

**County PRC Plan  
Effective 10/01/2023**

The Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) Program is designed to provide benefits and services to needy families and low-income employed families who need help with essential supports to move out of poverty and become self-sufficient. These services are discussed in Section A of this plan. In addition, this PRC plan is designed to provide services to prevent the need to permanently remove a child (ren) from his or her home. Services are limited to those normally provided in the Children Services Unit. These services are outlined in Section B of this plan.

This program shall be in operation according to the standards of policy and procedures as set forth within this document for 24 months beginning October 1, 2023. The covered benefits or services or the amounts specified for the benefits and services may be amended.

**Section A: Benefits and Services to needy families and low-income employed families who are in need of help with essential supports to move out of poverty and become self-sufficient.**

The Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) Program is designed to provide benefits and services to needy families and low-income employed families who are in need of help with essential supports to move out of poverty and become self-sufficient. These supports include non-recurrent, short-term, crisis-oriented benefits and on-going services that are directly related to the four purposes of the TANF program (reference 45 CFR 260.20) which do not meet the federal definition of assistance. Non-recurrent, short-term assistance addresses discrete crisis situations which do not provide for needs extending beyond four months. These non-recurrent benefits and services may encompass more than one payment a year, as long as the payment provides short-term relief and addresses a discrete crisis situation rather than meeting on-going or re-current needs. These benefits and services are consistent with the federal definition of non-assistance as found in 45 CFR 260.31(b). The definition of non-assistance includes:

1. Non-recurrent, short-term benefits that:
  - a. are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need;
  - b. are not intended to meet re-current or on-going needs; and
  - c. will not extend beyond four months;
2. Work subsidies (i.e. payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employer wages, benefits, supervision and training);
3. Supportive services such as transportation provided to families whom are employed;
4. Refundable earned income tax credits;
5. Contributions to, and distribution from, Individual Development Accounts (IDAs);

6. Services such as case management, transitional services, job retention, job advancement, and other employment-related services that do not provide basic income support; and
7. Transportation benefits

### **Assistance Group Composition**

PRC benefits and services are available to a family assistance group (AG) which includes a minor child or pregnant individual as defined in Sections 5108.01 and 5108.06 of the revised code. PRC benefits and services are also available to the non-custodial parent that resides in Erie County with a minor child who lives in Ohio and does not live in the same household as the minor child. Non-custodial parents must be currently cooperating with child support.

At a minimum, an eligible family must consist of a minor child who resides with a parent, caretaker relative, legal guardian or legal custodian (or consist of a pregnant individual). No family is eligible for PRC assistance unless the family includes a minor child who resides with the parent, caretaker relative, legal guardian or legal custodian. PRC assistance may also be provided to a pregnant individual with no other minor children.

A child may be temporarily absent from the home in accordance with the time frames established in rule 5101:1-3-04 of the Ohio Administrative Code and still qualify for PRC. During the temporary period, the child is considered to be residing with the parent, caretaker relative, legal guardian, or legal custodian. An eligible family may also consist of a minor child residing with a parent, caretaker relative, legal guardian or legal custodian and other members of the household (who may or may not be related to the minor child) who may significantly enhance the family's ability to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

### **Eligibility**

In order to receive PRC benefits and services, a member of the AG must be a citizen of the United States or a qualified alien as defined in Section 5506(d) of Public Law 105-33 (the Balance Budget Act of 1997).

Eligibility for PRC is dependent upon the AG's demonstration and verification of need for financial assistance and/or services. In order for eligibility to be determined, the income of the AG must be compared to the economic need standard established for the benefits and services requested. The economic need standards are based upon federal poverty guideline measures which shall be updated when the federal poverty guidelines are released. When determining eligibility for the PRC AG to receive benefits or services, the AG income must be equal to or less than the economic need standard.

