

# Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) HANDBOOK

This handbook provides a standard set of policies and guidelines but does not cover every situation or scenario. The provider must contact DSS in those situations the handbook does not cover.

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b><u>4</u></b>
Steven’s Amendment	
<b>Missouri Work Assistance Program (MWA)</b> .....	<b><u>5</u></b>
Provider Expectations	
Team Member Training	
Meetings/Conference Call Requirements	
Who can participate?	
Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP)	
Participant Access Requirements	
Meetings/Appointments	
<b>MWA Case Management System</b> .....	<b><u>9</u></b>
<a href="#">Missouri Work Assistance</a>	
Forms/Letters/Documents	
<b>MWA Services/Processes</b> .....	<b><u>10</u></b>
Initial Contact	
Monthly Contact Requirement	
Assessments	
Individual Employment Plan (IEP)	
Missouri Economic Research and information Center (MERIC)	
Career Pathways	
Goal Development	
Steps to obtain goals	
<b>Employment and Training Requirements</b> .....	<b><u>16</u></b>
Hours of Participation	
Best Interest of the Participant	
Outcomes and Performance Measures	
Employment & Training Activities (Core and Non-Core)	
Federal Week/Month	
Teen Parents	
Holidays	
Excused Absences	
Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Deeming	
Good Cause for Non-Participation	
Exemptions	
Temporary Waivers	
Volunteers	

Work-Eligible Individuals (WEI)

<b>Case Notes</b> .....	<b><a href="#">36</a></b>
<b>Educational Expenses</b> .....	<b><a href="#">37</a></b>
<b>Supportive Services</b> .....	<b><a href="#">37</a></b>
Transportation Reimbursement Expenses (TRE)	
Work Related Expenses (WRE)	
WRE Chart	
<b>Conciliation/Sanction</b> .....	<b><a href="#">44</a></b>
Conciliation Process	
Sanction Process	
Sanctioned Applicant	
<b>Ending/Exiting from TA cash benefits</b> .....	<b><a href="#">46</a></b>
Transitional Employment Benefits (TEB)	
Forty-five (45) month Lifetime Limit (LTL)	
<b>Hearings/Appeals</b> .....	<b><a href="#">47</a></b>
<b>Reporting Requirements/Change in Circumstances</b> .....	<b><a href="#">48</a></b>
Fraud Reporting	
<b>Oversight/Monitoring</b> .....	<b><a href="#">48</a></b>
DSS Monitoring	
Provider Self-Monitoring	
<b>Invoicing and Payments</b> .....	<b><a href="#">49</a></b>
<b>Information Security</b> .....	<b><a href="#">50</a></b>
Confidentiality	
MWA System Access/Closure Requests	
<b>Appendix A: Resources &amp; Quick Links</b> .....	<b><a href="#">52</a></b>
<b>Appendix B: Forms</b> .....	<b><a href="#">53</a></b>
<b>Appendix C: Definitions &amp; Acronyms</b> .....	<b><a href="#">54</a></b>
<b>Appendix D: Region List and Map</b> .....	<b><a href="#">57</a></b>

## Introduction

Section 208.040 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri, and Code of State Regulations Title 13, Division 40, Chapter 2 ([Missouri Secretary of State: Code of State Regulations \(mo.gov\)](#)) authorizes the provision of the State of Missouri's Temporary Assistance (TA) program under the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. The Department of Social Services (DSS) receives the TANF block grant from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

The regulatory basis for TA work participation in Missouri is found in 13 CSR 40-2.300 through 13 CSR 40-2.370 of the Missouri Code of State Regulations. MWA is awarded to approved agencies who submit a proposal through a competitive bid process, these agencies are referred to as providers or contractors.

In 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law and Missouri chose a combined state plan, which includes TA as a partner. TANF funds a variety of programs to support families and children, aiming to achieve one of four core TANF purposes, which are:

1. Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.
2. End the dependence of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.
3. Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.
4. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

To receive or continue to receive TA, many individuals are required to participate in the Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) program, which is funded by the TANF Block Grant.

Providers must ensure the Administration for Children and Families, TANF Block Grant requirements are followed, which are found at [Office of Family Assistance \(OFA\) | The Administration for Children and Families \(hhs.gov\)](#)

Stevens Amendment: The provider must obtain prior approval from the state agency before issuing any statements, press releases, and other documents describing projects or programs funded in whole or in part with federal funds. The provider shall clearly state the following:

- a. The percentage of the total costs of the program or project that will be financed with federal money;
- b. The dollar amount of federal funds for the project or program; and
- c. The percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the project or program that will be financed by nongovernmental sources.

The provider must obtain approval from the state agency prior to publicity releases and publications

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

## **Missouri Work Assistance Program (MWA)**

1. MWA is Missouri's employment and training program for TA participants aged eighteen (18) or older and teen parents under age 18 to begin self-sufficiency planning. MWA offers job training, educational opportunities, and employment support. The MWA program assists approved TA participants and sanctioned applicants with employment and training. The MWA Program objective is to assist families advance to self-sufficiency, to allow independency from the need of benefits and participants are able to exit all benefit programs. The MWA program intends to achieve this objective by:
  1. Enhancing the participant's employability.
  2. Assist with barrier removal to engage TA individuals in activities.
  3. Offer training, and employment services.

The MWA participant may meet their employment and training required hours by engaging in activities in core or non-core activities or in a combination of both which will lead to self-sufficiency

MWA providers also serve other eligibility groups- SkillUP and Children's Division (CD) Older Youth. See the SkillUP and MWA Older Youth Handbook for the policies and guidelines about those programs. The handbooks can be found at: [Employment and Training Provider Portal | Missouri Department of Social Services \(mo.gov\)](#)

### **Provider Expectations**

Providers assist participants in attaining and retaining employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency. MWA services are individualized to meet the needs of the participant. These services include creating unique workshops, offering family assistance, counseling, mentoring, budgeting, building/retaining assets classes, housing assistance, resolving legal issues, job coaching, job retention, overcoming transportation, childcare barriers, assisting with overcoming other barriers and providing other tools and resources to assist the family to self-sufficiency. Providers must engage with community partners and develop collaborative partnerships to provide services listed above to the participant. These collaborations include employers, educational institutes, apprenticeships in and other entities as accordance with federal regulations.

Providers are to offer a variety of services to ensure participants are able to develop and accomplish employment, training and career goals. Funds are to be used for individuals who meet TANF requirements and are lawfully present in the United States.

Providers serve participants with a whole-family approach that is community based and sensitive to the needs of the participant. Providers must meet the unique needs of each participant, which may include, but not be limited to language, sight, and hearing impairments.

DSS, its providers and sub-recipients are required by law when working with non-English speaking populations to utilize interpretive services to effectively communicate with those that may have limited-English proficiency (LEP).

The MWA provider is required by policy to inform the TA participant of the required hours of participation as a part of the enrollment process.

OWCI gathers information to celebrate a participant's achievements. This collection of information is considered a success story. Providers at a minimum of on a quarterly basis, will submit at least one participant success story that provides information on the services the participant received, barriers and obstacles reduced or removed, and goals achieved. The success story template and release documents can be found at: [Success Stories | Missouri Department of Social Services](#). Success stories are shared with the Department of Social Services (DSS) and other entities which may include but is not limited to websites and other state and federal government agencies.

### **Team Member Training**

Providers are to ensure their personnel are equipped with the appropriate training to fulfill the job requirements of their assigned position. Providers must make certain team members who provide employment and training case management and coaching services are enrolled and have complete classes both instructor-led and self-directed classes within thirty (30) days of their hire date.

Although each provider will have their own onboarding procedures, new team members must complete all trainings listed on the MWA New Employee Training Checklist before being granted access to DSS System(s)

The provider's new team member will not be granted access until all OWCI trainings are completed and a certification is received.

Providers must ensure that case managers receive training pertaining to their job duties including but not limited to effective communication, trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing, effective assessing, critical thinking, de-escalation techniques, etc. on a quarterly basis, at a minimum.

### **Meeting /Conference Call Requirements**

DSS will schedule meetings, trainings, phone and/or virtual conferences with the provider. The provider must have a representative at each scheduled meeting, training, or conference, regardless of if the event is held via the phone, in-person or virtually.

The provider will be responsible for taking notes, giving progress updates, asking clarifying questions, reporting system issues, and sharing information with their personnel.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

**Who can participate?**

MWA participants must either be receiving TA cash (DD), a volunteer (WW), on Transitional Employment Benefits (TEB), or be a sanctioned applicant (AA) who is mandatory to participate.

TA participants are electronically referred to MWA providers to the MWA Case Management System via FAMIS in the overnight batch once the TA case is approved. Mandatory participant who does not meet an exemption or exclusion are referred. Volunteers are referred to the MWA provider, even when the participant did not state they would like to volunteer. Providers are to make certain that all participants are aware of the opportunity to volunteer.

<b>MWA Status Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>DD</b>	<b>Mandatory participant</b> - Participants who are determined to have no condition or barrier that would allow an exemption or exclusion are mandatory to participate in work requirements activities and are referred to the Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) program for employment and training services.
<b>WW</b>	<b>Volunteer</b> - There are two types of <b>Volunteers</b> who are referred to the Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) program for employment and training services. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An individual who is exempt may volunteer to participate with Missouri Work Assistance. The volunteer has the same requirements as mandatory participants. (But cannot be sanctioned)</li> <li>2. Parents of a child under age 12 weeks are also referred to Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) program for employment and training services.</li> </ol>
<b>TB</b>	<b>TEB (Transitional Employment Benefit)</b> - TEB payments to families are made when the family loses eligibility for Temporary Assistance benefits due to an increase in income of the parent(s), removal of an earnings disregard, or a household composition change which causes ineligibility due to income guidelines for TA. <b>Months receiving TEB do not count toward the 45-month Lifetime Limit.</b>
<b>SS</b>	<b>Sanctioned</b> – A participant whose TA grant has been reduced by 50% for failing to comply with Missouri Assistance work activities without good cause.
<b>AA</b>	<b>Sanctioned applicant</b> – An individual who re-applies for TA after their case was closed due to a full family sanction. The individual must meet all eligibility factors for TA <b>and</b> complete a work activity for a minimum average of thirty hours for at least one week prior to approval of the TA case. <u>(As sanctioned applicants have not been approved for TANF, TANF funds cannot be provided to the individual as we do not have confirmation the individual is eligible for TANF)</u>
<b>AB</b>	<b>TEB Applicant</b> – A participant whose Temporary Assistance has closed and is waiting for an eligibility determination for TEB to be completed. If approved, their status will change to TEB.
<b>Providers CANNOT serve TA individuals coded as below with MWA funds</b>	
<b>RR</b>	<b>Rejected applicant</b> – An individual determined to not meet the eligibility criteria for Temporary Assistance or TEB.
<b>ZZ</b>	<b>Closed</b> – A participant whose Temporary Assistance case has closed in the FSD FAMIS system.

## **Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP)**

All Temporary Assistance applicants who are subject to TA work requirements must complete a Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP) prior to FSD staff determining their eligibility for TA.

Individuals who are exempt or meet a temporary waiver (exclusion) are not subject to this requirement. All others must indicate in their plan the work activities in which they agree to participate if they are approved for TA.

Upon the provider request, OWCI will forward the Personal Responsibility Plan to the MWA provider.

## **Participant Access Requirements**

Providers must allow immediate accessibility to services, and participants are not required to have an appointment or notify the provider prior to an office visit. Participants can meet face-to-face, by phone, or virtually.

Providers must have a presence within each county of their awarded region. Providers must be available to MWA participants Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm Central Standard Time, excluding state holidays. In parts of the state where participants would often come in for services, there must be a physical location to receive these services. Providers are encouraged to have office hours outside of the normal Monday - Friday business hours of 8:00-5:00, to accommodate participants who work non-traditional work hours.

The listing of state holidays can be found at [Hours of Work, Overtime, and Holidays | Missouri Office of Administration \(mo.gov\)](#). The provider will follow the state holiday listing for office closures; however, can choose to open on state holidays. If Missouri's Governor issues an executive order to close DSS offices statewide, the provider can also close that day.

Providers cannot close offices for non-emergency reasons without prior approval from DSS. To request to close an office/location, the provider must send the MWA Office Closure Request to [FSD.MWAAdministration@dss.mo.gov](mailto:FSD.MWAAdministration@dss.mo.gov), prior to the requested closing date.

If there is an emergency, providers are to follow their emergency protocol and notify DSS immediately once it is safe.

## **Meetings/Appointments**

Providers must work with participants to meet them where they are available, as most participants have limited resources to travel. Home visits, virtual visits, or visits at an alternative locations when the participant is unable to meet at an office, alternative location, or virtually.

Prior to making the home visit, providers will ensure they have made every attempt to make certain the participant is aware of the date and time of the visit. The provider will explain the purpose of the visit, have visible identification, and ensure they are aware of all individuals who

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

will be involved in the conversation. Providers will ensure home visits are professional. Staff will ensure their employer (provider) is aware prior to the visit and safety precautions are taken.

Providers must make certain meeting locations are able to maintain the participants confidentiality as sensitive information may be shared.

Providers must have a safety protocol plan that includes how team members are to proceed when dealing with threats or dealing with angry participants.

