

---

## 10000 Arkansas Work Pays

Arkansas Act 1705 of 2005 established the Work Pays Program. Work Pays is an incentive program designed to encourage working TEA clients to remain employed after closure of the TEA case while increasing their hours of work and/or hourly wage. Families participating in Arkansas Work Pays will receive a monthly cash assistance payment in the amount of \$204 for up to 24 months, provided they meet the Work Pays eligibility requirements. The twenty-four (24) months will count toward the federal 60 month time limit but not the state's TEA 24 month limit. This work incentive program may be limited to 3,000 families.

The eligibility worker will explain the Work Pays program to the applicant and provide a Work Pays pamphlet during the initial interview for TEA cash assistance. The case manager will discuss the Work Pays program with the client during on going case management activities. When the TEA case closes due to employment, the client will receive additional information about Work Pays, including a Work Pays application.

### 10100 Work Pays Eligibility Requirements

An individual must meet the following requirements:

1. Have care and custody of a related minor child;
2. Be a resident of the State of Arkansas;
3. Meet the citizenship or alienage requirement (Refer to TEA 2220);
4. Apply for Work Pays within six (6) months of TEA case closure with Employment;
5. Received TEA cash assistance for at least three (3) months;
6. Have not received more that twenty-four (24) months of Arkansas Work Pays Program Benefits.
7. Meet Work Hours Requirement:
  - For initial eligibility - Was engaged in paid work activities for a minimum of twenty-four hours per week for the past month and meet the federal participation rate.
  - For on-going eligibility – must be in paid work activities for a minimum of twenty-four(24) hours per week and meet the federal participation requirement for one(1) of the past three(3) months and for at least three (3) of the past six (6) months.

8. Have income below the federal poverty level for the family size;
9. Comply with the Work Pays Personal Responsibility Agreement;
10. Comply with Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) requirements, including assignment of support and cooperation in establishing paternity and/or support unless good cause exists.

### **10101      *Work Pays Application Process***

Each month a Work Pays application will be mailed to all TEA clients whose case closed the prior month due to employment. This process will be completed by Central Office through a mass mailing process. For clients interested in applying for Work Pays, the application must be completed and mailed to the Work Pays Processing Unit who will determine initial eligibility. Applications received at a local DHHS or DWS office or at a case management contractor's office will be forwarded to the processing unit upon receipt. The Work Pays applicant must sign the application. If it is a two-parent household, both parents must sign the form.

### **10102      *Determining Initial Eligibility***

The client must meet the following general eligibility requirements:

- Have care and custody of a related minor child;
- Be a resident of the State of Arkansas;
- Meet the citizenship or alienage requirement;

In most situations, these requirements will have been established for TEA eligibility and do not have to be re-verified. However, if there has been a change, (e.g. a second parent moves in the household) it must be verified.

#### **Prior TEA Receipt**

The client must have received at least 3 months of TEA cash assistance and the case closed within the past 6 months with employment. This includes cases that close due to reaching the time limit or have been extended and earnings are included. The 3 months do not have to be consecutive. (See example below)

**Example 1:** Ms. Davis applied for Work Pays in September 2006. Her TEA case closed in April 2006 due to employment after receiving assistance for 9 months. The client provided verification of employment with Entergy working 40 hours per week at \$6.00

per hour. Ms. Davis met all eligibility requirements; therefore, her application is approved.

**Example 2:** Ms. Wilson applied for Work Pays in July 2006. Her TEA case closed in June due to employment after receiving assistance for 2 months. These were the only months she received TEA. She is employed 35 hours per week. Since she did not receive TEA for at least 3 months, her application is denied.

### **Income**

The parent's gross earnings along with other countable income must be below the 150% Federal Poverty Level for the family size (see Appendix B). The income of the child(ren) is disregarded. (Refer to TEA 2331 for unearned income to disregard) For initial eligibility, self declaration of income can be accepted. However, if it is determined after approval that the client did not meet the income/hours requirement, the case will be closed. This determination will be made by the Case Manager upon receipt of initial work documentation from the client.

### **Work Hours Requirement**

The client must be employed at least twenty-four (24) hours per week. If less than 30, he/she must be engaged in another countable work activity that when combined with the work hours will meet the federal TANF work requirement for the family. The client's declaration of the hours worked can be accepted. If the hour requirement is met, the application may be approved if all other Work Pays requirements are met. Acceptance of the self-declaration will be documented in the ANSWER system. If it is determined after approval that the client does not meet the work hour requirement, the Work Pays case will be closed. (See examples below)

**Example 1:** Ms. Adams applies for Work Pays on July 1, 2006. It has been verified that she has been employed since May 2006. She works 30 hours per week. Ms. Adams meets the 24 hours per week work requirement and the Federal Participation requirement. If otherwise eligible, the application may be approved.

