

**Standards for Support Services Payments; JOBS, Pre-TANF, SFPSS, TANF**

In the Job Opportunity and Basic Skills (JOBS), Pre-Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Pre-TANF), State Family Pre-SSI/SSDI (SFPSS), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs, notwithstanding any other administrative rule in chapter 461 and subject to the availability of state and federal funding, the following special provisions apply:

- (1) *Support services* (see OAR [461-001-0025](#)) payments are available to:
  - (a) An individual who is an adult parent, needy *caretaker relative* (see OAR [461-001-0000](#)), *teen parent* (see OAR [461-001-0000](#)), or a *minor parent* (see OAR [461-001-0000](#)) who is head of household; in the TANF *filing group* (see OAR [461-110-0330](#)) and is not otherwise *exempt* (see OAR [461-130-0305](#)) and in accordance with participation requirements in OAR [461-130-0310](#).
  - (b) An individual who is a recipient of Pre-TANF or SFPSS programs.
- (2) Pursuant to the reasonable cost requirements in 45 CFR 75.404, in approving *support services* payments, the *Department* (see OAR [461-001-0000](#)) must consider lower cost alternatives. This rule is not intended to supplant *Department* funding with other funding that is available in the community. The expectation of the *Department* is that *Department* staff and individuals work collaboratively to seek resources that are reasonably available to the individual in order to participate in activities.
- (3) Payments for *support services* are provided when:
  - (a) Necessary to participate in an approved *activity* (see OAR [461-001-0025](#)) specified in the individual's *case plan*;
  - (b) Authorized in advance;

- (c) The payment meets one of the four federal purposes of TANF identified in 45 CFR 260.20; and
  - (d) All other provisions of this rule are met.
- (4) A *Department* approved *activity* is eligible for *support services* payments, except for the following activities:
  - (a) Family Support & Connections,
  - (b) Retention services, and
  - (c) *Microenterprise* (see OAR [461-190-0197](#)).
- (5) In the JOBS, Pre-TANF, SFPSS, and TANF programs, the *Department* may provide payments for *support services* for *eligible* (see OAR [461-130-0310](#)) individuals engaged in an approved *activity* specified in the individual's *case plan*, subject to provisions in subsections (1)(a) and (1)(b) of this rule. *Support services* payment types are subject to the following limitations:
  - (a) Tuition payments:
    - (A) Tuition payments for a *vocational training activity* or a *jobs skills training activity* (see OAR [461-001-0025](#)) are limited to single payments by session as defined by the educational or vocational training entity, such as a term, semester, or quarter.
    - (B) Tuition payments for a *self-initiated training activity* shall be limited to no more than a twelve-month period per individual and shall be reviewed on a term-by-term basis. Individuals must show that they are making *satisfactory progress* (see OAR [461-001-0025](#)) in their program and working towards receiving or clearing their standing to receive financial aid.
    - (C) Lower cost alternatives, as described in section (2) of this rule, must be explored, including the individual pursuing financial aid and other sources of assistance.

- (b) Auto Expenses: Payments for auto expenses, repairs, or car insurance to support the goals specified in the individual's *case plan*. Payments for vehicle repairs are limited to situations where repairs are necessary to operate the vehicle. In order to comply with section (2) of this rule, payments are made after the Department receives at least two estimates, unless the Department determines there is a hardship in obtaining the estimates.
- (c) Eyeglasses: Effective July 19, 2023, payments for eyeglasses (does not include contacts) when necessary to remove a barrier towards gaining employment. Requests for eyeglasses above \$50 shall require verification of the need from a qualified and appropriate professional. Payments for eyeglasses are limited to individuals who are not:
  - (A) Under the age of 21,
  - (B) A pregnant adult, or
  - (C) Within the last day of the twelfth month following the month in which the individual gave birth.
- (d) Tax Preparation Services: Payments for personal tax preparation services are limited to payments for the current tax year and can only be accessed from January 1 through Tax Day in April, in situations where no free community resources are available.
- (e) Science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM): Payments for science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics are limited to educational purposes including but not limited to family passes to museums, Oregon State Parks, and marine or natural science centers. Individuals must continue to meet all other provisions of this rule and payment is limited to activities in which the *eligible* individual and their TANF *filing group* can participate together.
- (f) None of the following are allowed for payment by the *Department*:

- (A) Medical Assistance or medical services, including but not limited to dental services, eye exams, urinalysis and other medical screenings, or substance use testing.
- (B) Mental health services.
- (C) Alcohol and drug treatment services.
- (D) Credit card debt or other debt payments.
- (E) Payments for expenses in the collection process.
- (F) Payments for eviction related expenses that do not result in the dismissal of the eviction.
- (G) Payments for entertainment services, including but not limited to amusement parks, digital streaming services or applications, or movie theaters.
- (H) Fines, reinstatement fees, restitution, legal or civil fees (including attorney fees and expungement), court costs, or other costs associated with a legal penalty.
- (I) Purchase of a car, recreational vehicle, or motor home.
- (J) Any payments described in this rule for individuals employed in, seeking employment in, or engaged in an *illegal activity* (see OAR [461-120-0215](#)).
- (K) Animal related costs.
- (L) Payments for child care, including registration fees and ERDC co-payments.
- (M) Purchase of a firearm or other items intended to be used as self-defense or as a weapon.
- (N) Payments for expenses with a due date in a future benefit month.

- (6) The *Department* may require an individual to provide verification of a need for, or costs associated with, *support services* prior to approval and issuance of payments if verification is reasonably available.
- (7) The *Department* may reduce, close, or deny in whole or in part a request for *support services* payments in the following circumstances:
  - (a) The purpose for the payments is not related to the individual's *case plan*.
  - (b) The individual is failing to comply with the *case plan* or disqualified, unless the payments in question are necessary for the individual to demonstrate cooperation with the individual's *case plan*.
  - (c) The individual disagrees with *support services* payments offered or made by the *Department* as outlined in the individual's *case plan*.
  - (d) The payment does not relate to one of the four federal purposes of TANF in 45 CFR 260.20
  - (e) The payment does not comply with the reasonable cost requirements in 45 CFR 75.404 or lower cost alternatives are available.

Statutory/Other Authority: ORS [409.050](#), [411.060](#), [411.070](#), [411.121](#), [412.006](#), [412.009](#), [412.014](#), [412.049](#)

Statutes/Other Implemented: ORS [291.003](#), [409.010](#), [409.040](#), [411.060](#), [411.070](#), [411.121](#), [412.001](#), [412.006](#), [412.009](#), [412.014](#), [412.049](#), 45 CFR 75.404, 45 CFR 260.20

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