

24.4 LOCAL OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE WORK PROGRAM ASPECT OF WV WORKS

In addition to the responsibilities contained in other chapters of this Manual, the Worker has responsibilities related to the work program aspect of WV WORKS.

The Worker must assist the client in all reasonable ways to achieve self-sufficiency. To accomplish this, the Worker must assess the client's knowledge and skills, work with the client and make informed recommendations about courses of action appropriate for each individual to develop a plan that is expected to lead to self-sufficiency. In addition, he must enter into an agreement with the client concerning his involvement in the process of becoming self-sufficient, monitor the client's progress to determine changing needs and the need for support service payments and take appropriate follow-up action based on the client's actions.

The eligibility requirement of the negotiated agreement, the Personal Responsibility Contract, is detailed in Chapter 1. Other requirements, particularly those dealing with the client's continuing eligibility, are found throughout this Manual. Chapter 13 contains other information about the eligibility aspect of the work requirements. The following sections in this Chapter are devoted to work activities and follow-up actions and contain information necessary for the Worker to assist the client in becoming self-sufficient and in developing opportunities for him.

A. CASE MANAGEMENT

The Work Programs (WP) sub-system in RAPIDS assists the Worker in managing the work program aspect of WV WORKS.

To meet the goals of the WV WORKS Program, a Worker performs the following activities for WV WORKS families:

- Determines initial and ongoing case and individual eligibility. When the WV WORKS family also receives Food Stamps and/or Medicaid, eligibility for these Programs is also determined and maintained by the same Worker
- Negotiates the PRC with the client to determine the best means to achieve self-sufficiency and accept personal responsibility. The initial PRC, including Part II, must be manually completed by the Worker. Once this is completed and all other eligibility requirements are met, the case is confirmed in

RAPIDS and the referral to the WP subsystem is accomplished. The Worker may complete WP information after that time, but must not require the client to visit the office again to be present during the WP enrollment process.

Changes to Part II of the initial PRC are made using WP screens WPJS and WPAS. Such changes are attached to the initial PRC.

- Establishes for the client only reasonable and appropriate requirements related to the client's capability to perform the tasks on a regular basis, including physical capacity, psychological fitness, maturity, skills, experience, family responsibilities and place of residence. In addition, reasonable and appropriate requirements take into account the client's proficiency and child care and other support services needs.
- Monitors compliance with the PRC
- Provides continuous assessment of the client's needs and goals and negotiates adjustments to the PRC as necessary
- Determines which clients are temporarily exempt from meeting the work requirement and assists the client in becoming able to participate
- Determines good cause for failure to comply with the PRC
- Applies sanctions as appropriate
- Develops employment and other work activity opportunities for the client within the community
- At the discretion of the CSM, WV WORKS staff may continue to carry the Medicaid and/or Food Stamp portion of the case once WV WORKS benefits are stopped, to allow for continuity and follow-up on the client's progress.
- Makes referrals to other community services
- Provides payment for support services, as appropriate

- Identifies potential resources and makes appropriate referrals to secure them
- Conducts a home visit or a work/activity-site visit a minimum of once each 12 months.

This case management process provides for substantial flexibility in administration of the work component of WV WORKS, but the mandates must be met for each adult to meet a work requirement and for the State to meet and maintain an established participation rate. The Worker has the discretion to tailor the work requirements to the needs and goals of each family. Therefore, there are no mandatory procedures or processes that must be applied to each family. Instead, the Worker's reasonable and appropriate guidance and discretion are used to assist the client in accepting personal responsibility and achieving self-sufficiency.

Self-sufficiency is defined as being able to provide for the family's basic needs without relying on WV WORKS monthly cash assistance. It is recognized that some families will not be able to become completely self-sufficient. For these families the goal is to reduce the reliance on cash assistance as much as possible.

B. ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the ongoing process of determining each adult and emancipated minor's goals, skills, needs and challenges. Assessment begins at application and does not end until case management stops.

An in-depth assessment is necessary to discover the client's challenges to meeting his goals and to develop plans to overcome them.

The assessment is limited to producing information useful to both the client and the Worker in evaluating the client's challenges and in meeting his goals.

Rather than being a fixed process with mandated procedures, assessment is an ongoing activity. As the client's circumstances change, his goals and/or challenges may change, resulting in changes in the actions or activities necessary for him to succeed.

The assessment process necessarily includes a series of interviews/conversations with the client. It may also include educational and/or aptitude/interest testing and interpretation of this information; identification of the

client's skills, abilities and interests; use of community resources; and research into possible employment opportunities.

The following RAPIDS screens record the appropriate assessment results. Their use is mandatory.

- WPED (Education)
- WPAW (Employment)
- WPJR (Participation Readiness)

The WV WORKS Self-Sufficiency Appraisal Form, OFA-WVW-3A, is essential to the assessment process and its use is mandatory for all adults and emancipated minors who are included in a WV WORKS check. The purpose of the form is to gather pertinent information about the client: work experience, what type of work the client desires, educational background, family information and family support system, individual and family health, client's finances, life situations, and goals. This information, along with testing and other assessment information, is used to negotiate the client's Self-Sufficiency Plan (Part 2, PRC). It is expected that the Self-Sufficiency Plan (SSP) will be a step-by-step plan to lead the client toward his goal and self-sufficiency.

