PORTAGE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES

PRC PLAN
Prevention, Retention and Contingency

Effective 10/01/2016

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PURPOSE

The Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) program is designed to serve low-income families who may or may not currently be receiving Ohio Works First (OWF) cash assistance. OWF encourages family self-sufficiency through employment while it meets temporary needs through cash assistance. The common thread between these programs is *self-sufficiency*, which is defined as the ability to sustain and maintain one's family independently, without need for or reliance on governmental or community agencies.

The PRC program is a tool to encourage families to attain and retain employment, prevent dependency, and promote family stability within the context of community priorities and needs. PRC makes it possible to meet the needs of low-income families through supportive services and/or short-term cash-related payments so that they do not need OWF cash assistance. Specifically, the PRC program falls into three categories:

Prevention Services:
Designed to divert families from ongoing cash assistance by providing short term assistance when crises arise.

Retention Services:
Provided to assist an employed member of the family in maintaining employment by enhancing job skills, overcoming barriers, and providing short-term assistance or wage supplementation if necessary.

Contingency Services:
Provided to meet an emergent need which, if left unattended, threatens the safety, health or well-being of one or more family member.

In Portage County, this plan is a critical tool designed to provide nonrecurring, short-term, crisis-oriented assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own home or in the homes of relatives, to prevent dependency on governmental subsidies by promoting job preparation, work and self-sufficiency, and to alleviate a family crisis that could lead to the removal of a child(ren) from their home.

POLICY STATEMENT

The PRC program is designed to provide benefits and services to needy families and low-income working families who are in need of help with essential supports to move out of poverty and achieve self-sufficiency. This program provides the Portage County Department of Job and Family Services (PCDJFS) with the flexibility to encourage employment and promote self-sufficiency. The program utilizes federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds for those who have specific and immediate needs. These benefits and services are consistent with the excluded assistance items as found in 45 C.F.R. 260.31(b). While PRC in Portage County is not on-going OWF assistance, it is designed to include:

1. Services to families to allow an employed adult member to maintain employment and, thereby, achieve or continue self-sufficiency.

2. Employment-related services to OWF families that are at risk of reaching their thirty-six (36) month time limit.

3. Supportive services to enhance family functioning and promote self-sufficiency.

4. Supportive services to at-risk youth including, but not limited to, employment and training.

5. Services to families in crisis involved with child protective services that could affect the removal from or safe return of a child(ren) to the home.

6. Services to families, elderly, and disabled individuals in the event that the Governor declares a disaster or state of emergency and supplemental funding for disaster-related PRC assistance and services are available.

7. Services to families to meet an emergent need caused by circumstances beyond applicant control which, if not satisfied, threatens the safety, health, and/or well-being of one or more family members.

8. Services to families experiencing family violence.

9. Supportive services to promote non-custodial parent engagement and increase the capacity of non-custodial parents to provide emotional and financial support for their child(ren).

In Portage County, these services are provided through PRC preventative services: regular PRC assistance (including contingency services), PRC diversion, PRC supportive services, and PRC disaster assistance.

When appropriate, PCDJFS staff will provide applicants with referral information to access Medicaid, food stamps, child care assistance and other programs that could help them transition from welfare to work. The staff will also explain PRC eligibility factors, time constraints, and funds available for various supportive services.

Portage County will continuously provide fair and equitable treatment to families applying for PRC in accordance with the policies outlined in this document. Procedural guidelines detailing the application of these policies are available through PCDJFS. The scope of services outlined in Appendix A cannot be reduced, limited or restricted unless the Plan is amended.

EXPLORING COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Applicants must explore and utilize any program, benefit or support system available that may reduce or eliminate the emergent need within the local community prior to the authorization of PRC. The application may be denied if the needed service is available through another resource.

The "local community", as it relates to PRC, may include areas beyond Portage County's boundaries. A PRC assistance group is required to utilize all other resources prior to applying and utilizing any PRC program or service. Personnel determining eligibility for PRC should be aware of community resources that may be utilized to help meet the need. For PRC purposes, payment for Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)-eligible utilities will not be authorized while HEAP is available. In the

event that disconnection of service is imminent, a statement of approval/denial will be required from the HEAP administering agency prior to approval of utility expenses.

ASSISTANCE GROUP COMPOSITION

An assistance group is defined as a group of individuals treated as a unit for purposes of determining eligibility for the PRC program. In Portage County, an assistance group for PRC services includes all household members residing at the same address and must consist of at least:

- A minor child
  Per Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 5107.02(G), minor child means either of the following:
  (1) an individual who has not attained eighteen (18) years of age; or,
  (2) an individual who has not attained nineteen (19) years of age and is a full-time student in a secondary school or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training (G.E.D. classes do not qualify); **or,**
- An emancipated minor (needs to provide court verification); **or,**
- A pregnant individual with no other minor children who is medically verified to be pregnant; **or,**
- A parent with shared custody of the minor child(ren) who lives in the county and who sometimes lives in the same household with the minor child(ren); **or,**
- A non-custodial parent of a minor child who lives in Portage County but does not live in the same household as the minor child may be eligible for specific PRC services. Applicant must provide documentation of established child support responsibility and verification that applicant is in compliance with the current order.

