A. Support Services

**INTENT**

The intent of support services is to provide individualized assistance, subject to the limitations of state funding, that allows clients to participate in case plan activities, build skills for and reduce barriers to employment, accept job offers and retain employment after other resources have first been explored and exhausted.

1. Supporting JOBS case plans

- Basic needs payments for personal incidentals made during the Pre-TANF Program are made from TANF funds issued through the support services payment process. Applicants in the Pre-TANF program may also receive support services that are needed to complete case plan activities;

- Support services are available to support available JOBS program activities, JOBS Plus subsidized employment and Pre-TANF;

- Support services provided for Pre-TANF and TANF JOBS participants are subject to the guidance provided below.

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<th>Specific Requirements; Pre-TANF Program Rule</th>
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The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports individuals to succeed in attaining self-sufficiency by providing payments for items that clients may need to be able to participate in available JOBS activities on their case plans.

- These payments can include items such as child care and transportation. They also may include other payments needed to look for a job (such as interview
clothing when no other resources are available), accept a job offer (such as uniform and tools), for a teen parent to complete a high school diploma or GED, or costs related to a district-approved vocational training (VT) plan (such as books and supplies, and with manager approval, tuition and fees) when no other resources are available;

- Support service payments are authorized in advance of the client beginning the JOBS activity or employment, meaning that they should be issued in time for the client to be able to participate in the planned activities;

- In approving support service payments, the department must consider lower-cost alternatives. It is not the intent of the department to supplant department funding with other funding that is available in the community. It is also not the department’s intent that clients be sent to community organizations seeking their own support to participate in available JOBS activities. It is the department’s expectation that case managers and clients will work collaboratively to seek resources that are reasonably available to the client in order to participate in activities.

Support services may not be used to pay for the following items:

- No support services for exempt individuals;

- Nonessential items such as television, cable, Internet, etc.;

- Items such as fines, reinstatement fees, restitution, legal fees, court costs or other costs associated with a penalty;

- Purchase of a car, recreational vehicle, motor home, etc.;

- No support services for exempt individuals. With manager approval, exceptions can be made as determined by the district on a case-by-case basis, as budget allows;

- Pet-related costs including pet deposits, pet fees, kennels, etc.;

- ERDC copayments;

- Other costs not related to completion of the case plan.
Eligible people

In order to receive a support service payment, a client has to meet both of the following criteria:

(A) The client has to be one of the following people:

- A TANF applicant or recipient who is not otherwise exempt from JOBS requirements:
  
  (a) Participating in the Pre-TANF program;
  
  (b) Participating in available family stability activities such as addiction, mental health and medical services;
  
  (c) Disqualified for failure to complete substance abuse, mental health or other treatment who is participating in specific JOBS program activities.
  
  (d) Exempt from JOBS requirements as a one-parent household with a dependent child under six months of age.

- A TANF-related program recipient or non-TANF recipient who is:
  
  (a) A participant in the SFPSS Program attending specific JOBS activities, including family stability activities such as addiction, mental health and medical services;
  
  (b) A Post-TANF program client who is also participating in specific JOBS activities for participation hours needed to meet program requirements;
  
  (c) A disqualified client if these payments are necessary for the client to re-engage in the JOBS Program and end their current disqualification;
  
  (d) Serving an IPV disqualification and is required to and is participating in specific JOBS activities;

NOTE

The Post-TANF program is currently suspended.
(e) An adult who, due to state time limits, is no longer receiving cash assistance but whose children remain on assistance and the adult continues to cooperate with their JOBS case plan.

(f) An individual who is over-income for the TANF program due to earnings earned in a TANF/JOBS on-the-job training activity. Such an individual may receive support services for no more than three months – unless circumstances unique to the situation are identified and warrant the department to approve a limited number of additional months. Eligibility for support services under this section is only permitted while the individual continues to participate in the on-the-job training activity.

**NOTE**

If support services are issued for longer than three months to an individual over-income for TANF and the family did not apply for ERDC within the first three months after leaving TANF (and does not otherwise qualify for an exception to the ERDC reservation list), the family may be subject to the ERDC reservation list.