In order to gain as much information as possible prior to negotiation of the first full SSP, a home visit is required within 45 days of the date of application. At a minimum, the Worker must review the completed appraisal form with the client during the home visit. The first full SSP and the appraisal form must also be completed within 45 days of the date of application, so the home visit must not be delayed until the last day.

The form is designed for either the client or Worker to complete and may be completed in the office or at the client's home. Allowing the client to take it home to complete gives him the opportunity to think about his strengths, what he wants to change about his life and what he would like to obtain for himself and his family. If the Worker asks the client to complete the form at home and return it prior to the home visit, there is no penalty for failure to return the self-completed form. Instead, the Worker will take another form to the home visit and complete it at that time.

If desired, the Worker may complete the first full SSP in the client's home during the home visit, after reviewing the appraisal form and all other assessment information.

Additional helpful information in the workbook "Making Case Management Work" may be used by the Worker and is available in each District office.

The product of the ongoing assessment process is a series of SSP's that reflect the client's changing circumstances and tasks that move him toward self-sufficiency. Failure, without good cause, to keep appointments to initiate or continue the assessment process indicates a failure/refusal to cooperate or participate. The Worker must attempt 2 assessment home visits, at least one of which must be scheduled, prior to imposing a sanction for failure to cooperate.

C. ASSESSMENT TESTING

In assessing the client's current situation and negotiating the PRC, the Worker must explore family situations, education, work history, skills, aptitudes, attitude toward work, employment potential, possible social services or other support systems including physical, mental and emotional fitness, and the need for support service payments. Form WT-3A may be used as an interviewing guide, but the areas explored are not limited to those on the form. Individual circumstances may require varying degrees of exploration. The Worker may include educational assessment testing.

Assessment testing consists of the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) or Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), Learning Needs Screening, and Work Keys. The purpose of using TABE and CASAS is to measure basic academic skills such as reading, math, language, and spelling.

The Learning Needs Screening, completed at the time TABE or CASAS is administered, is used to screen for possible learning disabilities. Based on the results, referrals may be made to the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) for further assessment and diagnosis of possible learning disabilities and/or for accommodations to be made in an ABE/GED class, or for other training/employment programs.

The Learning Needs Screening is completed by or for the client and is voluntary. A referral may be made to the Department of Education Assessment Specialist for TABE or CASAS testing, Learning Needs Screening, and Work Keys testing as appropriate. WV WORKS staff may complete the Learning Needs Screening if necessary. If this is done, the WV WORKS Supervisor must send a copy of the completed Learning Needs Screening to the OFA WV WORKS Unit, Attention: Education Agreement Staff Member. However, it is recommended that the Assessment Specialists complete the Learning Needs Screening on all clients scheduled for assessment testing. When WV WORKS staff learns that an ABE teacher has completed the Learning Needs Screening, a copy of this form must also be forwarded to the OFA WV WORKS Unit.

1. Scheduling For TABE or CASAS

All WV WORKS recipients are to be scheduled for TABE or CASAS and Learning Needs Screening referral unless the following circumstances exist:

- S Client has completed two or more years of college. The Worker has discretion in having these individuals tested; or
- S Client is scheduled to begin a job which will make the family financially ineligible for a monthly WV WORKS check.
- S Other documented conditions exist that prevent effective assessment. These reasons must be documented in the case recording; or
- S Client completed TABE, CASAS, or other appropriate assessment testing at another agency, training facility, etc. within the previous two years, unless one of the conditions exists under the second and third bullets listed below for repeated assessment testing.

After the initial basic skills assessment (TABE or CASAS), WV WORKS recipients are referred for re-testing under the following conditions:

- S Two years have elapsed since the initial assessment;

- S More than one year has elapsed and the client wants to enroll in an education or training program; or
- S Specific instances have occurred, such as a head injury that could impact learning ability.

Clients may be referred for either the TABE or CASAS testing. It is not necessary to have both. Copies of test results are to be requested for participants who have completed TABE, CASAS, Work Keys, or other similar assessment testing at BEP, ABE, One-Stop Centers, vocational training centers, etc.

Based on the elements measured by each test, as found below, the Worker determines which test is more appropriate.

- S CASAS measures life skills involving reading and math in the context of work-related questions. Scores can be correlated to grade level equivalents for reading and math only.
- S TABE measures reading, math and language skills through real-life and academic questions. Scores are given in grade level equivalents. Participants being referred to vocational training, other training programs/college should be administered the TABE.