While a minor child in the assistance group is a requirement for PRC services, a child that is temporarily absent from the home in accordance with the timeframes established in Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 5101:1-3-04 may be considered in the home for PRC eligibility purposes, if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The location of the absent child is known.
2. There is a definite plan set forth by Children Services for the return of the absent child to the home.
3. The absent child shared the home with the assistance group before the onset of the absence and receiving OWF (Ohio Works First) assistance prior to removal.
4. PRC benefits/services will assist with the return of the absent child(ren).
5. The child has been absent no longer than forty-five (45) consecutive days.

OAC 5101:1-3-04 also sets forth exceptions to the requirement that the assistance group member be absent for no longer than forty-five (45) days: When the temporary absence is due to the removal of a child by Children Services, a reunification plan to return the child to the home within six (6) months from the date of removal is required.

PRC RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for PRC services, assistance groups must reside in Portage County and meet the residency requirement as outlined in OAC 5101:1-3-03.

Section 5101:1-3-03 of the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC)

A. Residency Requirement

1. Residence in the state is a requirement for OWF. Residence is established by a person who

is living in Ohio voluntarily with the intention of making his/her home in Ohio. Residence may also be established by a person who is living in Ohio, is not receiving assistance from another state, and entered Ohio with a job commitment or seeking employment in Ohio, whether or not currently employed. A child is a resident of the state in which the parent, legal guardian, custodian or specified relative caring for the child is a resident.

2. Absence from the state for more than thirty (30) days constitutes evidence of intent to establish residence elsewhere, unless a written statement has been submitted to indicate intent to return to Ohio. The written statement must be retained in the case record. The County Department of Job and Family Services shall consider such written statement as acceptable proof of intent to return to Ohio. A statement is not considered acceptable proof of intent to return to Ohio when the applicant/recipient contradicts the statement by giving up Ohio living arrangements, applying for public assistance in another state, or securing long-term housing arrangements in another state.

Residency will be established by living in the county voluntarily with the intent to remain permanently or for an indefinite period of time. An applicant may also establish residency that is not receiving assistance in another state or county and who has entered the county with a job commitment, whether or not currently employed.

Individuals or families from areas affected by a national disaster as designated by the President of the United States must reside in Ohio voluntarily with the intention of making his/her home in Ohio. PCDJFS will presume intent to remain if the applicant is from an affected area and is uncertain whether they intend to remain (as stated in Family Stability Letter #36 for OWF residency).

ECONOMIC NEED

All household members must verify that for thirty (30) days prior to making application for the requested services, the actual total gross income was equal to or less than the Economic Need Standard established for each service/benefit. If all members of the PRC assistance group (AG) are the same as a currently active Public Assistance AG and if the Economic Need Standard for the Public Assistance program the AG is receiving is equal to or less than the Economic Need Standard for PRC, income verification may not be necessary. Verification that is obtained by telephone must be clearly documented in the record and include the name and position of the supplier of the verification, the date the verification was obtained and the verification details. For PRC contracted services, the contractor acting as the agent of PCDJFS may assess the eligibility of the applicant and provide services based on that judgment; however, PCDJFS will be the final authority regarding an applicant's PRC eligibility.

All income that has been received by the household during the thirty (30) day budget period is considered when determining financial need with the exception of the earned income of a minor child still in school. The thirty (30) day budget period begins with the date the PRC application is received by PCDJFS. The only allowable deduction from the countable income is legally obligated child support payments paid by a household member to or for a non-household member. This wage withholding must be verified (OAC 5101:1-24-20).

If the dollar amount owed on a specific requested PRC cash-related service exceeds either the individual cap for that service or the overall PRC maximum benefit available, the applicant will be responsible for paying any overages. Documentation that the applicant has paid, or made arrangements to pay their portion of requested service will be required before PRC payment will be processed.

For PRC Supportive Services, the receipt of federal means-tested benefits provides adequate verification that the assistance group has an economic need. Applicant must verify how this need will be met in future months.

TANF ASSISTANCE

In 1996 the Federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) authorized the TANF program in order to reduce the cyclical dependence on the welfare system. TANF encourages self-sufficiency for families through employment while meeting their basic needs through temporary cash assistance. Self-sufficiency is defined as being able to sustain and maintain one's family independently without need for, or reliance on, government or community agencies. Four (4) core goals/purposes comprise TANF:

1. Provide assistance to needy families so children may be cared for in their own home or in the homes of relatives.
2. End dependence of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.
3. Prevent and reduce out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies.
4. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

PRC services provided by PCDJFS are customized to fit the individual assistance group. Services must relate directly to the promotion and achievement of self-sufficiency in accordance with 45 CFR 260.31. See Appendix B for specific guidance.

