



TWS 05-11

February 23, 2006

To: The WorkSource contractors and staff

From: Rodney Bradshaw
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Subject: Hurricane Katrina and Rita Child Care Financial Aid

BACKGROUND

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is paying child care financial aid to support families who have been displaced or lost jobs due to Hurricane Katrina or Rita. The requirements for establishing eligibility for this child care financial aid were less than for other The WorkSource customers because families displaced by the hurricanes needed time to establish themselves in our community, obtain lost documents, and find work.

NEW RULES FOR PAYMENT OF CHILD CARE FINANCIAL AID TO HURRICANE AFFECTED FAMILIES

The same criteria used to authorize child care for low income Gulf Coast customers will now be used for Rita/Katrina customers except that Rita/Katrina customers must provide proof that they are affected by one of the storms.

The WorkSource will no longer provide 90 days of child care financial aid for hurricane affected customers who are not working or in school for at least 30 hours a week.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE

- Customers who have been displaced from their homes due to hurricane Katrina or Rita
- Caregivers who were not affected by the storms but are caring for children displaced by the storm are eligible for child care financial aid under National Emergency Grant guidelines.
- Customers who show proof that they lost jobs due to the storms are eligible under National Emergency rules whether they are displaced from their homes or not. This most often applies to customers affected by Rita.

- All customers in one of the above categories must be working/in school at least 30 hours a week and meet the low income guidelines.

ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTS

- Customers must document/provide proof of their residency in a hurricane affected area.. The following documents are acceptable proof:
 - Driver’s license or other government or school issued ID with an address in affected areas
 - Bills or other mail to the customer at an address in an affected area
 - Unemployment Insurance or Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)
 - Evidence of FEMA or Red Cross assistance
 - Data base information listing the customer as an evacuee (i.e. UI, Louisiana Department of Health and Human Services, Red Cross)
 - Other documents that staff reasonably believes support the customer’s statement that she was living in an area affected by the hurricane
- Any member of the household whose income is considered in determining eligibility for child care financial aid must provide The WorkSource with a copy of his or her social security card or documentation from the Social Security Administration confirming application for a card.
- The WorkSource requires check stubs, letters from employers, attendance records or other proof of income and hours of work or school from Katrina/Rita customers, just as we do from other low income customers.
- The WorkSource will not authorize any financial aid payment for care until we have received all requested documents from the customer, and we have determined that the customer is eligible. There is not a time limit for producing the documents as long as National Emergency Grant funds are available.
- The customer must sign The WorkSource - Parent Agreement

INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

- **Customers who were previously approved for 90 days of time-limited National Emergency Grant child care financial aid while they looked for work must request and reapply for additional financial aid beyond the 90 days.** These customers must meet income guidelines for low income care at the sustaining level at the time they reapply for financial aid.
- Customers who have not previously received National Emergency Grant financial aid for child care from The WorkSource must meet the income guidelines for low income customers at the initial level.

- When The WorkSource approves National Emergency Grant child care financial aid, the appropriate office staff will give or send the customer the letter titled “Attachment 1. NEG Child Care Financial Aid Approval”.
- When The WorkSource does NOT approve National Emergency Grant child care financial aid, the appropriate office staff will tell the customer the reason in person or on the telephone.

Do not send a letter unless the customer requests formal notification or a chance to appeal. If a customer makes such a request, give or mail the customer the attached letter titled “Attachment 2. National Emergency Grant Child Care Ineligible for New Grant” stating the reason for the denial. The appeal form is attached to the letter.

- A customer who does not qualify for National Emergency Grant child care financial aid and requests an appeal will not receive care during the appeal as each time limited grant is considered a new request for financial aid.

TIME LIMITS

- No customer applying for National Emergency Grant child care financial aid may be approved for financial aid beyond August 28, 2006. Funding will not be available after that date. No National Emergency Grant child care financial end-dates may extend beyond August, 28, 2006.
- The WorkSource will mail a letter to customers currently receiving National Emergency Grant child care financial aid with end dates after August 28, 2006. The letter will state that The WorkSource’s child care financial aid for the customer will end by August 28, 2006 because funding will no longer be available and tell the customer how to enter her name on the wait list.
- Customers receiving National Emergency Grant child care financial aid must sign up for the wait list in order to request financial aid after August 28, 2006.
- When speaking with customers about National Emergency Grant child care financial aid:
 - Remind the customer the National Emergency Grant child care financial aid is time-limited and subject at any time to be discontinued if funds become unavailable.
 - Customers currently receiving National Emergency Grant child care financial aid must sign up for the wait list to be considered for financial aid beyond August 28, 2006.
 - Signing-up for the wait list does not guarantee that financial aid will be available. Other customers may be ahead of them.
 - Customers wishing to be considered for aid after August 28, 2006 should sign-up for the wait list now.

