
MONTHLY MEETING AGENDA

Date: Wednesday, August 5th
Time: 1:00 – 2:30 PM
Location: Department of Workforce Services
Room 157-A
1385 S. State Street
Salt Lake City

Conference Call-in Number: 1-866-456-0016
Access Code: *2658942* (be sure to hit * before and after code)

DWS/Work Supports:

1:00 Welcome and Introductions

Yvette Woodland, DWS
Helen, DWS
Whitney Burrell, Karen Silver
Melanie Zamora
Lois Kelson
Diane
Suzan Pixton

1:05 Follow-Up Items

- I. General Assistance (Helen Thatcher)
 - a. How did the August 1st changes go?

Helen: counting up cases that closed – 458 due to time limit changes. On average, for all reasons – 280 cases close every month anyway. Glitch – a few people should have been raised if food stamps were lower, will be fixed tomorrow and will get larger amount on horizon card.

Did write a letter to all the medical providers – giving them a new form. Gonna start a project in a few months regarding having medical experts or occupational therapists to see if this works. Cost-effective and better medical data as goals.

Regions – adapting to policy – central has reassigned their staff. Were able to meet with about 90% of customers to try to plan for them not getting benefit anymore.

Could be people that were closed who were getting SOAR – maybe times can refer to other SOAR trained people to take these cases.

Melanie Zamora – Road Home passed many SOAR cases back to DWS

Helen – have to be in a program in order to pay for SOAR, so if not in a program can't offer it.

Melanie – a few years ago had all supportive services become trained and were working cases hard – was soooo time consuming, passed it back to SOAR team. Naturally will take some of that back on, but not know if would want to take on all the new cases.

Helen – does not know who has this training in the community for referrals.

Sheila – what if were part of SOAR process, well under way, and was denied, then needs to go to federal appeal process- this legal services connection DWS naturally had. Would DWS have ability to help them? For non-profits have to send them shopping for an attorney. If legal services has a case open – will DWS be able to still work on this? New medical evidence, etc.

Helen – will look into this.

Suzan Pixton – hard for DWS to justify relationship with legal services if not going to get the money back.

*** get a clinic at the law school????

Helen – do allow legal services to finish, even if case is closed. Asked Lloyd Pendleton for a list.

--- send out email – talk to Lloyd Pendleton about offering more training in SOAR.

Karen – clients were able to meet face-to-face with DWS workers.

2. Updates on Rulemaking? (Helen Thatcher, Suzan Pixton)

- a. Advocates are wondering why DWS chose not to promulgate rules before sending letters out to GA participants notifying them of benefit termination as of July 31, 2009. The 6 Sigma process happened in May. DWS knew going into the 2009 legislative session that it was going to do something regarding GA eligibility. It seems like it had plenty of time to engage in a thoughtful rulemaking process, including notifying all GA participants (as interested parties) that there would be a rulemaking process and that they would have a chance to ask for a public hearing. (Karen Silver)

Karen – DWS has known about need to change all of this since legislative session, why did have to do emergency rule. Also, in letter sent to GA people, why didn't insert something about the government rulemaking process.

Melissa – didn't know what plans were for restructuring until mid-May.

Suzan – could not have filed it regular status by May 31st because all plans were not in effect – that was drop dead date for Aug. 1st.

Karen – Emergency rule filed end of July, why that late?

Suzan – department needed additional time to decide on not just benefit level, but administrative costs, needed more input. Didn't know until sometime in June what all the changes were – it wouldn't have mattered when it was filed. We sent the letters out.

Karen says that was after it was done.

Suzan – clients have never been listed on interested parties list – advocates and other interested parties. Not think would be a good use of resources to send out to all the clients – not understand it, costly, and are not identified as interested parties under the statute.

Karen – Child care rules – were able to get department to post a notice about rule change on the door of each workforce services office.

Suzan – did send out letters and met with 90% of the clients. Many people don't come into the office so doesn't help much. Will post rulemaking day – 26th at the offices. More effective to send letters. Have only used it once before in 12 years – Katrina.

3. Legislative Priorities (Diane Lovell)

- a. Draft Bill that implements changes in eligibility and for the other half restructure – how is this coming along?

Diane – table to next month. A bill file has been opened, but DWS not sure if going to go forward because of all the technical issues – deciding whether or not need to go that route with restructuring of other half of department. Would have to change every single rule if do changes as a division. Will end up being called a „section“.