**Example 2:** Mr. Thomas applied for Work Pays on July 7, 2006. He declares that he has been employed since March 2006 working 24 hours per week and is attending Vo-Tech at night. He is taking a three (3) hour course in management and will graduate December 2006. He received TEA cash assistance for 8 months prior to starting Vo-Tech. His TEA case closed in April. The work requirement is met. The 3 hours of class along with the 3 hours of allowable study time brings his total countable hours to 30 per week which meets the federal work requirement for his situation. If otherwise eligible, the application may be approved.

**Example 3:** Ms. Harris applied for Work Pays on October 15, 2006. She declares that she is employed at Wal-Mart working 30 hours a week at \$6.00 per hour. She meets all other eligibility requirements and her case is approved based on her declaration of income and hours. However, it is determined after approval that she is only working 25 hours per week. Even though she was working 24 hours per week, she did not meet the federal participation requirement of 30 hours in October. Therefore, her Work Pays case is closed.

**Note:** If in a 2-parent family, the work hours/week must meet the 2-parent requirement. If there is a child under age 6 in the home, as long as the 24 hours of paid work is met the client does not have to meet the higher rate unless it is a 2-parent household.

### Resources

The family's resources are totally disregarded.

### Child Support Requirement

The applicant will be required to comply with the Office of Child Support Enforcement. Failure to comply without good cause will result in a 25% sanction being imposed. (Refer to TEA 2140).

### **10103      *Application Disposal***

The Work Pays Processing Unit will dispose of the application for Work Pays by either approval or denial within 30 days from the date of application.

**Please Note:** Initial approval for Work Pays does not release a payment. The Case Manager will determine if the work hour's requirement was met and authorize a payment to be made.

### **10104      *Referral for Case Management Services and Payment Authorization***

Upon approval of the application, a referral will be sent by the Work Pays Eligibility Worker via a task through ANSWER to the Work Pays Service Manager for payment authorization and case management services.

### **10105      *Payment***

### Payment Amount

The Work Pays payment amount is \$204 monthly unless under a sanction.

### **Payment Authorization**

The Case Manager will authorize the payment when verification of participation is received or good cause for non-compliance is established. (Refer to Work Pays policy TEA 10300).

### **Extract**

A client will receive a Work Pays payment once per month. However, extract will occur twice during the month. The first extract is the 10<sup>th</sup> workday of the month for clients who have provided all the required verification and met requirements for a full payment. A second extract will occur on the second work day from the end of the month for clients who provide verification later during the month. The payment is added to the client's EBT account. (See TEA policy 10330 for specific procedures the Work Pays Case Manager will follow to authorize payment.)

### **10106      *Reevaluation***

All Work Pays cases will be re-evaluated by the central processing unit every 6 months to determine continued eligibility. The following criteria must be met:

- There must be an eligible child in the home.
- The client's gross earned income plus other countable income must be below the 150% Federal Poverty Level for the family size.

### **10107      *Case Closure***

A Work Pays case will be closed if the client fails to meet the general eligibility requirements including but not limited to one of the reasons listed below. The Case Manager will notify the Work Pays Eligibility Worker if a change in eligibility occurs between re-evaluations. The Work Pays Eligibility Worker will process the case closure.

- Client failed to meet the work requirement for three (3) continuous months
- Client failed to meet the work participation hours for at least three (3) of the past six (6) months
- Unable to locate
- Income exceeds 150% Federal Poverty Level for family size
- Client's request

## **10200      Work Pays On-Going Case Management**

Case management is the process of coordinating and brokering the multiple services needed to achieve progress toward self-sufficiency. Case management will provide the recipient with sufficient information on what to expect regarding changes and challenges in the world of work. The Case Manager will serve as a point of contact for clients and a point of accountability for the agency. The Case Manager has the overall responsibility for working with the client from initial interview until case closure.

Case management services will be provided as long as the client is Work Pays eligible, or up to 12 months after the Work Pays case has been terminated due to earnings in excess of the federal poverty level.

### **10220      *Time Limits***

The Arkansas Work Pays Program allows former TEA clients whose case closed due to earnings to receive a cash assistance payment in the amount of \$204 per month for up to 24 months and receive case management, supportive services, and job retention and advancement services, provided they meet eligibility requirements. The twenty-four (24) months will count towards the federal 60-month time limit but will not count towards the State's TEA 24-month time limit. If the client reaches 60 months while participating in Work Pays, an automatic extension will be given to the 60-month limit. This work incentive program may be limited to 3,000 participants.

### **10230      *Assignment of Referral***

Upon approval of a Work Pays application a referral task is created in the ANSWER System from the Work Pays Processing Unit to the Works Pays Service Manager.

#### **10230.1      *Assignment of Task***

- A task will be assigned to the Works Pays Service Manager on the Work Pays Service Management Tab in ANSWER.
- The Works Pays Service Manager will assign the task to the appropriate Case Manager's To Do List in ANSWER.
- The Case Manager will send a notice to the client, which contains updated agency information, an explanation of verifiable allowable documentation needed, and a request for an initial interview to be conducted no later than 2 days from the date of Work Pays approval.

---

**10300      Work Verification and Payment Process**

During the initial interview, which may be conducted by telephone, the Case Manager will present an overview of the program, gather information, and advise the client of what and when information is needed.

