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POLICY TRANSMITTAL NO. 05-06	DATE: MARCH 7, 2005
FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION	DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES OFFICE OF PLANNING, POLICY & RESEARCH

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TO: ALL OFFICES

SUBJECT: MANUAL MATERIAL

OAC 340:10-3-57; and 10-20-1.

EXPLANATION: OAC 340:10-3-57 Instructions to Staff 14 is added to clarify that a supplement can be issued when compliance with Child Support Enforcement occurs after deadline.

OAC 340:10-20-1 Instructions to Staff 10 is revised to reflect Family Assistance/Client Services (FACS) case notes must be updated when the county director approves Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) within 12 months of the application date for Diversion Assistance.

Original signed on 3-4-05

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Mary Stalnaker, Director  
Family Support Services Division

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Sharon Neuwald, Interim Administrator  
Office of Planning, Policy & Research

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WF # 05-D (NAP)

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## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILING MANUAL MATERIAL**

OAC is the acronym for Oklahoma Administrative Code. If OAC appears before a number on an Appendix or before a Section in text, it means the Appendix or text contains rules or administrative law. Lengthy internal policies and procedures have the same Chapter number as the OAC Chapter to which they pertain following a “DHS” number, such as personnel policy at DHS:2-1 and personnel rules at OAC 340:2-1. The “340” is the Title number that designates DHS as the rulemaking agency; the “2” specifies the Chapter number; and the “1” specifies the Subchapter number.

The chronological order for filing manual material is: (1) OAC 340 by designated Chapter and Subchapter number; (2) if applicable, DHS numbered text for the designated Chapter and Subchapter; and (3) all OAC Appendices with the designated Chapter number. For example, the order for filing personnel policy is OAC 340:2-1, DHS:2-1, and OAC 340:2 Appendices behind all Chapter 2 manual material. Any questions or assistance with filing manual material will be addressed by contacting Policy Management Unit staff at (405) 521-3611.

### **REMOVE**

340:10-3-57

340:10-20-1

### **INSERT**

340:10-3-57, pages 1-8, revised 3-1-05

340:10-20-1, pages 1-4, revised 3-1-05

**340:10-3-57. Special considerations**

(a) **Concurrent receipt of State Supplemental Payment (SSP) for the aged, blind, or disabled.** An individual who is not a recipient of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) has an option to be included in a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) assistance unit or may be a recipient of SSP if all eligibility requirements are met. ■ 1 The individual may also be included in the TANF assistance unit pending determination of eligibility for SSP or SSI if all eligibility requirements are met. ■ 2

(b) **Concurrent receipt of SSI.** If it appears an individual included in a TANF application or an active TANF benefit might meet the eligibility conditions for TANF and SSI, the individual has a choice to have eligibility determined for TANF or SSI benefits.

(1) When the only dependent child is receiving SSI, the natural or adoptive parent(s) or needy caretaker relative may receive TANF if all other factors of eligibility are met. The assistance unit will consist of the adult(s) only.

(2) When a TANF applicant is also an applicant for SSI, eligibility for TANF must be determined and, if eligible, is included in the benefit until notified of SSI eligibility.

(3) When a TANF recipient is an applicant for SSI, the Social Security Administration (SSA) advises DHS of SSI eligibility, requesting the month of TANF termination and the amount of TANF benefits paid for each month of SSI eligibility. ■ 3 SSA considers a recipient removed from a TANF grant effective with, and based on, the TANF termination date provided orally by the local social services specialist. If the actual date of termination is later than the date given orally to SSA, TANF payments to SSI recipients are TANF overpayments and must be recouped.

(4) When a TANF recipient is determined ineligible for SSI the individual may continue to be included in the TANF assistance unit if all other conditions of eligibility are met.

(5) When a TANF recipient is determined ineligible for SSI for reasons other than a disability determination the individual may be included in an SSP, if all other conditions of eligibility are met. ■ 4

(c) **Concurrent receipt of TANF and SSI.** An individual cannot be included in a TANF benefit for the same month he or she was included in a SSI payment. ■ 5 The individual has a choice of which program, TANF or SSI, best meets his or her needs and, if otherwise eligible, may receive under that program. Individuals are informed of their responsibility to report to the Department if any member of the assistance unit makes application for SSI or becomes eligible for SSI. Also, they must report to the

SSA if any assistance unit member applies for TANF or is receiving TANF when the member makes an application for SSI. ■ 6

(d) **Concurrent receipt of state and Tribal TANF.** An individual who is included in a Tribal TANF payment cannot be included in another TANF benefit in the same month. If the individual meets the criteria of a Tribal TANF service area and population, the entire household must be served by Tribal TANF. If the household moves out of the tribe's service area, the social services specialist coordinates certification of state TANF benefits.

