



# STATE OF IOWA

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
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## PROMISE JOBS POLICY MEMO

**TO:** Lori Adams, DeAnn Barnhill, Paula Freeman, Jane Schockemoehl, Jack Mustapha, Iowa Workforce Development  
John Wilken and John Wiedemeier, Bureau of Refugee Services  
Bill Brand, Lorie Easter, Tim Fitzpatrick, Department of Human Rights  
DHS Income Maintenance Supervisors and Administrators

**FROM:** Ann Wiebers, Administrator, Division of Financial, Health and Work Supports

**SUBJECT: PROMISE JOBS MEMO #163**

**DATE:** September 9, 2008

### **Summary:**

This PROMISE JOBS memo implements revisions to PROMISE JOBS policy:

- Mileage rate increases from \$.30 to \$.34 per mile.
- Implements the Family Investment Agreement (FIA) Progress Review.

### **Effective Date:**

Use the instructions in this memo in lieu of any contrary instructions in the PROMISE JOBS Provider Manual as of the dates below. The PROMISE JOBS Provider Manual will be updated as soon as possible.

- ◆ **September 1, 2008** for the mileage rate increase (as per e-mail instruction sent by IWD on 08-18-2008).
- ◆ **September 9, 2008** for the FIA Progress Reviews.

### **New Policy:**

#### **Mileage Rate Increase**

**Legal Reference: 441 IAC 93.110(6)"B"**

The PROMISE JOBS mileage reimbursement rate for private transportation increases from \$.30 per mile to **\$.34 per mile** effective September 1, 2008.

PROMISE JOBS staff need to use the new rate of **\$.34 per mile** to calculate transportation allowances for participation that will occur **on or after September 1, 2008**.

**New Policy:**

**FIA Progress Reviews**

**Legal Reference: 441 IAC 93.111(239B)**

**Desired Results:** PROMISE JOBS participant families will have current and appropriate FIA goals and activities.

- Reinforce participant awareness of and accountability for PROMISE JOBS program requirements.
- Demonstrate PROMISE JOBS worker interest and support of participant success.
- Strengthen participant and worker relationship.
- Provide participant regular access to their worker for help with addressing changing needs.
- Give PROMISE JOBS workers up-to-date information on the participant's current situation and involvement in FIA activities that may help to meet federal work participation rates.

*What is an FIA Progress Review?*

An FIA Progress Review is a regular evaluation of the case file and family situation to make certain that the family's current FIA goals and activities are appropriate and that the family is making progress towards those goals.

The Progress Review must include verbal contact with and input from the FIA-responsible family member unless participant problems or barriers prevent verbal contact. A scheduled phone conversation is suggested. A face-to-face interview is not required unless needed for reasons other than the Progress Review. A review that consists of communicating by mail only shall be used only as a last resort and the reason must be documented in the case file.

*When do you complete an FIA Progress Review?*

Complete a Progress Review of each FIA at least once every six-months. An FIA Progress Review may be completed beyond the 6-month limit when there are participant problems or barriers as described at **Problems With Participation or Barriers to Participation**.

**Example of determining Progress Review due date:**

- FIA is signed and/or FIA Progress Review completed 09-29-2008.
  - The FIA progress review is due no later than March 2009.
- Conducting progress reviews more frequently than once every six months may be necessary. Consider the following circumstances:
- A history of LBPs (2 or more).
  - Last year of FIP due to 60-month limit.
  - Zero or very low hours of participation.
  - Multiple barriers.
  - Currently in a six-month hardship period.

*Who must participate in an FIA Progress Review?*

At least one FIA-responsible family member must participate in the review process. However, you may require more than one FIA-responsible member to participate in the review process when there is a need for contact with more than one member. A face-to-face may be more appropriate in this instance.

When there is more than one FIA for the family, complete a review with at least one FIA-responsible family member for each FIA.

**Examples of who must participate in a FIA Progress Review:**

- In a two-parent family, both parents sign the FIA but only one must participate in the Progress Review.
- When a minor parent receives FIP with an adult parent, the minor parent and adult parent sign a separate FIA and both must participate separately in the Progress Review. You may schedule the minor parent and adult parent for the same time and alternate the conversation between the parents when conducting the review interview whether by phone or in-person.
- When an FIA-responsible child receives FIP with an exempt parent, the child signs an FIA and must participate in the Progress Review.