PCDJFS will serve both OWF participants and other needy families as specified in this PRC Plan. PCDJFS will not provide medical services under this program except when pre-pregnancy family planning services are offered. Under no circumstances will an employee of the Portage County Department of Job and Family Services be an approved vendor.

PRC applicants discovered to have fraudulently received or improperly disposed of services and/or benefits will be required to reimburse Portage County Department of Job and Family Services for the full amount of the services and/or benefits and may be subject to prosecution. Applicants currently sanctioned for non-compliance with an OWF self-sufficiency contract are ineligible for PRC services with the exception of the PRC supportive services offered under child welfare, domestic violence situations or contracted services for noncustodial parents. Applicants currently having a client caused overpayment of any kind after October 1, 1997 are ineligible for PRC. Any adult or head of household having an overpayment will not be eligible for PRC benefits until an active repayment plan is in place. If agreed upon payments are not maintained any subsequent PRC payments may be denied.

IN THE EVENT THAT AN EMERGENCY/DISASTER THREATENS OR INCAPACITATES OPERATIONS AT PCDJFS, THE PRC PLAN WILL BE TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED.

PRC APPLICATION AND ELIGIBILITY

Applicants are required to complete an application and provide all necessary verification. Applicants must have a clearly defined need and demonstrate that receipt of the service will promote their goal of self-sufficiency. Eligibility is dependent on the family unit's verified need and the determination that PRC assistance will satisfy the need. Eligibility for PRC benefits or services is not automatic. Any subsequent PRC applications for regular PRC received within thirty (30) days of the initial application shall be marked as duplicate and filed in the PRC file.

Regular PRC services/benefits are available to an eligible applicant once in a 12-month period per service. Some services are only available once in 24-months, 36-months, or once in a lifetime based on the application date.

PRC Application and Eligibility Points of Interest:

1. In order for the PRC applicant to be found eligible, the gross income of the complete household must be at or below 200% of the current Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) which are updated and distributed by Ohio Department of Job and Family Services every February.

2. Properly submitted applications for PRC Program assistance shall be approved or denied within thirty (30) days after all necessary verifications are received by PCDJFS. Applications where the verifications are not received within thirty (30) days will be denied.

3. Social security numbers of each member of the household must be provided on the application. The applicant may be required to provide:
    - verification of household composition;
    - age of each individual;
    - driver's license or state ID for applicant; and,
    - school attendance (for children ages 18-19).

4. All income received by all household members during the past thirty (30) days will be considered and verified in determining eligibility. If all members of the PRC Assistance Group (AG) are the same as a currently active Public Assistance AG and if the Economic Need Standard for the Public Assistance program the AG is receiving is equal to or less than the Economic Need Standard for PRC, income verification may not be necessary.

5. Applicant family must make every effort to explore the availability of financial and/or services within the state of Ohio prior to approval of PRC program services.

6. PCDJFS provides all customers with the opportunity to register to vote. The voter registration application as prescribed by the Secretary of State under ORC 3503.10 will be made available to persons who are applying for, receiving assistance from, or participating in the PRC program. Applicant will mark the appropriate checkbox. If applicant does not check either box, he/she will be considered to have decided not to register to vote at that time. Applying to register or declining to register to vote will not affect the amount of assistance that applicant will be provided by the agency.

7. PRC services must be used within ninety (90) days of the date the PRC application is approved. If the applicant still is in need of the service and wants assistance from the PRC program after ninety (90) days, a new application must be filed.

8. Payment for all PRC services will be made directly to providers, not the applicant. Payment for PRC services received prior to application approval will not be reimbursed.

Applicants for PRC are responsible for completing all necessary documents, furnishing all available forms and information, and cooperating in the eligibility determination process. Applicants must utilize all available income and resources in meeting the presenting need. Applicants are eligible if they meet all eligibility requirements on the date of application.

The application can be denied for failure to meet the eligibility requirements, failure to cooperate, quit a job within the past sixty (60) days, failure to demonstrate employment or participation in a work-related activity, failure to provide information needed to determine eligibility within thirty (30) days of the application filing date or serving a current sanction. Final approval of the PRC request is based on established guidelines as included in the PRC plan, and availability of PRC funds. The applicant's signature on the PRC application will serve to authorize the exchange of information between PCDJFS and the designated provider.

A PRC applicant who disagrees with a determination made on their case may request a state hearing by way of the state hearing request process outlined in the Explanation of State Hearing Procedures form (JFS 04059). A copy of this document is provided as an attachment to each PRC application.