(e) **Concurrent receipt of more than one form of public assistance.** An individual who is included in a TANF benefit cannot be included in another TANF or SSP benefit for the same period. When a TANF applicant is eligible for TANF but has received a weekly or bi-monthly TANF benefit from another state for the same month the applicant is eligible in Oklahoma, the benefit from the other state is counted as unearned income. ■ 7 An individual who is the payee for a TANF benefit, but not included in that benefit, is not prevented from being a recipient of SSP if the SSP eligibility requirements are met. When transferring a TANF recipient to SSP, the removal and approval date must agree.

(f) **Stepparent or person acting in the role of a spouse and parent(s) of a minor parent.** The natural or adoptive parent's income cannot be diverted to meet the needs of the stepparent or other dependents in the home, but is considered available to the TANF assistance unit. No income is considered if the stepparent, person acting in the role of a spouse, or parent(s) of a minor parent is an SSI recipient.

(1) **Stepparent income.** If a stepparent of the child(ren) for whom TANF is requested is living in the home with the child(ren), the verified earned and unearned income of the stepparent, after all applicable TANF income disregards and work related expenses, is computed to determine the amount considered available to the assistance unit. The stepparent's income is computed by:

(A) subtracting the work related expense, one-half of the remaining earned income, and dependent care expense from the stepparent's earned income for full-time or part-time employment; [OAC 340:10-3-33]

(B) adding the net earned income to the stepparent's unearned income;

(C) subtracting the need standard for the appropriate number of individuals, including the stepparent and dependents who are not included in the assistance unit but are living in the home and can be claimed on the stepparent's personal income taxes; ■ 8

(D) subtracting the actual amounts the stepparent paid to individuals not living in the household but claimed as tax dependents. It is the stepparent's responsibility to identify and verify tax dependents; ■ 9

(E) subtracting the actual payments of alimony and child support to individuals outside the household; and

(F) adding the stepparent's remaining net income to all other gross income of individuals included in the TANF assistance unit. If the income does not exceed the monthly maximum gross income, the remaining income of the stepparent is considered as a contribution to the assistance unit.

(2) **Stepparent resources.** Resources owned exclusively by the stepparent are not considered in determining the assistance unit's resource eligibility. Consideration is only given to the assistance unit's share of resources that are owned jointly with the stepparent.

(3) **Person acting in the role of a spouse.** Income must be considered available to the TANF assistance unit of any non-relative adult(s) of the opposite sex not receiving TANF who lives in the home with the natural or adoptive parent. ■ 10 The income of this individual(s) is computed the same as stepparent income; however, the exemption of one-half of the remainder and dependent care expense is not applicable in determining this individual's countable earned income. ■ 11 [OAC 340:10-3-57(f)(1)] If the parent or the person acting in the role of a spouse fails to provide information necessary to determine income eligibility, the application is denied or the cash assistance terminated.

(4) **Parent(s) of a minor parent.** When a minor parent is living in the home with his or her natural or adoptive parent(s) and the needs of the parent(s) are not included in the assistance unit, the parent's income is considered available to the assistance unit and computed the same as stepparent income. [OAC 340:10-3-57(f)(1)] The income of a minor parent's stepparent is not considered. The parent of the minor parent may be designated as the substitute payee for the case. ■ 12

(g) **Allocating or diverting income.** When family members are not included in the assistance unit, special consideration is required in determining the income available to the assistance unit.

(1) Income received by an individual included in the assistance unit is not allocated or diverted to individuals who are not in the assistance unit. All countable unearned and earned income of the individual is considered available to the assistance unit.

(2) The net income of an alien parent excluded from the benefit because the citizenship or alienage requirement is not met is considered the same as stepparent income. However, the needs and income of disqualified alien siblings are not considered when determining eligibility of an otherwise eligible child.

