



LARIMER COUNTY WORKS POLICY

Title:	Job Readiness		
Effective Date:	7/1/98	Page: 1 of	4
Desk:		Revision:	1
Reference:	LCWC P & P 02-119	BCC Approval on:	12/15/98
Agency Letters:			
Regulations:	3.619 & 3.620		

BACKGROUND:

Colorado Works applicants and participants are required to be engaged in a work activity once they have been determined to be job ready or once the parent or caretaker relative has received assistance under the Program for 24 months. The Larimer County Works program is likely to require participation in a work activity prior to the 24 months. For purposes of meeting this requirement, the applicant or recipient may participate in the work activities listed in SB 120 and state rules, or any other work activities designed to lead to self-sufficiency as determined by Larimer County and outlined in the participant's Individual Responsibility Contract (IRC).

POLICY:

I. Process for determining whether a participant is defined as "Job Ready" and work participation requirements:

1. Initial Family Assessment - Part I (to be completed by the technician):

The Assessment Specialist will review the responses given by the participant to the questions presented on the Larimer County Works Family Assessment which is completed at the initial interview with the TAG technician.

If the participant is currently working in unsubsidized employment sufficient hours to be continuously counted in the County's work participation rate, has no other significant barriers to employment, and requires no additional assistance or the only service needed is child care assistance, the participant will be considered "job ready." This participant will be placed in an appropriate service delivery track and assigned to an employment coach or income maintenance technician for development of an IRC that supports their continuing progress towards self-sufficiency. In the event that the participant's work situation is self-employment, the provisions and requirements of the separate Self-Employment Policy for Larimer County Works Program shall apply, except that the Assessment Specialist shall determine the appropriate service delivery track for the participant. In the event that the participant's work schedule becomes erratic or reduced such that they are not in

a countable work activity for three continuous months, and an income maintenance technician is monitoring the participant, the participant will be referred to the Assessment Specialist for further assessment and possible placement in another Works Program Track.

If the responses on the Individual and Family Assessments indicate any one of the following major barriers to current participation in a work activity, the participant will be considered “not job ready” and will be assigned to an employment coach or income maintenance technician for development of an IRC designed to address the barriers presented.

- a. Unresolved legal issues which would make it temporarily unfeasible for the participant to maintain a consistent work activity, schedule or the outcome of which would significantly change the eligibility and/or service delivery needs of the participant;
- b. Untreated drug/alcohol problems, treatment for which is necessary prior to continuing the assessment and service delivery process;
- c. Domestic violence situation for which a waiver has been requested;
- d. Chronic physical or mental problems, treatment for which is necessary prior to continuing the assessment and service delivery process.

The IRC’s developed with these participants will establish specific activities to be pursued by the participant to address these barriers and timetables for completion of these activities. Income maintenance technicians will refer to the Assessment Specialist all cases for which a change in circumstance or completion of the IRC activities make them no longer in the appropriate track. The Assessment Specialist will review all TRACK 1 participants at a minimum of every six months, and make a determination whether the participant will continue in TRACK 1, or be reassigned to another track as outlined below.

2. Individualized Assessment - Part II:

Participants are scheduled for an Individualized Assessment (Part II) with the Assessment Specialist and required to complete the Individual Assessment Form for each family member age 18 or older, and anyone 16 -17 who is not attending school at least part-time. At the Individualized Assessment (Part II), the Test of Adult Basic Education, Job Search Attitude Inventory, and other assessment testing may be administered to all participants. Based on this assessment, which will include evaluation of basic skills, past employment, levels of employability, educational levels, and other relevant factors, the Assessment Specialist will determine whether participants are job ready or not job ready and assign them to the appropriate service delivery track.

3. Participants Assessed as Not Job Ready:

Participants for whom the above criteria does not apply are placed in TRACK II and provided with the most intensive case management and employment preparation services to overcome barriers to employability, if the following criteria apply:

1. Participant reads below the 10th grade level and does not have a high school diploma or GED; or
2. Participant has chronic health or mental health problems which are remediable; or
3. Participant has any two or more of the following:
 - Math skills below the 4th grade level
 - Unresolved major family problems (i.e., children with drug problems)
 - Infant(s) not yet potty trained
 - Family has more than three children and participant does not meet the criteria for employable, “job ready” group as stated below.

4. Participants Assessed as Job Ready:

All participants who do not meet the criteria established in previous sections, but who meet any one of the following criteria, will be placed in TRACK IV and be designated as job ready:

- Participant has stated they want to actively seek and obtain employment; or
- Participant is in the last semester of training, or is participating in a training program the duration of which is three months or less.

TRACK IV participants, considered to be job ready, are required to be in a continuously countable work activity by 30 calendar days after signing the IRC with an Employment Coach.

5. Temporary Hold and Good Cause:

In the event that a participant who is required to participate in a work activity is temporarily not able to participate in a continuously countable work activity, the Income Maintenance Technician or Employment Coach, as appropriate, may present the participant’s specific situation to the Quality Assurance Committee and request a Temporary Hold. The Quality Assurance Committee will review the specifics of the participant’s situation, the staff recommendation, and the number of participants already in Temporary Hold, and approve or deny the request. In general, the Quality Assurance Committee will consider appropriate reasons for Temporary Hold to be the same as are used for “good cause” in other program policies.

If the request for Temporary Hold is approved, the participant will be excused without sanction from participating in a continuously countable work activity for the period approved by the Quality Assurance Committee, but not to exceed beyond the participant's initial 24 months in Larimer County Works. If the request is denied, the participant will be required to continue to comply with work participation requirements. All approved requests for Temporary Hold are subject to change with a minimum of 30 calendar days notice to the participant do to a change in the participant's situation, changes in the numbers or composition of households receiving countable assistance, and other factors unforeseen at the time the request is approved.

6. No Exemptions from Work Participation Requirements Based on Age of Youngest Child:

Larimer County Works will not automatically exempt participants from work activity requirements based on the age of their youngest child.

A one-time exemption from the work participation requirement may be applied to a participant for the first 12 week period after a child is born while the participant is receiving assistance which places them in the denominator for the county's work participation rate. Participants who are eligible for this exemption may volunteer to participate.

If circumstances arise and a participant needs additional time beyond 12 weeks, and the participant has not received assistance for 24 months or has already used the exemption for the birth of a previous child, the income maintenance technician or employment coach may submit a request for Temporary Hold as provided above.

7. Accepting and Turning Down Job Offers:

Participants who are job ready are expected to seek and accept appropriate employment. Participants are encouraged to discuss any bona fide job offer with their employment coach, or income maintenance technician if they are not assigned to an employment coach, to analyze the implications and opportunities presented by the circumstances of the offer and the participant's needs. In some cases, the consequences of a participant accepting a particular job offer may include undue hardship to that participant. In that case, the employment coach can consult with their supervisor to determine whether good cause exists for the participant to decline the job offer without sanction.