

RHODE ISLAND GOVERNMENT REGISTER
AMENDED PUBLIC NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Title of Rule: Rhode Island Works Program Rules and Regulations (218-RICR-20-00-2)

Rule Identifier: 218-RICR-20-00-2

Rulemaking Action: Direct Final Amendment

Important Dates:

Date of Public Notice: January 17, 2025

End of Public Comment: February 16, 2025

Rulemaking Authority:

Title XIX of the Social Security Act

R.I. Gen. Laws § 40-5.2-1 et seq.

RI State Budget FY2025

Summary of Rulemaking Action:

The Rhode Island Works Program (R.I. Gen. Laws Chapter 40-5.2-1 et seq.) establishes the legal basis for a welfare to work program to assist needy families to prepare for, accept and retain employment with necessary supports, as quickly as possible, and is the law through which the Federal assistance program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, is available to families in Rhode Island who meet program eligibility criteria. This Direct Final Amendment is being filed to implement the Legislative changes that were signed by the Governor with the 2025 Rhode Island State Budget and effective July 1st, 2024, as well as clarify and simplify policy language to reduce barriers and provide supports to our families.

The regulatory changes proposed in this filing are identical to the regulatory language currently in effect as of 01/16/2025. The effective version was originally noticed for public comment on 11/26/2024.

After the end of the public comment period (11/26/24 through 12/26/24), a processing error occurred. As a result of processing error, the agency is repromulgating the regulatory changes (effective as of 01/16/25). The regulatory language included in this notice redlines changes made in the most recent promulgation. The agency is noticing these changes for additional public comment.

The Agency does not expect this filing to be controversial and therefore, a public hearing will not be held.

Additional Information and Public Comments:

If no formal objection is received on or before February 16, 2025, the Department of Human Services will file the Amendment and the Final Rule will take effect on this date.

Objections should be addressed to:

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Department of Human Services

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Hazard Bldg. #74

Cranston, RI 02920

dhs.policyfeedback@dhs.ri.gov

Regulatory Analysis Summary and Supporting Documentation:

The Department is amending this regulation to enact changes made to the RI Works Program with the approval of the FY 2025 budget, as well as clarify and simplify policy language to reduce barriers and provide supports to our families.

Amendments to the rule include the following:

Changes to gender-neutral wording and pronouns throughout this regulation;

Made technical changes throughout;

Removal of effective dates associated with pilot programs that have become permanent;

Removal of COVID language;

Removal to SNAP references;

Added clarifying definitions under § 2.2;

Included fleeing felons as excluded from assistance unit under § 2.4.3 as per TANF regulations;

Provided additional clarification of school training of children 18-19 under § 2.5.2

Eligibility Factor of Age as well as the addition for verification requirements;

Removed OCSS procedural language;

Removed the need for an affidavit as verification under § 2.5.3;

Added COFA as qualified non-citizens per Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2024, Pub. Law 118-42, in accordance with section § 141 of the Compacts of Free Association (COFA);

Removed Full Family Sanction language under § 2.7.8 per Governor's budget;

Added assessment development language under § 2.10.1

Clarified Non-core Activities, Required Activities, and Exemptions under § 2.11.2 ;

Increased earned income disregard per Governor's budget;

Removal of Income In-kind chart;

Increase to standards of assistance § 2.18 ;

Increase in catastrophic assistance from \$123 to \$200 in § 2.18.10.

For full regulatory analysis or supporting documentation contact the agency staffperson listed above.