

PROMISE JOBS

Participant Guide



IowaWORKS

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70-0010 (06-17)

PROMISE JOBS
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Welcome to PROMISE JOBS.

PROMISE JOBS stands for Promoting Independence and Self Sufficiency through Employment, Job Opportunities and Basic Skills.

We are here to help you improve your household income through meaningful and lasting employment.

Enrollment in the PROMISE JOBS Program



Our program is guided by the Department of Human Services (DHS) Administrative Rules and developed by both the state and federal government. All recipients of financial assistance payments, through the Family Investment Program, are required to participate in PROMISE JOBS. Local DHS offices refer applicants and participants of the Family Investment Program to PROMISE JOBS.

Getting Started

You will work with a PROMISE JOBS Case Worker to develop a Family Investment Agreement and outline steps to help you reach your goals and increase your income through different PROMISE JOBS activities.

Unless challenges exist, every PROMISE JOBS participant is expected to participate in PROMISE JOBS full-time. Participation in PROMISE JOBS full-time is defined as an average of 30 hours per week.

A key point to keep in mind: 100% participation is required

Full participation is required, even if you are eligible to receive partial Family Investment Program payments. Your financial benefits can be affected, and might be canceled, if you choose not to participate in PROMISE JOBS.

Keeping your appointments and following through with your activities should be a priority. Expectations for successful participation in the PROMISE JOBS programs are the same expectations an employer would have.

By working closely with your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker, other staff members and taking advantage of all aspects of the PROMISE JOBS program, our hope is you will find a rewarding job to sustain you and your family.



Program Length

In 1997, the federal government imposed a five year (60 months) lifetime limit on financial public assistance for families with adults. This means after you receive financial assistance for 60 months, whether it is consecutive or not, you are no longer eligible. Each month financial assistance is received through the Family Investment Program, it is counted toward one of the 60 months. Families with adults receiving financial assistance, with either the Family Investment Program in Iowa or the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families in another state, U.S. Territory, or tribe, is counted toward the limit. Families with adults are not able to receive additional financial assistance unless they apply for and are determined eligible for a hardship exemption. Your DHS Income Maintenance Worker will provide you with important information about your Family Investment Program.

PROMISE JOBS Transportation and Child Care Assistance

PROMISE JOBS provides transportation and child care assistance to participants complying with the program.

The transportation allowance is determined by the state mileage rate or public transit rates.

PROMISE JOBS is able to pay child care for providers who are approved by DHS. PROMISE JOBS funded child care assistance is only to be used when participating in a PROMISE JOBS related activity. If a change in your child care affects your ability to participate in PROMISE JOBS program activities, call your PROMISE JOBS worker before you quit your job, quit school or fail to participate in your agreed upon activities. Together, you and your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker may be able to come up with a solution.

For assistance choosing a child care provider approved by DHS, please contact Child Care Resource and Referral at 855-244-5301 or visit online at www.iowaccrr.org.

Child Care Assistance After Completing the PROMISE JOBS Program

If the Family Investment Program eligibility ends and you are receiving PROMISE JOBS approved child care, PROMISE JOBS will transfer your child care to DHS if you have a continued need for child care. If you do not have a continued need for child care, PROMISE JOBS will cancel your child care.

In the future, if you find you have a need for child care, you can contact DHS to reapply for child care.



General Information

To continue receiving Family Investment Program benefits, participants are required to meet expectations outlined in the PROMISE JOBS program and follow what is agreed upon in the Family Investment Agreement. Program expectations are similar to employers' expectations of their workers. Meeting these requirements will give you the knowledge and confidence needed to reach your career and professional development goals.

If you have any questions regarding information provided in this guide, please ask your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker.

