

## **PARTICIPANT REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS**

**PROGRAM NAME:** Passport to Economic Progress

**PROGRAM APPLICATION USED FOR DATA COLLECTION:** *One-Stop Service Tracking (OSST) system*

**FUNDING SOURCE:** *Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)*

**FUNDING AMOUNT:** \$2,000,000 Total

**Tampa Bay Workforce Alliance, Inc. (RWB 15) - \$1,350,000**

**Suncoast Workforce Board, Inc. (RWB 18) - \$650,000**

**DATE RANGE FUNDS MAY BE USED:** *July 1, 2008-June 30, 2009*

**REGIONAL WORKFORCE BOARDS (RWBs) AFFECTED:** Tampa Bay WorkForce Alliance, Inc. – RWB 15, Hillsborough County and Suncoast Workforce Board, Inc. - RWB 18, Manatee and Sarasota Counties

### **PURPOSE and INTENT**

The Florida State Legislature declared there are former recipients of Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) who are working full time but whose incomes are below 200 percent of the poverty level. Incomes below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level make families vulnerable to welfare and public assistance dependency. The legislation is designed to require the implementation of a performance-based program: the program defines incentives for achieving specific benchmarks designed to lead to self-sufficiency, which the participant can earn while working full-time. The intent of the program is to address **TANF purpose number two: end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting work, job preparation and marriage.**

Program providers must determine eligibility and retain documentation to support eligibility requirements in the case file. The Eligibility Form for TANF Funded Services, [AWI WTP 0005](#) must be used for any individuals enrolling in the *Passport to Economic Progress program on or after July 1, 2008.*

### **ELIGIBILITY (as stated in Florida Statutes 445.048):**

- A. To be eligible for the Passport to Economic Progress program, an individual must:**
1. Be a former recipient of TCA who last received such assistance on or after January 1, 2000 or must be a member of a family meeting all other eligibility criteria for being served under TANF purpose number two.
    - If the enrollee is a former recipient of TCA, the enrollee's cash assistance must have been closed due to receipt of earned income; receipt of earned income and the Cash Assistance Severance Benefit;

Florida Statute 445.048

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increased earnings; increased receipt of Child Support with earned income, or has earned income and opts not to receive TCA.

- For the purpose of enrollees who are not former recipients of TCA, these individuals must meet TANF eligibility requirements. If the individual is a Non-Custodial Parent (NCP) and is enrolled under the definition of family as an NCP, the program must engage the participant to cooperate with Child Support Enforcement and pay child support. This is to meet requirements under TANF purpose number two.
2. Reside in the areas designated and funded for the Passport program.
  3. Continue to meet the definition of family as indicated on the Eligibility Form for TANF Funded Services, AWI WTP 0005, which can be found on the [Welfare Transition Website](#);
  4. Meet citizenship or qualified non-citizenship status as indicated on the Eligibility Form for TANF Funded Services, AWI WTP 0005;
  5. Remain below 200 percent of the [Federal Poverty Level](#) ;
  6. For the purpose of the ***Passport bonuses***,
    - The participant must be employed full time, which for the purposes of this program means employment averaging at least 32 hours per week.
    - Have an average family income below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level for the six months preceding the date of application for each performance based incentive bonus. The Federal Poverty Level is available at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/poverty.shtml> .
  7. The RWB must retain documentation regarding income.
    - Utilizing income from TCA and Food Stamps is appropriate. The RWB may use Florida On-line Recipient Integrated Data Access (FLORIDA) screens and/or self-attestations to verify household income for the previous six months. Other documentation, including pay stubs, verification of employment and bank statements will be accepted based on local operating procedures and State data validation requirements.

**B. Bonuses or incentives are regionally defined for the purposes of the Passport program. Bonuses and incentives must be performance based.**

**C.** In order to assist **former recipients of TCA** who are **participating in the Passport** program with the transition from welfare to self-sufficiency, transitional benefits **may be** provided for up to four years after the last month the family receives TCA. Transitional participants must meet all other eligibility criteria for each benefit listed under Florida Statute. Extended transitional services are defined as:

1. Transitional education and training support services as specified in F.S. 445.030 for up to four years after the family is no longer receiving TCA;

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2. Transitional transportation support services as specified in F.S. 445.031 for up to four years after the family is no longer receiving TCA; and
3. Transitional Childcare as specified in F.S. 445.032 for up to four years after the family is no longer receiving temporary cash assistance.

