

DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT  
Secretary Roberta Gassman  
201 East Washington Avenue  
P.O. Box 7946  
Madison, WI 53707-7946  
Telephone: (608) 266-7552  
FAX: (608) 266-1784  
www.dwd.state.wi.us



State of Wisconsin  
Governor Jim Doyle

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND  
FAMILY SERVICES  
Secretary Kevin R. Hayden  
1 West Wilson Street  
P.O. Box 7850  
Madison, WI 53707-7850  
Telephone: (608) 266-9622  
FAX: (608) 266-7882  
www.dhfs.wisconsin.gov

**TO:** Income Maintenance Supervisors  
Income Maintenance Lead Workers  
Income Maintenance Staff  
W-2 Agencies  
Workforce Development Boards  
Job Center Leads and Managers  
Training Staff  
Child Care Coordinators

**FROM:** Janice Peters, Director  
Bureau of Wisconsin Works  
Division of Family Supports

**DFS OPERATIONS MEMO**

**No:** 08-35

**DATE:** 06/23/2008

<b>FS</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>MA</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>BC+</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>SC</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>CTS</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>CC</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>W-2</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>FSET</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>EA</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CF</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>JAL</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>JC</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>RAP</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>WIA</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Other</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<b>EP</b>	

**PRIORITY: MEDIUM**

**SUBJECT:** Wisconsin Works (W-2) Up-Front Job Search and Job Readiness Activities and CARES Functionality

**CROSS REFERENCE:** [Operations Memo 06-27, W-2 Move Placements Project;](#)

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** June 30, 2008

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this memo is to describe:

1. The circumstances under which it is appropriate to assign up-front job search and job readiness activities using the CARES Worker Web (CWW) page, "W-2 Pre-Eligibility Requirements"; and
2. Updates in CWW functionality to support the assignment of up-front job search and job readiness requirements.

**BACKGROUND**

W-2 agencies record up-front job search and job readiness activities assigned to a W-2 applicant as a condition of eligibility on the CWW page, "W-2 Pre-Eligibility Requirements". The assignment of up-front job search and job readiness activities provides the W-2 agency with an opportunity to assist individuals who appear job-ready in obtaining employment before placing them into a W-2 employment position. W-2 agencies must provide a combination of services that strongly support the W-2 applicant's job search efforts.

**WHEN IS ASSIGNMENT TO UP-FRONT JOB SEARCH AND JOB READINESS ACTIVITIES APPROPRIATE?**

Either or both parent(s) applying for W-2 may be assigned to up-front job search and job readiness activities as a condition of eligibility to receive W-2 assistance. The Resource Specialist and/or Financial Employment Planner (FEP) should assign up-front job search and job readiness activities, when appropriate, for all adult applicants in the W-2 group. However, applicants who are not considered ready for unsubsidized employment must not be required to participate in these activities.

**For individuals who appear ready for unsubsidized employment, assignment to up-front job search and job readiness activities may be appropriate under any of the following conditions:**

1. An individual has filed a W-2 application with a W-2 agency and has no open W-2 case in that W-2 agency or any other W-2 agency;
2. An individual has a W-2 case that is pending closed in CARES due to eligibility reasons and his or her W-2 placement has been end-dated and s/he subsequently contacts the same W-2 agency or a different W-2 agency to request assistance from W-2;

**Example:**

Laura's CMC placement ended on June 18th and she returns to work. Her FEP notifies her that case management follow-up services are available, but Laura declines. Her worker enters Laura's earned income in CARES, ends the W-2 episode and changes the request for W-2 to No. W-2 eligibility is pending closed for July 31<sup>st</sup>. On July 20<sup>th</sup>, Laura notifies the W-2 agency that she lost her job and submits a new request for W-2. Based on their assessment of Laura's work history, education and employment skills, the agency determines that it is appropriate to assign up-front job search and job readiness activities to Laura before making a new placement determination.

3. A W-2 participant who lives outside of Milwaukee moves from one county to another county and the counties operate the W-2 program under different W-2 contracts (i.e. the two counties are not part of the same W-2 consortium).
4. A W-2 participant moves from Milwaukee County to another county or visa versa.

When a participant moves from one county to another (scenarios #3 and #4 above), it is important for the new agency to capture the W-2 application date by having the individual sign the [Wisconsin Works \(W-2\) and Related Programs Registration form, form number DWSP-14880](#). As with any other W-2 application, the FEP must meet with the individual within five working days of the date the W-2 agency receives the signed application. The FEP has seven working days after this first meeting to make a placement determination. The assignment of up-front job search and job readiness activities may take place while the applicant is waiting to meet with the FEP, while submitting required verification, or while the FEP is determining the appropriate W-2 placement.