Most participants will have limited resources to travel. When attempting visits, providers will ensure that participants are not required to travel long distances to meet. The reason must be documented to include why other means of communication were not used.

## **MWA Case Management System**

The MWA Case Management System is the computer program developed for MWA providers to document the cases of MWA participants. It includes case history, assessments, IEPs, work activity hours, barriers and goals, as well as each contact held with the participant. Additionally, the MWA providers can access various reports, MERIC data, forms, and caseload management tools.

The system is divided into three (3) main categories at the Main Menu. The categories are Office, Participants, and Resources.

- The Office Section contains the referral screens such as new participant list, transfer lists and the various region, office, and staff detail screens for sorting information regionally.
- The Participant's section is where the case activities are recorded and includes case notes, assessment screen, Individual Employment Plan (IEP), conciliation/sanction, domestic violence, hours, and Transportation Reimbursement (TRE) and Work-Related expense (WRE) information for the participant.
- The Resources section, includes the Federal Calendars, the step-by-step user guide for the system, MERIC data links, link to TA policy manual, reports and letters and forms sections.

MWA letters can be found in the MWA Case Management System:

<https://dssapp.state.mo.us/MissouriWorkAssistance/LettersAndForms.aspx>

## **MWA Services/Processes**

DSS will electronically refer participants to providers on a daily basis; the provider will immediately accept all DSS referrals. Providers work with participants to determine a method that will help them meet their goals based upon the needs and barriers of the participant. Meetings and appointments may be held in-person or virtually. The provider will interact with participants in the same professional, respectful manner regardless of if the meeting is held in-person or virtually. Virtual and in-person meetings have the same requirements such as timeliness of the scheduling of the meeting, completing, and updating assessments, completion of paperwork, completing IEPs, and working towards resolving barriers etc.

For virtual meetings, the provider must ensure the participant has the necessary access. Providers must follow information security management rules related to proper communication and safety when corresponding via mail, electronically via social media, email or by phone. The participant's needs must always take precedence over the provider on how the meeting will be held. Regardless of the manner of communication, the identification of the participant will be confirmed by the provider prior to any discussions.

### **Initial Contact Requirements**

All voluntary, mandatory, and sanctioned TA participants are referred electronically to providers for case management and coaching services within one business day after the TA case is processed by the Family Support Division (FSD). Providers then complete the following:

- Mail a MWA Case Management System Call-In appointment letter (MWA.001) within three business days from the referral date to the participant/two-parent households.
- Schedule an initial meeting for the participant(s) between 5 but no later than 10 working days from the date the appointment letter is mailed.
  - Meetings are not scheduled on state holidays, federal holidays, or weekends, unless agreed upon by the participant.
  - If the participant is unable to attend the meeting, the participant must contact provider to reschedule the meeting prior to the scheduled meeting time, and request an alternative meeting date, time, or place.
    - The meeting must occur prior to or during the same calendar week as the original meeting, unless good cause exists. When good cause exists, the participant may only request to schedule one (1) additional appointment which will be within a reasonable amount of time not to exceed ten (10) business days from the original meeting date.
      - “Good cause” includes a mistake or conduct beyond the control of the TA participant that is not intentionally or recklessly designed to impede an eligibility determination under these or any other TA regulations.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

- Good cause includes but is not limited to— 1. A court-required appearance or incarceration lasting less than thirty (30) days; 2. An emergency family crisis that renders the participant unable to meet at the scheduled place, date, or time; and 3. A breakdown in transportation arrangements with no readily accessible alternate means of transportation.
- The participant shall have six (6) weeks from the first business day of the week following the meeting with the division to comply with the work activity requirements, as required by the division. The participant’s TA benefits shall not be sanctioned during the six (6) week period.
- If the participant fails to appear for the scheduled face-to-face meeting and does not contact the division prior to the meeting to reschedule the meeting, the participant shall have six (6) weeks from the first business day of the week following the most recent scheduled meeting with the division to comply. The participant’s TA benefits shall not be sanctioned during the six- (6-) week period.
  - If the participant does not comply with the work activity requirements during the six (6) week period the participant’s benefits are to be sanctioned ([Missouri Secretary of State: Code of State Regulations](#)- Section 13 CSR 40-2.315 Work Activity and Work Requirements for Recipients of Temporary Assistance)
- During the initial visit/orientation, the provider will cover the following topics:
  - Opportunities available through MWA
  - Assessments
  - Individual Employment Plan (IEP)
  - Dates and times of individual and group meetings
  - How services are provided when children are present
  - The best method of secure monthly contact such as phone, text, email, face-to-face, virtual software, etc.
  - The process for conciliation and sanctions if requirements aren’t met
  - Detailed information regarding the provider’s processes, business operations, and partner services
  - Supportive service assistance available, the requirements to receive the support, and the payment process
  - Classes available including financial planning
  - Online resources available including jobs.mo.gov.
  - The importance of self-sufficiency, and the impact of employment on benefits

### **Monthly Contact Requirements**

Providers are required to maintain contact with participants at a minimum of twice monthly. The contact can be made via written correspondence, in-person, virtual, electronic, phone, or social media avenues.

Providers must continue to meet the minimum twice monthly contact requirement until the participant is successfully engaged and meeting their required work participation hours. For the participant meeting their required work participation activity hours they are not required to continue their monthly contacts, if it causes the participant a hardship. The provider will document the participant's preference in the MWA Case Management System and contact the participant intermittently.

All documentation of meeting required hours must still be provided in a timely or the provider must resume monthly meetings with the participant.

- The participant must be placed in core or non-core activities as specified in employment and training activities and as set out in Missouri's Work Verification Plan (WVP).
- The provider will help the participant in identifying their best course to attain self-sufficiency regardless of the core/non-core activity hour's ratio at this time and its effect on the Federal Work Participation Rate.
- Hours must continue to be documented in MWA Case Management System.

Administration for Children's and Families (ACF) determine core/non-core activities. DSS reserves the right to modify how providers determine participation in an employment or training activity. Currently, the Best Interest of the Participant is being utilized when determining activity participation. DSS reserves the right to revert back to requiring core/non-core hours be met at any time.

### **Assessments**

Assessments are used as the foundation for the participant's IEP and allow both the participant and provider to:

1. Identify strengths to use in goal setting in the IEP
2. Identify potential barriers prior to completing the participants IEP
3. Determine necessary actions to break down barriers
4. Identify existing work skills and work experience in relation to current labor market and the participant's aptitudes/interest
5. Identify if further education or training is appropriate relative to the participant's current job skills
6. Determine work readiness

During the assessments, the provider will:

1. Assist the participant in understanding the value, necessity and results of the assessment while assisting them in the development of their short- and long-term goals, the IEP, and treatment that may be needed.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

2. Assist the participant with interpretation and understanding of the assessment tests and results as they relate to the participant's self-sufficiency goals.
3. Assist the participant in self-identifying substance abuse, physical or mental health issues, and learning disabilities. Once identified making necessary referrals.
4. Screen for domestic violence.
5. Assist the participant to identify, explore and examine choices so that they can make appropriate decisions.
6. Identify and discuss with the participant any existing work skills, work experience, transferrable skills, or barriers to employment.

The MWA system assessment is completed during a participant's initial meeting and updated any time there are changes. The provider will complete each of the screens with all information.

1. Employment Assessment: Contains the current and previous employment experience, including job seeking skills and barriers to finding or maintaining employment.
2. Household Assessment: Includes the participant's previous and current housing, physical address if it is different from the FSD address, and household member information.
3. Education Assessment: Tracks the participant's education and training that has been completed, previously attempted, and currently in progress.
4. Transportation Assessment: Used to identify transportation barriers and lists the participant's current transportation options.
5. Legal Assessment: Lists the participant's legal issues and current legal status (probation, parole, work release, court ordered community service, none).
6. Childcare Assessment: Used to determine if the participant needs childcare assistance, the childcare back-up plan, and barriers to obtaining childcare.
7. Health Assessment: Provides information regarding the participants' current health conditions.
8. Assessment – Case Manager Summary: Updated when participants report changes and is used to assist in creating or updating the Individual Employment Plan.

Providers will also administer a basic skills assessment that measures participant's literacy, math, and workplace/soft skills within thirty (30) calendar days of the initial meeting. The results of this assessment will be case noted in the Basic Skills Additional Info Section on the IEP.

If the participant is unable to complete the assessment due to lack of literacy or English proficiency, the MWA provider will assist the participant in addressing these barriers prior to requiring the assessment.

### **Individual Employment Plan (IEP)**

The IEP is the blueprint the participant and the provider create to guide the participant to self-sufficiency. The provider assists the participant in building this plan, but the plan must be customized based on the participants' current state and future goals. The provider engages with the participant and completes the MWA assessment screens and assessment screening tests. The

provider and participant then formulate a plan that will guide them to self-sufficiency for their family while gaining the skills necessary for them to achieve their employment goals they desire.

The list below outlines the minimum components necessary to develop an IEP that is focused on both the individual and their family's needs:

- Personal information (includes name, address, etc.)
- Degree/certificate(s)/license(s) and veteran status information
- Desired positions
- Work history
- Family members (include all members, not just related members, or members receiving temporary assistance benefits)
- Goals and barriers – The provider must include benchmarks
- Current English, math, and other workplace skill levels
- Activity plan
- Dated signature of participant and the provider

While developing the IEP, the provider must:

- Educate the participant on the MWA program;
- Provide an explanation of the TA time limits and explain the intended temporary nature of the program;
- Share the participant's rights and responsibilities and share the MWA rights and responsibilities that includes:
  - Reasons for exemptions
  - Description of the conciliation process
  - Failure to participate without good cause(sanctioning)
  - Right to appeal
- Help the participant understand their strengths and skills;
- Explain the provider's agency, services, procedures, and locations;
- Encourage the participant's growth through the development of goals and steps to attain self-sufficiency;
- Help the participant understand the importance of planning for a temporary crisis or ongoing needs such as transportation, childcare, emergency situations, attending appointments, caring for ill family members, handling own illness, etc.
  - The provider will assist individuals with barriers by creating a long-term holistic plan. The solutions may include assistance from family, friends, neighbors, or other community resources.
- Outline the next steps in the process.

The IEP must be updated each time there are changes in goals, activities, barriers, steps, or anticipated completion dates.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

## **Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC)**

MERIC researches and provides analyses on the Missouri workforce. MERIC houses data from Workforce Development, Economic Development and Labor Information and utilizes this data to study economic trends, target industries and labor markets. The website provides information on Economic Indicators, Industry Standards, Occupational Studies, Regional Information and

Community Issues. Providers may access labor information in specific regions to assist participants in finding employment opportunities in their area. The MERIC website also provides access to the Missouri Career Pathways which is to be utilized when assisting participants with developing career goals.

Providers can access the MERIC website at: <https://meric.mo.gov/>

When using MERIC information to make a decision for the participant, the MERIC information should be placed in the case record to document the justification for the decision.

## **Career Pathways**

Career Pathways are a sequence of training and education programs that are designed to develop a person's academic and technical skills. MERIC has prepared research and resources for Career Pathways. Career Pathways are part of all industry groups, so the same common definition of career pathways introduces the concept for all industries.

Providers may access Missouri Career Pathways here:

[Missouri Career Pathways | Missouri Economic Research and Information Center \(mo.gov\)](#)

The Career Pathway field is the area in the IEP in which the participant identifies the occupational employment category in the participant's desired career. The participants' desired position must fall within a field that is considered a growing occupation, and the expected wage progression must lead to family supporting employment and non-dependence on government benefits.

## **Goal Development**

Short-term employment goals are opportunities the participant is willing and able to engage in while working toward their desired long-term goal. The provider will assist the participant in determining the answer to the question of, "What job can I do right now?"

Long-term employment goals are the goals the participant plans to achieve when they have attained the needed education and/or experience to fulfill the job requirements to do the desired position listed in their IEP. The provider will assist the participant in determining the answer to the question of, "What job am I ultimately wanting to obtain within my desired career path?"

Educational goals are goals related to the education needed to achieve the participants desired career pathway position. The provider will assist the participant in determining the answer to the question of, “What degree, training or certification is required/needed to obtain my desired job?”

### **Steps to obtain goal(s)**

There must be least one step for each goal and generally there are multiple steps needed to reach goals. The steps can be short-term and long-term in their expected completion timelines to meet the needs of the participant. Each step must clearly state a task that needs to be completed and once successfully completed will either allow progression to the next step on the path or to successful completion of the goal. The participant can be working on multiple tasks and goals at a time.

## **Employment and Training Activities Requirements**

Temporary Assistance (TA) participants are engaged in core and non-core hours in allowable employment and training activities. Activities are the documented action items in the IEP. The objective is the activity, such as employment or education attendance.

All states report core and non-core activities to the Administration for Children and Families and a Work Participation Rate (WPR) is determined. States also receive credits to the WPR based on caseload reduction and other factors. Currently, Missouri has enough of a reduction credit to focus on what is in the Best Interest of the Participant and not place the emphasis on if participation hours are met in a core or non-core activity. Although, providers may allow Best Interest of the Participant guidelines, participants are still required to have an updated IEP and to complete their required activity hours to be considered cooperating.

