

FACT SHEET



TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
Arkansas Department of Workforce Services

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Welfare reform in 1996 led to the creation of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program by Congress replacing the former Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) Program. When implementing welfare reform at the state level, Arkansas chose a strategy of investment.

The Arkansas TANF program helps families overcome barriers to work through training, education and supports. The goal is to help families, not only to move from welfare to work, but ultimately to leave poverty behind forever. The TANF program in Arkansas is referred to as the Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) program.

HISTORY

- 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) replaced AFDC with TANF
- States develop and implement their own TANF program
- The federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA) reauthorized TANF
- The DRA and related interim final rules issued by DHHS introduced new requirements on states and stricter requirements on work program compliance

TANF OVERSIGHT BOARD

- Created by Arkansas Act 514 of 2007
- Nine-member board
- Appointed by Governor and Legislature
- Developed Vision and Blueprint for State's TANF Program
- Makes recommendations regarding TANF Program to Governor and Joint Public Health, Welfare, and Labor Committee

PROGRAM ELEMENTS FOR TANF

The Four Goals of TANF

1. Provide assistance to needy families
2. End dependence of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage
3. Reduce out-of-wedlock pregnancies
4. Encourage formation of two-parent families

TANF Federal Requirements

1. Cash assistance time limit of 60 months
2. Work requirements of most cash recipients
3. Recipients face payment sanctions and termination of benefits for not meeting work requirement
4. Individual Responsibility Plans required for all cash recipients
5. Teen parent live-at-home and stay-in-school requirement
6. Annual state plan
7. 15% cap on administrative costs
8. Allows up to 30% of the TANF block grant to be transferred to Child Care and Social Services Block Grant Program
9. State Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirement
 - » 5% of 1995 spending when meeting work participation rates
 - » 80% of 1995 spending when not meeting work participation rates
 - » Funding penalties if fail to meet federal requirements
 - » New Work Verification Plan requirements



ARKANSAS CASELOAD INFORMATION

- In 2010, Arkansas averaged 8,605 TANF cases.
- The average number of recipients per month is 19,736

PROGRAM ELEMENTS FOR TANF

- Barrier Screening, Assessments, & Referral
- Domestic Violence
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Health
- Caring for a Special Needs Child
- Work Assessments & Employment Planning
- Income supplements such as tax credits
- Job Search, Matching, & Placement
- Life Skills Development
- Training
- Education
- Linkage to Work Supports
- Child Care Assistance
- Transportation

Per Arkansas Act 514 of 2007, the TANF program is defined as Transitional Employment Assistance, Work Pays, Career Pathways Initiative, and the Community Investment Initiative. Arkansas created these innovative TANF programs to address the four purposes of TANF. With these innovative programs, Arkansas has transformed public assistance from a system focused on entitlement to one focused on personal responsibility and sustained self-sufficiency.

TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (TEA) PROGRAM

The TEA program is a state-administered program that serves families in every political subdivision in the state. The TEA program is funded by federal funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the TANF block grant and is administered by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services. TEA provides time-limited cash assistance to needy families with (or expecting) children and furnishes parents with work training and other supportive services they need in order to attain permanent self-sufficiency.

The welfare reform law changed the welfare system into one requiring participation in activities leading to employment as a condition of receiving time-limited services. The TEA program also provides assistance to children being cared for by non-parental guardians.

ARKANSAS WORK PAYS PROGRAM

Arkansas Work Pays is a post-employment program created by Arkansas Act 1705 of 2005 and provides assistance to prior participants of the TEA Program. Families participating in the Arkansas Work Pays Program will also be eligible for the same supportive services and assistance as families enrolled in the TEA program and shall receive a monthly cash assistance payment. The intent is to provide the necessary supports — workforce training, transportation, child care, family counseling, etc. — to help those at-risk families move up the economic ladder, achieve self-sufficiency, and end dependency.

CAREER PATHWAYS INITIATIVE (CPI)

Under the Career Pathways Initiative, Arkansas invests public funds to support the development and implementation of career pathways programs in the state's two-year colleges and technical institutions for low-income families. Career Pathways programs represent a unique post-secondary training service delivery model, one that addresses the unique challenges low-income adults face in terms of successfully completing post-secondary training. Career pathways programs provide training in local high demand occupations and career fields, in addition to intensive counseling and supplemental services such as child care and transportation assistance.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT INITIATIVE (CII)

Arkansas Act 1705 of 2005 authorized the Department of Workforce Services to contract with private or community organizations, including faith-based organizations, to offer services and supports to parents, children, and youth in their communities. The Community Investment Initiative focuses on improving outcomes for youth, parenting and family functioning, marriage and relationship skills, employment skills and family connections of parents who leave state jails and prisons and support services to child-only cases in the TEA program.



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arkansas.gov/esd/Programs/TANF/