**Section 112.68 School Attendance Initiative**

a) Identification and Referral

1) Participating elementary schools will identify children in grades one through eight who receive TANF and who are not attending school regularly, as defined by the school. If the schools cannot address the families' problems that appear to be resulting in irregular school attendance, they will refer the families to participating social service networks. The family will be notified, in writing, of the referral and the consequences for non-cooperation with the referral.

2) Social service networks should be specifically equipped to address the causes of truancy, at no cost to the family other than the normal co-payment under existing programs.

3) Upon referral, a Social Service Network Representative will assess the specific family situation and will develop a service plan with the family that will include getting the child to regularly attend school.

4) The service plan for the truant child in grades seven and eight is completed by the social service agency, school, juvenile justice system or other agency. The plan includes options such as community service, mandatory after school tutoring/mentoring programs, and working with juvenile advocates. It may also include suspension from extracurricular activities. Contact with law enforcement may also be involved.

b) Use of Protective Payee

1) Upon failure of the family to cooperate with the referral, or with the service plan, as determined by the social service provider, the family will be placed under a Protective Payee with the Social Service Network Representative acting as the payee for the family's TANF grant. The provisions of 89 Ill. Adm. Code 117.10 shall otherwise apply.

2) The Protective Payee will remain in effect until the family follows through with the service plan, as determined by the social service provider. The Protective Payee may be discontinued during the months of June, July and August at the option of the service provider.

c) Cash Assistance Sanctions

1) If a protective payee plan, as provided in subsection (b) of this Section, has been in effect for at least three months and the child continues to regularly miss school, as defined by the school, the cash assistance payment will be reduced by 50 percent of the family's payment level until the attendance is satisfactory. If attendance is not satisfactory after three months of reduced payments, the entire cash payment will be stopped.

2) For a second instance, the cash assistance payment will be reduced by 50 percent of the family's payment level for three months. If attendance is not satisfactory after three months of reduced payments, the entire cash payment will be stopped.

3) For a third instance and any subsequent instance, the family's entire cash assistance payment will be stopped for at least three months. Cash assistance will be reinstated for the fourth month if the requirement is met during the three-month sanction period.

4) Sanction penalties accumulate by family, not by person, during any single period of continuous assistance. A single period of continuous assistance is not interrupted by a loss of all cash assistance due to a sanction. If a family member's non-cooperation occurs during a sanction period which was the result of another member's non-cooperation, the next progressive sanction shall apply.

5) Reconciliation must be attempted before imposing a sanction under this Section.

6) Sanctions will not be applied during the months of June, July and August, except in the case of year-round schools.

7) Sanctions under this Section, employment and training programs and the Responsibility and Services Plan (89 Ill. Adm. Code 112.79), and Child Support Enforcement (89 Ill. Adm. Code 160.30) shall be considered along one track. After a sanction is taken under one Section, a subsequent sanction under that Section or either of the other two Sections will be at the next level of sanction, as set out above.

(Source: Amended at 22 Ill. Reg. 14744, effective August 1, 1998)