*Scheduling an FIA Progress Review*

Schedule the phone or face-to-face contact by sending *Notice of Appointment or Participation*, form 470-0813. Until the form is revised, mark the "Other:" field and add "FIA Progress Review" as the activity and complete the rest of the form, including appointment time and date.

If scheduling a phone interview, enter the following in the "Located at:" field:

"Phone interview. Call PROMISE JOBS at \_\_\_\_\_ at the appointment time on the date noted below. If you get a busy signal, keep trying until you talk with the worker listed above. Leave a message if you receive the worker's voice mail."

Complete the rest of the form, including appointment time and date.

When the FIA includes more than one FIA-responsible family member, use the following as guidance when selecting which member to schedule for the FIA Progress Review when only one member must participate:

- If the FIA includes a child and a parent, select the parent.
- If the FIA includes two-parents:
  - Select the parent that is participating the least amount of hours, or
  - Select the parent with activity hours that conflict the least with normal PROMISE JOBS working hours, or
  - Select the parent with the majority of problems or barriers, unless it is difficult for the parent to participate in a phone or face-to-face interview.
  - Select the parent that communicates with PROMISE JOBS most often regarding the family's situation.
- If the FIA includes two-parents, you may address the *Notice of Appointment or Participation* to both parents and note on the form that only one parent needs to call for the phone interview, or appear for the appointment.

#### *Completing the FIA Progress Review*

Review the circumstances of the entire family when conducting an FIA Progress Review, even if only one FIA-responsible family member is participating in the review.

Prior to the scheduled interview, review the case files of all FIA-responsible family members to become familiar with the following:

• Current FIA and FIA end date	• LBP history
• Current level of participation	• Number of months left on FIP
• IWorks data to ensure it is current and accurate	• Any outstanding needed documentation
• Any reports or information from other agencies that are involved with the family	• Most recent Self- Assessment, form 470-0806, to make note of any areas of concern or questions you want to ask during the review.
• Past identified barriers to make note of any areas of concern or questions you want to ask during the review	• Consider other services/supports (from other agencies/programs) that may serve this person's needs or assist in progress towards self-sufficiency
• Hardship information, if applicable	• FSSG amounts used / future needs

In addition, consider the following four domains to determine the items that you need to discuss during the interview. Within each domain are examples of questions in italics that you can use as a "script" or reminder for discussion points:

### **Domain 1: Status of current FIA goals and steps**

- Discuss the current FIA activity to determine progress and if there are any issues. *How are your GED and individual job search going for you?*
- Discuss the next step, when it is scheduled, and if still appropriate.
- Discuss if additional or different activities need to be included in the FIA. Consider the circumstances to guide the participant to appropriate new or different activities. *Since you have not been able to find a job yet, would you like to try working at a work experience site to learn some skills?*
- If there have been recent problems with participation, discuss the problems to determine if the participant needs help or guidance from you. *You didn't \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e., get your time and attendance in on time). What happened? Is there something that we can do to help so this doesn't happen again?*
- *Is your child care provider working out? Do you need any changes?*
- *How is your transportation?*
- Determine if referrals are needed to other services (FaDSS, therapy, VR, others) or if FSSG may be appropriate.
- Discuss the number of months left in the 60-month limit. *You have \_\_\_\_\_ months left of FIP, how best can we help you reach your goals? Do we need to change your goals?*
- If the participant is near the 60-month limit, inform the participant of their right to request a hardship exemption to the limit through DHS.

### **Domain 2: Life Changes**

Discuss household composition, housing situation, and question the participant about legal issues and health. Ask about the possibility of domestic violence.

Examples:

- *Any changes in who is in your home?*
- *Any housing issues or problems?*
- *Any new legal issues? How is your divorce progressing?*
- *How is your health? How is the health of your family members?*
- *Are you in a relationship with another adult that has threatened or hurt you or your children? Do you worry about the safety of you or your children?*

### **Domain 3: Employment**

Discuss current employment status.

