

## **TANF/JOBS Program Re-Engagement Review – March 2010**

### ***Background***

The Department of Human Services conducts re-engagement reviews every six months in accordance with ORS 412.009 (6).

The “re-engagement” process is performed to ensure the following:

- Individual case plans were created in partnership with clients;
- Activities on the case plan were appropriate;
- Clients are aware of their rights and responsibilities;
- Screenings and possible evaluations for barriers have been offered/completed and documented; and
- A team review of the family’s situation before potential sanction – which includes a discussion of child safety issues – was conducted.

The goal of these efforts is to identify early potential barriers to client success in the program and ensure necessary steps are taken to address those barriers.

### ***Results of the Review***

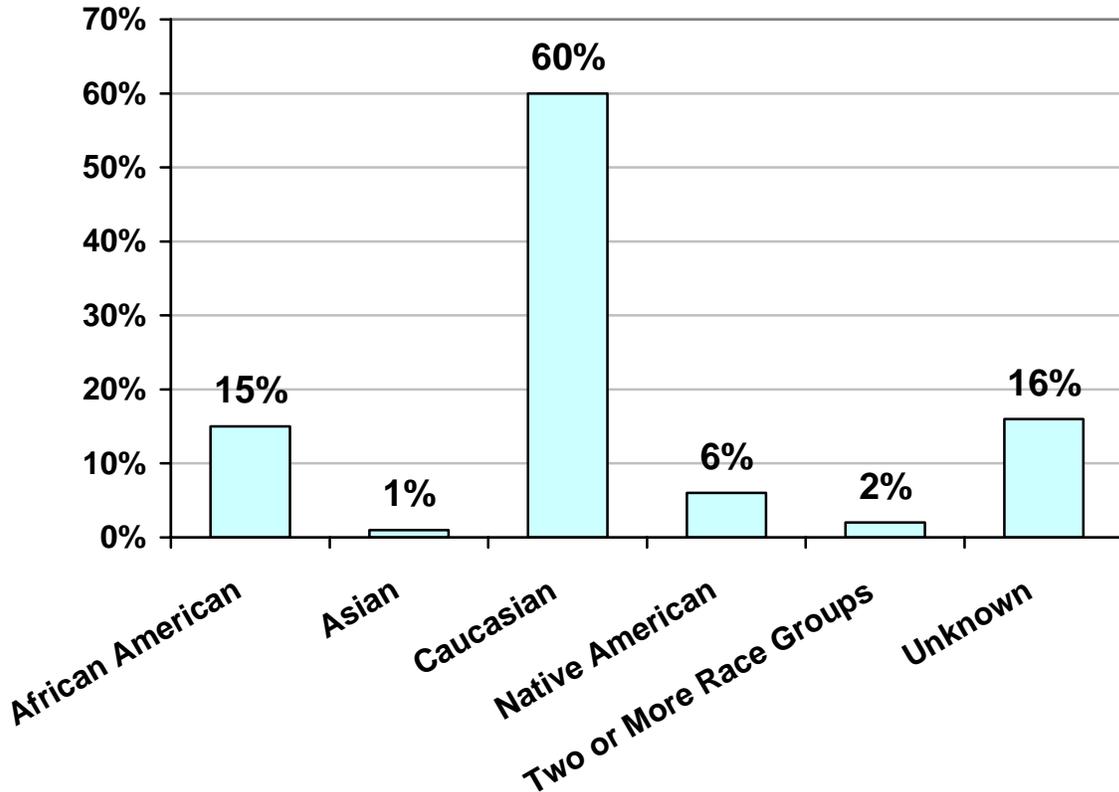
This biannual review consisted of a review of all TANF cases with an active disqualification in the month of March 2010. A total of 124 cases were included as part of the review. This was an increase of 28 cases from the September 2009 review.

In this review, race and ethnicity data was included. The two charts below display the race and ethnicity information relative to the 124 clients. The information is displayed in percentage of total persons with an active disqualification<sup>1</sup>.

