



DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
DIVISION OF FAMILY AND ECONOMIC SECURITY
ADMINISTRATOR'S MEMO SERIES

DFES 25-04

ISSUE DATE: 1/31/2025

DISPOSAL DATE: 09/29/2025

ACTION

NOTICE

PROGRAM CATEGORIES:

- W-2 - Wisconsin Works
- RA - Refugee Assistance
- CS - Child Support
- CF - Children First
- TJ - Transitional Jobs
- TMJ - Transform Milwaukee Jobs

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 1, 2021

TO: Agency Administrators at UMOS, Maximus, and Forward Services Corporation (FSC)

**FROM: Connie M. Chesnik
Division Administrator**

RE: Wilson-Fish Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Coordination Program Eligibility

PURPOSE:

[DFES Admin Memo 21-05](#) erroneously noted that participants enrolled in the Wilson Fish TANF Coordination Program (WF TCP) are eligible for services for up to 60 months (or five years) after obtaining ORR-eligible immigration status, as is the case with W-2 Programs. This memo serves to inform participating Wisconsin Works (W-2) agencies about the correct eligibility criteria and enrollment process for the WF TCP.

BACKGROUND:

The WF TCP is a four-year pilot program (October 2021 – September 2024 extended until September 2025) implemented by the Department of Children and Families' Bureau of Refugee Programs (BRP) and funded by a grant from U.S. Department of Health Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) that is designed to better:

- identify and address the needs of refugee families receiving Wisconsin Works (W-2), and
- develop opportunities that advance each WF TCP family's social and economic self-sufficiency.

The objectives of the program are to:

1. Adapt existing in-person and remote W-2 resources and services in Barron, Brown, Calumet, Dane, Eau Claire, Milwaukee, Outagamie, Sheboygan, and Winnebago counties to increase accessibility to refugees and other eligible arrivals.
2. Increase the effectiveness of and access to job-skills through enhanced English courses.
3. Reduce service gaps and increase refugee family well-being through:
 - a. enhanced case management - use of the Transition to Success (TTS) framework as methodology, and
 - b. services delivered in alignment with Culturally and Linguistically Approved Services (CLAS) standards.

POLICY

The Refugee Program Liaisons (RPLs) at WF TCP-contracted W-2 agencies must adhere to the policies outlined below when using the program funding to enroll individuals and provide services that enhance existing W-2 services. The policies specific to the WF TCP will be obsolete once the program funding is exhausted.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND ENROLLMENT

To be eligible for the program, individuals must have what is considered an [“ORR eligible”](#) immigration status and have children under the age of 18. This may include refugees, asylees, holders of Special Immigrant Visas, victims of trafficking, Cuban-Haitian entrants, and Amerasians. Upon enrollment, participants must verify their Wisconsin residency. Additionally, per the WF TCP Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), client participation in the WF TCP is limited to the **first 36 months after their arrival in the U.S.** However, DCF can request extension from ORR on a case-by-case basis for continued participation until the activity concludes should a client engage in an activity related to a specific goal or participate in a time-limited job retention service that extends beyond 36-month period.

RPLs at W-2 agencies are responsible for identifying eligible participants within existing W-2 caseloads and accurately documenting service provision. At the time of enrollment, individuals should also meet the following criteria:

- Individuals served through the Refugee Support Services program are eligible for enrollment in the WF TCP, but W-2 contracted agencies must ensure there is no duplication of services and that this is appropriately documented.
- Individuals served through the Preferred Communities program are also eligible for enrollment in the WF TCP, with similar appropriate documentation of services to prevent service duplication.
- Individuals served through the Matching Grant (MG) program are ineligible for enrollment in the WF TCP; however, they become eligible after exiting the MG program. W-2 contracted agencies must also ensure that there is no duplication of services in this case.

AGENCY ACTION

UMOS, Maximus, and FSC should establish a process for tracking client families still receiving TANF cash benefits or participating in one of the two job retention programs as they near their 36th month post-arrival. Agencies should reach out to the WF TCP Program Coordinator if any

clients are expected to need an extension beyond the 36-month eligibility date. If a client is pursuing a specific goal or participating in a time-limited job retention service that extends past their 36-month eligibility, DCF will request an extension from ORR for the client to remain in the program until the activity concludes, following ORR guidance.

CONTACTS

Questions regarding this memo should be directed to: DCFRefugee@wisconsin.gov

DCF/DFES/BRP/RPPS