

## 24.16 CONTINUATION OF SERVICES

Effective February 2010, any Work Eligible Individual currently in a post-employment option will have their continuation of services period extended for up to 6 additional months. Initial funding for this program extension was under provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. Any individual whose current period of eligibility ended on January 31, 2010 is not eligible for this extension. There will be a total of up to 12 months of eligibility for either post-employment option. The family may decide at any time during the extension period that they no longer wish to receive the EAP payment, and may not receive PL services instead. The Worker must indicate on the DFA-WVW-15 the total number of months that the family will receive post-employment services.

Beginning January 2008, Work-Eligible Individuals may choose between 2 employment support options any time WV WORKS cash assistance is closed and the participant reports employment. The closure may be at the client's request or may be due to excess income, but the participant must be employed the required number of hours. See Section A below. When the client accepts employment and the WV WORKS benefit is closed, the Worker advises the client regarding the benefits of each option and the participant chooses the one best suited to the needs of his family. The participant signs the WV WORKS Post-Employment Services Option form, DFA-WVW-15, to document the decision. **The participant has 30 days from the date of closure to sign the DFA-WVW-15 to document his decision. The participant is ineligible to receive either option if the form is not returned in this time frame.** The Case Manager must note which option the individual has chosen in Work Programs comments. The participant receives 1 copy of the form and another is placed into the case record. This participant's decision is binding for the post-employment period. Both options may receive bonuses.

Option 1 – This option is a continuation of support services and payments any time WV WORKS cash assistance is closed due to employment which meets the requirements outlined below. Services include case management; support service payments; continuation of and payment for activities such as, but not limited to, job search, job readiness, and skills training. Employed former WV WORKS participants must apply to receive continued support service payments, see Section 24.14.

Option 2 – This option is the West Virginia Employment Assistance Program (EAP). This program enables the employed former WV WORKS recipient to continue to receive the TANF payment he received prior to becoming employed by use of a 100% earned income disregard for the EAP period. The family must elect to receive the Employment Assistance payment instead of continued support service payments. Participation hours for this employment may be projected for up to 6 months by using either pay stubs or a written statement from the employer. If it is apparent that the hours may vary substantially, the EAP participant must provide a time sheet or pay stubs each month to verify the hours.

**EXAMPLE:** A WV WORKS client reports employment. The income reported is over the program limit so the WV WORKS benefit closes for March. The Worker contacts the client and explains the 2 employment support options and the client chooses the EAP. The Worker mails the DFA-WVW-15 to the client to obtain his signature but the client fails to return the completed form. In May the client comes in for a SNAP review **with the completed** form and returns it to the Worker. The client is not eligible for EAP benefits **since the form was not returned within 30 days from the date of closure in March.**

When the AG is closed due to imposition of the 3<sup>rd</sup> or subsequent sanction, no continued support service payments are issued. Because the participant was not employed at the time the benefits ended, he is not eligible for either employment option even if he later becomes employed during the continuation of services period. When there is no break in receipt of benefits, such as closures due to a late review or during a good cause period and the individual reports employment, he may still receive a continuation of services period.

**NOTE:** If he meets all eligibility requirements, an employed, non-recipient Work-Eligible Individual who was living with a child who was receiving assistance is also eligible to choose one of these employment support options. These services, support payments, and employment assistance are handled in the same manner as for former recipients who were included in the WV WORKS AG.

**NOTE:** An individual who was in a PL period as of January 1, 2008, may be eligible for PL payments through the end of their period if he becomes employed during that period.

#### A. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT OPTIONS

Individuals who meet all of the following requirements may choose a post employment option:

- Gross family income is 150% or less of the current FPL, excluding SSI income; and
- The family resides in West Virginia; and