



YOUR FREE GUIDE TO
TANF

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES



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While we are not affiliated with the government in any way, our team of writers have researched the U.S. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program to create this guide to assist consumers.

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COVID-19 and TANF

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. government passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which extends TANF funding through November 30, 2020.

Currently, there is no nationwide COVID-19 protocol in place to provide emergency TANF funds to states, territories or tribes. However, TANF offices may use their current funds to provide additional benefits, extend current benefits or streamline the TANF application process.

Some offices may even allow work exemptions for those impacted by COVID-19 due to work or school closure or those who are ill. In these states, qualified participants may be exempt from looking for work while receiving TANF benefits. Contact the TANF program office in your state or territory for more information about temporary TANF protocol, and to learn about any other COVID-19 measures in place.

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, many TANF offices across the country are temporarily closed to the public or available by appointment only. Contact an office before visiting in person to inquire about its hours of operation. See [page 8](#) of this guide for a list of TANF offices in each state.



What is the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program?

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF) is a welfare-job program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that provides financial aid to eligible families on a monthly basis. Each state, U.S. territory and tribe has its own separate TANF program. These state-administered programs can also choose to provide job preparation, work assistance and child care assistance.

The primary purpose of TANF is to help needy families achieve self-sufficiency. The federal government outlines four primary goals for the TANF program as:

1. Provide cash assistance to needy families to help them remain in their homes
2. End family dependence on benefits by encouraging job preparation
3. Reduce out-of-wedlock marriages, which is considered a driver of poverty
4. Encourage the institution and maintenance of two-parent families

Basic Eligibility

There are general TANF eligibility guidelines that all programs use to determine who qualifies for assistance. These are:

- Have a child 18 years or younger OR be pregnant
 - *Children who are 19 years old and are full-time students are also eligible
- Be unemployed, about to be unemployed or severely underemployed
- Be U.S. citizens, legal immigrants or permanent residents
- Be considered low to very low income

Since TANF is administered by each state, territory or tribe, the specific eligibility requirements vary. See [page 20](#) of this guide for a list of eligibility guidelines by location.

Federal TANF Contact Information

TANF is administered by the Office of Family Assistance (OFA), which is overseen by the larger Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). For general questions about TANF, contact the OFA by email at INFO.OFA@acf.hhs.gov. Or, contact the OFA by mail at:

Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families Office of Family Assistance
330 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20201

TANF Programs and Contact Information for U.S. States and Territories

Note: Neither the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) nor American Samoa have TANF programs.

If after clicking on a URL you are not taken to the correct page, please copy and paste the URL into your browser for best results.

Location	TANF Program Name	Administrative Office	Phone Number	Where to Find Local Office Contact Info
Alabama	Family Assistance	Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR)	(334) 242-1310	https://dhr.alabama.gov/county-office-contact/
Alaska	Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP)	Alaska Division of Public Assistance	(907) 465-3347	http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/contact.s.aspx
Arizona	Cash Assistance	Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES)	(855) 432-7587	https://azdes-community.secure.force.com/EOL/
Arkansas	Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA)	Arkansas Division of Workforce (ADWS)	(501) 682-2121	https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/contact/
California	CalWORKS	California Department of Social Services (DSS)	(916) 651-8848	https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Benefits-Service/Cash-Assistance/CalWORKS/County-Offices
Colorado	Colorado Works	Colorado Department of Human Services (DHS)	(303) 866-5700	https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdhs/contact-your-county

Location	TANF Program Name	Administrative Office	Phone Number	Where to Find Local Office Contact Info
Connecticut	Temporary Family Assistance (TFA)	Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS)	(855) 626-6632	https://portal.ct.gov/DSS/About-the-Department-of-Social-Services/Contact
Delaware	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Delaware Division of Social Services (DSS)	(800) 372-2022	https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dss/ofclocations.html
District of Columbia	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Department of Human Services (DHS)	(202) 727-5355	https://dhs.dc.gov/service/find-service-center-near-you
Florida	Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA)	Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF)	(850) 300-4323	https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/access/map.shtml
Georgia	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS)	(404) 657-3433	https://dfcs.georgia.gov/locations
Guam	Cash Assistance	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	(671) 475-2653	http://dphss.guam.gov/contact-us-2/
Hawaii	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Hawaii Department of Human Services (DHS)	(855) 643-1643	http://humanservices.hawaii.gov/locations/
Idaho	Temporary Assistance for Families in Idaho (TAFI)	Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (DHW)	(877) 456-1233	https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/ContactUs/tabid/127/Default.aspx
Illinois	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS)	(833) 234-6343	http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12
Indiana	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Indiana Division of Family Resources (DFR)	(800) 403-0864	https://secure.in.gov/fssa/dfr/2999.htm

Location	TANF Program Name	Administrative Office	Phone Number	Where to Find Local Office Contact Info
Iowa	Family Investment Program (FIP)	Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS)	(800) 972-2017	https://dhs.iowa.gov/dhs_office_locator
Kansas	Successful Families Program	Kansas Department of Children and Families (DCF)	(833) 765-2003	http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/Pages/DCFOfficeLocatorMap.aspx
Kentucky	Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program (KTAP)	Kentucky Department for Community Based Services (DCBS)	(800) 372-2973	https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dCBS/dsr/Pages/default.aspx
Louisiana	Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP)	Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)	(888) 524-3578	http://www.dcfsla.gov/directory
Maine	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	(207) 287-3707	https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/about/contact/offices
Maryland	Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA)	Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS)	(800) 332-6347	https://dhs.maryland.gov/weathering-tough-times/temporary-cash-assistance/?page_id=805
Massachusetts	Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC)	Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA)	(877) 382-2363	https://www.mass.gov/info-details/find-a-department-of-transitional-assistance-office-for-economic-assistance
Michigan	Cash Assistance	Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)	(517) 241-3740	https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-73970_5461--00.html
Minnesota	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)	(888) 345-0823	https://www.health.state.mn.us/about/locations/index.html

Location	TANF Program Name	Administrative Office	Phone Number	Where to Find Local Office Contact Info
Mississippi	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS)	(800) 948-3050	https://www.mdhs.ms.gov/local-mdhs-offices/
Missouri	Temporary Assistance (TA)	Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS)	(855) 373-4636	https://dss.mo.gov/dss_map/
Montana	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)	(888) 706-1535	https://dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/OfficeofPublicAssistance
Nebraska	Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	(402) 471-3121	http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Public-Assistance-Offices.aspx
Nevada	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Nevada Division of Welfare and Social Services (DWSS)	(800) 992-0900	https://dwss.nv.gov/Contact/Welfare/
New Hampshire	Financial Assistance for Needy Families (FANF)	New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	(603) 271-9700	https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/contactus/district-offices.htm
New Jersey	Work First NJ (WFNJ)	New Jersey Division of Family Development (DFD)	(609) 588-2000	https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/njsnap/home/cbss.shtml
New Mexico	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD)	(505) 476-9266	https://www.hsd.state.nm.us/LookingForAssistance/FieldOffices_1.aspx
New York	Family Assistance (FA)	New York Department of Social Services (DSS)	(800) 342-3009	https://otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/dss.asp

Location	TANF Program Name	Administrative Office	Phone Number	Where to Find Local Office Contact Info
North Carolina	Work First (WF)	North Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS)	(800) 662-7030	https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/local-dss-directory
North Dakota	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	North Dakota Department of Human Services (DHS)	(701) 328-2310	https://www.nd.gov/dhs/locations/countysocialserv/index.html
Ohio	Ohio Works First (OWF)	Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (JFS)	(866) 244-0071	http://jfs.ohio.gov/County/County_Directory.pdf
Oklahoma	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS)	(866) 411-1877	http://www.okdhs.org/countyoffices/Pages/default.aspx
Oregon	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS)	(503) 945-5600	https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/Offices/Pages/Self-Sufficiency.aspx
Pennsylvania	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS)	(800) 692-7462	https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/CAO-Contact.aspx
Puerto Rico	Programa de Ayuda Temporal para Familias Necesitadas (TANF)	Administracion de Desarrollo Socioeconomico de la Familia (ADSEF)	(787) 289-7600 ext. 2515	https://servicios.adsef.pr.gov/programaAyudaTemporalFamiliasNecesitadas.aspx
Rhode Island	RI Works (RIW)	Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS)	(855) 697-4347	http://www.dhs.ri.gov/DHSOffices/index.php
South Carolina	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS)	(800) 616-1309	https://dss.sc.gov/contact/

Location	TANF Program Name	Administrative Office	Phone Number	Where to Find Local Office Contact Info
South Dakota	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	South Dakota Department of Social Services (DSS)	(605) 773-4678	https://dss.sd.gov/fin_dyourlocaloffice/
Tennessee	Families First	Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS)	(866) 311-4287	https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/humanservices/families/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/office-locator-family-assistance.html
Texas	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Texas Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	(512) 424-6500	https://www.yourtexasbenefits.com/Screen/FindanOffice
U.S. Virgin Islands	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Department of Human Services	St. Thomas: (340) 774-0930 St. John: (340) 776-6334 St. Croix: (340) 718-2980	http://www.dhs.gov.vi/contact/index.html
Utah	Family Employment Program	Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS)	(801) 526-9675	https://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/officesearch/#/map
Vermont	Reach Up	Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF)	(800) 479-6151	https://dcf.vermont.gov/esd/contact-us/districts
Virginia	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Virginia Department of Social Services (DSS)	(804) 726-7000	https://www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency/index.cgi/
Washington	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Washington Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)	(877) 501-2233	https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/community-services-offices/community-services-office

Location	TANF Program Name	Administrative Office	Phone Number	Where to Find Local Office Contact Info
West Virginia	WV Works	Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR)	(304) 558-0684	http://dhr.wv.gov/bcf/Documents/DHHR.BCF.LocalOffices.pdf
Wisconsin	Wisconsin Works (W-2)	Wisconsin W-2 Agency	(608) 422-7000	https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/w2/parents/locate
Wyoming	POWER Work Program	Wyoming Department of Family Services (DFS)	(307) 777-7564	https://dfs.wyo.gov/about/contact-us/

TANF for tribal nations is administered by specific tribal organizations rather than state departments.

For more information on how to get in contact with an office, refer to the section called “Tribal TANF Contact Information” on [page 71](#) of this guide.



TANF Services Provided in U.S. States and Territories

TANF is operated separately in each state, territory and tribe. As such, the services differ among each specific TANF program. The chart below provides information about all services offered in each location.