## Income

The total gross income, both earned and unearned of all members of the PRC AG shall be counted except for gross earnings of a minor child as defined in Section 5101:1-23-20I(i) of the Administrative Code as well as the following excluded income:

- Child support payment distributions made by the Ohio department of job and family services (ODJFS) pursuant to division I of Section 1 of Am. S.B. 170 of the 124<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (10/25/2001).
- All income that is federally excluded in the determination of eligibility for federal needs-based programs. Federally excluded income includes the income sources identified in paragraphs I and (D) of this rule.
- Drug discounts and transitional assistance received under the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act, at Section 1860D-31(g)(6) of the Social Security Act (12/08/2003). The language in Section 1860D-31(g)(6) of the Social Security Act, states that the availability of negotiated prices or transitional assistance under this section shall not be treated as benefits or otherwise taken into account in determining an individual's eligibility for, or the amount of benefits under any other federal program.
- Monetary allowances paid under Section 401 of the Veteran's Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2000, effective December 1, 2000. Payments authorized and made by the Veteran's Administration (VA) to provide certain benefits, including a monthly monetary allowance for children with covered birth defects who are the natural children of women veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam from February 28, 1961 through May 7, 1975.

All income which is received or expected to be received during the thirty (30) day budget period is considered when determining financial need. The 30-day budget period begins 30 days projected from the date of the PRC application unless this period of time does not accurately reflect expected income. In this instance, income received 30 days prior to the date of the application may be utilized.

For cases in which the income cannot be accurately obtained, the implementation of practices that are reasonable and prudent should occur when determining countable income. More stringent verification is required for Section A benefits when PRC benefits and services involve a direct monetary gain by the applicant and opportunities for fraud are prevalent. Income can be self-declared for Section B services.

## **Unearned Income**

The following are examples of unearned income which must be counted. These are examples only and are not meant to be an all-inclusive list:

- RSDI Benefits
- Child Support
- Alimony
- Veteran Administration Benefits
- Worker's Compensation Benefits
- Lump-Sum Payments (Including Tax Refunds)
- Unemployment Benefits
- Pension and Retirement Benefits
- Strike Benefits
- Investment Income
- Rental Income
- OWF, DA or Supplemental Income (SSI) Payments

## **Earned Income**

Earned income is income in which the AG member must perform some type of labor or service to receive it. The following are examples of earned income. This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list:

- Earnings from work as an employee
- Earnings from self-employment
- Strike benefits if striker is required to perform services in order to receive them
- Training allowance

## **Residence**

PRC benefits and services are available to residents of the county in which they reside. Residence is established by living in the county voluntarily with the intent to remain permanently or for an indefinite period. Residence is also established by an applicant who is not receiving assistance from another county and entered the county with a job commitment or seeking employment, whether or not currently employed.

## **Ineligible Family Assistance Groups (AG's)**

Federal and State law must be adhered to when providing PRC benefits and services. If any one member of the PRC group meets one of the following disqualifications, that individual is ineligible to receive PRC and the entire AG may be ineligible to receive PRC:

1. No assistance for families without a minor child, unless an individual is pregnant.
2. No assistance for strikers.
3. No benefits or services to an individual who is not a citizen of the United States or a qualified alien.

4. No assistance for families that fraudulently (Intentional Program Violations – IPV) receive assistance under the SNAP, TANF, OWF, or PRC programs until repayment occurs.
5. No assistance for an assistance group who has been found to have fraudulently misrepresented residence in order to obtain assistance in two or more states at the same time.
6. No assistance to fleeing felons/probation/parole violators, or residents of public institutions.
7. No assistance for individuals who falsify an application for PRC.
8. No assistance to individuals to whom PRC Services will not make a difference regarding employment or keeping the family together.

Note: Receipt of PRC services in another county or state shall be considered when processing PRC applications. PRC benefit amounts and receipt dates from other jurisdictions shall be considered and included within the cap limits and time periods established within this plan.

### **Scope of Benefits/Services**

The focus of this program is to provide and authorize benefits and services within ten (10) days of the receipt of a signed application. In some instances, this time frame will not be met due to unavoidable delays on the part of the applicant or the agency.

The ten-day standard of promptness is a suggested time frame that is intended to stress the importance of dealing with PRC applications in an appropriately efficient manner. The denial of a PRC application due only to the expiration of the ten-day period is not acceptable eligibility determination practice. The AG record should contain sufficient documentation of the case activity on the PRC application, including an explanation of unexpected or unavoidable delays in processing the application.

