

The TANF JOBS Plus Program

The JOBS Plus Steps

Employers are usually made aware of the program when contacted by a local JOBS staff person. Local staff should make employers aware of the program requirements.

If an employer is interested in hiring a JOBS Plus worker, then:

- Step 1 **Employer provides a job description** to DHS or JOBS Contractor
- Step 2 **DHS refers eligible TANF clients** to the employer for an interview
- Step 3 The **employer selects an applicant**
- Step 4 If appropriate, **certify the TANF applicant as eligible for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)** (See *JOBS Plus Forms to be Used*)
- Step 5 DHS or the JOBS Contractor **sign a JOBS Plus Work Site Agreement (DHS Form 7878)** with the employer - the agreement is mailed to the address on the agreement and copy given the DHS Case Manager so they can set up the JOBS Plus case (note: use DHS Form 7879 if the employer is hiring the JOBS Plus worker through a staffing company)
- Step 6 **Give the TANF client a:**
 - 7819 (Rights and Responsibilities form)
 - 7874 (Notice of Entering JOBS Plus Program form)
- Step 7 **DHS Case Manager sets up the JOBS Plus case** (see the *JOBS Plus Cheat Sheet*) - **suspending TANF and SNAP benefits**
- Step 8 DHS or JOBS Contractor **monitors the JOBS Plus worker's progress** on a regular basis
- Step 9 **At the end** of the JOBS Plus assignment, the DHS Case Manager changes the JOBS Plus case (see the *JOBS Plus Cheat Sheet*) - **restoring TANF and SNAP benefits**

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What is JOBS Plus?

JOBS Plus is a subsidized work program that provides real jobs for TANF clients. TANF clients can be placed with an employer (private-for-profit, nonprofit, or governmental) for up to 6 months. Instead of receiving TANF and SNAP benefits, the client receives a paycheck from the employer and the employer is reimbursed for wages and payroll taxes.

The JOBS Plus program is a JOBS activity (PL). However, the program began as a ballot measure that was approved by the voters in 1991. In 1993 and 1995, the Oregon Legislature passed JOBS Plus legislation to implement the program. Although, JOBS Plus is a regular JOBS activity, there are special Oregon laws that apply.

Who is Eligible for JOBS Plus?

Any TANF client with an AD in-grant code is eligible for JOBS Plus. Children in a TANF benefit group are not eligible to be placed in JOBS Plus.

The Employment Department JOBS Plus Program ended June 30, 2005.

What are the Benefits of JOBS Plus?

For the employer, they...

- save money, the employer receives a reimbursement from the State for part of the payroll costs
- define the job and train the JOBS Plus worker to do the job they want done
- interview and select eligible workers
- become part of public-private workforce partnership that promotes self-sufficiency for Oregon families

For the TANF client, he or she...

- is placed in a real job, providing meaningful job experience
- receive wages that are likely to be more than the TANF and SNAP benefits they would have received
- receive a cash supplement for the difference if the JOBS Plus wages received are less than the amount of TANF and SNAP benefits
- continue to receive medical benefits and child care assistance with no co-pay
- receive any child support money collected by the State
- earn money towards an Individual Education Account

For DHS...

- JOBS Plus participants are enrolled in an activity that meets JOBS participation requirements
- Child care costs are paid out of the ERDC program, not local JOBS funds
- Employer reimbursements are not paid out of local JOBS funds
- working relations with the employer community are developed

What are the JOBS Plus Employer Requirements?

- All employers are eligible to participate
- JOBS Plus positions must be newly created positions - Employers cannot displace or reduce the hours of regular workers or fill existing vacant positions with JOBS Plus workers
- Employers must pay the JOBS Plus worker at least the Oregon minimum wage, pay all appropriate payroll taxes, and provide workers' compensation
- JOBS Plus workers are placed on the employer's regular payroll and are considered temporary employees, entitled to the same benefits as other temporary employees
- the employer must designate a mentor to assist the JOBS Plus worker with work place issues
- the number of JOBS Plus workers an employer can hire is limited to 10% (or at least 1) of the employer's total workforce - a waiver to this 10% requirement can be made by contacting State office

How is the JOBS Plus Employer Reimbursed?

The employer places the JOBS Plus worker on the company payroll and pays the JOBS Plus worker like any other employee. Employer billings and reimbursements are handled at the State level by the DHS Direct Pay Unit.

Employers are being reimbursed (**not paid in advance**):

- at the Oregon minimum wage for wages paid to the JOBS Plus worker, up to 40 hours per week. Overtime and wages paid in excess of the Oregon minimum wage are at the employer's expense
- for employer payroll taxes which include federal/state unemployment insurance taxes, OASDI, Medicare, and workers compensation premiums

The reimbursement steps are:

- 1) DPU will input employer information upon receipt of the site contract DHS form 7878 and/or 7879
- 2) DPU will mail the employer a Wage Reimbursement Billing form on the 10th of each month
- 3) the employer completes a form for each JOBS Plus worker and returns it to DPU by the 20th of the month
- 4) the reimbursement period is the 16th through the 15th of the next month
- 5) DPU promptly issues a check to the employer.

What can the JOBS Plus Participant Expect?