- If employed:
  - *Any changes in your work hours or benefits?*

- If no increase in wages or hours... *Is there something we can do to help you increase your pay/hours?*
- If not employed and employment is a current or upcoming FIA activity:
  - *What type of jobs would you like to have?*
  - *Do you have the skills and knowledge you need to get those jobs?*
  - *If not, is there anything we can do to help you gain those skills or get that knowledge such as additional training or work experience?*

#### **Domain 4: Rights and Responsibilities**

Reminder examples:

- *When unable to attend or complete an activity, contact PROMISE JOBS to explain prior to the appointment or the due date. PROMISE JOBS may reschedule, may be able to help, or may be able to excuse you from the activity.*
- *Report problems or barriers to participation so PROMISE JOBS can help you deal with them. You may need to provide verification.*
- *You always have the right to speak to or meet with a supervisor.*

The FIA does not need to be renegotiated as part of the FIA Progress Review process. However, you and the participant may decide that the FIA needs to be renegotiated as a result of information obtained during the review. Renegotiate the FIA during the FIA Progress Review if possible, regardless if the review is conducted over the phone or in-person. When negotiating an FIA over the phone, send a copy to the participant to be signed and returned within five working days.

When you meet with a participant to develop a new FIA or to renegotiate an existing FIA, always consider this as an opportunity for an FIA Progress Review. If possible and appropriate, complete an FIA Progress Review when you are meeting or talking with a participant for other reasons, even if a Progress Review is not due.

#### **Documenting and Tracking the FIA Progress Review**

When writing a new or renegotiated FIA, determine an appropriate review date that is no more than six full months from the date the FIA is signed. Code IWorks with a "task" to alert you at least one month before the next Progress Review is due for each FIA-responsible family member.

When you complete an FIA Progress Review, document the completion of the review in the participant's case file narrative and through entry of a "case note" in the IWorks system.

## ***Failure to Comply***

If a participant is scheduled to participate in an FIA Progress Review and fails,

- Send a written reminder as described at **FIA Participation Issues**.
- Schedule a face-to-face FIA Progress Review appointment by sending another *Notice of Appointment or Participation*, form 470-0813. A face-to-face is required at this point since a subsequent failure may result in a limited benefit plan.

If the participant fails to appear for the appointment, the participant has chosen a limited benefit plan unless the participant has an acceptable reason for missing the appointment as described at **Problems With Participation** or **Barriers to Participation**.

## ***Implementation***

Begin applying the new FIA Progress Review policy to your caseload over the 10-month period beginning September 9, 2008, and ending June 30, 2009. The new policy must be fully implemented by July 1, 2009, meaning that:

- An FIA Progress Review was completed on each FIA for all families receiving FIP on July 1, 2009, or if the FIA was signed less than six months prior,
- An appropriate due date for the FIA Progress Review is coded in the IWorks system.

Stagger implementing the new FIA Progress Review policy to your caseload over the 9-month period so that future reviews on a caseload do not all come due at the same time. Use the following as a guide:

### **New PROMISE JOBS participants:**

When you develop an FIA for a FIP applicant family on or after September 9, 2008, determine an appropriate review date that is no more than six full months from the date the FIA is signed.

### **Any participant renegotiating an FIA:**

- When you renegotiate an FIA for any reason on or after September 9, 2008, complete the FIA Progress Review and determine an appropriate next review date.

### **Employed participants:**

- When requesting verification of work hours for any FIA-responsible family member, consider also completing the FIA Progress Review for the family.

For new employments, complete the FIA Progress Review only when it appears that the family will remain eligible for FIP. For all employments, align the FIA Progress Review with the verification schedule for work hours, when possible.

**Other participant contacts or meetings:**

When needing to contact a participant to review their current situation for any reason, consider using this time to complete the FIA Progress Review for the family.

**Remaining caseload:**

Establish your own schedule for completing an FIA Progress Review on a portion of your cases each month to ensure that an FIA Progress Review is completed on each FIA within your caseload by July 1, 2009.

In each of the situations above, if the FIP family contains more than member who is FIA responsible, code IWorks as stated above for each FIA-responsible family member.

Please make this information available to PROMISE JOBS staff in each Service Delivery Region as quickly as possible. If you have questions, please contact Shari Seivert by e-mail at [sseiver@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:sseiver@dhs.state.ia.us) or by calling (515) 281-0703 or Janet Shoeman by e-mail at [jshoema@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:jshoema@dhs.state.ia.us) or by calling (515) 281-6082.