Location	Cash Benefits	Child Care Assistance	Job Preparation	Work Assistance
Alabama	✓		✓	✓
Alaska	✓	✓	✓	✓
Arizona	✓		✓	✓
Arkansas	✓	✓	✓	✓
California	✓	✓	✓	✓
Colorado	✓		✓	✓
Connecticut	✓		✓	✓
Delaware	✓		✓	✓
District of Columbia	✓	✓	✓	✓
Florida	✓		✓	✓
Georgia	✓		✓	✓
Guam	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hawaii	✓	✓	✓	✓

Location	Cash Benefits	Child Care Assistance	Job Preparation	Work Assistance
Idaho	✓	✓	✓	✓
Illinois	✓		✓	✓
Indiana	✓		✓	✓
Iowa	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kansas	✓		✓	✓
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓	✓
Louisiana	✓		✓	✓
Maine	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maryland	✓		✓	✓
Massachusetts	✓	✓	✓	✓
Michigan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Minnesota	✓		✓	✓
Mississippi	✓	✓	✓	✓
Missouri	✓		✓	✓
Montana	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nebraska	✓		✓	✓
Nevada	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Hampshire	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Jersey	✓		✓	✓
New Mexico	✓		✓	✓

Location	Cash Benefits	Child Care Assistance	Job Preparation	Work Assistance
New York	✓	✓	✓	✓
North Carolina	✓	✓	✓	✓
North Dakota	✓		✓	✓
Ohio	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oregon	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pennsylvania	✓	✓	✓	✓
Puerto Rico	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rhode Island	✓	✓	✓	✓
South Carolina	✓	✓	✓	✓
South Dakota	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tennessee	✓	✓	✓	✓
Texas	✓		✓	✓
U.S. Virgin Islands	✓		✓	✓
Utah	✓		✓	✓
Vermont	✓		✓	✓
Virginia	✓	✓	✓	✓
Washington	✓	✓	✓	✓
West Virginia	✓		✓	✓
Wisconsin	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wyoming	✓	✓	✓	✓



TANF Program Eligibility Requirements

There are certain program requirements you must meet in order to receive TANF benefits. Since TANF is operated independently in each state, territory and tribe, these requirements vary. TANF programs use the following standards to determine eligibility.

Income Requirements

Cash assistance from TANF is available to families and individuals with incomes below the location's median household income. Your income must be less than 50 percent of this amount.

TANF program income limits are determined based on:

- Cost of living in each state, territory or tribe
- Number of household members

Work Activity Requirements

Adult TANF recipients are required to be employed or participate in work activities as a condition of receiving TANF cash benefits. Work activities are those that promote employment and foster the job search process. The federal government has 12 categories of work activities that states implement in their TANF programs. These are:

- Unsubsidized employment
- Subsidized private-sector employment
- Subsidized public-sector employment
- Work experience, if sufficient private-sector employment is not available
- On-the-job training
- Job-search and job-readiness assistance
- Community service programs
- Vocational education training
- Child care services for individuals participating in a community service program
- Job skills training
- Education related to employment
- Attendance at a high school, if a minor

Each TANF program is responsible for determining the required amount of work search activities for eligibility. The minimum number of hours of work search activities is 20 hours per week for single parents and 30 hours per week for two-parent households.

Behavioral Requirements

Some states, territories and tribes have certain behavioral requirements for TANF recipients. The behavioral requirements typically are **mandatory school attendance** and **medical immunizations**. Programs with these requirements will limit or deny TANF cash benefits to applicants if school-age children are not attending school or if medical immunizations are not maintained.

Note: TANF programs can waive the medical immunization requirement if it violates religious beliefs or adversely affects a child's health.

Asset Requirements

Many states impose limits on assets, which are defined as anything of value that can be converted into cash. The assets considered in determining TANF eligibility are:

- Vehicles
- Stocks
- Bonds

TANF applicants will have their assets evaluated by their specific TANF program office. If they reside in an area that imposes a limit, they will only be eligible for cash assistance if their assets do not exceed the limit.

TANF Program Requirements in U.S. States and Territories

The chart below provides information about income, work activity and behavioral requirements in all 50 states and U.S. territories. The income column includes the gross monthly income limits **for three-person households (one parent and two children)** as an example.

To calculate your specific income limit, use the link in the “Income Limit Generator” column to find your location’s estimator tool. An “N/A” in this column means that an income generator is not available on your location’s website.

The weekly work activity hours columns in the chart include information for families with one parent and a child younger than six as well as families with two parents as examples. Some states and territories may have different work activity hour requirements for different family makeups. Contact your state or territory’s TANF program to inquire about work activity hours using the contact information on [page 8](#) of this guide.

Note: One asterisk(*) indicates the information is current as of 2018, and that 2020 data is not readily available on state websites.

Two asterisks ()** indicates that the maximum monthly income varies by county or district. The dollar amount listed for states with two asterisks (**) denotes the maximum income accepted in the majority of the state. Check your local TANF income eligibility requirement by contacting your area’s TANF program office. Find a complete list of TANF programs and contact information on [page 8](#) of this guide.

Three asterisks (*)** in the “Asset Requirement” column indicates that the location does have an asset requirement, but the specific amount is not available. Call your local TANF office to inquire about asset limits. Find a complete list of TANF contact information on [page 8](#) of this guide.

State	Maximum Gross Monthly Income	Income Limit Generator	Weekly Work Activity Hours (One Parent + Child Younger Than 6)	Weekly Work Activity Hours (Two Parents)	School Attendance Requirement	Immunization Requirement	Asset Requirement
AL	\$215	https://dhr.alabama.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/DHR-FAD-595-1.pdf	20	30	Yes	No	No

State	Maximum Gross Monthly Income	Income Limit Generator	Weekly Work Activity Hours (One Parent + Child Younger Than 6)	Weekly Work Activity Hours (Two Parents)	School Attendance Requirement	Immunization Requirement	Asset Requirement
AK	\$2,889	http://dpaweb.hss.state.ak.us/POLICY/PDF/TA_Standards.pdf	20	40	No	No	\$2,000
AZ	\$1,778	https://des.az.gov/services/child-and-family/cash-assistance/cash-assistance-ca-income-eligibility-guidelines	20	40	Yes	Yes	***
AR	\$223	N/A	20	40	Yes	Yes	***
CA**	\$3,304	N/A	20	55	Yes	Yes	***
CO	\$511*	N/A	20	30	No	No	No
CT**	\$908	N/A	20	35	No	No	\$3,000
DE	\$2,468	https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dss/tanf.html	30	35	Yes	Yes	***

State	Maximum Gross Monthly Income	Income Limit Generator	Weekly Work Activity Hours (One Parent + Child Younger Than 6)	Weekly Work Activity Hours (Two Parents)	School Attendance Requirement	Immunization Requirement	Asset Requirement
DC	\$818	https://dhs.dc.gov/service/tanf-district-families	20	30	No	No	\$2,000
FL	\$303	https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/access/docs/tcafact-sheet.pdf	20	35	Yes	Yes	\$2,000
GA	\$784	N/A	30	30	Yes	Yes	\$1,000
GU	*	*	20	40	Yes	No	No
HI	\$2,941	N/A	20	20	No	No	No
ID	\$389	https://ealthandwelfare.idaho.gov/services-programs/financial-assistance/apply-tanf	20	30	No	No	***

State	Maximum Gross Monthly Income	Income Limit Generator	Weekly Work Activity Hours (One Parent + Child Younger Than 6)	Weekly Work Activity Hours (Two Parents)	School Attendance Requirement	Immunization Requirement	Asset Requirement
IL	\$837*	N/A	30	35	Yes	No	No
IN	\$592	https://www.in.gov/fssa/dfr/2684.htm	20	30	Yes	No	\$1,000
IA	\$1,061*	N/A	20	35	No	No	***
KS	\$519*	N/A	20	30	No	No	\$2,250
KY	\$974	https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dcbs/dfs/fssb/Documents/KTAPIncomeLimits1.doc	20	30	No	No	***
LA	\$240	http://www.dss.state.la.us/page/139	20	30	No	Yes	No
ME	\$1,023*	N/A	20	35	No	No	***
MD	\$795*	N/A	20	30	No	No	No
MA	\$633	https://www.mass.gov/service-details/heck-tafdc-eligibility-and-how-to-apply	20	30	No	No	\$5,000
MI	\$803*	N/A	20	30	Yes	Yes	\$15,000
MS	\$680	https://www.mdhs.ms.gov/economic-assistance/tanf/	20	30	Yes	Yes	\$2,000

State	Maximum Gross Monthly Income	Income Limit Generator	Weekly Work Activity Hours (One Parent + Child Younger Than 6)	Weekly Work Activity Hours (Two Parents)	School Attendance Requirement	Immunization Requirement	Asset Requirement
MN	\$1,089*	N/A	20	30	No	No	\$10,000
MO	\$557*	N/A	20	35	No	No	\$1,000
MT	\$1,092	https://dph-hs.mt.gov/hcsd/tanf/tanfeligibility	20	30	No	No	\$3,000
NE	\$991*	N/A	20	35	No	No	***
NV	\$1,660*	N/A	20	35	Yes	Yes	\$6,000
NH	\$844*	N/A	20	30	No	No	\$1,000
NJ	\$636*	N/A	20	35	No	No	***
NM	\$1,778	https://www.hsd.state.nm.us/uploads/FileLinks/26463f122f47474487faee4922e09ce8/FPG_Cards_FY_2020_revised_12919_3.pdf	20	35	No	No	***
NY**	\$879*	N/A	20	30	No	No	***
NC	\$681*	N/A	35	55	No	No	***

State	Maximum Gross Monthly Income	Income Limit Generator	Weekly Work Activity Hours (One Parent + Child Younger Than 6)	Weekly Work Activity Hours (Two Parents)	School Attendance Requirement	Immunization Requirement	Asset Requirement
ND	\$1,331*	N/A	20	30	No	No	\$3,000
OH	\$840	N/A	20	30	No	No	No
OK	\$824*	N/A	20	30	No	No	***
OR	\$616*	N/A	20	30	No	No	***
PA**	\$677*	N/A	20	30	No	No	\$1,000
PR	Information not available	N/A	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available
RI	\$1,277*	N/A	20	30	No	No	\$1,000
SC	\$1,524*	N/A	20	35	No	No	***
SD	\$837*	N/A	20	30	No	No	***
TN	\$1,315*	N/A	20	30	Yes	Yes	***
TX	\$206	https://yourte.xas-benefits.hsc.texas.gov/programs/tanf/families	20	30	Yes	Yes	***
USVI	N/A	N/A	20	30	No	No	\$2,000
UT	\$668*	N/A	20	30	No	No	***
VT**	\$1,103*	N/A	20	30	No	No	***
VA**	\$640*	N/A	20	30	Yes	Yes	No

State	Maximum Gross Monthly Income	Income Limit Generator	Weekly Work Activity Hours (One Parent + Child Younger Than 6)	Weekly Work Activity Hours (Two Parents)	School Attendance Requirement	Immunization Requirement	Asset Requirement
WA	\$1,042*	N/A	20	30	Yes	No	\$6,000
WV	\$565*	N/A	20	30	No	No	***
WI	\$2,082	https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/annuals/w-2-mannual/Production/default.htm	20	30	Yes	No	\$2,500
WY	\$1,251*	N/A	20	30	No	No	\$5,000

Note: Find information about Tribal TANF eligibility on [page 73](#) of this guide.



