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**State of Wisconsin
Governor Scott Walker**

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

FROM: Janice Peters, Director
Bureau of Working Families
Division of Family and Economic Security

DFES OPERATIONS MEMO					
No:		11-77			
DATE:		12/22/2011			
FS	<input type="checkbox"/>	MA	<input type="checkbox"/>	BC+	<input type="checkbox"/>
SC	<input type="checkbox"/>	CTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	FSET	<input type="checkbox"/>
CC	<input type="checkbox"/>	W-2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	EA	<input type="checkbox"/>
CF	<input type="checkbox"/>	JAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	JC	<input type="checkbox"/>
RCA	<input type="checkbox"/>	RMA	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/> *
		EP			
PRIORITY: HIGH					

SUBJECT: Updated Policy on W-2 Two-Parent Households

CROSS REFERENCE: [Operations Memo 06-46 Updated Two Parent Guidance](#)

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 15, 2012

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Operations Memo is to inform agencies about a policy change on the types of activities that can be assigned to the second parent in a W-2 two-parent household and clarify policy about placing in a W-2 position the most employable parent or parent who is best able to most quickly increase the family's income.

BACKGROUND

In the process of updating the W-2 Policy Manual, the policy on W-2 two-parent households was reviewed. The Department re-evaluated the limited list of activities that were allowed to be assigned to the second parents in two-parent households and determined that the policy was unnecessarily strict. The Department has also clarified the policy on which parent in a W-2 two-parent household should be placed.

OLD POLICY ON TWO-PARENT HOUSEHOLDS:

Attached is a copy of the old policy on two-parent households. Note in section 2.2.5.2 of the old policy, the second parent in a household receiving Wisconsin Shares, i.e., federally-subsidized child care, must be assigned to participate in the following limited list of activities:

1. Unsubsidized employment
 - Working full time
 - Working part time
2. Subsidized employment
 - On-the-Job-Training (non-W-2 funded)
3. Work Training Experience
 - Work experience

NEW POLICY ON W-2 TWO-PARENT HOUSEHOLDS:

Below is a summary of the policy changes that will be made to the W-2 two-parent household policy. This policy has been removed from Chapter 2 and will be put into Chapter 14. Chapter 14 is currently W-2 Groups Eligible for Case Management and Other Services. In a future W-2 Manual release, the information in this chapter will be put in Chapter 7.

The changes below are organized by W-2 Manual section. Attached is a copy of the new policy with all policy updates incorporated. A track changes version is not included with this Operations Memo due to the extensive non-policy related editing that was done to improve clarity. These updates will be part of Manual Release 12-01.

Section 14.1:

- Provides an updated definition of a W-2 two-parent household. This definition will be added to the W-2 Manual glossary. Note: Although not a policy change, the section gives more detail on what an “included adult” is for W-2 eligibility and services and provides a new example.
- Adds an example to illustrate the definition of a W-2 two-parent household.

Section 14.2.1:

- Clarifies that for W-2 two-parent households, the FEP must place in a W-2 placement the most employable parent, i.e. the parent who is best able to most quickly increase the family’s income either by getting and keeping employment, or when appropriate, by getting SSI, SSDI or other disability benefits.
- Provides examples which parent to place at application.

Section 14.2.2:

- Clarifies that the circumstances of a W-2 parent household can change over time. When this happens, the FEP must determine:
 - If the W-2 Group still meets W-2 eligibility requirements;
 - If the W-2 Group still meets the definition of a W-2 two-parent household; and
 - Which parent in a W-2 two-parent household to place.
- Provides examples which parent to place when circumstances change.

Section 14.3.1:

- Revises policy to broaden the types of activities that can be assigned to a second parent in a W-2 two-parent household receiving Wisconsin Shares. The new policy eliminates the limited list of allowable activities in the old policy on W-2 two-parent households.

Section 14.4.1:

- Clarifies policy that W-2 hourly payment reductions only apply to the placed parent in a W-2 two-parent household. W-2 agencies must not apply hourly payment reductions to the second parent in a W-2 two-parent household, regardless of whether the household is receiving Wisconsin Shares.

Section that will not be included in the new policy on two-parent households:**Section 2.2.5.4:**

- Eliminates this section in Chapter 14 because W-2 no longer has a policy related to strikes for non-participation (see Operations Memo 11-08). Currently the policy on refusal to participate is under development. When the Department implements the Refusal to Participate policy, it will apply to the second parent in a W-2 two-parent household when the household is receiving Wisconsin Shares.

ACTION REQUIRED:

W-2 agencies must discuss this policy change with staff and update any relevant local agency procedures to implement the new policy on two-parent households effective January 15, 2012.

ATTACHMENTS:

Old Policy on Two-Parent Households

Wisconsin Works Manual, Chapter 14 on W-2 Two-Parent Households

CONTACTS:

For Policy Questions in the Balance of State: Bureau of Regional Operations, W-2 Regional Coordinators

For Policy Questions in Milwaukee: Milwaukee Operations Section Regional Administrators

For CARES Processing Questions: W-2 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, RCA – Refugee Cash Assistance Program, RMA - Refugee Medical Assistance Program, *Other EP – Other Employment Programs.