INELIGIBILITY

The following individuals are automatically ineligible for PRC assistance under the Portage County PRC Plan:

1. Fugitive felons and probation and/or parole violators.

2. An individual who is not a U.S. citizen or a qualified alien.

3. Individuals with any outstanding client caused overpayment balance after October 1, 1997 until the member of the assistance group repays the cost of the claim.

4. Individuals ineligible for other programs due to deliberate noncompliance with the terms of their assistance including sanctions and job quits.

5. A parent under age eighteen (18) not attending high school or equivalent, if they have not graduated from high school.

6. An unmarried parent under age eighteen (18) not living in an adult supervised setting unless emancipated.

7. An individual who fraudulently misrepresents residency in order to obtain assistance in two or more states. Applicant is ineligible for ten (10) years from the date of conviction.

8. Individuals who do not use their own resources to help meet their needs.

9. Individuals giving false or incorrect information.

10. Individuals who are not residents of Portage County.

PRC SCOPE OF SERVICES PROVIDED

The attached tables contain the scope of services provided under the PRC Program in Portage County (see Appendix A). The tables also contain the assistance groups served, the economic need standards, caps placed on the services, and the targeted groups. The identification of the targeted groups is essential in customizing service delivery specific to the family's circumstances.

Portage County Department of Job and Family Services reserve the right to amend this Plan as needed. Portage County Department of Job and Family Services agree to implement the PRC Program as described above, amended August 30, 2016 and effective October 1, 2016.

Kellijo Jeffries, Director
Portage County Department of Job & Family Services

9-12-16
Date

David B. Shea, Chairperson
Community Planning Committee

9/8/16
Date

APPENDIX A: Federal Definition of Assistance

Section 260.31 of the Federal Regulations defines "assistance" as follows:

(a) (1) The term "assistance" includes cash, payments, vouchers, and other forms of benefits designed to meet a family's ongoing basic needs (i.e., for food, clothing, shelter, utilities, household goods, personal care items, and general incidental expenses).
(2) It includes such benefits even when they are:
(i) Provided in the form of payments by a TANF agency, or other agency on its behalf, to individual recipients; and
(ii) Conditioned on participation in work experience or community service (or any other work activity under § 261.30 of this chapter).
(3) Except where excluded under paragraph (b) of this section, it also includes supportive services such as transportation and child care provided to families who are not employed.

(b) It excludes:
(1) Nonrecurring, short-term benefits that:
(i) Are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need;
(ii) Are not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs; and
(iii) Will not extend beyond four months.
(2) Work subsidies (i.e., payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employee wages, benefits, supervision, and training);
(3) Supportive services such as child care and transportation provided to families who are employed;
(4) Refundable earned income tax credits;
(5) Contributions to, and distributions from, Individual Development Accounts;
(6) Services such as counseling, case management, peer support, child care information and referral, transitional services, job retention, job advancement, and other employment-related services that do not provide basic income support; and
(7) Transportation benefits provided under a Job Access or Reverse Commute project, pursuant to section 404(k) of the Act, to an individual who is not otherwise receiving assistance.

(c) The definition of the term assistance specified in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section:
(1) Does not apply to the use of the term assistance at part 263, subpart A, or at part 264, subpart B, of this chapter; and
(2) Does not preclude a State from providing other types of benefits and services in support of the TANF goal at § 260.02(a).

APPENDIX B: PRC Services and Benefits

The client is responsible for paying all amounts in excess of the maximum payments listed herein. **All services are limited to 200% of FPG.**

Employment-Related Expenses

- Limited to five hundred dollars ($500) for job-support tools/equipment or supplies.
- Limited to five hundred dollars ($500) for licenses required to obtain or maintain employment in a field.
- Limited to five (5) uniforms not to exceed five hundred dollars ($500) for job-specific uniforms.

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application.
- Must have documented job offer or provide proof of current employment.
- Copy of dress code or statement from employer, or prospective employer, as to required uniforms and tools/equipment.
- Must submit an invoice or other document from store provider listing each item separately and price for each item.
- Any other supportive evidence (e.g. diploma, certificate from vocational school, etc.).

Duration: Eligible for services once in a twelve (12) month period. The twelve (12) month period begins on the date of application.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #2

Education Proficiency

- Limited to youth, ages 14 - 19, in need of extra schooling/tutoring in order to graduate, advance to the next grade, or pass the Proficiency test.
- Limited to actual cost of schooling not to exceed five hundred dollars ($500).

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application.
- Must provide verification that enrolled program(s) is required to advance youth to next grade level or graduation (e.g., statement from guidance counselor).
- Must submit enrollment confirmation.