The language in 445.048 (3) (F.S.) does not constitute an entitlement. Extended transitional benefits may only be provided to former recipients of TCA according to Florida Statutes. The section of Florida Statutes that clarifies Transitional Childcare as a support service was updated in 2007. In order for an individual to be eligible for transitional childcare, (s)he must be:

- A former welfare transition program participant or an individual redirected from cash assistance through Up-Front Diversion;
- Employed or actively seeking employment; and
- Below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

### **PERFORMANCE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

Based on legislative language, Workforce Florida, Inc., (WFI) in conjunction with the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) and the affected RWBs and program providers shall conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of the demonstration program. The evaluation is based on the degree to which clients accomplish agreed upon outcomes that are focused on ultimately achieving self-sufficiency.

### ***General Instructions***

Evidence of the participant's involvement in the program and achievements are retrieved from the OSST system. Each service, activity and training entered in OSST must have a provider. The individual services, training and activities are identified as Passport affiliated based on the provider entered in the OSST system. The Passport FEID numbers and provider information are given below.

- Each individual who is enrolled in the program must have a *Benchmark -1* entered and open under the *Service Plan*. A TANF Benchmark-1 entered under the *Service Plan* with the 2008-2009 Passport provider will identify the individual as enrolled in the Passport program during 2008-2009 program year. This benchmark must remain open during the program year or until the participant exits the Passport program.
- If a separate funding source is used for services (i.e. regular TANF Formula Funds), activities or training, enter the appropriate funding source's information. If the provider does not exist in OSST, add the provider to OSST based on the RWBs local operating procedures.
- Beginning with the month of July 2008, each RWB shall enter all participant data for each participant enrolled in Passport 2008-2009 in OSST. This includes goals, barriers, benchmarks, employment activities, trainings, and services. Participant information must be entered within **ten days after each full month** for the duration of the grant. The reports will be pulled and reviewed on the **first working day after the tenth** of the following month.

Florida Statute 445.048

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- Other information will be pulled from the OSST system and compiled in the reports provided to WFI. This information includes goals, barriers to employment, educational levels, and support services. Data entry on the *Skill Development and Plan Development* screens will be critical for reporting.

**The Passport to Economic Progress demonstration program provider information and Federal Employment Identification (FEID) number:**

**Passport provider for Region 15**

Provider Name: 2008 Passport RWB 15

Phone: 813-930-7400

FEID Number: 70120080715

**Passport provider for Region 18**

Provider Name: 2008 Passport RWB 18

Phone: 941-714-7449

FEID Number: 70120080718

**1. Benchmarks**

**A. General Benchmarks Information:**

1. The Passport to Economic Progress program offers performance based incentive bonuses. Receipt of incentive bonuses are contingent upon achieving specific **goals or benchmarks** agreed to and documented in the participant's signed **self-sufficiency plan**.
2. If a program participant receives an incentive or bonus, a correlated benchmark **must** be entered on the *Skill Development* screen, and a goal must be entered and detailed on the *Plan Development* screen. The WFI will receive a record of all benchmarks entered with an outcome of *Completed* and a list of goals associated with the case.
3. Documentation to support data entered in the system is required to be retained in the file for audit and monitoring.
4. If a participant was enrolled and engaged under the 2007-2008 program and is to be served under the 2008-2009 program, the participant must be determined eligible for the 2008-2009 year. An Eligibility Form for TANF Funded Services, AWI 0005, must be completed. The enrollment benchmark for the 2007-2008 year must be **ended**. A new enrollment benchmark with the appropriate provider must be entered.

