

Letter to college presidents from Secretaries Riley and Shalala

Dear Colleague:

The welfare reform law that President Clinton signed in August 1996 requires new responsibility from those on our nation's welfare rolls. The law emphasizes work so that we can make welfare not a way of life, but an opportunity for self-sufficiency.

One important question that has arisen in some states as they implement the law is whether welfare recipients who have been attending college must drop out to meet the law's work requirements. The law's requirements, although strict, should not preclude college attendance if colleges work with students on welfare to provide work opportunities nearby.

For the coming academic year, the welfare law's work requirement is 20 hours per week for single parents on welfare. This requirement grows to 25 hours for the 1998-99 academic year, and to 30 hours in 1999-2000. States can exclude some of the welfare caseload from this requirement, with 30% required to work in 1998, rising to 50% by 2002.

As you know, the college work-study program provides opportunities for many students to work on campus. Many colleges have a practice of limiting work study to 10 or 15 hours a week, but there is no limit in federal law. Colleges can provide as many hours as necessary to meet the student's financial need. Clearly in making a decision to increase an individual student's work study hours, you will want to ensure that he or she is able to manage both the academic burden and the work schedule. Many college students do manage to combine work with school: over half of the nation's college students currently work 20 hours a week or more. Part-time academic study may also be an option.

We encourage you to work with any students enrolled in your institution who are on welfare and with local welfare offices to explore whether there are work opportunities on campus, including through the work-study program, that will allow these students to continue their studies if they wish, whether full-time or part-time, as they also meet the law's work requirements. Please feel free to call on either of us if you have further questions or require technical assistance.

Sincerely,

DS and RR

(Possible to work with APWA to provide one welfare agency contact person per state as an attachment, who would agree to work with university officials and direct them to right person?)

TANF implementation/work sheet

DRAFT

DRAFT

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Letter to college presidents:

Dear:

The welfare reform law that President Clinton signed in August 1996 emphasizes responsibility from those receiving welfare. The law requires recipients to work to ensure that welfare provides only temporary support while the family moves to self-sufficiency.

As you know, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 provides States with broad flexibility to design and implement welfare reform programs that will move recipients into the workforce. The new law focuses strongly on work, and also provides States with the authority to utilize an array of services and activities, including education and training, to prepare recipients for work and self-sufficiency. Combining activities -- for example, combining education with employment -- is another strategy that States can consider as they design their programs.

The Administration is committed to promoting lifelong learning and to increasing access to higher education, which we know help individuals obtain and retain high quality, stable jobs. We are pleased to see that many States are using their flexibility under the welfare law to support these goals. For example:

Florida provides up to two years of supportive services, including child care, to individuals who have successfully left welfare for work and who wish to return to school in order to move to a better job.

California is increasing work-study positions for welfare recipients, and has received an AmeriCorps grant to support service-learning positions for recipients studying early childhood education.

We encourage you to work with local welfare offices and with any students enrolled in your institution who are on welfare and required to work, to explore whether there are work opportunities on campus or other arrangements that would allow these students to continue their studies, whether full- or part-time. We also encourage you to consider whether some of your courses might be redesigned to meet the new needs of welfare recipients for intensive, short-term, job-oriented training.

A list of State welfare agency administrators is enclosed. Please feel free to call on either of us if you have questions or seek technical assistance.

Sincerely,

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POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION UNDER TANF

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program emphasizes work and short-term training leading directly to work ~~rather than longer term education and training.~~ Each year States must place an increasing fraction of their caseload in work activities. Non-vocational post-secondary education does not count towards ~~the~~ participation rate. Vocational educational training, including vocational post-secondary education, can be counted for no more than 12 months per recipient and for no more than 30 percent of individuals who are engaged in work. Vocational educational training is not explicitly defined under the welfare law.

States must require all recipients to work (as defined by the State) after receiving benefits for 24 months, whether or not consecutive. Many States are choosing to impose work requirements earlier. Federal funds may not be used to provide assistance to families containing an adult who has received assistance for more than 60 months, and States may impose shorter time limits.

why relevant to TANF letter?

Although some post-secondary activities may not fulfill work participation rates, States are not otherwise precluded from spending their TANF dollars on these activities, so long as they promote job preparation, work, and self-sufficiency for needy families or promote one of the other primary goals of the TANF program. Because States receive credit towards the participation rate for caseload reductions not caused by eligibility changes, an effective welfare-to-work program can help a State achieve the participation rate requirement even if the specific activities are not countable.