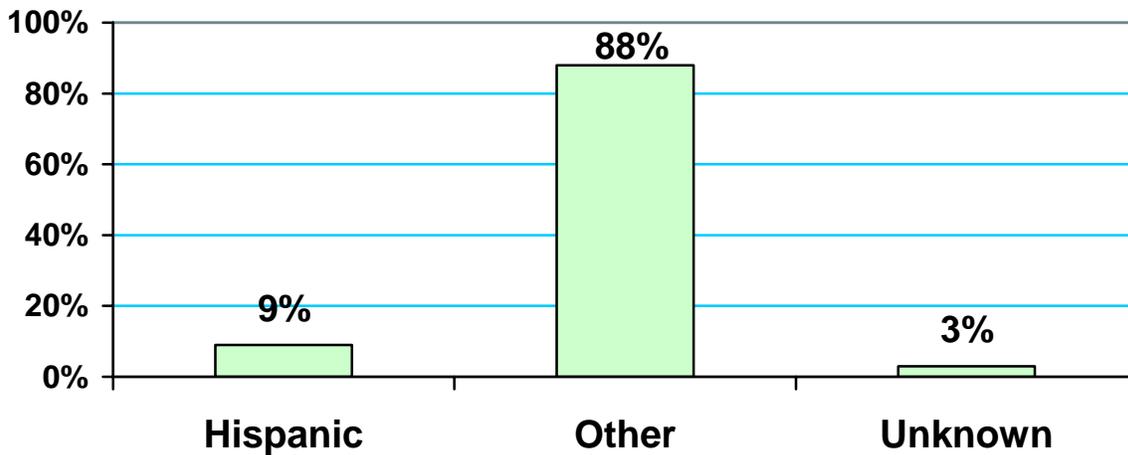
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<sup>1</sup> Based on Federal definition, Hispanic or Latino is identified as ethnicity rather than race. Providing race and ethnicity information is optional for DHS clients.

**March 2010 Re-engagement Review  
Race Data - 124 Total Clients**



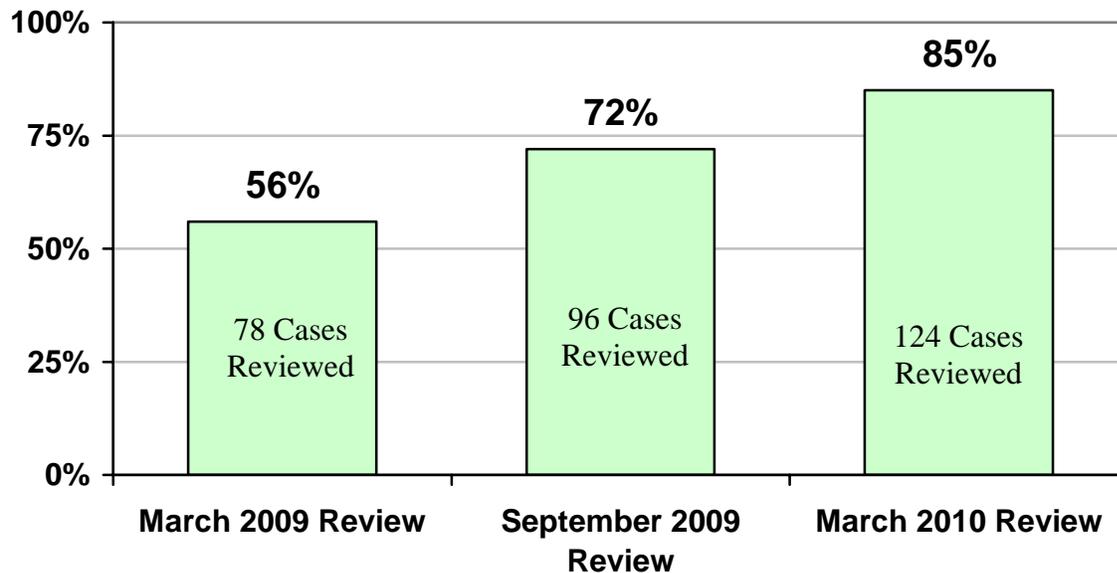
**March 2010 Re-Engagement Review  
Ethnicity Data - 124 Total Clients**



