What you need to know about Reach First

What is Reach First?

- Reach First is temporary, short term financial assistance for families who have a plan to become self-sufficient within 4 months.

- The initial Reach First payment is retroactive to the first of the month in which you applied. For example, if we receive your application on 10/18, your benefit will start 10/1.

- Benefits are paid once a month on the 1st, and the benefit amount is equal to what you would receive on Reach Up.

- The state will not take your child support, however, this income must be reported and will reduce your Reach First benefits.

- If you are not able to return or start work for some reason in 4 months, you can be switched to the Reach Up program and continue to receive financial assistance.

- You can be switched to Reach Up at any time during the 4 months if it is determined you will need cash assistance beyond 4 months.

What is required of me?

- You will be required to meet regularly with a Reach Up Team member (s). Reach Up Team members work with both Reach First and Reach Up participants.

- You will be expected to create a plan and participate in approved activities that will help you get off Reach First within 4 months. If you do not follow through, your Reach First benefits will end until you comply.

What else should I know?

- You may be eligible for financial supports related to the activities in which you are engaged. Some examples include gas money for job search, car repairs, and clothing for a job or job interview. There are dollar limits on all of these supports, and you must get prior approval. If your Reach First benefits end due to employment, you may be eligible for these financial supports for 6 months from the closure date.

- Reach First recipients are not eligible for Reach Ahead. Reach Ahead is a $50 food benefit for 12 months, then $5 for the following 12 months. A Parent(s) needs to be working a certain number of hours per week in paid employment to qualify and continue to qualify for this program.

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