### **Community Resources**

The availability of resources within the local community shall be explored prior to the authorization of PRC. A PRC AG shall apply for and utilize any program, benefit or support system which may reduce or eliminate the presenting need.

Personnel authorizing PRC should be aware of any community resources that could assist a family in need of immediate services. The knowledge of those resources that are available is necessary to determine if any other means within the community may meet or help meet the presenting needs. Local contracts with other entities may be initiated to provide services which may meet or help meet requested needs (i.e. planning transportation services).

### **Applicant Responsibility**

An applicant for PRC is responsible for completing all necessary documents, furnishing all available facts and information, and cooperating in the eligibility determination process. The applicant must cooperate with exploring available community resources. Erie County will investigate any and/all allegations of PRC assistance fraud. Overpayment collection will be pursued if it is determined an applicant fraudulently received PRC benefits.

## **Application**

The ODHS 3800, "Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) Program Application" has been developed for use when a family is applying for PRC benefits and services in Section 1 unless otherwise noted within the service grid. The application and any other information gathered during the eligibility determination process should be kept in the on-going OWF, Medicaid, and/or Food Stamp AG record. If the AG is not in receipt of on-going OWF, Medicaid, and/or Food Stamp assistance, a separate AG folder should be maintained for the PRC application and related verifications. In addition, PRC benefits and services provided to non-custodial parents shall also be kept in a separate AG record.

Eligibility factors, time restraints, and the amounts available to pay for the various benefits and services covered must be explained. Anyone applying for PRC services must receive appropriate information about, referrals to and access to Medicaid, food stamps, child care assistance and other programs that provide benefits that could help them successfully transition to work. It is also important to make the voter registration application as prescribed by the Secretary of State under Section 3503.10 of the ORC available to persons who are applying for, receiving assistance from, or participating in the PRC program. Reference Section 329.051 of the ORC.

PRC assistance will be authorized with the expectation that the PRC AG will be able to function without additional agency help. Services and benefits shall be provided which directly lead to or can be expected to lead the family in becoming self-sufficient by accomplishing one of the four purposes of TANF:

1. To provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;
2. To end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
3. To prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and
4. To encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families

## **Notice of Approval/Denial**

If it is determined that an application for PRC is approved, the ODHS 4074, Notice of Approval of Your Application for Assistance shall be mailed or otherwise delivered. If it is determined that an application for PRC is denied, the ODHS 7334, Notice of Denial of Your Application for Assistance shall be mailed or otherwise delivered.

Once eligibility for PRC is established, authorization shall occur and a payment for the benefits or services will be generated. Authorization may occur at any time during a period beginning on the date that PRC is approved. As long as payment is authorized within 30 days, actual payment may be made to vendors according to the procedures in place. All payments shall be made to the vendor or PRC AG. Policy has been written to ensure all auditing requirements are maintained.

## **Section B: Family Preservation and Reunification Services/TANF Child Welfare:**

The Erie County Department of Job & Family Services may provide services to a child(ren) and his parent, guardian, or custodian as the agency determines necessary. The purpose of this PRC Service is to prevent the need to permanently remove a child(ren) from his or her home. Services are limited to those normally provided in the Children Services Unit and are listed in Parts: IV, V, VI, and VII of the services grid.

### **Assistance Group Definition For Family Preservation and Reunification Services/TANF Child Welfare:**

PRC payments may be issued for supportive services to promote family stability as the agency determines necessary and subject to the availability of funds.

A child removed from the home of his parents shall constitute a PRC Assistance Group of one for the purposes of this service. The child(ren) must be eighteen years of age in high school or younger and the child(ren) must be in the home of one or both of parents or placed by Erie County Job & Family Services. There must be a reunification plan for the child(ren) to return to the home of his/her parents, specified relative, legal guardian or legal custodian. Kinship Caregiver” is defined under ORC 5101.85. The Kinship Caregiver must be in place of the child’s parents. Assistance Groups where minor child(ren) are residing with their parents or legal guardian can apply for Family Preservation and Reunification/TANF Child Welfare PRC Services. In such cases, all household members residing in the household shall be treated as one-assistance group. The PRC Assistance Group shall contain at least one minor child. A minor child is defined as a child eighteen years of age or younger who resides with his parent(s) or other specified relative who has legal custody of the child. Verification of legal custody must be documented.