4. Summer Internships and Child Care (Helen Thatcher)

- a. Last month DWS said it was still looking at ways to alleviate the dilemma of child care for summer internships. It was asked previously what the reasons were for why DWS has decided not to provide child care for FEP families who may have wanted to participate in summer internships. Advocates feel they haven't really gotten an answer. How many FEP participants would have fit in the summer internship category, except for the fact that DWS denied child care. (Karen Silver)

Helen – mistake on the part of the department. When SI was brought up – was set up to count as income in FEP – should not have been counting it as income (FEP cases were closed). SI is not considered actual employment – for those folks whose cases closed, they lost their childcare. Was about 50 cases – fixing this glitch, so person's cases won't close, contacting everyone letting them know will open up again – and still get child care. Closing did not result in losing benefits – would not have lost any money – Yvette will check. Trying to make everybody whole.

Can't see if people backed off because of child care. Was a mistake. Summer Internship slots are full. Still looking to see if can open up a few more slots. Central and North have done a waiting list. 716 slots.

1:20 TANF/ARRA Dollars for Emergency Rental Assistance? (Myla Dutton) (Debbie Her)

There have been rumors that there are additional ARRA TANF dollars that will be given to the regional offices for Emergency Assistance. Would like more detail about it and information on how eligibility will be determined so can make referrals.

- There is also some confusion between HPRP dollars and EA – HPRP requires that you have exhausted all other options and so does EA – so how will this work?

Yvette Woodland (DWS) – no ARRA dollars for EA rental assistance.

Helen – adding ARRA to this – TANF has yet to receive any stimulus money – caseload growth, support employment, and non-assistance. Lloyd Pendleton has bugged DWS to come up with some TANF \$\$\$ that is temporary (not ARRA) for rental assistance and case management. Sarah Brenna is involved with the group that is working this out. Has been given \$4 million – Chelsea and other in a statewide group about how to divide the money. Was at first focused on just salt lake, but he realizes has to be statewide. Is temporary, one-time money - \$4 million each year for 2 years. His office will be handling that process and MOUs, etc. All around homelessness. Chelsea with United Way – she works for Myla.

Melanie – SL County will get \$2.4 million and rest of state will get remainder. Not sure how it will be split, but rental assistance is the spirit of what has been written so far – 4 month rapid rehousing strategies.

I:25 Emergency Transportation Funds (Myla Dutton) (Debbie Her)

Mountainland region used to get EA and were able to use those funds to also buy bus tokens or gas for people to help them to get to work so they can keep their jobs. Helped around 260 people a month. This is now supposed to be handled through DWS offices. Some issues with this:

1. How is eligibility determined for this?
2. The people have to get the money on a horizon card – is DWS going to put \$1.00 or \$5.00 on the horizon card? It is estimated that 2/3rds of these people do not have Horizon cards.
3. With the horizon card, the people have to go to an ATM and then go catch bus or get gas – the idea behind this was that if someone comes a few hours before work and gets the assistance, they can still make it to work, but with all of the hoops now, it will be really hard for them to get quick emergency help and get to work on time.
4. How is this handled in the rest of state?

Yvette – Mountainland was an anomaly to the state. The goal with ESD is to improve overall customer service – all customers in the state have been accommodated as they can – recognizing they are not the only people to provide help. Do issue them through an EBT card on an emergency basis.

Network of communication had lists of other community resources that they knew to go to when DWS was not open to be that primary support. Offer information about how it works in other parts of the state for everyone.

Have decided now will do Z-funds internally.

Client can go into an employment center for emergency transportation fund – can happen quickly and get an EBT card issued right there. Business office can help them activate the card as well.

I:35 Transient Assistance Fund (Myla Dutton) (Debbie Her)

There is a Transient Assistance Fund set up for the state that helps people traveling through the state who have an emergency and need shelter (hotel), gas or food. They can get this call once they are in the state. In the Mountainland Region – Community Action has been providing 24 hour a day staff support for this program for the past 25 years.

1. Community Action cannot afford to provide the staffing and the funds – especially when there is a statewide fund just for this.
2. Now, with eRep these funds are no longer available to be reimbursed to the community agencies and with shortened hours – these services now are only

available Monday – Thursday and the people have to come into DWS to get the benefit.

3. How is eligibility determined?
4. Does this have to go on a Horizon Card?
5. How is the rest of the state handling the Transient Assistance?
6. Can community agencies get reimbursed from the Transient Assistance fund some other way?