Duration: Eligible for services once in a twelve (12) month period per child. The twelve (12) month period begins on the date of application.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #2

Adult Education

- Limited to adults that are in need of education or training to become self-sufficient.
- Limited to up to four (4) months of actual cost not to exceed one thousand dollars ($1,000).
- Service will include Adult Basic Education, GED Testing, Occupational Training and/or Short-Term Education Programs

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application.
- Education and/or training must be a part of applicant's Self-Sufficiency Plan OR applicant must participate in the Soft Skills courses at the Portage Workforce Connection.

Duration: Eligible for services once in a lifetime per individual.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #2

Utility Assistance

- With the exception of water, applicants must apply for HEAP assistance during the HEAP heating season and PRC funds will be utilized only during non-HEAP months.
- The agency will pay either the minimum amount necessary to restore service to regulated utilities, or the total amount owed to bring the utility current. This may include fees that are required if service has been shut off at the same address.
- Limited to six hundred dollars ($600), not including administrative fees.
- Limited to electric, natural gas, bulk fuels (fuel oil, propane, wood, coal and wood pellets) and water.

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application.
- Furnish original utility bill in the name of the applicant, spouse, or parent of child in the PRC assistance group.
- If utility is in the landlord's name, verification that the utility is the applicant's responsibility is required. Furnish utility bill from landlord documenting applicant's portion.
- Requested service must have a disconnection notice, or be at least thirty (30) days past due.
- Verification of attempts to pay has been made either through repayment agreement or partial payments.
- Applicant must be referred to budget counseling services.

Requirements for Gas and Electric:

- During the duration of the program, all customers of regulated utilities will be forwarded for enrollment in the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP Plus) or another utility sponsored payment plan. Maximum payments will be based on the minimum amount required to prevent disconnection or to restore services and maintain PIPP Plus program enrollment and could include PIPP Plus default amounts and/or PIPP Plus monthly payment requirements.

Duration: Eligible for services twice in a twenty-four (24) month period, not to exceed a combined total of six hundred dollars ($600). The twenty-four (24) month period begins on the date the application is received by PCDJFS.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1

Home Repairs

- Limited to three thousand two hundred dollars ($3,200), not including administrative fees, in emergency repairs that directly affect the health and safety of the family and are limited to electric, plumbing, septic, heat and accessibility problems.

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application.
- Furnish deed/land contract, or other proof of home ownership in the name of the applicant, spouse, or parent of child in the PRC assistance group.
- Address must be applicant's current place of residence.
- Repair need must be identified and verified by an approved contractor, selected by PCDJFS authorized vendor, as necessary for the health and safety of the family.
- Homeowners insurance should be primary coverage for Home Repairs.
- Provide proof that homeowners insurance will not cover repairs or is a required stipulation to obtain homeowners insurance.

Duration: Eligible for services once in the applicant's lifetime.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1

Child(ren) Cribs (Includes Mattress)

- Crib per child not to exceed three hundred dollars ($300).

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application.
- Must submit an invoice or other document from store provider listing each item separately and price for each item.
- Verification of urgency.
- If a pregnant woman is applying for her unborn child, she must be in the last trimester of her pregnancy.

Duration: Eligible for one per child under the age of two (2) years unless verification of disability is provided.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1

Legal Services

- Limited to families in need of the legal services in the PRC plan.
- Limited to twelve (12) months of actual cost not to exceed three thousand dollars ($3,000)

Services are for:

- Driver's License Suspension removal
- Criminal Record Expungement/Certificate of Qualifications of Employment
- Bankruptcy Filing
- Consumer Debt
- Help to obtain guardianship or custody for Kinship Care only
- Loss of housing issues (Foreclosures & Evictions)
- Public Benefits (SSI, SSDI & Unemployment)

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application.

Duration: The application is valid up to twelve (12) months from the application date. The twelve (12) month period begins on the date of application at Community Legal Aid Services.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1 and #4

Relocation Benefits

- Limited to applicants who are victims of domestic violence or have an emergent need caused by circumstances beyond applicant's control which, if not satisfied, threatens the safety or health of one or more family members. Eviction is not considered an immediate threat.
- Limited to one thousand five hundred dollars ($1,500) once in a lifetime per family.

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application.
- Verification of a protection order in place or some other means of verification.
- Verification of health threat should be documented by qualified health inspector.
- Verification of appropriate residence for relocation

Duration: Eligible for services once in a lifetime.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1 and #2

Domestic Violence Services

- Limited to eligible assistance groups of domestic violence.

- Limited up to two thousand dollars ($2,000) per family for case management and twelve thousand dollars ($12,000) per family for shelter services.

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application; **or**,
- Referral from PCDJFS case manager within the Self-Sufficiency Plan that PRC assistance is needed for, or to maintain, reunification; **and/or**,
- Status of reunification plan and/or statement from Children Services worker; **and/or**,
- Statement/referral from Domestic Relations Court or Family Counselor.

