TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES

12th Report to Congress

Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance

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Executive Summary

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides a fixed block grant of about $16.5 billion to states, territories (Guam, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico), and Washington, DC. Additionally, federally-recognized American Indian tribes and Alaska Native organizations may elect to operate their own TANF programs. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) created TANF, repealing the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and related programs.

The TANF program is intended to foster economic security and stability for low-income families with children. TANF funds monthly cash assistance payments to low-income families with children, as well as a wide range of services that are "reasonably calculated" to address the program's four broad purposes, which are to:

> (1) provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;
>
> (2) end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
>
> (3) prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and
>
> (4) encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

At the federal level, TANF and Tribal TANF are administered by the Office of Family Assistance (OFA) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). OFA also administers the Native Employment Works (NEW) program, Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF) grants, Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG), and Tribal TANF-Child Welfare Coordination grants.

This report provides data for fiscal years (FY) 2014 and 2015 and presents information regarding TANF expenditures and caseloads, work participation and earnings, the characteristics and financial circumstances of TANF recipients, TANF performance measures, interactions between TANF and child support, as well as specific provisions of state TANF programs. In addition, this report documents current family self-sufficiency and stability-related research, describes federal efforts to promote healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood, provides national data on out-of-wedlock births, and presents child poverty statistics. Below is a short summary of each chapter in this report.

Chapter I – TANF Spending

In FY 2015, states received federal TANF block grants totaling about $16.5 billion. In addition, 20 qualifying states received a combined total of over $685 million in FY 2015 Contingency Funds.

Combined federal TANF and state maintenance-of-effort (MOE) expenditures and transfers totaled $31.7 billion in FY 2015. Nationwide, states continue to exercise the flexibility of the block grant to address a wide range of needs of TANF eligible participants within the four broad categories of the statute. FY 2015 was the first year that states used a revised financial reporting form (the ACF-196R), which clarified and expanded the list of expenditure categories and also improved the accounting methodology.

Chapter II – Caseload

In FY 2015, a monthly average of 1.63 million families, with 4.17 million recipients, received TANF assistance funded either by federal TANF block grant funds or state MOE funds, including assistance funded through separate state programs (SSPs). These caseload figures only reflect the number of families receiving "assistance," which is largely comprised of monthly cash assistance payments to families. Over time, a growing proportion of TANF cases are considered "child-only." These are cases in which no adult receives assistance; assistance payments are only for the child or children.

Between FY 2014 and FY 2015, the average monthly caseload decreased slightly by about 19,000 families (1.1 percent). The average monthly number of families receiving TANF or SSP-MOE assistance declined in 48 states or territories from FY 2014 to FY 2015, increased in two states, and was essentially unchanged in four states over that same time period.

Chapter III – Work Participation Rates

Work participation rates measure the degree to which families receiving assistance in TANF and SSPs are engaged in work activities specified under federal law. The TANF statute specifies the work participation rate requirements for states. States must meet both an overall work participation rate and a two-parent work participation rate, or face a financial penalty.

The national average overall participation rate achieved in FY 2015 was 48.4 percent, an increase from the FY 2014 national average overall rate of 36.6 percent. The national average two-parent rate achieved in FY 2015 was 60.6 percent, nearly twice as high as FY 2014's 30.8 percent national average. The increase was largely due to policy changes in a subset of states.

Twenty states failed one or both work participation rates in FY 2014. Nine states failed the overall rate alone or both rates, and 11 states failed the two-parent rate only. Fifteen states failed one or both work participation rates in FY 2015. Of these states, 5 failed both rates and 10 failed just the two-parent rate.

Chapter IV– Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients

TANF program data is collected monthly and reported quarterly to HHS, as required of states. The data include disaggregated case record information on the families receiving assistance, families no longer receiving assistance, and families newly-approved for assistance.

In FY 2015, the average number of recipients in TANF families was 2.3, including an average of 1.8 child recipients. Among recipient families, 50.1 percent had only one child.

There were approximately 649,000 child-only cases (those in which no adult is receiving TANF assistance), which accounted for 48.6 percent of the total TANF caseload.

In FY 2015, 75.4 percent of children receiving TANF assistance in FY 2015 were under the age of 12. Race/ethnicity data demonstrate that Hispanic children comprised 39.3 percent of children receiving TANF assistance in FY 2015, while 29.0 percent of TANF children were Black, and 25.9 percent were White.

In terms of educational attainment, 53.9 percent of TANF adult recipients in FY 2015 had completed high school (or its equivalent), 38.6 percent had less than a high school level of education, and 7.5 percent of adult recipients had achieved more than a high school level of education.