**Up-front job search and job readiness activities must not be assigned under any of the following conditions:**

1. A W-2 participant has continued ongoing W-2 eligibility in one agency. This includes circumstances where a participant's CMC placement is ending, s/he is unemployed and she meets eligibility criteria for a different cash assistance placement.
2. A W-2 participant is placed in CMF and subsequently contacts the caseworker to be reassessed for W-2 placement because his or her employment has ended.
3. A W-2 participant moves from one Milwaukee W-2 region to another Milwaukee W-2 region and neither W-2 eligibility nor the W-2 placement has ended.
4. A W-2 participant moves from one county to another county where both counties operate the W-2 program under one W-2 contract (i.e., the two counties are part of the same W-2 Consortium) and neither W-2 eligibility nor the W-2 placement has ended.

### ***CARES PROCESSING OF W-2 PRE-ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS***

Case workers may refer to pages 5 and 6 of [Operations Memo 06-27](#) for information about the existing functionality of the CWW page, W-2 Pre-Eligibility Requirements.

Currently, the W-2 Pre-Eligibility Requirements page becomes protected after 2 months which does not allow a worker to make entries or updates. This has caused problems in some cases.

For example:

1. When a worker did not return to the screen to complete all required fields during the requisite two-month timeframe, it resulted in W-2 eligibility pending with no method available to the worker to fix the case; or
2. When an individual reapplied for W-2 while eligibility for W-2 was still open or pending closed in CARES, and the agency determined that assignment to up-front job search and job readiness activities was appropriate, it was not possible to update the W-2 Pre-Eligibility Requirements page to record the requirements.

Enhancements have been made to the W-2 Pre-Eligibility Requirements Page in order to remedy these known problems.

### ***UPDATES TO THE W-2 PRE-ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS PAGE***

Effective June 30, 2008, the W-2 Pre-Eligibility Requirements page will have the following functionality:

**Begin Month:** Enter the MM/CCYY of the application. The Begin Month is the only field that must be completed in order to move past the page.

**End Month:** This field can now be populated by the worker with a MM/CCYY. However, it is only necessary to populate this field when there is a need to create a new sequence of this page (for more information, see [New W-2 Request – W-2 Eligibility Remains Open](#) below). If there is no worker entry in this field, CARES will automatically enter the End Month when there is no open or pending W-2 eligibility for the following two consecutive months.

**CARES Worker Web - W-2 Pre-Eligibility Requirements**

User ID: XCTD25 User Name: J KANTER Quick Select: CASE/RFA Primary Person: PERRY JONES 30F PP Case: 4000776444 Status: Pending Mode: Intake 05/22/2008

**W-2 Pre-Eligibility Requirements**

Effective Period

\* Begin Month: MM / YYYY End Month: MM / YYYY Last Updated:

Delete Reason:

Additional Information

Sequence: 0

FEP Interview Date: MM / DD / YYYY

FEP ID: FEP Name:

Are there any pre-eligibility requirements? Have the pre-eligibility requirements been met?

Sequence Updated on or before

Add Case Comment Previous Next

**Delete Reason:** The only valid delete reason is <AE> (agency error).

**FEP Interview Date:** Enter the first date the applicant meets with the FEP. This date cannot be a future date. This is not a required field.

**FEP ID:** Enter the CARES ID of the assigned FEP worker. If there is an open W-2 placement, the FEP ID will be auto-populated on WPWW. When an ID is entered in this field, CARES displays the name of the person associated with the ID next to FEP Name. If the FEP ID is changed on WPWW, the FEP ID listed here will be updated. Alerts concerning eligibility are sent to the worker listed in FEP ID. This is not a required field.

**Are there any pre-eligibility requirements?:** A <Yes> or <No> response indicates whether the individual has been assigned to up-front job search and job readiness activities. If the response is <No>, then a response to the "Have the pre-eligibility requirements been met?" question cannot be entered. If neither a <Yes> or <No> response is entered, W-2 eligibility will pend unless eligibility fails for other non-financial or financial reasons.

**Have the pre-eligibility requirements been met?:** A <Yes> or <No> response indicates whether the individual has complied with the assignment of up-front job search and job readiness activities. If the response to the previous question is <Yes>, indicating that pre-eligibility requirements were established, this field must be entered.