The Case Manager will verify that the information provided by the client during the application process is correct by reviewing work hours documentation. If the information received is not accurate and would affect the client's eligibility status, the Work Pays Processing Unit should be notified immediately.

The client must provide verification of work hours or pay stubs for each week of every month. The verification can be provided by fax, mail, scan & Email, or in person. The agency will accept verification of earnings from the employer, check stubs, payroll printout, etc.

The client must be in a **paid** work activity at least 24 hours per week; and meet the weekly federal participation requirement (30 hrs per week single household; 35 hrs per week for a two-parent household) in one of the past three months and three of the past six months.

If there is a child under age six (6) in the home, as long as the 24-hours of paid work is met the client does not have to meet the higher rate unless it is a two-parent household.

The Case Manager will encourage the client to engage in a paid work activity equal to the federal work activity requirement (see box above), if possible.

If the client is only capable of engaging in a paid work activity for 24 hours a week, the Case Manager will assess previous work activities that the clients was engaged in their TEA case to determine what work activities are allowable in the Work Pays case and the number of hours the client can participate.

This evaluation is necessary due to federal limitations on certain work activities. The Case Manager will discuss allowable work activities with the client and assign the client to additional work activities needed to meet the weekly federal work participation requirement.

The worker must enter all work activity hours into ANSWER. If the client fails to follow through on a required activity then immediate contact is required.

**Note:** The Case Manager should review the work documentation each month to determine if a task should be sent to the Work Pays Processing Unit to update the budget.

An update to the budget is only necessary if there has been a substantial change in income. A substantial change is if the new wage is equal to or exceeds (the hourly rate calculated at 150 % FPL for a family size of two divided by 104.016) per hour.

Example: 2007 FPL for a family size of two (2) is 1711.25.  $1711.25/104.016 = \$16.45$ . \$16.45 is the per hour rate.

If the client becomes unemployed during their Work Pays case, the Work Pays Case Manager should assist the client to expeditiously find a new job. The client should be referred to all available resources in the workforce development system that will assist them in becoming employed.

### **10320      *Allowable Work Activities***

#### **Paid Work Activities:**

- Unsubsidized employment
- Subsidized employment – private and public sector
- On-the-Job Training
- Work experience
- Micro-enterprise

#### **Unpaid Work Activities:**

- Vocational educational training
- Education or Training
- Job skills training
- Work Experience Training
- Job search assistance
- Job readiness assistance
- Community Service

For a description and additional information about the allowable work activities, refer to TEA 3200-3254.

### **10330      *Payment Process***

Families participating in the Work Pays Program will receive a monthly cash assistance payment in the amount of \$204 (regardless of family size) for up to 24 months, provided they meet the Work Pays eligibility requirements. Work Pays payments are made in the month following the month in which the client participates. Payment will be made via the client's EBT card. For TANF federal purposes, a Work Pays case is considered cash assistance.

Example: Ms. Harris applies for Work Pays in July 2006. She provides verification of hours

worked for July in August. The case manager determined that the client met the work requirement for July and authorizes payment for August by placing a check in the payment box on the Work Pays payment screen in ANSWER.

By the 5<sup>th</sup> workday of each month, the Work Pays client should provide documentation to the Case Manager regarding work activity hours for each week of the preceding month.

By the 10<sup>th</sup> workday of each month, the Case Manager must have keyed the client's work participation hours into ANSWER. The Case Manager can average the weekly hours worked for the participation requirement if the client worked over or under the required weekly participation hours during that month. (**Note:** However, the Case Manager must key actual weekly hours into ANSWER.)

If the client provides documentation by the 5<sup>th</sup> workday of the month of work hours for each week of the preceding month and meets the 24-hour paid work requirement and the federal participation requirement, then the Case Manager will key the work hours into the Service Management tab of ANSWER and select the full payment indicator.

If by the 5<sup>th</sup> workday of the month, the client

- does not provide documentation;
- provides insufficient documentation; or
- provides documentation but it does not meet the 24-hour per week paid work requirement and/or the federal work participation requirement,

the Case Manager will send a notice to the client requesting within 10 calendar days that the client submit proper documentation of meeting the work participation requirements or show good cause why they did not meet the work participation requirements and that if not received within 10 days, their cash assistance payment will be sanctioned by 50%.

If the client provides the required data or shows good cause within 10 calendar days, the Case Manager will key the work hour's data into the Service Management tab of ANSWER and select the full payment indicator.

If the client does not provide the required data or does not show good cause within 10 calendar days, the Case Manager will key the work hour's data into the Service Management tab of ANSWER and select the sanctioned payment indicator. The client's cash assistance payment for that month will be reduced by 50% of the original amount.

Refer to Work Pays Policy 10600 for non-compliance requirements.

NOTE: If the client does not meet the 24-hour paid work activity or meet the federal work participation rate for three (3) consecutive months, the Case Manager will send a 10-day notice to the client requesting work activity documentation or to show good

---

cause why s/he didn't comply with work requirements or the case will be closed. If the client does not provide the documentation, show good cause, or provides documentation and still does not meet the work activity requirements, the Case Manager will not authorize a cash assistance payment for the third month. Instead, the Case Manager should refer to 10700 on closing the Work Pays case and take proper action to close the case.