A child(ren) temporarily absent from their home for up to six months in accordance with the time periods in ORC 5107.10 are eligible for the PRC program. A temporary absence from the home is an absence that is expected to be no longer than six months in duration, the children services’ case plan must specify that the intent is for the child to return to the home of his/her parents, specified relative, legal guardian, or legal custodian. Children falling into this category shall be considered a family of one for the purposes of PRC eligibility.

### **Eligibility and Application For Family Preservation and Reunification Services/TANF Child Welfare:**

An application can be the Request for Supportive Services, Case Plan, Safety Plan or the ODHS 3800.

Eligibility for these services is dependent upon the PRC Assistance Group's demonstration of need for financial assistance and/or services and the determination that provision of PRC services will satisfy the need. For the purposes of this section, the agency providing services shall document that the services provided relate to the risk of the minor child(ren) or will facilitate reunification or help maintain the child(ren) in their current placement, or that services provided prevented adjudicated unruly or misdemeanant youth from out-of-home placement.

Application for Family Preservation and Reunification Services/TANF Child Welfare may be made by an adult family member or a Children Services representative applying on behalf of the family.

### **Notice and State Hearing Requirement**

PRC notices must be in compliance with Chapter 5101:6 of the Ohio Administrative Code. Rules 5101:6-2-02 and 5101:6-2-03 of the Ohio Administrative Code set forth the requirements for issuing notice when an application for public assistance benefits, including benefits or services under the PRC program, is approved or denied.

County agencies may modify the format, but not the content, of state hearing notices mandated in Chapters 5101:6-1 to 5101:6-9 of the Administrative Code to accommodate computer generation of the notice. All such modifications must be prior approved by the Bureau of State Hearings.

At the time of application, individuals must be informed in writing of their right to request a state hearing. This can be done by providing a copy of the JFS 04059, "Explanation of State Hearing Procedures." The applicant must have the opportunity to be heard in a state hearing or an administrative appeal. Pursuant to Section 5108.09 Revised Code, PRC hearing decisions are based upon the county PRC plan in effect at the time of the adverse decision, and the county agency must provide a copy of the PRC plan and all amendments to the hearing officer.



# Erie County Prevention, Retention, Contingency Plan

## Part I: Contingency Services: TANF Purposes 1 and 2

Service or Benefit	Eligibility & Verifications	CAP	Economic Need Standard	Assistance Group
<p><b>Rent/Security Deposit/Mortgage*</b> Total agency expense not to exceed \$70,000 annually</p> <p>Past due deposits will not be paid for households requesting past due rent to prevent eviction. Assistance cannot be provided for any month greater than 6 months prior to the date of application. If approved metro housing, we will only assist with security deposit.</p>	<p>Completed PRC Application with all required verifications attached</p> <p>Proof of Earned and Unearned Income for 30 days prior to date of application</p> <p>*Verification of unexpected/unavoidable situation (beyond control of the family) which occurred within the last 60 days that placed the household in need of services</p> <p>*Ability to pay ongoing rent will be reviewed when determining eligibility for this service.</p> <p>*Job quits within 60 days of PRC application will result in ineligibility for housing assistance</p>	<p>Maximum of \$1000 per 24-month period</p>	<p>100% FPL</p>	<p>Parents with minor children and all other household members</p> <p>Legal custodian with minor children and all other household members</p> <p>Pregnant woman with no other minor children</p> <p>Non-Custodial Parents residing in Erie County with a court-ordered support order for a minor child residing in Ohio. Must be cooperating with CSEA</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Currently working a reunification plan</p>
<p><b>Rental Assistance while in a Sober Living Community**</b>(funding for rental assistance only and not medical services)</p>	<p>**Rental Assistance while in a sober living community to prevent children from being removed from the home and/or to reunite children with the family.</p>	<p>Maximum of \$700 per assistance group per 12-month period</p>	<p>200% FPL</p>	

