

DATE: June 26, 2014

OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM **14-06-01 Employment & Training**

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

TO: Executive Directors

FROM: Tom Strickler
Director
Bureau of Operations

PURPOSE

To inform County Assistance Offices (CAOs) of changes to criteria used when determining Road to Economic Self-Sufficiency through Employment and Training (RESET) participation referrals to CAO-directed or contracted employment and training (E&T) activities. These changes are effective July 1, 2014.

BACKGROUND

OPS 120702, 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 to be referred to a contracted E&T program. Recent changes to the EARN program created a need to update the referral process. These changes are being made to align the referral process with the updated program designs.

DISCUSSION

The CAO will complete a job readiness assessment 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 the client's responses.

1. Are you working? If yes, how many hours?
 - a. Do you have a work history?
2. What have you done while between jobs?
3. Do you have a high school diploma or GED?
 - a. Do you have an occupation-specific degree or certification?
 - b. Are you currently in – or interested in pursuing - college or another education or training program?
 - c. If you are under 22, are you pursuing – or interested in pursuing – your high school diploma or GED?

4. Is English your second language? If yes, what language do you prefer?
5. Do you or your children receive any social services from other agencies such as Children and Youth, mental health/mental retardation, DV provider, or the school district?
6. Is your housing situation stable?
7. Do you or your children have regular doctor visits related to an ongoing medical condition or concern?
 - a. Are you pregnant? If yes, what is your due date?
8. Are there any other barriers that may prevent you from getting or keeping a job?

IF	THEN
<p>An individual is determined mandatory (ETP Code 60) and the individual is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under age 22 and pursuing a high school diploma or GED or made arrangements to attend high school or a GED program; • Meeting the hourly requirement in unsubsidized employment; • Pregnant and within six weeks of her due date. Client is to participate in a self- directed job search; or • Expected to participate five hours per week as part of a two-parent household. The other parent will be participating for at least 30 hours in a core activity. 	<p>The individual will participate in a CAO-directed activity</p>
<p>An individual is enrolled, or has expressed an intent to enroll the next available semester, in one of Pennsylvania's 14 community colleges regardless of vocational education time available.</p>	<p>Refer the individual to KEYS</p>
<p>An individual is determined mandatory (ETP Code 60) and the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a work history; • Has an occupation-specific degree, certification or job skill; • Is employed less than the hourly participation requirement per week; • Expresses a desire to quickly attach to employment; or • Was positively terminated (Code 5) from the Work Ready (WR) program and not meeting the hourly requirement in unsubsidized employment. 	<p>Refer the individual to EARN contractor</p>

<p>An individual is determined mandatory (ETP Code 60) with or without good cause and the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has Good Cause 53 and has been identified as having “limited employability,” refer to a Work Ready (WR) provider for the number of hours the individual is capable of participating; • Is mandatory, but has barriers that would prevent the individual from obtaining employment within six months; • Is enrolled in an approved self-initiated educational or career training other than community college; • Has exhausted their transportation SPAL for the program year and is unable to find alternate transportation to a contracted program (would participate in barrier remediation with the program) will provide weekly job search logs to WR for data entry and will receive help with their transportation barrier; • Is pregnant (but is not within six weeks of her due date) and the PA 635 indicates she is employable; • Meets the requirements for the former MPP program; or • Does not meet criteria for any other program. 	<p>Refer the individual to a Work Ready provider</p>
<p>The individual is a refugee receiving TANF and there is a refugee provider in that area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A refugee may volunteer to participate in any of the other employment and training programs listed above. • Additional information about refugee programs may be found at www.refugeesinpa.org. 	<p>Refer to a Refugee Provider</p>
<p>The individual is an exempt volunteer;</p>	<p>May volunteer to participate in program of their choice</p>

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 English as a Second Language services that may be available in the community. All RESET rules apply to LEP individuals.

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

NEXT STEPS

1. Any questions can be directed to the Bureau of Policy, Division of Employment and Training Programs Policy Unit, at (717) 787-1302.
2. Retain this Operations Memorandum until the information is incorporated into the Cash Assistance Handbook Chapter 135.