**5. Benchmarks**

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- **TANF Benchmark -1 (851):** is the **enrollment benchmark**. This benchmark is entered under *Add Services* once the individual has been determined or re-determined eligible and is enrolled in the Passport to Economic Progress program. Each individual enrolled in the program **must** have a **Benchmark - 1 entered and open** under the *Service Plan* during program engagement. This benchmark must remain open during the receipt of Passport services, bonuses, or until the participant exits the Passport demonstration program.
- **TANF Benchmark -2 (852): Applied for Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).** This benchmark is entered by selecting *Add* under the *Service Plan* if the participant applies for the EITC during the Passport program year. If the participant **receives** the EITC, end the service benchmark with an outcome of **Completed**. If the individual did not receive the EITC, enter an outcome other than *Completed*. This TANF benchmark may only be entered once. Documentation may include the application with a confirmation number for regular EITC, pay stubs for advanced EITC with a reflection of line item for EITC and/or self-attestation.
- **TANF Benchmark - 3 (853): Attained a GED or high school diploma.** This benchmark is entered by selecting *Add* under the *Service Plan* if the participant attains a GED or high school diploma during the Passport program year. This benchmark may only be entered once. The self-sufficiency plan and the activity/training information (on the *Skill Development* screen) should reflect the goal. Please update the *Plan Development* screen under the *Educational Details* tab with the appropriate educational attainment. The *Goals and Interests* section of the *Plan Development* screen should reflect the education process. **To be counted as a successful achievement, the benchmark must be ended with an outcome of *Completed*.**
- **TANF Benchmark – 4 (854): Attained a vocational education certificate or a job skills training certificate as stated in the self-sufficiency plan.** This benchmark is entered by selecting *Add* under the *Service Plan* if the participant attains a vocational education or training (related to employment) certificate during the Passport program year. This TANF benchmark may be entered more than one time. The self-sufficiency plan and the activity/training information (on the *Skill Development* screen) should reflect details of the goal achieved. Please update the *Plan Development* screen under the *Educational Details* tab with the

appropriate educational attainment information and the goal section with the appropriate goal information. To be counted as a successful achievement, the TANF benchmark must be ended with an outcome of *Completed*.

- **TANF Benchmark -5 (855): Upgrade position.** This benchmark is entered by selecting *Add* under the *Service Plan* if the participant obtains an upgraded position. This benchmark may be entered more than once. The self-sufficiency plan should reflect the details of the goal achieved. Update the *Skill Development* screen with the new position/employment appropriately. To be counted as a successful achievement, the benchmark must be ended with an outcome of *Completed*.
- **TANF Benchmark – 6 (856): Increase available income.** This benchmark is entered by selecting *Add* under *Service Plan* if the participant obtains an increase in available income through an increase in wages/earnings, an addition of fringe benefits, an increase in hours, and/or a shift differential. These examples are the only reasons a Benchmark 6 is entered in the system. This benchmark may be entered more than once. The self-sufficiency plan should reflect the details of the goal achieved. Update the *Skill Development* screen with the new position/employment appropriately. To be counted as a successful achievement, the benchmark must be ended with an outcome of *Completed*.
- **TANF Benchmark – 7 (857): Retention 30 days.** This benchmark is entered by selecting *Add* under the *Service Plan* if the participant retains employment for 30 days at a minimum of 32 hours per week. This benchmark may only be entered once per job. The self-sufficiency plan should reflect the type and detail of the job retention goal. Update the *Skill Development* screen with the job follow-up information. To be counted as a successful achievement, the benchmark must be ended with an outcome of *Completed*. Update the *Plan Development* screen with the job retention goal information.
- **TANF Benchmark -8 (858): Retention 90 days.** This benchmark is entered by selecting *Add* under the *Service Plan* if the participant retains employment for 90 days at a minimum of 32 hours per week. This benchmark should only be entered once per job. The self-sufficiency plan should reflect the detail of the job retention goal. Update the *Skill Development* screen with the job follow-up information. To be counted as a successful achievement, the benchmark must be ended with an outcome of

*Completed.* Update the *Plan Development* screen with the job retention goal information.

- **TANF Benchmark – 9 (859): Retention 180.** This benchmark is entered by selecting *Add* under the *Service Plan* if the participant retains employment for 180 days at a minimum of 32 hours per week. This benchmark should only be entered once per job. The self-sufficiency plan should reflect the type and detail of the job retention goal. Update the *Skill Development* screen with the job follow-up information. To be counted as a successful achievement, the benchmark must be ended with an outcome of *Completed.* Update the *Plan Development* screen with the job retention goal information.