(h) **Benefit reduction as a result of program violation.** The TANF benefit is reduced by 25% of the payment standard when a determination of program violation has been made. ■ 13 The 25% penalty is removed when compliance is documented or the time frame for the penalty has ended. ■ 14 When multiple types of program violations have occurred, a 25% penalty of the payment standard is imposed for each type of violation. If the benefit reduction causes existing income to be in excess of the benefit amount, the case is closed using the reason for the benefit reduction. ■ 15 The amount of the payment standard reduction applies as Food Stamp Penalty Income in the Food Stamp Program. [OAC 340:50-7-29(b)(1)] Reasons for benefit reduction are: ■ 16

(1) refusal to cooperate in an effort to obtain child support; [OAC 340:10-10-5(b)]

(2) failure to apply for or provide a social security number; ■ 17

(3) failure of a child kindergarten age to 18 years of age to attend school; [OAC 340:10-13]

(4) failure to provide verification of child(ren) immunizations; and [OAC 340:10-14]

(5) intentional program violations determined as fraud by court action or an administrative disqualification hearing or administrative hearing waiver. [OAC 340:65-5-38(B)(C) and (D)]

(i) **Parent living in the home receiving SSP.** When there is a parent living in the home but not included in the TANF benefit because of receipt of SSP and not SSI, consideration is not given to that parent's individual income for the TANF benefit. When a parent in the SSP benefit becomes ineligible to continue to receive the SSP, the parent is included in the TANF benefit and all the income and resources of the parent are considered in determining eligibility for TANF. If consideration of the parent's income and resources causes the TANF benefit to be closed, and the closure of the SSP benefit was a direct result of an overall social security increase, the SSP benefit is placed in Special Medical Status. If the parent is living in the home but not included in the TANF benefit because of receipt of SSP and SSI, no consideration is given to the parent's income and the parent is not included in the TANF assistance unit as long as the parent remains eligible for SSI.

(j) **TANF eligibility when the child(ren) is placed in out-of-home care.** ■ 18 When the child(ren) is removed by a child protection action and it is reasonably anticipated the child(ren) will return to the home within four months, the natural or adoptive parent or needy caretaker relative continues eligible for TANF, if other conditions of eligibility are met. ■ 19 A team consisting of the social services specialist, the child welfare worker, the natural or adoptive parent or needy caretaker relative, and any other appropriate partner(s) must meet to develop a mutually agreed upon plan of action. ■ 20 This plan addresses employability and strategies to correct the conditions which caused the child(ren) to be removed from the home. ■ 21 At the end of the four month period if the child(ren) has not been returned to the home, the adult(s)' needs are removed and the TANF benefits are discontinued. ■ 22

(k) **Strikers.** The assistance unit is not eligible for TANF for any month the natural or adoptive parent, whether or not included in the benefit, is participating in a strike on the last day of that month. An individual other than the natural or adoptive parent is not included in the benefit for any month if that individual is participating in a strike on the last day of the month

### **INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF**

1. **The Family Support Services (FSS) worker is responsible for explaining the benefits of both programs but the individual is responsible for choosing the program that is most beneficial in meeting the individual's needs.**
2. **See OAC 340:10-2-8(c)(7) for the Disability Advocacy Program.**
3. **The FSS worker is responsible for providing the requested information to the Social Security Administration (SSA), taking the appropriate action to adjust the benefit for the next effective date, and confirming such action.**
4. **See OAC 317:35-5-4(1)(D) when Supplemental Security Income (SSI) has already determined the individual ineligible.**
5. **See OAC 340:10-3-28(1) for non-recurring lump sum SSI retroactive payments.**
6. **The local Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) office notifies the SSA District Office when a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipient is certified or terminated for cash assistance, if the recipient has also applied for SSI.**
7. **An individual is denied assistance for ten years if found to have fraudulently misrepresented residence in order to obtain assistance in more than one**

state. See OAC 340:10-3-56(a)(3)(N).

8. See OKDHS Appendix C-1, Schedule of Maximum Income, Resource and Payment Standard, Schedule IX.A.
9. The stepparent's most recent income tax return can be used as documentation of this information.
10. If the natural or adoptive parent is living with a couple, the couple's income is not considered available to the TANF assistance unit.
11. The person acting in the role of a spouse is coded on the Household tab as an "other adult residing in the household" in the "Rel to Payee" field, as "TANF - Temporary Assistance to Needy Families" in the "benefit" field and "Income/Resources are considered in benefit computation - individual not included" in the "status" field. On the Income tab, if this person has earned income, enter the total gross amount in the designated income field and the computer automatically calculates the work related expense. Any unearned income is entered in the designated field. Enter the "diverted" field with the need standard as indicated on OKDHS Appendix C-1, Schedule IX, for the appropriate number of individuals and, if necessary, any exemptions. Any remaining income is considered available to the TANF assistance unit.
12. See OAC 340:10-3-56(a)(3)(P), when the payee is an unmarried minor.
13. See OKDHS Appendix C-1, Schedule IX.
14. A supplement is issued for the next month, if compliance occurs after deadline.
15. See OAC 340:65-3-8 for review periods. The closure code for the computer input document is 14A.
16. The 25% benefit reduction is initiated by the FSS worker updating the Family Assistance/Client Services (FACS), Household tab, for the appropriate penalty block(s) and the Financial Assistance tab at the same time for recalculation of the cash benefit. The computer automatically updates the Food Stamp Penalty Income (FSPI) screen. See OAC 340:50-7-29(b)(1)(A). When the program violation has ended, the FSS worker must update FACS, Household tab, to remove the penalty and make a change at the same time to the Financial Assistance tab for recalculation of the cash benefit. The FSS worker

