

Child Protective Services: Intake

2103.25 Response to a Request to Evaluate a TANF Recipient Prior to a Second Sanction

Requirement

The county director determines whether the contact to evaluate a TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) household, prior to a second sanction, is made by TANF or by services staff. An evaluation by services staff includes the option of assigning a Family Service Worker II. If a services case is already active, the assigned services case manager should complete the evaluation; otherwise, assign the referral for the evaluation. **Evaluate the TANF household prior to the expiration date of the 10-day notice sent to the TANF recipient.**

Do not open a case for a CPS assessment (investigation) based on the evaluation, unless maltreatment is believed to exist, is observed or a child is believed to be at imminent risk of placement because of the family's loss of income.

Procedures/Practice Issues

TANF requires recipients to adhere to a Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP) and a Personal Work Plan (PWP). If a recipient fails to participate in or to meet a requirement of either plan, thus committing a material violation, the TANF case manager determines whether good cause exists for non-participation. If good cause is not determined and a conciliation process with the family is unsuccessful in obtaining compliance, sanctions may be imposed. A first sanction reduces the TANF grant by 25% for at least one month and up to a maximum of three months. If compliance is not initiated by the end of the third month, or if the recipient commits a second material violation within 24 months, all TANF benefits are terminated. A second sanction terminates the parent (or other adult relative payee) from the TANF program for life. When a family is sanctioned for the second time, TANF requires a contact in the home between the time the client receives the 10-day notice of the impending sanction and the expiration of the 10-day notice. At this contact evaluate the family's situation and the effect the loss of TANF income will have on children in the household. Losing all benefits will likely be a high stress factor for a family, increasing the chances of child abuse or neglect (See Economic Support Services County Letter 97-16, Part X, Material Violations).

Determine if the potential loss of income will affect the well-being of children in the home:

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- Does the parent understand the sanction?
- Does it appear that a child will be maltreated because of an imminent loss of family income?
- How does the parent plan to care for the child?
- Are there other resources that will provide for the family's basic monetary needs?
- Does any child have special needs, and, if so, how will they be affected by the loss of income?
- Are there any signs that the parent has special needs?

Circumstances may be discovered that have prevented a TANF recipient from fully complying with either the Personal Responsibility Plan or the Personal Work Plan. Share this information with the TANF case manager prior to the expiration of the 10-day notice. File written documentation (Form 452) of this evaluation contact in the service record, if a service record exists (otherwise place in a folder), and send a copy to the TANF record.

Each county office has a community resource registry of available services and resources (e.g., child care, health care, food/clothing closets, subsidized/available or affordable housing, etc.) to give to families. Encourage families to be personally responsible for making those decisions that lead to a well-functioning family unit.

This evaluation by services is not an activity that can be opened in IDS (Internal Data System), and it does not count for TCM (Targeted Case Management). Do not complete Form 431 (Child Abuse and Neglect Report), because this is not a CPS case determination.