The average monthly amount of assistance for TANF recipient families was $398. In FY 2015, 18.4 percent of TANF families had non-TANF income. Some 12.8 percent of TANF families had earned income with an average monthly amount of $946, while 6.0 percent of the TANF families had unearned income with an average monthly amount of $447. 11.4 percent of TANF families received child support in FY 2015, with an average monthly amount of $209. States reported that 84.3 percent of TANF families received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in FY 2015, which is consistent with levels over the previous decade. These families received average monthly SNAP benefits of $378.

Chapter V – TANF Performance Measures

HHS is required under Section 413(d) of the Social Security Act to annually measure and rank state performance in moving TANF recipients into private sector employment. Beginning with performance year FY 2001, ACF has calculated state job entry, job retention and earnings gains rates based on matching monthly listings of adult TANF recipients against the quarterly wage files on the National Directory of New Hires. ACF continues to use this data source to report on employment among TANF recipients, though these rates are affected by economic and demographic factors and state eligibility rules as well as state performance.

Chapter VI – Specific Provisions of State TANF Programs

The tables in this chapter were derived from information collected in the "Welfare Rules Databook: State TANF Policies as of July 2015," published by the Urban Institute with funding by ACF and HHS' Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE). These tables include state-by-state information on benefit levels, work requirements, eligibility and benefit determination, sanction policies, cash diversion programs, time limits, domestic violence provisions, and family cap policies.

Chapter VII – Work and Earnings

In 2015, 59 percent of low-income single mothers with children under 18 were employed. For the one-fifth of families with the lowest income, the average annual earnings of single mother families (including those with and without earnings) in 2015 was $3,068 (in 2015 dollars).

Chapter VIII – Child Poverty

In 2015, the federal poverty threshold for a family of four (two adults plus two children) was $24,036. The percentage of children (persons under 18) in poverty declined from 21.1 percent in 2014 to 19.7 percent in 2015. The total number of children in poverty in 2015 was 14.5 million.

Chapter IX – Out-of-Wedlock and Teen Births

Section 411 of the Social Security Act requires HHS to report data on the extent to which states are decreasing out-of-wedlock pregnancies. Since data on out-of-wedlock pregnancies are not collected, this section includes the latest available information about non-marital and teen birth trends, including birth rates for unmarried women, the share of all births that were by unmarried women, teen birth rates, and the ratio of out-of-wedlock to total births. The birth rate for unmarried women aged 15 to 44 years decreased for seven consecutive years from 51.8 births per 1,000 unmarried women in 2008 to 43.5 births per 1,000 unmarried women in 2015. The proportion of births to unmarried women declined slightly from 41.0 percent in 2009 to 40.2 percent in both 2014 and 2015 after a steady increase since 1997.

Chapter X – TANF and Child Support

Preliminary data for FY 2015 show that the child support program served 15.9 million children nationwide. Due in large part to the TANF caseload decline over the past two decades, the vast majority of child support services are now provided to non-public assistance cases. There were about 1.6 million child support cases in which the child was currently receiving public assistance (defined as those families where the children are either recipients of TANF or entitled to Foster Care maintenance payments) in FY 2015, accounting for 10.5 percent of the total caseload. Cases in which the children were formerly receiving public assistance constituted 42.8 percent of the FY 2015 child support caseload and cases in which the children have never received public assistance constituted 46.7 percent of the FY 2015 caseload.

Federal law requires families that receive TANF cash assistance to assign their rights to child support to the state. States can then decide what portion, if any, of child support collections to transfer back to TANF families as unearned income and how much of that income should be considered during benefit and eligibility calculations.

Chapter XI – TANF and the Work Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), enacted on July 22, 2014, provides new opportunities for employment and training activities to be extended to TANF recipients. In particular, TANF programs are required partners in the WIOA One-Stop system for a local workforce area (unless the governor notifies the Secretaries of the Departments of Labor (DOL) and Health and Human Services otherwise). Further, states may coordinate TANF programs and services with other workforce programs administered by DOL and the Department of Education (ED) and submit a combined state plan in lieu of submitting separate plans.

HHS consulted with DOL and ED, and strongly encouraged human services programs to participate in state and local planning around WIOA implementation. OFA has played a key role in providing technical assistance to TANF agencies and other human services programs regarding strategies for and benefits of collaboration.