- This a real job with employer expectations about performance and attendance
- JOBS Plus workers are not required to work more than 40 hours per week, they can volunteer for overtime, but cannot be required to work any overtime
- JOBS Plus workers will not receive any TANF or SNAP benefits while enrolled in JOBS Plus
- TANF and SNAP benefits are suspended the month after the workers' 1st JOBS Plus pay check
- TANF and SNAP benefits are restored the month after the workers' last day of JOBS Plus employment
- During the 5th & 6th month of the assignment, the JOBS Plus worker can be paid for up to 8 hours of job search per week. If the employer commits to hire the worker at the end of the JOBS Plus assignment, the job search requirement can be waived. If the worker has a part-time JOBS Plus job, the amount of paid job search can be pro-rated
- JOBS Plus workers are provided support services like any other JOBS participant. Child care assistance is paid for through the ERDC program
- JOBS Plus workers retain all child support collected by the State
- After 30 days, the worker will earn \$1 per hour worked toward an Individual Education Account
- JOBS Plus workers will be paid a wage supplement to make up any difference between the JOBS Plus wages they receive and the TANF and SNAP benefits they would have received (this supplement is calculated and issued by DPU)

What do these acronyms mean to me? EITC, WOTC, and IEA

EITC is the Earned Income Tax Credit. This is usually both a federal and state tax credit for employees. Wages, including JOBS Plus wages, can make the JOBS Plus worker eligible to receive extra money in the form of a tax refund. Work Related Tax Credits vary by year. For most up-to-date information check out the following websites:

- www.irs.ustreas.gov
- www.oregon.gov/dor/PERTAX/pages/irs_eitc.aspx
- www.WorkinginOregon.org

WOTC is the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. This is a federal tax credit available to employers who hire eligible TANF clients. The employer cannot receive a JOBS Plus subsidy and a WOTC credit at the same time. If the employer hires the JOBS Plus worker after the assignment ends, they can begin to receive the WOTC credit at that time. **HOWEVER, the WOTC certification must be completed PRIOR to the start of the JOBS Plus assignment.** Contact your local Employment Department for WOTC details.

A View Direct Report (WFS216OR-A) lists WOTC eligible TANF clients.

IEA is the Individual Education Account. After 30 days, JOBS Plus workers earn \$1 per hour worked toward an Individual Education Account. This \$1 per hour is deducted from the employer's reimbursement.

IEA funds can be used for training, education, books, and supplies for the JOBS Plus worker or anyone in his/her immediate family. IEA funds can be used for up to 5 years after the JOBS Plus assignment ends.

To be eligible, a JOBS Plus worker, must be hired into an unsubsidized job (any non-JOBS Plus job) for 30 days after the JOBS Plus assignment ends.

When the JOBS Plus assignment ends, an IEA Notification Letter will automatically be mailed to the JOBS Plus worker. By returning this letter, the IEA account will be activated.

Questions???? and Answers!!!

How is the supplement calculated?

Supplements are issued to workers if, for whatever reason, their monthly JOBS Plus wages are less than the amount of TANF and SNAP benefits they would have received. Supplements are calculated and issued by DPU.

The calculation is: Gross wages (reported by the employer) *minus* \$90 = Net wages + any child support received. This amount is compared to the TANF and SNAP benefit amount that the client would have received. If the JOBS Plus wages are less, a supplement is issued by the 1st of the month if the employer reimbursement form has been received.

Does the client have to maintain TANF eligibility while in JOBS Plus?

Yes. The suspended TANF and SNAP benefits are diverted to a JOBS Plus employer reimbursement fund. Without TANF benefits, DHS is unable to reimburse the employer. If a JOBS Plus worker loses his or her eligibility while in JOBS Plus, take the following action:

- Give the client a DHS 456 (Notice of Decision and Action Taken)
- Notify the employer that the JOBS Plus assignment is ending

Do you disqualify a JOBS Plus worker for non-cooperation?

Yes. Use the same process as for any other JOBS participant. Although, the worker is not receiving TANF benefits while in JOBS Plus and will not see the normal benefit reductions, the supplement issued maybe lower because it will be compared to the lower disqualified TANF benefit amount.

Are TANF JOBS Plus wages countable income?

Not for most benefits. Participants would continue to receive medical and child care while in the program. *(Specific details can be found in Oregon Administrative Rule 461-145-0130.)*

A former JOBS Plus participant wants to use their IEA funds?

The participant activates their IEA funds by returning an IEA Notification Letter. A replacement letter can be requested by calling DPU at (503)378-3862. After returning the IEA letter, the funds are transferred to the Oregon Student Assistance Commission (OSAC) who provides the participant with information on how to use their IEA funds. OSAC can be contacted at (800) 452-8807.

JOBS Plus Forms to be Used

Forms Used *(available on the Forms server - <https://apps.state.or.us/cf1/FORMS/>)*

7819 - JOBS Plus Rights and Responsibilities. To be signed by the JOBS Plus worker prior to the start of the JOBS Plus assignment.

7834 - JOBS Plus Employer Handbook. To be given to JOBS Plus employers. Provides an explanation of the JOBS Plus program.

7836 - JOBS Plus Handbook for Workers. To be given to JOBS Plus participant. Provides an explanation of the JOBS Plus program.

7838 – JOBS Plus for Employers - Coach Says... A JOBS Plus marketing brochure explaining the DHS and Employment Department JOBS Plus program to employers.

7874 - Notice of Entering JOBS Plus. To be given to the client upon entering JOBS Plus agreement. Advises clients of end of TANF and SNAP issuances.

7878 - JOBS Plus Work Site Agreement. Completed and signed by DHS or

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JOBS Contractor staff and signed by the employer.

- Original copy to DPU at the address on the Work Site Agreement
- Copy to the Case Manager - needed to set up the JOBS Plus case

7879 - JOBS Plus Staffing Company Work Site Agreement. To be used when an employer is hiring a JOBS Plus worker through a Staffing Company. Completed and signed by DHS or JOBS Contractor staff and signed by the employer.

WOTC - Employer submits to the Employment Department forms 9061 (or 9062) and 8850. The employer must complete 8850 before the JOBS Plus hire date. Available on the Oregon Employment Department web site. www.oregon.gov/EMPLOY/ES/bus/ and search for WOTC.

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