Although, Missouri continues to report WPR data to Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Missouri is not requiring providers to achieve a certain WPR. At any time, the Department of Social Services (DSS) reserves the right to return to requiring a certain WPR by provider, or to implement additional federal requirements.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

## **Hours of Participation**

Participants must engage in employment and training activities for a minimum number of hours per week. The number of hours a participant is required to participate depends on the household composition and the age of the youngest child.

<b>Minimum Required Participation Hours Per Week</b>		
<b>Single Parent Household</b>	Child under age 6	20 hours
	Child(ren) age 6 and over	30 hours
<b>Two-Parent Household</b>	Child(ren) under age 6 <u>and</u> not receiving childcare subsidy	35 hours
	All other 2-parent households	55 hours

## **Hours of Participation/Weekly Participation**

MWA follows the Federal week when considering hours of participation compliance. The federal week starts on Saturday and ends on Friday. To be considered fully participating, a participant must complete their required hours each week. Within the same month, providers should record the actual hours of participation in the MWA system, even if this exceeds the required hours, with the exception of Alternative Work Experience and Community Work Experience that cannot exceed the Fair Labor Standards Act calculation.

## **Best Interest of the Participant**

Best Interest of the Participant allows the provider to continue to place the participant in an activity that may not count toward the work participation rate. The participant may meet their required employment and training hours in core or non-core hours or in a combination of both that will lead to self-sufficiency, even though this may not meet the federal work participation rate. Individuals partaking of Best Interest of the Participant must still meet their required number of weekly hours.

Providers must document in the MWA Case Management System in case notes on how the use of “the best interest” supports the participant’s goals, steps, and IEP. This includes but is not limited to showing case progression and barrier removal. The Department of Social Services will

monitor the work participation rates and reserves the right to revert to requiring the federal core and non-core hour requirements.

“Best interest” does not remove state, federal, and program requirements to participate in work activities, conciliation/sanction processes, nor life-time benefit limits.

Factors to consider for “best interest” of the participant are:

- Have assessments and labor market data been provided and explained?
- Does the participant support the plan and goals?
- Do the IEP steps eliminate barriers to employment and move the participant forward in their plan?
- Do the IEP steps increase the participant’s education or skill gain to obtain employment?
- Has the participant been informed of their rights and responsibilities?
- Do the IEP steps and actions support the participant and their family’s needs?

### **Outcomes and Performance Measures**

During the federal fiscal year, the provider will maintain an average of at least 15% of the total number of referrals meet at least one (1) of the following measurements:

1. Obtained HISET (GED) or a program skills gain (education or credentials leading to employment) during participation or within one (1) year of program exit;
2. Entered into unsubsidized employment at thirty (30) or more hours per week and retain the employment for 60 days;
3. No longer on TA due to earnings and with a defined career pathway. Note: Transitional Employment Benefits is not considered receiving Temporary Assistance, so TEB participants would be considered no longer on TA for at least 60 days; or
4. In apprenticeship or On-the-Job short-term training for a specific job at thirty (30) or more hours per week, gain employment and retain the employment for at least 60 days

On June 3, 2023, the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 was signed into law. Effective FFY25, States must annually report on new mandatory outcome metrics, which are:

- The percentage of individuals who were work-eligible individuals as of the time of exit from TANF, who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exiting the program.
- The percentage of individuals who were work-eligible individuals who were in unsubsidized employment in the second quarter after exiting the program, who are also in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after the exit.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

- The median earnings of individuals who were work-eligible individuals as of the time of exit from the program, who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after the exit.
- The percentage of individuals who have not attained 24 years of age, are attending high school, or enrolled in an equivalency program and are work-eligible individuals or were work-eligible individuals as of the time exit from the program, who obtain a high school degree or its recognized equivalent while receiving assistance under the State program funded under this part or within one year after the exit.

“Exiting” means anyone who stops receiving assistance under the program (regardless of the reason why) and directs HHS to establish regulations regarding the reporting of performance indicators in consultation with states and the Department of Labor. The new metrics are used for reporting purposes only—states do not receive incentives or penalties for performance against the new outcome measures.

### **Employment & Training Activities (Core and Non-Core)**

The Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance TANF policy can be found at: [Policy | The Administration for Children and Families \(hhs.gov\)](#)

Please see the Missouri Work Verification Plan (WVP) for additional information.

[MWA | Missouri Department of Social Services](#)

<b>Allowable Activities &amp; Description</b>	<b><i>Component Activity / Core or Non-core / Examples of Countable Hours / Allowable Verification</i></b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS</u></b></p> <p>A structured volunteer activity for individuals who lack clear work skills and may not be able to obtain and maintain stable employment. Must include structured activities that improve the employability of the participant.</p> <p>*Subject to FLSA</p>	<p><b><u>Component Activity:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSR Community Service</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Core / NON-Core</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>CORE</i></b> activity for the calculation of weekly hours.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Examples of Countable Hours:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be considered a work site, organizations must apply to the local service provider in the region and complete the Community Service Worksite Agreement form. The employer must list the skills to be performed. The position must <b><i>not</i></b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Replace a paid employee</li> <li>▪ Result in layoffs of regular employees</li> <li>▪ Fill a vacancy of a full-time paid employee</li> </ul> </li> <li>• For assessment, an hour of attendance is equal to an hour of being assessed. Attendance hours for the assessment process will not include activities that require self-attestation.</li> <li>• A countable hour is equal to an hour of attendance at the worksite.</li> <li>• Include only activities that reflect same types of work “real” employees complete.</li> </ul>

**Allowable Verification:**

- The individual providing the assessment is required to provide signed written verification or verbal verification indicating type of assessment, date(s), time(s), and hour(s) spent.
- Timesheets/logs are to be kept daily, signed by employer, supervisor, or payroll representative, also attesting to actual attendance.
- Provided to case manager no less than every 2 weeks for review and entry into the tracking system.
- Case managers reassess the participant at a minimum of every 90 days.
- Detailed case notes must be entered at every circumstance while participating in program.
- Activity allows for Holidays/excused absences as described by current Work Verification Plan (WVP).

**Allowable Activities & Description**

***Component Activity / Core or Non-core / Examples of Countable Hours / Allowable Verification***

**JOB SEARCH / JOB READINESS**

**Job Search**– activity in which participant looks for suitable jobs by contacting employers. Participant must present themselves as available for work. Job search offers two formats – group job search workshop and independent job search

**Job Readiness** – Preparing a participant to seek, obtain and maintain employment.

**Component Activity:**

- JBS - Job Readiness activities; JBR - Job Search

**Core / NON-Core**

- **CORE** activity for the calculation of weekly hours.

**Examples of Countable Hours:**

- Completing applications for employment.
- Responding to classified advertisements.
- Completing online applications at home or employer’s worksite.
- Job fairs – attend, complete applications or speak with potential employers.
- Online research through jobs.mo.gov and other state/national data bases.
- Travel time between interviews and job search activities.
- Time spent completing assessments that measure basic skills.
- Attending workshops/classes in resume writing, networking, career exploration and soft skills.
- Programs designed to treat substance abuse and/or mental health.
- For assessment, an hour of attendance is equal to an hour of being assessed. Attendance hours for the assessment process will not include activities that require self-attestation.
- For job search, countable hours are determined by actual hours spent in that search.

	<p><b><u>Allowable Verification:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The individual providing the assessment is required to provide signed written verification or verbal verification indicating type of assessment, date(s), time(s), and hour(s) spent.</li> <li>• Online job search conducted on jobs.mo.gov are determined by log in and log out time. Documentation of actual online job search hours is sent electronically to FSD and recorded in the MWA system</li> <li>• Participant must provide documentation of actual hours of structured job search to the case manager (on the daily job search log) no less than once every two weeks.</li> <li>• Activity allows for Holidays/excused absences as described by current Work Verification Plan (WVP).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Allowable Activities &amp; Description</b></p>	<p><b><i>Component Activity / Core or Non-core / Examples of Countable Hours / Allowable Verification</i></b></p>
<p><b><u>ON THE JOB TRAINING (OJT)</u></b></p> <p>The participant is provided training which gives the knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job. The participant is compensated at a rate comparable to other employees performing same duties. OJT can be in the public or private sector.</p>	<p><b><u>Component Activity:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OJT - On-the-job-training</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Core / NON-Core</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CORE</b> activity for the calculation of weekly hours.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Examples of Countable Hours:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments to determine if TA participant can pursue/obtain specific employment opportunity</li> <li>• OJT employment</li> <li>• Paid supportive services including mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, job search and OJT training</li> <li>• OJT may include classroom training, job related basic skills, literacy, Limited English Proficiency (LEP and or occupational skills training that is required by the employer.</li> <li>• An hour of attendance is equal to an hour of assessment</li> <li>• OJT and paid supportive services including mental health, substance abuse treatment, job search and training a countable hour is equal to an hour of attendance</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Allowable Verification:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments and OJT hours are verified through wage stubs, attendance logs, and written or verbal verification from employer. Verbal verification will require a form filled out by the MWA case manager with pertinent information.</li> <li>• Paid supportive services including mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, job search and training are verified through wage stubs, attendance</li> </ul>

logs, and written or verbal verification from employer. Verbal verification will require a form filled out by the MWA case manager with pertinent information.

**Allowable Activities & Description**

***Component Activity / Core or Non-core / Examples of Countable Hours / Allowable Verification***

**PROVISION OF CHILDCARE SERVICE**

Allows one MWA participant to care for the child/ren of another MWA participant participating in a community service program.

**Component Activity:**

- CCS - Providing care services to someone participating in community service activities

**Core / NON-Core**

- **CORE** activity for the calculation of weekly hours.

**Examples of Countable Hours:**

- Structured, limited basis program in which individuals provide childcare for participants in approved TANF community service program activities. (\* In a 2-parent household, one parent cannot count providing childcare for his/her own child and be considered as participating.)
- Participants report actual hours on time sheets and activity logs for every day of every week of each month.

**Allowable Verification:**

- Time sheets or activity logs attesting to the provided information are signed by the participant (childcare provider) and program administrator.

**Allowable Activities & Description**

***Component Activity / Core or Non-core / Examples of Countable Hours / Allowable Verification***

**SUBSIDIZED PRIVATE & PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT**

Employment in the private or public sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TA or other public funds to offset some, or all of the wages and costs of employing a participant.

**Component Activity:**

- EPR - Subsidized Employment Private Sector; EPU - Subsidized Employment Public Sector

**Core / NON-Core**

- **CORE** activity for the calculation of weekly hours.

**Examples of Countable Hours:**

- Assessments when part of a paid activity.
- Paid employment in the public or private sector – TANF funded.
- Supportive Services: paid substance abuse & mental health treatment, job search, and training.
- Paid Federal Work Study.
- Paid supported work for individuals with disabilities in an integrated setting.
- Assessment - An hour of attendance is equal to an hour of assessment (does not include self-attestation),

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subsidized public or private employment TANF funded, Federal work study, and paid supported work for individuals with disabilities in an integrated setting a countable hour is equal to an hour of paid attendance or paid leave or paid holidays.</li> <li>• Substance abuse &amp; mental health treatment paid by the employer; a countable hour is equal to an hour of paid attendance.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Allowable Verification:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of a paid activity and paid employment in public or private sector, TANF funded hours are verified through attendance logs, daily attendance documents, or verbal verification. Attendance documents are signed by employer/worksites. Verbal documentation requires the case manager to complete a form with all pertinent information.</li> <li>• Paid substance abuse and mental health treatment will be verified by the employer.</li> <li>• Paid Federal work study “contracted” hours of work between the educational institution and TA participant are verified through documentation of attendance by instructor/supervisor, wage stubs or verbal verification. Verbal verification will require a form filled out by the MWA case manager with pertinent information.</li> <li>• Paid supported work for individuals with disabilities in an integrated setting will often be verified by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, attendance logs, hard-copy evidence, or verbal verification. Verbal documentation will require the MWA case manager to complete a form with all pertinent information.</li> </ul>
--	--

<b>Allowable Activities &amp; Description</b>	<b><i>Component Activity / Core or Non-core / Examples of Countable Hours / Allowable Verification</i></b>
---	--

<p><b><u>UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT</u></b></p> <p>Part or full-time employment in the public or private sector and is not subsidized by TA or another public program. Employment must consist of work for pay. Pay must not be less than either the federal minimum wage or the state’s</p>	<p><b><u>Component Activity:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EMP – Includes Unsubsidized Paid Emp., Comp in Lieu of Wages, Self-Emp., Work Study</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Core / NON-Core</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>CORE</i></b> activity for the calculation of weekly hours.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Examples of Countable Hours:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments when part of a paid activity (typing, physical, aptitude, drug, etc.).</li> <li>• Employment –wages paid solely by the employer. Includes temporary employment agency if agency functions as the employer and pays the participant directly.</li> <li>• Paid clinicals, internships, or apprenticeships.</li> <li>• Substance abuse &amp; mental health treatment when employer pays for the treatment hours.</li> <li>• Employer compensation in lieu of wages.</li> </ul>
---	---

