

Know Your Welfare Rights!

WELFARE TO WORK



Important Information about the **WELFARE TO WORK PROGRAM**

If you are receiving or applying for cash benefits, food stamps, Medicaid, or other assistance from the welfare office, there are other things they *must* do to help you.

- Your caseworker or another person from the agency must ask you about jobs you have had, the kinds of jobs you would like to do, the kind of education and training you have, transportation problems you have, and other work-related questions. They will create an **Employment Profile** based on your answers. [This is the law: **N.J.A.C. 10:90-4.7.**]
- Your caseworker must help you prepare an **Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP)**. This plan must include the specific work activity or other activity that you must do in order to keep getting assistance. The plan must also tell you the support services that you will receive so that you can do the activity, like child care or transportation assistance. [This is the law: **N.J.A.C. 10:90-4.8.**]
- If you are receiving Emergency Assistance (EA)—such as a temporary rent subsidy or housing in a motel or shelter—your EA caseworker must also work with you to prepare an **EA Service Plan**. This plan must say what you are going to do, **and what the agency is going to do**, to help you find permanent housing that you can afford. The EA Service Plan and the Individual Responsibility Plan should not be in conflict with each other. [This is the law: **N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.6.**]
- To help you get and keep a job, the welfare office should give you **supportive services**. These include:
 1. **Child care assistance** (which can last for up to two years after you leave welfare because you are working);
 2. **Transportation help** (so that you can attend a work activity or go to a job);
 3. **Medicaid for you and your children** for up to two years after you leave welfare because of a job (after two years, you can usually still obtain coverage from the NJFamilyCare program or through the insurance marketplace at www.healthcare.gov.)
 4. **Up to \$500 in cash** for some work expenses including tools, uniforms, and car maintenance.

[This is the law: **N.J.A.C. 10:90-5.1.**]

If your caseworker says that you *don't* have these rights, show him or her the citations to the regulations listed on this page. The citations are listed at the end of each paragraph above.

If you have any questions about your rights, or think you were treated unfairly by the welfare office, call LSNJLAWSM, Legal Services of New Jersey's statewide, toll-free legal hotline, at:

1-888-LSNJ-LAW
(1-888-576-5529)

You may also apply online at www.lsnjlawhotline.org.