TANF Application Process

If you are interested in receiving TANF benefits, you must apply through your location's TANF program. Depending on the area in which you live, you may be able to apply using the following methods:

- Online
- In person
- By mail
- By fax

After completing the application in your area, you need to attend an interview with a TANF program representative. Then, you will receive a decision from the TANF program office. If you are approved, you will receive cash benefits to use for food, clothing and other necessary expenses.

Find out more about what cash benefits can be used for in the section "What can I purchase with TANF benefits?" on [page 65](#) of this guide.

How to Apply for TANF Benefits

The TANF application process varies depending on where you live, but there is a general application process that you must follow to receive assistance.



- 01 Find your state, territory or tribe's TANF program.** For a list of state and territory TANF program contact information, see [page 8](#) of this guide. For Tribal TANF contact information, refer to [page 71](#).
- 02 Choose your application method.** Depending on your TANF program, you can apply online, in person, by mail or by fax.
- 03 Gather all required documents.** See the sections below for a complete list of necessary information and documents.
- 04 Attend a TANF interview.** Regardless of where you live, you must attend an in-person interview with a TANF program caseworker.
- 05 Receive a decision.** Your state, territory or tribe's TANF program will notify you of your approval or denial within 60 days of applying.

Information Needed for a TANF Application

TANF applications require you to submit the following information:

Your personal information

You will need to provide your full name, date of birth, citizenship status, Social Security Number (SSN), address and phone number.

Personal information for everyone in your household

You must provide the full names, dates of birth, SSNs, citizenship statuses and marital statuses for each person in your household. You must also provide information about each person's relationship to you.

Household details

You must disclose any disabilities, criminal convictions, veteran statuses or other information requested by your TANF caseworker.

Income details

You must include the following income-related information:

- Name and address of your employer
- Annual income
- Income from other public assistance programs
- Income from other sources, including self-employment

Assets and resources

You must provide information about your property, vehicles and cash on hand.

Recurring expenses

You need to list all of your monthly expenses, including rent or mortgage payments, child care costs, medical bills, credit card bills, transportation costs and any other recurring monthly costs.

Documents Needed to Complete a TANF Application

There are certain documents you will need to submit to your TANF program agency so that a caseworker can verify the information you provided in the application.

Documents Verifying Personal Information

- Driver's license
- Birth certificate
- U.S. or foreign passport
- Immigration documents (Permanent Resident Card or Certificate of Naturalization)

Documents Verifying State Residency

- A voter's registration card
- Utility bills or another official piece of mail
- Bank statements
- Rent receipt
- Tax receipt

Documents Verifying Proof of Income

- Recent pay stubs
- Employment statement that includes income
- Tax returns
- Retirement, disability or other benefit award letters

Documents Verifying Assets

- Mortgage documents

- Lease documents
- Vehicle purchase documents

Documents Verifying Household Relationships

- Marriage license
- Adoption papers
- Birth certificate
- Public health records

Documents Verifying Disabilities

- Retirement, survivors or disability insurance receipt
- Statement from a medical professional
- Copy of medical examination report

Having these documents on hand will allow you to provide the most accurate information during the application process. If your application has errors or false information, your application may be denied.

You must answer every question on the application. Leaving a question blank is another reason your application can be denied.

How to Apply for TANF in U.S. States and Territories

Review the information below for a list of the application methods accepted by your local state/territory TANF office and links to local application resources.

01 Alabama

Apply for Family Assistance

- By mail with this form: <https://dhr.alabama.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/DHR-FAD-690.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Human Resources (DHR) office. Find an office here: <https://dhr.alabama.gov/county-office-contact/>

02 Alaska

Apply for Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP)

- By mail with the form found here: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/features/org/applications.aspx>
- In person at your local Division of Public Assistance. Find an office here: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/contacts.aspx>

03 Arizona

Apply for Cash Assistance

- Online: <https://des.az.gov/services/basic-needs/food-assistance/applying-nutrition-assistance/health-e-arizona-plus-application>
- By mail with this form: <https://des.az.gov/sites/default/files/dl/FAA-0001A.pdf?time=1588543539264>
- In person at your local Department of Economic Security (DES) office. Find an office here: <https://des.az.gov/find-your-local-office>

04 Arkansas

Apply for Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA)

- Online: <https://access.arkansas.gov/>
- By mail with this form: <https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/src/files/Application-for-TEA-Benefits.pdf>
- In person at your local Division of Workforce (ADWS) office. Find an office here: <https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/contact/>

05 California

Apply for CalWORKS

- Online: <http://www.benefitscal.org/>
- In person at your local Department of Social Services (DSS). Find an office here: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/county-offices>

06 Colorado

Apply for Colorado Works

- Online: <https://coloradopeak.secure.force.com/>
- By mail with this form: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9eaXW7_92zSZjA5djJoX1JxSWc/view
- In person at your local Department of Human Services (DHS) office. Find an office here: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdhs/contact-your-county>

07 Connecticut

Apply for Temporary Family Assistance (TFA)

- Online: <https://connect.ct.gov/access/jsp/access/Home.jsp>
- By mail with this form: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DSS/Common-Applications/Application-for-Benefits-W-1E.pdf?la=en>
- In person at your local Department of Social Services (DSS). Find an office here: <https://portal.ct.gov/DSS/About-the-Department-of-Social-Services/Contact>

08 District of Columbia

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://dcbenefits.dhs.dc.gov/>
- By mail with this form: https://dhs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dhs/publication/attachments/Combined_Application_December-2015_%28English_%202_0.pdf
- In person at your local Department of Human Services (DHS). Find an office here: <https://dhs.dc.gov/node/117522>

09 Delaware

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://assist.dhss.delaware.gov/>
- By mail with this form: <https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dss/files/form100e.pdf>
- In person at your local Division of Social Services (DSS). Find an office here: <https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dss/ofclocations.html>

10 Florida

Apply for Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA)

- Online: <http://www.myflorida.com/accessflorida/>
- By mail with this form: <https://eds.myflfamilies.com/DCFFormsInternet/Search/OpenDCFForm.aspx?FormId=645>
- At your local Department of Children and Families (DCF) office. Find an office here: <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/access/map.shtml>

11 Georgia

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- By mail with this form: <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/media/9576/download>
- In person at your local Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) office. Find an office here: <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/locations>

12 Guam

Apply for Cash Assistance

- By mail or email with this form: <http://dphss.guam.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Application-for-Public-Benefits-form-APPROVEDVERSION.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Health and Human Services office. Find an office here: <http://dphss.guam.gov/contact-us-2/>

13 Hawaii

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- By mail with this form: http://humanservices.hawaii.gov/bessd/files/2015/12/BESSD-Application_June-2015.v2.pdf
- In person at your local Department of Human Services (DHS) office. Find an office here: <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Statewide-Processing-Centers-04-2018.pdf>

14 Idaho

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Families in Idaho (TAFI)

- By mail with this form: <https://publicdocuments.dhw.idaho.gov/WebLink/Browse.aspx?id=3170&dbid=0&repo=PUBLIC-DOCUMENTS&cr=1>
- In person at your local Department of Health and Welfare (DHW) office. Find an office here: <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/offices>

15 Illinois

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://abe.illinois.gov/abe/access/>
- By mail with this form: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/onenetlibrary/12/documents/Forms/IL444-2378B-IES.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Human Services (DHS) office. Find an office here: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12>

16 Indiana

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://fssabenefits.in.gov/bp/#/>
- In person at your local Division of Family Resources (DFR) office. Find an office here: https://www.in.gov/fssa/files/DFR_Map_and_County_List.pdf

17 Iowa

Apply for Family Investment Program (FIP)

- Online: <https://secureapp.dhs.state.ia.us/oasis/OASIS0100.aspx>
- By mail with this form: <https://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/470-0462.pdf?050420200001>
- In person at your local Department of Human Services (DHS) office. Find an office here: https://dhs.iowa.gov/dhs_office_locator

18 Kansas

Apply for the Successful Families Program

- Online: <https://cssp.kees.ks.gov/apspspp/sspNonMed.portal>
- In person at your local Department of Children and Families (DCF) office. Find an office here: <http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/Pages/DCFOfficeLocatorMap.aspx>

19 Kentucky

Apply for Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program (KTAP)

- Online: <https://benefind.ky.gov/>
- In person at your local Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) office. Find an office here: <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dcbs/dsr/Pages/default.aspx>

20 Louisiana

Apply for Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP)

- Online: <https://sspweb.ie.dcfs.la.gov/selfservice/selfserviceJSPController?id=0.8711212085344364&tab=1&fromPilot=true>
- By mail with this form: <http://www.dcfs.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/searchable/EconomicStability/Applications/OFS%20English%20Combined.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Find an office here: <http://www.dcfs.la.gov/directory>

21 Maine

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://www1.maine.gov/benefits/account/login.html>
- By mail with this form: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofl/public-assistance/pdf/GeneralApp-080117.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Find an office here: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/offices.shtml>

22 Maryland

Apply for Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA)

- Online: <https://mydhrbenefits.dhr.state.md.us/dashboardClient/#/home>
- In person at your local Department of Human Services (DHS). Find an office here: <http://dhr.maryland.gov/local-offices/>

23 Massachusetts

Apply for Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC)

- Online: https://dtaconnect.eohhs.mass.gov/?_ga=2.76359189.108031085.1589175228-1996710348.1588532120
- In person at your local Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) office. Find an office here: https://www.mass.gov/economic-assistance-cash-benefits/locations?_page=1

24 Michigan

Apply for Cash Assistance

- Online: https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-landing-page?language=en_US
- By mail with this form: https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/MDHHS-1171_Assistance_Application_and_Program_Supplements_616030_7.pdf
- In person at your local Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) office. Find an office here: www.michigan.gov/ContactMDHHS