Duration: Eligible for services as needed on a daily basis for each family member not to exceed four (4) months in a twelve (12) month period. The twelve (12) month period begins on the date the application is received by PCDJFS.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1 and #2

Housing Assistance

- Limited to services for homeless families who are in need of housing, outreach, advocacy, case management, child advocacy, housing placement assistance, employment readiness training, skill development and service coordination assistance.
- Limited up to twelve thousand dollars ($12,000) for shelter services per family.
- Homeless families who are eligible will be placed at the shelter. In the event the homeless shelter is full at time of application, families may be provided an additional ten (10) nights in a local motel/hotel not to exceed a total of five hundred fifty dollars ($550).
- Families who are eligible can receive rent or mortgage assistance. Assistance is limited to actual cost of two (2) month's rent or mortgage not to exceed a total of one thousand five hundred dollars ($1,500), excluding case management.

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application.
- HESS (Housing and Emergency Support Services) must identify as homeless and in need of services for emergency shelter, shelter services, and/or rent assistance.
    - For past due rent/mortgage assistance, requested payment must be at least thirty (30) days past due and must provide proof that current month cannot be paid.
    - Rent assistance can also be provided for homeless or imminently homeless households needing first month's rent to establish permanent housing. Rent assistance is not to be utilized for security deposits.
    - Verification of how needs will be met in future months. **Note:** If the landlord of the PRC applicant is a relative (i.e., parent, sibling, uncle, aunt, grandparent), the applicant must provide verification of a rental agreement or history of rent payment before consideration can be determined under the shelter provisions of this PRC Plan.
    - Applicant must be referred to budget counseling services.

Duration: Eligible for homeless and emergency shelter services on a daily basis for each family member not to exceed sixty (60) days in a twelve (12) month period. Even if applicant is receiving multiple services, services cannot exceed sixty (60) days. Eligible for rent/mortgage assistance once in a twenty-four (24) month period. The twelve (12) month or twenty-four (24) month period begins on the date the application is received by PCDJFS.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1 and #2

Child Safety Kits

- Limited to PRC eligible families with children under the age of two (2) unless verification of disability is provided.
- Households with women in their third trimester of pregnancy may qualify as well.
- Limited to essential items to keep children safe in homes.
- Limited to total cost not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars ($250), not including administrative fees, per family.

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application.
- **If homeless, the applicant cannot be staying in a homeless shelter**

Duration: Eligible for services once in a thirty-six (36) month period.
TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1

Government Directed Disaster Assistance

- Limited to families sustaining loss as a result of state-declared natural disasters.
- Limited up to one thousand five hundred dollars ($1,500) or as limited by the state.
- Limited to Shelter Assistance, Home Repairs, and Replacement of essential Household Contents (entertainment items excluded).

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application or designated Disaster application.
- Homeowners or renters insurance should be primary coverage for Shelter Assistance, Home Repairs, and/or Replacement of Household Contents.
- Provide proof that homeowners or renters insurance will not cover cost of Shelter Assistance, Home Repairs, or Replacement of essential Household Contents (entertainment items excluded).
- Submit copy of report/referral from local American Red Cross Chapter, FEMA, or local EMA.

Duration: Eligible for services as needed.
TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1 and #2

Family Disaster Assistance

- Limited to families sustaining disaster.
- Limited up to one thousand five hundred dollars ($1,500) or as limited by the state.
- Limited to Shelter Assistance, Home Repairs, and Replacement of essential Household Contents (entertainment items excluded).

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application or designated Disaster application.
- Homeowners or renters insurance should be primary coverage for Shelter Assistance, Home Repairs, and/or Replacement of Household Contents.
- Provide proof that homeowners or renters insurance will not cover cost of Shelter Assistance, Home Repairs, or Replacement of essential Household Contents (entertainment items excluded).
- Submit copy of Police/Fire Chief report indicating fire, flood, etc.; **or,**
- Submit copy of report/referral from local American Red Cross Chapter, FEMA, or local EMA; **or,**
- Submit copy of report from utility company indicating fire, explosion, etc.

Duration: Eligible for services as needed.
TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1 and #2

Emergency Clothing

- Limited to urgently needed clothing for children not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars ($250) per child.
- **Must be referred to the Clothing Center prior to approval of this service.**

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application.
- Must submit an invoice, receipt or other document from store provider listing each item separately and price for each item. Each invoice/receipt should be itemized per child.
- Verification of urgency.
- Must be due to a natural or residential disaster, reunification with parents or victims of domestic violence.

Duration: Eligible for services once in a twelve (12) month period. The twelve (12) month period begins on the date of application.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1

Academic Support Services

- Limited to any tools, equipment and materials (including but not limited to uniforms) that are necessary for workforce-readiness training within a career-technical education program for school age children in grades 9 through 12.
- Limited to five hundred dollars ($500) per academic year.

Requirements:

- Completed PRC application.
- Letter from the school verifying that the student has fees incurred and amount of fees.