**6. The following are Activity Benchmarks. These benchmarks are entered under the activity section of the *Skill Development* screen with the appropriate Passport to Economic Progress provider.**

- **TANF Benchmark -1 (851): Participant completed other self-sufficiency goal.** This benchmark is entered by selecting *Add Activity* under the *Skill Development* section of the *Skill Development* screen if the participant receives a bonus incentive for any other reason that is not identified by another benchmark listed in the reporting instructions. The self-sufficiency plan must reflect the detail of the goal. Update the *Plan Development* screen with the goal information. To be counted as a successful achievement, the benchmark must be ended with an outcome of *Completed.*

## 2. Non-Benchmark Data Entry

Other information will be collected from the OSST system.

- **Educational Attainment:** on the *Plan Development* screen, the user can enter and update the participant’s educational level. To enter the program participant’s educational level, the user must select the *Edit* tab under the *Education Details*. **Educational levels will be reported to the WFI.**
- **Barriers to Employment:** on the *Plan Development* screen, the user can enter barriers to employment by selecting the *Add* tab under the *Needs and Barriers* sub-heading. **Statistics regarding four specific barriers will be reported to WFI.** The barriers are “Criminal Record”, “Probation/Parole Record”, “Medical/Dental Care” and “English as a Second Language”. Please note, if a participant discloses substance abuse and/or mental health issues, the barrier



entered should be “Medical/Dental Care”. Program participants should be assisted to overcome or to get help with barriers.

- **Support Services:** on the *Skill Development* screen, users can record the support services a program participant is receiving by selecting the *Add* tab under the *Service Plan* sub-heading. Support services funded by TANF dollars must be entered in OSST. This includes transitional support services, Passport funded support services or other support services provided through local TANF dollars/TANF programs. **WFI will receive information regarding the number of Passport participants receiving transitional services, childcare, transportation, etc.**

## QUARTERLY REPORTS

Each month, AWI in will retrieve data from OSST and prepare program performance reports using the data.

## CLOSE OUT INSTRUCTIONS

### A. 2007-2008 Program Participants:

- If the Passport participant was enrolled during the 2007-2008 program year and will not be served using Passport funds during the 2008-2009 program year, the case may be left open to record retention data.
  - i. A new enrollment benchmark should not be entered.
  - ii. If the Passport program will no longer expend Passport TANF funds on the participant and retention data is not being recorded in the system, the case should be terminated. The *Actual End Date* (for all services and benchmarks with the Passport provider) should be entered to reflect the last day on which the individual was a Passport participant, when the service ended (activity, training, etc.), or when the benchmark was achieved.
- Longitudinal benchmarks may be entered on 2007-2008 participants no later than March 10, 2009. The final report will be pulled on the first working day after the tenth of March, 2009. If the case is not being tracked for retention based on the reporting instructions, the case should be closed, unless the case has been enrolled in the 2008-2009 program.

### B. 2008-2009 Program Participants

- If the participant is being enrolled in the 2008-2009 program year and will be provided services with 2008-2009 Passport dollars, a **TANF Benchmark 1** with the correct provider must be entered under the *Service Plan* to reflect 2008-2009 eligibility and enrollment. Staff must also ensure that the participant is eligible for the 2008-2009 program year by completing the

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Eligibility Form for TANF Funded Services, [AWI WTP 0005](#) . All benchmarks obtained during the 08-09 year must have the 2008-2009 provider.

- If the program participant was enrolled during the 2008-2009 program year, exits the program, and is no longer being served with Passport funds:
  - i. End the services, activities, training and employment appropriately.
  - ii. Close the case. Select the *Case Action* drop down box on the *Case-at-a-Glance* screen. Select *Close This Case*.
  - iii. Cases may remain open with an enrollment benchmark (TANF Benchmark 1) while monitoring for progress and tracking longitudinal benchmarks. These particular cases should be closed once the case is no longer being monitored.
  - iv. Longitudinal benchmarks may be entered on 2008-2009 participants no later than March 10, 2010.