Yvette - Network of communication had lists of other community resources that they knew to go to when DWS was not open to be that primary support. Offer information about how it works in other parts of the state for everyone.

Will also check out how to apply for the Transient Fund dollars.

Helen - \$18,000 statewide transient fund. Z-funds are a different pot. Transient fund does exist, there is an eligibility process, but not sure how that works.

***** get UTA to donate bus tokens????

Also, DWS has Z-funds that can help people get to employment.

Yvette will get us the procedures.

1:45 TANF Time Limits and eRep (Karen Silver) (Helen Thatcher)

Advocates have heard that getting eREP running is delaying the implementation of the (what I call) "lost the job" extension for people who have used up their 36 months. Are there other things DWS would like to do that it can't because of eREP capability at this time? If so, what? What are the costs involved?

Suzan – we sent out in this packet of rules – the rule about TANF extension based on the recession. Expanding for people who lose their job due to a reduction in force – or have lost a job since January 1, 2008 due to a reduction in force. Effective October 1st – come in on or after and apply for extended benefits on that. Expires December 31, 2011. Regular rulemaking procedure, no hearing.

1:55 Child Care for Job Seekers (Lynette Rasmussen)

General introduction to the new program.

Kids in Care – Job Search childcare program. In 2000, focus groups and public meetings – Checked all off list but job search child care!!! Available for parents through CCR&R. Would not have been able to do this with reorg in time frames we needed. ARRA money – expires Dec 31, 2011. Steve Matterly – CCR&R program director made it happen. Go to workforce services website, on right bar under „What's New“ – child care, unemployed. Reimburses regulated providers while parent involved in job search activities. Some flexibility regarding if need to be unemployed in last 90 days. 100 hours can use at their discretion. Utah only state that is doing it this way. Have to prove you are unemployed, job search log, application online. Are eligibility limitations. Went to the high end of what CDF allows. Providers must be willing to provide drop-in care, and must be regulated – monthly invoice to CCR&R – paid directly. Started July 1st.

2:00 New Eligibility Services Division (John Pierpont)

Questions: Is DWS planning to do a satisfaction survey to see how ESD is working for workers

as well as applicants? It might be helpful.

John – talked about it, timing is everything, so down the line a bit.

Overview – is there a graphic of the new teams? **** Diane can get this.

Main Objectives:

1. Centralize
2. Standardize the Work
3. Reduce Costs
4. Improve Customer Service

Prior structure – 5 regions, 36 employment centers.

Have all eligibility serve in one division – six month time frame. All of the regional structures have been collapsed into one division on June 22nd. Standardizing becomes costly. Operating manual – policies, procedures, pathways – all are expected to work in this across the state.

3 Operational Units – ESO/CBT (community based teams), Medical Unit – heavily focused on specialization – in past been generalists, so now getting more specialized because complicated.

ESO/CBT: multi-program --- FS, TANF, FIN
70% of staff work in a call center environment now.

ESO (45% of all eligib)

801-313-4600 (local)

1-866-435-7414 if outside salt lake county. (before had over 40 toll free numbers).

These numbers are to initiate an application (can still go in, online, at home, etc.)

4 spanish speaking teams.

Still us language line contracted service. Just moved spanish internal.

Specialized child care in that unit.

CBT – (7% of workload) primary interface – employment counselor. Want a sharp focus on this, so have connection btwn employment function and eligibility.

MEDU

LTC

ABD

CHIP/PCN/UPP

Outreach

Child Care

Understand programs better and can take higher caseload because specialized.

Wanted to avoid the bounce between case workers. 92% bounced between medical and foodstamps – so realized medical unit has to know food stamps.

Many disabled/special needs have a direct dial to their DWS worker. (LTC, ABD, Outreach)

All Eligibility Policy Programs are under ESD (John, Debbie) and QC, PEP (Payment Error Prevention), Investigative piece.

Performance Review Team – all of the editing functions, across the state to get to standard work – along policy procedure pathways.

Shock factor – equalized workload across the state – could call from salt lake, and could talk to a worker in moab.

Thinks it will be about six months til feel workflows and policies are where they need to be.

Savings: \$6.5 million. 97 less staff (through attrition, at about 88 right now) (this doesn't affect MOE)

2:20 Legislative Priorities (Diane Lovell)

No Health Items this Month.

Topics Welcome!

We find these meetings are most productive when topics are generated by the community. Please email ideas for topics to melissa@utahcap.org or lincoln@healthpolicyproject.org. Thanks.