



# LCDJFS E-Newsletter

Spring 2016

A newsletter from the Lorain County  
Department of Job & Family Services

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## Fiscal Reconcile for 2015

**By Jeff King**  
**Fiscal Administrator**

Our agency receives funding from three sources. The Federal, the State, and the County Government. Each of these funding sources have a different Fiscal Year. The County fiscal year is January 1<sup>st</sup> thru December 31<sup>st</sup>. The State fiscal year is from July 1<sup>st</sup> thru June 30<sup>th</sup> and the Federal year runs from October 1<sup>st</sup>. thru September 30<sup>th</sup>. These multiple funding sources require different procedures to close out and reconcile their fiscal years. The State and Federal reconciliation process grants us a three month "liquidation" period.

Lorain County Job and Family Services has 21 allocations that fund our services. Many of these allocations are too small to actually fund the designated service that they were established to fund. When this occurs we consolidate some allocations to fund the desired expenditures. The State and Federal allocations also have some pre-determined "mapping" that permits us to exceed our allocations with the excess expenditures automatically rolling to a different allocation. We are also able to purposefully exceed some state allocations and this excess rolls to a federal allocation.

Our goal in the Fiscal Department is to spend up to the designated amount without exceeding the Allocation. We are also challenged to have all of the expenditures end in the correct allocations. Certain expenditures are more advantageous ending in certain allocations. All of this must be accomplished within the time frames established by the funding sources.

We recently closed our fiscal years and reconciled our allocations. For Fiscal Year 15, Lorain County Job and Family Services utilized 96 % of our allocations. The year end results are very impressive due to the 9,200 RMS hits that our caseworkers fill out over the course of a year. These RMS results are then used by the staff in Fiscal to fund our daily business, which in the end yields an optimal utilization of our many allocations.

# Food Assistance Employment and Training

**By Marge Kiely  
Administrator**

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is designed to promote the general welfare and to safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's population by raising the levels of nutrition among low-income households. SNAP was formerly known as Food Assistance.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Program (FAET) requires mandatory nonexempt work registrants in receipt of SNAP benefits to participate in employment and/or training. Failure to follow the work requirements may result in loss of SNAP benefits and/or sanction. Lorain County DJFS must comply with these federally mandated regulations.

Since October 1, 2013, there have also been added requirements for receiving SNAP benefits for certain individuals, Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD). Again, failure to follow those work requirements may also result in loss of SNAP benefits and/or sanction.

FAET/ABAWD Work Requirements include:

- Participate in an Appraisal appointment with an Employment Service Counselor
- Sign an Employability Contract and fulfill all requirements as outlined on the plan
- Be assigned to and cooperate with an appropriate work activity or work activities

All SNAP applicants/recipients are assessed by the caseworker to determine if they are a mandatory registrant or if they meet exemption criteria. If mandatory, the individual is scheduled for an appraisal with the Employment Service Counselor to review their current employability status, complete a contract, and to be assigned to an appropriate activity.

Recipients may be assigned to one or multiple activities to meet their work activity hours. There are many caveats in regards to which activities are compatible and the number of hours that each individual needs to participate. The Employment Service Counselor explores options with the customer during the appraisal appointment, so that a valid contract can be signed and adhered to. Monthly hours of participation must be verified.

Some of the activities are as follows:

- Work Experience Activity (WEP) is limited to activities that provide an individual with skills to gain employment. WEP must be supervised by the employer, or work site sponsor. Lorain County DJFS is responsible to develop and maintain viable work sites where individuals can be assigned.
- Job Search and Job Readiness is the act of seeking or obtaining employment, preparation to seek or obtain employment, including life-skills and substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, or rehabilitation activities for those who are otherwise employable.
- Education and Training are organized educational programs that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for employment in current or emerging occupations.
- Employment-paid, unpaid, in-kind (for ABAWD only)

Our goal as an agency is to provide a service through FAET/ABAWD assignments that will increase employability by improving job readiness. We want to ensure that participants become familiar with general workplace expectations and exhibit work behavior and attitudes necessary to compete successfully in the labor market.



