

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER NO. ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES 2-2009**

**Work First Program**

**TO:** County Directors of Social Services  
**ATTENTION:** Work First Program Administrators, Managers, and Supervisors  
**DATE:** March 27, 2009  
**SUBJECT:** Good Cause for Two-Parent Families  
**EFFECTIVE DATE:** April 1, 2009

**I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

The purpose of this letter is to clarify when to apply good cause as it relates to two-parent families. If a Work First participant in a two-parent family is unable to complete the activities outlined in the MRA, the caseworker must determine if the participant has good cause or if the family has become exempt. Counties should use prudent judgment to ensure that good cause is applied reasonably and equitably to two-parent families. Good cause is defined as a significant family crisis or change, illness or disability of the caretaker or child, civil leave, or any other reason deemed sufficient by the county director or designee. Therefore, if the parents have made their best efforts and have complied with all requirements outlined in the MRA to the best of their ability, we must consider good cause and not sanction these families. Apply this same policy for releasing checks when families have moved in to Pay-After-Performance status.

Some examples of when good cause is applied include but not limited to:

- A refugee family where the parents do not have sufficient English language proficiency or have not sufficiently acclimated to the American culture, such that one or both parents are unprepared for work or work activities.
- Two-parent families that experience unusual circumstances that prevents them from completing the full 35/55 hour requirement but have completed everything else requested by their caseworker as outlined on the MRA.

**II. IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES**

Apply this policy to the next review, application, or change in situation effective **April 1, 2009**.

**III. EFFECTIVE DATE**

This policy is effective **April 1, 2009**. Should you need additional guidance, please contact your Work First Representative.

Sincerely,



Dean Simpson, Chief  
Economic and Family Services

DS/ gbw

cc: Sherry S. Bradsher  
Sarah Barham  
Hank Bowers  
Charisse Johnson  
Sara Mims  
Work First Local Support  
Local Business Liaisons