The client will receive one payment per month, but extract will occur twice during a month. For all clients who have provided all the required verification and met the participation requirements for the month will receive their payment at initial extract. Those clients who provide verification later during the month will receive their payment during the second extract. The initial extract of payment data is the 10<sup>th</sup> workday of the month. The second extract is the 2<sup>nd</sup> workday from the end of the month. After the payment data is extracted from ANSWER, the system will uncheck the Indicator so that it must be rechecked the following month in order to make a subsequent payment.

**Note:** There is a system edit that will check to see if a payment has already been received for the month to prevent duplicate payments.

\*\*\* Work Pays income will be countable in the same capacity as TEA Cash in Food Stamps and Medicaid cases. All changes reported to the Case Manager will be entered as a task on the ANSWER System.

#### **10400      *Job Retention and Advancement***

The Work Pays program focuses on post-employment services that are designed to provide job retention and advancement for employed post-Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) participants. Post-Employment services are an essential tool in preventing participants from returning to TEA by helping them keep their current jobs, gain skills for a career, move toward better jobs, and become self-sufficient. The intent is to provide services that will assist these clients to increase their earnings and job retention so they can advance. Case Managers will assist the client in determining their career goals and connecting the client with resources that will assist them in achieving their goals. The following resources, as appropriate, will be provided to the Work Pays client:

- developing a career advancement plan;
- identifying career ladders, either with the client's current employer or with another employer or industry;
- referral to Career Pathways Training Initiative;

- referral to other TANF Initiative Providers;
- job search assistance through the Arkansas Job Link system;
- career counseling;
- working with employers to develop advancement strategies;
- removing specific barriers;
- coordinating work supports (e.g., child care, Medicaid, employment expenses, supportive services); and
- pursuing educational and/or training activities that develop or expand a client's job expertise; and
- referral to other appropriate service providers in the workforce development system available through the Arkansas Workforce Centers statewide.

Case Managers will build relationships with Work Pays participants. This assists in guiding, supporting, and encouraging the participant toward accountability, goal setting and good decision-making.

#### **10420      *Career Advancement Plan***

Clients may need assistance increasing their incomes while on a job. They may also need assistance learning the skills and behaviors to be a valued worker. The Case Manager will work with the client to create a Career Advancement Plan. The plan will concentrate on: job retention, getting promoted, earning a pay raise, increasing his/her hours, and acquisition of benefits. The plan will be used and modified during the entire time the client receives Work Pays benefits.

An in-person meeting with the client should be scheduled no later than two (2) calendar days after approval of the Work Pays Case to develop the Career Advancement Plan. The Career Advancement Plan interview will be conducted at a time and location agreed upon by the client and the Case Manager. The Case Manager must have bi-weekly contact with the client and the Case Manager will secure contact information from the client.

#### **10430      *Supportive Services***

Work Pays clients may be eligible for extended supportive services such as: child care, Transitional Medicaid or ARKids First, mentoring, financial credit counseling, individual development accounts, and any job retention services offered by the department. For supportive services, refer to TEA 5100.

**10500 Work Pays Bonus**

As an incentive to clients to retain their jobs, each Work Pays recipient may receive pre-set bonus payments after meeting certain job retention targets. To be eligible for the bonuses, the individual must have met the federal work participation rate requirement in each of the preceding months according to the bonus schedule below. All bonus payments will be made through the participants EBT card but not counted as cash assistance. Bonuses will be paid in addition to the monthly cash assistance payment.

The case manager will assess prior work participation and select the indicator in ANSWER to trigger the appropriate bonus payment. The bonus payment indicator should be marked at the same time as the work participation is entered each month. See Work Pays 10330 for entry of work participation hours.

**Bonus 1: Three (3) Months Job Retention Target**

Clients that meet the work participation requirements for three consecutive months will receive a bonus in the amount of \$400.00.

**Bonus 2: Additional Six (6) Months Job Retention Target**

Clients that meet the work participation requirements for an additional six (6) consecutive months not including the initial three (3) months in bonus 1 above will receive a job retention bonus in the amount of \$600.

**Bonus 3: Exit Bonus**

Upon closure of the Work Pays case due to time limits, clients that have met the work participation requirements for 21 out of 24 months will receive an exit bonus in the amount of \$800.

**Earnings Bonus: Case Closure Due to Earnings**

The Work Pays client may receive an exit bonus of \$1,200.00 anytime within the 24 months case time limit if their income exceeds 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for their family size. The Case Manager will send a task to the eligibility worker stating that the client's earnings appear to exceed the FPL. The Action Plan will remain open. The eligibility worker will determine continued eligibility. If earnings exceed FPL, the Work Pays case will be closed and notification will be sent to the Case Manager. The Case Manager will authorize the bonus to be issued and close the Action Plan after the bonus has been issued.

