

## 24.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter describes the work requirements of WV WORKS and the services available to assist clients in meeting these requirements and maintaining independence from cash assistance.

The purpose of WV WORKS is to help economically dependent, at-risk families become self-supporting. It is a work-oriented, performance-based, time-limited Program that emphasizes employment and personal responsibility.

WV WORKS expects parents and other caretaker relatives to support their own dependent children and those in their care. Every parent and other caretaker who is included in a payment has a responsibility to participate in an activity to help prepare for, obtain and maintain gainful employment.

The goals of WV WORKS are to: achieve more efficient and effective use of public assistance funds, reduce dependency on public programs by promoting self-sufficiency, and structure assistance to emphasize employment and personal responsibility.

The Sections that follow discuss the requirement that all adults in the AG meet a work requirement and describes minimum participation rates to which the State must adhere. There are several loosely-defined activities described in Sections 24.6-24.13. Based on the client's participation in one or more of these activities, the State's participation rate is determined. However, the goals of WV WORKS do not include meeting a participation requirement. Instead, the foundation of the Program is self-sufficiency. There are, therefore, many activities which allow the client to meet his work requirement, but which do not lead to self-sufficiency. The Worker may allow the client to continue in the activity which meets the participation requirement while developing plans with the client to begin another activity which will accomplish or lead to self-sufficiency.

**EXAMPLE:** Mrs. Smith is a single parent with 2 children. She provides home-schooling for both children. By doing this, she meets the participation requirement by participating in a Community Service activity. However, home-schooling her children will not lead her to self-sufficiency. The Worker must negotiate a PRC which will lead the client toward becoming self-sufficient. In the meantime, however, Mrs. Smith continues to meet the work participation requirement by home-schooling her children.

**EXAMPLE:** Miss Jones is a single parent with 1 child. Her mother owns a small grocery store and she helps her mother in the store and delivers groceries for their homebound customers. She works between 35-40 hours/week. For this work, her mother pays her \$100/month. Miss Jones is meeting her work requirement, but she is not moving toward self-sufficiency. The Worker must negotiate a PRC which will lead the client toward becoming self-sufficient, by encouraging her mother to pay her what her work is worth, by finding other employment or by participating in another activity that will lead her toward self-sufficiency. In the meantime Miss Jones continues to meet the work participation requirement by working for her mother.

The Work Programs subsystem (WP) of RAPIDS provides automated support for WV WORKS work requirements by tracking the client's involvement in employment and other activities and by providing for the storage and retrieval of information necessary for the assessment process. After eligibility and the benefit level for WV WORKS have been confirmed in RAPIDS, appropriate recipients are automatically referred to WP. Even though referral is automatic, registration in WP is not. The Worker must enroll the client in WP. Failure to do so could result in sanctions against the State for not meeting the federal work requirement.