(B) The client has agreed to participate in an activity as outlined in the case plan. If the activities listed on the case plan are not agreeable to the client, or if the client is requesting case plan activities that are outside of what DHS wants or can provide, case managers should work with the client to find a mutually agreeable solution. This process is called re-engagement.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON RE-ENGAGEMENT, SEE TANF-M.13.**
Approval and denial/closure of support service payment requests

Requests for support services:

An eligible person may request a support service by phone, in person, in writing or by using the Request for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Support Services and Notice of Decision and Action Taken (DHS 7822) form.

Time frames:

When a client requests a support service payment, DHS has 30 days in which to make an eligibility decision if the client is receiving ongoing TANF. If the client is in the Pre-TANF program, the application must be processed in time to resolve the problem. In all other circumstances, the application processing time frame is 30 days. DHS should act as quickly as possible to either approve or deny a request for a support service payment. DHS will make adequate and timely support service payments available to clients to ensure current participation in required activities. Clients will have good cause for not participating in required activities prior to authorization or receipt of necessary support service payments.

Pending a request:

There may be circumstances where the branch does not have enough information to determine whether a client is or is not eligible for a support service payment. In those instances, it may be necessary to issue the client a Notice of Pending Status (DHS 210) requesting the specific information or verification that is necessary for the branch to make a decision.

Approving a payment:

Discussions around needed support services should occur during the case plan development process. This will provide an opportunity for the worker to discuss what support the client needs to be successful in completion of their case plan, resources the client may have available, resources within the community and lower cost alternatives, if available. Agreed-upon payment should be noted on the case plan.

When approving a request for a support service payment, staff do not need to send a notice informing the client that payment (including payments to third parties such as utility companies or landlords) has been approved because approved payments are listed on the case plan.
Denying a payment:

- Staff must issue notices to clients when they deny a request for a support service payment (use the Notice of Decision and Action Taken (MSC 456) or DHS 7822 form). Note the reason for the denial on the decision notice;

- Staff must also issue a notice (use the DHS 456 or DHS 7822) to the client if a payment (such as transportation or child care costs) that a client receives on an ongoing basis is stopped (closed) or reduced. The effective date for closing ongoing support service payments is the day the case plan activities expire or the day the payment is no longer needed;

- If the client and the worker are not able to agree on the type or amount of a support service payment, the client must be given a denial or closure/reduction notice (use the DHS 456 or DHS 7822);

- If the worker offers the client a support service payment that is different in any way from the item that the client requested, the client must be given a notice of denial (use the DHS 456 or DHS 7822). This is true even if the client has accepted the alternative payment that the case manager has offered. The worker should note the alternate payment agreed upon with the client on the decision notice.

**NOTE**

Staff are required to explain this process to clients. Make sure to note in TRACS when this explanation has been given. With some clients, the process may only need to be explained one time. In other instances, it will need to be explained multiple times.

**NOTE**

You should use DHS 7822 to convey your decision to the client if the client made the request for a support service on the DHS 7822.

**Example:** A client is requesting a JOBS support service payment for car insurance to go to and from a JOBS activity. Transportation costs are limited to fuel and public transportation. The case manager must issue the client a notice of denial. The client has the right to request a hearing.
**Example:** A client is requesting a JOBS support service payment for fuel to go to and from a JOBS activity. The client resides in an urban area where there is adequate public transportation available, the school-age children take the bus to school, so the client is not required to transport them to a child-care facility and fuel is not a lower-cost alternative. The branch will authorize a bus pass to the client, but will not pay for fuel. The case manager must issue the client a notice of denial, whether or not the client accepts the alternative payment. The client has the right to request a hearing.

DHS may reduce, close or deny all or part of an individual’s request for a support service payment if any of the following are true:

- The client does not meet the definition of an eligible person as set out above;
- The individual making the request for the support service payment is disqualified for noncooperation with their case plan. However, the branch may authorize support service payments to disqualified clients if these payments are necessary for the client to re-engage in the JOBS program and end their current disqualification;
- The request is not related to the individual’s case plan; or
- A lower cost or no-cost alternative is available.

When services are stopped, denied or reduced, the client is eligible for an expedited hearing.

**Example 1:** A client has been receiving JOBS child care payments for several months for her two children while she is attending JOBS activities. The child care is no longer needed. The branch sends a notice to let the client know that DHS will no longer be paying child care.

**Example 2:** A client has been receiving JOBS child care payments over the summer for her two school-aged children while she participates in JOBS. In September, the children will be returning to school. The client will still have a child care need, but at a lower amount than what she currently needs because the children will be in school much of the day. The branch sends her a notice informing her that her child care support service amount will be reduced effective September 1.