NOTE: If the Work Pays client exits the program and re-enters the program, the client will be eligible for bonuses not already received when their Work Pays eligibility has been re-established. See Work Pays 10800 for the eligibility criteria for re-entry to the Work Pays program.

**10600      *Non-Compliance***

Non-compliance occurs when a person who is required to participate in certain activities fails to do so. Below are two reasons that a Work Pays client's case may be deemed in non-compliance.

- fails to comply with the assigned work requirement; and/or
- refuses to cooperate with the Child Support Enforcement (Automatic system generated sanction of 25%).

**10610      *Compliance with Child Support Enforcement***

The client will be required to comply with the Office of Child Support Enforcement. Failure to comply without good cause will result in a 25% sanction being imposed. This sanction is an automatic system generated sanction and requires no action on the part of the Case Manager.

**10620      *Good Cause for Work Non-Compliance***

The sanction process will not be applied if the person demonstrates that he or she had good cause for not complying. The determination of good cause is a decision made by each local office. For acceptable good cause reasons refer to TEA 3510.

**10630      *Determining Good Cause for Work Non-Compliance***

Once failure to comply with Work Pays requirements has been established, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Contact the client to give him/her the opportunity to explain why he or she failed to comply and make a determination of good cause, if appropriate. This contact should be in writing. If the contact is made by phone or face-to-face, the case

record must be documented accordingly. The worker should provide the client, at a minimum, the following information:

- a. The specific act of non-compliance;
  - b. A reasonable time to establish good cause prior to applying the sanction.
  - c. That if the sanction is imposed, it will result in the Work Pays payment being reduced; and
  - d. That the sanction months in which benefits are received will continue to count toward the individual's 24-month time limit.
2. If the client contacts the local office and good cause is determined to exist, then a full payment will be authorized.
  3. In the event good cause is not established and the participant does not cooperate, the cash assistance payment will be reduced.
  4. An adequate notice will be sent to the client advising that a sanction is being imposed.

#### **10640      *Non-Compliance Sanction***

If on the 5<sup>th</sup> workday of the month, verification of hours has not been received, a notice is sent requesting documentation. If the documentation is not received within the 10 days provided in the sanction notice and good cause is not established, a 50% sanction (reduction in benefits) will be imposed on the Work Pays case. Refer to Work Pays Policy TEA 10330 to apply the sanction.

If a client does not comply with both the work requirement and the Office of Child Support Enforcement, the sanction applied will not exceed 50%.

Home visits will be required on Work Pays cases when an act of non-compliance occurs.

#### **10650      *Lifting the Sanction***

If the client fully participates in the next month following a sanctioned payment, the Case Manager will authorize a full payment.

#### **10700      *Case Closure***

A Work Pays case will be closed if the client fails to meet the general eligibility requirements or one of the reasons listed below. The Case Manager will communicate changes with the Work Pays Processing Unit by creating tasks and updating the narratives in ANSWER. The Work Pays Processing Unit will process the case closure.

- Client failed to meet the work requirement for three (3) consecutive months
- Client failed to meet the work participation hours for at least three (3) of the past six (6) months
- No eligible child in the home
- Unable to locate
- No longer a resident of the state
- Income exceeds 150% of the Federal Poverty Level for their family size
- Client requested case closure

**10800      *Re-entry to Work Pays***

Re-entry into the Work Pays Program is through the TEA Program. An individual can re-enter Work Pays if they are within six months of their last TEA case closure and all Work Pays eligibility requirements are met. An individual who leaves the Work Pays Program due to insufficient work hours may re-enter the program once they establish that they are in a paid work activity with a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours per week and met the federal work participation requirement for the past month. Otherwise, re-entry to Work Pays will occur through TEA eligibility and transition to Work Pays upon TEA case closure.

**10900      *Overpayment***

Any payment received by or for a recipient which is in excess of the amount that should have been paid is an overpayment. However, only those overpayments described in TEA Policy 9000 will be reported and collection pursued.

# Appendix B

Work Pays Income Limits Family Size	Effective July 1, 2007	
	100%	150%
1	850.83	1276.25
2	1140.83	1711.25
3	1430.83	2146.25
4	1720.83	2581.25
5	2010.83	3016.25
6	2300.83	3451.25
7	2590.83	3886.25
8	2880.83	4321.25
9	3170.83	4756.25
10	3460.83	5191.25
For each additional member add:	290.00	435.00



## How to Apply

Complete the enclosed application form. Remove the application insert and fold in half with the mailing address facing outward.

If an application form is not attached, you can access one online at [www.arkansas.gov/esd](http://www.arkansas.gov/esd) and select "For Jobseekers" or by visiting your local Arkansas Workforce Center, Department of Workforce Services (formerly Arkansas Employment Security Department), or local Department of Health & Human Services office. To find your local Department of Workforce Services office, go to [www.arkansas.gov/esd](http://www.arkansas.gov/esd) or call toll-free at 1-866-ARWORKS. If all of the required information is completed, your application will be processed within 30 days from the day it is received at the Central Processing Unit. If you are eligible, you will receive a notice of application approval in the mail and will be contacted by a Work Pays Case Manager. Apply soon, as the application window is limited to 3,000 participants.

