



Department of
Job and Family Services

John R. Kasich, Governor
Cynthia C. Dungey, Director

Family Assistance Letter #133
OFFICE OF FAMILY ASSISTANCE
February 28, 2014

TO: Directors, County Departments of Job and Family Services

FROM: Kara B. Wentz, Deputy Director
Office of Family Assistance

SUBJECT: **TANF Summer Youth Employment Program**

We are pleased to announce the availability of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding to support a TANF Summer Youth Employment Program for 2014. With these funds, the Office of Family Assistance is offering an opportunity for county departments of job and family services (CDJFS) to establish a 2014 TANF Summer Youth Employment Program.

These dollars will enable county agencies to establish programs that allow low income TANF-eligible Ohio youth to gain valuable work experience while earning a paycheck to help meet basic needs. Summer employment programs offer the opportunity for youth to develop a work history and to receive a reference from an employer.

This Family Assistance Letter governs the 2014 TANF Summer Youth Employment Program and supersedes all previous letters.

All counties that intend to operate a TANF Summer Youth Employment Program must inform Matthew Cunningham at matthew.cunningham@jfs.ohio.gov in the Office of Family Assistance by **Friday, March 14, 2013**, to qualify for participation and to ensure equitable distribution of funds.

FUNDING

A total of \$35 million in funding is available for the 2014 TANF Summer Youth Employment Program. Funding will be made available through county TANF allocations and will be administered through Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) programs.

LENGTH OF OPERATION

This program will operate from May 1, 2014 to October 31, 2014. Normal PRC allocation liquidation rules will apply.

30 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
jfs.ohio.gov

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DETAILS OF THE PROGRAM

To qualify for this program, county agencies must:

- Continue an existing Summer Youth Employment Program or develop a new Summer Youth Employment Program that will start no sooner than May 1, 2014;
- Amend its PRC plan to include the Summer Youth Employment Program if the program is not included in the plan already;
- Follow state and federal TANF and PRC requirements, including Rule 5101:1-3-16 of the Ohio Administrative Code;
- Complete reports regarding outcomes to be developed by the Office of Family Assistance; and
- Correctly code expenditures to the proper fiscal codes (codes and instructions will be forthcoming from ODJFS, Office of Fiscal and Monitoring Services).

COUNTY PRC PLAN

As noted above, participating counties must amend their PRC plans to include the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program to use these funds if it is not already included. The PRC plan shall include a description of activities and services that are to be provided and must establish the eligibility requirements for the participants. In defining eligibility criteria, a county's PRC plan must identify the income standard and any other criteria or limitation(s) the county specifies. As with any amendments to the PRC plan, amendments pertaining to the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program must be submitted to the Program-Policy@jfs.ohio.gov mailbox.

TANF Purpose- the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program meets the first two purposes of TANF:

1. To provide assistance to needy families so that the children may be cared for in their homes or the homes of relatives.
2. To end dependence of needy parents on governmental benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

Eligibility - A 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 ages 14-17, as long as the youth is a minor child in a needy family and is in school (youth may be 18 if they are a full-time student in a secondary school) ;
- Youth ages 18-24, as long as they are in a needy family that also has a minor child; or
- Youth ages 18-24 that have a minor child and are considered needy.

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.

Minor Child and *Families* are defined in federal and state regulations:

Minor child means an individual who: (1) Has not attained 18 years of age; or (2) Has not attained 19 years of age and is a full-time student in a secondary school (or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training).

Families are defined by federal regulations and state law 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 17 years of age or 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, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) has provided guidance respective to the Summer 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 TANF Summer Youth Employment Program are capped at \$10.00 per hour for this allocation. Performance bonuses or lump sum payments are not allowed.

Further, a CDJFS may not pay the youth directly because the funds are wage subsidies, which the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has defined as payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employee wages, benefits, supervision, and training. A CDJFS 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.

The TANF Summer Youth Employment program is a different program from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Summer Youth Employment Program. One of the key distinctions is who pays the wages to the youth. In the WIA Summer Youth Employment Program wages are paid by the agency and not the employer. However, should a CDJFS contract with a WIA agency as a third party contractor, that WIA agency may pay the wages to the youth as the employer of record.

TRAINING

All CDJFS are strongly encouraged to add a soft skills training component to their TANF Summer Youth Employment Program. Soft skills training includes, but is not limited to, how to write a resume and cover letter, tips for interviewing and job etiquette. Soft skills training can be offered by the OhioMeansJobs Center, local workforce investment areas (WIA), vendors or employers. For example, if an OhioMeansJobs Center offers regular soft skills classes, it may not add to the cost to include a small number of participants in the training classes. It is recommended that the CDJFS identify existing resources and assess how it can leverage and maximize training resources. It also is recommended that the CDJFS partner with its local WIA area to determine if the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program participants are eligible for WIA services and whenever possible co-enroll eligible participants into WIA to assist in

achieving the desired training component. Another benefit to co-enrolling participants in the WIA program is that they will have access to other services, such as supportive services and follow up services, which will assist in making their participation in the TANF Summer Work Program even more successful. Keep in mind that the CDJFS may not employ or pay the youth directly. The TANF Summer Youth Employment Program is a wage subsidy program and a third party not the CDJFS must be an “employer of record”.