2. Work Keys

Work Keys assessment measures basic skill levels and determines how they compare to the skills required for specific jobs. Skill areas include Reading for Information, Locating Information, and Applied Math. Work Keys can be used to match clients to specific jobs for which they are qualified, determine skill gaps for desired jobs, and/or serve as an effective tool in employment portfolios. The Work Keys Occupational Profiles handbook, which is available in local offices shows job profiles and skill levels required for each job. In addition, certain companies in West Virginia have specified those Work Keys skill levels required for their occupations. Clients falling below the specified skill level required in one of the three skill areas may be referred to an ABE classroom to upgrade that specific area or areas.

Recipients are to be scheduled for Work Keys testing under the following circumstances:

- S Assessment testing indicates client has a seventh grade or higher level in reading and math; and
- S Guidance is needed to effectively determine appropriate job placement; or
- S Client has a fifth-grade or higher level in math and reading when businesses in the area use Work Keys in the hiring process, or when local staff is working closely with the community colleges to develop specific job or skills training.

Recipients are referred for retesting as follows:

- S Client has successfully completed vocational skills training, or college; or
- S Client has upgraded basic skills in ABE or has passed the GED; or
- S Skill areas from initial Work Keys testing have been successfully upgraded as a result of referral and attendance in an ABE class or other training facility.

3. Referral For Assessment Testing

Referral for assessment testing is accomplished by forwarding a completed WT-70 for each individual to the Assessment Specialist. Groups are referred by memorandum which includes the name of each group member. The test administrator is responsible for completing a release of information for each client.

4. Worker Follow-Up

When the test results are received, the Worker records the information on the appropriate RAPIDS screen. An interview is scheduled with the client as soon as possible, to discuss the test results. At this interview, the client may be provided with a copy of the test results. Staff may contact the Department of Education Assessment Specialist for questions or help in evaluating the results of TABE,

CASAS, Learning Needs Screening, or Work Keys. Special attention should be paid to the recommendations made by the Assessment Specialist on page 4 of the Learning Needs Screening for possible referral to programs and services.

5. Testing Requirements For WIA

Most, if not all, Workforce Investment Act (WIA)-funded employment and training programs now require that TABE, CASAS, or similar academic skills testing, and, in many cases, Work Keys be completed by clients referred to and enrolled in those programs. Therefore, the Worker must schedule clients for the appropriate assessment testing whenever possible.

6. Delays In Testing

If circumstances prevent assessment testing by the Assessment Specialist in time for a client to enter ABE, training, employment, or another program, alternate assessment testing arrangements may be made. This could be referral to an ABE teacher, One-Stop Center, or BEP office. It is important, however, that a Learning Needs Screening be completed by WV WORKS staff or by the ABE teacher for clients tested at those facilities. However, whenever possible, clients are to be scheduled for assessment testing administered by the Assessment Specialists.

7. Substance Abuse

If the client indicates substance abuse problems, referral for evaluation and counseling should be made prior to scheduling assessment testing. Any determination of substance abuse problems is based on statements made by the client, not on the feelings or perceptions of the Worker.

D. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRC SELF-SUFFICIENCY PLAN

NOTE: See Chapter 1 for information about the PRC as an eligibility requirement and about completion of an initial SSP and the first full SSP.

RAPIDS screens WPJS and WPAS allow for the recording and printing of Part 2 of the PRC.

The PRC is a document that consists of 2 parts. Part I contains information and requirements applicable to all individuals who are required to sign it. Part II is the Self-Sufficiency Plan which is the result of negotiations between the client and the Worker. The Self-Sufficiency Plan (SSP) is subject to renegotiation throughout the client's receipt of cash assistance. Initial and ongoing assessment produces information that allows the Worker to provide reasonable guidance to the client to attain his goals and forms the basis of the Plan.

The promotion of self-sufficiency is accomplished primarily through the use of the SSP. The SSP is completed during a negotiation between the Worker and the adult(s) and/or emancipated minor(s) in each AG. During the negotiation, the client must be encouraged to provide information about his goals for becoming self-sufficient and the means by which his goals may be achieved. If the client does not have defined self-sufficiency goals, the Worker must encourage him to consider such goals in consultation with his family before the PRC is updated.

The Worker must explore all of the desires and work goals presented by the client to determine which are possible, which can be accomplished with the resources available to the client and to the Department, which can be accomplished in an appropriate time and, ultimately, which is most likely to result in self-sufficiency for the client. In addition, the Worker must explore other possibilities not presented by the client and offer these to the client as alternatives. At all times, the Worker is expected to balance the client's wishes with his need to achieve self-sufficiency and the Department's goal of meeting federally-established participation rates.

All requirements listed on the SSP must be reasonable and appropriate for the individual client.

The SSP must be specific enough to provide direction for the client and must reflect careful analysis of the client's needs and potential. It must also be flexible enough to change as opportunities and situations warrant. Changes in occupational goals or activities to meet the client's work requirement require revisions to the SSP. Each time the SSP is revised on a paper form, the client and the Worker must initial and date the changes. When a new SSP is completed, both must sign and date the form. The client must be provided with a copy of the SSP each time a new one is completed or a revision is made to an existing one.

