



CHANGE NOTICE FOR MANUAL

DATE: September 29, 2008

MANUAL: WORK FIRST MANUAL

CHANGE NO.: 08-2008

TO: County Directors of Social Services

EFFECTIVE: October 1, 2008

I. BACKGROUND

The Federal Final Rule was published in February of 2008. This final rule implements the changes to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) required by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA of 2005), which was signed into law on February 8, 2006, reauthorized the TANF program until 2010. The DRA and the Final Rule mandate changes that affect Work First policy as of October 1, 2008. The attached policy manual revisions are intended to bring North Carolina's Work First Program in compliance with federal law and rule.

The changes that are addressed in the attached sections of the Work First Manual have to do with the definitions of "Work Eligible Individuals" and the definitions of the federal work activities. Additionally, there are new rules about how to count and report hours of participation, as well as requirements for supervision and documentation related to work activities and hours of participation. Throughout the manual sections, language was updated to include current terms, such as Food and Nutrition Services and Work First User Manual. The term "immigrant" replaces the term "alien". References to manual section and forms have been hyperlinked to the DHHS Online Publications site, and cited figures are replaced with designated form numbers where appropriate. Language and grammatical changes were made to improve ease of use. Throughout the policy, changes have been made to ensure compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA) as it relates to the provision of reasonable accommodations, participant compliance and caseworker responsibility within the Work First program.

II. SPECIFIC CHANGES

Section 103

- A. Caretakers must comply with Child Support Enforcement for all child support orders.
- B. Verification of the adult-supervised living arrangements for minor parents must also be verified at review.
- C. Work Eligible individuals must complete 30 of the required 35 hours of work activities in Federal work activities. A clarifying note was added regarding individuals with the work registration code "L".
- D. That requirement that a disabled family member can not attend school full time and the accompanying definition have been removed from policy.
- E. SSDI recipients are exempt from the work requirement.

- F. Caretaker responsibility for immunizations, regular school attendance and medical exams was expanded to include all children in their care. Clarification was added that once a child enters public, private or religious school the caseworker does not have to monitor the immunization requirement.

Section 105A

- A. All reference to the Personal Responsibility Contract were deleted. Also, the term “work eligible” is used in lieu of “adult” and “mandatory adult” where appropriate.
- B. 200% services were included in the list of services available to families during their 36 month period of ineligibility for Work First assistance.
- C. Recipients who receive the Post Secondary Education Waiver do count toward the Work Participation Rates. Whenever possible categorize Post Secondary Education as Vocational Educational Training as defined in Manual Section 118, Work Requirements and Services.
- D. The timeline for reviewing and adjusting cases to the 24 month time clock was changed from 18, 21, and 24 months to 12, 18 and 24 months.
- E. References to the obsolete DSS-1660 and DSS-8213 were removed and replaced with the DSS-8228 or comparable instrument.

Section 118

- A. Information was added regarding the use of and documentation related to Functional Assessments.
- B. Self employment is included in the definition of unsubsidized employment. Instructions are provided on how to calculate countable hours and how to project the participation and average income.
- C. Job Search and Job Readiness activities are limited to 240 hours for a single parent with a child under age 6 and 360 hours for all other individuals in a 12 month period. Job Search/Job Readiness can not be reported for more than 4 consecutive weeks. There is a one time allowance for counting average hours during 3 or 4 days to remaining days in the week.
- D. One hour of unsupervised homework time can be counted for each hour of class time, plus any additional supervised study time.
- E. Participation in distance learning can be counted on a case by case basis.
- F. Education leading to a baccalaureate or advance degree can now count as Vocational Educational Training.
- G. Excused absences were converted to hours instead of days – up to 80 hours of excused absences per participant, of which no more than 16 hours can be reported as excused absences in a month.
- H. Instructions for calculating and deeming Work Experience and Community Services were updated.
- I. Daily supervision does not necessarily mean daily contact, but it does mean a responsible party has the daily responsibility for oversight of the individual's participation.
- J. Electronic Reporting is acceptable from a provider to the caseworker.
- K. Married Teens and Teen Head of Households are by Federal definition Work Eligible Individuals. As long as the participant maintains satisfactory school attendance, the person is considered to have completed the required hours of participation.

- L. The DSS-6960, Job Search Log was revised and the DSS-5309, Excused Absence Log was created to support policy requirements.

Section 119

- A. Clarification was provided regarding two-parent families and the Work Participation Rate.
- B. Language was added regarding the use of Functional Assessments when making a determination of incapacity.
- C. References to 5 days were changed to 5 working days.
- D. When a parent leaves the home the caseworker must change the payment type in the month of the change.

III. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

These policies are in effect as of October 1, 2008. Please note that these policies are subject to change based on feedback from Health and Human Services' review of the state's Work Verification Plan that was submitted to ACF on September 2, 2008, and which is to be in effect by October 1, 2008.

IV. INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE WORK FIRST MANUAL

Remove		Insert	
Section	Pages	Section	Pages
103	All	103	1-12
105A	All	105A	1-16
118	All	118	1-37
119	All	119	1-11

If you have questions, please contact your Work First Representative.

Sincerely,



Charisse S. Johnson, Chief
Family Support and Child Welfare Services

Attachments:

- [WF103](#)
- [WF105A](#)
- [WF105Af1](#)
- [WF105Af2](#)
- [DSS-6960](#)
- [DSS-5309](#)
- [WF118](#)
- [WF119](#)

cc: Sherry S. Bradsher
Jo Ann Lamm
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Family Support and Child Welfare Team Leaders
Work First Program Representatives
Children's Programs Representatives
Local Business Liaisons