**PRACTICE ADVISORY**
Updated: February 27, 2004

# Time Limits: Ongoing Employability Assessment Review and Case Management

## Background:

Under the *Employment and Assistance Act*, clients who are expected to work require an active employment plan as a condition of eligibility for income assistance. On-going eligibility for assistance is dependent upon compliance with the terms and conditions of the employment plan.

While these clients have a personal responsibility to pursue employment, the employment plan provides clients with employment supports and/or programs they may need to achieve independence at the earliest opportunity. Further, as indicated in the Employment Plan General Standards," posted October 23, 2003 on the ministry intranet field guide, the employment plan and its effective management are critical to ensuring clients have supports needed to move towards sustainable employment.

For clients reaching their 24-month time limit, intensified case management will be undertaken to ensure they have up to date employment plans and to review their personal circumstances to determine why they have not found employment. Those clients who are in compliance with their employment plan and meeting employment-related obligations will not have the time limit policy imposed.

## Objectives:

- ensure maximized opportunities for clients to secure employment;
- ensure compliance with employment plans and employment obligations;
- re-assess clients who may have proven barriers to employment.

## Client Lists:

- During the first week of each month, Information Management Branch will mail to District Supervisors a list of clients with income assistance time counts of 23 months and 22 months, listed by office and grouped into three categories: Never Participated in JP (includes referred but not accepted into JP), currently in JP, and Others. Copies of the individual office lists will be sent by e-mail to Managers, Policy and Program Implementation for purposes of project oversight within the region.
- A template letter on the ministry intranet will be sent by Employment and Assistance Workers (EAW) to clients following an initial telephone contact, confirming appointment dates (see Case Management Instructions below).
- Managers, Policy and Program Implementation, will oversee implementation of the following Case Management Instructions by Employment and Assistance Centres (EACs) in their respective regions.

## Case Management Instructions:

- In order of highest time count first, EACs will set up interview appointments with each of these clients to:

  a) Assess current employability situation and personal circumstances.

  b) Review compliance with employment obligations and existing employment plans; apply sanctions, where appropriate.

  c) Update employment plans, as required.

  d) Where appropriate, refer to a JP service provider those clients who have an Employment Screen score below 15 and either have not participated in JP or have not previously been accepted into JP.

e) Where clients have identified barriers that clearly interfere with employment and where they meet the criteria for NEO or PPMB, change their status, accordingly

- Each of these clients is to be contacted and interviewed, by telephone or in person, by **the last working day of the month**.

  a) Where it is known that a client does not have a telephone, immediately send letter (using approved template), setting appointment date.

  b) For clients with telephones, call them and set an interview date that is prior to the last working day of the month.

  c) After the telephone call, send letter to client (using approved template), confirming appointment time and date. Record date letter sent on MIS client history screen.

  d) In instances where clients do not respond to the first telephone call, three additional attempts to contact the client will be made between the first call and the end of the second week of the month.

  e) In instances where clients cannot be contacted, and/or where the appointment letter is returned because the client has no fixed address, the client's cheque will be signaled and contact made at the earliest opportunity.

  f) If the client does not claim the signaled cheque, his/her file will be closed, as per standard practice.

  Note: If clients on the high time count lists appear in the office for other reasons prior to the above-noted appointment date, pursue the opportunity to conduct the assessment interview sooner, where possible.

- At the interview with the client, the EAW will:

  a) Examine client's Employability Screen and Client Employability Profile.

    (1) If either or both were completed more than 6 months ago, the screens will bere-applied to assess client progress.

    (2) Update Employability Screen and Profile information on MIS.

  b) Examine client's file and MIS history screens to identify and consider any relevant new information (e.g., submission of PWD application, receipt of medical information).

  **c)** Following "a" and "b" above (in this section), determine whether client meets expected to work, NEO or PPMB criteria.

  **d) For clients with an Employment Screen Score below 15 who are expected to work and have never participated in JP (including those who were not previously accepted into JP),** refer to a JP service provider, where appropriate.

    (1) Update employment plan and MIS information, accordingly.

    (2) Monitor client progress and compliance monthly until either the client secures independence through employment or is referred back to the ministry.

  e) **If the client referenced in "d" above is not accepted into the JP program by the JP service provider,** discuss client's employment barriers with the provider and enter that information on the MIS history screen. Re-assess client's situation as per "a," "b," and "c" of this section (above).
  (1) If the client is expected to work, update client's employment plan to include supervised independent work search and/or participation in other appropriate employment related programs. Monitor client progress and compliance monthly until client secures independence through employment or leaves the caseload for other reasons. Enter closure information on MIS, using specific codes to indicate reason for leaving the caseload.
  (2) If the client appears to meet NEO or PPMB criteria, proceed as per "h" below.

f) **For clients expected to work who currently are participating in JP,** discuss progress with the client and JP contractor to assess compliance, employment prospects and/or employment barriers.

(1) Where there are no compliance issues and JP progress is promising, update employment plan, where applicable, and JP participation continues.

(2) If there are compliance issues, invoke sanctions, as appropriate.

(3) Monitor client progress and compliance monthly until either the client secures independence through employment or leaves the caseload for other reasons.

(4) Enter closure information on MIS, using specific codes to indicate reason for leaving caseload.

g) **For all other clients who are expected to work, but are not covered in "d" through "f" above,** assess client compliance with employment obligations and employment plan.

(1) Where there are no compliance issues, update the client's employment plan to include supervised independent work search and/or participation in other employment related programs. In some cases, it may be appropriate (e.g., where life circumstances have changed) to re-refer JP clients who previously participated, but were not placed within the 90/120 day period available to achieve employment.

(2) If there are compliance issues, apply sanctions, as appropriate.

(3) Monitor client progress and compliance monthly until either the client secures independence through employment or leaves the caseload for other reasons.

(4) Enter closure information on MIS, using specific codes to indicate reason for leaving caseload.

h) **If client appears to meet NEO or PPMB criteria**, initiate process to confirm status. Until and unless status is confirmed, the client will be treated as indicated above in "d," "e (1)," "f," or "g," as appropriate.

i) Whenever client status changes, enter updated information on MIS.