

Operations Memorandum - Employment & Training

OPS050605

(Revised 3/28/08)

6/21/05

SUBJECT: Implementation of the Diversion Program
TO: Executive Directors
FROM: Christine M. Bowser, Director, Bureau of Operations

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to introduce CAO to the new Diversion initiative effective August 1, 2005. Diversion is designed **to provide aid to families whose earned income has been reduced and who are in need of short-term assistance to provide for financial needs until self-sustaining income begins again. Diversion is designed to be an alternative to receiving ongoing TANF cash assistance.**

Diversion should be offered to TANF applicants who meet all the following criteria:

- Meet all TANF non-financial and income/resource requirements in the month of application or the following month.
- Are currently employed or have received earned income within 90 days of application.
- Have verified financial need(s), and these needs would be met from a one-time cash assistance benefit. Are awaiting receipt of verified, self-sustaining income.
- **What is Diversion?**
Diversion is a lump sum payment of one-month, two-months, or a maximum of three months of the family size allowance (FSA), given to a family who qualifies for TANF to pay for financial needs that have occurred due to loss of job or reduction in earnings. The family must verify that income will be received by the end of the Diversion period that will make it unnecessary for the family to apply for ongoing TANF benefits.

NOTE: All families who make application for TANF and who meet the criteria for Diversion should be given the option of receiving a Diversion benefit instead of ongoing TANF benefits.

Before a Diversion benefit is authorized, eligibility for supportive services and other CAO benefits such as Emergency Shelter Allowance (ESA) and Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) that could meet the family's financial need should be considered. **Diversion applicants are not required to pursue on-going benefits, such as Food Stamps, to meet their financial needs, but should be made aware of the additional benefits of receiving food stamps.**

Guidelines and procedures for implementing Diversion are included with this OPS Memo as [Attachment 1](#). A Desk Guide for determining eligibility for Diversion is [Attachment 2](#), and the Diversion Agreement Form ([PA 1793](#)) **has been revised and is available on Docushare.**

Next Steps

Implement the Diversion Program beginning August 1, 2005, pending completion of system changes.

Direct questions regarding Diversion to the Bureau of Employment and Training Programs at 717-787-1302.

This Operations Memorandum and attached procedures for the Diversion Program will become obsolete when they are incorporated into the Cash Assistance, Food Stamp and Medicaid Handbooks.