<p>minimum wage, whichever is higher.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-Employment</li> <li>• Assessment - An hour of attendance is equal to an hour of being assessed. (does not include self-attestation).</li> <li>• Unsubsidized employment, temp. agency employment, paid clinicals, paid internships, paid– apprenticeships, substance abuse &amp; mental health treatment with set number of hours &amp; compensation in lieu of wages- a countable hour is equal to an hour of attendance at the worksite when the employer pays the full wage or paid leave or Holiday status.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Allowable Verification:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment performed as part of a paid activity, unsubsidized employment, employment through a Temp Agency, paid clinicals, internships, and apprenticeships are verified through; written documentation from the employer, wage stubs, attendance logs, or verbal verification from the employer.</li> <li>• Paid substance abuse &amp; mental health treatment are verified by the employer.</li> <li>• Self-Employment and compensation in lieu of wages (no set hours) Missouri uses the Federal minimum wage calculation to determine countable hours. Written or verbal verification is provided to the MWA case manager – verbal verification requires a form filled out by the MWA case manager.</li> </ul>
---	--

<p><b>Allowable Activities &amp; Description</b></p>	<p><b><i>Component Activity / Core or Non-core / Examples of Countable Hours / Allowable Verification</i></b></p>
--	---

<p><b><u>VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING</u></b></p> <p>Formalized training that prepares a participant for current or emerging occupations. Training must lead to a certificate, license, or degree.</p> <p>*ACF does not include hours in the WPR beyond 12 calendar months for any TA participant.</p>	<p><b><u>Component Activity:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VOC - Vocational Education and Training</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Core / NON-Core</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CORE</b> activity for the calculation of weekly hours.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Examples of Countable Hours:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment to determine if participant is able to participate in the educational/training activity chosen.</li> <li>• Vocational schools</li> <li>• Trade schools</li> <li>• Community college required for specific occupations.</li> <li>• Proprietary schools</li> <li>• Remedial/basic education provided as a component of a vocational certificate, license, or degree.</li> <li>• Limited English Proficiency (LEP) as a requirement for a vocational certificate, license, or degree.</li> <li>• Distance/Virtual Learning</li> <li>• Baccalaureate degrees</li> <li>• Advanced degrees</li> </ul>
---	---

<p>*The training provider must be approved by DESE as an eligible provider. In rare cases this can be waived.</p> <p>*Justification of the need for training must be documented on the IEP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrial skills certifications</li> <li>• One hour of unsupervised study time for each hour of class time, except remedial, basic education and Limited English proficiency classes.</li> <li>• Also, supervised study time for all programs.</li> <li>• For assessment, an hour of attendance is equal to an hour of being assessed. Attendance hours for the assessment process will not include activities that require self-attestation.</li> <li>• A countable hour for the vocational education and training activity is equal to one hour of “seat time” attending a class, lab, or organized tutoring session etc.</li> <li>• For distance learning, a countable hour is determined by the hours allowed for individuals in a classroom setting.</li> <li>• One hour of unsupervised study/homework time for each hour of class time will be allowed except for assessments, LEP, and remedial/basic education.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Allowable Verification:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The individual providing the assessment is required to provide signed written or verbal verification indicating type of assessment, date(s), time(s), and hour(s) spent. Verbal verification also requires the name and title of individual providing the assessment.</li> <li>• Attendance by the participant can be documented by signed time sheets, or attendance records provided by the instructor or an individual in a school’s official administrative setting.</li> <li>• Verification will be provided every 2 weeks.</li> <li>• Participant must have satisfactory progress; this is defined as 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale.</li> <li>• The case manager can verify attendance with the participant by phone, in person, or electronically. *(If a case manager verifies actual hours of attendance based on regular communication, and the participant fails to demonstrate satisfactory progress at the end of an instructional period such as a quarter or semester, the standard of verification will revert to signed documentation from the educational institution.)</li> <li>• For distance learning, attendance is verified through log in/out attendance records available on-line or in electronic format, or by the case manager.</li> <li>• Total homework/study time counted for participation cannot exceed the hours required or advised by a particular educational institution.</li> <li>• Activity allows for Holidays and Excused Absences as described by current Work Verification Plan (WVP).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Allowable Activities &amp; Description</b></p>	<p><b><i>Component Activity / Core or Non-core / Examples of Countable Hours / Allowable Verification</i></b></p>
<p><b><u>WORK EXPERIENCE</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Component Activity:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CWP - AWEPP Alternative Work Experience Program (AWEPP) and Community Work Experience Program (CWEPP)</li> </ul>

Consists of Alternative Work Experience Program (AWEP) and Community Work Experience Program (CWEP) is unpaid, volunteer work designed to improve the employability of the TA participant not otherwise able to obtain sufficient or suitable employment.

Including work associated with the refurbishing of publicly assisted housing.

\*Subject to FLSA

**Core / NON-Core**

- **CORE** activity for the calculation of weekly hours.

**Examples of Countable Hours:**

- Assessments to determine if TA participant is able to pursue/obtain specific employment opportunity
- Volunteer employment in the private sector – Alternative Work Experience (AWEP)
- Volunteer employment in the public sector - Community Work Experience (CWEP)
- AWP/CWEP participants:
  - Cannot fill existing unfilled vacancies;
  - Cannot receive a salary or any work or training expenses;
  - Only placed in the position if they cannot be placed in paid jobs;
  - Are not considered federal employees if they perform work for a federal office or agency;
  - Never displace current employees;
- An hour of attendance is equal to an hour of assessment (assessment will not include self-attestation)
- AWEP/CWEP an hour of attendance is equal to a countable hour

**Allowable Verification:**

- For assessments to determine if TA participant is able to pursue/obtain specific employment opportunities the individual providing the assessment will provide signed written verification or verbal verification. Verbal verification will require a form filled out by the MWA case manager with pertinent information.
- AWEP/CWEP hours are verified through attendance logs signed by the employer/worksite.
- Participant Agreement must be signed

**Allowable Activities & Description**

***Component Activity / Core or Non-core / Examples of Countable Hours / Allowable Verification***

**EDUCATION  
DIRECTLY  
RELATED TO  
EMPLOYMENT**

This activity is only considered when the participant is seeking employment where a general equivalency

**Component Activity:**

- HSE - High School Equivalency ; REM - Remedial Education

**Core / NON-Core**

- **NON-CORE** activity for the calculation of weekly hours.

**Examples of Countable Hours:**

- Assessment to determine if the participant is able to participate in the educational/training activity chosen.
- Adult Education and Literacy (AEL)

<p>or high school diploma is required, or continued employment is conditional on receiving the diploma/certificate, and when necessary, LEP is a component of the course study.</p> <p>*Participants with overseas diplomas will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine if they qualify.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited English Proficiency (LEP)</li> <li>High School Equivalency classes and testing</li> <li>Literacy skills classes</li> <li>Supervised homework and study activities related to AEL.</li> <li>For assessment, an hour of attendance is equal to an hour of being assessed. Attendance hours for the assessment process will not include activities that require self-attestation.</li> <li>For AEL, LEP, High School Equivalency classes and testing, and literacy skills classes, a countable hour for the AEL, LEP, etc. activity is equal to one hour of “seat time” attending a class or organized tutoring session. (Unsupervised, informal study time is not a countable component of this activity.)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Allowable Verification:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The individual providing the assessment is required to provide signed written verification or verbal verification indicating type of assessment, date(s), time(s), and hour(s) spent.</li> <li>Actual hours are verified by attendance sheets or statements signed by an instructor or other supervisory personnel.</li> <li>Verification will be provided every 2 weeks documenting actual attendance in each class.</li> <li>Activity allows for Holidays and Excused Absences as described by current Work Verification Plan (WVP).</li> <li>Per final regulations, there is no criteria to meet for good and satisfactory progress.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Allowable Activities &amp; Description</b></p>	<p><b><i>Component Activity / Core or Non-core / Examples of Countable Hours / Allowable Verification</i></b></p>
<p><b><u>JOB SKILLS TRAINING DIRECTLY RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT</u></b></p> <p>Any training or education for specific job skills required by an employer to obtain the job or to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace</p>	<p><b><u>Component Activity:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JST - Job Skills Training; AEL - Adult Education &amp; Literacy; ESL - Limited English Proficiency</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Core / NON-Core</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><i>NON-CORE</i></b> activity for the calculation of weekly hours.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Examples of Countable Hours:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment to determine if the participant is able to participate in the educational/training activity</li> <li>Customized or general training directly related to a specific job or to prepare participant for employment in a particular occupational field</li> <li>LEP or literacy instruction related to a specific job or occupational field</li> <li>Post-secondary college programs leading to a baccalaureate or advance degree related to a specific job or occupational field</li> </ul>

- Distance/Virtual learning
- Any other educational setting wherein the participant is gaining knowledge or skills related to a specific occupation, regardless of whether or not the participant has gained a high school diploma or equivalency.
- One hour of unsupervised study time for each hour of class time for all programs.
- Plus, supervised study for all programs
- For assessment, an hour of attendance is equal to an hour of being assessed. Attendance hours for the assessment process will not include activities that require self-attestation.
- A countable hour for job skills training is equal to one hour of “seat time” attending a class, lab, or organized tutoring session etc.
- For distance learning, a countable hour is determined by the hours allowed for individuals in a classroom setting.
- One hour of unsupervised study/homework time for each hour of job skills training will be allowed except for assessments, LEP, and remedial/basic education.

**Allowable Verification:**

- The individual providing the assessment is required to provide signed written verification or verbal verification indicating type of assessment, date(s), time(s), and hour(s) spent.
- In-person learning, related to job skills training to direct employment, instructor can provide a written statement or verbal statement to the case manager stating the hours the participant was in class/training.
- Distance/Virtual learning, related to job skills training to direct employment, school/instructor can provide a written statement or verbal statement to the case manager stating the hours of “normal” class time required or a schedule of the hours of class time per day normally required for the class.
- Total homework/study time counted for participation cannot exceed the hours required or advised by a particular educational institution.
- Activity allows for Holidays and Excused Absences as described by current Work Verification Plan (WVP).
- Participants will provide a training or class schedule to their case manager at the start of each term of the course of study or a statement from the instructor or other supervisory personnel.
- The case manager can verify attendance with the participant by phone, in person, or electronically. (If a case manager verifies actual hours of attendance based on regular communication, and the participant fails to demonstrate satisfactory progress at the end of an instructional period such as a quarter or semester, the standard of verification will revert to signed documentation from the educational institution.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily supervision is verified by attendance sheets or other written or electronic methods of “check-in”. This is performed by the instructor or other supervisory staff who are present daily at the training/classes.</li> <li>• Verification will be provided every two weeks.</li> </ul>
<b>Allowable Activities &amp; Description</b>	<b><i>Component Activity / Core or Non-core / Examples of Countable Hours / Allowable Verification</i></b>
<p><b><u>SATISFACTORY ATTENDANCE AT A SECONDARY SCHOOL OR IN A COURSE STUDY LEADING TO A CERTIFICATE OF GENERAL EQUIVALENCE</u></b></p> <p>Satisfactory attendance at a secondary school provided the participant has not already completed secondary school.</p>	<p><b><u>Component Activity:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HIS - High School; JHI - Junior High</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Core / NON-Core</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>NON-CORE</i></b> activity for the calculation of weekly hours. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This can be a “CORE ” activity for teen parents up to the month the teen parent turns 19 years of age, who is a custodial parent of a minor child</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b><u>Examples of Countable Hours:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School for teen parents up to the month they turn 19.</li> <li>• High school equivalency classes and testing.</li> <li>• Limited English Proficiency (LEP) classes.</li> <li>• Homeschooling</li> <li>• Any parent or guardian may educate a child at home. (See complete home school definition in the current WVP.)</li> <li>• For High School Equivalency classes and testing, and literacy skills classes, a countable hour for the AEL, LEP, and etc. activity is equal to one hour of “seat time” attending a class or organized tutoring session. (Unsupervised, informal study time is not a countable component of this activity.)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Allowable Verification:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actual hours are verified by attendance sheets or other written or electronic methods of “check in” is performed by the instructor or other supervisory staff who are present daily at the classes.</li> <li>• Verification will be provided every 2 weeks documenting attendance in each class.</li> <li>• Activity allows for Holidays and Excused Absences as described by current Work Verification Plan (WVP).</li> <li>• Per final regulations, there is no criteria to meet for good and satisfactory progress.</li> <li>• A student who attends a full course of instruction of the secondary school can be “deemed” to be engaged in work.</li> </ul> <p>*Can be a public, private, parish or home school.</p>

These activities are <b><i>not</i></b> counted.	AST	Assessment – not related to a specific activity
	CON	Conciliation
	REF	Refugee/Resettlement Activity
	TWV	Temporary Waiver

### **Federal Week/Month**

For active TA participants, work participation hours are counted and recorded based on a Federal Work Week which is calculated Saturday through Friday. Therefore, some months have four weeks and others have five weeks depending on whether the month has four or five Fridays. This is considered a Federal month. The MWA System displays Federal Calendars under the resource tab. The calendar shows which month a particular week falls into when the activity is reported to Health and Human Services (HHS).