25 Minnesota

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://applymn.dhs.mn.gov/online-app-web/spring/public/process-login?execution=e2s1>
- By mail with this form: https://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=cm_000509
- In person at your local Department of Health (MDH) office. Find an office here: <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-0005-ENG>

26 Mississippi

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://www.access.ms.gov/Application>
- In person at your local Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) office. Find an office here: <https://www.mdhs.ms.gov/contact/>

27 Missouri

Apply for Temporary Assistance (TA)

- Online: <https://apps.dss.mo.gov/fmwBenefitCenter/Account/SignInInfo.aspx>
- By mail with this form: <https://dss.mo.gov/fsd/formsmanual/pdf/IM-1TA-Application-for-Temporary-Assistance-Cash-Benefits.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Social Services (DSS) office. Find an office here: https://dss.mo.gov/dss_map/

28 Montana

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://apply.mt.gov/>
- In person at your local Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) office. Find an office here: <https://dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/OfficeofPublicAssistance>

29 Nebraska

Apply for Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)

- Online: <https://dhhs-access-neb-menu.ne.gov/start/?tl=en>
- By mail with this form: <http://public-dhhs.ne.gov/Forms/DisplayPDF.aspx?item=378>
- In person at your local Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) office. Find an office here: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Public-Assistance-Offices.aspx>

30 Nevada

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://intranet.dwss.nv.gov/ANConstruction.html>
- By mail with this form: https://dwss.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/dwssnvgov/content/Home/Features/Forms/2905-EG_Application%20for%20Assistance.pdf
- In person at your local Division of Welfare and Social Services (DWSS) office. Find an office here: <https://dwss.nv.gov/Contact/Welfare/>

31 New Hampshire

Apply for Financial Assistance for Needy Families (FANF)

- Online: <https://nheasy.nh.gov/#/>
- By mail with this form: <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dfa/documents/dfa-800-eng.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) office. Find an office here: <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/contactus/districtoffices.htm>

32 New Jersey

Apply for Work First NJ (WFNJ)

- In person at your local Division of Family Development (DFD) office. Find an office here: <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dfd/programs/njsnap/cbss/index.html>

33 New Mexico

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://www.yes.state.nm.us/yesnm/home/index>
- By mail with this form: <https://www.hsd.state.nm.us/uploads/files/HSD%20100%20w%20Covr%20Sheet.pdf>
- In person at your local Human Services Department (HSD) office. Find an office here: https://www.hsd.state.nm.us/LookingForAssistance/Field_Offices_1.aspx

34 New York

Apply for Family Assistance (FA)

- By mail with this form: <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/applications/2921.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Social Services (DSS) office. Find an office here: <https://otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/dss.asp>

35 North Carolina

Apply for Work First (WF)

- In person at your local Department of Social Services (DDS) office. Find an office here: https://files.nc.gov/ncdhhs/documents/directory_2.pdf

36 North Dakota

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://www.nd.gov/dhs/eligibility/index.html>
- By mail with this form: <https://www.nd.gov/dhs/info/pubs/docs/sfn-405-application-for-assistance.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Human Services (DHS) office. Find an office here: <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/locations/countysocialserv/index.html>

37 Ohio

Apply for Ohio Works First (OWF)

- Online: <https://benefits.ohio.gov/>
- In person at your local Department of Jobs and Family Services (JFS) office. Find an office here: http://jfs.ohio.gov/County/County_Directory.pdf

38 Oklahoma

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <http://www.okdhslive.org/>
- In person at your local Department of Human Services (DHS) office. Find an office here: <http://www.okdhs.org/countyoffices/pages/countyfind.aspx>

39 Oregon

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

- By mail with this form: <https://apps.state.or.us/Forms/Served/de0415f.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Human Services (DHS) office. Find an office here: <https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/Offices/Pages/Self-Sufficiency.aspx>

40 Pennsylvania

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/compass.web/Public/CMPHome>
- By mail with this form: <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Documents/Benefits%20Applications/PA-600-2-20-Final.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Human Services (DHS) office. Find an office here: <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/CAO-Contact.aspx>

41 Puerto Rico

Apply for Programa de Ayuda Temporal para Familias Necesitadas

- Online: <https://servicios.adsef.pr.gov/certServicio.aspx>
- By phone: 787-289-7600 or 787-294-0738

42 Rhode Island

Apply for RI Works (RIW)

- Online: <http://www.dhs.ri.gov/applynow/index.php>
- By mail with this form: <http://www.dhs.ri.gov/assets/documents/DHS-2ApplicationForAssistanceRev09-16.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Human Services (DHS) office. Find an office here: <http://www.dhs.ri.gov/DHSOffices/index.php>

43 South Carolina

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://scmapp.sc.gov/>
- By mail with this form: <https://dss.sc.gov/media/1784/dss-form-3800-aug-18.pdf>
- In person at your local Department of Social Services (DSS) office. Find an office here: <https://dss.sc.gov/contact/>

44 South Dakota

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- In person at your local Department of Social Services (DSS) office. Find an office here: <https://dss.sd.gov/findyourlocaloffice/>

45 Tennessee

Apply for Families First

- Online: <https://faonlineapp.dhs.tn.gov/>
- In person at your local Department of Human Services (DHS) office. Find an office here: <https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/humanservices/for-families/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/office-locator-family-assistance.html>

46 Texas

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://www.yourtexasbenefits.com/Learn/Home#login>
- By mail with this form: https://www.yourtexasbenefits.com/GeneratePDF/StaticPdfs/en_US/H1010_May2018.pdf
- In person at your local Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) office. Find an office here: <https://www.yourtexasbenefits.com/Screeners/FindanOffice>

47 U.S. Virgin Islands

Apply for TANF

- By mail with this form: http://www.dhs.gov.vi/financial_programs/documents/Combined_Food_and_Cash_Application_Form.pdf
- In person at your local Department of Human Services Office. Find an office here: <http://www.dhs.gov.vi/contact/index.html>

48 Utah

Apply for Family Employment Program

- Online: <https://jobs.utah.gov/mycase/>
- In person at your local Department of Workforce Services (DWS) office. Find an office here: <https://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/officesearch/>

49 Vermont

Apply for Reach Up

- Online: <https://dcf.vermont.gov/mybenefits>
- In person at your local Department for Children and Families (DCF) office. Find an office here: <https://dcf.vermont.gov/partners/cis>

50 Virginia

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://commonhelp.virginia.gov/>
- In person at your local Department of Social Services (DSS) office. Find an office here: https://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/bp/tanf/forms/AP_FOR_BENEFITS_032-03-0824-35-eng.pdf
- In person at your local Department of Social Services (DSS) office. Find an office here: <https://www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency/index.cgi>

51 Washington

Apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Online: <https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/>
- In person at your local Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) office. Find an office here: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/community-services-offices/community-services-office>

52 West Virginia

Apply for WV Works

- Online: <https://www.wvpath.org/>
- In person at your local Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) office. Find an office here: <http://dhhr.wv.gov/bcf/Documents/DHHR.BCF.LocalOffices.pdf>

53 Wisconsin

Apply for Wisconsin Works (W-2)

- In person at your local W-2 Agency. Find an office here: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/w2/parents/locator>

54 Wyoming

Apply for POWER Work Program

- By mail with this form: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1r9Supds1XkerGakMvZVUjK5hCyhfM-co/view>
- In person at your local Department of Family Services (DFS) office. Find an office here: <https://dfs.wyo.gov/contact-us/>



After Applying for TANF

Before receiving TANF benefits, you must attend a TANF interview with a program caseworker. This is your opportunity to provide additional information to make your case.

If the caseworker determines that you satisfy all program requirements, you will receive an approval notice and be issued cash assistance. If your application is rejected during this interview, you will receive a notice of denial, which you can appeal. To learn more about the appeal process, refer to [page 47](#) of this guide.

TANF Interviews

A program caseworker will evaluate your application and documents in-person at a local TANF office and make a decision regarding your benefits. The purpose of the interview is to:

- Review your application documents and correct any mistakes
- Address any questions and clarify program requirements
- Develop a personalized plan for seeking or maintaining employment

Preparing for the TANF Interview

Upon submitting your TANF application, you will receive a notice in the mail or by email that explains the documents you need to bring to the interview. In some cases, you may be asked to submit these documents by mail or online before the interview.

Refer to the section titled “Documents Needed to Complete a TANF Application” on [page 29](#) of this guide for a complete list of acceptable documents.

TANF interviews are scheduled within one month of submitting your application. Failing to appear for the interview results in an automatic denial. If you need to reschedule your initial interview, contact your assigned caseworker or your TANF program office.

During the TANF Interview

During your interview, your caseworker will review the forms you submitted and the documents you provided and ask you questions related to the information. The caseworker may also ask you for additional information, which you must submit afterwards to support your application.

All TANF programs have the authority to drug test applicants. To find out if your application process will include a drug test, talk to your caseworker or contact your TANF program. For a list of contact information and TANF website links, refer to [page 8](#) of this guide.

After the interview, your TANF office will send you a notice of approval or denial by mail. It may take up to one week after the interview to receive the notice.



TANF Denials and Appeals

If your TANF application is denied, you can appeal the denial. An appeal is a written notice of disagreement that you file with your state, territory or tribe's TANF department. When you are denied TANF benefits, the program office will send you a denial notice that includes instructions on how to initiate an appeal.

Common Reasons for Denial

If your TANF application is rejected, your denial letter will provide an explanation as to why you were denied benefits. The most common reasons for denial are as follows:

- Your income is too high according to county or state requirements
- You failed to prove that you have child dependents
- Your application has incorrect information
- Your application is missing information
- The state believes you are underreporting your family income
- You have failed to maintain your child's school attendance

- You have failed to provide supplementary documents in time
- You have failed to attend your required TANF appointments
- You have not completed pre-approval work requirements
- You have more assets than TANF eligibility requirements allow
- You do not cooperate with child support enforcement efforts



When to File an Appeal

If you believe you were wrongly denied TANF benefits, you can appeal to your state, territory or tribal TANF program. Appeals are suited for situations that can be quickly corrected. If one of the below scenarios is the reason you were rejected, the appeal process may be quick and you should be accepted into TANF:

- If you made a mistake on your application
- If you forgot to include necessary documents
- If your income was reported incorrectly

There are some reasons for applications being denied for which an appeal might not result in acceptance into the program. For example, if your income is too high or you have too many assets, you cannot appeal the denial. You cannot change these factors, so an appeal would not change the outcome of the TANF program's decision.

