

# Fact Sheet

# Ohio Works First



## MAXIMUM MONTHLY PAYMENT KEEPS FAMILIES BELOW 30% OF THE FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL

Ohio's cash assistance program for families with children is known as Ohio Works First (OWF). It is funded by the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant.

Currently, there are 139,000 children in Ohio who rely on the Ohio Works First cash assistance program. These children live in families who meet all of the rules for the "reformed" welfare system. The average OWF household size is now two, given the larger increase in child only cases. The most common OWF household consists of one or two children living with a relative caretaker, usually a grandparent.

A typical family of two on the Ohio Works First cash assistance program receives only \$355 a month in cash. **That is \$860 a month below the federal poverty level.** This means that the families of these children must make difficult choices between the necessities of food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and other basic needs.

### Maximum Public Assistance Benefits Compared to Poverty Level

Family Size	OWF Monthly Payment Standard	100% Federal Poverty Level (Monthly)	OWF Minus Federal Poverty Level	OWF as a % of Poverty
1	\$259	\$903	-644	29%
2	\$355	\$1215	-860	29%
3	\$434	\$1526	-1092	28%
4	\$536	\$1838	-1302	29%
5	\$627	\$2150	-1523	29%
6	\$698	\$2461	-1763	28%

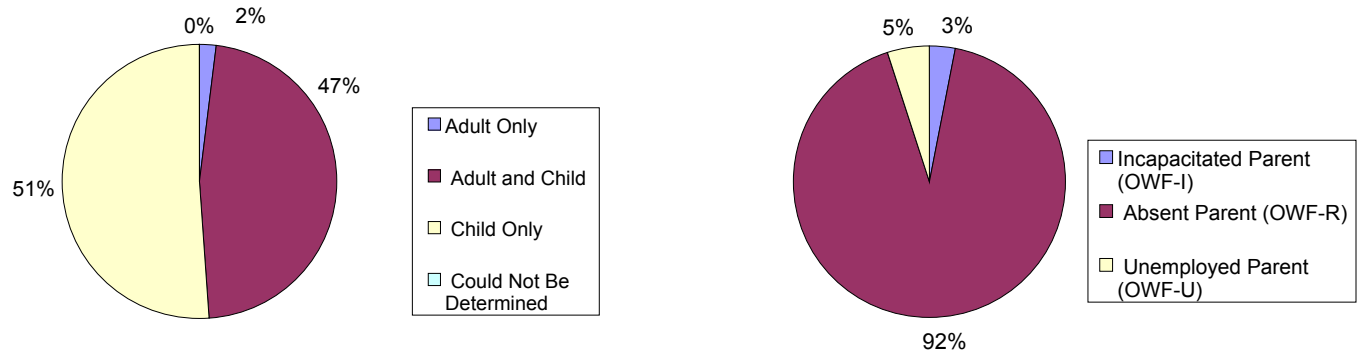
- 139,000 Ohio children received cash assistance benefits in January 2009

- 51% of all OWF cases are child-only cases

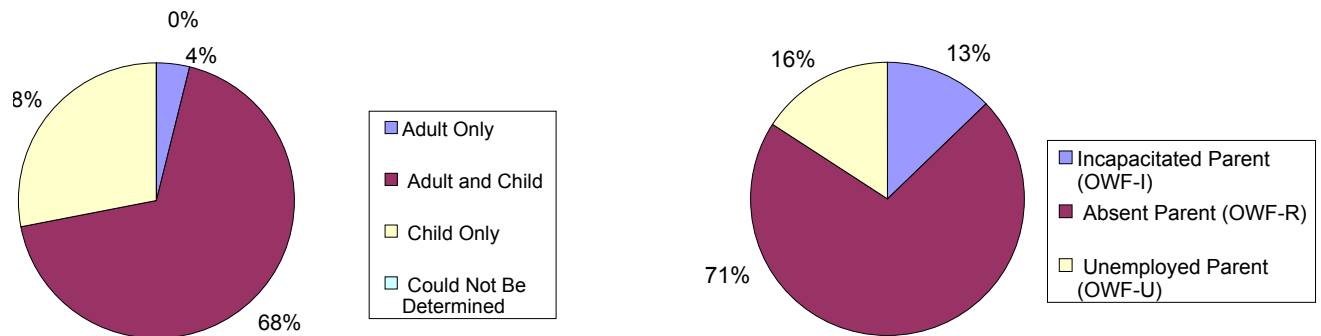
- Maximum monthly payment for a family of two has increased only \$144 in 30 years, from \$192 in 1978 to \$336 in 2008

- A family of three currently receives just \$434 per month in OWF assistance. This funding still leaves them more than \$1,000 below the federal poverty level each month.

**Families by Program, Statewide - Adult/Child Composition - Calendar Year 2008 Average/Month**



**Families by Program, Athens County - Adult/Child Composition - Calendar Year 2008 Average/Month**



Of the roughly 82,000 households receiving OWF per month in calendar year 2008, more than one-half (51%) were “child-only” cases, meaning that only the children in these households receive public assistance, not the adults. “Child-only” assistance groups have been steadily increasing over the past several years. OWF cases increased from 80,413 in June 2008 to 86,272 in December 2008, an increase of 5,859 cases. The number of recipients increased from 173,257 in June of 2008 to 190,525 in December of 2008, an increase of 17,268 people. More than 79% of OWF children are less than 13 years old. About 46% are under the age of six. Of the total caseload in January 2009, 73% were children.

That was then...	This is now...	Change
2000 Ohio median family annual income <b>\$50,037</b>	2007 Ohio median family annual income <b>\$57,999</b>	<b>+\$7,962</b> +16% source: U.S. Census
Minimum wage (annual) 1999 <b>\$10,712</b>	Minimum wage (annual) 2009 <b>\$15,184</b>	<b>+\$4,472</b> +42% source: DOL
Federal poverty level 1999 (annual) (family of 2) <b>\$11,060</b>	Federal poverty level 2009 (annual) (family of 2) <b>\$14,570</b>	<b>+\$3,510</b> +32% source: HHS
Maximum cash assistance benefits 1999 (annual) (family of 2) <b>\$3,552</b>	Maximum cash assistance benefits 2009 (annual) (family of 2) <b>\$4,260</b>	<b>+\$708</b> +20% source: ODJFS

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