Some activities hours are limited by ACF. Job Search and Job Readiness hours are limited to no more than 120 hours or 180 hours for four consecutive weeks during a fiscal year. States that meet the definition of a “needy state” for the Contingency Fund are limited to no more than 240 hours or 360 hours for four consecutive weeks during a fiscal year. Missouri is considered a “needy state.”

Vocational Education and Training is limited to 12 months.

**NOTE:** Best Interest of the Participant allows participant to continue in an activity although ACF limits the hours.

### **Teen Parents**

A teen parent is an individual receiving Temporary Assistance (TA) who is under age 18 (including the month the individual turns 18) and is the custodial caretaker of a child. For MWA purposes, a teen parent is defined as up to the month he or she turns 19 and is the custodial caretaker of a minor child. For MWA there is no minimum age limit for teen parent. Teen parents will be referred to MWA whether or not they are attending school and will receive case management services through MWA. Teen parents who are not the head of household (payee) are not referred to MWA.

All teen parents without a high school diploma or the equivalent are required to participate in education as their required work activity. Providers are to enroll the teen parent in a regular high school program activity. In cases where enrollment in a regular high school is not possible because of the participant's age or inability to function effectively in a high school environment, enroll the participant in a high school equivalency or GED program.

If it is determined that the teen is unwilling or is unable to attend any educational activity, and is age 16 or older, place the teen parent in other activities such as unsubsidized or subsidized employment. It remains the primary goal to encourage the teen parent to complete high school.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

When a teen parent is enrolled in an educational activity, send the "Teen Parent in Educational Activity" alert to inform FSD that the participant is attending school. It is extremely important that this alert is sent immediately upon verification of the attendance at an educational activity. Opening the activity of *High School* will generate this alert. FSD changes the Work Activity code in FAMIS and the teen's months of receipt of TA do not count toward their 45-month lifetime limit while they are attending high school or another educational activity.

Consider attendance at high school as meeting the teen parent's hourly participation rate, even if the actual attendance hours do not equal the required hours. However, if the teen is enrolled in HISET classes or other educational activities, the teen must participate for his/her actual required hours.

Planning to return to school in the fall does not meet the work requirement during the summer months. If the teen parent is not enrolled in summer school, teen parents need to participate in another activity. For those teen parents not enrolled in summer school, MWA case managers need to assist teen parents in finding a countable work activity during the summer months.

### **Holidays**

Program activities allow certain holidays to count toward participation for the hours participants normally would have attended for that day (up to eight (8) hours) if the employer/school observes the holiday.

Holidays include:

- January 1 – New Year's Day
- Third Monday in January – Martin Luther King's Jr's Birthday
- Third Monday in February - Washington's Birthday
- Last Monday in May – Memorial Day
- June 19 - Juneteenth
- July 4 – Independence Day
- First Monday in September – Labor Day
- Second Monday in October – Columbus Day
- November 11 – Veterans Day
- Fourth Thursday in November – Thanksgiving Day
- December 25 – Christmas Day

If the employer/school observes holidays that are not on this list, those holidays do not count towards participation and the participant needs to achieve the required hours in some other manner.

### **Excused Absences**

Participants are allowed eighty (80) hours of excused absences in a twelve (12)-month period, with no more than sixteen (16) hours in any given month. Excused absences are allowed for any reason.

## **Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Deeming**

Alternative Work Experience/Community Work Experience (AWEP/CWEP) program positions are subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the employer is required to verify they are subject to FLSA by indicating this (in a check box) on the AWEP/CWEP agreement.

If the employer states they are not subject to FLSA, the TA participant will not be placed at that worksite.

Missouri has received approval to operate a simplified Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The TA grant and the SNAP allotment less child support retained by the state divided by the state minimum wage and those hours are then divided by the number of federal weeks in that month to obtain the maximum allowable weekly hours for that month for each Work Experience and Community Service Program participant. TA participants who meet their FLSA monthly calculated hours are deemed to meet their core participation requirement, even if the calculated hours do not equal the minimum required participation hours per week requirement. The MWA system calculates the FLSA, and it is found on the TA Participation screen.

## **Good Cause for Non-Participation**

TA participants may have good cause for not participating in employment and training activities, and/or not responding to the call-in letter. If the participant responds at any point prior to or on the date of the sanction appointment, s/he must be evaluated to determine if the criteria for an exemption, temporary exclusion, or another good cause reason(s) is met.

## **Exemptions**

An exemption is a period of time that a TA participant is not required to participate in the MWA program due to meeting one (1) of the reasons discussed below. If a participant meets an exemption during the TA application/approval process, they are not referred to MWA for services. FSD will maintain responsibility for monitoring the exemption status.

If the participant is referred to MWA and is then later found to meet an exemption, the provider obtains verification of the exemption, maintains adequate records related to the exemption, and reports the information to FSD the same day by sending the appropriate alert in the MWA system. The participant must provide FSD with the documentation to allow a determination to be made if the verification is sufficient for the participant to be exempt.

Exemption categories:

- Custodial Caretaker of a Child under twelve (12) Weeks of Age (01) – A caretaker of a child under the age of twelve (12) weeks is exempt from participating in MWA; however, they are still referred to MWA as volunteers due to the short nature of the exemption and the months count towards the lifetime limit.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

- Two-parent households can opt to share the twelve (12) week time period but may not take the exemption simultaneously.
- Needed in the Home to Care for a Disabled Individual (05) – If there are no alternative means of care available to care for a disabled household member a parent or caretaker may be granted an exemption. This exemption is only good until resources are located that will not jeopardize the safety and well-being of the disabled individual household member and the person must not be granted the exemption until all other options for care have been explored. If this exemption is needed, a written statement of documentation of the need is required from a medical professional and it must specify the caretaker responsibilities that make participating in MWA unacceptable for the caregiver and outline the expected timeframe for this level of care need.
  - Mentally and/or Physically Disabled (06) - Anyone who has made a first application for SSDI/SSI or other employer sponsored disability insurance or is a participant of SSDI/SSI.  
**Note:** second applications or appeals DO NOT meet the exemption requirement for this category. Any temporary disability does not meet the requirement. A doctor's note does not meet this category requirement.
  - Caretaker Payees aged Sixty (60) or older (07) – Any caretaker payee aged sixty (60) or older is exempt from participating.

### **Temporary Waivers**

A temporary waiver is granted to a participant that is not able or may only be partially able to comply with the MWA work requirement. The provider must contact all participants granted a waiver or exclusion, to review the situation and re-evaluate the waiver status. Participants are placed in assessment if documentation is required for the current condition. Individuals granted waivers are still subject to the forty-five (45) month lifetime limit.

- At risk pregnancy
- Temporarily waived pregnant participant gives birth
- Temporarily disabled
- Victims of Domestic Violence
- Active with Children's Division
- Lack of Childcare or Transportation
  - Before placing a participant in a waiver for lack of childcare or transportation, the circumstances must be reviewed. If the waiver is approved, record the approval as a case note in the MWA System, place the participant in the waiver for a maximum of 30 days. The provider must review the waiver at a minimum every two (2) weeks. Continue to assist the participant to locate childcare or obtain transportation while they are in the temporary waiver status. At the end of 30 days, re-evaluate the situation with the participant, review the available options. These waived participants remain subject to the 45-month lifetime limit

of TA; therefore, it is important to resolve this barrier as soon as possible.

**Note:** When a participant asks for temporary waiver status place her/him in assessment while attempting to obtain documentation of the condition.

When the documentation is received place the participant in the appropriate temporary waiver with a scheduled end date up to 6 months in the future, or as indicated in the documentation.

The temporary waivers are:

- Active with Children’s Division (CD) (03) – If the participant states they have an active case with DSS CD and this will impact their participation in work/educational activities, the provider must email their assigned FSD Program Specialist and report this. FSD will contact CD and confirm if the participant has an active case and if the participant’s involvement in the case prevents the individual(s) from MWA participation.
- Temporary Disability (04) - The participant must provide documentation from a physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist verifying the medical condition. The verification must state that the individual is unable to participate in any work/educational activity and the expected duration of the condition. (The temporary disability must be expected to persist at least thirty (30) days but less than six (6) months. This includes pregnancy if it is medically determined that the baby and or the mother is at risk. ) This waiver can be claimed at any time by the applicant/participant.  
**Note:** If documentation from the medical professional suggests the participant will be considered disabled beyond twelve (12) months, the participant may need to be offered FSD forms referred to as a MRT (Medical Review Team) packet to complete. The provider should assist participants with forms if needed. The participant must also be referred to Social Security to apply for disability benefits.
- Domestic Violence (DV) (05) – Domestic violence is any behavior the purpose of which is to gain power and control over a spouse, partner, or intimate family member. At times there will be participants that are victims of domestic violence. These individuals may need to be allowed appropriate time for the family to overcome its immediate crisis. If the participant indicates they need a DV waiver, only ask for details in regard to employability, how they prefer to be contacted, and schedule a follow-up appointment.
- Lack of Childcare (08) or Lack of Transportation (09) – Having a barrier to childcare or transportation can impact the participant’s ability to participate in the program. The participant can request a temporary waiver due to a lack of childcare or a lack of transportation or the provider can explain this option.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

## **Volunteers**

TA participants who meet certain Exemptions or Temporary Waivers may choose to volunteer but later fail to comply.

- Volunteers are sent a ‘Voluntary Call-in Letter #1.
- Volunteers should not be placed in Conciliation. If the volunteer is not participating, send the ‘Voluntary Pre/Post Conciliation’ letter.
- A Volunteer **cannot** be sanctioned. If s/he chooses not to participate, the ‘Volunteer Not Participating’ alert should be sent to FSD for those meeting an Exemption.
- FSD enters the appropriate Exemption code in FAMIS, which closes the case in the MWA system.
- For MWA Participants in a Temporary Waiver, no alert is sent to FSD, and the waiver is allowed for the verified time.

TA participants with a child under 12 weeks are automatically referred to MWA as Volunteers in addition to other types of Volunteers mentioned above and cannot be placed into conciliation or sanctioned.

- Volunteers are sent a ‘Voluntary Call-in Letter #1.
- These volunteers should not be placed in Conciliation until their status changes to Mandatory.
- Continue frequent contact to offer resources and build relationship with the participant during this time.

## **Work-Eligible Individual (WEI)**

Missouri’s participation rates are determined by the number of work eligible single parent families that meet their participation requirements. Participation is calculated on a cumulative annual basis based on the Federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30).

Missouri defines a work-eligible individual as:

- Adult receiving assistance,
- Minor child head of the household receiving assistance, or
- Non-participant parent living with a child receiving such assistance; unless the parent is one of the following:
  - A minor parent who is not a head-of-household,
  - Alien who is ineligible due to immigration status,
  - A participant of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits on a case-by-case basis.

These individuals are identified and maintained in Missouri’s interactive eligibility determination system, known as FAMIS. Individuals who apply for or receive assistance under TANF or a separate state program are identified in the system by a code. This code is used in conjunction

with relationship identifiers, age information, and citizenship status codes to identify the work-eligible individuals listed above.

Individuals are considered work-eligible unless they are:

- Needed in the home to care for a disabled family member, who is living in the home as verified by medical documentation to support the need for the parent to remain in the home to care for the disabled family member,
- A minor parent who is not a head-of-household,
- Alien who is ineligible due to immigration status, or
- A participant of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits on a case-by-case basis.

## **Case Notes**

Case notes are a vital part of the participant's record. Case notes must be factual and recount the interaction with the participant. Detailed case notes tell the participant's story during participation in the program and must include information such as - activities assigned to the participant, participant challenges/barriers, successes the participant may have and other pertinent information regarding the participant.

Case Notes must be recorded in the MWA system and must provide accurate and adequate recording of events and circumstances affecting the TA participant's ability to engage in employment and training activities. Case notes must be recorded after each interaction with the applicant/participant. Case notes must be entered real time while assisting the participant; however, there may be times when this is not possible due to availability of the system. In those cases, the case notes must be entered no later than twenty-four (24) hours from the last interaction with the participant.

Reminders regarding case notes:

- A part of the permanent record, therefore, not optional.
- FSD staff providing services will also read the case notes.
- The participant or guardian of the participant has the right to receive copies of the case notes and any other documentation in their record.
- In the case of a hearing related to a MWA failure to cooperate sanction, case notes from the record will be submitted as evidence.
- A case note must be entered at every interaction (face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings, texts, social media, emails, and phone calls) with the participant. Case notes must include:
  - The reason for the interaction
  - Documents completed and the reason
  - Participant concerns regarding participating in the program

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

- Barriers to participation, employment, or training.
- A case note must also be entered when an unsuccessful attempt to contact is made.
- Avoid emotional language, judgement, opinions, and jargon.

## **Educational Expenses**

Whenever possible providers should inquire and request payment plans for any qualified education expenses such as tuition, fees and other related expenses for eligible participants. Providers are to communicate with the college, vocational school, or other post-secondary educational institution to set up payment plans to ensure the participants remains eligible for TA while pursuing their educational attainment.

## **Supportive Services**

Supportive services are reimbursements or purchases made for or to the participant to help remove barriers to self-sufficiency. The provider must document in the participants file how these supports are tracked and released.