If the response to this question is <Yes>, W-2 eligibility passes if all other non-financial and financial requirements are met. If the response is <No>, W-2 eligibility fails. Responding with a question mark pends W-2 eligibility unless eligibility fails for other non-financial or financial reasons.

Under the new functionality, if the original response to this question is either <No> or a question mark the worker will have the ability to update this field. There will be no limitation on the timeframe in which these updates can be made until the page is either end dated or deleted.

If the response to this question is <Yes> (or if there were no requirements), then the record is considered complete and the page can only be updated during the two-month time frame (i.e., Begin Month + one additional month).

If neither question (“Are there any pre-eligibility requirements?” or “Have the pre-eligibility requirements been met?”) is entered, W-2 eligibility pends until the worker enters a <Yes> or <No> response to the questions as described above.

### **New W-2 Request – W-2 Eligibility Remains Open**

If a new request for W-2 is made while eligibility for W-2 is open (or pending closed) in CARES and the agency determines that it is appropriate to assign pre-eligibility requirements, the worker must first record a date (MM/CCYY) in the End Month field. This will allow the worker to create a new sequence of the page. The month and year recorded in the End Month field must be no later than the month prior to when the new pre-eligibility requirements are assigned.

#### **Example:**

W-2 Participant moves from County A to County B on March 11th and pre-eligibility requirements are assigned in the new county. The case worker records February 2008 (02/2008) in the End Month field. On the new sequence of the screen, the worker will then be able to record a new Begin Month using the new W-2 request date (03/2008) and respond to the appropriate questions on the page.

### ***GOOD CAUSE FOR FAILING TO COMPLETE UP-FRONT JOB SEARCH***

A W-2 applicant who fails to complete up-front job search and job readiness activities without good cause may be denied eligibility for W-2. If the applicant demonstrates good cause for failing to complete the up-front activities or if it is determined during the up-front process that the applicant has barriers to employment, the agency must immediately assign the individual to the appropriate W-2 placement and activities. In determining whether the applicant had good cause for failing to complete up-front activities, refer to the list of good cause reasons covered in [Operations Memo 05-52](#).

If the applicant fails to complete assigned up-front job search and job readiness activities but is able to demonstrate good cause, the case worker may need to adjust entries on the CWW W-2 Pre-Eligibility Requirements page to ensure that the applicant is not denied W-2 eligibility for failing to complete pre-eligibility requirements. In these circumstances, the worker should change the response to the question, “Are there any pre-eligibility requirements?”, from <Yes> to <No>.

### ***OTHER TYPES OF NON-FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY***

While a W-2 applicant has a responsibility to furnish verification of non-financial eligibility (see [Section 2.2.0 of W-2 Manual](#) for a full list of non-financial eligibility items), it is not appropriate to use the W-2 Pre-Eligibility page to track other types of non-financial eligibility. There are other pages throughout CARES that were designed to track other types of non-financial eligibility and when appropriate to deny W-2 for non-financial eligibility reasons. It is very important to use the

correct CARES pages/fields to track non-financial eligibility so that if W-2 must be denied, the appropriate reason(s) is recorded in the denial/closure notice.

For example:

1. An applicant who recently lost employment is required as a condition of eligibility for W-2 to apply for Unemployment Insurance. If the applicant did not cooperate with applying for Unemployment Insurance, the worker would navigate to the CWW Non-Cooperation Information page and select Non-Cooperation Type: AOB – *Person has failed/refused to apply for other benefits*. This would fail eligibility for W-2 using failure reason 207 – *An adult in your family did not apply for other programs*.
2. An applicant must apply for or provide a social security number (SSN) for all W-2 group members. If the applicant is unwilling to furnish the SSNs or provide verification that the SSNs have been applied for, the worker would navigate to the CWW Current Demographics page and record <No> in the SSN Cooperation field for each individual that has not applied for or provided a social security number. This would fail eligibility for W-2 using failure reason 241 – *Group member refuses to give or get a social security number*.

## **CONTACTS**

For Policy Related Questions: BW-2 Regional Office Staff

For CARES Processing Questions: W-2/CC Help Desk

Program Categories – FS – FoodShare, MA – Medicaid, BC+ – BadgerCare Plus, SC – Senior Care, CTS – Caretaker Supplement, CC – Child Care, W-2 – Wisconsin Works, FSET – FoodShare Employment and Training, CF – Children First, EA – Emergency Assistance, JAL – Job Access Loan, JC - Job Center Programs, RAP – Refugee Assistance Program, WIA – Workforce Investment Act, Other EP – Other Employment Programs.

DWD/DFS/BW2/HH