# Medicaid

By **Sandy Moraco**  
Administrator

Medicaid has been called many things this past couple of years (OIES, OBWP and MAGI) the covered services are the same. The rules and regulations have change, determining eligibility has changed and the system from which it is delivered has changed.

**OIES** - Ohio Integrated Eligibility System, the original name of the computer system where eligibility was determined.

**OBWP** - Ohio Benefit Worker Portal, the current name of the computer system where eligibility is determined. (Same system, new name)

**MAGI** - Modified Adjusted Gross Income, the theory of how eligibility is now determined for family/adult Medicaid.



Individuals may file an applications for OBWP/MAGI Medicaid in several ways. The most popular method is dropped off, mailed, faxed, or email (ODM 7216), and electronically through the Ohio Benefit Portal. We also receive applications from the Federal Market Place as they screen applications that appear to qualify through us. Our global application for assistance can be sent through a paper JFS 7200 or electronically on e-Gateway where we can explore Food Assistance, Cash and Medicaid. Sometimes, individuals may submit multiple applications trying to apply in each of the mentioned methods. Sadly, this delays our processing time as we have to screen and link each application to the original application received.

Currently, the new OBWP system, contains about 34,000 active cases and we have nearly 4,000 cases pending in different stages of processing.

The old computer system, known as CRIS-E, continues to maintain the ABD, Waiver, Nursing Home, QMB, and SLMB Medicaid cases as well as SNAP cases. The current plan is for all Medicaid cases to be converted into OBWP by 6/30/16. Medicaid rules for some of these programs are expected to change effective 7/1/16. Both the rules and the system are undergoing development, clearance, and pending roll-out.

After conversion in June, we will continue to work both CRISE and OBWP as our SNAP/OWF cases will not join OBWP until the middle of 2017, at the earliest.

Working in two systems has caused delays in processing, as they do not talk to each other. Therefore, requiring us to manually input data into both system to determine eligibility for one family. And, with the roll-out of any new software program, there are always glitches and setbacks along the way. We continue to train, and develop best practices to work as efficiently as we can.

To help us speed up the process we need to know what the household's tax filing status is, who is being claimed and by whom, and we can communicate with the Federal IRS Hub (PING) to verify income, and citizenship status. If this PING is successful, we may be able to process the case without additional verification. If it is not successful, then we will send a letter asking for specific verification.

## Child Support Enforcement Agency's Changes

**By Barbara Tamas  
Administrator**

The Lorain County Child Support Enforcement Agency has a new Administrator, Barbara Tamas. Barbara is a licensed attorney in the State of Ohio and was formerly an assistant prosecuting attorney for the Child Support division of the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office. Additionally, Barbara practiced as an assistant prosecutor for the City of Parma, a Juvenile Diversion Magistrate and an assistant law director for the City of Cleveland.

Former Investigator 1 Tina Blakely has been promoted to the position of Supervisor of the Agency's Child Support Establishment unit. Tina has been with the Agency for 25 years, of which 23 years were spent as an Investigator 1. Patricia L. Johnson (Patty) has recently been hired to replace Tina in the capacity of Investigator 1 working the Foster Care caseload. Patty comes to the Agency with 20 years of experience in retail management. Heather Abicht has replaced Amanda Klein as the Agency's new Scheduling Clerk in the Establishment unit. Heather has 20 years of experience in the airline industry.



The Agency's Child Support Modification unit hired Amanda Klein and Mark Taylor as Investigator 1s. Amanda was the former Scheduling Clerk in the Agency's Establishment unit and was promoted to an Investigator 1 after 8 years with the Agency. Mark formerly worked at the Cuyahoga County Child Support Enforcement Agency as a Support Officer for 8 years. Mark has replaced Erica Rollison, as Erica has accepted a position in the Agency's Call Center as an Investigator 1, Call Center Representative. Erica has been employed with the Agency for 23 years. The Agency welcomes all new hires and wishes the best of luck to Tina, Amanda and Erica in their new positions.

### Contact LCDJFS

42485 North Ridge Road  
Elyria, Ohio 44035-1057  
Phone: 440-323-5726  
Fax: 440-323-3422  
TTY/TDD: 440-284-4125  
Child Support Office: 440-284-4401  
Hours of Operation:  
7:30-4:15 Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri  
7:30-6:30 Tue