EDUCATION • TRAINING • KEEP YOUR JOB • INCREASE YOUR INCOME



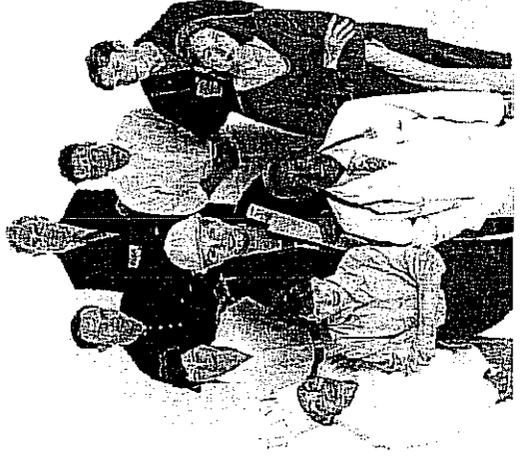
# ARKANSAS Pays

EDUCATION • TRAINING • KEEP YOUR JOB • INCREASE YOUR INCOME

ARKANSAS WORK PAYS PROGRAM

P.O. Box 899

Forest City, Arkansas 72336



## BUILD YOUR INCOME, BUILD A CAREER

- Receive bonuses for keeping your job and increasing your income
- Receive supportive services while you work
- Receive a monthly cash assistance payment to help with monthly expenses

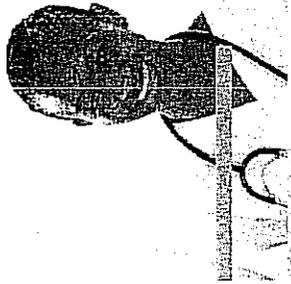
Program available to eligible participants only. For more information, call 1-866-ARWORKS.

# ARKANSAS WORK PAYS MEANS MORE MONEY FOR YOUR FAMILY

## What is Work Pays?

The Arkansas Work Pays Program, effective July 1, 2006, provides assistance to prior participants of the Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) Program that meet eligibility requirements. The program is limited to 3,000 participants. While on Work Pays, you will:

- Keep your paycheck.
- Receive monthly cash assistance of \$204 per month while you are on the program (for up to 24 months).
- Receive big bonuses for keeping your job and increasing your income.
- Receive one-on-one support from your case manager to help you keep a job; get promoted or get a better job; and increase your income.



## If you qualify for Work Pays, you may also be eligible to receive:

- Help with educational expenses
- Help with work related expenses
- Help paying for child care
- Transitional Medicaid or ARKIDS 1<sup>st</sup>
- Financial Credit Counseling
- Individual Development Accounts
- Mentoring

- Work Pays can help you increase your income level and break out of low wage jobs.
- Learn the secrets of getting a promotion.
- Get help on earning a pay increase.
- Increase your worth to your employer so you get more hours and paid more.
- Get a plan for how to make more money.

## How Can Work Pays Help Me?

The path is up to you. Your case manager will help you every step of the way. Your Case Manager can help you find a better job, assist you in reaching your educational goals, help you get your GED, and help you with Child Care and Transportation. Besides all of the one-on-one support that you will receive to reach your educational and career goals, you will also receive financial support while on the program.

Cash Assistance	\$204 per month for 24 months maximum	\$4,896
Bonus 1	Stay employed for 3 consecutive months	\$400
Bonus 2	Stay employed for an additional 6 consecutive months	\$600
Bonus 3	Exit Bonus for meeting work requirements for 21 out of the 24 months on the program	\$800
Bonus 4	Your earnings exceed 150% of the Federal Poverty Level and you leave the program	\$1,200
This is what you take home if you meet all of the Work Pays program requirements and qualify for all of the bonuses.		\$7,896



## What should I expect if my application is approved?

### FIRST WORK PAYS INTERVIEW

Very soon after the approval of your Work Pays application, your Case Manager will contact you. During the first interview, your Case Manager will review the information you provided on the application form and ask questions about your family's circumstances. This will help to determine what services your family needs. Your Case Manager will explain all of the program requirements so you fully understand your responsibilities in the program. Your Case Manager will explain the allowable documentation necessary from you to document your weekly work activities and how you can provide that information each pay period.

## Who is Eligible?

If you are a former Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) benefit recipient and your case closed due to you becoming employed, you may be eligible for Work Pays.

An individual must meet the following requirements to be eligible for Work Pays:

- Have care and custody of a related minor child;
- Be a resident of the state of Arkansas;
- Meet certain citizenship or alienage requirements;
- Apply for Work Pays within six (6) months of your TEA case closure with employment;
- Received TEA cash assistance for at least three (3) months;
- Have not received more than twenty-four (24) months of Arkansas Work Pays program benefits;
- Meet the Work Hours Requirement—You must engage in paid work activity for at least 24 hours per week and meet the federal work participation rate, which is usually an additional 6 hours per week in either paid work activity or other allowable work activity. This additional number of hours could be more or less depending on your family situation. Your Case Manager will help you determine if you need additional hours to meet the work requirement.

