

GOOD CAUSE DETERMINATION GUIDELINES

The good cause determination is an important part of the noncompliance process. It provides an opportunity for you and the recipient to present information relevant to the issue of nonparticipation and can often lead to resumed participation and the avoidance of losing cash aid.

During the interview: 1) Explain the good cause and compliance processes; 2) Ask why the recipient did not comply with program requirements; 3) Refer to the examples of good cause below and determine if the participation problem was due to one of these examples or any other good reason. If yes, and that reason is verified, good cause exists; 4) Determine if the recipient is repeatedly experiencing barriers to participation. If yes, the recipient has an ongoing problem and should be evaluated to determine if he or she should be exempt or a referral to mental health, substance abuse, domestic abuse, or learning disability services is necessary.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD CAUSE:

- Temporary illness (review for exemption if more than 30 days)
- Temporary illness of child or family member (review for exemption if more than 30 days)
- Breakdown of transportation arrangements
- Lack of child care
- Lack of appropriate special needs child care
- Breakdown in child care arrangement
- Lack of access to shelter, counseling, or other services
- Homelessness
- Death in the family
- Severe family crisis
- Physical access barriers for the disabled
- Earthquake or severe weather condition prevented travel/attendance
- Learning disabilities that are a factor in the failure to participate
- Legal difficulties
- Court appearances
- Temporary incarceration
- Remoteness from Welfare-to-Work activities
- Language barriers
- Discrimination based on age, sex, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability
- Employment or offer of employment exceeds the daily or weekly hours of work customary to the occupation
- Violation of health and safety standards
- No workers' compensation insurance
- Accepting employment or participating in a work activity would cause an interruption to an approved education activity or job training (except work experience or community service)
- Violation of union membership

Substance Abuse Indicators:

(Review for exemption if substantially interferes with ability to participate in Welfare-to-Work)

- Recurring health issues
- Failing an employer drug test
- History of family/child substance abuse
- Irregular sobriety

Mental Health Indicators:

- Chronic homelessness
- Irregular or sporadic work history
- Chronic family or relationship problems
- Anxiety
- Severe depression

Domestic Abuse Indicators:

- Current or past violence or harassment (sexual, physical, or emotional)
- Fear of abuse or abuser
- Sabotage from abuser when the victim attempts to become independent
- Abuser interferes with work or Welfare-to-Work activity
- Concern for children's safety
- Lack of appropriate services
- Physical/Mental health/Substance abuse issues
- Severe depression and/or anxiety
- Issues related to living in temporary housing or a sheltered environment
- Legal problems such as restraining orders, divorce, court appearances, etc.
- Victim of a stalker
- Homelessness
- Lack of support system (isolation)
- Stockholm Syndrome (bonding with the captor)
- Economic control (abuser hides or controls money, checkbooks, savings, etc.)

Other Good Reasons: On a case-by-case basis, as determined by the county, any other reason that temporarily prevents or significantly impairs a recipient's ability to work regularly or go to Welfare-to-Work activities.