Chapter XII- Tribal TANF and Native Employment Works (NEW)

By the close of FY 2015, 70 Tribal TANF plans were approved to operate on behalf of 298 tribes and Alaska Native villages, and serve the non-reservation area of 122 counties. Grants allocated to approved programs totaled $192,103,592 in federal funds.

Federally-recognized tribes and Alaska Native organizations that were Tribal Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) program grantees under the former AFDC program are eligible to administer Native Employment Works (NEW) grants. NEW grants support work activities and other employment and training services. During NEW Program Year (PY) 2014-2015 (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015), there were 78 NEW grantees with $7,558,020 awarded in funding.

In addition, eight Tribal TANF grantees operate discretionary grants for coordination of Tribal TANF and child welfare services to tribal families at risk of child abuse or neglect. These Tribal TANF – Child Welfare Coordination grantees were selected through a competitive process in 2015. The project period for these grants is September 30, 2015 – September 29, 2020.

Chapter XIII - Promotion of Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood

On September 30, 2015, OFA announced grant awards to 90 organizations in 27 states and one territory to provide activities to promote healthy marriage and relationship education, responsible fatherhood, and reentry services for currently or formerly incarcerated fathers under four funding opportunities. The Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education Grant Program (HMRE), New Pathways for Fathers and Families (New Pathways), Responsible Fatherhood Opportunities for Reentry and Mobility (ReFORM), and National Resource Center for Marriage and Families (Resource Center) are part of HHS' community-based efforts to promote strong, healthy family formation and maintenance, responsible fatherhood and parenting, and reentry opportunities for fathers returning from incarceration.

Chapter XIV - Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability-Related Research

HHS sponsors, manages, and conducts research and evaluations pertaining to family self-sufficiency and stability, including projects relevant to management of the TANF program, studies of TANF recipients and low-income individuals, and low-income families more generally, while focusing on evaluations of service interventions to improve family economic well-being. HHS' research and evaluation activities in these areas are carried out primarily by the ACF Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) and ASPE. OPRE and ASPE coordinate their research agendas with each other and with other government agencies, independent research organizations, and private foundations, and collaborate with university-based research centers.

OPRE's and ASPE's family self-sufficiency and stability-related research and evaluation projects fall into five broad categories: (1) TANF and the safety net, (2) employment and the labor market, (3) education and training, (4) family strengthening, and (5) cross-cutting research.

I. TANF Spending

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) created the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, repealing Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and related programs. TANF funds monthly cash assistance payments to low-income families with children, as well as a wide range of services that are "reasonably calculated" to address the program's four broad purposes. These are to:

(1) provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;

(2) end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;