must also complete the Food Stamp Penalty Update (FSPU) screen with an end date. When the TANF case closes and there is a program violation coded, the FSS worker must update FACS, Household tab, by removing the penalty and the FSPU screen with an end date.

**17.** See OAC 340:10-12, 340-65-3-1(e), 340:65-3-4, 340:50-5-68, and 317:35-5-27.

**18.** See OAC 340:10-3-56(a)(2)(B)(ii).

**19.**(a) The FSS worker is notified by the Child Welfare (CW) worker within five working days from the filing of the petition that impending reunification of the family is planned and this adult(s) may be considered eligible for the adult only benefit. The child(ren) is removed from this TANF benefit. It is the responsibility of the FSS worker to determine if the adult(s) meets continuing eligibility requirements. If eligibility requirements are not met, the appropriate case action is taken. When the CW worker informs the FSS worker the child(ren) has been placed in another relative's home and TANF benefits are requested by this relative for the child(ren) only, the needy caretaker relative or the natural or adoptive parent, if eligible, is approved for continuing adult only TANF benefits.

(b) When the adult(s) is determined eligible, the computer document is updated by entering "A" in Payee/Spouse/Parent Indicator - TANF Only block that is located on the Household tab, and an expected date of return in the Adult TANF Pending Reunification block located on the Financial Assistance tab. Food stamp benefits are recalculated using the adult only benefit amount. The adult(s) continues eligible for managed health care. When the child(ren) is returned to the home, the date entered in the Adult TANF Pending Reunification block is deleted, the "A" in Payee/Spouse/Parent Indicator - TANF Only block is updated to "1," and the child(ren) is added back to the TANF benefit, if the family continues to meet eligibility criteria.

**20.** The team must meet within 15 working days of the filing of the petition. At a minimum, the team consists of the FSS worker, CW worker, and the natural or adoptive parent or needy caretaker relative. The plan of action agreed upon must be documented in the case record.

**21.** Any time during the four month period, that it is evident the natural or adoptive parent or needy caretaker relative is not complying with the plan of action, the FSS worker notifies the CW worker and terminates the TANF adult only benefits. If the CW plan changes any time during the four month period

to other than reunification, the FSS worker is notified and the TANF adult only benefits are terminated.

**22.** A County Worker Activity (CWA) Report 80 notifies the FSS worker during the third month for action to be taken. If no action is taken by regular roll of the fourth month the case continues to appear on the CWA Report. It is the responsibility of the FSS worker to take appropriate timely action. The case record must document the decision to not return the child(ren) to the home. Other available support services and OKDHS programs are explained to the natural or adoptive parent or the needy caretaker relative.

### **340:10-20-1. Diversion Assistance (DA)**

(a) **Scope.** DA for families with a minor child(ren) provides for financial assistance in lieu of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) when there is an immediate need to retain or obtain employment. ■ 1 & 2 DA is not used to pay fines, including traffic fines, or any cost related to a criminal offense, such as legal fees or court costs. DA is limited to once in the lifetime of the applicant(s); therefore, it is vital that financial planning be initiated to determine if the provision of DA will allow the family to be self-sufficient for the next 12 months. ■ 3 Families approved for this benefit are not included in the count of persons reported for federal participation rates and these payments do not count against the individual(s) 60-month lifetime limit of receipt of TANF. For this reason, an adult must be included in the DA benefit. ■ 4

(b) **Need.** The criteria for the eligibility for DA are described in (1) through (4).

(1) The individual(s) is employed or has a bona fide offer of employment. ■ 5

(2) There is a financial need which, if not met, can cause the loss of employment or the offer of employment for the individual(s). ■ 6

(3) The family monthly gross income cannot exceed the gross income maximum as shown on the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) Appendix C-1, Schedule of Maximum Income, Resource, and Payments Standards, Schedule XVI, for the appropriate family size. ■ 7

(4) Family resources cannot exceed limits as shown on OKDHS Appendix C-1, Schedule XVI. ■ 8

(c) **Requirements.** ■ 9 The applicant(s) completes Form FSS-1, Comprehensive Application and Review, which states the applicant(s) agrees to not apply for TANF for one year from the date of application for DA. ■ 10 In two-parent families both parents must sign the application form. ■ 11

(1) Refer to OAC 340:65-3-4 for Social Security number (SSN) requirement. The application is not delayed waiting for a SSN.