The SSP outlines the objectives and the steps needed to achieve self-sufficiency, as well as a time frame for the completion of program requirements. Specific duties are required.

It may be possible for the client to achieve self-sufficiency without a document defining specific activities. However, clarifying goals and actions to reach the goals helps the client and Worker to focus on the most appropriate actions. This makes their efforts more productive. Although the primary concern should be the development of a meaningful SSP, the form itself is helpful to the client in understanding the expectations. Committing the plan to writing also helps the Worker be more specific about his responsibilities. By signing the PRC, each party agrees to fulfill his respective responsibilities.

E. JOB DEVELOPMENT

Job development and the subsequent placement of individuals in employment are the primary focus of WV WORKS. The WV WORKS staff is expected to be visible in the community and participate in various employment-related activities and initiatives. The WV WORKS staff is expected to relate to private employers and related organizations professionally, honestly and with integrity.

Job development and placement efforts must be coordinated closely with the local Job Service Office. As appropriate, clients are required to register with the Job Service Office and to keep their applications current. The results of ABLE or other career-oriented testing is shared with the Job Service Office as needed. A Release of Information form must be signed by the client prior to the sharing of information. The form must be placed in the case record. To increase the resources available to the client, contacts are established and maintained with DRS, Department of Education, Community Action agencies and other public and private organizations that could offer activities or support. A close working relationship should be established with the local WIA and Welfare to Work Programs.

F. CHILD CARE REFERRAL

Child care must be made available to any client who needs it in order to accept employment or to participate in another work activity. The client must be referred to the appropriate Resource and Referral agency. Child care must be arranged before placement.

G. MENTORING

When the Worker and the client agree that the client could benefit from a mentor for counseling and guidance, the client may be assigned to a mentor. Mentoring may be accomplished by assigning a mentor to work individually with one or more clients. In addition, a mentor or team of 2 or more mentors may provide assistance to one or a group of clients. The method selected is based on the client's needs and the resources available.

NOTE: Being a mentor does not allow access to or knowledge of confidential information about the client. The Worker must obtain the client's written permission prior to providing such information to the mentor. A general waiver allowing information to be shared with the mentor is not sufficient; a waiver is required for each piece of information shared or one waiver may identify each piece of information. The client may provide any personal or confidential information to the mentor that he chooses.

A mentor must:

- Be gainfully employed or retired from gainful employment;
- Have sufficient time available to provide guidance for the client;
- Set the boundaries of the relationship, so that the client is guided by, but not dependent upon, the mentor;
- Consult frequently with the Worker about guidance provided to the client;
- Notify the Worker immediately upon deciding to terminate the relationship with the client;

- Adhere to the Department's standards of confidentiality regarding case record information.

A mentor must not:

- Be a relative or married to a relative of the client;
- Have a relationship with the client prior to becoming a mentor;
- Have a physically intimate relationship with the client;
- Loan or give the client money.

Being a mentor may include counseling and guidance in decision making, handling crises, reminders to keep medical appointments, assistance in accessing resources, transportation, arranging child or elder care, providing emergency child or elder care, planning so that household tasks are done in spite of work schedules and children, improving employability, learning to shop wisely, planning meals, and any other aspects of the client's life that can lead him toward self-sufficiency. Mentoring may be particularly beneficial to minor parents or other young parents.

H. WELFARE TO WORK (WtW)

Welfare To Work (WtW) programs provide a tool for the local WV WORKS staff to use to assist a client in meeting his goal of becoming self-sufficient. This is accomplished by providing the client with certain work-related opportunities/benefits in the WtW network that are expected to result in self-sufficiency. The Worker initiates the process by referring appropriate clients to WtW and by working with the other professional staff and the client in choosing and/or designing a plan to benefit the client.

WtW is structured around a concept of "Work First, Train Later," and emphasizes placement into and retention of unsubsidized employment. This concept

also recognizes that a client may be provided, as appropriate, education and skills training appropriate to the job, as well as other services to ensure lasting unsubsidized employment. The goals are based on those of the WV WORKS Program and were developed to provide extra help for those who continue to receive cash assistance after the initial caseload reduction due to the implementation of welfare reform legislation. The purpose of WtW is to provide transitional assistance which moves hard-to-employ WV WORKS recipients who live in high-poverty areas into unsubsidized employment and economic self-sufficiency.

WtW functions by cooperation among the following entities: OFA and WV WORKS staff of DHHR; Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and Assessment and Case Management Center (ACMC) staff of BEP; Private Industry Councils (PICs).

Each group has its own responsibilities in moving the hard-to-employ client into self-sufficiency. However, the WV WORKS staff has the primary responsibility for case management services for all WV WORKS applicants, recipients and former recipients, including those who participate in WtW. Therefore, even though some case management services may be provided by the other agencies involved in WtW, the WV WORKS staff must take the lead. Referral to WtW does not eliminate the client's PRC requirements. Instead, cooperation with the WtW requirements must be made a part of the PRC, once the client becomes involved. WtW activities will be structured by BEP to allow the client to comply with WtW requirements and meet his work participation requirement at the same time.

