TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
    DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
    FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS/ELIGIBILITY STAFF

FROM: KEVIN M. MCGUIRE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RE: CHANGING THE FOCUS ON WORK PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

PROGRAM AFFECTED: TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE (TCA)

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

SUMMARY:

When we implemented universal engagement in November 2004, we also implemented the requirement for customers to participate in work activities for 40 hours per week. By simulating an average business work week we are best able to prepare customers for employment. Requiring 40 hours of participation also prepared us to meet anticipated changes to federal rules under TANF Reauthorization.

With the recent passage of TANF Reauthorization legislation that did not raise the minimum hourly requirement for the federal Work Participation Rate, the 40-hour per week participation requirement has come under reconsideration. While our work participation rate continues to increase slowly, to avoid federal penalties we need to do better, and to do that, we need to work with the customers who are not participating at all or are participating for less than the required number of hours. Our goal is to encourage employment and work activity participation that leads to employment.

Action Required

Case managers should develop an Independence Plan for each customer that includes 40 scheduled hours of participation per week. However, effective immediately, case managers should no longer impose a penalty against any customer who is participating in countable activities an average of at least 30 hours per week, or 20 hours per week if the customer is a single parent caring for a child under 6.

Customers caring for a child under the age of 6 must participate for at least 20 hours per week in one of the Core Federal Work Activities. Customers with no children under 6 must participate for 30 hours each week, with at least 20 hours in Core Federal Work Activities.
Activities and up to an additional 10 hours in Non-Core Federal Work Activities. If a customer with a child under age 6 completes 20 hours or more, but less than 40 hours per week in an agreed upon activity, or if a customer with the youngest child of 6 or older completes 30 hours or more, but less than 40 hours per week in an agreed upon activity, do not impose a sanction against the customer. Also, if a customer fails to participate for the required number of hours but documents a good cause reason, do not impose a sanction, and ensure that the appropriate Other State Defined Activities (OT*) are entered into WORKS.

**Core Federal Work Activities include:**
- WEJ Unsubsidized Employment
- WSU Subsidized Private Sector Employment
- WSP Subsidized Public Sector Employment
- OJT On-the-Job Training
- WEX Supervised Work Experience
- WEM Supervised Community Service Programs
- WEC Providing Child Care for a Community Service Participant
- BEV Vocational Education (12 month lifetime limit)
- JBS Job Search/Job Readiness (4 consecutive/6 total week limit per fiscal year)
  - JBT Substance Abuse Treatment (counted as part of JBS)
  - JBM Mental Health Treatment (counted as part of JBS)
  - JBR Rehabilitation Services (counted as part of JBS)

**Non-Core Federal Work Activities include:**
- IST Job Skills Training
- BER Education Directly Related to Employment
- BED Basic Education

**Other State Defined Activities include:**
- OTM Wellness Rehabilitation
- OTD Disabled =>12 Months
- OTP Prenatal/Postpartum
- OTB Child < 1 (<= 12 months lifetime)
- OTG Caring for a Disabled Household Member
- OTQ Transferring Customer
- OTL Pursuit of Income Supports
- OTZ Seeking Child Care (<= 30 days)
- OTT Seeking Transportation (<= 30 days)
- OTF Family Services/Counseling
- OTV Domestic Violence Victim in Counseling
- OTO Court Ordered Appearance
- OTJ Temporary Incarceration
- OTS Substance Abuse Referral/Wait List
- OTC In Conciliation
- OTX Adverse Action Period or Sanctioned
- OTU Under Appeal for Sanction
To increase our ability to assist more customers and, in turn, increase our work participation rate, we must immediately focus our efforts on the TCA work mandatory population that is not engaged or is under-engaged in countable work activities or employment.

INQUIRIES:

Please direct TCA policy inquiries to Marilyn Lorenzo at 410-767-7333 or Gretchen Simpson at 410-767-7937.

cc: DHR Executive Staff  
    DHMH Management Staff  
    FIA Management Staff  
    Constituent Services  
    DHR Help Desk