

Department of Public Health
and Human Services

Section:
CASE MANAGEMENT

TANF CASH ASSISTANCE

Subject:
Parents as Scholars

Supersedes: TANF 701-3 (a) (07/01/06) TB 64 (06/20/11)

► References: 37.78.103, .807, 825 and 826; House Bill 555; Senate Bill 385 (2011 Legislative Session)

GENERAL RULE: Senate Bill 385 revised the Parents As Scholars Program (PAS), which provides that some recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) be allowed to continue postsecondary education activities beyond the allowed 12 months under Federal regulations, or to participate in full-time classes to obtain a General Education Degree or High School diploma. Parents As Scholars participation is limited. The number of slots available is 25 statewide and slots will be awarded through a regional lottery.

**► ELIGIBILITY
CRITERIA**

The TANF recipient wishing to participate in the PAS activity must submit a Parents As Scholars Application (HCS-186) to the WoRC program. The WoRC case manager will review the application for completeness and determine if the participant meets the eligibility criteria. PAS applicants must meet the following:

1. Meet all basic eligibility requirements for TANF, including income and resource criteria and cooperation with paternity and child support regulations. (See 103-3)
2. Must be a full time post secondary education student. The definition of a full-time student is one enrolled at least 12 credit hours each semester or 30 credit hours per year in an approved educational program, or
3. be a full-time high school student, General Education Degree (GED) student, or vocational training student as defined by the institution in which the participant is enrolled.
4. Must be enrolled in an approved educational program defined as a program in a unit of the Montana university system as provided in 20-25-201, a community college, a tribal college, a private college, or any other accredited college in Montana in which an individual is enrolled in pursuit of an associate's or baccalaureate degree or an

accredited high school or training program approved by the department as rule.

EXCEPTION: On-line post-secondary courses are countable toward the required credits as long as the credits are transferable in their entirety to the Montana university system. The number of credits per semester must be comparable to the number of credits that define a full-time post secondary student in Montana. The student must provide proof that the online college is accredited and credits are transferable to a unit of the Montana University system.

5. Must have successfully completed 12 months of Short Term Training (STT) while on TANF and be in good standing with the educational program, unless enrolled as a full-time student in High School or a GED program. GED and high school participants are exempt from this eligibility criteria.

► APPROVED STUDENT

The approved TANF recipient student must:

1. Continue to meet all basic eligibility requirements for TANF.
2. Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale or be making satisfactory progress as defined by the institution in which the participant is enrolled. PAS will match financial aid rules in regard to the GPA and academic probation issues. Verification of current GPA must be provided at the end of each semester and as well as verification of registration for classes for the next semester with a minimum of 12 credits.
3. Ensure the course work will lead to a certificate or degree in an approved program.
4. Not have a baccalaureate degree or a current certificate in a field for which a degree or certificate was previously awarded.
5. Be enrolled full-time in an approved educational program in an accredited college in Montana or in an on-line curriculum for which credits are transferable in their entirety to an approved educational program in Montana, or
6. be enrolled full-time, as defined by the institution, in high school, an Adult Basic Education program, or a Vocational Training program.

7. Maintain monthly face to face contact with the WoRC case manager and school counselor throughout the PAS participation period to ensure ongoing case management, compliance with the FIA/EP requirements and satisfactory progress in educational activities outlined in the comprehensive plan.
8. Develop a plan for the completion of the course of study and the attainment of a degree or certificate, regardless of the number of months remaining on the individual's TANF time clock.

► ASSIGNMENT OF SLOTS

The participant expressing a desire to apply for the Parents As Scholars program must:

1. Complete the *parents As Scholars Application* (HCS-186) and return the completed form to the WoRC program. WoRC Monitors will ensure the applicant meets the eligibility criteria for the PAS Program.
2. If applicant meets the eligibility criteria for the PAS program, the application will be forwarded to Central Office in Helena for submission into the lottery pool and drawing.
3. Once the drawing is held, the WoRC monitors will notify the WoRC case manager by e-mail if a slot was awarded to the PAS applicant.
4. WoRC case manager will notify the participant in writing of the status of the application and if appropriate negotiate and enter a PAS code on the EMPL Screen.

► RETENTION OF SLOTS

Once a TANF recipient student is approved for the PAS program, the slot will be retained during the summer months and school breaks as long as the student continues to participate in negotiated work activities according to their current FIA/EP. A participant must negotiate alternate activities while not attending school to meet the required weekly participation hours according to their EP. Failure to do so may result in the participant being recommended for sanction. If the participants case is closed as a result of a sanction, the student will lose eligibility to participate in the PAS program and the PAS slot will be assigned to another student.

SANCTION

Students in the PAS program can be sanctioned upon recommendation from the WoRC Case Manager. See TANF sanction policy 702-3. A student who is sanctioned the first time while in the PAS program will retain their slot if they renegotiate their FIA/EP before the end of the penalty month. A student who is sanctioned for the second or subsequent time will lose their PAS slot immediately.

DEPENDENT CARE

Dependent daycare will be provided for the hours of school attendance and travel time to and from the childcare provider, with the exception of a \$10.00 co-payment, which is the obligation of the student.

TIMECLOCK

Approval for PAS does not extend the Federal or State 60 month timeclock. PAS recipients must meet extended benefit criteria, such as domestic violence, to receive benefits past 60 months.

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