

# Families First Parental Involvement

## Policy 23.10

Effective: December 15, 2023

### Introduction

Parents and/or caretakers shall have an appropriate parental involvement activity as part of their Personal Responsibility Plan if the need is identified in a child(ren) in the assistance unit. Failure to complete a required parental involvement activity will result in a reduction of the cash grant.

### Scope

This policy outlines the parental involvement requirement, how the need for this requirement is identified, and penalties for non-compliance in order to assist Families First customers in overcoming any school, family, or other barriers that may interfere with the family's ability to be successful.

### Policy

#### Parental Involvement Requirements

The Parental Involvement requirements, if the need is identified relative to the child, are:

1. Attend two (2) or more conferences within a school year with the child's teacher to review the child's status in school;
2. Attend at least eight (8) hours of parenting classes; or
3. Participate in support services that the child may need as determined by the Eligibility Counselor and/or TANF Case Manager in collaboration with the customer.

### Criteria

Parental Involvement will be required when:

1. The child(ren) in the assistance unit (AU) is not maintaining a grade point average that is sufficient to progress to the next grade.
2. The child(ren) has five (5) or more unexcused absences during the school year; or

3. The parent(s) indicates they are having behavioral issues with the child(ren) due to:
  - a. Traumatic events that may have occurred with the child;
  - b. School experience with the child that may have occurred, such as bullying issues, fighting at school, etc.; and/or
  - c. Childhood experiences with the parent that have left them with deficient models of parenting, such as growing up in a volatile home, living through a difficult divorce, having ill or unavailable parents, living with addiction, etc.

### Exceptions

The parental involvement requirement does not apply to:

1. Children under age five (5).
2. Minor single parents whose youngest child is in the home and is less than one (1) year of age.

### Sanctions

1. An AU that fails to meet this requirement for one (1) child or all children in the AU and does not have good cause will have a twenty percent (20%) sanction applied to the AU cash payment.
2. The sanction will remain in effect until the AU is in compliance with the required parental involvement activity.
3. The budget will have the twenty percent (20%) reduction removed the first (1<sup>st</sup>) possible month after compliance with the requirement is verified.
4. Failure to comply with this requirement will not result in case closure or application denial.

**Good Cause**

Good cause may be granted when there is non-compliance with a required parental activity. Proof of the good cause reason must be provided along with an expected timeframe for completion of the

requirement. See [Families First Good Cause for Non-Compliance](#) for good cause reasons.

**Supporting Documents**

[Families First Good Cause for Non-Compliance](#)

[Families First Parental Involvement Procedures](#)

**Definitions/Acronyms**

Term	Definition
<b>Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP)</b>	An agreement between the Families First customer and the Tennessee Department of Human Services in which the Families First customer agrees to take certain steps to move the AU to self-sufficiency. In return, the Tennessee Department of Human Services agrees to provide temporary cash assistance and additional support services to help the customer to gain employment.
Acronyms	Expansion
<b>AU</b>	Assistance Unit
<b>PRP</b>	Personal Responsibility Plan
<b>TANF</b>	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

**Supersedes**

Policy 23.26 Families First Parental Involvement, eff. date 02/15/2018

**Approval History**

Approved By	Approver Title	Approved Date	Effective Date
Clarence Carter	Commissioner	12/03/2023	12/15/2023
Danielle Barnes	Commissioner	01/29/2018	02/15/2018
		06/17/2016	07/01/2016

**Revision History**

Date	Version	Location of Change	Description/Reason for Change
12/03/2023	12/15/2023	Introduction, Scope, Policy Section	Updated parental involvement requirements and exceptions language
01/29/2018	02/15/2018	Policy Section	Minor language changes for clarity
06/17/2016	07/01/2016	N/A	New Policy

<b>Approved By</b>	<i>Clarence H. Carter</i>	<b>Approval Date</b>	12/03/2023
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<b>Application</b>	All TDHS Family Assistance Staff and Contractors		