## **Transportation Reimbursement Expense (TRE)**

TRE (e.g. reimbursement by check/pay card, purchase of gas, bus pass/tokens, etc. ) allows participation in employment and training activities. Reimbursement is the responsibility of the provider.

MWA participants with an approved TA case who are engaged in an allowable employment or training activities may receive reimbursement for incurred transportation expenses while participating in MWA work activities.

Participants that have completed work activity hours are eligible for up to the maximum of \$20 transportation reimbursement each day. TRE is not to exceed \$100 within a federal work week (Saturday thru Friday) and is not to exceed \$100 per household. If another organization or person pays transportation costs, TRE funds are used only to supplement that reimbursement.

The participant must have completed all required assessments, enrollments and provided required documentation to be eligible for TRE.

The provider may not adjust this policy with local policies or any additional requirements.

Providers must issue the TRE payment no later than 20 calendar days after the participant has provided all necessary documentation.

Example 1: Joe completed 2 days of work activities and incurred transportation costs. Joe is eligible for \$40 TRE. (2 days at \$20 /day)

Example 2: Sally completed 7 days of work activities; Sally completed an online job search in her home. Sally is not eligible for TRE, as she did not incur transportation costs while completing her work activity hours.

Example 3: Amy and Robert are a two-parent household. Robert completed 5 days of work activities and incurred transportation costs. Amy completed 1 day of work activities and incurred transportation costs. The household is eligible for \$100 in TRE ( 5 days at \$20/day)

**Note:** Two-parent households are eligible by household, not per person.

Example 4: Laura completed 3 days of work activities, Laura's mom gave her \$20 to pay for her transportation costs to travel to and from the activity location. Laura is eligible for \$40 TRE ( 3 days at \$20/day = \$60 – \$20 = \$40)

Example 5: Lucy completed 7 days of work activities and incurred transportation costs. Lucy is eligible \$100 TRE ( 5 days at \$20/day)

Example 6: Mary completed 4 days of work activities and incurred a transportation cost. Mary started her basic skills assessment (literacy, math and workplace/soft skills), but did not finish. It has been documented the case manager has requested Mary complete her assessment, but she has failed to complete. Mary is not eligible for TRE until all necessary assessments and enrollments are completed.

#### TRE payments:

- Are issued only when a transportation cost is incurred, and a need has been determined.
- May be used to supplement other reimbursement. (If another organization pays transportation costs. Reduce the TRE by the amount paid by the other organization.
- Are not an entitlement.
- Are issued only for verified dates a participant is attending work, school, or training.
- Are authorized based upon availability of funding.

Authorizing TRE Payments: At a minimum, the TRE payment records must include the following and must be documented in case notes:

- Name, DCN, and Social Security number of the person receiving the TRE,
- Date of the payment,
- Period of time covered by the payment,
- Amount of the payment,
- Method of payment (i.e.: gas card, bus pass, EBT card, etc.)

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

**Note:** Riding a bike or walking is not allowable for TRE payments. Bike repairs and the purchase of walking shoes may be allowable with WRE funds.

MWA Providers are not allowed to provide TRE for a participant that has not enrolled in the program or while a sanctioned person is not participating.

Example A: Alice was referred to MWA on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Alice did not attend her initial appointment, she visits the MWA provider on November 20<sup>th</sup>, at that time she is enrolled in the MWA program and reported she is attending school. Alice would be eligible for TRE beginning November 20<sup>th</sup> once all documentation is provided and she has a transportation expense.

**Work Related Expense (WRE)**

WRE (e.g. purchase of work shoes, car repairs, tools, etc.) allow participation in employment and training activities. Providers make the payments directly to the vendor.

WRE information:

- On a 12-month rolling calendar.
- Allowable only when a need is determined.
- Not an entitlement.
- Authorized based upon availability of funding.
- May be authorized for up to seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750) in a rolling calendar year.
- Supervisory/management approval is required for authorizations up to one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500)/ rolling calendar year.
- FSD management approval is required for requests exceeding one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500)/rolling calendar year.

**WRE CHART**

- It is important whenever possible that a participant contribute to the expense(s).
- Discussions are held on how the expense will be paid on an on-going basis.
- At all times providers must consider other programs, community partners, local resources, and networks to allow for braiding of funds or other resources that may assist in paying the expense.
- Are **never** given to the participant but are paid to the vendor.
- Case managers are to always request documentation of the expense.
- A budget must be completed with the participant.

**Allowable Work-Related Expenses**

Item(s)	Conditions/Explanations
Application Fee for HISET (High School Equivalency Test)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If participant agrees or is participating in employment and training activities, this can be paid.</li> </ul>

Automobile repair(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owned by the participant and used as their primary vehicle. The provider must request proof of ownership (i.e.: a title), proof of insurance, and a valid driver's license.</li> <li>• On a case-by-case basis, it can be used for a vehicle the participant will ride in or drive to fully participate in employment and training activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This must be carefully investigated as to why the participant cannot obtain his/her own vehicle (i.e.: doesn't have driver's license, etc.) or other transportation.</li> <li>○ Verify this will be a long-term transportation solution.</li> <li>○ The owner of the vehicle must provide proof of ownership, proof of insurance, and a valid driver's license if the owner is transporting the TA participant.</li> <li>○ Owner of the vehicle must sign a statement that they will give this person rides as needed to participate in employment and training activities or allow the participant to drive the car for a certain period of time.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• For repairs over five hundred dollars (\$500), or if the MWA case manager questions the cost, the participant must submit three (3) estimates for the cost of the repairs. It is left to the discretion of the MWA Provider if the estimates must come from certain vendors that may be more reasonable in cost.</li> <li>• WRE funds can be used to purchase automobile parts to be installed by someone other than an auto repair shop; however, the case manager must verify the individual who will install the parts is qualified to do the type of work required.</li> <li>• The mechanic or other authorized person must verify, to the best of his/her knowledge, this repair(s) will make the vehicle operable and is not just a short-term fix.</li> <li>• Diagnostic testing is allowable if the mechanic is unsure of the problem and there is no way to determine the cost unless this is completed.</li> </ul>
Bicycle or Bicycle Parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowable if used for transportation for employment and training activities.</li> </ul>
Car Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowable</li> <li>• Only pay one month at a time to verify eligibility and participation is met.</li> </ul>
Childcare Payments & Registration Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is preferable that a childcare provided is licensed or registered if WRE assistance is provided; However, if not licensed or registered the childcare provider must have a written policy and documentation is required.</li> <li>• The participant must apply for childcare assistance and provide verification of the application and that the expense has not been paid before WRE can be provided.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providers also should be mindful WRE is not a long-term plan.</li> </ul>
College Application and Entry Test Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowable</li> </ul>
Computers/Laptop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval needed by DSS MWA Manager</li> </ul>
Criminal Background Check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be required by the employer for all employees (not just MWA participants) in order to participate in a work activity.</li> </ul>
Household Cleaning Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowed to be purchased in a limited quantity when this is causing a barrier to employment and training. This cannot be paid on a regular/monthly basis.</li> </ul>
Driver's License Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fees per the Missouri Department of Revenue, the length of the license and the fee associated with it depends on driver's age: if the driver is under or over 20 years of age.</li> </ul>
Legal Costs, Fines, Penalties, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowable when these costs, fines or penalties would assist with the strengthening the probability of employment of the parent(s) and/or assist with family stability.</li> </ul>
Licensing Fees (Including Safety Inspection and Transfer Fees)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only allowed for a one-year period.</li> </ul>
Medical and Dental Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant must provide documentation that this will not be covered by MO HealthNet or private health care (i.e., statement showing not eligible for MO HealthNet; denial per dentist/doctor office; etc.). It must be a barrier to employment.</li> <li>• Cannot be used for another participant unless it is a 2-parent household, even if they are married to this person.</li> </ul>
Mortgage Payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be paid in extenuating circumstances for short-term emergencies.</li> <li>• Participant must provide documentation (i.e.: bill, loan, etc.) showing this is his/her responsibility.</li> </ul>
Personal Hygiene Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase of a reasonable number of items such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Soap,</li> <li>○ Deodorant,</li> <li>○ Toothpaste and mouthwash,</li> <li>○ Hair care items (i.e.: shampoo, conditioner, hair spray, brush, etc.).</li> <li>○ Face cleaning scrubs,</li> <li>○ Razors,</li> <li>○ Makeup (foundation, eye shadow, lipstick, etc.),</li> <li>○ Hair color, or</li> <li>○ Manicure set.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The most cost-effective method must be used and WRE purchases must be based on need.</li> </ul>

Phone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase minutes for cell phones; or</li> <li>• Payment of a monthly expense for a limited time.</li> </ul>
Rent/Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be paid in extenuating circumstances for short-term emergencies.</li> <li>• Participant must provide a copy of the lease agreement with his/her name as the person responsible for payment.</li> <li>• Participant needs to pay as much as they can.</li> <li>• A rent deposit can be paid only <i>once</i> for a participant's household (must show on the TA case as the head of the household), regardless of the number of times the participant is on benefits.</li> </ul>
SATOP Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be paid when this is a condition for the participant to get his/her license back.</li> </ul>
Start-Up Costs or Costs to Operate Own Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval needed by DSS MWA Manager. The participant must have a business plan and clearly outline the purchases that need to occur, the long-term sustainability, and how this will lead to self-sufficiency.</li> </ul>
Uniforms (Not Paid for By the Employer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes any uniform required by the employer.</li> </ul>
Union Dues to Allow a Participant to Obtain or Continue Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowable for different unions and to fees as required by the union.</li> </ul>
Work and/or School Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work tools required by the employer.</li> <li>• School supplies if required for the class.</li> <li>• Computer software required for a specific class.</li> <li>• Textbooks (including the HISET booklet) if required for the class.</li> </ul>
Work Clothes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WRE funds are only intended to purchase what is necessary for the employment or training activity.</li> <li>• Necessary clothing must be purchased at the most reasonable price.</li> </ul>
<b>Non-Allowable WRE Examples</b>	
<b>Item(s)</b>	<b>Conditions/Explanations</b>
Diapers	Participants must be encouraged to find other resources such as diaper banks.
Food/Drink	TANF funds should not be used for the purchase of food. Participants should be encouraged to find other resources such as food pantries or use their SNAP benefit.

Items Pawned by Participant, Jewelry	Not allowed
Medical expenses covered by Medicaid/Medicare or other health insurance	
Sales Tax for WRE purchases	Do not pay sales tax on the WRE purchase as the WRE item(s) is tax exempt. Instead, provide the appropriate tax-exempt documentation so sales tax is not charged.
Sleepwear, Toys, Weight Loss products	Not allowed

## **Conciliation/Sanction**

Conciliation is a time period when the non-compliant TA participant is given an additional opportunity to comply with the MWA program participation requirements.

Sanctioning is the process when the participant has not been compliant with the work requirements of the TA program and has not complied during the conciliation process and the TA grant is reduced or ended. Once the conciliation period is exhausted and the participant meets no exemptions, exclusions, or good cause reasons the provider will move the case into sanction.

The following MWA services must be provided prior to recommending a conciliation:

- Help in eliminating barriers to participation;
- Assistance in participating in employment and training activities as soon as possible;
- Aid in preparing for work; and
- A thorough explanation of the MWA compliance requirements

If the participant qualifies for an exemption or temporary exclusion, they are not subject to the conciliation process. In addition to possible exemption or exclusion, the TA participant may not be required to participate due to good cause. Good cause reasons are those that are considered as out of the participant's control but are not an exemption or exclusion.

Some examples are:

- Required court appearance or incarceration
- Emergency family crisis that renders participation unreasonable
- Breakdown in transportation with no alternative
- Childcare is temporarily unavailable
- Lack of needed social services necessary to participate such as drug and alcohol programs, mental health programs, lack of shelter
- Employment results in a net loss of income

## **Conciliation Process**

Conciliation begins after the participant fails to comply by either not responding to call-in letters, fails to participate as required in a work activity or fails to provide necessary documentation. If it is determined that the participant is not in compliance, then a conciliation/sanction record is opened immediately. The reason for the opening is identified in the drop-down menu and a conciliation appointment date is scheduled.

The MWA System will begin the conciliation period the following Monday after the case manager opens the conciliation record which is after the scheduled appointment if it is missed and not properly rescheduled. During conciliation, the participant has six (6) weeks to comply with employment and training requirements and must verify they have completed one (1) week of required hours OR that they qualify for a temporary waiver, have a good cause or FSD finds the participant meets an exclusion to end the conciliation process. In two-parent households both participants can comply with employment and training requirements, required hours can be completed by either participant or combined between both participants.

**Reminder:** In conjunction with the case notes screen, providers must utilize the comments box on the Conciliation/Sanction screen to document each step taken related to the participant's conciliation/sanction process.

### **Conciliation for Two-Parent Households (2PHH)**

When one participant of a 2PHH fails to comply by either not responding to call-in letters or failing to participate as required in a work activity or fails to provide necessary documentation, conciliation/sanction record is opened for that participant.

When both participants of a 2PHH fail to comply by either not responding to call-in letters or failing to participate as required in a work activity or fails to provide necessary documentation, conciliation/sanction record is opened for both participants.