1. Referral Process

Referrals to WtW are made using form OFS-WtW-1. The form is self-explanatory. The client's PRC, including all updates, and the latest results of all tests must be attached to the form prior to referral to the ACMC. Copies are distributed according to instructions on the bottom of the form.

Some Job Service Offices have set limits on the number of referrals that may be made to an ACMC for WtW. It is necessary to determine this information locally and monitor for compliance with the limits.

There are separate categories of clients who may be served through WtW. The WV WORKS Worker makes the decision about which client is an appropriate referral and the category in which he is placed. Details about determining the appropriate category are found in item 2, below.

Other referral requirements may be established locally by mutual consent between the WV WORKS and ACMC staff.

2. Appropriate Referrals

The following 2 items identify the groups for which WtW funding may be spent. Funding may be used for both custodial and non-custodial parents as detailed below.

Seventy percent of the WtW funding must be spent for individuals who meet the criteria of any of the categories described below and labeled as 70%.

Not more than thirty percent of the funding may be spent for individuals who meet the criteria of any of the categories described below and labeled as 30%.

NOTE: The percentages described below refer to the portion of the WtW funding that may be spent for each group and do not refer to the number or percentage of WtW referrals from each group.

a. Custodial Parent

A custodial parent qualifies as follows:

- 70% Criteria

- Has received WV WORKS or TANF from another state for 30 months or more. The months need not be consecutive; or
 - Is receiving WV WORKS and is within 12 months of losing benefits due to the 60-month time limit; or
 - Has already exhausted his 60-month time limit.
- 30% Criteria
- Is receiving WV WORKS; or
 - Is not receiving WV WORKS due to the 60-month time limit; and
- N Has characteristics associated with long-term welfare dependence; or
- N Is a youth who has aged out of foster care; or
- N Whose income level is below 100% FPL.

b. Non-Custodial Parent

A non-custodial parent qualifies as follows:

- Is unemployed or underemployed, or is having difficulty paying child support obligations; and
- The minor children or the custodial parent as received WV WORKS or TANF from another state for 30 months or more, or is within 12 months of losing WV WORKS benefits due to the 60-month time limit; or

- The minor children
 - Are eligible for or receiving WV WORKS; or
 - Received WV WORKS during the preceding year; or
 - Are eligible for, or receiving Food Stamps, SSI, Medicaid or CHIP

3. Allowed Activities

WtW funds may be used for the following activities. The agencies that operate the project determine how the funds are used.

- Job readiness activities financed through job vouchers or through contracts with public or private providers.
- Employment activities, as follows: community service programs, job creation through public or private wage subsidies, work experience, on-the-job training.
- Job placement services financed through job vouchers or through contracts with public or private providers.
- Post-employment services through job vouchers or through contracts with public or private providers. Placement in any subsidized or unsubsidized job qualifies the client for post-employment services. Such services include, but are not limited to: basic educational skills training, occupational skills training, English as a second language, mentoring.
- Job retention services and support services following placement in a job readiness activity or in any subsidized or unsubsidized job. These services include, but are not limited to: transportation, non-medical substance abuse treatment, child care, emergency or short-term housing.

I. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ASSISTANCE

The Worker must inform each applicant/recipient of the availability of services related to prevention of domestic violence. To protect the abused person when the information is offered to more than one adult or emancipated minor in the family at the same time, it must be stressed that the Worker is required to provide the information to all clients. The instructions about domestic violence assistance in Sections 1.2 and 1.25 must be followed.

J. VISION AND/OR DENTAL SERVICES

Providing dental and vision services is a cooperative effort between the WV WORKS Program and the Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health (OMCFH).

The WV WORKS staff's responsibility is limited to completion of form OFA-R-1 to refer eligible clients to OMCFH, to certify that the client is eligible to receive vision and/or dental services, and to explain to the client the importance of keeping his scheduled appointments and the deadline for his appointment.

Only one OFA-R-1 is completed, even when the client is being referred for both services. The distribution of the color copies is shown on the bottom of the form. The Worker must make certain the last copy of the NCR form is legible when the form is completed. If it is not, the Workers must write over the information on the last copy and forward to OMCFH.

The referral for vision/dental services is time-limited. The client must schedule and keep the first appointment with the service provider within 6 months of the referral date shown on the OFA-R-1. The Worker must enter the date (mm/dd/yy) on the OFA-R-1.

NOTE: Simply scheduling an appointment with the service provider within 6 months does not meet the requirement. The appointment must be kept within 6 months of the referral date in order for payment to be made.

When the client has been unable to schedule and keep an appointment during this time, another referral may be issued. However, if the reason he was unable to get an appointment was a delay in starting the process, he is permitted only one additional referral.

To be eligible to receive vision and/or dental services, the client must be in either of the 2 following groups:

1. Participating

To qualify based on participation in an activity, the client must meet both of the following requirements.

