

**§ 108A-29. Priority for employment services.**

(a) Repealed by Session Laws 2009-489, s. 12, effective August 26, 2009.

(b) Individuals seeking to apply or reapply for Work First Program assistance and who are not exempt from work requirements shall register with the Division of Employment Security for employment services. The point of registration shall be at an office of the Division in the county in which the individual resides or at another location designated in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Division and the local department of social services.

(c) Individuals who are not otherwise exempt shall present verification of registration for Work First Program assistance. Unless exempt, the individual shall not be approved for Work First Program assistance until verification is received. Child-only cases are exempt from this requirement.

(d) Once an individual has registered as required in subsection (c) of this section and upon verification of the registration by the agency or contractor providing the Work First Program assistance, the individual's eligibility for Work First Program assistance may be evaluated and the application completed. Continued receipt of Work First Program benefits is contingent upon successful participation in employment services in the Mutual Responsibility Agreement, and lack of cooperation and participation in employment services may result in the termination of benefits to the individual.

(e) Repealed by Session Laws 2009-489, s. 12, effective August 26, 2009.

(f) Each county department of social services shall enter into a cooperative agreement with the local Division to operate the Job Search component on behalf of Work First Program registrants. The cooperative agreement shall include a provision for payment to the Division by the county department of social services for the cost of providing those services, not otherwise available to all clients of the Division, described in this subsection as the same are reflected as a component of the County Plan payable from fund allocations in the county block grant. The county department of social services may also enter into a cooperative agreement with the community college system or any other entity to operate the Job Preparedness component. This cooperative agreement shall include a provision for payment to that entity by the county department of social services for the cost of providing those services, not otherwise available to all clients of the Division, described in this subsection as the same are reflected as a component of the County Plan payable from fund allocations in the county block grant.

(g) The Division shall further assist registrants through job search, job placement, or referral to community service, if contracted to do so.

(h) An individual placed in the Job Search component of the Division or other agency providing Job Search services shall look for work and shall accept any suitable employment. If contracted, the Division shall refer individuals to current job openings and shall make job development contacts for individuals. Individuals so referred shall be required to keep a record of their job search activities on a job search record form provided by the Division, and the Division will monitor these activities. A "job search record" means a written list of dates, times, places, addresses, telephone numbers, names, and circumstances of job interviews. The Job Search component shall include at least one weekly contact with the Division. The Division shall adopt rules to accomplish this subsection.

(i) The Division of Employment Security shall notify all employers in the State of the "Exclusive No-Fault" Referral Service available through the Division of Employment Security to employers who hire personnel through Job Service referrals.

(j) All individuals referred to jobs through the Division of Employment Security shall be instructed in the procedures for applying for the Federal Earned Income Credit (FEIC). All

individuals referred to jobs through the Division who qualify for the FEIC shall apply for the FEIC by filing a W-5 form with their employers.

(k) The FEIC shall not be counted as income when eligibility is determined for Work First Program assistance, Medicaid, food and nutrition services, public housing, or Supplemental Security Income.

(l) The Division of Employment Security shall work with the Department of Labor to develop a relationship with these private employment agencies to utilize their services and make referrals of individuals registered with the Division of Employment Security.

(m) An individual who has not found a job within 12 weeks of being placed in the Job Search component of the Program may also be placed in the Community Service component at the county's option.

(n) If after evaluation of an individual the Division of Employment Security believes it necessary, the Division or the county department of social services also may refer an individual to a Job Preparedness provider. The local community college should include adult high school equivalency diploma, Adult Basic Education, or Human Resources Development programs that are already in existence as a part of the Job Preparedness component. Additionally, the Division or the county department of social services may refer an individual to a literacy council. Through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Division of Employment Security, the local department of social services, and other contracted entities, a system shall be established to monitor an individual's progress through close communications with the agencies assisting the individual. The Division of Employment Security or Job Preparedness provider shall adopt rules to accomplish this subsection.

(o) The Job Preparedness component of the Program shall last a maximum of 12 weeks unless the recipient is registered and is satisfactorily progressing in a program that requires additional time to complete. Every reasonable effort shall be made to place the recipient in part-time employment or part-time community service if the time required exceeds the 12-week maximum. The county department of social services may contract with service providers to provide the services described in this section and shall monitor the provision of the services by the service providers. Registrants may participate in more than one component at a time.

(p) The Division shall expand its Labor Market Information System. The expansion shall at least include: statistical information on unemployment rates and other labor trends by county; and publications dealing with licensing requirements, economic development, and career projections, and information technology systems which can be used to track participants through the employment and training process.

(q), (r) Repealed by Session Laws 2009-489, s. 12, effective August 26, 2009.

(s) Members of families with dependent children and with aggregate family income at or below the level required for eligibility for Work First Family Assistance, regardless of whether or not they have applied for such assistance, shall be given priority in obtaining employment services including training and community service provided by or through State agencies or counties or with funds which are allocated to the State of North Carolina directly or indirectly through prime sponsors or otherwise for the purpose of employment of unemployed persons. (1961, c. 998; 1963, c. 1061; 1965, c. 939, s. 2; 1969, c. 546, s. 1; 1971, c. 283; 1973, c. 476, s. 138; 1977, c. 362; 1981, c. 275, s. 1; 1981 (Reg. Sess., 1982), c. 1282, s. 19; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 966, s. 1; 1997-443, s. 12.7(a); 1998-212, s. 12.27A(l), (m); 1999-340, s. 9; 2001-424, s. 21.13(d), (e); 2007-97, s. 8; 2009-489, s. 12; 2011-401, s. 3.12; 2014-115, s. 28(d).)