



LARIMER COUNTY WORKS POLICY

Title:	State Diversion		
Effective Date:	April 1, 2002	Page: 1 of	4
Desk:	EC and FAP	Revision:	#5 7-1-07
Reference:	LCWC P&P 02-134	BCC Approval on:	6-26-07
Agency Letters:			
Regulations:	3.600.1 ; 3.619.1 ; 3.620.1 CCR 26-2-709(2) DRA 2005 public law 109-171		

The State Diversion program, (regulated by Volume III, section 3.619.1) is designed to encourage family stabilization and promote comprehensive assessment of a family's strengths and barriers. Payments are short term in nature and cannot exceed 3 consecutive payment months.

Title IV-E Special State Diversion which consists of emergency cash assistance and cash assistance to aid families in meeting their Family Resource Program service plan, Other Assistance and County Diversion programs are each outlined in separate policies. State Diversion benefits are not an entitlement based benefit and are subject to available funding and County specified policies. (3.600.1)

STATE DIVERSION

BACKGROUND:

Welfare reform legislation provides a county-option to create a state diversion program for individuals who are eligible for Basic Cash Assistance, but who have identifiable short-term needs. The purpose of the State Diversion Program is to provide short-term assistance for family stabilization, within established limits and guidelines, to assist low-income families in meeting their basic and employment related needs as determined by an assessment.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

1. Families must be eligible for Basic Cash Assistance in every way including citizenship and identity, dependent children, resources, income, cooperation with child support except for assignment of payments for period covered by State Diversion , immunization requirements, school attendance etcetera (as required by State Staff Manual Volume III, Section 3.600 through 3.616.5, including but not limited to 3.600.12 -.14;3.600.3;604.2;3.606.1-.3;614.5 A-C , 3.619.1A, H)
2. The applicant household demonstrates unmet needs that may include barrier assessment, referral services or financial assistance, but does not appear to

- need long term assistance at the time of initial interview. Long term for this program is defined as less than four months of assistance.
3. The applicant and his or her family cannot have received basic cash assistance (i.e., TAG) in the same month that State Diversion is proposed and/or granted; (3.619.2)
 4. The head of household voluntarily agrees to the State Diversion;
 5. The applicant must agree to a period of ineligibility from further cash assistance for a period of one to three months as determined by the county based on the nature of the households short term needs; and
 6. The adult must sign a State Diversion Family Stabilization Individual Responsibility Contract (IRC).

POLICY:

It shall be the policy of Larimer County to offer State Diversion to applicants who are eligible for Basic Cash Assistance and who meet the aforementioned eligibility criteria and have been assessed to have needs that can be met by family stabilization payment(s).

PROGRAM YEAR AND LIMITS:

The maximum assistance, which can be provided to any household, per program year is:

1. Larimer County has lifetime limit for State Diversion of 3 periods of Family Stabilization payments in an adult's 60 month lifetime TANF eligibility. In the event that there are two parents in the household, the State Diversion limit is set by the total received. Example. Client A received 1 Family stabilization payment period in Household 123; Client B received 1 Family Stabilization payment period in Household 456. Clients A and B become one household due to presence of a common child, this new Household would have 1 remaining period of eligibility for Family Stabilization. If they were to then separate each would have 2 countable periods of Family Stabilization payments. Verification of Family Stabilization payments for this determination are made through CBMS issuance records.
2. State Diversion payments are based on the specific stabilization needs presented by the household.
3. Supportive Services, if deemed appropriate by an Employment Coach, may be approved on a separate IRC agreement during the period covered by the State Diversion payment. (3.619.1C)
4. Larimer County shall require the participant(s) to agree to not apply for any further assistance under Basic Cash Assistance or any other county cash assistance program for a period of time as specified by the State Diversion Family Stabilization IRC agreement. Following the period of ineligibility, State Diversion recipients may apply for Colorado Works, County Diversion or Special State Diversion/ Family Resource Program benefits for any subsequent months.

5. In the event of unforeseen emergency circumstances, the household may request an exemption to reduce the period of ineligibility. The decision to allow this exemption must be approved in writing by the Larimer County Director of the Department of Human Services.

Each program year shall be July 1 through June 30. All funds are subject to availability.

Assistance which may be provided:

All assistance guidelines are per family (not per person unless specified as such). Assistance is provided in the form of cash via the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card. In the interest of providing assistance in the quickest and most effective manner, Larimer County will not provide State Diversion funds in the form of vendor payments or provide services in lieu of cash payments.
(3.619.1D)

Other Information

Applications:

Eligibility for the State Diversion program is based on the Single Purpose Application. If following the period of ineligibility as established in item 3 above, the household requests on-going Basic Cash Assistance or any other Diversion program offered by Larimer County, a new Single Purpose Application shall be required.

Applicant/Participant Responsibilities:

All recipients of State Diversion must enter into a State Diversion Family Stabilization Individual Responsibility Contract (IRC) (3.604.52). The IRC shall specify the need that is being addressed and type of assistance provided as well as the agreed upon period of ineligibility, expectations and terms of the assistance payment.

Sanctions/Recoveries:

A recovery shall be established for the entire (100%) amount of the State Diversion assistance provided to the participant if the terms and conditions outlined in the State Diversion IRC are not followed (met).

If the participant was unable to comply with the activities due to circumstances beyond their control (good cause), a recovery may not be established or may be voided as determined with the written approval of two Eligibility Program Managers.

All of the rules and regulations that apply to Basic Cash Assistance (i.e., Colorado Works) with regard to eligibility, Intentional Program Violations (IPV's), and recoveries

apply to recipients of State Diversion. Hearings apply only if the family is denied a monthly TAG payment and not the State Diversion program or method of payment.

Intentional Program Violation (IPV's):

Applicants who have been convicted of an IPV cannot receive any TANF funds from any source during the designated disqualification period. (3.605, 3.609.4, 3.614.21) Children may receive services paid for by these funds. Payments made on behalf of children residing in a household containing an adult who is excluded due to IPV may be paid by EBT to an account issued to the excluded parent with the written approval of two Eligibility Program Managers or a Division Manager. The disqualification periods are:

- 12 months for the first offense beginning with the first month any Temporary Assistance Grant (TAG) payment was affected.
- 24 months for the second offense beginning with the first month any TAG payment was affected.
- Permanently for the third offense beginning with the first month any TAG payment was affected.
- Ten years if convicted by a court for misrepresentation in order to obtain assistance in two states at the same time.
(3.627)

Employees Applying for State Diversion:

Employees of the Larimer County Department of Human Services or the Workforce Center who apply for Colorado Works shall be interviewed by a Senior Eligibility Technician or Case Manager II (child welfare liaison) and all records shall be kept confidential. The imaged files shall be password protected and the case notes will be located in the Diversion Database that is only accessible by staff with the security to do so. When State Diversion is being considered, the assessment shall be reviewed by a manager from outside the Benefit Planning Division and Eligibility Program Manager who does not directly supervise the applicant. The approval or denial decision based on the assessment shall be documented by the Eligibility Program Manager.