

August 1, 2003

TO: CDJFS Directors
One-Stop Operators
Local Workforce Policy Board Chairs
County Commissioners

FROM: Jeanne Carroll, Deputy Director, Office of Family Stability 
Bruce Madson, Deputy Director, Office of Workforce Development 

SUBJECT: Clarification on TANF Funding in the Workforce Development System

As counties consider the reconfiguration of local workforce investment areas, the designation of regional one-stop systems and the potential re-alignment of a county as a Conventional WIA Area or as part of the Ohio Option Area, some questions, as well as confusion, have arisen regarding the role of TANF funding. This clarification attempts to answer those questions.

Question 1: If a county changes from Ohio Option status to Conventional WIA status, does that alter an area's access to TANF funding?

Answer: No, TANF funding is allocated to the CDJFS as a part of the county's Consolidated Allocation regardless of whether the area is designated as Conventional WIA or Ohio Option. If TANF funding is currently being used for workforce development for TANF eligibles in coordination with WIA funds in a given Ohio Option area or if TANF is funding work and training activities in coordination with a Workforce Policy Board, there is nothing to prohibit that same level of TANF participation were the area to become a Conventional WIA area. Local TANF participation requires the concurrence of and coordination with the CDJFS. The local TANF authority (i.e., CDJFS) is a mandatory partner in the Workforce Development System. **Note:** There are no additional TANF funds or incentives set aside for WIA at the state level for One Stops.

Question 2: If a county earned TANF-WIA Supplement funds as an Ohio Option county, are those funds lost if the county becomes a Conventional WIA county?

Answer: No, the incentive funds (i.e., TANF-WIA Supplement) earned by a county from partnering up and joining the Ohio Option belong to the county that earned them, even if the county now decides to become a Conventional WIA county. Whatever incentives a county has earned remain with the county regardless of workforce designation.

Question 3: If entities such as Community Action Agencies and Regional Councils of Government become WIA/One Stop operators instead of using the CDJFS', will this prevent the leveraging and use of TANF funds?

Answer: No, unless these entities are not working together with the CDJFS in coordinating the use of TANF funds. The CDJFS can have a TANF contract with the One-Stop or with the WIA provider that allows the leveraging of TANF funds. Again, the critical factor is local coordination with the CDJFS as the TANF funding authority. The current TANF funding structure provides allocations to counties within the County Consolidated Allocation. This makes the funding that counties receive more flexible and gives counties discretion in how to spend the TANF funds. As long as TANF funds are used for TANF eligible populations for work and training purposes, then expenditures are allowable and can be used in the workforce development system. Counties may choose when, where and how they spend the TANF funding they receive based on community needs.

Question 4: Is it required that the CDJFS director be the One Stop operator or the CDJFS be the One Stop location in order to use TANF funds in the One Stop?

Answer: No, as stated above, the CDJFS, as the local TANF authority, is a mandatory partner in the local workforce development system but that, in no way, requires the CDJFS to be the One Stop operator or the One Stop location. The access to local TANF funds is not contingent upon CDJFS designation as the One Stop. Coordination and collaboration with the CDJFS is essential in deciding how TANF funds will be used, based on local needs and local discretion. Again, Ohio law mandates that TANF be a partner, but it does not mandate that the CDJFS be the One Stop operator or that it be the One Stop location.

Question 5: Are there specific requirements on the use of TANF Funds?

Answer: Yes, TANF funds may be used for work and training purposes as long as the services are provided to TANF eligible families and meet one of the four federal purposes of TANF. Counties must also assure that the TANF funded work and training programs offered are specifically identified in the county's PRC plan and that eligibility requirements are also stipulated in the plan. Estimated TANF program expenditures and numbers of individuals served must also be reported in the TANF Web Reporting Tool (WRT). It should be noted that TANF funding to counties was reduced by about \$50 million in SFY 04 as compared to SFY 03 so counties must be more vigilant in funding those services that demonstrate the greatest return on investment.

If you have further questions regarding the use of TANF funds in the workforce development system, please contact Stan Sells at 614-752-6213.

**Cc: OJFSDA
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