(2) Refer to OAC 340:10-15 for requirements for citizenship and alienage.

(3) The application is processed within seven working days.

(d) **Benefits.** ■ 12 Benefits can equal up to three months of the payment standard as shown on OKDHS Appendix C-1, Schedule XVI for the appropriate family size. ■ 13

Benefits can be approved in more than one authorization as long as the request for additional funds is made before the end of the 90 day period which begins with the initial date of application, and does not exceed three times the monthly payment standard for the family size. ■ 14 Payment is issued through an authorization to purchase. ■ 15 The provider is paid no later than five working days from the date of receipt of the properly completed invoice in the OKDHS Finance Division. ■ 16

### **INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF**

1. Refer to OAC 340:10-9 for relationship requirements.
2. Any family that includes a head of household or spouse of a head of household who has already reached the 60-month time limit is not eligible for Diversion Assistance (DA).
3. The lifetime limit applies to the adult(s) and child(ren) included in the DA payment. As long as the child(ren) remains a minor, this restriction applies.
4. See OAC 340:10-3-56(a)(3) for individual(s) whose needs cannot be included.
5. The worker is required to verify there is current employment or there is a valid offer of employment. This is documented in the case record.
6. The worker is required to verify the financial need and the cost. A budget sheet can be used to determine income and expenses.
7. Family gross income includes stepparent income, income of a person acting in the role of a spouse, and income of parents of a minor parent. See OAC 340:10-3-26 and 340:10-3-40 for consideration of income.
8. See OAC 340:10-3-5 for consideration of resources.
9. (a) At the time of application, the worker advises DA applicants of other social services available to them and their family members such as substance abuse, domestic violence, Prevention and Relationship Program (PREP), or marriage counseling services. If appropriate, a referral is made to the Children and Family Services Division.  
  
(b) There is no work requirement and no deprivation of parental support required for either single or two-parent families. Referrals can be made to an existing community resource for individuals who have not obtained a high

school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) certificate and have demonstrated a lack of literacy skills. Refer to OAC 340:10-2-6(4)(C). During the certification period, current literacy contracts can provide payment of services for the DA recipient who follows through with a referral.

10. The county director can approve Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) if there is an unforeseen circumstance that requires the family to apply. This approval is only used after the three-month time period covered by DA benefit. The approval by the county director must be documented in Family Assistance/Client Services (FACS) case notes. Receipt of TANF during this three-month period is a duplication of benefits.

11. Both parents do not have to be employed; however, one must be at risk of losing his or her employment or the offer of employment.

12. The guidelines for DA are listed in (1) through (2) of this Instruction. Any exceptions to these guidelines must be approved by the appropriate area office.

(1) Transportation. This service can be utilized when a transportation related expense has been determined. To be eligible for an automobile repair or expenses related to tag, title, tax, and/or insurance, the automobile must be owned or co-owned by the payee, his or her spouse, or the payee's parent or the spouse's parent if under age 21 and the payee or spouse must have a valid driver's license.

(2) Shelter expense. This service can be utilized when an expense related to shelter has been determined.

13. The worker must:

(1) determine on a case-by-case basis whether the service is available through any other resource, which includes other Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) programs, local churches, and civic groups;

(2) negotiate for goods and services for the individual(s) at the least possible cost and determine whether the labor cost can be reduced or donated;

(3) not include state or local taxes in the negotiated amounts;

**(4) pre-determine and authorize any payment or service by signing the Authorization to Purchase form; and**

**(5) inform the individual to sign the Authorization to Purchase form only after the service has been provided.**

**14. When the certification is processed, the worker must enter on the Fin. Assistance tab on FACS, the warrant amount field with three times the TANF payment standard for the number of persons in the assistance unit.**

**15. The payment screen is accessed through the on-line Finance system. Enter the provider's federal identification number, address, and telephone number. Enter on the same screen case number, cash amount of the service, the object code 42 for transportation or 43 for shelter expense, and a description of the service requested by the individual. This description must be as detailed as possible to prevent any misunderstanding as to what the payment of the authorization covers. When all the information is entered the completed form is printed and given to the individual.**

**16. The county director or designee is responsible for periodically monitoring expenditures from the DA account.**