How to Appeal a TANF Denial

If your application is denied, you will receive a TANF denial notice. This notice will state both the reason you were rejected and the steps required to initiate an appeal. The appeal process may vary slightly in each state, territory or tribe. However, there is a standard procedure for starting the appeal process.

01 Receive a denial notice. Your local TANF program will send you a notice within 60 days of your application.

02 Find the reason for denial. All TANF departments will provide the exact reason for your application's rejection.

03 Draft a written appeal request. The request must mention that you are challenging the TANF application denial and that you would like a hearing. File as soon as you receive the denial notice. In most cases, you have 30 days or less to appeal the decision.

04 Gather evidence. Depending on the reason for your denial, you will need to provide additional documents to prove your eligibility for TANF benefits. Refer to [page 29](#) of this guide for a list of the documents needed to complete a TANF application.

05 Attend an appeal hearing. This formal meeting is your opportunity to provide evidence and facts that prove your program eligibility.

06 Receive a written decision. Your state, territory or tribe's TANF program will provide a written statement after your appeal indicating whether or not they have reversed the initial decision. In most cases, you will receive this within a few days of the hearing.

If your appeal is not granted and you are still denied TANF benefits, you can apply for the program in the future if your eligibility changes.

To begin the appeal process, find out how to get in touch with your local office in the section called "TANF Programs and Contact Information for U.S. States and Territories" on [page 8](#).



TANF Lifetime Limits and Extensions

Although TANF is operated by each state, territory or tribe, there is a federal lifetime limit on benefits of 60 months. This means TANF recipients can only receive benefits for a total of 60 months in their lifetime regardless of where they live. The 60 months do not have to be consecutive.

Some states have shorter TANF limits than the federal lifetime limit. This means that even though recipients can collect cash assistance for up to 60 total months throughout the United States, they can only receive benefits in a specific location for a designated shorter amount of time.

TANF programs do have the option of extending benefits to qualifying individuals under special circumstances using their own state funds.

Who is exempt from the TANF lifetime limit?

American Indian or Alaska Native recipients living in federally recognized Tribal Nations are exempt from the 60-month lifetime limit. Federal welfare reform law cites the difficulty for these recipients to find employment within their land, and applying a lifetime limit would require these recipients to find employment off their land.

To learn more about which Tribal Nations are federally recognized, find a list here: <https://www.usa.gov/tribes#item-37647>.

For more information about American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal TANF programs, refer to the “Tribal TANF” section on [page 70](#) of this guide.

Note: The District of Columbia no longer has a TANF benefit time limit. Recipients can receive cash assistance for as long as they remain eligible in the program.

TANF Extension Eligibility

To extend your TANF benefits beyond the 60-month time limit, you must be experiencing a qualifying hardship or meet your program’s extension criteria. Qualifying hardships are defined as scenarios that prevent adult recipients from finding or keeping employment. These include:

- Having (or having a child with) a physical disability

- Being a victim of domestic violence
- Having a mental illness
- Having a drug or alcohol addiction
- Becoming homeless
- Being considered “at risk” of cruel conditions, battery or violence

TANF Extensions in U.S. States and Territories

The table below provides information about TANF extensions in each state and territory. Note that, for Tribal TANF, extension length and regulations are decided by the tribal organizations of the over 300 federally recognized tribes that participate in the program. Refer to [page 70](#) of this guide for more information on Tribal TANF.

The “**Extension available?**” column indicates whether recipients in that location are eligible to receive benefits beyond the 60-month time limit.

The “**Maximum Length of Extension**” column denotes the number of additional months for which TANF recipients can receive benefits.

The “**Who qualifies?**” column indicates the categories of recipients who can receive extensions.

The “**Do out-of-state TANF hours count?**” column includes information about recipients that have received TANF funds in other states or locations. These months are also referred to as “federal TANF months.” Some locations count the months during which recipients received TANF benefits in other

locations toward the new state’s overall time limit. Others only count the months in which recipients receive TANF benefits in that specific location.

Note: An asterisk (*) denotes information is not readily available on official TANF websites.

Refer to [page 8](#) of this guide for TANF contact information by location.

Location	Time Limit	Extension available?	Maximum Length of Extension	Who qualifies?	Conditions of Extension	Do out-of-state TANF hours count?
AL	60 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves	Recipient or spouse of recipient with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be unemployed • Participate in JOBS: https://dhr.alabama.gov/family-assistance/jobs-program/ • Comply with child support 	Yes
AK	60 months	Yes	12 months	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the Family Self Sufficiency Plan (FSSP): http://dpaweb.hss.state.ak.us/manuals/ta/719/719-1_self_sufficiency_planning_requirement.htm 	Yes

Location	Time Limit	Extension available?	Maximum Length of Extension	Who qualifies?	Conditions of Extension	Do out-of-state TANF hours count?
AZ	12 months	Yes	12 months	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the request: https://des.az.gov/sites/default/files/dl/FAA-1440A.pdf?time=1593094512133 	No
AR	24 months	Yes	36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families with qualifying hardship Parents or caretakers age 60 or older 	*	Yes
CA	48 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All adults in the home meet the hardship 	Yes
CO	60 months	Yes	6-month periods as determined by caseworker	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must request extension before 60 months are up 	Yes
CT	21 months	Yes	6-month periods, no more than 12 months total	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families with qualifying hardship Families with low income even after employment services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income must remain lower than state payment standard 	Yes

Location	Time Limit	Extension available?	Maximum Length of Extension	Who qualifies?	Conditions of Extension	Do out-of-state TANF hours count?
DE	36 months	Yes	12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families with qualifying hardship Adult recipients who could not find employment 	*	Yes
DC	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
FL	48 months	Yes	*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families with qualifying hardship Adult recipients who could not find employment 	*	Yes
GA	48 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves	Families with qualifying hardship	*	Yes
GU	60 months	*	*	*	*	*
HI	60 months	Yes	6-month periods as determined by caseworker	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with First to Work (FTW) program if deemed eligible: http://humanservice.hawaii.gov/bessd/ftw/ 	Yes

Location	Time Limit	Extension available?	Maximum Length of Extension	Who qualifies?	Conditions of Extension	Do out-of-state TANF hours count?
ID	24 months	Yes	36 months	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to follow Personal Responsibility Contract (PRC): https://publicdocuments.dhw.idaho.gov/WebLink/DocView.aspx?id=139&d-bid=0&repo=PUBLIC-DOCUMENTS 	Yes
IL	60 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If extension is requested more than 10 days after the 60-month time limit expires, 30-day wait period applies 	Yes
IN	24 months	*	*	*	*	*
IA	60 months	Yes	6-month periods as determined by caseworker	Families with qualifying hardship	*	Yes
KS	24 months	Yes	12 months	Families with qualifying hardship	Extension will be reviewed after 6 months	Yes

Location	Time Limit	Extension available?	Maximum Length of Extension	Who qualifies?	Conditions of Extension	Do out-of-state TANF hours count?
KY	60 months	*	*	*	*	*
LA	60 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must maintain compliance with Family Success Agreement (FSA): http://www.dcfs.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/searchable/EconomicStability/TANF/2014TANFRenewal.pdf 	Yes
ME	60 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves	Families with qualifying hardship	*	Yes
MD	60 months	Yes	6-month periods as determined by caseworker	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension will be reviewed every 6 months 	Yes
MA	24 months in a 5-year period; 60 total months	Yes	2-month periods as determined by caseworker; unlimited number of extensions	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in work activities 	Yes
MI	60 months	Yes	3-month periods as determined by caseworker	Victims of domestic violence	*	Yes

Location	Time Limit	Extension available?	Maximum Length of Extension	Who qualifies?	Conditions of Extension	Do out-of-state TANF hours count?
MN	60 months	Yes	Equal to the number of months recipient was eligible, up to 60 months	Families with qualifying hardship	*	Yes
MS	60 months	Yes	*	Families with qualifying hardship	*	Yes
MO	45 months	Yes	*	Families with qualifying hardship	*	Yes
MT	60 months	Yes	*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families with qualifying hardship Minor/teen parent as the head of household 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with Employability and Service Plan: https://dph-hs.mt.gov/hcsd/tanf-policymanual 	Yes
NE	60 months	Yes	6-month periods as determined by caseworker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families with qualifying hardship Caretakers who are not parents of the child 	*	Yes

Location	Time Limit	Extension available?	Maximum Length of Extension	Who qualifies?	Conditions of Extension	Do out-of-state TANF hours count?
NV	24 months followed by a 12 month break	Yes	6-month periods as determined by caseworker	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with New Employees Of Nevada (NEON): https://dwss.nv.gov/TANF/TANF_FAQ-Eligibility_Criteria-N/P/ 	Yes
NH	60 months	Yes	6-month periods for as long as recipient remains eligible	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with New Hampshire Employment Program (NHEP): https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dfa/tanf/employment.htm 	Yes
NJ	60 months	Yes	At discretion of caseworker	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue work activities 	Yes
NM	60 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves	Families with qualifying hardship	*	Yes
NY	60 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension will be reviewed every 6 months 	Yes

Location	Time Limit	Extension available?	Maximum Length of Extension	Who qualifies?	Conditions of Extension	Do out-of-state TANF hours count?
NC	24 months	Yes	6-month periods until recipient hits 60 total months	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must have been in compliance with the Work First Outcome Plan: https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/work-first-family-assistance 	Yes
ND	60 months	Yes	*	Families with qualifying hardship	*	Yes
OH	36 months	Yes	6-month periods until recipient hits 60 total months	Families with qualifying hardship	*	Yes
OK	60 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families with qualifying hardship Families who are underemployed 	*	Yes
OR	60 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor parents Needy caretaker relatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enroll in JOBS program: http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/ss/tanf/employment.html Situation is temporary (less than 12 months) 	Yes

Location	Time Limit	Extension available?	Maximum Length of Extension	Who qualifies?	Conditions of Extension	Do out-of-state TANF hours count?
PA	60 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enroll in Maximizing Participation Project (MPP): http://services.dpw.state.pa.us/oimpolicymanuals/cash/135_Employment_and_Training_Requirements/135_Appendix_H.htm 	Yes
PR	60 months	*	*	*	*	*
RI	48 months	Yes	Initial 6-month extension, then 3-month extensions	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with an Employment Plan: http://www.dhs.ri.gov/Programs/RIWorksAmlRequiredtoWork.php 	Yes
SC	24 months in a 10-year period	Yes	12 months	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must have made effort to seek employment 	No
SD	60 months	Yes	*	Families with qualifying hardship	*	Yes