Absence Policy

Since participation in PROMISE JOBS is a mandatory requirement to continue receiving Family Investment Program benefits, policies and procedures for attendance must be followed. You must notify your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker ahead of time and may be asked to provide written documentation for absences. The following are examples of absences from PROMISE JOBS that may be excused:

- Medical appointments
- Illness
- Illness of a dependent child (who lives in your home)
- Legal appointments
- Housing appointments
- Inclement weather
- Bereavement
- Other emergency or extraordinary circumstances

The following are examples of unexcused absences and invalid reasons for missing PROMISE JOBS activities:

- Out of town trips or vacation
- Helping friends deal with a crisis
- Routine appointments for you or your child that could be scheduled at a time that does not interfere with PROMISE JOBS activities

Confidentiality

As a PROMISE JOBS participant you have the right to confidentiality. PROMISE JOBS may speak with DHS and the Family Development and Self Sufficiency Program (FaDSS) regarding your case at any time. It is PROMISE JOBS policy that we do not speak to anyone else regarding your case without a signed a release of information from you.

Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Domestic Violence

People of all races, ethnicities, religions and classes experience mental health disorders, substance abuse and domestic violence. Our main concern is the safety of you and your children.

If you are experiencing mental health or substance abuse issues or find yourself in a violent or otherwise unhealthy relationship, please inform PROMISE JOBS. Your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker will provide supportive services and referrals to outside resources for additional assistance.

Important Paperwork

The PROMISE JOBS program follows strict guidelines set by DHS. You are receiving financial assistance with the expectation you participate in job readiness, education and employment activities for an average of 30 hours per week. Hours of participation must therefore be documented and verifiable.

It is important to accurately complete your paperwork and submit it on time. If not, you may be at risk of losing benefits.

Time and Attendance Form

The Time and Attendance form will document the PROMISE JOBS activities you participate in. This may include workshops, school, doctor appointments and any other activity you participate in during your regularly scheduled PROMISE JOBS time.

The form must be accurate and complete with signatures. Time and Attendance forms are due to your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker by the 10th of the following month. To ensure proper delivery, please include your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker's name on every form you submit.

Job Search Record Form

When seeking employment, you will be required to document all of your job search activities on the Job Search Record form.

These too will need to be signed and submitted to your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker by the 10th of the following month and should include the name of your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker on every page.

It is important that you keep this form current. Update it as you complete each activity in order to accurately document and receive credit for you job search efforts.



If your paperwork is not turned in on time, you may be at risk of losing your benefits!

How and When to Contact

Your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker

Your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker is here to help you succeed in the PROMISE JOB program. Please reach out to your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker for any of the following reasons:

- If you will be late or cannot keep a scheduled appointment, contact your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker prior to the appointment
- If you cannot provide requested paperwork by the due date provided, contact your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker before the date it is due and preferably as soon as possible
- As soon as you establish employment, contact your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker and DHS with employer name, start date, rate of pay, projected number of hours per week and the duration of placement (if you have been hired for temporary employment)
- Prior to quitting employment, your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker will need to determine if you have good cause
- If terminated from employment, contact your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker and DHS immediately to determine if this impacts your benefits
- If you have a question about a notice you received, you should first find the contact information on that notice and follow the instructions provided
- When you have an address change, contact your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker and DHS
- Anytime there is a change in your current situation

If you do not contact your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker or you do not follow through with the steps in your Family Investment Program, you may lose your Family Investment Program and PROMISE JOBS benefits.

Walk-Ins and Phone Calls

PROMISE JOBS Case Workers are busy every day with scheduled appointments, workshops and other business-related activities. If you stop by the office without an appointment, it is possible your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker may not be able to meet with you. We recommend you first try to contact your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker via phone regarding their availability.

When leaving a voice message, be sure to speak clearly and leave the following information:

- First and last name
- Phone number where you can be reached by your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker (make sure your voice-mail is set up to receive messages)
- Reason for your call

Workshops

Appropriate Dress

PROMISE JOBS activities should be treated as your “job” until you find qualified lasting employment. Different jobs will require different manners of dress. For the purpose of classroom participation, we require you to wear clean, neat clothes and shoes.

Acceptable casual business attire is recommended at all times. IowaWORKS staff members can help describe what casual business attire is if you are not certain - do not be afraid to ask.

