

Operations Memorandum - Employment & Training

OPS120702

July 12, 2012

SUBJECT: Changes in Employment and Training Determination of RESET
Program Participation Requirements

TO: Executive Directors

FROM: Richard Wallace, Acting Director, Bureau of Operations

Purpose

To inform County Assistance Offices (CAOs) of changes to criteria used when determining RESET participation referrals to CAO-directed or contracted employment and training (E&T) activities. These changes are effective July 1, 2012.

Background

[OPS 111004](#), Employment and Training Program Changes, advised CAOs to evaluate a cash recipient's RESET status to determine whether a client was required to participate in a CAO-directed activity or was referred to EARN. Changes to this policy must be made to ensure that cash recipients engage in work and move themselves and their families off of assistance, even when Special Allowances (SPALs) are no longer available. Additionally, changes are being made to ensure that individuals with good cause or an exemption also participate in a plan to decrease their need for public assistance.

Discussion

As a condition of eligibility, an individual determined mandatory for RESET and applying for cash assistance, who is not employed at least 20 hours per week, is required to participate in an applicant job search before benefits will be authorized. An individual must apply for at least three unsubsidized jobs per week. Verification of the job search is required prior to authorization. The applicant job search begins on the date that the client is notified of the eligibility requirement. This would be when the PA 253 is provided to the applicant at the interview or by mail, allowing three mailing days. For the purpose of collecting applicant job search information from cash assistance applicants, the new Job Application Report Form ([Attachment 1](#)) may be used until a final revised version is available on Docushare.

Note: For applicants who have also applied for unemployment compensation, the UC-304 may be used to verify job application requirements are met.

The timeframe for processing applications has not changed. CAOs are expected to make a decision on eligibility within 30 calendar days of the application filing date (CAH 104.5). CAOs must process Medicaid and SNAP while the client is completing the upfront job search eligibility requirement, if all necessary information is available.

REMINDER: Diversion should be offered to all applicants who meet TANF and Diversion criteria before authorization of TANF cash assistance.

If the cash assistance applicant, who is mandatory for RESET, does not get a job during their job search, and all other conditions of eligibility are met, the CAO will authorize the case and proceed as follows:

The CAO will complete a job readiness assessment to identify criteria to determine the RESET program participation requirement and project referral. A corresponding AMR will be completed. The CAO assessment should include the questions listed below. The participation requirement will be based on how the clients answer the questions.

1. Do you have a recent work history?
2. Do you have an occupation-specific degree or certification?
3. Are you currently enrolled in an educational activity or training program?
4. Are you employed? How many hours per week do you work?
5. Are you under age 22 and pursuing a High School Diploma or GED?
6. What have you been doing since you were last required to look for work, during your sanction period or exemption period?
7. Are there barriers that prevent you from getting a job?
 - (a) Do you or your children receive any social services from other agencies such as Children & Youth, MH/MR, DV Provider, or school district?
 - (b) Is your housing situation stable?
 - (c) Do you have regular doctor visits for yourself or children related to an ongoing medical condition or concern?

IF	THEN
An individual is determined mandatory (ETP Code 60) and the job search does not result in employment and the	

<p>individual:</p> <p>Is under age 22 pursuing a high school diploma or GED;</p> <p>Has exhausted their enrollments in a contracted program;</p> <p>Is meeting the hourly requirement in unsubsidized employment;</p> <p>Is enrolled in a self-initiated educational or training activity;</p>	<p>The individual will participate in a CAO- Directed activity</p>
<p>An individual is enrolled in one of Pennsylvania’s 14 Community Colleges and has not exhausted their 12 months of Voc-Ed limit,</p>	<p>Refer the individual to KEYS</p>
<p>The job search does not result in employment and the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a recent work history; • Has an occupation-specific degree, certification or job skill; • Is employed less than 20 hours per week; • Does not meet criteria for any other track; 	<p>Refer the individual to EARN provider</p>
<p>The job search does not result in employment and the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has Good Cause 53 – and has been identified as having “limited employability” refer to 	<p>Refer the individual to a Work Ready provider</p> <p>(Note: In Philadelphia,</p>

<p>work ready provider for the number of hours the individual is capable of participating;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is an exempt Volunteer; • Is in their third trimester of pregnancy when the PA 635 indicates employable; • Meets the requirement for referral to MPP (Attachment 2); 	<p>clients will continue to be referred to MPP)</p> <p>Enrollment Limitations introduced in OPS 111004 no longer apply to participation in or referrals to Work Ready.</p>
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Clients should not be terminated from their current project enrollment. The CAO must complete the job readiness assessment at the next renewal, partial redetermination, compliance review contact or change in RESET participation status.

CAOs and contractors will continue to provide equal access to all E&T programs and services to individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), including providing information on non-core ESL services that may be available in the community. All RESET rules apply to LEP individuals.

Next Steps

- 1) If you have any questions, contact the Division of Employment and Training Policy Unit Staff at 717-787-1302.
- 2) Retain this Operations Memorandum until the information is incorporated into the CAH 135 Handbook.