## **Sanction Process**

Like conciliation, the following MWA services must be provided prior to recommending sanction:

- Help in eliminating barriers to participation, through use of all available resources;
- Assistance in participating in employment and training activities as soon as possible;
- Aid in preparing for work or training; and
- A thorough explanation of the MWA compliance requirements for ending the conciliation/sanction process.

If after the six (6) weeks of the conciliation, the participant still has not met the requirements to resolve the conciliation, the sanction alert is sent to reduce the TA grant by fifty percent; (50%). Which begins the ten (10) weeks 50% sanction period.

- On the Conciliation/Sanction tab in the MWA system, the provider will check the box

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

beside Recommend 50% Sanction in section 4. Providers must ensure the necessary due process for conciliating the case was done and the timeframes are met before entering this action into the MWA system.

- Once the box is checked, FSD is notified and the FAMIS system begins the process to reduce the participants grant by fifty percent (50%).
- The provider must continue to attempt re-engagement of the participant by continuing monthly contact attempts. During the entire process, providers must use the comments box on the Conciliation/Sanction screen to document each step taken related to the participant's conciliation/sanction process.
- During the ten (10) weeks, the participant is required to complete four (4) consecutive weeks of work participation for a minimum of thirty (30) hours each week in order to lift the sanction and return to their full TA grant. If during the fifty percent (50%) sanction period, the participant completes the required four (4) consecutive weeks at thirty (30)/hours each week or enters a waiver or exemption the sanction is lifted. The provider must enter the Conciliation /Sanction Tab in MWA system and in section 4 mark the Lift Sanction box. This sends a notification to FSD that the participant has now complied and no longer needs to be sanctioned. FSD will then remove the benefit reduction and reinstate the full TA grant for the household.
- If the participant continues non-cooperation, no action is needed by the provider. The process will continue through the fifty percent (50%) to the Full Family Sanction (100% sanction/case closure). The TA case is closed for the entire household due to non-compliance with TA work requirement policies and having not met any exemption, exclusion, or good cause reasons.

#### Two – Parent Household Sanctions

- If both parents are in sanction status, the household remains sanctioned until both participants meet the requirements to lift the sanction.
- If one parent is in sanction status that participant must meet the requirement to lift the sanction.
- If one participant is in a temporary waiver, they cannot be sanctioned, however, the other participant may still be sanctioned.

#### Sanctioned Applicants

TA applicants whose case was previously closed for a Full Family Sanction and remain mandatory are electronically referred to MWA Providers while in application status as a Sanctioned Applicant case. These individuals previously allowed their TA case to close due to their noncompliance with TA work requirements.

Sanctioned applicants must complete one (1) week (7 days starting any day of the week) at thirty (30) hours of activity to lift their sanction and be eligible for approval for TA unless they meet an exemption, exclusion, or temporary waiver. Providers must engage participants immediately as a TA application must be completed within the TA application period (30 days). The participant which has been sanctioned must be matched with appropriate activities to ensure the participant is given the opportunity to immediately complete thirty (30) hours of work participation activities in a week

Once the participant has satisfactorily verified their hours, the MWA provider will send the alert via the MWA Case Management System to FSD, that the participant has resolved the work requirement sanction. FSD will then review the case and if there are no other eligibility requirements pending FSD will approve the case.

## **Ending/Exiting from TA cash benefits**

Temporary Assistance (TA) cash benefits can end for a variety of reasons such as - participant moves out of state, household lifetime limit has been reached, employment, voluntary closings and other reasons. The coordination of services is essential to a participant's and the overall success for the family. When a participant's case ends or they exit a program, contractors must evaluate the participants to determine if the individual is eligible for participation in a different employment and training program.

## **Transitional Employment Benefits (TEB)**

The Transitional Employment Benefit (TEB) is a fifty-dollar (\$50) payment to families for up to six (6) months when the family loses eligibility for Temporary Assistance (TA) benefits due to:

- An increase in income of the parent(s)
- Removal of an earnings disregard or an allowable expense deduction
- A household composition changes which causes ineligibility due to income guidelines for Temporary Assistance

TEB helps support working families during their transition into employment and the loss of Temporary Assistance benefits. TEB benefits are not prorated and may be received for up to six (6) consecutive months. TEB households are subject to the same change reporting requirements as TA households. Changes in work hours must be verified. Active TEB participants can request Temporary Assistance again, the participant must complete a new Temporary Assistance application for cash assistance.

Families will not be eligible to receive TEB if they voluntarily close their Temporary Assistance case to prevent exhaustion of the forty-five (45) month lifetime limit. TEB does not count toward the forty-five (45) month lifetime limit for Temporary Assistance.

MWA contractors will serve TEB participants by offering employment and training services which would include case management/coaching and supportive services.

## **Forty-five (45) month Lifetime Limit (LTL)**

The TA program is time limited. The grant is not provided to a family that includes an adult who has received Temporary Assistance for more than forty-five (45) months. The forty-five (45) month limit for receiving TA is calculated as a cumulative total of forty-five (45) months,

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

whether or not consecutive. Any month in which an adult receives assistance counts toward their forty-five (45) month time limit, this includes months received by the participant in another state, unless approved for a non-LTL exemption or a hardship. The Temporary Assistance forty-five (45)-month lifetime limit does not impact eligibility for any other programs offered through the Family Support Division (FSD) .

Reasons to request a Hardship:

- Diagnosis of a substance abuse issue
- Diagnosis of a mental health issue
- Any of the reasons for a temporary waiver or exemption that are listed in the handbook
- Family crisis that keeps participant from being employed

All requests for a hardship (extensions to the forty-five (45) month lifetime limit) will be evaluated by FSD for necessity and are subject to rejection based on the evidence provided for the request.

## **Hearings/Appeals**

When a participant does not agree with a decision, they can request a hearing.

If a participant informs the MWA Provider they would like a hearing, the provider shall:

- Notify the participant to contact FSD to request a hearing by:
  - Online at [Welcome to myDSS | mydss.mo.gov](https://www.myDSS.mo.gov) or
  - Contacting the FSD Customer Service Center at 855-373-4636, or
  - Visiting a local Resource Center. Resource Center locations can be found at [Contact Us \(mo.gov\)](https://www.mo.gov)

Once the request is received and processed, exhibits or documents will be requested by DSS from the provider. The provider must respond to the request promptly and provide documents within five (5) working days and send documents by email to [FSD.E&TInquiry@dss.mo.gov](mailto:FSD.E&TInquiry@dss.mo.gov)

The provider will be notified of the date and time of the hearing. The provider must make certain either the case manager or a supervisor is available to participate in the hearing as an agency witness.

## **Reporting Requirements/Change in Circumstances**

Participants can report changes by calling FSD, by visiting a Resource Center, online ([FSD Benefits Landing - Benefits Portal \(mo.gov\)](#)) or by reporting to the MWA provider. The provider must immediately report changes to FSD by using the MWA Case Management alert system to notify FSD of the participant's change in circumstances. Comments must be added to the MWA Case Management System and necessary alerts sent.

### **Fraud Reporting**

If the provider determines there are reasonable grounds to believe financial fraud or abuse or misconduct in the administration of the contract has occurred, the provider will immediately report to the Department of Social Services (DSS), Division of Legal Services (DLS) any financial fraud or abuse or misconduct in the administration of the contract by calling 877-770-8055 or by email at [DLS.ReportFraud@dss.mo.gov](mailto:DLS.ReportFraud@dss.mo.gov). The provider must cooperate with all DLS investigations of suspected financial fraud or abuse or misconduct. (The provider may be prosecuted under applicable federal and/or state law for false claims, statements, or documents, or concealment or material fact.)

## **Oversight and Monitoring**

### **DSS Monitoring**

The provider is subject to monitoring and inspection by DSS or a DSS designee to assure comply with the requirements of the contract. The provider will participate in and cooperate with any monthly case reviews, monitoring reviews, fiscal monitoring, all program evaluations, and improvement plans in accordance with federal reviews, or any other performance initiative required of, or by, the DSS.

If the DSS has concerns with the provider's performance in the contract, the DSS may, at its sole discretion, issue a monitoring report or other concerns to the provider. This provision does not change the state's right to Cancellation of the Contract.

The DSS monitoring will:

- 1) Inform the provider of the reason for DSS's concern
- 2) Inform the provider of the reason for the DSS's desired resolution/corrective action to be taken by the provider
- 3) Require the provider to resolve the situation to the DSS's satisfaction
- 4) Require the provider to provide a written Corrective Action Plan (CAP) for preventing the situation/incident from recurring

The provider will submit the CAP in the timeframe outlined in the monitoring report. The DSS will review the proposed corrective action plan and approve, deny, or require modifications to the CAP.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

## **Provider Self-Monitoring**

Providers will review cases monthly. The review can be observations, focused/targeted reviews, peer reviews or participant services/participant review.

- A minimum of two (2) cases per case manager, per month, must be reviewed. DSS will periodically review supervisor case reviews
- Program improvements taken for case file review must be documented, including, but not limited to additional training for the case manager and a written plan to resolve the issue.
- If there are errors found, there must be additional training and steps to address the concerns, and additional records must be reviewed.

## **Invoicing and Payments**

- Invoices will be submitted for reimbursement of actual allowable expenses in accordance with the MWA, SkillUP and Older Youth program requirements on the approved forms, as directed by the DSS.
- DSS may recover from the provider all funds for which adequate verification and full documentation of expenditures is not maintained.
- The provider may transfer funding between program budget categories, as identified on Budget/Price Analysis, without state agency prior approval, if transfers do not exceed 15%. If the transfer exceeds 15%, the provider must have prior approval from the state agency. The provider must retain all documentation necessary to support amounts billed for indirect costs.
  - Invoices will be submitted no less than once every month. The provider will e-mail invoices, expenditure reports, and supporting documentation to:  
[W&CI.INVOICES@dss.mo.gov](mailto:W&CI.INVOICES@dss.mo.gov).
- The provider must submit invoices on a DSS provided invoice.
- All invoices submitted will include backup documentation that clearly indicates the expense, date of the expense and how it relates to the MWA, SkillUP and Older Youth programs. Submission of backup documentation by the fifteenth (15th) of the following month for reconciliation of the weekly invoices for all funding sources unless otherwise approved by the DSS for cost incurred to provide the services required under this contract.
- Each invoice for the month of May will need to be submitted by a date as directed by DSS.
- Invoice templates are available on the OWCI portal: [MWA | Missouri Department of Social Services \(mo.gov\)](#)

## **Information Security**

Providers will enter and maintain all required case management data in FSD's Missouri Work Assistance System, along with any other data system used in combination with the MWA system. Providers are required to update all systems timely and accurately.

Participation must be entered weekly, but no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> day following the preceding month. If participation tracking is entered after the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the preceding month it must be entered at the time it is received. Rounding up of activity hours should only occur on a weekly basis and not daily.

All equipment that is connected to the state network must be in a secure area and must be utilized by only provider's personnel given security access. The provider must complete all security forms provided by FSD to request access to the agency's network and the MWA system. FSD has the right to revoke access to the network and MWA system at any time if it is determined the provider is not in compliance with the contract, access will be restored when the state is satisfied that the provider is in full compliance again.

DSS approved equipment may only be used to access the state network and MWA system. Users must create their own passwords, not disclosing their passwords to anyone under any circumstance, regardless of their position title. Passwords will need to be updated every 90 days; users cannot use the last 5 passwords used previously when they are prompted for a password update.

## **Confidentiality**

Providers are required to adhere to DSS confidentiality requirements related to their reports, electronic/paper files, documents, any other materials, and all of the file information is the property of DSS and therefore accessible for complete DSS or its designee oversight. MWA files shall be maintained separately from other program files or documents.

Workstations, printers, storage devices, case records must be kept in a secure location and protected from unauthorized access

If at any time information related to abuse or neglect is suspected, they are bound to the DSS mandated reporting rules and must make the appropriate hotline report to DSS Children's Division.

Providers are required to notify OWCI immediately upon a suspected breach of their system or if there is a confidentiality breach.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

### **MWA System Access/Closure Requests**

Access requests received from the provider must include all the correct documentation per the contract, the DSS security agreement, contain all the correct information and what type of computer hardware the employee will be using.

Upon the termination of an individual by the provider, users must be identified, and access ended immediately to prevent unauthorized access or use of DSS systems and information. Providers must notify the DSS by completing and submitting the completed access request form via email to [FSD.E&TIquiry@dss.mo.gov](mailto:FSD.E&TIquiry@dss.mo.gov) requesting that access be ended for the terminated employee as soon as possible and must return the VPN token (if applicable) to the DSS.