# Erie County Prevention, Retention, Contingency Plan

## Part II: Employment and Training Services: TANF Purposes 1 and 2

Service or Benefit	Eligibility & Verifications	CAP	Economic Need Standard	Assistance Group
<p><b>Transportation</b> SPARC Tickets or taxi service for employment or education <b>**Must currently be employed or in training**</b></p> <p><b>Driver License Reinstatement fees</b></p> <p><b>Driver's Education Class</b></p> <p><b>Short Term Training/Education</b> – to be no longer than 4 months (Tuition, Books, Fees, testing, physical, CPR, First Aid) <b>**Approval for training is dependent on background check**</b></p> <p><b>Supportive Services</b> for employment/training: uniforms, work/dress shoes, hygiene products</p>	<p>Completed PRC Application with all required verifications attached</p> <p>Proof of Earned and Unearned Income for 30 days prior to date of application</p>	<p>Maximum of \$200.00 once per 12-month period</p> <p>\$500 once every five (5) years (Total fees must result in reinstatement of DL)</p> <p>\$360 once per lifetime</p> <p>\$1500 once per lifetime</p> <p>\$200 once per 12-month period</p>	<p>200% FPL</p>	<p>Parents with minor children and all other household members</p> <p>Legal custodian with minor children and all other household members</p> <p>Pregnant woman with no other minor children</p> <p>Non-Custodial Parents residing in Erie County with a court-ordered support order for a minor child residing in Ohio. Must be cooperating with CSEA</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Currently working a reunification plan</p>

# Erie County Prevention, Retention, Contingency Plan

## Part III: Disaster Services: TANF Purpose 1

Service or Benefit	Eligibility & Verifications	CAP	Economic Need Standard	Assistance Group
<p><b>Family Disaster Assistance</b> Benefits to assist with damage or loss sustained as a result of natural disaster upon declaration by County Commissioners, Governor or President of the United States</p>	<p>Completed PRC Application with all required verifications attached</p> <p>Proof of Earned and Unearned Income for 30 days prior to date of application</p> <p>Families must demonstrate that the disaster has created an economic need</p>	<p>Program availability and duration is dependent upon allocation terms from ODJFS</p>	<p>200% FPL</p>	<p>Parents with minor children and all other household members</p> <p>Legal custodian with minor children and all other household members</p> <p>Pregnant woman with no other minor children</p> <p>Elderly or disabled individuals meeting specific eligibility criteria for non TANF funded services</p>

# Erie County Prevention, Retention, Contingency Plan

## Part IV: Family Preservation and Reunification Services/TANF Child Welfare: TANF Purposes 1 and 2

Service or Benefit	CAP	Economic Need Standard	Assistance Group	Targeted Group
Diagnostic/Assessment Services (excluding medical expenditures) Parent/Child Education Services Respite Care (excluding medical expenditures) In-home Services (excluding medical expenditures) Special Services for Drug and Alcohol Addiction (excluding medical expenditures) Transportation Domestic Violence Supportive Services Post-finalization Adoption Services (excluding medical expenditures) Counseling and Therapeutic Counseling Services (excluding medical expenditures) Prevention and Reunification Services Emergency Housing (non-recurrent, short-term, not to exceed four months per incidence) Home Health Aide Services (excluding medical expenditures) Family Stability Services Family Case Conferencing Services Mentoring Programs Lice Removal/Prevention/Education Life Skill Services Adoption Services	As Needed	200% FPL	Assistance Group definition for Family Preservation and Reunification Services / TANF Child Welfare	Families with children at risk of abuse or neglect. Purpose to prevent the need to permanently remove a child(ren) from their home. For families, if in the judgment of Erie County PCSA staff, services will facilitate reunification or will help maintain a child in their current placement.

