

Department of Social and Health Services
Olympia, Washington
EAZ Manual

Revision #1167
Category WorkFirst Sanctions - Participation
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Summary

Updating references to reflect Legislative changes to sanction policy

WorkFirst Sanctions-Participation

Revised July 01, 2021

Purpose:

This section describes the penalties that a TANF recipient experiences if the person refuses to participate without good cause, in the activities identified in their WorkFirst Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP).

[WAC 388-310-1600](#) - WorkFirst Sanctions

- [Clarifying Information](#) and [Worker Responsibilities](#)

Clarifying Information - [WAC 388-310-1600](#)

1. Mandatory TANF/SFA WorkFirst participants are sanctioned when the person has not complied with WorkFirst activities without establishing good cause. The WorkFirst Program Specialist

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(WFPS) or WorkFirst Social Service Specialist (WFSSS) determines if there is good cause for not participating in required WorkFirst activities.

NOTE: For further information on WorkFirst sanction process see the [WorkFirst Handbook](#)

2. Review the WorkFirst sanctioned case to see if the Basic Food Benefits should be sanctioned under the Basic Food Program rules for failure or refusal to comply with the Basic Food E&T requirements. This applies only to non-exempt Basic Food recipients.

NOTE: For further information on the BF E&T sanction process see the [Basic Food E/T Section G. - Disqualifications](#)

Worker Responsibilities - [WAC 388-310-1600](#)

Non-Compliance Sanction (NCS)

See the WorkFirst Handbook [3.5.1](#)- Non-Compliance Sanction Policy on how to process the sanction including the eJAS instructions.

Non-Compliance Sanctions (NCS) Re-Applicants

A person may re-apply for WorkFirst cash assistance (TANF) or State Family Assistance (SFA) after NCS termination at any time by submitting a new application. There are different processing instructions depending when the application is received.

1. **Applications received prior to the effective date of NCS termination**

The case is still open on the current WorkFirst cash assistance (TANF) AU through the end of the month, refer the applicant to WorkFirst staff to follow WFHB 3.6.3.3.

2. **Applications received after the effective date of NCS termination**

- a. Schedule intake interview.

- b. Refer the applicant to WorkFirst staff to determine whether the person must meet WorkFirst participation requirements before receiving cash.

3. **Approving applicants whose assistance was terminated under the NCS policy.**

Applicants must participate for 4 weeks (28 days) before we open the case, unless they have good cause that interferes with participation. The WFPS or WFSSS makes the participation requirement determination and communicates the outcome to the application worker. All NCS reapplications must be referred to a WFPS or WFSSS to determine whether the applicant is able to participate.

- a. Follow these procedures to process an application:

- i. Give the person a pending letter for financial eligibility and a separate WorkFirst participation TANF pending letter (85-06) for the WorkFirst participation requirement.

- ii. If the application will exceed beyond the 30th day (standard of promptness), then enter a Delay Reason Code of WF (WorkFirst Participation). Update the date the client is

expected to complete the participation requirement in the SOP Extension Date field in ACES 3G.

- iii. After participation requirements have been met, cash benefits start from the date the person was otherwise financially eligible.
- iv. Prior to opening the case, check to see if the person received child support/CEAP or any other income sources that must be budgeted against the grant. We budget CEAP as unearned income "Other Countable – CA/MAA Only (OA)" for the month they received the benefit.
- v. The TANF open effective date can't be earlier than the NCS termination effective date.

- b. If the WFPS or WFSSS determines that participation isn't required:
 - i. Enter the re-qualifying reason code WP and date on the ACES 3G WORK REGISTRATION screen to remove the 28-day participation requirement.
 - ii. Cash benefits start from the date the person was otherwise financially eligible.
 - iii. Prior to opening the case, check to see if the person received child support, CEAP or other income sources that must be budgeted against the grant. We budget CEAP as unearned income "Other Countable – CA/MA Only (OA)" for the month they received the benefit.
 - iv. The TANF open effective date can't be earlier than the application date.

4. Denying an NCS application

- a. If the eligibility worker is notified that the participant has stopped participating, then: Deny the application (leave the re-qualifying reason field blank on the WORK REGISTRATION screen). Finalize the application and add the following free form text to the denial letter:

"You haven't completed the WorkFirst 4-week participation requirement as described in your IRP. To request reconsideration, contact your WorkFirst Program Specialist or WorkFirst Social Service Specialist."

- b. Review the WorkFirst sanctioned case to determine if the Basic Food Benefits should be sanctioned under the Basic Food Program rules for failure or refusal to comply with the Basic Food E&T requirements or if the participant meets an exemption.

- c. If the client requests reconsideration, then:

Instruct the person to contact their WFPS or WFSSS if they want a reconsideration of their denial. If the WFPS or WFSSS reports that there has been client contact, follow these steps depending on the information received.

 - i. Deny the reconsideration if no good reason was determined.
 - ii. Re-screen and approve the application (or update the pending letter if other financial eligibility elements are still needed) if no further participation is required.

iii. Re-screen the application. If the application will exceed beyond the 30th day (standard of promptness), then enter a Delay Reason Code of WF (WorkFirst Participation). Update the date the client is expected to complete the participation requirement in the SOP Extension Date field in ACES 3G.

ACES Procedures

- For ACES processing on NCS cases, see [ACES instructions](#).
- See [Disqualified or Sanctioned Assistance Unit or Client - Canceling a Sanction](#)

E-JAS Procedures

See the [WorkFirst Handbook](#) for information on Sanctions in eJAS.