

441—41.30(239B) Time limits.

41.30(1) *Sixty-month limit.* Assistance will not be provided to an FIP applicant or recipient family that includes an adult who has received assistance for 60 calendar months under FIP or under any program in another state that is funded by the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant unless the applicant or recipient family is eligible for a hardship as defined in subrule 41.30(3). The 60-month period need not be consecutive. In two-parent households or households that include a parent and a stepparent, the 60-month limit is determined when either a parent or stepparent has received assistance for 60 months.

a. An “adult” is any person who is a parent of the FIP child in the home, the parent’s spouse, or included as an optional member under subparagraph 41.28(1) “b”(1) or “b”(2).

b. “Assistance,” for the purpose of this rule, will include any month for which the adult receives an FIP grant or a payment in another state using federal TANF funds that the other state deems countable toward the 60-month federal limit. Assistance received for a partial month will count as a full month.

41.30(2) *Determining number of months.*

a. In determining the number of months an adult received assistance, the department will consider toward the 60-month limit:

(1) Assistance received even when the parent is excluded from the grant unless the parent, or both parents in a two-parent household, are SSI recipients.

(2) Assistance received by an optional member of the eligible group as described in subparagraphs 41.28(1) “b”(1) and “b”(2). However, once the person has received assistance for 60 months, the person is ineligible but assistance may continue for other persons in the eligible group. The entire family is ineligible for assistance when the optional member who has received assistance for 60 months is the incapacitated stepparent on the grant as described in subparagraph 41.28(1) “b”(3).

b. When the parent, or both parents in a two-parent household, have received 60 months of FIP assistance and are subsequently approved for supplemental security income, FIP assistance for the children may be granted, if all other eligibility requirements are met.

c. When a minor parent and child receive FIP on the adult parent’s case and the adult parent is no longer eligible due to the 60-month limit on FIP assistance, the minor parent may reapply for FIP as a minor parent living with a self-supporting parent.

d. In determining the number of months an adult received assistance, the department will not consider toward the 60-month limit any month for which FIP assistance was not issued for the family, such as:

(1) A month of suspension.

(2) A month for which no grant is issued due to the limitations described in rules 441—45.26(239B) and 441—45.27(239B).

e. The department will not consider toward the 60-month limit months of assistance a parent or pregnant person received as a minor child and not as the head of a household or married to the head of a household. This includes assistance received for a minor parent for any month in which the minor parent was a child on the adult parent’s or the specified relative’s FIP case.

f. The department will not consider toward the 60-month limit months of assistance received by an adult while living in Indian country (as defined in 18 U.S.C. Section 1151 as amended to December 31, 2024) or a Native Alaskan village where at least 50 percent of the adults were not employed.

41.30(3) *Exception to the 60-month limit.* A family may receive FIP assistance for more than 60 months as defined in subrule 41.30(1) if the family qualifies for a hardship exemption as described in this subrule. “Hardship” is defined as a circumstance that is preventing the family from being self-supporting. However, the family’s safety will take precedence over the goal of self-sufficiency.

a. Reserved.

b. Eligibility determination. Eligibility for the hardship exemption will be determined on an individual family basis. A hardship exemption will not begin until the adult in the family has received at least 60 months of FIP assistance.

c. Hardship exemption criteria. Circumstances that may lead to a hardship exemption may include the following:

(1) Domestic violence. “Domestic violence” means that the family includes someone who has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty. It includes:

1. Physical acts that resulted in, or threatened to result in, physical injury to the individual.
 2. Sexual abuse.
 3. Sexual activity involving a dependent child.
 4. Being forced as the caretaker relative of a dependent child to engage in nonconsensual sexual acts or activities.
 5. Threats of, or attempts at, physical or sexual abuse.
 6. Mental abuse.
 7. Neglect or deprivation of medical care.
 - (2) Lack of employability.
 - (3) Lack of suitable child care as defined in 441—subrule 93.4(5).
 - (4) Chronic or recurring medical conditions or mental health issues, or an accident or disease, when verified by a professional. The applicant or recipient will follow a treatment plan to address the condition or issue.
 - (5) Housing situations that make it difficult or impossible to work.
 - (6) Substance use disorder. A family requesting a hardship exemption due to substance use disorder will be required to obtain clinical assessment and follow an intensive treatment plan.
 - (7) Having a child whose circumstances require the parent to be in the home. This may include but is not limited to a child as defined in rule 441—170.1(237A) or a child receiving child welfare, juvenile court or juvenile justice services. The safety of the child will take precedence over the goal of self-sufficiency.
 - (8) Reserved.
 - (9) Other circumstances that prevent the family from being self-supporting.
- d.* Eligibility for a hardship exemption.