Location	Time Limit	Extension available?	Maximum Length of Extension	Who qualifies?	Conditions of Extension	Do out-of-state TANF hours count?
TN	60 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves, or 2-month extension for temporary life crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families with qualifying hardship Recipients undergoing temporary crisis (eviction, natural disaster, pregnancy complications or the death of family member) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be evaluated by Families First supervisor 	Yes
TX	60 months	Yes	24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families with qualifying hardship Families who are underemployed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with Choices, the state's work training program: https://www.twc.texas.gov/programs/choices-program-overview 	Yes
USVI	60 months	*	*	*	*	*
UT	36 months	Yes	Month-to-month not to exceed 60 total months	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employed for at least 20 hours per week 	Yes
VT	60 months	Yes	*	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow a Family Development Plan (FDP): https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/E_SD/Report/VT%20State%20TANF%20Plan%20Amendment%20%282019%29.pdf 	Yes

Location	Time Limit	Extension available?	Maximum Length of Extension	Who qualifies?	Conditions of Extension	Do out-of-state TANF hours count?
VA	60 months	Yes	12 months	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have been actively seeking employment 	Yes
WA	60 months	Yes	Until hardship resolves	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue meeting eligibility requirements 	Yes
WV	60 months	Yes	6 months	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must request an extension before 60-month period expires (victims of domestic violence can request after 60 months) 	Yes
WI	60 months	Yes	24 months	Families with qualifying hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have been actively seeking employment 	Yes
WY	60 months	*	*	*	*	*

TANF Benefits

There is no nationwide TANF benefit amount. The amount of TANF benefits you receive each month depends on:

- **Location of residence:** Each area has its own standards and policies when determining the amount of benefits an applicant will receive
- **Size of your family:** The amount of children in the household
- **Household income:** Your household's total annual income

Maximum Monthly Benefits in U.S. States and Territories

Each state, territory and tribe has a different TANF maximum benefit amount. The chart below provides the maximum TANF cash benefit amount **based on a family of three (one parent and two children)** in U.S. states and territories as an example.

If your family size or composition is different, your maximum benefit amount will vary. Refer to the section called "TANF Programs and Contact Information for U.S. States and Territories" on [page 8](#) of this guide to get in touch with your local office

and find out how much your family composition's maximum benefit amount is.



Maximum monthly benefits are not available for Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. For more information, contact your location's TANF program office.

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates the state has different maximum benefit amounts in each county. If you reside in a state with this policy, contact your state's TANF program office using the phone number provided on [page 8](#) of this guide.

Location	Maximum Benefit Amount for a Family of 3
Alabama	\$215
Alaska	\$923
Arizona	\$278
Arkansas	\$204
California*	\$785
Colorado	\$508
Connecticut*	\$698
Delaware	\$338
District of Columbia	\$658
Florida	\$303
Georgia	\$280
Hawaii	\$610
Idaho	\$309

Illinois	\$520
Indiana	\$288
Iowa	\$426
Kansas*	\$429
Kentucky	\$262
Louisiana	\$240
Maine	\$594
Maryland	\$709
Massachusetts	\$633
Michigan	\$492
Minnesota	\$532
Mississippi	\$170
Missouri	\$292
Montana	\$588
Nebraska	\$468
Nevada	\$386
New Hampshire	\$1,066
New Jersey	\$559
New Mexico	\$447
New York*	\$789

How TANF Benefits Are Distributed

The way you receive TANF cash assistance depends on where you live. There are four ways that states, territories and tribes distribute TANF benefits:

01 Paper Checks

Traditional paper checks are still available in many locations and can help families keep track of their finances. This option is beneficial for recipients who do not have a bank account.

02 Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card

An EBT card is a state-issued debit card that public assistance program recipients use to purchase items. The TANF program loads cash benefits onto the EBT card once per month, typically on the first of the month. Then recipients use these EBT cards just like a regular debit card when making a purchase. EBT cards can also be used at ATMs, where recipients can withdraw cash. When the card balance reaches zero, recipients must wait until the next month for the TANF program to reload it.

Note: Some retailers and online stores do not accept EBT cards. Before making a purchase, check with the store to learn the types of accepted payment methods.

Location	Maximum Benefit Amount for a Family of 3
North Carolina	\$272
North Dakota*	\$486
Ohio	\$497
Oklahoma	\$292
Oregon	\$506
Pennsylvania*	\$421
Rhode Island	\$554
South Carolina	\$292
South Dakota	\$615
Tennessee	\$277
Texas	\$295
Utah	\$498
Vermont*	\$640
Virginia*	\$442
Washington	\$569
West Virginia	\$340
Wisconsin	\$653
Wyoming	\$697

03 Prepaid Card

Prepaid cards are similar to standard debit cards with a four-digit pin. They can be used online or in stores to purchase items, and are accepted by more major retailers than EBT cards. Retailers that accept EBT cards will often place a banner on display indicating that EBT cards are accepted in their stores.

- Personal care items
- Shelter
- Utilities
- Household goods

Note: Prepaid cards sometimes charge ATM withdrawal fees.

04 Direct Deposit

With this option, TANF benefits are deposited directly into a recipient's bank account once per month, typically on the first day of the month. Then, they use their personal debit cards, cash or checks to purchase the items they need.

What items are restricted for purchase with TANF cash benefits?

State, territory and tribal TANF programs restrict the purchase of certain items with cash benefits. TANF cash benefits cannot be used to purchase items at the following businesses:

- Liquor stores
- Tattoo or body-piercing businesses
- Strip clubs
- Casinos
- Online gambling websites

What can I purchase with TANF cash benefits?

The purpose of TANF benefits is to help families purchase essential items in times of financial need. Each state, territory and tribe defines "essential items" slightly differently as evidenced by the purchase restrictions in the following table, but the Office of Family Assistance (OFA) lists the following item categories as essential:

- Food
- Clothing

This list is not all-inclusive. States, territories and tribes have the final say in restrictions and penalties for purchasing restricted items. Learn more about these specific topics in the section below.

TANF Restrictions and Penalties

Some states, territories and tribes provide information related to TANF restrictions and penalty enforcement.

The chart below lists these locations and details on the specific restrictions and penalties in these areas.

If your state, territory or tribe is not listed in the chart, contact your local TANF office to learn more about restrictions and penalties. Refer to [page 8](#) of this guide for a list of TANF contact information in each location.

Note: An asterisk (*) denotes information was not readily available on the location’s TANF website. Contact your local department for more information.

Location	TANF Restrictions	Penalty Enforcement
Alabama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Gambling • Tattoos and body piercings • Adult entertainment • Psychic services 	<p>1st violation: Disqualified from TANF for 1 month</p> <p>2nd violation: Disqualified from TANF for 3 months</p> <p>3rd violation: Disqualified from TANF permanently. If permanently disqualified, children may still receive benefits through a payee representative.</p>
Arizona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Gambling • Adult entertainment <p>These establishments are prohibited from accepting EBT cards in general or having ATMs that accept EBT cards.</p>	*
California	TANF benefits cannot be withdrawn from an ATM at adult entertainment establishments or gambling facilities.	Fraud penalties are determined by the amount of benefits spent, but can involve prison time and/or fines.
Colorado	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tobacco • Gambling • Firearms • Adult entertainment 	*

Location	TANF Restrictions	Penalty Enforcement
Florida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Gambling • Adult entertainment <p>These establishments are prohibited from accepting EBT cards in general or having ATMs that accept EBT cards.</p>	N/A
Idaho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Gambling • Adult entertainment 	Misuse of cash assistance could result in a misdemeanor or forfeiture of benefits.
Indiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Gambling • Firearms • Adult entertainment 	TANF recipients that misuse benefits can be charged with a Class C misdemeanor.
Iowa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Gambling • Adult entertainment 	*
Kansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Gambling • Tobacco • Adult entertainment • Sporting/music events • Spa and nail salons • Tattoos and body piercings • Psychic services • Movie theaters • Theme parks • Lingerie 	*
Maine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Gambling • Adult entertainment 	TANF recipients who misuse funds can face up to a Class D crime.
Maryland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gambling 	*

Location	TANF Restrictions	Penalty Enforcement
Massachusetts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Gambling • Tobacco • Adult entertainment • Firearms • Tattoos or body piercings • Spas and nail salons • Jewelry • Cruise ships 	<p>TANF recipients who knowingly misuse benefits must reimburse funds.</p> <p>2nd violation: Disqualified from receiving cash assistance for two months</p> <p>3rd violation: Disqualified from cash assistance permanently</p>
Michigan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Gambling • Adult entertainment 	*
Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Tobacco 	TANF recipients that misuse their benefits may be disqualified from further assistance.
Missouri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Tobacco • Gambling • Adult entertainment 	TANF recipients who misuse funds must reimburse the state department.
New Hampshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Tobacco • Gambling • Adult entertainment 	<p>1st violation: Suspension of cash assistance for 2 pay periods</p> <p>2nd violation: Suspension of cash assistance for 4 pay periods</p> <p>3rd violation and subsequent violations: Suspension of cash assistance for 6 pay periods</p>
New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Gambling • Adult entertainment 	*
Oklahoma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Tobacco • Gambling • Adult entertainment 	<p>1st violation: Reduce TANF benefits by 25 percent for 3 months</p> <p>2nd violation: Reduce TANF benefits by 35 percent for 6 months</p> <p>3rd violation: Reduce TANF benefits by 50 percent for 12 months</p> <p>4th violation: Permanently disqualified from TANF</p>

Location	TANF Restrictions	Penalty Enforcement
Pennsylvania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Tobacco • Gambling • Adult entertainment 	*
Tennessee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Tobacco • Gambling • Adult entertainment 	<p>Recipients who knowingly misuse TANF benefits will be required to reimburse the state department. Upon a subsequent violation, the TANF recipient will be permanently disqualified from receiving public assistance through a direct cash payment or EBT card.</p>
Texas	<p>Texas ONLY allows TANF funds to be used toward “essential goods,” which are those deemed necessary for the welfare of the children: https://yourtexasbenefits.hhsc.texas.gov/programs/tanf/families</p>	*
Utah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Gambling • Adult entertainment <p>These establishments are prohibited from accepting EBT cards in general or having ATMs that accept EBT cards.</p>	<p>Penalties are determined on a case by case basis, but can involve temporary or permanent disqualification from assistance.</p>
Virginia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Tobacco • Gambling • Adult entertainment • Tattoos or body piercings 	<p>TANF recipients who misuse benefits can be charged with larceny.</p>
Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Tobacco • Gambling • Adult entertainment • Tattoos or body piercings 	<p>TANF recipients that misuse funds could face fines, legal proceedings and disqualification from public cash assistance.</p>



Tribal TANF

Federally recognized American Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages are eligible to operate their own TANF programs separate from states and territories. Currently, there are nearly 300 tribes across the United States that operate a version of the TANF program.