## Results - Re-Engagement Process

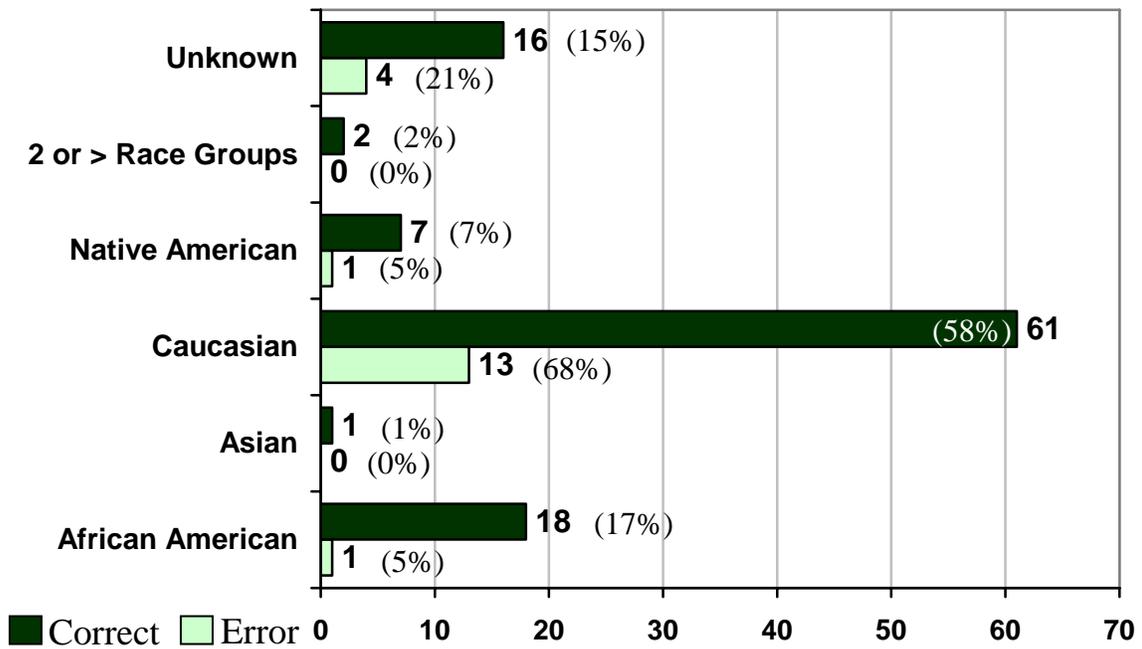
The chart below displays the percentage of cases where a disqualification was appropriately applied as compared to the two previous re-engagement reviews conducted. Approximately 85 percent (105 out of 124) of the cases reviewed had the disqualification applied correctly. This percentage represents an increase of 13 percentage points over the September 2009 review and a 29 percentage point increase over the March 2009 review.