## Appendix A: Resources & Quick Links

Resource/Topic	Link
Temporary Assistance/Case Management Policy	<a href="#">Temporary Assistance/Case Management Manual – DSS Manuals (mo.gov)</a>
The inquiry email address is used for questions for MWA, MWA- SkillUP and Older Youth.	<a href="mailto:FSD.E&amp;TInquiry@dss.mo.gov">FSD.E&amp;TInquiry@dss.mo.gov</a>
The monitoring email address is used for contact with the OWCI Performance Monitoring Unit	<a href="mailto:FSD.E&amp;TMonitoring@dss.mo.gov">FSD.E&amp;TMonitoring@dss.mo.gov</a>
The invoice email address is used for is used for invoicing questions and where expenditure & invoices are submitted for reimbursement.	<a href="mailto:W&amp;CI.INVOICES@dss.mo.gov">W&amp;CI.INVOICES@dss.mo.gov</a>
The Training Unit email address is used for contact with the Training Unit for questions regarding training.	<a href="mailto:FSD.WIT.CIU.Training@dss.mo.gov">FSD.WIT.CIU.Training@dss.mo.gov</a>
I have a participant in the office and need immediate assistance due to an emergency situation. (Sanctioned applicant, TA application due today and just received verification, applicant has completed 30 hours)	Contact your assigned Program Specialist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have a question about an MWA Change Request.</li> <li>• I have a policy question.</li> <li>• ASAPs, System Access, etc. questions or forms.</li> <li>• Questions about the MWA Case Management System, encrypted emails, etc.</li> </ul> There is a sanctioned applicant on the New Participant List, when is the application due/last day to lift the sanction?	<a href="mailto:FSD.E&amp;TInquiry@dss.mo.gov">FSD.E&amp;TInquiry@dss.mo.gov</a>
I received returned mail, contact information is incorrect.	The MWA Case Management Alert System – <a href="#">Missouri Work Assistance (state.mo.us)</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant wants to apply for benefits, has a budget adjustment (add a person, close a case, childcare changes, sanction status incorrect, etc.)</li> <li>• Participant wants to provide to FSD for an active or pending case</li> <li>• Participant would like an update on case/application, report a change or has questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Welcome to myDSS   mydss.mo.gov</a>, or</li> <li>• <a href="#">FSD Upload Portal (mo.gov)</a> , or</li> <li>• FSD Customer Service Center at: 855-373-4636, or</li> </ul> Visit a local Resource Center/ <a href="#">Contact Us (mo.gov)</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant needs to complete an interview.</li> </ul>	FSD Customer Service Center at: 855-373-4636, or Visit a local Resource Center Contact Us <a href="#">Contact Us (mo.gov)</a>
MWA System is down.	Contact the IT help desk at: 800-392-8725.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

## Appendix B: Forms

Description of Form	Form
MWA letters can be found in the MWA Case Management System. Call-in letters, Assessments, etc.	<a href="https://dssapp.state.mo.us/MissouriWorkAssistance/LettersAndForms.aspx">https://dssapp.state.mo.us/MissouriWorkAssistance/LettersAndForms.aspx</a>
DSS Confidentiality & Information form,	 MO886-4461.pdf
MWA Access Form (29)	 MWA.029 Access Form.pdf
MWA Provider New Employee Checklist	 MWA Provider New Employee Check List
Work Verification Plan (WVP)	 Work Verification Plan (WVP) effective

## Appendix C: Definitions & Acronyms

<b>Name/Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Administration for Children & Families (ACF)	The Administration for Children & Families (ACF) is a division of the Department of Health & Human Services. ACF promotes the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities.
Alternative Work Experience (AWEPE)/ Community Work Experience (CWEPE)	Unpaid, volunteer work designed to improve the employability of the Temporary Assistance (TA) participant not otherwise able to obtain sufficient or suitable employment.
Applicants	Individuals who have applied for Temporary Assistance (TA) benefits and the determination of eligibility has not yet been made.
Carryover Funds	The process by which unobligated funds remaining at the end of a budget period may be carried forward to the next budget period. MWA and SkillUP do not have carryover funds.
Community- Based Organization (CBO)	A public or private nonprofit organization that is engaged in meeting the needs of the community members.
Conciliation	A period of time when the non-compliant TA participant is given an additional opportunity to comply with the MWA program participation requirements.
Departmental Client Number (DCN)	Number used to identify an individual that has applied for or is receiving benefits from the Family Support Division.
Department of Social Services (DSS)	Serves as the agency that oversees the TANF Block grant.
Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)	Establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and youth employment standards affecting employees in the private sector and in Federal, State, and local governments.
Family-centered	Services are provided with the consideration of the entire family.
Family Support Division (FSD)	Division within the Missouri Department of Social Services that Administers Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits (Title IV-A) which Administers the Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) program.
Family Assistance Maintenance Information System (FAMIS)	Missouri's eligibility determination system.
Federal Minimum Wage	Used for calculating self-employment and compensation in lieu of wages hours for Temporary Assistance (TA) participants <a href="https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/wages">https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/wages</a>
Full family sanction	Closing of the TA case due to non-cooperation with work requirements.
HISET	A trademarked name for the high school equivalency exam and credential recognized in Missouri. Also known as GED.
Labor Market Information (LMI)	Composed of occupational growth, wage projections, regional job statistics and other work-related information.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

Medical Review Team (MRT)	Reviews medical conditions when a Temporary Assistance (TA) participant states they cannot engage in employment and training activities due to a medical disability that has not been confirmed by the Social Security Administration (SSA).
Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC)	Research division for the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (DHEWD) which provides analyses and assistance on employment and other trends at: <a href="https://meric.mo.gov/">https://meric.mo.gov/</a>
Missouri Resource Navigator	Lists essential services and opportunities at: <a href="https://mo.servicesnavigator.org">https://mo.servicesnavigator.org</a>
MWA Case Management System	A consolidated computer web-based system used by MWA providers to record and track customer employment and training services. Provides record-keeping for the work requirements and activities of the TA population. TA cases are referred electronically from FAMIS to the MWA case management system.
Office of Family Assistance (OFA)	The Office of Family Assistance (OFA) administers federal grant programs that foster family economic security and stability, including the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.
Office of Workforce & Community Initiatives (OWCI)	Oversees DSS employment, training, and community programs.
One Stop Delivery System	TANF programs are partners in the American Job Center (AJC) one-stop delivery system. Partners identify operational elements such as shared assessments, case management, systems, cross-training of program staff and family-friendly policies.
Participant(s)	Individual who has applied for, or is receiving, or has been denied TA benefits, or a sanctioned applicant, or an individual receiving TEB or an individual that has been sanctioned and is still receiving a TA benefit.
Re-engagement	The process MWA service providers use to attempt to move sanctioned TA participants into compliance with work activity requirements
Sector strategies/ partnerships	Multiple organizations collaborate to bring together the training options in an area with the skills needed for employers in that area.
SkillUP	The employment and training program that offers SNAP (Food Stamp) participants the opportunity to gain skills, training, and work experience.
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) also known as the Food Stamp program in Missouri.
Temporary Assistance (TA)	Name of Missouri's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.
Temporary Wavier	A TA participant that was referred to the MWA program as employment and training ready or is participating and is no longer able to continue with employment and training activities.

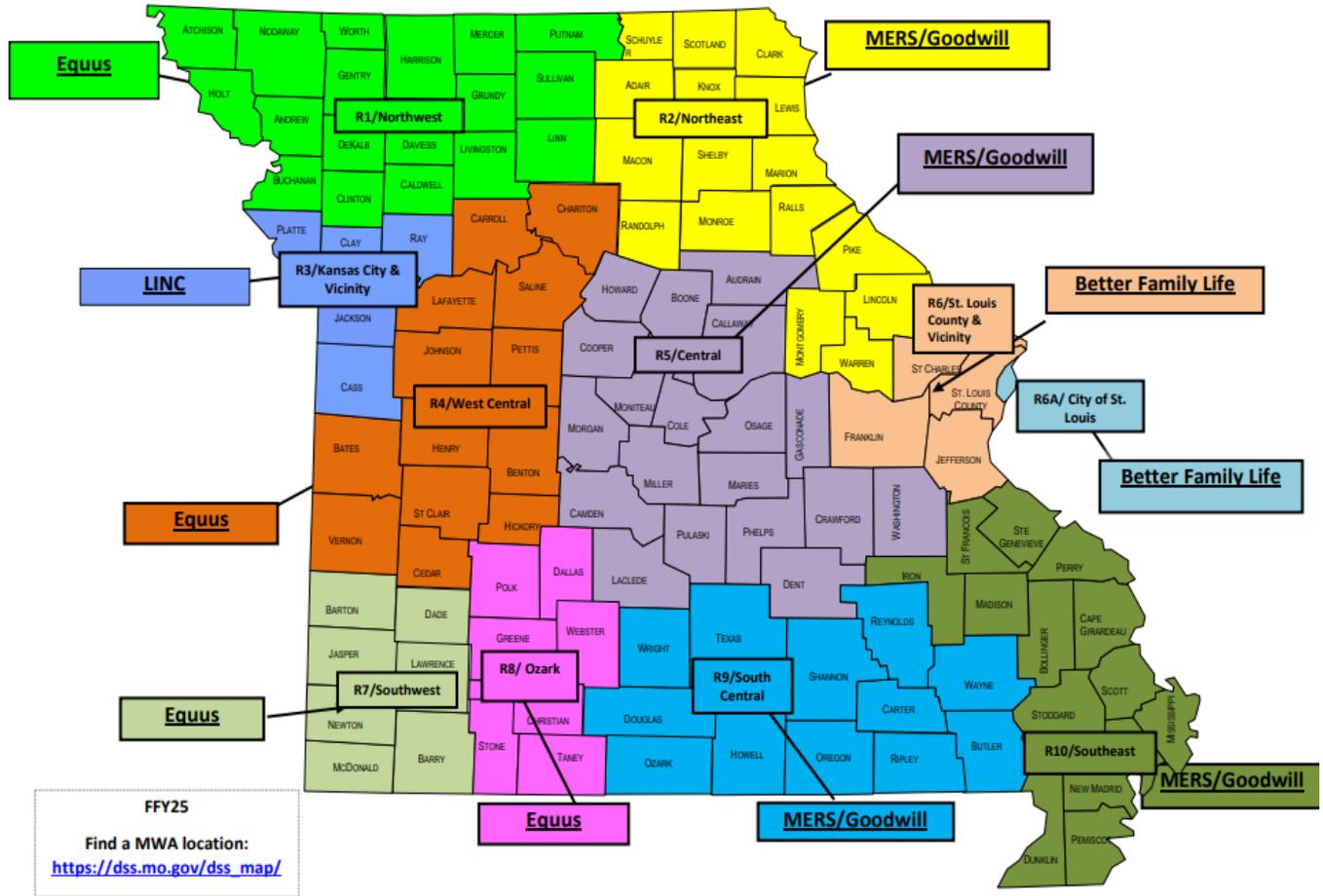
Transitional Employment Benefit (TEB)	A \$50.00 payment to families for up to six (6) months when the family loses eligibility for TA benefits due to an increase in income, removal of an earnings disregard or an allowable expense deduction, or a household composition change which causes ineligibility due to income guidelines for TA.
Virtual communication	Allows communication when individuals are unable to meet in-person. Usage includes training, e-learning, meetings
Vocational Rehabilitation	Provides specialized services to individuals with disabilities to help them achieve employment and independence by providing individualized counseling, training, and other services to help individuals achieve gainful employment or independent living.
Volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Temporary Assistance (TA) participant who meets an exemption but chooses to participate in the Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) program., OR</li> <li>• A TA participant who is participating in an Alternative Work Experience (AWE) / Community Work Experience (CWE) or Community Service Program</li> </ul>
Wagner-Peyser	Employment services in the One-Stop services delivery system.
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)	Designed to strengthen and improve the nation's public workforce system and help get Americans, including youth and those with significant barriers to employment, into high-quality jobs and careers and help employers hire and retain skilled workers.
Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)	Tax credit for employers who hire individuals with barriers to employment including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and food stamp participants.

[\(Table of Contents\)](#)

## Appendix D: List of Counties/Map of MWA Regions

<b>Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) Regions</b>		
	<b>Region</b>	<b>Counties</b>
1	Northwest	Andrew, Atchison, Buchanan, Caldwell, Clinton, Davies, DeKalb, Gentry, Grundy, Harrison, Holt, Linn, Livingston, Nodaway, Mercer, Putnam, Sullivan, Worth
2	Northeast	Adair, Clark, Knox, Lewis, Lincoln, Macon, Marion, Monroe, Montgomery, Pike, Ralls, Randolph, Scotland, Schuyler, Shelby, Warren
3	Kansas City & Vicinity	Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte, Ray
4	West Central	Bates, Benton, Carroll, Cedar, Chariton, Henry, Hickory, Johnson, Lafayette, Pettis, Saline, St. Clair, Vernon
5	Central	Audrain; Boone, Callaway, Camden, Cole, Cooper, Crawford, Dent, Gasconade, Howard, Laclede, Maries, Miller, Moniteau, Morgan, Osage, Phelps, Pulaski, Washington
6	St. Louis County & Vicinity	Franklin, Jefferson, St. Charles, St. Louis County
6A	City of St. Louis	St. Louis City
7	Southwest	Barton, Barry, Dade, Jasper, Lawrence, McDonald, Newton
8	Ozark	Christian, Dallas, Greene, Polk, Stone, Taney, Webster
9	South Central	Butler, Carter, Douglas, Howell, Oregon, Ozark, Reynolds, Ripley, Shannon, Texas, Wayne, Wright
10	Southeast	Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Dunklin, Iron, Madison, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Perry, Scott, St. Francois, St. Genevieve, Stoddard

## Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) Providers



[\(Table of Contents\)](#)