- The individual must be an adult recipient of WV WORKS when the referral is made. Receipt of DCA alone does not qualify the individual for these services. Once the referral is made, services continue whether or not the client remains eligible for WV WORKS; and
- The individual is participating in an activity listed in Section 24.6 through Section 24.13. The rate of participation required to qualify for these services is the rate shown on the individual's PRC.

2. Sole Barrier to Participation

When the sole barrier to the client's participation in a work activity listed in Section 24.5 is the need for vision and/or dental services, a referral may be made. Once the referral is made, services continue whether or not the client remains eligible for WV WORKS.

OMCFH has signed agreements with service sites which detail the allowable services, reimbursements, scope of services, etc. In addition, OMCFH will provide a list of all providers to the appropriate county. The client may choose his own provider from this list. Distribution of copies of the form in a timely manner is crucial.

There is a maximum lifetime limit on the payment for these services. This limit is monitored by OFMCH. Closure of the vision and/or dental services case by OFMCH occurs when services are completed or the maximum allowable benefits are reached.

K. WV WHEELS

The purpose of WV WHEELS is to assist in eliminating transportation as a barrier by providing the client with an opportunity to contract with a vendor to lease a vehicle and own it after the contract is satisfied. The Worker initiates the process by referring appropriate clients to the WV WHEELS vendor in his Region.

1. Appropriate Referrals

WV WORKS recipients and those eligible for continued support service payments may be referred. The following requirements must be met when determining an appropriate referral:

- Valid driver's license.
- The unavailability of public transportation.
- The client does not already own a road worthy vehicle, or it is a two-parent household and another vehicle is required.

EXCEPTION: When the client already owns a vehicle and repairs to make it road-worthy exceed its value, a referral may be made to WV WHEELS.

- The need to meet a work activity or continue employment.
- The client does not have a criminal driving record, such as but not limited to, a DUI conviction in the past 3 years, hit and run, flight to avoid arrest. Clients who have completed a State-approved driving class and have had their licenses restored may be referred.
- The client has the financial ability to make payments.

Participation in WV Wheels is limited to one time per individual. If an AG contains two parents and two vehicles are required, each one may participate in the program.

It is only necessary that the client be an active adult WV WORKS AG member or eligible for continued support service payments at the time of referral and lease signature. Subsequent ineligibility for either program, or moving to another county or Region within the State does not affect the continuation of the lease agreement. When a client moves out of state, the lease agreement becomes null and void, and he may negotiate a buy-out agreement with the vendor. Support service payments for relocation must never be used to assist the client in paying the buy-out.

If the client already has a vehicle(s) registered in his name, he must provide documentation that:

- the vehicle(s) is junked; or
- the cost of repairs exceeds the limit specified in Section 24.14; or
- the other parent needs the vehicle for employment or to participate in an activity.

Once the client signs a lease agreement with the vendor, he is no longer eligible for support service payments for auto insurance or vehicle repair, for the duration of the lease agreement.

The client's failure to comply with the vendor's requirements without good cause will result in loss of the vehicle, and all of the money the client has paid toward the lease. In addition, the client must not be referred again to the program. Failure to comply with the lease agreement and loss of the car of itself is not a sanctionable offense.

Loss of the car does not constitute good cause for failure to meet a work requirement. The Worker must carefully evaluate the circumstances of each client's situation.

2. Referral Process

Referrals to the WV Wheels vendor are made using form OFS-WHEELS-1. The form is self-explanatory, and all requested information on the form is mandatory. When the vendor notifies the Worker of approval or denial for participation in the program, the Worker must record the appropriate information in RAPIDS. If the vendor notifies the Worker that the client is not a suitable candidate for the program, the vendor must provide a written explanation.

3. Vendor Responsibilities

Upon receipt of the OFS-WHEELS-1, the vendor completes an evaluation process with the client, and if determined a suitable candidate, completes and signs a vehicle lease-purchase agreement with the client. The vendor provides the client with a road-worthy vehicle, provides regular maintenance on the vehicle, and provides insurance at the prevailing class rate. The client must agree to make the vehicle payments on time and make the vehicle available for regular maintenance. If the client fails to comply with the lease agreement and it is terminated, the vendor must notify the Worker.

Upon successful completion of the 24-month lease, the client receives the title to the vehicle from the vendor.

L. IN-SERVICE TO WV

In-Service to WV provides WV WORKS recipients with additional services and an alternative to using their last 12 months of WV WORKS. It is a State-funded, public works program administered by the Bureau of Employment Programs (BEP), but with the primary case management services provided by WV WORKS staff. Referral to BEP is accomplished using form OFS-ESP-1.

The RAPIDS component code is IW.

Information about this project was first released by memorandum on February 8, 2001. The memorandum remains in effect.

1. Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to participate, the client must:

Volunteer to participate. The Worker must make the opportunity to participate available to all AG's which meet the eligibility criteria and who volunteer.

- Be included in a WV WORKS AG where at least 1 adult has received 48 months or more of WV WORKS/TANF benefits. The individual who is referred need not be the one who has received WV WORKS/TANF for 48 months.