- Have income below the federal poverty level for the family size;
- Comply with the Work Pays Personal Responsibility Agreement;
- Comply with Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) requirements, including assignment of support and cooperation in establishing paternity and/or support unless a good cause exists.

## What if my application is not approved?

If you are approved for Work Pays, you and your Case Manager may develop a Career Advancement Plan. This plan will outline steps that you and your Case Manager will take to help you keep your job and increase your income. You and your Case Manager will work as a team in developing this plan. When you sign the plan, you are stating that you will follow the steps outlined in the plan. When your Case Manager signs, he or she is committing State resources that will help you keep a job and increase your pay.

# Work Pays APPLICATION ARKANSAS

If you need this material in a different format, such as large print, contact your DHHS or DWS local office.  
Si necesitas este formulario en Español, llame 1-800-482-8988

1) Applicant Information - Please complete about yourself. If another parent is in the home, please list in number 2 below.

Social Security Number		Last Name		First Name		MI	
Birth Date	Sex	County	Email Address		State		
Street Address		City		State		Zip Code	
Mailing Address (if different)		City		State		Zip Code	
Home or contact telephone		Work telephone		May we contact you at work? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Fax number	

2) Household

List all children under age 18 living in the household. Please list the other parent if he/she is also living in the home.

Social Security Number	Last Name	First Name	Birth Date	Race	Sex	Relationship to You	U.S. Citizen (Yes/No)

3) Work/Income

Please complete this section about you and the second parent if living in the home.

Are you employed?	Where?		Gross Pay (before deductions)	How often?	How many hours per week?
	Y	N			
Are you engaged in any other activity such as community service, college work study, Vocational Education or GED?	Y	N	Where?	How often?	How many hours per week?
Is second parent (if living in the home) employed?	Y	N	Where?	How often?	How many hours per week?
Do you or other parent in home have any unearned income?	Y	N	Source?	How often?	Who receives?

4) Question

Have you or any household member been found guilty or not a contendere (no contest) to a felony conviction involving the manufacture or distribution of a controlled substance?  Yes  No

Place Stamp Here

Fold in half, tape ends together, and mail to the address listed below.

Return Address

ARKANSAS WORK PAYS PROGRAM  
P.O. Box 899  
Forrest City, Arkansas 72336

# Work Pays ARKANSAS APPLICATION

## Personal Responsibility Agreement Arkansas Work Pays Program

I understand that the Personal Responsibility Agreement (PRA) will provide me with individual responsibilities that I must comply with while participating in the Arkansas Work Pays Program. I understand that this program is limited to twenty-four (24) months and that I must be employed and seeking employment that will increase my pay and enhance career choices. I understand that supportive services will be provided if needed.

I agree to the following responsibilities:

1. Work the maximum number of hours possible, up to 40 hours per week, but if I am only able to work 24 hours weekly, I agree to engage in other allowable work activities as required by my Work Pays Case Manager.
2. Accept full time employment that may be offered.
3. Cooperate and work with my case manager in developing my Career Advancement Plan and following the plan activities.
4. Follow up on job leads that would lead to better pay and a possible career.
5. Will not voluntarily terminate employment.
6. Ensure that my children receive their age appropriate childhood immunizations.
7. Ensure that my school age children attend school.
8. Cooperate with the Office of Child Support Enforcement in seeking child support and/or establishing paternity.
9. Report any changes within 10 days that will affect my eligibility.

I understand that in some circumstances the agency may determine that I had good cause for not complying with the above requirements.

### READ CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU SIGN THIS APPLICATION.

(Please initial beside each bullet point to acknowledge that you have read and understand the statement.)

- I understand that I must help establish my eligibility by providing as much information as I can, and in some situations I may be required to provide proof of my circumstances.
- I authorize the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Department of Workforce Services (DWS) to obtain information from other state agencies and other sources to confirm the accuracy of my statements.
- I understand that as a condition of eligibility, each applicant for or recipient of Work Pays benefits must furnish his/her social security number to DHHS. Federal law 42U.S.C. §§ 1320b-7(a) (1) and 1320b-7(b) (2) and DHHS Transitional Employment Assistance Manual Policy 2110 requires DHHS to collect your SSN before approving your application. \* Disclosure of your Social Security Number is voluntary. However, a person who does not provide the number or apply for one will not be eligible to receive benefits. If someone does not have an SSN, DHHS will help the person apply for one. As long as an SSN application is filed with the Social Security Office, the DHHS application may be approved. DHHS will also use Social Security Numbers for program applicants and participants to access information, determine eligibility, verify wages, unearned income and other information, to prevent duplicate participation, to facilitate mass changes in Federal benefits and to determine the accuracy and reliability of information.
- I understand that no person may be denied Work Pays benefits on the grounds of race, color, sex, age, disability, religion, national origin, or political belief.
- I may request a hearing from DHHS if a decision is not made on my case within the proper time limit or if I disagree with the decision.
- I agree to notify my case manager within 10 days if I, or any of my dependents, cease to live in my home, if I move, or if any other changes occur in my circumstances.
- I authorize DHHS to examine all records of mine, or records of those who receive or have received Work Pays benefits through me, to investigate whether or not any person has committed fraud, or for use in any legal, administrative or judicial proceeding.
- Assignment of Child Support. I understand that if I accept Work Pays, by state law, I will have assigned all rights, title, and interest in any support that I have in my own behalf or in behalf of any other person for whom I am receiving a Work Pays payment. I understand that all support payments including those received by me directly from the absent parent, are to be paid to the Office of Child Support Enforcement. I understand that this assignment ends when I no longer receive Work Pays, except as to any unpaid support obligation that has accrued at the time my Work Pays case is closed. I also understand that as a condition of eligibility for Work Pays, I must cooperate with the Office of Child Support Enforcement in establishing paternity and obtaining child support.

