



## Policy

<b>SECTION: WTP</b>	<b>POLICY#020-C0085</b>	<b>PAGE: 1 of 6</b>
<b>TITLE: Welfare Transition Program</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE: 8.20.20</b>	
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### **DISTRIBUTION: CAREERSOURCE TAMPA BAY STAFF**

**PURPOSE:** To establish a local policy that identifies the role of CSTB's management of the Welfare Transition (WT) program in Region 15. To guide staff in administering Welfare Transition services.

**BACKGROUND:** In October of 1996 two acts (one Federal and one State) were passed, dramatically changing welfare programs in the state of Florida. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), Public Law 104-193 eliminated the open-ended federal entitlement program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and replaced it with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant. This legislation changed the nation's welfare system from the receipt of cash assistance as an entitlement to one that requires work in exchange for time-limited assistance. The block grant also included flexibility in funding that allows states to develop programs to meet one of the four purposes of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families:

1. Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or the homes of relatives;
2. End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
3. 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. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Florida enacted the Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency Act. The act was developed to implement the requirements of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and to emphasize work, self-sufficiency, and personal responsibility.

In October of 2000, Florida passed the Florida Workforce Innovation Act (Senate Bill 2050), which redefined Florida's welfare delivery system by replacing the former Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency Program with the Welfare Transition Program. This legislation also consolidated the state workforce and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs under one board, CareerSource Florida. The act created the Department of Economic Opportunity, which provides administrative and program guidance for workforce programs. Workforce, welfare, and employment services are delivered by the 24 Regional Workforce Boards via the local CareerSource Florida centers.

WT Services and Activities will be provided in accordance with the Personal Responsibilities and Work Opportunities Act (PRWOA), and the Florida Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act of 2014.

## **POLICY:**

The purpose of the WT program is to assist applicants and recipients of TANF in becoming self-sufficient by emphasizing work, self-reliance, and personal responsibility. This is accomplished by providing a quality program that includes both customer choice and progressive steps for a participant to achieve that will lead to his/her self-sufficiency. The end goal for each participant is to obtain full-time unsubsidized employment.

WT participants are served through all CSTB centers and provided with: Formal Classroom Training, Resource Room Equipment, Computer Training, Job Skills Training, Job Search Opportunities, and Employability Skills Workshops. Also, Community Service and Work Experience opportunities, and Internships at businesses are available for each WT participant to complete as part of their steps leading to full-time employment. Assignment of activities is based on participants' work history, education, employment goals, and/or training, and current skills.

## **Work Registration**

Work Registration begins with the applicant applying for cash assistance online with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) through the MY FLORIDA ACCESS System. DCF will complete all the eligibility process and determination on all TANF applicants. Once DCF determines the applicant is eligible, they will refer the applicant to the WT program and inform them to access the One-Stop Service Tracking (OSST) Client online to complete the Florida State DEO Work Registration Orientation. Also, applicants are informed to contact CSTB to complete the additional steps of the work registration process. However, once DCF receives the alert the OSST Client site has been completed, then DCF can move forward with opening the cash assistance to the applicant.

## **Notice of Mandatory Activity**

After a participant has completed the Work Registration, DCF will approve the cash assistance. Once the TANF is approved by DCF, WT staff receives a system alert through the staff's OSST system that the individual is now a mandatory participant and a Notice of Mandatory Activity (NOMA) Letter is mailed to the participant. The letter informs the client that their cash assistance is open and that they are now actively receiving the assistance. The NOMA instructs the customer to complete an online assessment and contact the LWDB to schedule an appointment. CSTB will initiate the appointment contact and schedule the initial appointment via mailed appointment letter/or telephone scheduling. When the client reports to WT per their NOMA letter, WT staff will check the skills development screen to determine if the client has completed their initial assessment. When all required work registration actions are completed, the NOMA in OSST can be closed as completed by the appropriate WT Staff.

