ELIGIBILITY FOR COMMERCE WORKFIRST PROGRAMS

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I. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the Commerce WorkFirst Programs, a participant must be receiving a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grant from the State of Washington. Every thirty (30) days the participant's eligibility for the Commerce WorkFirst Program will be reviewed by the WorkFirst Case Manager, the Contractor, and the participant.

If the TANF grant status is Denied or Closed, the participant is not eligible to participate in Commerce WorkFirst Programs until the status is Open. If TANF is showing in eJAS as Pending, contact DSHS to determine when the TANF will be approved. If approval is expected within a reasonably short timeframe, enter a case note documenting the conversation with DSHS, leave the referral on the caseload screen until the TANF status is open, and then proceed as usual. Community Jobs can be used to cure an open WorkFirst sanction but cannot be used to cure a Non-Compliant Sanction (NCS) that has closed a participant's TANF. Community Works can be used to cure Non-Compliant Sanction (NCS) that has closed a participant's TANF but cannot be used to cure an open WorkFirst sanction.

A dependent minor – not head of household, who is meeting their WorkFirst obligations by either attending school or attaining their High School Diploma/GED and listed on the participant's grant, is not eligible for the Commerce WorkFirst Programs. Dependent minors may be considered for a referral only when they have successfully completed High School or obtained a GED. The Contractor must contact the Council for an exception if a dependent minor is referred who has completed High School or obtained their GED.

II. SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY FOR COMMUNITY JOBS

The Community Jobs (CJ) program is a WorkFirst activity that provides TANF participants with up to nine (9) months of paid, temporary employment combined with intensive case management and stacked activities. Participants may be enrolled in a CJ program only once unless approval has been made by the Council and Commerce through the E-Ticket. Participants that are working

in “unsubsidized employment” at the time of the referral to Community Jobs cannot be enrolled in Community Jobs.

III. SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY FOR COMMUNITY WORKS

The Community Works (WC) program is an unpaid (voluntary) work activity for one (1) to twelve (12) months of participation that supports engagement in an education pathway, assists in gaining recent work experience, and provides a core work activity that meets TANF requirements.

Participants receive services tailored to worksite placement to increase employability. These services include:

- An initial assessment that identifies education level as well as current and desired work skills,
- Career planning that identified both short-term and long-term job goals,
- On-going assistance for work-related issues,
- Work-related support services, and
- Assistance with developing childcare and transportation plans.

IV. RE-ENROLLMENT REQUEST

CJ is meant to be a one-time program. For CJ, if a previous CJ Individual Development Plan (IDP) was created, a re-enrollment request is required. Contractors must provide the Council with the information they need to verify that the participant has the barriers to be in CJ and that the case manager action plans clearly show that intensive case management services will be provided. The more detailed information provided, justifying the request, the better the chances the request will be approved.

V. BACK-TO-BACK COMMUNITY JOBS PROGRAMS

If the participant has completed their 9-month CJ program and would benefit from an additional 9-month program, the following steps need to take place:

- The Contractor will conduct case staffing with DSHS WorkFirst case manager.
- If all parties agree, the DSHS WorkFirst case manager will follow the DSHS process to approve the back-to-back program.
- Commerce approval is not required, however, a request to open a new plan with documentation that the DSHS has approved a back-to-back program must be submitted to the Council.