# Erie County Prevention, Retention, Contingency Plan

## Part V: Family Preservation and Reunification Services/TANF Child Welfare: TANF Purpose 1

Service or Benefit	CAP	Economic Need Standard	Assistance Group	Targeted Group
<b>Visitation Services</b> These are in addition to supervised visitation at PCSA	Per contract, as needed	100% FPL	Assistance Group definition for Family Preservation and Reunification Services / TANF Child Welfare	Children temporarily placed out of their home

## Part VI: Family Preservation and Reunification Services/TANF Child Welfare: TANF Purposes 1, 2, and 4

Service or Benefit	CAP	Economic Need Standard	Assistance Group	Targeted Group
<b>Services</b> To assist with such things as clothing, school expenses, , or summer day camps needed to maintain the child in their current placement or to reunify child(ren) with parent/caretaker.	No Cap, as needed, not to exceed 4 months in duration	100% FPL	Assistance Group definition for Family Preservation and Reunification Services / TANF Child Welfare	Child(ren) temporarily placed out of their home or families with child(ren) at risk of abuse or neglect. Families, if in the judgment of the Erie County PCSA staff, the services will facilitate reunification or will help maintain a child(ren) in their current placement. NOTE: The services must facilitate reunification or must help maintain child(ren) in their current placement. Approval for any service will be based on ability to maintain improved situation.



# Erie County Prevention, Retention, Contingency Plan

## Part VIII: TANF “Soft” Services: TANF Purposes 1 and 2

Service or Benefit	Eligibility & Verifications	CAP	Economic Need Standard	Assistance Group
<p><b>Employment and Training Services</b>            Services for eligible individuals and families to promote family stability by providing employment related services. Services are provided through ECDJFS contracts with community partners and are funded with TANF funds. ECDJFS may act as a referral source for the Comprehensive Case Management &amp; Employment Program (CCMEP) or may offer TANF funded services onsite to promote self-sufficiency.</p>	<p>Completed PRC Application with all required verifications attached</p> <p>Proof of Earned and Unearned Income for 30 days prior to date of application</p> <p>All other required forms per the contract(s).</p>	<p>Limited to the availability of funds.</p>	<p>200% FPL</p>	<p>Individuals that are OWF and/or TANF eligible and who are 14 – 24 years of age and are required to participate or volunteer in CCMEP or target populations specified in the contract(s) with provider(s).</p> <p>Non-Custodial Parents residing in Erie County with a court-ordered support order for a minor child residing in Ohio. Must be cooperating with CSEA</p>

## Summer Youth Employment Program

**LENGTH OF OPERATION:** This program will operate from May 1, 2021 to September 30, 2021.

This program is to establish a summer program for individuals who are 14-18 years of age enrolled in secondary school with educational, employment and training supports.

**TANF Purpose:** the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program meets the first two purposes of TANF:

1. To provide assistance to needy families so that the children may be cared for in their homes or the homes of relatives.
2. To end dependence of needy parents on governmental benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

**Eligibility:** A TANF Summer Youth Employment Program funded through PRC shall only serve persons from a TANF-eligible family. The types of persons that may be served are:

- Youth age 14-18, enrolled in secondary school, as long as the youth is in a needy family and in school.

The youth served may be non-custodial parents as long as they are considered "needy" and have a minor child. "Needy" is not specifically defined by state or federal regulation but may be no greater than income at 200% of the federal poverty level.

*Family:* is defined in federal and state law and regulations as follows: a minor child who resides with a parent, specified relative, legal guardian or legal custodian (a child may be temporarily absent from the home provided certain requirements are met); a pregnant individual with no other children; or a non-custodial parent who lives in the state, but does not reside with his/her minor child(ren).

*Foster Care:* Youth in a foster care setting age 14 to 18 years of age if they are a full-time student in a secondary school may be served under the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program. The United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF) has provided guidance respective to the Youth Employment Program. This guidance is only applicable to the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program and no other TANF or PRC program

**Redacted from PRC Plan Effective 05/01/2021:** COVID-19 Response



# Director Signature Page

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**Karen Balconi Ghezzi, Esq. Executive Director**

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**Date**