## **Initial Appointment**

Every participant that becomes mandatory will be scheduled an initial assessment appointment with a WT Career Coach. The Career Coach will conduct an initial appointment within 30 days of the client becoming mandatory and complete a program orientation and assignment of mandatory activities.

During this appointment, the WT Career Coach will review all assessments, Grievance forms/process and the Opportunities and Obligations to complete the program orientation and accomplish the following with the participant:

- Restate the goals and requirements of the WT program
- Complete the oral assessment
- Discuss items on all assessments
- Review previous employment history & career goals
- Create Career Development Plan (CDP) in OSST
- Develop objectives/ Steps to Self Sufficiency
- Develop a plan to overcome barriers
- Provide Support Services as needed and based on budget
  - Refer to CSTB Supportive Service and Incentive Policy #018-C0012 for further details.
- Assignment of activities
- Advise participant of obligations, penalties, and sanctions
- Record contact via case note in the OSST system
- Refer to other Workforce Professional or community-based organizations as needed.

### **Career Development Plan (CDP)**

The CDP specifies the activities, services, and short/long term employment goals agreed upon by both the participant and the WT Career Coach. This plan must contain the progressive steps that the participant must take to complete their objectives and become economically self-sufficient. Both the WT Career Coach and the participant must sign and date the CDP and must be maintained in the participants file within CSTB's management information system ATLAS.

A CDP is required for all participants referred to WT and must be initiated and completed within 30 days of his/her case becoming mandatory. The WT Career Coach will complete the CDP during an appointment with the client utilizing all assessments and creating Objectives/ Step to Self Sufficiency. Also, the Career coach will review the participant's short-term and career goals. If the participant does not have any clearly defined goals, the Career coach conducts oral interviews and assessments to begin the process of goal setting. All goals must be reviewed at appointment.

Once the CDP has been completed case management will commence. The purpose of case management is to provide individual guidance and progressive steps that lead each participant toward economic self-sufficiency. Each WT Career Coach is responsible for recording and maintaining all case information in the OSST system and its accuracy.

### **Approved Work Activities for Mandatory Participants**

Allowable Activities assigned during the Initial appointment and on the CDP are outlined below:

#### **Activities**

The Florida State Work Verification Plan defines the required activities into "Core Activities" and "Core Plus Activities".

#### **1. Core Activities**

Core Activities are required work activities that can stand alone or in conjunction with another Core or Core Plus Activities for the participant to meet the required hours.

Outlined below are CSTB considered Core Activities:

- a. Job Search and Job Readiness;
- b. Employment and Training Opportunity Program;
- c. Community Service with a non-profit;
- d. Work experience with a for profit or non-profit employer (must be directly related to their employment goals);
- e. Unsubsidized/ Subsidized Employment;

- f. On-the-Job Training;
- g. Vocational Education and Training; and
- h. Providing Child Care Services.
- i. Attending GED or high school (this only applies to Teen Parents).

## **2. Core Plus Activities**

Core Plus Activities are supplemental work activities that have an educational or training aspect and must be accompanied by a minimum number of hours of participation in a core activity to count towards participation. Outlined below are CSTB considered Core Plus Activities:

- a. Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment
  - Only applies to clients who have already received their high school diploma.
- b. Education Directly Related to Employment
  - Only applies to clients who have not received their high school diploma.
- c. Satisfactory Attendance at a Secondary School or a course of Study Leading to a GED only allows for the completion of a GED. WT allows for the completion of the requirement by attending an off-site class at a state-recognized program.

## **3. Medical Deferrals**

A participant who has medical limitations and will be unable to complete the required amount of participation hours must identify these limitations by submitting the Medical Verification Form signed by a licensed physician. If the Medical Verification Form is used, it must be completed by a licensed physician (ME or DO).

After a participant submits the completed Medical Verification Form, he/she will be scheduled to meet with their Career Coach. During this appointment, the Career Coach will determine what activity(ies) if any, the applicant can complete based upon limitations stipulated by the physician. This decision will depend upon the number of hours that the applicant is allowed to work, as well as the physical limitations reported on the medical verification form. Career Coach will conduct a verbal and written assessment and the information collected will be used to create an Alternative Responsibility Plan (ARP).

