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AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 601, 602, 607, and 609; Pub. L. 109-171.

SOURCE: 64 FR 17884, Apr. 12, 1999, unless otherwise noted.

§ 261.1 What does this part cover?

This part includes the regulatory provisions relating to the mandatory work requirements of TANF and State work participation data verification requirements.

[71 FR 37475, June 29, 2006]

§ 261.2 What definitions apply to this part?

(a) The general TANF definitions at §§ 260.30 through 260.33 of this chapter apply to this part.

(b) *Unsubsidized employment* means full-or part-time employment in the public or private sector that is not subsidized by TANF or any other public program.

(c) *Subsidized private sector employment* means employment in the private sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing a recipient.

(d) *Subsidized public sector employment* means employment in the public sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing a recipient.

(e) *Work experience (including work associated with the refurbishing of publicly assisted housing) if sufficient private sector employment is not available* means a work activity, performed in return for welfare, that provides an individual with an opportunity to acquire the

general skills, training, knowledge, and work habits necessary to obtain employment. The purpose of work experience is to improve the employability of those who cannot find unsubsidized employment. This activity must be supervised by an employer, work site sponsor, or other responsible party on an ongoing basis no less frequently than daily.

(f) *On-the-job training* means training in the public or private sector that is given to a paid employee while he or she is engaged in productive work and that provides knowledge and skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job. On-the-job training must be supervised by an employer, work site sponsor, or other responsible party on an ongoing basis no less frequently than daily.

(g) *Job search and job readiness assistance* means the act of seeking or obtaining employment, preparation to seek or obtain employment, including life skills training, and substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, or rehabilitation activities for those who are otherwise employable. Such treatment or therapy must be determined to be necessary and certified by a qualified medical or mental health professional. Job search and job readiness assistance activities must be supervised by the TANF agency or other responsible party on an ongoing basis no less frequently than daily.

(h) *Community service programs* mean structured programs and embedded activities in which TANF recipients perform work for the direct benefit of the community under the auspices of public or nonprofit organizations. Community service programs must be limited to projects that serve a useful community purpose in fields such as health, social service, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, welfare, recreation, public facilities, public safety, and child care. Community service programs are designed to improve the employability of recipients not otherwise able to obtain employment, and must be supervised on an ongoing basis no less frequently than daily. A State agency shall take into account, to the extent possible, the prior training, experience, and

skills of a recipient in making appropriate community service assignments.

(i) *Vocational educational training (not to exceed 12 months with respect to any individual)* means organized educational programs that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for employment in current or emerging occupations requiring training other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree. Vocational educational training must be supervised on an ongoing basis no less frequently than daily.

(j) *Job skills training directly related to employment* means training or education for job skills required by an employer to provide an individual with the ability to obtain employment or to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace. Job skills training directly related to employment must be supervised on an ongoing basis no less frequently than daily.

(k) *Education directly related to employment, in the case of a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency* means education related to a specific occupation, job, or job offer. Education directly related to employment must be supervised on an ongoing basis no less frequently than daily.

(l) *Satisfactory school attendance at secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate* means regular attendance, in accordance with the requirements of the secondary school or course of study, at a secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate. This activity must be supervised on an ongoing basis no less frequently than daily.

(m) *Providing child care services to an individual who is participating in a community service program* means providing child care to enable another TANF recipient to participate in a community service program. This activity must be supervised on an ongoing basis no less frequently than daily.

(n)(1) *Work-eligible individual* means an adult (or minor child head-of-household) receiving assistance under TANF

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or a separate State program or a non-recipient parent living with a child receiving such assistance unless the parent is:

(i) A minor parent and not the head-of-household or spouse of the head-of-household;

(ii) An alien who is ineligible to receive assistance due to his or her immigration status; or

(iii) At State option on a case-by-case basis, a recipient of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

(2) The term also excludes:

(i) A parent providing care for a disabled family member living in the home who does not attend school on a full-time basis, provided that the need for such care is supported by medical documentation; and

(ii) An individual in a family receiving MOE-funded assistance under an approved Tribal TANF program, unless the State includes the Tribal family in calculating work participation rates, as permitted under section 261.25.

[71 FR 37475, June 29, 2006]

Subpart A—What Are the Provisions Addressing Individual Responsibility?

§ 261.10 What work requirements must an individual meet?

(a)(1) A parent or caretaker receiving assistance must engage in work activities when the State has determined that the individual is ready to engage in work or when he or she has received assistance for a total of 24 months, whichever is earlier, consistent with section 407(e)(2) of the Act.

(2) The State must define what it means to engage in work for this requirement; its definition may include participation in work activities in accordance with section 407 of the Act.

(b) If a parent or caretaker has received assistance for two months, he or she must participate in community service employment, consistent with section 407(e)(2) of the Act, unless the State has exempted the individual from work requirements or he or she is already engaged in work activities as described at § 261.30. The State will determine the minimum hours per week and the tasks the individual must per-

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form as part of the community service employment.

§ 261.11 Which recipients must have an assessment under TANF?

(a) The State must make an initial assessment of the skills, prior work experience, and employability of each recipient who is at least age 18 or who has not completed high school (or equivalent) and is not attending secondary school.

(b) The State may make any required assessments within 30 days (90 days, at State option) of the date an individual becomes eligible for assistance.

§ 261.12 What is an individual responsibility plan?

An individual responsibility plan is a plan developed at State option, in consultation with the individual, on the basis of the assessment made under § 261.11. The plan:

(a) Should set an employment goal and a plan for moving immediately into private-sector employment;

(b) Should describe the obligations of the individual. These could include going to school, maintaining certain grades, keeping school-aged children in school, immunizing children, going to classes, or doing other things that will help the individual become or remain employed in the private sector;

(c) Should be designed to move the individual into whatever private-sector employment he or she is capable of handling as quickly as possible and to increase over time the responsibility and the amount of work the individual handles;

(d) Should describe the services the State will provide the individual to enable the individual to obtain and keep private sector employment, including job counseling services; and

(e) May require the individual to undergo appropriate substance abuse treatment.

§ 261.13 May an individual be penalized for not following an individual responsibility plan?

Yes. If an individual fails without good cause to comply with an individual responsibility plan that he or she has signed, the State may reduce the amount of assistance otherwise