Specific Attire

- Shirts must be free of any offensive graphics
- Make sure you are well groomed by showering or bathing regularly and by having clean hair

While our program is located in the IowaWORKS office; occasionally there may be on-the-spot job interviews with employers. It is good practice to always be prepared for unpredictable opportunities.

Active Participation

In order to maximize benefits received through the PROMISE JOBS program, you need to actively participate. Active participation means being on time each day as well as openly participating in group discussions and providing feedback when asked. You may not be allowed to join the class if you arrive late.

Your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker and IowaWORKS staff will do all they can to help your participation in the PROMISE JOBS program yield success; however, you are ultimately responsible for what you get out of the program.

Other Noteworthy Items

Smoking is not permitted in the building or near the entrances to the building. If you wish to smoke on your breaks, please go across the street or sit in your vehicle.

Cell phones must be turned off. If you are expecting an important call, please notify the workshop leader or classroom instructor before it begins. If you do receive an important call, politely excuse yourself from the classroom to answer it. Do not sit in class and text or talk on your phone.

If you have a sensitive issue, you should speak to your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker in private. Anything you hear in the classroom should not be shared with others outside of the classroom.

Important Things to Know

Respect

Every individual is to be treated with dignity and respect. Profane language will not be tolerated. If you feel you have been disrespected by a participant or member of staff, speak to your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker or the program supervisor about the situation.

When You Are Hired

Upon obtaining employment, contact your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker immediately and provide employment verification. By staying in touch with your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker you may find you are eligible for additional work support.

Employment

Obtaining employment is ideal for many reasons:

- You no longer need full assistance
- You can buy things for your family that you otherwise may not have been able to afford
- You qualify for earned income tax credits
- You will continue to develop your skills and grow professionally
- You can take pride in what you do and may find a new sense of self-worth

You will want to speak with your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker if you encounter a problem with your employment and before making changes to your current employment situation. Your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker can help you review your options and determine how employment changes will affect your situation.

Any of the following changes might affect your Family Investment Program benefits:

- Turning down a job offer that you applied for while conducting job searches for the PROMISE JOBS program
- Quitting your employment
- Reducing your hours at work



While participating in the Family Investment Program I receive \$_____ per week and \$_____ per month.

If I got a job I could earn \$_____ per week and \$_____ per month.

Hourly Wage	\$7.25	\$8.00	\$8.50	\$9.00	\$10.00
20 hours per week	\$145.00	\$160.00	\$170.00	\$180.00	\$200.00
30 hours per week	\$217.50	\$240.00	\$255.00	\$270.00	\$300.00
40 hours per week	\$290.00	\$320.00	\$340.00	\$360.00	\$400.00
20 hours per month	\$580.00	\$640.00	\$680.00	\$720.00	\$800.00
30 hours per month	\$870.00	\$960.00	\$1020.00	\$1080.00	\$1200.00
40 hours per month	\$1160.00	\$1280.00	\$1360.00	\$1440.00	\$1600.00

Losing or Ending Employment

As previously mentioned in this guide, you must notify your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker prior to quitting employment and immediately upon termination.

Your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker will determine the next steps and whether or not your job loss will result in a Limited Benefit Plan and loss of Family Investment Program and PROMISE JOBS benefits.

The following are generally not considered valid reasons to quit a job:

- Illness or pregnancy unless a doctor has advised you in writing to quit and provided a Report on Incapacity
- Feeling like you are not doing a good job
- Having personality conflict
- Deciding you do not like the job duties

It is recommended that you talk to your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker before accepting a new job and quitting your current job. Your new job must be equal to or greater than your current job.

Rights and Responsibilities

Please be sure to carefully review all forms with information about the PROMISE JOBS program, and reach out to your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker with any questions. Other forms include:

- Family Investment Agreement Rights and Responsibilities - Please sign and date both copies (one copy you will keep for your records and the other copy will need to be returned to your PROMISE JOBS Case Worker)
- Limited Benefit Plan information
- Information on the Family Self-Sufficiency Grant

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program
Auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities.
For deaf or hard of hearing, use Relay 711.