Duration: Eligible for services as needed.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1 and #2

Transportation Services

- Limited to three (3) months of service.
- Bus Tokens/Passes for employment-related services in each month for a maximum of three (3) months.
- Household limited up to a two hundred dollar ($200) value per month in Gas Cards for employment-related services for a maximum of three (3) consecutive months from date of PRC approval.

Requirements:

- Completed PRC Application.
- Verification of current employment or offer letter with start date.

Additional information needed if applying for Gas Card:

- Present valid Ohio State driver's license.
- Provide proof of current auto insurance coverage in the name of the applicant, spouse, parent of child in the PRC assistance group, or assistance group member responsible for providing transportation.
- Provide registration or title in the name of the applicant, spouse, parent of child in the PRC assistance group, or assistance group member responsible for providing transportation.
- Employment required at a minimum of thirty (30) hours weekly at minimum wage.

Duration: Eligible for services twice in a twelve (12) month period. The twelve (12) month period begins on the date of application.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #2

Child Welfare

- In-Home Based Services or respite services as determined necessary by Portage County Children Services worker.
- Other services that may be essential to the PRC AG to secure or maintain employment, ensure the health and safety of children, prevent the removal of children from the household, maintain a permanent placement (i.e., kinship) or for the reunification of children with their family or relative as authorized by the Portage County JFS Director or her designee.

Requirements:

- Completed PRC Application or a Common Application Form.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1

Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) Supportive Services

- CSEA case management services designed to support individuals and track, monitor and report outcomes. Employment and training support activities designed to obtain or retain employment or improve employment activities.
- Non-custodial parent who is responsible for a minor child. Non-custodial parent must be an Ohio resident.
- Non-custodial parent with a minor child in the Child Support Enforcement system who has an open, active child support case with an active or pending court or administrative ordered child support obligation. Individual is an unemployed or underemployed Ohio resident.
- Services may include individual and/or group sessions, monthly meetings, support groups, referral, case management, visitation mediation, and legal services related to employment barriers (i.e., fine reductions, expungement).

Requirements:

For the purposes of Child Support Enforcement Agency Supportive Services only, the following eligibility criteria must be met:

- Completed CSEA Supportive Services Application.
- The assistance group composition shall consist of the applicant only (must be responsible for but it is not a requirement that the child reside in the home).
- Referral from the Portage County Child Support Enforcement Agency.
- Individuals with any outstanding client caused overpayment balance after October 1, 1997 will **not** be ineligible.
- Individuals noncompliant with the terms of their assistance including sanctions and job quits will **not** be ineligible.

Duration: The application is valid up to six (6) months from the application date.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #2 and #4

TANF Summer Youth Employment Program

- Effective during the period May 1st – August 31st.
- Limited to Portage County youth, ages 16–24, in families already receiving TANF cash assistance (service priority) or in any TANF-eligible family, who are seeking employment or job skills.
- TANF funds for this program may be used for subsidized wages plus transportation and other supportive services.
    - Youth will be paid from minimum wage up to ten dollars ($10) per hour as determined by each approved work site, at no more than forty (40) hours per week. Performance bonuses or lump sum payments are not allowed.

- Transportation for employed youth for the purpose of attending work or training shall not exceed five hundred dollars ($500) per youth, not including administrative fees.
- Other supportive services for employed youth (education, training, counseling or other employment related services) shall not exceed a total of five hundred dollars ($500) per youth, not including administrative fees.

Requirements:

- The types of persons that may be served include:
  - Youth ages 16–17, as long as the youth is a minor child in a needy family and is in school (youth may be 18 if they are a full-time student in a secondary school);
  - Youth ages 18–24, as long as they are in a needy family that also has a minor child;
  - Youth ages 18–24 that have a minor child and are considered needy;
  - Youth served may be non-custodial parents as long as they are considered "needy" and have a minor child. "Needy" is not specifically defined by the state or federal regulation but may be no greater than income at 200% of the federal poverty level.
  - Youth must be 16–24.
  - Foster Care: Youth in a foster care setting ages 16-17 or 18 years of age if they are a full-time student in a secondary school shall be considered an assistance group of one (1) for this PRC program only.
  - Youth must create an Ohio Means Jobs Account on line.
- Completed TANF Summer Youth Employment Program Application.
- The application period begins on the date PCDJFS receives the application.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1 and #2

Ohio Works Incentive Program (OWIP)

- Effective while program is endorsed by the State of Ohio or until funds are exhausted.
- OWIP is designed to further assist OWF recipients in achieving and maintaining unsubsidized employment. The program allows for placement incentives and retention payments to be earned while placed in an On-the-Job Training (OJT) program or unsubsidized employment.
- The goal of this program is to reduce dependency on the OWF program while strengthening Ohio's workforce.
- Limited to OWF recipients who reduce or eliminate their OWF assistance due to gaining or increasing employment as outlined in the PCDJFS OWIP Policy (available upon request).
- Individuals eligible to receive OWIP payments will be identified by their OWF case manager and referred to PRC to receive payment.
- Although PCDJFS can bill for all placements, the client will only receive incentive payments for up to four (4) placements in a twelve (12) month period