**Percent of cases with Correct Process**

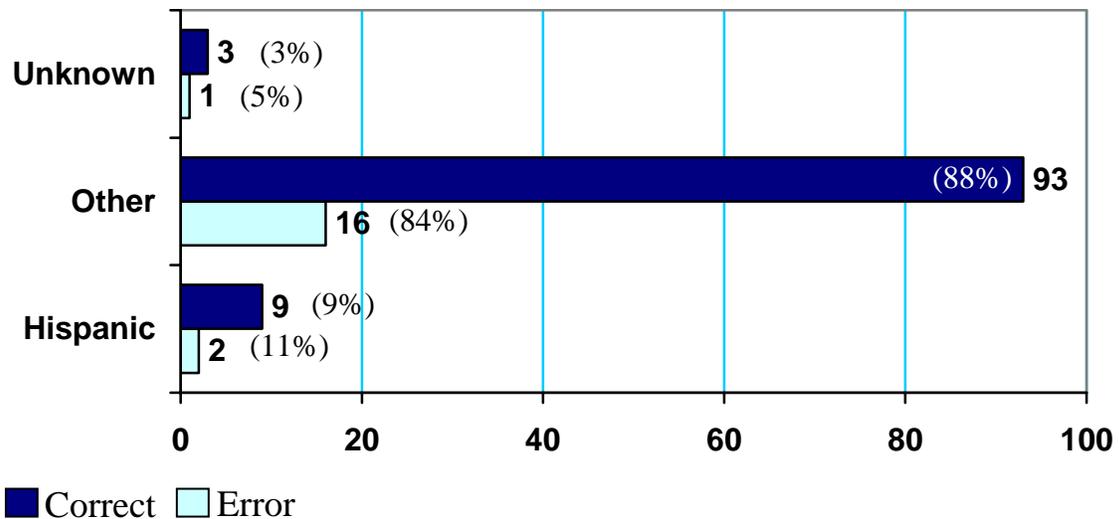


There were a total of 105 clients with a disqualification applied correctly. The charts below display the number of disqualifications applied correctly or in error by race and ethnicity. The charts also include the percent of disqualifications applied correctly and in error by race and ethnicity. The percent in each category represents a percentage of the total disqualifications correctly applied (105 cases) or those applied in error (19 cases).

### Disqualifications by Race - Correct or Error



### Disqualifications by Ethnicity - Correct or Error



## ***Positive Outcomes***

- The re-engagement process has continued to improve over the past year. The current review saw the correct process applied 85 percent of the time. This is an increase of 13 percentage points over the September 2009 review.
- Documentation of the re-engagement process has improved overall.
- Self-Sufficiency Intensive Case Consultants (ICCs) have become more involved with their local re-engagement process. They help to discover issues non-participating clients are facing prior to entering the re-engagement process. They are also reviewing cases prior to a disqualification being applied. The involvement of ICC's has led to more appropriate application of disqualifications.

## ***Removing Disqualifications***

There were numerous reasons why a disqualification would be removed. The table below displays the reasons, which resulted in disqualification removals during the September 2009 and March 2010 reviews.

<b>Reason for Removal <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>September 2009</b>		<b>March 2010</b>	
	<b>26 cases</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>19 cases</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Accommodations</b> (No record of a needed accommodation being offered)	2	7%	2	11%
<b>Assessment/Evaluation</b> (No record of required assessment/evaluation being offered)	5	18%	5	26%
<b>Child Safety review</b> (no record of child safety review with Child Welfare)	10	37%	5	26%

<sup>2</sup> The percentages represent the percent of cases with a disqualification removed in which this particular reason for the removal was discovered. A single case may have had multiple reasons for removal and any single reason would have resulted in the disqualification being removed.

<b>Reason for Removal <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>September 2009</b>		<b>March 2010</b>	
	<b>26 cases</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>19 cases</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Client re-engaged</b> (client re-engaged and was cooperating with plan)	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Disabilities</b> (No record of disability issues being considered)	3	11%	2	11%
<b>Domestic Violence</b> (No record of domestic violence being considered)	1	4%	0	0%
<b>DQ4<sup>3</sup> Requirements</b> (No record of DQ4 requirement being met)	1	4%	0	0%
<b>New DQ Instance: Local Team Staffing</b> (No record of review team staffing)	5	18%	2	11%
<b>Continuing DQ: Local Team Staffing</b> (No record of review team staffing on continuing non-cooperation)	15	56%	8	42%
<b>Required notices</b> (No record of required notices being sent)	1	4%	0	0%
<b>Rights and Responsibilities form</b> (DHS 7819 not located)	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Screening</b> (No record of required screenings being offered or re-offered)	7	26%	8	42%
<b>TANF closed</b> (TANF case closed prior to disqualification)	0	0%	0	0%

<sup>3</sup> DQ4 constitutes full-family sanction. The additional requirements before full-family sanction are that the department attempt a home visit and discuss with the client alternative resources should the TANF grant end.