(1) Families may be eligible for a hardship exemption when circumstances prevent the family from being self-supporting. The hardship condition shall be a result of a past or current experience that is affecting the family’s current functioning. Current experience may include fear of an event that is likely to occur in the future. The definition of the hardship barrier relies upon the impact of the circumstances upon the family’s ability to leave FIP rather than the type of circumstances.

(2) Families with FIA-responsible persons who are not exempt from referral as defined in subrule 41.24(2) determined eligible for more than 60 months of FIP shall make incremental steps toward overcoming the hardship and participate to their maximum potential in activities reasonably expected to result in self-sufficiency.

(3) Barriers to economic self-sufficiency that an FIA-responsible person who is not exempt as defined in subrule 41.24(2) has that were known and existing before the family reached the 60-month limit will not be considered as meeting eligibility criteria for hardship unless the individual complied with PROMISE JOBS activities offered to overcome that specific barrier.

e. Requesting a hardship exemption.

(1) Families that have or are close to having received 60 months of assistance as defined in subrule 41.30(1) may request a hardship exemption. Requests for the hardship exemption shall be made on a hardship request form prescribed by the department. In addition, families that have received assistance for 60 months and are no longer receiving FIP shall complete an application form prescribed by the department as a condition for regaining FIP eligibility. Failure to provide the required application within ten days from the date of the department’s request will result in denial of the hardship request.

(2) In families that request FIP beyond 60 months, all adults as defined in subrule 41.30(1) shall sign the request. When the adult is incompetent or incapacitated, someone acting responsibly on the adult’s behalf may sign the request.

(3) Requests for a hardship exemption will not be accepted prior to the first day of the family’s fifty-ninth month of assistance. The date of the request will be the date an identifiable hardship request form prescribed by the department is received in any department or PROMISE JOBS office. An identifiable form is one that contains a legible name and address and that has been signed.

(4) To receive more than 60 months of FIP assistance, families must be eligible for a hardship exemption and meet all other FIP eligibility requirements.

(5) When an adult as defined in subrule 41.30(1) who has received assistance for 60 months joins a recipient family that has not received 60 months of assistance, eligibility will continue only if the recipient family submits a hardship request form prescribed by the department and is approved for a hardship exemption as described in subrule 41.30(3) and meets all other FIP eligibility requirements.

(6) When an adult as defined in subrule 41.30(1) joins a recipient family that is in an exemption period, the current exemption period will continue, if the recipient family continues to meet all other eligibility requirements, regardless of whether the joining adult has received FIP for 60 months.

(7) When two parents who are in a hardship exemption period separate, the remainder of the exemption period, if there is a need, will follow the parent who retains the current FIP case.

f. Determination of hardship exemption.

(1) A determination on the request will be made as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days following the date an identifiable hardship request form prescribed by the department is received in any department or PROMISE JOBS office. A written notice of decision will be issued to the family the next working day following a determination of eligibility or ineligibility for a hardship exemption. The 30-day time standard will apply except in unusual circumstances, such as when the department and the family have made every reasonable effort to secure necessary information that has not been supplied by the date the time limit expired; or because of emergency situations, such as fire, flood or other conditions beyond the administrative control of the department.

(2) When a Financial Support Application is required to regain FIP eligibility, the 30-day time frame in rule 441—40.25(239B) will apply.

(3) Income maintenance will determine eligibility for a hardship exemption.

(4) The family shall provide supporting evidence of the hardship barrier and the impact of the barrier upon the family's ability to leave FIP. The department will advise the applicant or recipient about how to obtain necessary documents. Upon request, the department will provide reasonable assistance in obtaining supporting documents when the family is not reasonably able to obtain the documents. The type of supporting evidence is dependent upon the circumstance that creates the hardship barrier.

