

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

### **Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) Program**

Due to Oregon's poor economy, the state does not have enough money to continue paying for all the services it currently provides. Therefore, the number of people who receive Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) services is being reduced.

There were no easy choices when making cuts to the Department of Human Services (DHS) budget. Our first reductions included lowering the number of employees and other administrative costs. However, the majority of the DHS budget goes directly to clients or pays for the services they receive. Unfortunately, the current budget shortfall is too great to keep all services intact, even those that we know help families stay employed.

We understand that these reductions are painful and will cause a hardship for families who need child care services. If you have questions about this information, someone in the Direct Pay Unit can help you. Please call 1-800-699-9074.

**Q: What is the Employment Related Day Care Program?**

A: ERDC helps eligible, low-income working families pay for child care. This helps parents to stay employed and children to be well cared-for in safe, stable child care settings.

**Q: How many people will lose ERDC?**

A: About half of the 11,000 people who currently receive ERDC will lose child care services.

**Q: Who will lose ERDC and who will keep it?**

A: Only families who have recently been on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) *in Oregon* will still be eligible for ERDC. Families who have never been on TANF or who have not been on TANF in the past two years will lose child care services.

**Q: How and when will child care services be reduced?**

A: The reduction will take place in two phases. The first is for *new* applicants only. The second is for families already using ERDC services.

***New applicants – October 1, 2010***

- Effective October 1, 2010, new applicants who have not received TANF in Oregon for at least one month in the prior 24 months will not qualify for ERDC.
- Only families who have received TANF in Oregon for at least one month in the prior 24 months will be enrolled in the ERDC program.

***Families already enrolled in the ERDC Program – December 31, 2010***

- For those families already enrolled in ERDC on October 1, 2010, who do not meet the new requirement, DHS will extend services until December 31, 2010. After this date, ERDC services will end for families who have not received TANF in Oregon for at least one month in the prior 24 months.
- Families who have received TANF in Oregon for at least one month in the prior 24 months will continue to receive ERDC services. They still have to meet all other ERDC requirements.

**Q: How do I know if I have been on TANF at least one month in the prior 24 months?**

A: You may call your worker at your local DHS office. You can find a list of offices throughout the state at [www.oregon.gov/DHS/assistance/localoffices.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/assistance/localoffices.shtml).

**Q: Do other assistance programs qualify my family for ERDC?**

A: No. Other assistance programs such as the Oregon Health Plan, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, also known as food stamps), and Post-TANF do not qualify families for ERDC.

**Q: How will I know if I am losing ERDC services?**

A: If your family will no longer be eligible for ERDC after December 31, 2010, we will mail you an official notice by December 1, 2010.

**Q: My family has been on TANF within the past 24 months. Why did I get a letter?**

A: We expect that some families will need to make alternate child care arrangements, and we want to give them enough time to plan ahead. So we are sending letters to *all* families currently using ERDC services. We will mail a second letter as a reminder in September.

We will check the eligibility of all families enrolled in ERDC before December 1, 2010. At that time, only those families who will lose their services will get an official notice.

**Q: I'm a child care provider. When and how will I be informed if a family I serve is losing ERDC?**

A: It is the responsibility of the parents to tell the provider if the family no longer qualifies for ERDC.

**Q: Why did DHS limit ERDC services to only families who have recently been on TANF?**

A: We understand that all families enrolled in ERDC depend on these services for financial support and ensuring safe, stable care for their children. However, when forced to make reductions to the program, we maintained services to families who have most recently left the TANF cash assistance program to ensure they have child care services as they make the transition to employment.

**Q: Who do I talk to if I have a question about the reductions?**

A: If you are a client or a child care provider and you have questions about this information, someone in the Direct Pay Unit can help you. Please call 1-800-699-9074.

**Q: Where can I find other child care services?**

A: You can learn what other resources might be available at the Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network website at <http://www.oregonchildcare.org>.

