

Approved by USDA 11/09/2006

STATE OF FLORIDA

FOOD STAMP

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM

PLAN OF OPERATIONS

FOR

OPTIONAL WORKFARE PROGRAMS

FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR (FFY) 2007

Submitted By:
The Department of Children and Families
Office of ACCESS Florida
Food Stamp Employment
And Training Program

And

The Agency for Workforce Innovation

SUMMARY OF FLORIDA'S FOOD STAMP OPTIONAL WORKFARE PROGRAMS

A. Abstract of Florida's Food Stamp Optional Workfare Program (OWP)

The Food Stamp Optional Workfare Program is a program in which food stamp recipients perform work in a public service capacity as a condition of eligibility. In lieu of wages, workfare participants receive compensation in the form of their household's monthly food stamp allotment. The funding for the three workfare contracts is 50/50 state/federal match funds. The 100% federal grant funds are only used to operate Florida's Food Stamp Employment and Training Program and therefore are not used to fund the Optional Workfare Programs.

The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) is the single state agency for the Food Stamp Program. The Department of Children and Families and the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) have a written Interagency Agreement for the Agency for Workforce Innovation to operate the Optional Workfare Programs. All Optional Workfare Programs are operated by written contracts between the Agency for Workforce Innovation and the County Board of Commissioners in the three separate counties as follows:

1. Optional Workfare Counties

- a. Escambia County: The Escambia County Board of Commissioners is the operating agency for the Escambia County Optional Workfare Program. The Optional Workfare Program has been in continuous operation since 1985.
- b. Walton County: The Walton County Board of Commissioners sub-contracts the Walton County Optional Workfare Program to the Okaloosa/Walton College, which is the operating agency for the program. The Optional Workfare Program has been in continuous operation since April 1, 1995.
- c. Holmes and Washington Counties are part of the Walton County Optional Workfare Program. The Walton County Board of Commissioners has formed a consortium with the Holmes County Board of Commissioners and the Washington County Board of Commissioners to provide workfare services to Holmes and Washington Counties as part of the Walton County Optional Workfare Program.
- d. Okaloosa County: The Okaloosa County Board of Commissioners sub-contracts the Okaloosa County Optional

Workfare Program to Workforce Connection Inc., which is the operating agency for the program. The Optional Workfare Program began on January 1, 1998.

2. **Program Changes:** There are no program changes for this fiscal year. According to Florida law the Agency for Workforce Innovation operates all employment and training related programs. The Agency for Workforce Innovation continues to be responsible for administering the Optional Workfare Program contracts, with technical assistance provided by the Department of Children and Families Program staff.

Each County Board of Commissioners has requested that the Optional Workfare Program for its county be renewed for another year. Florida wishes to renew the Optional Workfare Program for all three contracts.

3. **Population:** Nonexempt food stamp recipients as defined in 7 CFR 273.7(a) and (b) and Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) as defined in 273.24 are required to register for work and participate in the Optional Workfare Program.

Exemptions from work registration are defined in 7 CFR 273.7(b) and the exceptions to the ABAWD time limit are described in 273.24. In addition, a non-ABAWD household is deferred from participation if the household's monthly food stamp allotment is less than \$95 because it is not cost effective to assign those households to workfare sites.

OWP participants may be excused from program participation by the service provider for a period up to 90 days for the following good cause reasons:

- ◆ Household emergency;
- ◆ Medical incapacity (less than 90 days);
- ◆ Medical incapacity of a household member;
- ◆ Pregnancy;
- ◆ Lack of childcare;
- ◆ Lack of transportation; and
- ◆ Circumstances beyond the individual's control.

Procedures for noncompliance described in the FFY 2007 Food Stamp Employment and Training Program plan apply to the Optional Workfare Program.

4. **Program Components:** The workfare component is the only mandatory component in the Optional Workfare Program. As long as the participant is participating in the workfare component, (s)he may also participate in education/training components.

Note: Orientation is a required activity for new or reopened referrals, if the participant has not attended orientation within the last 12 months. Orientation is required if there has been significant program changes since the participant last attended, regardless of the time frame. Assessment is required prior to placement into a component. Orientation and assessment are not stand-alone components; however they are qualifying ABAWD activities and are considered part of the component to which the participant is initially assigned.

B. Program Component

1. Component Summary

a. Name of Component: Workfare/Work Experience

1. Description of component: Workfare is a work component in which food stamp recipients perform work in a public service capacity as a condition of eligibility. In lieu of wages, workfare participants receive compensation in the form of their household's monthly food stamp allotment. The primary goal of workfare is to improve the recipient's employability and to encourage the recipient to move into regular employment while returning something of value to the community.

The Work Experience Component consists of the three following activities:

- Upfront Job Search/Work Experience (WE)- Self-Initiated Work Experience (SIWE)
- Work Experience
- Work Experience combined with Job Search (JS)/Job Search Training (JST)

Note: Self-Initiated Work Experience, although not part of this component, is an activity to which participants may also be assigned.