(5) Examples of types of supporting evidence may include:

1. Court, medical, criminal, child protective services, social services, psychological, or law enforcement records.

2. Statements from professionals or other individuals with knowledge of the hardship barrier.

3. Statements from vocational rehabilitation or other job training professionals.

4. Statements from individuals other than the applicant or recipient with knowledge of the hardship circumstances. Written statements from friends and relatives alone may not be sufficient to grant hardship status, but may be used to support other evidence.

5. Court, criminal, police records or statements from domestic violence counselors may be used to substantiate hardship. Living in a domestic violence shelter will not automatically qualify an individual for a hardship exemption, but would be considered strong evidence.

6. Actively pursuing verification of a disability through the Social Security Administration may not be sufficient to grant hardship status, but may be used to support other evidence.

(6) The department will notify the family in writing of additional information or verification that is required to verify the barrier and its impact upon the family's ability to leave FIP. The family will be allowed ten days to supply the required information or verification. The ten-day period may be extended under the circumstances described in 441—subrule 40.24(1) or 441—paragraph 40.27(4)“c.” Failure to supply the required information or verification, or refusal by the family to authorize the department to secure the information or verification from other sources, will result in denial of the family's request for a hardship exemption.

(7) and (8) Reserved.

(9) Recipients whose FIP assistance is canceled at the end of the sixtieth month will be eligible for reinstatement as described in 441—subrule 40.22(5) when a hardship request form prescribed by the

department is received before the effective date of cancellation even if eligibility for a hardship exemption is not determined until on or after the effective date of cancellation.

(10) When a hardship request form prescribed by the department is not received before the effective date of the FIP cancellation and a Financial Support Application is required for the family to regain FIP eligibility, the effective date of assistance will be no earlier than seven days from the date of application as described in rule 441—40.26(239B).

(11) Eligibility for a hardship exemption will last for six consecutive calendar months. Exception: The six-month hardship exemption ends when FIP for the family is canceled for any reason and a Financial Support Application is required for the family to regain FIP eligibility. In addition, when FIP eligibility depends on receiving a hardship exemption, the family shall submit a new hardship request form prescribed by the department. A new hardship exemption determination will be required prior to FIP approval.

(12) FIP received for a partial month of the six-month hardship exemption period will count as a full month.

(13) There is no limit on the number of hardship exemptions a family may receive over time.

g. Six-month FIA. Families who request a hardship exemption shall develop and sign a six-month FIA as defined in 441—93.4(239B) to address the circumstances that are creating the barrier. All adults as defined in subrule 41.30(1) shall sign the six-month FIA unless the adult is a stepparent and is not requesting assistance or is exempt as specified at subrule 41.24(2).

(1) The six-month FIA shall contain specific steps to enable the family to make incremental progress toward overcoming the barrier. Each subsequent hardship exemption will require a new six-month FIA. Failure to develop or sign a six-month FIA will result in denial of the family's hardship exemption request.

(2) Families that request a hardship exemption will be notified verbally and will be hand-issued the notice of a scheduled appointment for orientation and FIA development. If the notice of appointment cannot be hand-issued, at least five working days will be allowed from the date the notice is mailed for a participant to appear for the scheduled appointment for orientation and FIA development unless the participant agrees to an appointment that is scheduled to take place in less than five working days.

(3) Failure to attend a scheduled interview when required, except for reasons beyond the adult's control, will result in a denial of the family's hardship exemption request. In two-parent families, both parents will be required to participate in any scheduled interview. When the adult is incompetent or incapacitated, someone acting responsibly on the adult's behalf may participate in the interview.

(4) PROMISE JOBS staff shall provide necessary supportive services as described in 441—Chapter 93 and shall monitor the six-month FIA. Periodic contacts shall be made with the family to monitor progress. These contacts need not be in person. Time and attendance reports shall be required as specified in 441—subrule 93.10(2).

(5) The six-month FIA shall be renegotiated and amended under the circumstances described in 441—subrule 93.4(8).

(6) Any family that is not exempt from referral as defined in subrule 41.24(2), that has been granted a hardship exemption, and that does not follow the terms of the family's six-month FIA will have chosen an LBP in accordance with 441—Chapter 41 and 441—Chapter 93.

h. Any family that is denied a hardship exemption may appeal the decision as described in 441—Chapter 2506.

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