I DECLARE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE ABOVE IS TRUE AND CORRECT. If I receive benefits to which I am not entitled because I withheld information or provided inaccurate information, such assistance will be subject to recovery by the Department of Health and Human Services, and I may be subject to prosecution for fraud and fined and/or imprisoned.

Signature of Parent or Relative \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number of person helping to complete form \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Second Parent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address of person helping to complete form \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Family Support Specialist \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address of person helping to complete form \_\_\_\_\_

A decision on your application should be made within 30 days.

If you have questions about eligibility for Work Pays, call your TEA case manager.

Please fold and return the Application to the address shown on the back

## Section 11 Work Pays

Arkansas Act 1705 of 2005 established the Work Pays Program. Work Pays is an incentive program designed to encourage working TEA clients to remain employed after closure of the TEA case while increasing their hours of work and/or hourly wage. Work Pays may be limited to 3,000 families.

### 11.1 Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for Work Pays, an individual must meet the following requirements:

1. Have care and custody of a related minor child;
2. Be a resident of the State of Arkansas;
3. Meet the citizenship or alienage requirement (Refer to TEA 2220);
4. Apply for Work Pays within six (6) months of TEA case closure due to employment;
5. Received TEA cash assistance for at least three (3) months
6. Have not received more than twenty-four (24) months of Arkansas Work Pays Program benefits;
7. Meet Work Hours Requirement;
  - For initial eligibility – was engaged in paid work activities for a minimum of twenty-four hours per week for the past month and met the federal participation rate for the past month;
  - For on-going eligibility – must be in paid work activities for a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours per week and met the federal participation requirement for one (1) of the past three (3) months and for at least three (3) of the past six (6) months.
8. Have income below the federal poverty level for the family size;
9. Sign and comply with the Work Pays Personal Responsibility Agreement;
10. Comply with the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) requirements, including assignment of support and cooperation in establishing paternity and/or support unless good cause exists.

### 11.2 Payment

Families participating in Arkansas Work Pays will receive a monthly cash assistance payment in the amount of \$204 regardless of family size for up to 24 months. The twenty-four months will count toward the federal 60-month time limit but not the State's TEA 24-month limit. The \$204 payment may be reduced if the client is found to be in non-compliance with work requirements and/or child support enforcement requirements.

### 11.3 Case Management

Case management services will be provided as long as a client is Work Pays eligible, or up to 12 months after the Work Pays case has been terminated due to earnings in excess of 150% of the federal poverty level. Work Pays is designed as a post-employment program which provides job retention and advancement services for the client. Post-employment services are essential to prevent participants from returning to TEA by helping them keep current jobs, gain skills for a career, move toward better jobs, and becoming self-sufficient.

- Career Advancement Plan will be completed versus an Employment Plan which is completed in TEA.
- Post-employment services that could be provided as part of the Career Advancement Plan are:
  - ✓ Identifying career ladders with current employer or others
  - ✓ Referral to other TANF initiative providers
  - ✓ Career counseling
  - ✓ Job search assistance through the Arkansas Job Link System
  - ✓ Providing supportive services to remove specific barriers

### 11.4 Work Pays Bonus

As an additional incentive to participants to remain employed, 4 bonus payments are available (i.e., at a level that meets the federal work requirement).

Bonus 1: Three (3) months consecutive employment - \$400

Bonus 2: Additional six (6) months consecutive employment - \$600

Bonus 3: Exit Bonus - exiting Work Pays due to reaching 24 month limit – 21 out of 24 months employed - \$800

Earnings Bonus: Received at any time income exceeds 150% FPL and Work Pays case closed as result - \$1200

**Note:** The Earnings Bonus can be paid at any time the case closes due to income exceeding the federal poverty level.

### 11.5 Non-compliance

The Work Pays payment will be reduced by 50% in any month the Work Hours requirement is not met without good cause.

### 11.6 Supportive Services

Appropriate Job Retention services will be available to Work Pays participants.

## 11.7 Overpayment

Any payment received by or for a recipient that is in excess of the amount that should have been paid is an overpayment. However, only those overpayments described in TEA Policy 9000 will be reported and collection pursued.

---

TN# 06-1  
Supersedes  
TN# NA

Effective Date July 1, 2007