

Participants must be receiving TCA, Food Stamps or Medicaid.

TWO-PARENT FAMILY PROGRAM

Pursuant to TANF Purpose Number 4, non-cash assistance may be given to encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Anyone participating in the two-parent family which can include the non-custodial parent, custodial parent and child(ren) can receive non-cash assistance to achieve the program goals.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

When determining how to provide a supportive service/benefit using TANF funds, for non-cash assistance customers, consideration should be given to the following criteria:

- Eligibility requirements (and income requirements if any);
- Eligibility process;
- Referral process;
- Documentation requirements (eligibility, participation, outcomes);
- Support services allowed under the program;
- Limitations to support services (prioritization, amount, time limited);
- Activities allowed/required under the program;
- Training allowed/required under the program;
- Data entry;
- Definition of exit or termination;
- Performance expectations;

- Program goals; and
- Other important criterion or program information as Florida Crown Workforce Board, Inc. determines necessary.

RESOURCES

The following resources are available for consultation:

Federal Regulations, CFR 45
Florida Statute, Chapter 445
Florida Statute, Chapter 414
The Florida TANF State Plan
Welfare Transition Guidance Papers

The United States Department of Health and Human Services has provided a variety of documents explaining the information outlined in the Federal Regulations, including the flexibility and requirements of TANF legislation. Documents include the Guide on Funding Services for Children and Families through the TANF Program.

Other documents include the Use of TANF Non-Assistance Funds: Models and Strategies prepared by the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network, and the Helping Families Achieve Self-Sufficiency: a Guide on Funding Services and Programs for Children and Families through the TANF Program developed by HHS.

ACTION

All FCWB Career Specialists, Supervisors, Program Managers, Customers and Service Providers engaged in implementing programs under Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and the Welfare Transition Program (WTP) will adhere to this policy.

Approved: *John Chastain*
John Chastain, Executive Director