

Prevention, Retention, and Contingency Program

The Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) program was established in Ohio to help families overcome immediate barriers to achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency. The program was designed to provide benefits and services to needy families and low-income employed families who are in need of help with essential supports to move out of poverty and become self-sufficient. The PRC program provides new opportunities to develop and implement creative and innovative strategies and approaches to remove families from a cycle of dependency on public assistance and into work.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) administers the program and has developed a PRC model with program eligibility criteria which counties may choose to adopt and implement if they so desire, or the counties may choose to create their own plan. With this program, counties have been given the flexibility to choose how much money to spend on this effort and are empowered to design the PRC program in a way that will best fit the needs of their local communities.

PRC, by design, has been developed to provide benefits and services that are not considered “assistance”. When a benefit or service falls within the definition of “assistance”, there is a set of consequences for the family, including time limits, child support assignment, and data reporting requirements. The following benefits and services do not constitute “assistance” and are, therefore, allowable under the PRC program:

1. Non-recurrent, short-term benefits that :
 1. are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need;
 2. are not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs; and
 3. will not extend beyond four months.
2. Work Subsidies (i.e., payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employee wages, benefits, supervision and training);
3. Supportive services such as in transportation provided to families who are employed;
4. Refundable earned income tax credits;
5. Contributions to, and distributions from, Individual Development Accounts;
6. Services such as counseling, case management, peer support, job retention and other employment-related services that do not provide basic income support; and
7. Transportation benefits provided under a Job Access or Reverse Commute project to an individual who is not otherwise receiving assistance.

In general, PRC services are available to needy families which include a minor child or can be available to a pregnant individual. Benefits may also be provided to a non-custodial parent of a minor child, if the non-custodial parent lives in the state and does not live in the same household as the minor child. The use of PRC funds must meet one of the four purposes of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) which are:

- To provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own home or in the homes of relatives;
- End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and,
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Families receiving assistance under other public assistance programs (Ohio Works First, Disability Assistance, Food Stamps) may also apply for and receive PRC assistance.

This program is administered in all 88 County Departments of Job and Family Services (CDJFSs)