NOTE: Referral must take place no later than the AG's 59th month of receipt. When referred in the 59th month, he begins participation in his 60th month and receives his last WV WORKS payment during his first month of participation in In-Service to WV.

- Be included in a WV WORKS AG that has received WV WORKS payments for at least the 6 consecutive months prior to referral; the month of referral may be counted as one of the 6 consecutive months.
- Not be employed full-time for wages. The determination of full-time employment is based on working 100 hours/month or more.
- Meet all WV WORKS eligibility requirements at the time of referral.

2. Special Procedures For Determining/Redetermining Benefit Amount

The benefit issued by BEP is equal to the level of the WV WORKS check for the referral month. The check amount received for the month of referral is frozen at that level for the duration of the client's participation in In-Service to WV. This includes any incentives and reductions, including reductions due to sanctions, that may be in effect during the referral month. If the client receives a CSI payment for or in the referral month, the CSI is not added to the check amount when determining the level at which benefits are frozen.

Subsequent changes in circumstances which would normally result in an increase or decrease in the WV WORKS check amount, or case closure, are not used for In-Service to WV purposes. This includes income changes, changes in AG composition and any other change that impacts on eligibility or the amount of the benefit.

The client receives his WV WORKS check for the month of referral and the first month he begins an In-Service activity. He also continues to receive the CSI, if appropriate, for those months he received WV WORKS and child support was paid. Participation begins the first of the month following referral. The AG is closed effective the month participation begins. Once the AG is closed, no CSI benefits are issued for months in which he is an In-Service to WV participant. The client, even though he is paid semi-monthly, does not receive his first In-Service pay until the beginning of the month after participation begins, so he does not receive a WV WORKS check and pay from In-Service to WV in the same month. The following example illustrates the timing.

EXAMPLE: A client who receives a WV WORKS check amount of \$512 is referred to In-Service to WV in April. He is to begin participation May 1st.

April 1 st	Referred to In-Service to WV. Receives WV WORKS check of \$512
May 1 st	Begins In-Service to WV activity. Receives WV WORKS check of \$512. AG issued advance notice for WV WORKS AG closure and the AG is closed by advance notice deadline.
May 15 th (or 16 th)	No pay from In-Service to WV because time sheet has not yet been submitted
May 20 th	Time sheet for May 1 st - May 15 th (or 16 th) due and submitted
June 1 st	First pay received from In-Service to WV for May 1 st - May 15 th (or 16 th). No WV WORKS check received.
June 15 th	Second pay received from In-Service to WV for last of May.

Advance notice requirements must be met when the AG is closed, regardless of the reason for closure, including participation in In-Service to WV.

The In-Service to WV placement may only be terminated when the 12-month time limit expires, the client dies, moves out of state, drops out, is terminated by BEP for failure to participate, or was originally ineligible to participate in In-Service at the time of referral.

NOTE: Because payroll deductions are withheld from the client's earnings and his benefit level remains constant, he could experience a decrease in actual income received. This must be explained to the client before he volunteers so he can make an informed decision about participation. Some or all of this potential decrease in income can be made up by receipt of EITC benefits as part of his semi-monthly pay. The Worker must discuss EITC with the client

and, upon request, provide information to assist him in receiving it.

3. Limits On Participation

Referral for participation in In-Service to WV is a one-time-only opportunity. If the client leaves or is terminated after referral, no other referral may be made, regardless of the reason for leaving.

Each individual is limited to 12 consecutive months of participation.

All placements begin on the first work day of the month.

4. Effect On Other Benefits

a. Food Stamps and Medicaid

Income from participation in In-Service to WV is countable for Food Stamps and all Medicaid coverage groups. In all instances it is counted as earned income.

It is possible that the AG, or some AG members, could lose Medicaid coverage due to counting the earnings from, or due to losing the time-limited earned income disregards for In-Service to WV, because the WV WORKS check is excluded. The adults are the most likely to lose coverage, but may be Medicaid-eligible under AFDC- or SSI-Related Medicaid.

If the client is terminated from In-Service to WV due to failure to cooperate, a Voluntary Quit penalty may be applied.

It is possible that the AG may lose Food Stamp eligibility, since they will no longer be WV WORKS recipients and may no longer be categorically eligible. The receipt of an In-Service benefit by at least one member of the Food Stamp AG does not cause the AG to be categorically eligible. The AG may qualify for

Categorical Eligibility in some other way, most likely by being eligible for continued support services as found in Section 24.16.

b. WV WORKS

Participation does not impact on the federal or State work participation requirement in any way. The WV WORKS AG is closed upon entry into In-Service to WV.

If the client fails to comply with BEP's In-Service to WV requirements, a 45-day waiting period may be imposed for WV WORKS upon reapplication; a PRC sanction is not imposed at reapplication.

c. DCA

When the client is active with In-Service to WV he is not eligible for a DCA Payment. After he is no longer active with In-Service to WV and applies for WV WORKS, he is treated as any other applicant in determining eligibility for DCA.