(3) prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and

(4) encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

TANF Funding

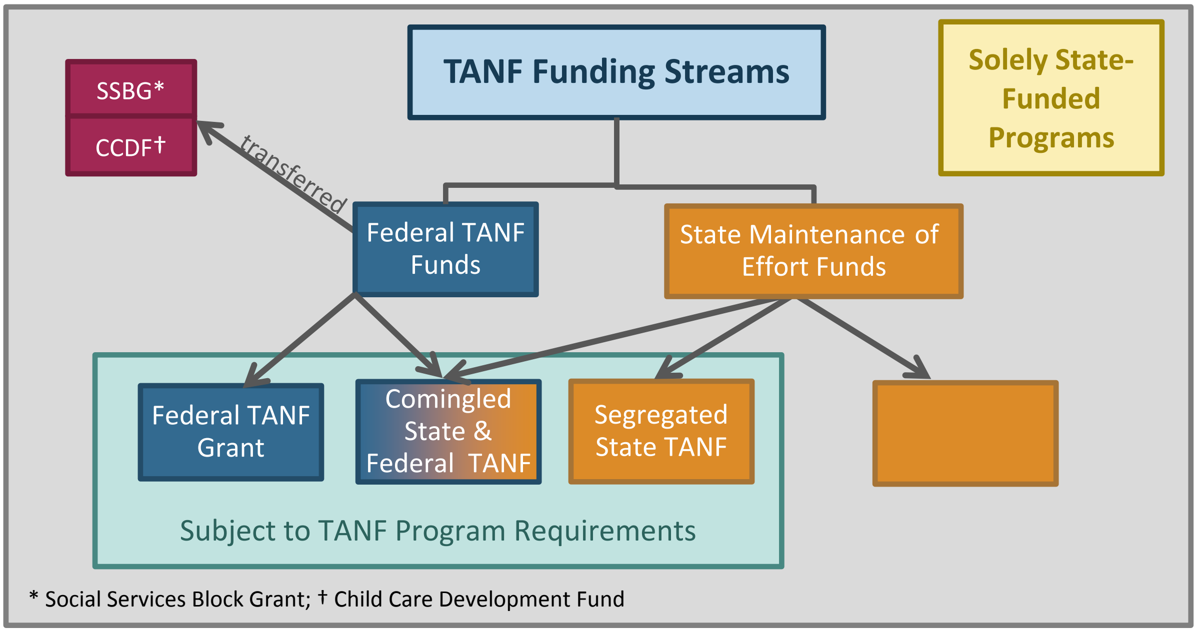
Funding Streams

TANF provides a fixed annual block grant of about $16.5 billion to states, territories,[1] and Washington, DC. Each state's block grant (or State Family Assistance Grant) is equal to its peak expenditures on AFDC-related programs between FY 1992 and FY 1995; the amount is fixed and has not changed since TANF's inception.

Federally-recognized American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native organizations may elect to operate their own TANF programs to serve eligible families. In FY 2015, Tribal TANF programs received $192,103,592 in federal funds. More information about Tribal TANF programs can be found in Chapter XII of this report.

In order to receive their full federal block grant, states must meet a maintenance-of-effort (MOE) requirement, which means they must maintain state expenditures for "eligible families" to receive benefits and services related to TANF purposes in an amount equal to at least 80 percent of state spending in FY 1994 for AFDC programs related to cash assistance, emergency assistance, job training, and child care (about $11.1 billion). This amount is reduced to 75 percent (about $10.4 billion) if a state meets its work participation rates (described in Chapter III). In addition to counting their own expenditures, current law allows states to count as MOE costs borne by third-parties, such as non-governmental organizations, as long as they satisfy MOE requirements.

[1] Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.



States may spend their MOE funds in three different ways:

- Commingled with federal funds and expended in the state's TANF program. These expenditures are subject to federal funding restrictions, TANF requirements, and MOE limitations.
- Segregated from federal funds, but spent in the state's TANF program. These expenditures are subject to many TANF requirements, including the work participation requirements, requirements to assign child support payments to the state, and reporting requirements. However, the federal five-year time limit on assistance and certain other federal funding restrictions do not apply to segregated state funds.
- In separate state programs (SSP), operated outside of the state's TANF program**.** These expenditures are somewhat more flexible, although they must be consistent with the goals of the TANF statute and other MOE requirements. Families receiving assistance through SSPs are not subject to federal requirements regarding child support assignment, the federal five-year time limit, and various other federal rules. However, the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA) that reauthorized the TANF program extended work participation requirements to SSP families with a work-eligible individual, beginning in FY 2007.

Some states also provide assistance through solely state-funded (SSF) programs, which are not funded by either TANF or MOE funds. SSF families are not subject to federal work participation requirements, and therefore states often create SSF programs to serve families that may have trouble meeting all of the work participation guidelines, such as two-parent families, families with a head-of-household with barriers to employment, and families with a head-of-household working toward a postsecondary degree. ACF does not collect expenditure data for SSF programs.

In addition to the basic block grant available to all states, some states receive TANF Contingency Funds. The Contingency Fund provides additional funding for states that meet certain criteria intended to reflect a poor economy. To be eligible to receive Contingency Funds, a state must meet one of two criteria: (1) the state's average unemployment rate for the most recent 3-month period for which data are available must equal or exceed 6.5 percent and this rate must be at least 10 percent higher than the average unemployment rate for the comparable 3-month period in either or both of the last two calendar years; or (2) the average number of SNAP participants in the state for the most recent three-month period for which data are available must exceed by at least 10 percent the average number of food stamp participants in the state in the comparable three-month period of either FY 1994 or FY 1995. These criteria have made almost all states eligible for Contingency Funds since 2009. With these criteria and limited funds, the Contingency Fund has run out of funds midway through recent fiscal years. States also must meet higher MOE requirements in order to qualify for Contingency Funds.

The Protect Our Kids Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-275) reauthorized the Contingency Fund through FY 2014 with an appropriation of $610 million available for eligible states in each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014. The Consolidated and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, appropriated $608 million for the Contingency Fund in FY 2015 and FY 2016, reserving in FY 2015 $15 million for welfare research funds and $10 million for the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP).

Use of Funds

In general, both TANF and MOE funds must be used to further one or more of the four TANF purposes. States also may expend federal TANF funds on previously permitted activities under the AFDC program and allowed to continue under TANF (such as certain expenditures for children involved in foster care or the juvenile justice system). States may reserve unobligated federal funds (except for Contingency Funds) for use in future fiscal years. States may transfer up to a total of 30 percent of their TANF funds to either the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) or the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) programs, with no more than 10 percent transferred to SSBG.

