

POLICY & PROCEDURE: Parent Unknown

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: Section 13(1) of the Ontario Works Regulations:
*Directive 23.0***

PROCEDURE:

1. In cases where parent of a dependent in a benefit unit claims that an absent parent is unknown they will be requested to provide in writing, the details and circumstances around the conception of the child. An *Information Regarding Father Unknown/Undeclared* form will be provided by the Case Manager to be completed by the parent. This form will be included with the Family Support referral. The Family Support Worker will conduct an in-depth interview with the parent and document the circumstances around the conception and pregnancy.
2. Should there be any inconsistencies identified between the written details provided by the parent and the information collected at the Family Support interview a deemed income should be deducted from the benefit unit's basic assistance.
3. It is expected that a parent make attempts at finding and identifying an unknown parent. They will need to document their attempts and provide to Family Support Worker for review. The Family Support Worker should assist the parent in the search. If the parent does not make a reasonable attempt to locate or identify the absent parent a deemed income should be deducted from the benefit unit's basic assistance.
4. The deemed income will be removed from the benefit unit's basic assistance if the parent reveals who the absent parent is or satisfies the Family Support Worker that they have done all they can to locate and identify the unknown parent.
5. An absolute refusal to identify an absent parent without providing extenuating circumstances means that they are not eligible for Ontario Works Assistance.

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STANDARDS:

1. The benefit unit will be given a minimum of ten working days (two weeks) to provide the written details around the conception and pregnancy.
2. The Case Manager will provide the parent with the *Information Regarding Father Unknown/Undeclared* form to document the details around the conception and pregnancy.
3. If a deemed income is applied the benefit unit will be given notice in writing with the right to appeal.
4. The FSW will apply the deemed income charge and make notes in SDMT.
5. The benefit unit will get 10 days notice of a deemed income to be applied against their Ontario Works Assistance.
6. After an extended period of time and there has been an attempt to locate and identify the parent a permanent waiver may be granted. All others are subjected to a review of circumstances every three months.

CALCULATING THE DEEMED INCOME DEDUCTION

The Family Support Guidelines should be used in calculating the deemed income deduction. It should be based on the absent parent working forty hours a week at minimum wage. After a period of six months it may be increased to the equivalent of dependant's amount of basic assistance.

EXAMPLE 1:

- A single parent applying for OW assistance claims she does not know who the father of her child is.
- The case manager gives her the *Information Regarding Father Unknown/Undeclared* form and instructs her to complete and return the form within 10 working days.
- The *Information Regarding Father Unknown/Undeclared* form is returned, completed, and a referral is made to the FSW.

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- The FSW interviews the client and documents the events around the conception.
- Inconsistencies are identified between what information is provided in the interview and the form completed prior to the interview.
- A deemed income of \$115.00 is applied to the clients OW income assistance.
- Three months later the client reveals who the absent father is and agrees to pursue support. The deemed income is removed effective in the month the client provides the name of the father and agrees to pursue support.

Reviewed and Approved By:

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Date

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Date