View a list of all federally recognized tribes and Alaska Native tribal entities on the U.S. government website: <https://www.usa.gov/tribes#item-37647>.

Or, if you prefer searching by state, use the tribal search tool offered on the National Conference of State Legislators website: <https://www.ncsl.org/research/state-tribal-institute/list-of-federal-and-state-recognized-tribes.aspx>.

Tribal TANF Contact Information

Each Tribal TANF program is operated by specific American Indian and Alaska Native tribal entities. However, there are 10 regional TANF offices that oversee Tribal TANF programs by state. The following chart contains contact information for each regional office as well as the specific states that it oversees.

Region	States	Address	Phone Number
Region 1 - Boston Region	Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont	JFK Building, 15 Sudbury Street Rm. 2000 Boston, MA 02203	(617) 565-2462
Region 2 - New York Region	New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands	26 Federal Plaza, Room 4114 New York, NY 10278	(212) 264-2890 ext. 128
Region 3 - Philadelphia Region	District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia	801 Market Street, Suite 8300 Philadelphia, PA 19107-3134	(215) 861-4058
Region 4 - Atlanta Region	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee	61 Forsyth Street, Suite 4M60 Atlanta, GA 30303-8909	(404) 562-2938
Region 5 - Chicago Region	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin	233 N. Michigan Ave. Suite 400 Chicago, IL 60601	(312) 886-9540
Region 6 - Dallas Region	Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas	1301 Young St., Room 945 Dallas, TX 75202	(214) 767-7327

Region	States	Address	Phone Number
Region 7 - Kansas City Region	Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska	601 East 12th St., Rm. 349 Kansas City, MO 64106	(816) 426-2236
Region 8 - Denver Region	Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming	999 18th Street, South Terrace, Suite 499 Denver, CO 80202	(303) 844-1483
Region 9 - San Francisco Region	Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Guam	90 7th Street, Ninth Floor San Francisco, CA 94103	(415) 437-7579
Region 10 - Seattle Region	Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington	701 5th Avenue, Suite 1510, MS-71 Seattle, WA 98104	(206) 615-2569

How Tribal TANF Works

Like states and territories, eligible American Indian and Alaska Native tribes receive grants from the U.S. government to design and implement their own public welfare programs. To create and enforce a TANF program, tribes submit a three-year Tribal TANF plan to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Tribal TANF programs are a bit different than TANF programs in the states and territories. Due to the increased difficulty in finding and maintaining employment on reservation lands, tribes are given more flexibility in designing their TANF programs. Other eligibility and work requirements may also differ between specific Tribal TANF programs. Continue reading the sections below to learn more about these requirements.

Tribal TANF Program Eligibility

To receive TANF benefits through a Tribal TANF program, you must be a member of a federally recognized American Indian tribe or an Alaska Native. View a list of all federally recognized tribes and Alaska Native tribal entities on the U.S. government website: <https://www.usa.gov/tribes#item-37647>.

Like TANF programs in states and territories, you must also meet general TANF eligibility guidelines, which are:

- Have a child 18 years or younger OR be pregnant
*Children who are 19 years old and are full-time students are also eligible
- Be unemployed, about to be unemployed or severely underemployed
- Be U.S. citizens, legal immigrants or permanent residents
- Be considered low to very low income

Refer to the section “TANF Program Eligibility Requirements” on [page 18](#) for more information about general requirements.

Since tribes are responsible for creating their own TANF programs, they are allowed to define their program’s specific eligibility criteria, including income. Tribal TANF programs are not bound to the same income limits as states and territories. Tribes must outline their own definition of a “needy family” in their Tribal TANF plan.

Learn about how tribal law can supersede federal law with the following eligibility FAQs.

Can a family receive Tribal TANF assistance if a child is living with a legal guardian?

According to federal law, children must be living with a parent or an adult family member to receive assistance through the TANF program. However, the specific tribe’s tribal law can allow a legal guardian to stand in the place of a parent, allowing the family to receive Tribal TANF assistance.

Can a noncustodial parent qualify for Tribal TANF assistance?

Yes. Parents who do not have physical custody of their child(ren) are known as “noncustodial parents.” These individuals can still receive assistance through a Tribal TANF program. Tribes have the ability to define their TANF program laws, and have two options for serving noncustodial parents.

01 Tribes can choose to include noncustodial parents in the definition of a family unit, which defines the types of individuals who make up a family. In this scenario, the noncustodial parent would submit their income and work requirements for purposes of calculating TANF program eligibility.

02 Or, tribes can provide other benefits outside of financial assistance to noncustodial parents. These benefits are:

- Counseling
- Job readiness
- Employment placement
- Post-employment services

- Cash assistance
- Child care assistance
- Job preparation
- Work assistance

Can Tribal TANF programs provide assistance to child-only families where the child is living with a non-relative caregiver?

Yes. Tribes have the freedom to design their own TANF programs and go beyond their state’s definitions for “family unit.” In situations where a child is living full-time with an adult that is not a family member, he or she may qualify for assistance if tribal law defines this. Even if the state where the tribe is located does not include non-relative caregivers in their definition of a family unit, the tribe may choose to go beyond state law and include this in its own definition.

Tribal TANF Services

Tribes have the same flexibility as states to determine the types of services they will provide through their TANF programs. These services are:

The services offered depend on the needs of the tribe or village as well as the total size. Smaller reservations may choose to offer limited services compared to large tribes. To learn about the services offered by the specific Tribal TANF program in your state, contact the regional office that oversees your location. Refer to “Tribal TANF Contact Information” on [page 71](#) of this guide for a list of regional office contact information.

Tribal TANF Work Requirements

Like states, Tribal TANF programs have work requirements that you must follow to continue receiving cash assistance. However, these requirements are more flexible and differ from states because of the difficulty of finding and maintaining solid employment on reservation lands.

Tribes are given more freedom to define “work activities” than states are. They may choose to count additional activities toward work activity requirements beyond the 12 types of activities defined by the federal government. Refer to the section “Work Activity Requirements” on [page 19](#) of this guide for a list of all 12 types of federal work activities, and contact your local tribal organization for more information.

Tribal TANF Lifetime Limits and Extensions

While states and territories adhere to a federal lifetime benefit limit of 60 months (many of which have even shorter limits within their respective states), tribes have more flexibility in defining lifetime limits.

Each tribe-specific program defines its own lifetime limit and process for extending benefits. Hardship exceptions still apply to Tribal TANF recipients. Those experiencing a hardship can receive extended assistance depending on the Tribal TANF program's definition of qualifying hardships. For tribal-specific information about lifetime limits or extensions, contact your Tribal TANF program directly or reach out to one of the regional offices found in the "Tribal TANF Contact Information" section on [page 71](#) of this guide.

Tribal TANF Non-Assistance

The purpose of the TANF program is to promote employment and self-sufficiency, which is why Tribal TANF programs can choose to provide a variety of non-assistance to its members. Non-assistance is any activity that promotes the four main goals of the TANF program that may not meet the OFA's definition of "assistance," which is cash, payments, vouchers, and other forms of benefits designed to meet a family's ongoing basic needs.

The following types of non-assistance services are available through Tribal TANF programs:

- 1.** Nonrecurring, short-term benefits
 - a.** Must address a specific crisis or time of need; cannot expect to meet or solve ongoing issues
 - b.** Cannot extend beyond four months
- 2.** Work subsidies - employers receive payments from Tribal TANF programs that cover the expenses related to hiring a new employee, promoting employment and new hires
- 3.** Child care
- 4.** Case management
- 5.** Transportation for employed individuals
- 6.** Counseling for:
 - a.** Other public assistance programs, like Medicaid, CHIP, Native Employment Works and Food Stamps
- 7.** Refundable earned income tax credits
- 8.** Contributions to individual development accounts, which help individuals save money for education expenses or home purchases



TANF and Child Support

TANF recipients are required to cooperate with child support laws while receiving public cash assistance. In most states and territories, TANF program participants cannot receive child support payments while receiving cash benefits. Some states, however, do allow beneficiaries to continue receiving a portion of child support payments. These states allow TANF recipients to continue receiving child support payments if restricting the payments would cause further harm.

TANF and Child Support Payments in U.S. States and Territories

States that allow TANF recipients to receive a portion of their monthly child support payments are known as “pass through” states. In other words, they allow some of this payment to “pass through” to the TANF program participant without affecting their eligibility for the TANF program.

States can choose whether to enact this pass-through policy. Those that have pass-through options determine the exact amount that TANF recipients can receive. The table below defines the states that have a pass-through policy for monthly child support payments as well as the specific pass-through amount.

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates the state or territory is a fill-the-gap state, which means the specific amount that is passed through to the TANF recipient depends on unmet need. TANF programs calculate the pass-through amounts in these states by subtracting the family’s income from the state’s maximum eligibility standard.

Location	Pass-Through
Alabama	No
Alaska	\$50
Arizona	No

Arkansas	No
California	\$50
Colorado	100% of the payment
Connecticut	\$50
Delaware	\$50
District of Columbia	\$150
Florida	No
Georgia	*
Guam	No
Hawaii	No
Idaho	No
Illinois	\$100 for one child, \$200 for two or more children
Indiana	No
Iowa	No
Kansas	No
Kentucky	No
Louisiana	No
Maine	\$50

Location	Pass-Through
Maryland	\$100 for one child, \$200 for two or more children
Massachusetts	\$50
Michigan	No
Minnesota	100% of the payment
Mississippi	No
Missouri	No
Montana	\$100
Nebraska	No
Nevada	No
New Hampshire	No
New Jersey	\$100
New Mexico	\$100 for one child, \$200 for two or more children
New York	\$100 for one child, \$200 for two or more children
North Carolina	No
North Dakota	No
Ohio	No
Oklahoma	No

Oregon	\$50 per child / \$200 max.
Pennsylvania	\$100 for one child, \$200 for two or more children
Puerto Rico	\$50
Rhode Island	\$50
South Carolina	\$75
South Dakota	No
Tennessee	*
Texas	\$75
U.S. Virgin Islands	No
Utah	No
Vermont	\$50
Virginia	\$100
Washington	\$50 for one child, \$100 for two or more children
West Virginia	\$100 for one child, \$200 for two or more children
Wisconsin	75% of payment
Wyoming	No

Emergency TANF Assistance

In times of crisis or emergency, states can implement non-recurrent short-term benefits through their TANF programs. These one-time benefits are not meant to solve long-term issues and do not extend beyond four months.