Work Experience sites are developed by the service providers. Work site agreements and job descriptions are developed with community based organizations. The calculation used to determine the required hours of Work Experience participation is the household allotment of food stamps, divided by the state minimum wage, divided by the number of participants in the household. *Work Experience* will be used in the management information system to identify individuals assigned to this activity.

During the first 30 days after referral from the DCF, participants may be assigned to job search after orientation and assessment as long as the participant is being referred to WE/SIWE at the end of the 30-day period. *Upfront Job Search/WE-SIWE* will be used in the management information system to identify participants assigned to this activity. The participant will be assigned to WE or SIWE and the management information system will be updated to reflect the new assignment when this activity ends. **NOTE:** The hours assigned to Upfront Job Search/WE-SIWE should not exceed the benefit calculation.

After the first 30 days, Job Search and Job Search Training can be included in this activity, but must comprise less than half of the required Work Experience hours for the month. *Work Experience combined with JS/JST* will be used in the management information system to identify individuals assigned to this activity.

2. Type of component: A work component.
3. Description of component structure: Optional Workfare Programs are administered by written contracts between the Agency for Workforce Innovation and three separate county governments. Workfare participants are placed at not-for-profit and public agency work sites to perform work equal to the value of their monthly food stamp allotment.
4. Geographic areas covered: Escambia County; Okaloosa County; Walton County; Holmes County; and Washington County.
5. Anticipated number of mandatory registrants who will begin the component: 8,050

(Escambia = 5,000; Walton = 1,450; Okaloosa = 1,600)

Holmes and Washington Counties are served out of Walton County and therefore, are not shown separately.

6. Anticipated number of volunteer registrants who will enter the component: -0-
7. Anticipated number of Notice of Adverse Actions (NOAAs) for noncompliance with the component: 4,050 (Escambia =2,500; Walton = 750; Okaloosa = 800).

Holmes and Washington Counties are served out of Walton County and therefore, are not shown separately.

8. Targeted population: The targeted population is all food stamp work registrants who do not meet exemption, exception, or deferral criteria.
9. Level of participant effort: The maximum total number of hours of work required of a household each month shall be determined by dividing the household's food stamp allotment by the state minimum wage, with the maximum number of hours required being 30 per week. Optional Workfare Programs have the option to allow participants to find their own community work experience slot, however, this option will be used only if an appropriate work site assignment cannot be located for the participant from existing work sites.
10. Organizational responsibilities: The public or not-for-profit agency must agree to allow the registrant to conduct job search activities during work hours, give assistance in applying for jobs that are available within that agency, and arrange work hours to complement any job preparation, education, or training activity in which the registrant may be involved. The operating agency will review the participant's attendance and performance at least monthly.
11. Per participant cost of participant reimbursement: Based on recent information (one quarter) projected forward:
Escambia: $(\$8,075 / 3 \text{ months}) * (12 \text{ months})$
= \$32,300
Okaloosa: $(\$2,400 / 3 \text{ months}) * (12 \text{ months})$
= \$9,600

Walton: $(\$4,075 / 3 \text{ months}) * (12 \text{ months})$
= \$16,300

Approximate Total = \$58,200

\$25 Transportation and related costs: \$58,200

Dependent care costs: \$0

Amount of the Transportation: \$58,200

State (50%): \$29,100

Federal (50%): \$29,100

12. Cost of the component per participant: \$104.23

(The approximate total of the three contract budgets is \$780,836, plus \$58,200 in participant reimbursements equals \$839,036.) $(\$839,036 / 8,050 \text{ participants} = \$104.23)$

13. Total cost of component: \$839,036
(Total of budgets for three contracts plus reimbursement costs)

14. Cost of Component excluding reimbursements: \$780,836
(Total of budgets for three contracts)

C. Contractual Arrangements.

Financial contracts to provide Optional Workfare Program services have been executed and are managed strictly according to State of Florida law. Copies of the actual documents are available for inspection at the Agency for Workforce Innovation, 107 East Madison, Caldwell Building, Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120 and the Department of Children and Families, 1317 Winewood Boulevard, Building 3, Room 412, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700.

Amount of the Contracts: \$780,836 state (50%): \$390,418

Federal (50%): \$390,418

Note: The amount of the contracts does not include the amount of reimbursements for the Optional Workfare counties.

2. Contract Management Approach: Performance Based, Cost Reimbursement.
3. Basis for Charging for Contractual Services: Actual costs per contract budget line items.
4. Monitoring of Optional Workfare Programs:

The Agency for Workforce Innovation is responsible for monitoring the Optional Workfare Programs. The final monitoring review product for the Optional Workfare Programs is a monitoring report that assesses the providers' compliance with the Optional Workfare Program requirements. In the event the monitoring report includes significant negative findings, a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) will be required from the provider. Technical assistance will be provided by AWI and DCF to assist the provider in their CAP process until all negative findings have been addressed to the satisfaction of AWI. Copies of all state monitoring reports, schedules, and corrective action plans will be maintained at the Agency for Workforce Innovation.

5. Contracts

The three Optional Workfare Program contract renewals have been signed by the applicable County Board of Commissioners and the Agency for Workforce Innovation, with an effective date of July 1, 2006.