Receipt of a DCA payment counts as 3 of the 6 months a client must have received WV WORKS to be eligible for In-Service to WV, but does not count when determining if the 48-month eligibility requirement is met.

EXAMPLE: A family received WV WORKS for 42 months before becoming ineligible due to earnings. The mother worked for 8 months before being laid off. When she reapplied for WV WORKS, she had the promise of another job in 3 months, so she chose to receive a DCA payment instead of a monthly check. Through no fault of her own, the job did not materialize and she reapplied for WV WORKS at the end of 3 months. After 3 months of receiving a monthly WV WORKS check again, she meets the requirement of having received WV WORKS for 6 consecutive months prior to

referral to In-Service: 3 mos. for DCA + 3 additional months of WV WORKS = 6 consecutive months. However, because DCA does not count toward meeting the requirement of having received

WV WORKS for 48 months, she does not qualify for In-Service to WV:
42 mos. + 3 additional mos. = 45 mos.

d. BCSE Requirements

In-Service to WV clients are not required to be referred to BCSE.

If child support is collected by BCSE for a month for which the client received an In-Service to WV benefit, the client does not qualify for the Child Support Incentive for that month. After closure of the WV WORKS AG, the client is treated by BCSE as any other non-assistance client.

e. School Clothing Allowance (SCA)

These clients are not automatically eligible for the SCA because they are no longer WV WORKS recipients. They must apply in order to receive it.

5. Support Services

See Sections 24.14 and 24.16 for the support services for which the client is eligible.

The WV WORKS staff is responsible for the issuance of all support service payments for identified needs.

6. Determining The Hours Of Participation And BEP Payment Amount

BEP determines the appropriate number of hours of participation, based on the check amount, including applicable incentives and reductions, in the month of referral.

The amount of the BEP payment to the client is based on the actual number of hours worked during the month, minus payroll deductions. The client is paid semi-monthly.

7. Client Notification

The Worker is responsible only for client notification about benefits received from DHHR, such as WV WORKS, Food Stamps and Medicaid. Advance notice is required before closure of the WV WORKS AG due to referral to In-Service to WV. Once the WV WORKS case is closed and the client is referred, the Worker is not involved in any type of notification related to the In-Service Program.

8. Interview Requirements

During the interview to explore the possibility of an In-Service to WV referral, the Worker must explain the following to the client:

- The possible effect on Medicaid eligibility, since In-Service income is counted for Medicaid while WV WORKS income is not.
- Increase in the number of Food Stamp redeterminations during the year due to counting In-Service income as earnings and non-receipt of WV WORKS.
- The client's actual income could decrease from the amount last received from WV WORKS because payroll deductions will be withheld.
- The potential impact on Food Stamps and WV WORKS benefits should the client reapply after failing to comply with BEP's In-Service requirements.
- There is only one chance given to succeed in the In-Service to WV project; if the client leaves it, he cannot be referred again.

- The client will be paid semi-monthly. This could cause the family some financial difficulty in adjusting to receiving income semi-monthly instead of monthly. The Worker must make assistance in financial planning available.
- Those WV WORKS AG's who received Child Support Incentive payments no longer receive them when they choose to participate in In-Service to WV. However, BCSE does not retain current child support collected after AG closure, so the AG will receive the amount actually received by BCSE.

M. PERIODIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY EVALUATIONS (24, 36, 48 MONTHS)

After a client has received WV WORKS for 24 months, a face-to-face meeting must be scheduled with the adults or emancipated minors in the WV WORKS AG to evaluate the progress of the self-sufficiency plan and to develop a new plan as needed. The meeting must occur during the 24th or 25th month of receipt of WV WORKS benefits. The purpose of this meeting is to complete a mandatory case staffing which is to include the client, other parent in the household (even if the other parent is excluded from the AG), the Worker, the Supervisor, other DHHR staff as needed, any community resource person(s) directly working with the client, and a representative of the client's choosing. At this meeting, any additional barriers to self-sufficiency should be identified and solutions to overcome those barriers explored. The client should be encouraged to make decisions regarding those barriers and the solutions. At this meeting, the PRC and assessment form must be reviewed and updated as needed.

NOTE: If the requirements in Section 13.9,B regarding submitting a MRT application are not met by this time, it must be completed as necessary during the 24 month evaluation.

Another face-to-face evaluation must be completed after the client has received WV WORKS for 36 months.

This meeting must occur during the 36th or 37th month of WV WORKS receipt. It will serve the same purpose and follow the same pattern as the 24-month evaluation. In addition, the client must be offered a referral to an intensive case management agency, if there is an available slot. This 36-month meeting must also include the CSM or his designee.

An additional face-to-face evaluation must be completed after the client has received WV WORKS for 48 months. This meeting must occur during the 48th or 49th month of receipt. It follows the same pattern as the 36-month evaluation. However, a referral to an intensive case management agency is mandatory after receipt of benefits for 48 months. If there are no available slots with such an agency, the Worker must provide the intensive case management services.