Emergency TANF assistance is different from regular TANF cash benefits. Individuals who receive an emergency cash payment through TANF are not held to the same requirements as regular TANF recipients, which are:

- Work activity requirements
- Lifetime benefit limits
- Child support prohibition

Types of TANF Emergency Assistance

Each state, territory and tribe determines the types of emergency assistance it will offer through their TANF program. Emergency assistance is designed to resolve a variety of short-term crises and emergency scenarios.

States use leftover TANF funds to provide these non-recurrent, short-term emergency funds in a variety of programs:

- Utility and energy assistance
- Emergency housing assistance
- Vehicle support or payments
- Burial services
- Domestic violence assistance
- Transportation assistance
- Family support services
- Clothing stipends
- Family or caregiver assistance
- Scholarship assistance

For more information about the availability of emergency benefits, refer to the contact information section on [page 8](#) of this guide to get in contact with your local agency.

TANF Fraud

To continue receiving benefits from the TANF program, you must follow the program's guidelines and avoid fraud.

What is considered TANF fraud?

The most common cases of TANF fraud are:

- When applicants provide false information on their TANF applications to receive benefits or to increase their benefit amount
- When individuals use TANF cash assistance to purchase restricted items or purchase items from restricted businesses (see [page 65](#) of this guide for a list of restrictions and penalties)
- When a retailer that has been disqualified to participate in the TANF program lies on their application to become an approved EBT retailer again
- When a retailer accepts TANF funds as payment for unauthorized items

What happens if I receive a higher benefit amount than what I am entitled to and I do not report it?

TANF recipients who do not report changes or overpayments can be penalized and even lose the assistance altogether.



Does the government take action against those who commit TANF fraud?

Each state and territory has its own process for investigating suspected TANF fraud. State TANF agencies conduct undercover investigations on retailers and individuals suspected of fraud and work with federal law enforcement officials to reduce instances of fraud.

How can I report TANF fraud?

If you have credible information that someone is committing TANF fraud, report it right away.

You can report TANF fraud to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) via phone by calling the hotline below:

- 1-800-HHS-TIPS (1-800-447-8477)

You can also report TANF fraud to your state's TANF agency. Depending on where you live, you may be able to report fraud online, by mail or by phone. Refer to [page 8](#) of this guide to find your state's TANF contact information.

Additional Resources

In addition to TANF, the federal government offers other resources to families and individuals who

need financial assistance. To qualify for these programs, individuals and families have to meet low income requirements. Those who qualify for TANF automatically qualify for the following government assistance programs.

Food Benefits

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/state-directory>

Housing Benefits

- Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8): https://www.hud.gov/topics/housing_choice_voucher_program_section_8
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/programs/liheap>

Healthcare Benefits

- Medicaid: <https://www.medicaid.gov/>

Sources

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- 1.2 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/oro/priorities/covid-19-resources-for-human-services-leaders>

2. What is the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program?

- 2.1 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/tanf/about>

3. Basic TANF Eligibility

- 3.1. <https://www.benefits.gov/benefit/613>
- 3.2. <https://www.hhs.gov/answers/programs-for-families-and-children/what-is-tanf/index.html>

4. Federal TANF Contact Information

- 4.1. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/about>

5. TANF Programs and Contact Information by State

- 5.1. (Same state-specific sources as requirements below)

6. What are the services that state TANF programs may provide?

- 6.1. (Same state-specific sources as requirements below)

7. TANF Program Eligibility Requirements

7.1 Income Requirements

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7.2 Work Search Requirements

7.2.1. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/family-income-support/temporary-assistance-for-needy-families>

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7.3 Behavioral Requirements

8. TANF Program Requirements by Location

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<https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/frequently-asked-questions>

8.4 <https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dss/tanf.html>

8.5 <https://dhs.dc.gov/service/tanf-district-families>

8.6 <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/access/docs/tcafactsheet.pdf>

8.7 <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/tanf-eligibility-requirements>

8.8 <http://humanservices.hawaii.gov/bessd/tanf/>

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- 8.21 <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/atap/default.aspx>
- 8.22 <https://portal.ct.gov/DSS/Economic-Security/Economic-Security---Financial-Assistance>
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9. TANF Application Process

9.1 How to Apply for TANF Benefits

9.1.2 https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/urban_report.pdf

9.2 Information Needed for a TANF Application

9.2.1 https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/urban_report.pdf

9.3 Documents Needed to Complete the TANF Application

9.3.1 https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/urban_report.pdf

9.4 Documents Verifying Personal Information

9.4.1 <https://www.uscis.gov/i-9-central/acceptable-documents>

9.5 Documents Verifying State Residency

9.5.1 <https://www.uscis.gov/i-9-central/acceptable-documents>

9.6 Documents Verifying Proof of Income

9.6.1 <https://turbo.intuit.com/blog/home-ownership/proof-of-income-1204/>

9.7 Documents Verifying Assets

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10. How to Apply for TANF In Every Location 10.1 (Links in guide)

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11.2 Preparing for the TANF Interview

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11.3 During the TANF Interview

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12. TANF Denials and Appeals

12.1 Common Reasons for Denial

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12.2 When to File an Appeal

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13. TANF Lifetime Limits and Extensions

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13.2 When an Extension Can be Filed

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- 13.3.40 https://dss.sc.gov/media/2167/tanf_policy_manual_vol-51.pdf
- 13.3.41 <https://dss.sd.gov/docs/economicassistance/tanf/TANFStatePlan.pdf>
- 13.3.42 <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/23.21%20Families%20First%20Time%20Limits.pdf>
- 13.3.43 [https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc= &p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=1&pt=15&ch=372&rl=455](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc= &p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=1&pt=15&ch=372&rl=455)
- 13.3.44 <https://jobs.utah.gov/edo/stateplans/tanfstateplan.pdf>
- 13.3.45 https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/ESD/Docs/RU/Tiime_Limits.pdf
- 13.3.46 <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/63.2-613/>
- 13.3.47 <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/node/594/node/10366>
- 13.3.48 https://dhhr.wv.gov/bcf/Services/familyassistance/PolicyManual/Documents/Chapter%2015/ch15_6.pdf
- 13.3.49 <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/manuals/w-2-manual/Production/pdf/W2ManualRelease1601.pdf>
- 13.3.50 <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED502532.pdf>

14. TANF Benefits

14.1 Maximum Monthly Benefits by Location

14.1.1 <https://www.cbpp.org/research/family-income-support/more-states-raising-tanf-benefits-to-boost-families-economic-security>

14.1.2 https://www.urban.org/research/publication/welfare-rules-databook-state-tanf-policies-july-2018/view/full_report

14.2 How TANF Benefits are Distributed

14.2.1 <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/ebt>

14.2.3 <https://www.federalreserve.gov/publications/2017-July-prepaid-card.htm>

14.3 What can I purchase with TANF cash benefits?

14.3.1 <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2010-title45-vol2/pdf/CFR-2010-title45-vol2-sec260-31.pdf>

14.4 What items are restricted for purchase with TANF cash benefits?

14.4.1 TANF Restrictions and Penalties by Location

14.4.1.1 <https://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/ebt-electronic-benefit-transfer-card-restrictions-for-public-assistance.aspx>

15. Tribal TANF

15.1 Tribal TANF Contact Information

15.1.1 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/ofa-regional-tanf-managers>

15.2 How Tribal TANF Works

15.2.1 <https://www.benefits.gov/benefit/627>

15.3 Tribal TANF Program Eligibility

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/tribal/tribal-tanf> <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2000-title45-vol2/pdf/CFR-2000-title45-vol2-sec286-7.5.pdf>

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ofa/tanf_plan_requirements_2017_2020_0.pdf

15.3.1 Can a family receive Tribal TANF assistance if the child is living with a legal guardian?

15.3.1.1. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tribal-qa#TANF_Child_Only_Cases

15.3.2 Can a noncustodial parent qualify for TANF assistance?

15.3.2.1 https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tribal-qa#TANF_Child_Only_Cases

15.3.3 Can a Tribal TANF program provide assistance to child-only cases where a child is living with a non-relative caregiver?

15.3.3.1 https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tribal-qa#TANF_Child_Only_Cases

15.4 Tribal TANF Services

15.4.1 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/tribal/tribal-tanf>

15.5 Tribal TANF Work Requirements

15.5.1 <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/22196/412990-A-Descriptive-Study-of-Tribal-Temporary-Assistance-for-Needy-Families-TANF-Programs.PDF>

15.5.2 https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/work_requirements_0.pdf

15.6 Tribal TANF Lifetime Limits and Extensions

15.6.1 <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/22196/412990-A-Descriptive-Study-of-Tribal-Temporary-Assistance-for-Needy-Families-TANF-Programs.PDF>

15.6.2 https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tribal-qa#Work_Activities

15.7 Tribal TANF Non-Assistance

15.7.1 https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tribal-qa#TANF_Child_Only_Cases 68

16. TANF and Child Support

<https://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/child-support-and-tanf-interaction-literature-review-april-2003>

16.1 TANF and Child Support Payments by Location

15.1.1 <https://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/state-policy-pass-through-disregard-child-support.aspx>

17. Emergency TANF Assistance

17.1 Types of TANF Emergency Assistance

17.1.1 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/examples-non-recurrent-short-term-benefits>

17.1.2 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tanf-acf-pi-2020-01>

18. TANF Fraud

18.1 What is considered TANF fraud?

18.1.1 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/faq/how-do-i-report-welfare-fraud>

18.1.2 <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2010-title45-vol2/pdf/CFR-2010-title45-vol2-sec260-3.1.pdf>

18.2 What happens if I receive a higher benefit amount than what I am entitled to and do not report it?

18.2.1 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/faq/how-do-i-report-welfare-fraud>

18.3 Does the government take action against those who commit TANF fraud?

18.3.1 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/faq/how-do-i-report-welfare-fraud>

18.4 How can I report TANF fraud?

18.4.1 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/faq/how-do-i-report-welfare-fraud>

19. Additional Resources

19.1.1 <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/state-directory>

19.1.2 https://www.hud.gov/topics/housing_choice_voucher_program_section_8

19.1.3 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/programs/liheap>

19.1.4 <https://www.medicaid.gov/>

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TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES