

	<b>Agency Name</b>	Office of Family Support (OFS)
	<b>Chapter No./Name</b>	04 – Family Assistance Manual (FAM)
	<b>Part No./Name</b>	P. Strategies to Empower People (STEP) Program
	<b>Section No./Name</b>	P 500-STEP Sanctions/Good Cause
	<b>Document No./Name</b>	P-510-STEP Sanctions
	<b>Effective Date</b>	March 1, 2013

Sanctions are to be used as a last resort when FITAP work-eligible families have not met the required expectations of the STEP Program. A sanction is not considered a punishment, but is a natural consequence of not meeting program expectations.

FITAP families with work-eligible parents (not caretaker relatives) who are not included in the FITAP certification are included in the Federal Participation Rate, unless that parent is not included because he or she receives SSI or is an alien who is ineligible due to immigration status. Refer to C-121-FITAP. These families are subject to sanctions if they do not meet the required expectations of the STEP Program.

Work-eligible recipients must fully understand the expectations that OFS has of them and the consequences for not meeting these expectations. These expectations and consequences must be emphasized and explained to the client in detail during completion of the Family Success Agreement. In an attempt to avoid the need for sanction, the worker must regularly remind the client of these expectations and consequences and must assist the client in solving problems that arise. Solutions to these problems, good cause consideration, and potential sanctions should be discussed in supervisory conferences and documented \*\*\* \* in the case notes. \*\*

Case records should contain adequate documentation that clients were informed of their expectations and consequences during the Intake interview and completion of the Family Success Agreement.

If the client still fails to comply with STEP Program requirements, the appropriate STEP sanction must be applied in a fair and consistent manner. Once sanctioned, staff must work with the client to cure their sanction by first understanding the challenges and barriers that may have led to the sanction. Staff must then work with the client to jointly determine solutions to those challenges in order to better determine the types of support needed by the client to comply with STEP requirements.

An intensified case management approach allows staff to learn more about our clients and to offer opportunities to help our clients address and resolve their challenges. The STEP sanction philosophy must be fair, but it must hold our clients accountable and responsible for their success in overcoming these challenges.