

Department of Public
Health and Human Services

SECTION:

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

WoRC GUIDELINES MANUAL

SUBJECT:

Excused Absences and Holidays

Revised ►

EXCUSED ABSENCE HOURS POLICY:

Beginning October 1, 2008 the number of excused absence hours allowed for a TANF participant will be limited to no more than 80 hours in a preceding 12-month period, and no more than 16 hours can be used per month. This will ensure that participants who begin receiving TANF case assistance late in the fiscal year are provided the same benefit as those who have received TANF cash assistance for a longer period of time within the fiscal year.

Revised ►

BREAK IN TANF CASH ASSISTANCE:

If a TANF participant has a break in receipt of TANF cash assistance for any reason the excused absence time period does not start over.

Example: Johnny applies for and receives TANF from 1/1/09 until 6/30/09. TANF closes effective 6/30/09. As of 5/31/09 Johnny uses all 80 hours of his excused absences. On 7/16/09 Johnny reapplies for TANF and is eligible effective 7/16/09. Johnny would not be able to use excused absence hours until 1/1/10.

Revised ►

LIMITATIONS ON EXCUSED ABSENCES:

The following limitations on use of the excused absence hours apply:

1. The participant **must have good cause**, as defined in section 2.3 for not participating;
2. The participant may not use more than 16 excused absence hours in one month;
3. The participant may not exceed 80 excused absence hours in the preceding 12-month period; and
4. The use of the excused absence hours is limited to unpaid allowable work activities.

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TRACKING OF EXCUSED ABSENCES:

WoRC Case Managers will no longer be required to manually track the use of the excused absence hours in the WoRC case file. TEAMS will now track and display excused absence hours on the EMPS screen to ensure the limitations are met.

Revised ►

RECONCILIATION OF EXCUSED ABSENCES:

If the TANF participant meets the above criteria for an excused absence, hours should be reconciled toward the specific activity/component, in addition to all other actual, verified participation hours. This may result in full hours being reconciled on EMPR. A TEAMS case note must be entered regarding the use of the excused absence.

Example: Johnny is scheduled to participate in a WEX placement for 33 hours per week in April. He is absent from the WEX site one day due to illness. He completes full WEX participation the rest of the week (25 hours) as verified by the WEX site supervisor. The WoRC Case Manager verifies that Johnny has excused absence hours available. The WoRC case manager would reconcile a full 33 hours of WEX on EMPR for the week.

If the TANF participant has good cause for not participating, but does not have an excused absence hours available, the activity/component will be reconciled only with actual, verified participation hours on EMPR. A sanction would not be recommended however as good cause exists.

Example: Same scenario as above. Johnny is scheduled to participate in a WEX placement for 33 hours per week in April. He is absent from the WEX site one day due to illness. He completes full WEX participation the rest of the week (25 hours) as

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verified by the WEX site supervisor. The WoRC Case Manager verifies that Johnny has already used 16 excused absence hours in April. The WoRC Case Manager would reconcile the actual 25 hours of participation on EMPR for the week. However, a sanction would not be recommended as Johnny has good cause for non-participation

HOLIDAYS POLICY:

The number of holidays allowed for a TANF participant will now be limited to **no more than 10** in any Federal Fiscal year (October 1 – September 30). The State has designated the following holidays as allowable holidays, no other holidays are allowed:

Columbus Day
Veteran's Day
Thanksgiving
Christmas
New Year's Day
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
President's Day
Memorial Day
4th of July
Labor Day

NOTE: Because of the limitations of the holidays to 10 within any Federal Fiscal year, the "count" of holidays does not start over if there is a break in TANF assistance.

LIMITATIONS ON HOLIDAYS:

The following limitations on use of the holidays apply:

1. The participant must be involved in an **unpaid** allowable work activity or, if participating in employment and the place of

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employment is closed for the holiday, the participant must be paid for the holiday;

NOTE: If the participant is involved in employment, the place of employment is closed but the individual is not paid for the holiday, there is no leave day allowed for the holiday. (The participant may make up the lost hours in another activity or throughout the month.)

2. The participant must have been scheduled to participate in the activity; and
3. The holiday must be included in the list of the allowable holidays above.

TRACKING OF HOLIDAYS:

WoRC Case Managers are still required to manually track the use of the holiday in the WoRC case file to ensure the limitations are met.

RECONCILIATION OF HOLIDAYS:

If the TANF participant meets the above criteria for a holiday absence, eight (8) hours should be reconciled toward the specific activity/component, in addition to all other actual, verified participation hours. This may result in full hours being reconciled on EMPR. A TEAMS case note must be entered regarding the use of the holiday.

Example: Jorge is scheduled to participate in a WEX placement at Rocky Mountain Federal Credit Union for 33 hours per week in October. The credit union is closed on Columbus Day. Jorge does not make up the hours missed that day, but does complete full WEX participation the rest of the week, as verified by the WEX site supervisor. The WoRC Case Manager verifies that Columbus Day is one of the allowed holidays. The WoRC Case Manager would

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reconcile a full 33 hours of WEX on EMPR for the week.

Example: Derek is employed part-time at McDonald's. He is scheduled to work 20 hours per week and has negotiated the employment of 20 hours as an allowable activity on his EP. He is also scheduled to complete 20 hours a week at a WEX site at Good Samaritan.

McDonald's is closed on Christmas and Derek is not given additional shifts that week. He only works 16 hours that week, as verified by pay stubs. Derek is not paid for the holiday. The WoRC Case Manager would reconcile 16 hours of EMP on EMPR for the week and attempt to reconcile another primary activity for the additional hours. Derek may make up the additional hours throughout the month.

Good Samaritan is also closed on Christmas. Derek completes the remaining hours of WEX during the week. Because Derek meets the criteria for a holiday absence, the WoRC Case Manager would reconcile 20 hours of WEX on EMPR for the week.

Example: Derek is employed part-time at McDonald's. He is scheduled to work 20 hours per week and has negotiated the employment of 20 hours as an allowable activity on his EP. He is also scheduled to complete 20 hours a week of self-directed job search.