~~under the federal law states may encourage~~
In addition, ~~there is nothing in the federal law that prevents States from encouraging~~ recipients to combine their required work activity with additional education. Although it is not easy to raise children, work in a job, and go to school at the same time, many Americans do so each year. Most undergraduate students, whether or not they are raising a child, work while attending college. Almost all part-time students work; most full-time students also work, although usually not full-time.

Under PRWORA, States have the flexibility to design their TANF programs. The scheduling of work activities, time-limit policies, including extensions and exemptions, and the availability of child care for both work and classes all have a great impact on whether taking college classes is a real possibility for recipients. States that wish to promote college as an option can also leverage resources from outside the welfare system, such as federal work-study funds, to support this goal.

456-7628

TANF/Work Study

Author: ELIZABETH LOWER-BASCH <elowerba@OSASPE.DHHS.GOV> at Internet

Date: 8/8/97 4:42 PM

Priority: Normal

TO: Steve Carter at WDCA07

TO: Sarah Lichtman at WDCB02

TO: Jon Weintraub at WDCC01

TO: Carney McCullough at WDCA01

TO: Fortuna_D@a1.eop.gov at INTERNET

TO: staylor@acf.dhhs.gov at INTERNET

TO: Harold_McCollough@ed.gov at INTERNET

TO: Ted_Sky@ed.gov at INTERNET

Subject: Draft letter on education

----- Message Contents -----

This is a slightly revised version of the documents that we distributed this afternoon. In particular, we tried to clarify the distinction between the state and individual participation requirements.

I'm expecting comments by Wednesday at noon. Don't hesitate to call if you want to discuss the letter.

Elizabeth Lower-Basch

HHS/ASPE/HSP

HHH 404B

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Elizabeth -HHS

- info. on all options / flexibility
- audience welfare & college work
Study

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Letter to college presidents:

Comments

Dear:

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As you know, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 provides States with broad flexibility to design and implement welfare reform programs that will move recipients into the workforce. The new law focuses strongly on work, but also provides States with the authority to utilize an array of services and activities, including education and training, to prepare recipients for work and self-sufficiency. Combining activities -- for example, combining education with employment -- is another strategy that States can consider as they design their programs.

The Administration is committed to promoting lifelong learning and to increasing access to higher education, which we know help individuals obtain and retain high quality stable jobs. We are pleased to see that many States are using their flexibility under the welfare law to support these goals. For example:

- ▶ Florida provides up to two years of supportive services, including child care, to individuals who have successfully left welfare for work and who wish to return to school in order to move to a better job.
- ▶ California is increasing work-study positions for welfare recipients, and has received an AmeriCorps grant to support service-learning positions for recipients studying early childhood education.

We encourage you to work with local welfare offices and with any students enrolled in your institution who are on welfare and required to work, to explore whether there are work opportunities on campus that would allow these students to continue their studies, whether full- or part-time. We also encourage you to consider whether some of your courses might be redesigned to meet the new needs of welfare recipients for intensive, short-term job-oriented training.

A list of State welfare agency administrators is enclosed. Please feel free to call on either of us if you have questions or seek technical assistance.

Sincerely,

Aug. 18th
get it out

- send to state agencies

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Although some post-secondary activities may not fulfill work participation rates, states are not otherwise precluded from spending their TANF dollars on these activities, so long as they promote job preparation, work, and self-sufficiency for needy families or promote one of the other primary goals of the TANF program. Because states receive credit towards the participation rate for caseload reductions not caused by eligibility changes, an effective welfare-to-work program can help a state achieve the participation rate requirement even if the specific activities are not countable.

In addition, there is nothing in the federal law that prevents states from encouraging recipients to combine their required work activity with additional education. Although it is not easy to raise children, work in a job, and go to school at the same time, many Americans do so each year. Most undergraduate students, whether or not they are raising a child, work while attending college. Almost all part-time students work, but even most full-time students work, although usually not full-time.

Under PRWORA, States have the flexibility to design their TANF programs. The scheduling of work activities, time-limit policies, including extensions and exemptions, and the availability of child care for both work and classes all have a great impact on whether taking college classes is a real possibility for recipients. States that wish to promote college as an option can also leverage resources from outside the welfare system, such as federal work-study funds, to support this goal.