APPEALS

- National Emergency Grant funding is provided under the Workforce Investment Act. The Workforce Investment Act appeals process, not the Child Care and Development appeals process, applies for a customer who wants to appeal an action on National Emergency Grant-funded child care financial aid.
- A customer must request to appeal an action taken by The WorkSource affecting her National Emergency Grant funded child care financial aid.
- Appeals from a customer applying for a new grant of National Emergency Grant child care financial aid

Provide customers who request to appeal The WorkSource decision of ineligibility for a new grant of child care financial aid the letter and appeal form titled “Attachment 2. National Emergency Grant Child Care Ineligible for New Grant”.

The WorkSource staff member will complete the top of the appeals form with the customer’s name, social security number, date, and the appropriate address. The date is important as there are time limits to file and respond to appeals. This letter and form do not allow the customer to receive child care financial aid during the appeal.

Example: Joy Jones was approved to receive 90 days of NEG funded child care financial aid while she looked for work. Her end date for this time limited financial aid was Tuesday 2-21-06. On Monday 2-20-06 she called The WorkSource to ask if she could continue to receive child care financial aid. She must reapply for a new time-limited grant. Ms. Jones is not working but is attending class on Tues. and Thurs. She is taking 6 credit hours. Ms. Jones is not eligible for a new time limited grant because she is not working/in school for 30 hours a week.

- Appeals from customer currently receiving National Emergency Grant child care

The WorkSource will send customers whose National Emergency Grant child care financial aid is reduced or discontinued before the end of the time limited grant the usual “Stopping Care Letter” without the attached appeals form. Customers may request to appeal the decision stated on the letter. When a customer makes a request to appeal, The WorkSource will provide the appeals form titled “Attachment 3. National Emergency Grant Child Care Financial Aid Complaint/Appeal to Stopping Care”. This form allows the customer to continue child care financial aid during her appeal if she chooses.

Example: Annie Smith was approved for NEG child care through 8-28-06. Ms. Smith called on 3-1-06 to report that she had an accident and would not be able to work for 9 weeks. Her doctor confirmed this. Her care is stopped before the end of her eligibility period as she will be unable to work for more than 8 weeks. Ms. Smith is sent the Stopping Care Letter - 6a. without the appeals form. She has 15 days to make other

arrangements and to request information about an appeal. If she makes the request she receives the NEG appeals form that allows her to choose to continue her care during the appeal.

- The WorkSource must provide the information titled “Attachment 4. The WorkSource Complaint Procedure for National Emergency Grant Funded Child Care Financial Aid” to all customers who request to appeal National Emergency Grant child care financial aid actions.
- The contractor which receives a written appeal from a customer will log the appeal and fax a copy of the written appeal to H-GAC on the same day the contractor receives the complaint. **Fax written appeals to Angela Bergaila at 713.993.4578**
- The Board staff will send a copy of the appeal to TWC .
- The contractor appeals staff member will arrange a conference, by telephone or in person, with the person(s) who filed the complaint and anyone else the contractor or customer would like to be present..

Contractors must arrange the appeals conference as quickly as possible, but no later than one week (7 calendar days) after receiving the appeal.

- The contractor staff member conducting this conference will send to the customer the letter and form titled “Attachment 5. Appeal to Board” within three working days after the conference. The letter will confirm whether the issues discussed at the conference were resolved. It will inform the customer of her next step (i.e., requesting a formal hearing from the Gulf Coast Workforce Board) if the issue was not resolved to her satisfaction. The WorkSource staff must complete the top line on the appeals form that is attached to the letter before sending it..

File a copy of this letter at the contractor’s office with the hearing officer, and **fax a copy of the letter to Angela Bergaila at 713.993.4578.**

TRACKING CUSTOMERS

All customers receiving child care financial aid funded by the National Emergency Grant (NEG) must be tracked in both TWIST and the CCSD.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

1. Make sure that all office managers, supervisors, trackers, financial aid specialists and other appropriate staff are aware of the requirements for certifying and documenting eligibility of hurricane evacuees, tracking service, and providing child care financial aid.

2. Make sure that trackers and quality assurance staff incorporate certification, documentation, and tracking requirements from this issuance in their regular reviews and work.
3. Please share the issuance with all staff.

QUESTIONS

For questions contact Trudy Ray trudy.ray@theworksource.org 713. 499.6683 or Betty Drake betty.drake@theworksource.org or submit questions through the electronic Q&A at <http://theworksource.org> .