Requirements:

For the purposes of OWIP only, the following eligibility criteria must be met:

- Completed PRC OWIP Application.
- Referral for payment must be made by their OWF case manager.
- Individuals not completing a vendor form will be deemed ineligible for payment.
- Individuals noncompliant with the terms of their assistance including sanctions and job quits will not be eligible.
- If the state denies placement/incentive payments for any reason, no further payments will be issued.
- Must meet eligibility as outlined in the PCDJFS OWIP Policy for Track A and B payments.

Duration: The application is valid up to twelve (12) months from the application date. The application period begins on the date PCDJFS receives the application.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #2

Kinship Permanency Incentive (KPI) Program

The KPI program is designed to promote a permanent commitment by a kinship caregiver(s) through becoming guardians and custodians over minor children who would otherwise be unsafe or at risk of harm if they remained in their own homes. KPI provides time-limited incentive payments to families caring for their kin. See Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-40-04 and Family, Children and Adult Services Manual Transmittal Letter No. 343 for more details.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1

Back-to-School Program

- Effective during the period August 1st – September 30th.
- Limited to Portage County families with youth age kindergarten through 12th grade who are verified to be enrolled in the upcoming school year.
- Foster Care/Kinship: Youth in foster care or kinship settings who are age kindergarten through 12th grade and verified to be enrolled in the upcoming school year shall be considered an assistance group of one (1) for this PRC program only.
- The purpose is to provide households with school clothes and shoes for the current school year in the form of a merchandise voucher for purchases at PCDJFS designated vendors only.
- Limited to a voucher of up to one hundred dollars ($100) for eligible children on Ohio Works First (OWF) or a voucher of up to seventy-five dollars ($75) for eligible children on Food Assistance (FA). If the entire authorized limit is not spent, client does not receive the difference. Lost or stolen vouchers cannot be replaced.
- PCDJFS reserves the right to offer the Back-to-School Program to youth/families even if they may be noncompliant with the terms of their assistance including sanctions and job quits and have outstanding client caused overpayment balances after October 1, 1997 for this PRC program only.

Requirements:

- Completed PRC Application.

Duration: Eligible for services once per school year, per eligible child.

TANF Goal(s) Addressed: Purpose #1

APPENDIX C: FORMS

JFS 04059 Explanation of State Hearing Procedures
JFS 07200 Request for Cash, Food and Medical Assistance Application
PRC Application (also used for disaster assistance)
PRC CSEA Supportive Services Application
PRC OWIP Application
TANF Summer Youth Employment Program Application
Application for Kinship Permanency Incentive

RESOLUTION NO. 16-0720

RE: APPROVE THE REVISED PREVENTION, RETENTION AND CONTINGENCY PLAN, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2016 FOR THE PORTAGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES.

It was moved by Kathleen Chandler, seconded by Vicki A. Kline that the following resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, Chapter 5108 of the Ohio Revised Code and rules issued under the chapter require that the Department of Job & Family Services to adopt a written statement of policies governing the prevention, retention, and contingency (PRC) program for Portage County; and

WHEREAS, there have been twenty-four (24) revisions since the inception of the PRC Plan with the last revision approved by Resolution 16-0651 with an effective date of August 1, 2016; and

WHEREAS, the Director of the Portage County Department of Job & Family Services presented the Board of Commissioners with the revised Prevention, Retention and Contingency Plan (see backup – Exhibit A) for the Portage County Department of Job & Family Services, Division of Family Employment & Support Services, advising the Board of Commissioners that the PRC Plan was revised in accordance with Chapter 5108 of the Ohio Revised and reviewed by the County Community Planning Committee; and

WHEREAS, the Portage County Prosecutor's Office reviewed the revised PRC Plan and advised that the proposed changes are consistent with the requirements of the applicable statutes and related regulations; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Portage County Commissioners does hereby certify that the Portage County Department of Job & Family Services complied with Chapter 5108 of the Ohio Revised Code in adopting the statement of policies and agrees to adopt this revised Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) Plan in its entirety, as presented by the Director of the Portage County Department of Job and Family Services, effective October 1, 2016; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board, and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in meeting open to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll call vote as follows:

Maureen T. Frederick, Absent; Vicki A. Kline, Yea; Kathleen Chandler, Yea;

I, Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a resolution of the Board of County Commissioners of Portage County duly adopted August 30, 2016 and appearing upon the official records of said Board, Volume 86, Page ____.

Clerk, Portage County Board of Commissioners