**Expedited Hearings Rule**

461-025-0315 — Expedited Hearings
Applying for Support Service Payments

Payments for basic living expenses in the Pre-TANF Program are restricted to personal incidentals and 100 percent of the TANF Payment Standard based on family size (see OAR 461-135-0475 for more information). When the case manager or branch denies a request for a basic living expense or support service payment in the Pre-TANF program, the branch sends the appropriate notice as it would under the same circumstances if the client were a TANF recipient.

Verification

DHS may require an individual to provide verification of the need for a support service payment prior to the approval and issuance of a support service payment. DHS can also require individuals requesting support service payments to provide verification of the need and the costs associated with such payments if verification is reasonably available. If verification is not reasonably available to the family, no verification may be required.
**Child care**

Support payments for child care will be provided, as limited by OAR 461-160-0040 and OAR 461-190-0211, when necessary to enable the individual to participate in approved JOBS program activities specified in the case plan. Payments for child care will be made for:

(A) The lesser of the actual rate charged by the care provider or the rate established in OAR 461-155-0150. The department rate for children in care less than 158 hours in a month is limited by OAR 461-155-0150.

(B) The minimum hours necessary, including meal and commute time, for the individual to participate in approved JOBS program activities.

(C) Child care should be for actual time spent addressing the barrier. Expected hours will affect authorized hours on child care billing forms, so this should be closely monitored to ensure attendance is recorded properly.

(D) Child care for JOBS Plus participants is considered child care for working families and issued by Child Care Billings (CCB) with no copay.

**Housing and utilities**

Support Services for housing and utilities are available to JOBS-eligible participants who are currently engaged in a plan that is reflective of their housing stabilization goals.

- Payment amount can be up to two months' shelter or utility costs per benefit group, AND

- Total benefit should not exceed $3,000 per payment per benefit group within a three-month period

Payment type include but not limited to:

- Rent
• Utilities
• Move-in fees
• Rental Application fees
• Mortgage
• Store fees
• Other payments based on are needs

To issue support services for housing and/or utilities, the following must be true:

• Participant has a plan for sustaining housing related payments.
• Participant is actively engaged and eligible for JOBS support services with no active disqualifications.
• Participant is currently or will be working with a local housing agency to access available resources.
• Participant has a legal obligation to make the payment; AND
• Participant did not cause or had no control of the events leading to unstable living situation.

NOTE

For situations in which a participant is requesting support services beyond the limit mentioned above, Family Coaches must staff and obtain approval from managers.

Example 3: A client has been receiving JOBS child care payments over the summer for her two school-aged children while she participates in JOBS. In September, the children will be returning to school. The client will still have a child care need, but at a lower amount than what she currently needs because the children will be in school much of the day. The branch sends her a notice informing her that her child care support service amount will be reduced effective September 1.

Example 4: Chris is living in a homeless shelter while working with a local housing agency. The local housing agency will pay for his deposit...
and first month’s rent. However, he would like assistance getting his electricity set up as the company requires $100.00-dollar deposit. Chris has been actively engaged in the JOBS program and has a plan reflective of his housing goals. FC will verify the information provided and issue payment as requested.

**Example 5:** Kaylie is receiving TANF, she states she has a job lined up, however she needs to pay rent to prevent homelessness. Rent is $1,500 monthly. FC is able to help her develop a plan that will support her housing and employment goals. FC receives verbal confirmation that Kaylie has legal obligation to pay rent, and issues support services.

**NOTE**

If participant is not eligible for support services for housing and/or utilities, refer to partner agencies such as local community action agencies or other local housing agencies.

Using support service funds for housing in domestic violence situations:

**NOTE**

Support service payments are not intended to supplement TA-DVS payments for housing.

**Case Plan Activities and Standards for Support Service Payments; JOBS, Post-TANF, Pre-TANF, REF, SFPSS, TA-DVS, TANF Rule**

461-190-0211 — Case Plan Activities and Standards for Support Service Payments; JOBS, Post-TANF, Pre-TANF, REF, SFPSS, TA-DVS, TANF

**Transportation**

The department will provide payment for transportation costs incurred in travel to and from JOBS or other approved activities. Payment is made only for the cost of public transportation or the cost of fuel for a privately-owned vehicle. Payments for fuel costs for a privately-owned vehicle are only provided if the individual providing the
transportation has a valid driver’s license and vehicle insurance, and if the following are true:

- No public transportation is available;
- Public transportation is available, but the client has a verifiable medical condition or disability that keeps them from utilizing public transportation and for which no accommodation is available;
- Public transportation is available, but it is more costly than the cost of fuel;
- Transportation costs for appointments should be charged to medical transportation, if appropriate.