## ***Improvements***

Improvements were seen in four important areas. They include:

- **Child Safety:** Child safety reviews are required prior to each level of disqualification. The review consists of contact with Child Welfare to determine if there is a risk to the child or children in the event a disqualification is applied.

During this review, the percentage of occurrences decreased from 37 percent (10 of 27 cases) in the last review to 26 percent (5 of 19 cases) in this review.

- **DQ4 Requirements (Attempted home visit and discussion of alternate resources):** Prior to applying a DQ4 the staffing must include a discussion of alternate resources in the event of full family sanction. The local team must also attempt a home visit.

During the current review, no cases progressed to a DQ4 without the DQ4 Requirements being completed. This accounts for the decrease in the percentage of occurrence from 4 percent (1 of 27 cases) in September 2009, to 0 percent (0 of 19 cases) during the current review.

- **New DQ Instance: Local Team Staffing prior to disqualification:** Prior to a disqualification being applied, a local staffing must take place to determine if any barriers were preventing the individual from meeting the program requirements. The local staffing team includes DHS staff, partners, and professionals such as mental health specialist, nurse, Family Support & Connections, etc.

The percentage of occurrences in this category decreased from 18 percent (5 of 27 cases) to 11 percent (2 of 19 cases) in March 2010.

- **Continuing DQ: Local Staffing on continuing non-cooperation:** After a disqualification has been determined appropriate and applied, if there are no changes and the client continues not to cooperate, the disqualification will automatically advance to the next level. Prior to the disqualification

advancing, there must be a local staffing to determine if the disqualification is still appropriate.

The percentage of occurrences in this category decreased from 56 percent (15 of 27 cases) in September 2009 to 42 percent (8 of 19 cases) of the cases in March 2010.

### ***Difficulties***

While there have been significant improvements, some areas saw increases or no change in the percentage of occurrences, which caused a disqualification to be removed.

- **Accommodations:** DHS must provide reasonable accommodations in order for an individual to participate in program requirements. In order to apply a disqualification staff must determine whether or not accommodations are needed. If there are needed accommodations, staff must determine if they were provided and if provided whether they were appropriate.

The percentage of occurrences in this category increased from 7 percent (2 of 26 cases) in September 2009 to 11 percent (2 of 19 cases) of the cases in March 2010.

- **Assessments:** When a screening, or other indicator, identifies a need for additional assessment or evaluation, DHS must offer the assessment or evaluation to the client. The September 2009 review found 18 percent (5 of 27 cases) of the removals involved an identified assessment not being offered. This review found the percentage increasing from 18 percent to 26 percent (5 of 19 cases).
- **Disabilities:** Understanding the barriers a client faces is essential to providing appropriate services. DHS must consider if an aspect of a client's disability caused the behavior, which lead to the non-cooperation.

The percentage of occurrences in this category remained the same as the past review. The current review found 11 percent (2 of 19 cases) of cases had no record that disability issues were considered; the September 2009 review also included this error in 11 percent (3 of 26 cases) of the cases.

- **Screening:** Before imposing a disqualification, DHS must ensure all screenings for barriers have been offered. These include alcohol and drug, learning needs, mental health, physical health, domestic violence and family stability (as per policy).

The September 2009 review found that in 26 percent (7 of 27 cases) of the cases there was no record that screenings had been offered. This number has increased to 42 percent (8 of 19 cases) during the current review.

### ***Conclusion***

The current number of cases with an active disqualification increased from the previous review. The number of disqualifications applied in error has decreased significantly. Including Intensive Case Consultants (ICCs) and other specialists in the re-engagement process has helped maintain or improved processes in many areas. This and other best practices have been shared among local districts. Overall it is evident local offices are continuously working to improve re-engagement processes.