OHIO MEANS JOBS.COM – NEW 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. Some of these tools are listed below:

- **Resume** – OhioMeansJobs.com has tools that will allow youth to either upload an existing resume, utilize a resume builder and the ability to have their resume rated with results that will assist them to enhance their resume.
- **Training Center** – OhioMeansJobs.com has hundreds of assessments and soft skill tools to help youth obtain a career. All of their activities will be saved and recorded within their virtual backpack for easy access and tracking.
- **Career Planning** – This tool can help you assist youth in exploring different careers and learn what skills and training might be needed as well as what type of salary they can expect to earn.
- **In-Demand Jobs** – OhioMeansJobs.com has information on Ohio’s in-demand jobs, which offer good pay and a promising future. The site includes details on the education/training needed, number of openings each year, wages, and growth for in-demand jobs as well as other jobs.
- **Career Profile** – This tool can assist you in helping youth identify which jobs match their interests best.
- **Occupation search** – This tool can help you assist youth in finding helpful information about different jobs like the training/education required, salary range, number of openings each year, skills needed, and personality traits needed along with a video.
- **School search** – This tool can help you assist youth to search for training and/or university programs available as well as save any programs found to the youth’s virtual backpack.
- **Employment Program search** – This tool can help you assist youth in finding funding programs they may qualify for to cover the cost of any training and education they need.
- **Job search** – OhioMeansJobs.com has filters from location, job type (FT, PT, and Internship), salary, etc.
- **Budget Calculator/Target Salary** – This tool can help youth estimate their expenses and decide what salary they need to cover their expenses.

The youth will be able to access the tools necessary for participation by going to www.ohiomeansjobs.com and a confirmation of their registration will need to be incorporated into the CDJFS reporting. The OhioMeansJobs Project staff will provide a step-by-step guide to registering along with a webinar on this website and the virtual services offered.

ALLOWABLE COSTS

Allowable costs under this program include:

- Payments to employers for wages (at no higher than \$10.00 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;
- FICA;
- Direct supervision and training costs; and
- Transportation costs to and from the work site.

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.

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

The TANF Summer Youth Employment Program funding does not include TANF administration. 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 and 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;
- 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.

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 is considered countable earned income for the food assistance program, except for those food assistance participants 17 years old or younger who are enrolled in secondary school.

Cash Assistance: Pursuant to rule 5101:1-23-20 of the Ohio Administrative Code, earnings received from participation in the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program are countable in determining Ohio Works First eligibility and level of benefits when the participant is a minor parent or does not meet the definition of a minor child. Income received from the program by non-parent minors who meet the definition of a minor child (because the minor is either under 18 years of age, or is age 18 and attending high school full time) is excluded from the determination of Ohio Works First eligibility for the family.

THIRD PARTY CONTRACTING

A CDJFS may enter into a contract or grant with a third party provider. In the agreement, the CDJFS 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. Please see attachment A to this letter for further information on grant and contracting options.

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: Fiscal Administrative Procedure Letter (FAPL) 2; Ohio Administrative Code Rule 5101:9-4-07.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

The ODJFS Office of Unemployment Compensation has stated that under Section 4141-5-05 of the Ohio Administrative Code, employers are not required to report the wages paid to youth as part of the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program. Employers should not include the youth or the youth's wages on their quarterly unemployment compensation reports. So long as the youth is not included on the wage reports, the weeks and wages should not count towards any other employment that the youth might have for the purpose of a claim.

According to the ODJFS Office of Unemployment Compensation, if employers report the wages paid to youth under this program, the employer will run the risk that those wages may be

included in a benefit claim. The result would be a negative impact on the employer's contribution payment and rate. A reimbursing nonprofit employer would be required to reimburse the state for any benefits paid to the youth.

For specific questions concerning unemployment compensation, a county agency may contact James Durbin, Assistant Chief, Contribution Section, Bureau of UC Tax at (614)644-3709 or at james.durbin@jfs.ohio.gov.

REPORTING TOOLS

A reporting tool will be developed to capture the data necessary to track the data in this program. A new reporting tool will replace the MS Access database that was used in 2013. Reports will be due on the **10th of each month** to the Office of Family Assistance. Further instructions concerning the new reporting tool will be issued in a subsequent communication.

A youth survey will be prepared in Survey Monkey for the participating youth to complete. Further instructions concerning the youth survey will also be issued in a subsequent communication.

EMPLOYER EVALUATION

In addition to the monthly reporting tool, employers will be responsible for completing an evaluation of the youth. A new evaluation tool is being designed and will be communicated to the counties in a subsequent communication.

All documentation is to be kept in case files at the CDJFS. There is no requirement to enter documentation into CRIS-E for the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program. County agencies should keep copies of documentation of all reporting and evaluations submitted to ODJFS.

CERTIFICATES OF COMPLETION

Each county agency is required to issue a certificate of completion to the participating youth who completed the summer youth program. The design of the certificate will be left up to each county agency. The certificate shall contain, at a minimum, the following items:

- The name of the program (TANF Summer Youth Employment Program);
- The name of the youth;
- The dates of participation;
- The name of the employer; and
- Funding for this program was provided by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

Staff should have youth add the receipt of the certificate to their resumes. OhioMeansJobs is able to search resumes by keywords, so the certificate will be searchable. Youth also should upload the certificates to the document section of their virtual backpacks.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Please be aware that all child labor laws and regulations do apply. An overview of child labor requirements can be referenced at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/youthlabor/>.

RESOURCES

Individual questions about the 2014 TANF Summer Youth Employment Program activities and PRC plans can be emailed to Program-Policy@jfs.ohio.gov. Information about state and federal requirements for the PRC program can be found in the PRC Reference Guide, at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/owf/prc/>.

For further information about the 2014 TANF Summer Youth Employment Program, please feel free to contact Matthew Cunningham either by email at matthew.cunningham@jfs.ohio.gov or by phone at (614)644-1296.

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