## **4. Other Deferrals**

A WT Career Coach may assign the participant to a Deferral Status. Deferral is simply defined as an extenuating circumstance that does not allow the participant to complete work activity. A deferral from work activity can also be made if the participant falls into one of the following categories:

- Lack of Childcare,
- Lack of Transportation,
- National Disasters,
- Deferral Due to Other Reasons, and/or
- Domestic Violence (DV).
  - Refer to CSTB Domestic Violence Procedure #019-C0026 for further details.

*Note: Refer to WT Work Requirements CSTB Procedure #020-C0059 for further information on work activity requirements and understanding of participation rates.*

## **Employment and Training Opportunity Program (ETOP)**

ETOP is job training at a supervised public/ private non-profit agency and for-profit employers. Non-profit work experience maintains a work activity status while the participant awaits placement into an internship or paid employment. It provides a work-based mentoring atmosphere and increases a participant's employability skills.

While participating with non-profit work experience/ internship activities, the WT participant will:

1. Continue to receive the total amount of his/her authorized TANF and food stamps in lieu of a wage.
2. Be deemed an "Employee of the State" for purposes of Worker's Compensation coverage and be subject to the requirements of drug-free workplaces.
3. Complete a required assigned number of hours of ETOP. A participant in ETOP may also be assigned to additional activities to ensure all required hours are completed.

## **Job Participation Rates**

At a minimum timesheets/ paystub must be submitted to the WT Career Coach bi-weekly with documented weekly activity hours the participant has completed for those weeks. CSTB utilizes centralized data entry through the Management Information System (MIS) department. If a participant misses an assigned or scheduled activity, he/she are required to provide a documented "good cause" reason as to why he/she did not attend their activity to prevent a penalty action to be initiated on their case.

## **Non-compliance Penalties**

The CDP in OSST is created along with the Objectives/ Steps to Self Sufficiency to ensure that the participant is aware of their obligations as required by the WT program. If the participant fails to complete the required work activities, a pre-penalty is requested on the case as instructed in State policy.

- **First non-compliance:** Temporary cash assistance shall be terminated for the entire family for a minimum of 10 days from the effective date of the sanction or until the individual who failed to comply with the work requirement does so, whichever is later.
- **Second non-compliance:** Temporary cash assistance shall be terminated for the family for 1 month from the effective date of the sanction or until the individual who failed to comply does so, whichever is later. The noncompliant individual must comply with the required work activity upon completion of the one-month penalty period before temporary cash assistance can be reinstated. Upon meeting the work requirements, TCA shall be reinstated to the date of compliance or the first day of the month following the penalty period, whichever is later.
- **Third non-compliance:** Temporary cash assistance shall be terminated for the family for a period of 3 months or until the individual who failed to comply does so, whichever is later. The non-compliant individual must comply with the required work activity upon completion of the 3-month penalty period before temporary cash assistance can be reinstated. Upon meeting this requirement, temporary cash assistance shall be reinstated to the date of compliance or the first day of the month following the penalty period, whichever is later.

## **REFERENCES:**

- Florida Statute 445.024 Work Requirements:  
<https://www.flsenate.gov/laws/statutes/2017/445.024>
- US Code-2014-title 2- The Public Health and Welfare- Chapter 7- subchapter IV:  
<https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title42/chapter7/subchapter4&edition=prelim>
- Public Law 104-193:  
<https://www.congress.gov/104/plaws/publ193/PLAW-104publ193.pdf>
- Florida Workforce Innovation Act:  
<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/data/statutes/digest2000/sl00165.pdf>
- DCF- Temporary Cash Assistance:  
<https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/access/temporary-cash-assistance.shtml>

**INQUIRIES:** Any questions about this desk guide should be directed to the Chief Operating Officer or Programs Director managing WTP and/or their designee.