



LARIMER COUNTY WORKS POLICY

Title:	60 Month Clock County Defined Activities		
Effective Date:	11-13-00	Page: 1 of	5
Desk:	EC and FAP	Revision:	
Reference:	LCWC P&P 02-133	BCC Approval on:	11-13-00
Agency Letters:			
Regulations:			

Background:

The Federal Government stated in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) that the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits will not exceed a total of 60 cumulative months. PRWORA allows each state to determine reasonable hardship exemptions. The federal law limits the number of participants that each state may exempt in a fiscal year. These exemptions shall not exceed 20 percent of the average monthly number of families, within the state of Colorado, to which assistance is provided under the state program.

Colorado state law allows the state to exercise the option of exempting 20 percent of the statewide caseload from the 60-Month life time limit for TANF benefits. Colorado state law indicates, in Colorado Department of Human Services Staff Manual Volume III, Section 3.619, that:

“An assistance unit containing an individual who has received assistance in Colorado or another state as an adult for sixty (60) or more cumulative months shall not be eligible for assistance unless granted an exemption by the state.

Up to twenty percent (20%) of the statewide caseload may be exempt from the time limit for good cause. Good cause reasons for exemptions from the sixty- (60) month time limit include, but are not limited to:

- A. Disability of the adult or the child(ren); or
- B. Child(ren) living with a non-parent(s) for whom out-of-home placement would be necessary if assistance ended; or
- C. Families experiencing Domestic Violence issues.

Good Cause exemptions will be granted by the State Department on a case specific basis, but will not be effective in advance of the need for exemption.”

Participants with an exemption must qualify and remain eligible for Larimer County Works (cash assistance) according to the eligibility requirements.

1.0 Policy:

It shall be the policy of Larimer County:

- To exercise the option of using all available exemptions, up to 20 percent of the state-wide caseload, from the 60-month life time limit for TANF benefits. It is understood that the state may choose to hold, at the state level, a percentage of exemptions. The State Department of Human Services may elect to allocate the remaining exemptions to counties in need. Larimer County, until otherwise directed, will establish a procedure for processing, reviewing and approving (or denying) up to a minimum of 18 percent of Larimer County's monthly cash assistance caseload.
- To apply the Family Violence Option to families experiencing current domestic violence related issues. These domestic violence issues are defined as those perpetrated by an intimate partner. The Family Violence Option allows counties to approve exemptions for these families and not count these exemptions as part of the 20% of state allowable exemptions for a period of up to 6 months.
- To focus on skill development, work activity participation, job preparation, employment, and job retention. Larimer County is a participation-first county that will refer participants not able to obtain employment to other resources in order to assist with establishing a financially stable means of support.
- To work intensively with all Works participants prior to reaching their 60-month cash assistance time limit. This will ensure that as many participants as possible reach the legislation's goals of enhanced self-sufficiency through employment, job preparation, or marriage.
- To determine, through a committee structure, a procedure for reviewing, processing, and approving (or denying) requests for an exemption to the 60-month time limit. This Exemption Committee may grant exemptions for a period of up to three months at a time. All exemptions will be monitored monthly by the committee and/or the committee's designee. Exceptions to this three-month rule will be determined by the committee, which is charged with managing the requests for exemptions. Participants who receive an exemption may re-apply for an additional exemption but will be required to compete with all other exemption requests at each three-month interval.

- The categories for exemption include, but are not limited to, the following:
(Note: Meeting one or several of the categories does not constitute an automatic exemption.)
 - ♦ Domestic Violence: Experiencing current issues and participating in a domestic violence program or other appropriate treatment services
 - ♦ Mental Health: As determined by appropriate professional for self, spouse or child
 - ♦ Physical Health: As determined by appropriate professional for self, spouse or child
 - ♦ Child(ren): Living with a non-parent(s) for whom out-of-home placement would be necessary if assistance ended
 - ♦ Transportation: Lives in remote location where transportation is unavailable, and/or the participant is unable to move, and/or the distance from employment opportunities is prohibitive, and/or other reasonable solutions to addressing the transportation issue(s) are not readily or financially available
 - ♦ Education: Skills below functional literacy or nearing completion of school or training program
 - ♦ Child Care: Child not in school and/or no childcare available
 - ♦ Legal Issues: Extreme court related issues or mandates for adult or child that would prohibit participation and/or the legal issues seriously impede the obtainment or retainment of employment
 - ♦ Housing: Homeless - not living with family or others, living on the street, in car, in a shelter, or safe house
 - ♦ Unemployed and/or Underemployed: The availability of appropriate employment opportunities is not available to the participant due to a depressed economy, oversupply of workers in the participant's job cluster, or other economic circumstances that cause the participant to be unlikely to obtain employment
 - ♦ Substance Abuse: Admission of a problem and actively working on a recovery plan determined, supported, and monitored by a professional
 - ♦ Other: Economic need, family circumstances, household composition, ability to manage the on-going issue(s), amount of time needed for enhanced self-sufficiency, motivational level, previous commitment and follow-through of Individual Responsibility Contracts (IRC's), availability of other resources, and/or other related considerations as determined by the Exemption Committee

- To require each exempted participant to adhere to the terms of an Exemption Individual Responsibility Contract (IRC) and to return Monthly Status Reports (MSR) and Monthly Contact Sheets (MCS) within the established timeframes. A Larimer County Works staff member will monitor an exempted participant's status.

- To close the cash assistance case within the next possible adverse action time frame if the participant is in non-compliance with the terms of the Exemption IRC. The Larimer County Works Supervisor, or other designee, may determine if there is “good cause” resulting in the non-compliance of an Exemption IRC. If it is determined that there is not “good cause”, then the exemption will be revoked and the available slot withdrawn. There will be no intervention or sanction process.

Participants who lose their slot, due to non-compliance, can reapply for a future slot. Their failure to comply would be a factor in determining the exemption.

2.0 Scope:

- Applies to TANF participants and Larimer County’s 60-month time limit clock requirements.

3.0 Departments Affected:

- Larimer County Workforce Center (LCWC): Skills Assessment and Fiscal Teams.
- Larimer County Department of Human Services.

4.0 References:

- The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PL 104-193), enacted August 22, 1996.
- Colorado Revised Statutes:
 - ♦ CRS 26-2-716 County duties - appropriations - penalties – incentives
 - ♦ CRS 26-2-706 Restrictions on length of participation
- Colorado Department of Human Services Staff Manual Volume III, Section 3.619
- LCWC Policies:
 - ♦ P & P 02-129 24-Month Clock/County Defined Activities Policy
 - ♦ P & P 02-106 Countable Community Service Activities
 - ♦ P & P 02-133 Skill Development Policy
 - ♦ P & P 02-134 Participant Transition / Case Closure Policy

5.0 Applicable Forms:

- State report number ECJTECA-203 (Current Clock Tick Register).
- Individual Responsibility Contract (IRC)
- Monthly Status Report (MSR)
- Monthly Contact Sheet (MCS)
- Notice of Action (SMR-3)
- Exemption Request and Verification Form (to be developed)
- Good Cause Exemption Form (to be developed)
- Priority Rating of Exemptions Form (to be developed)