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## URGENT MESSAGE – PLEASE READ THIS LETTER

### YOUR WV WORKS Benefit IS GOING TO STOP

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Dear WV WORKS Recipient:

The 1996 federal Welfare Reform law put a limit on the number of months a family with an adult included in the payment can receive a WV WORKS benefit. This limit applies regardless of the amount of the benefit. Each state had to choose how many months to offer a monthly benefit to eligible families, up to a maximum of 60 months. West Virginia chose to provide the full 60 months of benefits. This was explained to you when you applied for cash assistance.

Our records show that you have received WV WORKS cash assistance **for a total of 55 months**. If this total is not correct, please contact your Worker immediately.

This means that **your benefit will stop after you receive 5 more months of cash assistance benefits, if you are eligible to receive them**, and you cannot receive cash assistance benefits for any month after that no matter how your family situation changes.

- ✓ Stopping your benefit will not automatically stop your Food Stamps. Since you will have less income, your Food Stamps may increase. But, even if they increase, your Food Stamps will not increase by the amount of the benefit you will lose. If you do not currently receive Food Stamps, you may want to consider applying for them.
- ✓ If you receive Medicaid, your medical card will not be affected when your **cash assistance benefit** is stopped.
- ✓ Check with your local DHHR office to determine if there are other benefits you might be eligible to receive.

The federal government has allowed states to lengthen the time some people receive cash assistance benefits. There are a small number of families in extreme hardship situations who may temporarily continue to receive a benefit after receiving cash assistance for 60 months. To make the decision about who may temporarily continue to receive the benefit, the WV DHHR has established certain guidelines about the kind of situations that may temporarily extend receipt of the monthly cash assistance benefit. These are listed on the attached form. **Please read the list carefully to determine if your family situation falls into one of these categories.**

You may **request an extension to the time limit by completing the attached form** and returning it to the Division of Family Assistance in the DHHR State Office in Charleston. The return address is on the form.

**We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity. Once your benefits have stopped due to receiving cash assistance benefits for 60 months you cannot become eligible again** unless you are in a domestic violence situation. Only one temporary extension is allowed for each family and the extension may be for 1 - 6 months.

If you have any questions, please contact your local DHHR office or call the State Office in Charleston toll free at 1-800-642-8589.