In considering transportation payments, it is vital that staff evaluate all aspects of the client’s transportation need and cost-effectiveness for DHS. For example, if DHS’ child care cost will be higher as a result of requiring a client to ride the bus instead of driving their own car or getting a ride with another person, staff should consider paying for gas vouchers or other payments.

DHS will not authorize car repairs. However, there may be other resources available to the client. For example, there may be shuttle services that can connect a client with employment or activities in other areas.

| Case Plan Activities and Standards for Support Service Payments; JOBS, Post-TANF, Pre-TANF, REF, SFPSS, TA-DVS, TANF Rule |
| 461-190-0211 — Case Plan Activities and Standards for Support Service Payments; JOBS, Post-TANF, Pre-TANF, REF, SFPSS, TA-DVS, TANF |

**Example:** A client living in a rural area must travel 30 miles one way to a JOBS activity. Her father has been allowing her to use his vehicle to get back and forth to the activity. DHS can pay for the gas needed to get back and forth. His vehicle now needs a new head gasket and it will cost approximately $500 to repair. DHS will not pay for the new part or for the actual repair.

**Example:** A client requests purchase of a cheap car. They do not want to ride the bus anymore because it takes too long to get anywhere. DHS cannot pay for the purchase of a car because support services can only help with public transportation or the cost of vehicle fuel.

**Example:** A client requests payment of a fine and ODL reinstatement fees because their license was suspended for driving without insurance in order to participate in approved JOBS activities. DHS cannot use support services to pay for items such as fines, reinstatement fees, restitution, legal fees, court costs or other cost associated with a
Other support services

When no other resources are available, DHS can also provide payment for other items needed to look for work, accept a job offer, allow a teen parent to achieve a high school diploma or GED, or complete a district-approved vocational training activity. These items can include, but are not limited to the following:

- Interview clothing to look for or accept a job;
- Reasonable accommodations of a client’s disability to look for or accept a job;
- Uniform needed for the offered job;
- Grooming needs to look for or accept a job;
- Tools needed for the offered job; and
- Bonding and licensing needed to accept a job;
- Food handler license to accept a job at a restaurant;
- GED expenses as the need is determined on a case-by-case basis (contact Central Office for guidance on this process);
- Books and supplies needed to complete a short-term vocational training activity approved by the district;
- Tuition for short-term vocational training activity only with manager approval;
- Limited support services for specific family stability activities as budget allows;
- Support services may be used as determined by the district on a case-by-case basis, to allow mandatory individuals to participate in activities (i.e., attend treatment), to address issues related to addiction (DA), medical (MD), mental health (MH), rehabilitative activities (RA), and application for SSI (SS);
- Other payments needed by mandatory participants that are not otherwise excluded in rule may be authorized as determined on a case-by-case basis, as budget allows.
2. Support service payment process

Payments are made by DHS staff designated by the branch or contractor staff designated by DHS to issue vouchers. All payments except JOBS Plus wage reimbursement and child care are made using the following methods:

- Check entered on JASR to client or dual-payee to client and provider;
- A revolving fund check to client or dual-payee to client and provider, and entered on JASR;
- A Negotiable Items –Field Business Review (DHS 219N) form for bus passes.

The preferred method is a check issued to the client through overnight JASR, to arrive in time for the client to meet participation needs. A revolving fund check should be used only in emergencies.

SEE THE COMPUTER GUIDE, III–B AND III–C FOR INSTRUCTIONS ON CREATING A JAS SCREEN AND MAKING SUPPORT SERVICES PAYMENTS.

Child care payment process: Child care payments are issued using the JCCB process or a check to reimburse the client for allowable child care they have already paid. When WO unsubsidized work hours are the majority of the total case plan hours, child care payments are issued using the child care authorization no copay process. Child care payments for JOBS Plus participants are also issued using the child care authorization no copy process.

SEE THE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE CHAPTER FOR DETAILS ON THE PAYMENT PROCESS.