TANF and MOE funds can be spent on "assistance" and "non-assistance." "Assistance" includes cash and other benefits designed to meet a family's ongoing basic needs, as well as child care, transportation, and supports for families that are not employed. The major TANF program requirements (e.g., work requirements, time limits on federal assistance, and data reporting) apply only to families receiving "assistance." "Non-assistance" benefits are those that do not fall within the definition of assistance and include expenditures such as child care, transportation, and other work supports provided to employed families, non-recurrent short-term benefits, Individual Development Accounts, refundable Earned Income Tax Credits, work subsidies to employers, and services such as education and training, case management, job search, and counseling.

States have broad flexibility to design and implement programs, including determinations on the type and amount of assistance payments, the range of services to be provided, and the rules for determining who is eligible for benefits (e.g., states set their own income definitions for "needy" families and may use different standards for different programs).

Expenditure Overview: FY 2015 Financial Data[2]

In FY 2015, states received federal TANF block grants totaling about $16.5 billion. In addition, 20 qualifying states received a combined total of over $685 million in FY 2015 Contingency Funds. At the beginning of FY 2015, states reported having $3.4 billion in funds carried over from prior years, which consisted of carry-over block grant funds and TANF Emergency Contingency Funds.[3] At the end of FY 2015, the amount of unspent funds to carry over to FY 2016 was $4.1 billion.

Combined federal TANF and state MOE expenditures and transfers totaled $31.7 billion in FY 2015. FY 2015 was the first year that states used a revised financial reporting form (the ACF-196R), which clarified and expanded the list of expenditure categories and also improved the accounting methodology. The new level of detail revealed that states spent about 16 percent of TANF and MOE funds on a combination of child welfare services, pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs, and services for children and youth (including after-school and home visiting programs). See the section below on *TANF Financial Data Reporting Revisions* for more information.

Figure 1-A provides an overview of the use of funds in FY 2015 from all sources, and Figure 1-B illustrates how states used their TANF and MOE funds in FY 2014 and FY 2015, combining certain expenditure categories that reflect similar activities, such as child care spent in the TANF program and TANF funds transferred to CCDF.[4] Figures 1-C and 1-D show how each state used its TANF and MOE funds for the spending categories of basic assistance; work, education, and training; and child care. On the national level in FY 2015, 25 percent of combined TANF and MOE funds were used for basic assistance (largely cash aid to meet a family's ongoing basic needs), 17 percent for child care (spent or transferred), and 8 percent for work, education, and training activities.

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[2] Financial expenditures reflect adjustments and corrections by states and are current as of August 2017.

[3] The TANF Emergency Contingency Fund, established by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), provided up to $5 billion to help states, territories, and tribes that had an increase in basic assistance expenditures, or an increase in expenditures related to non-recurrent short-term benefits or subsidized employment in FY 2009 and FY 2010. FY 2015 expenditures include Emergency Contingency Funds from the FY 2009 and FY 2010 awards, as these funds are available until expended.

[4] Note that the tables and figures do not include expenditures by tribes and the territories of Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and Guam.

FY 2015 data also show that states spent about 10 percent ($3.2 billion) of their TANF and MOE funds on program management, which includes assessments and case management services in addition to administrative and systems costs, and 8 percent ($2.6 billion) went to refundable state tax credits. About 7 percent ($2.3 billion) of all TANF and MOE funds were spent on child welfare services (reported separately for the first time in FY 2015), including foster care and child welfare services and payments authorized solely under prior law,[5] and 6 percent ($2.0 billion) went to pre-kindergarten or Head Start programs.

Due to the modification and expansion of categories on the new reporting form, the category of "other" decreased 12 percentage points from 15 percent in FY 2014 to 3 percent in FY 2015. For example, new categories like pre-Kindergarten/Head Start and Services for Children and Youth allowed states to report expenditures more accurately.

Figure 1-E shows beginning and end-of-year federal TANF balances for each state, while Figure 1-F provides a summary of state MOE expenditures by state.

These tables and all of the FY 2015 financial data resources, including an interactive map, national and state pie charts, and a fact sheet, can be found at: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tanf-and-moe-spending-and-transfers-by-activity-fy-2015. FY 2014 financial data tables and pie charts can also be found on OFA's website.

For definitions of each category, please see the Program Instruction and the completion instructions for the ACF-196R Form, which was used to report TANF spending in FY 2015. These instructions can be found at: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tanf-acf-pi-2014-02.

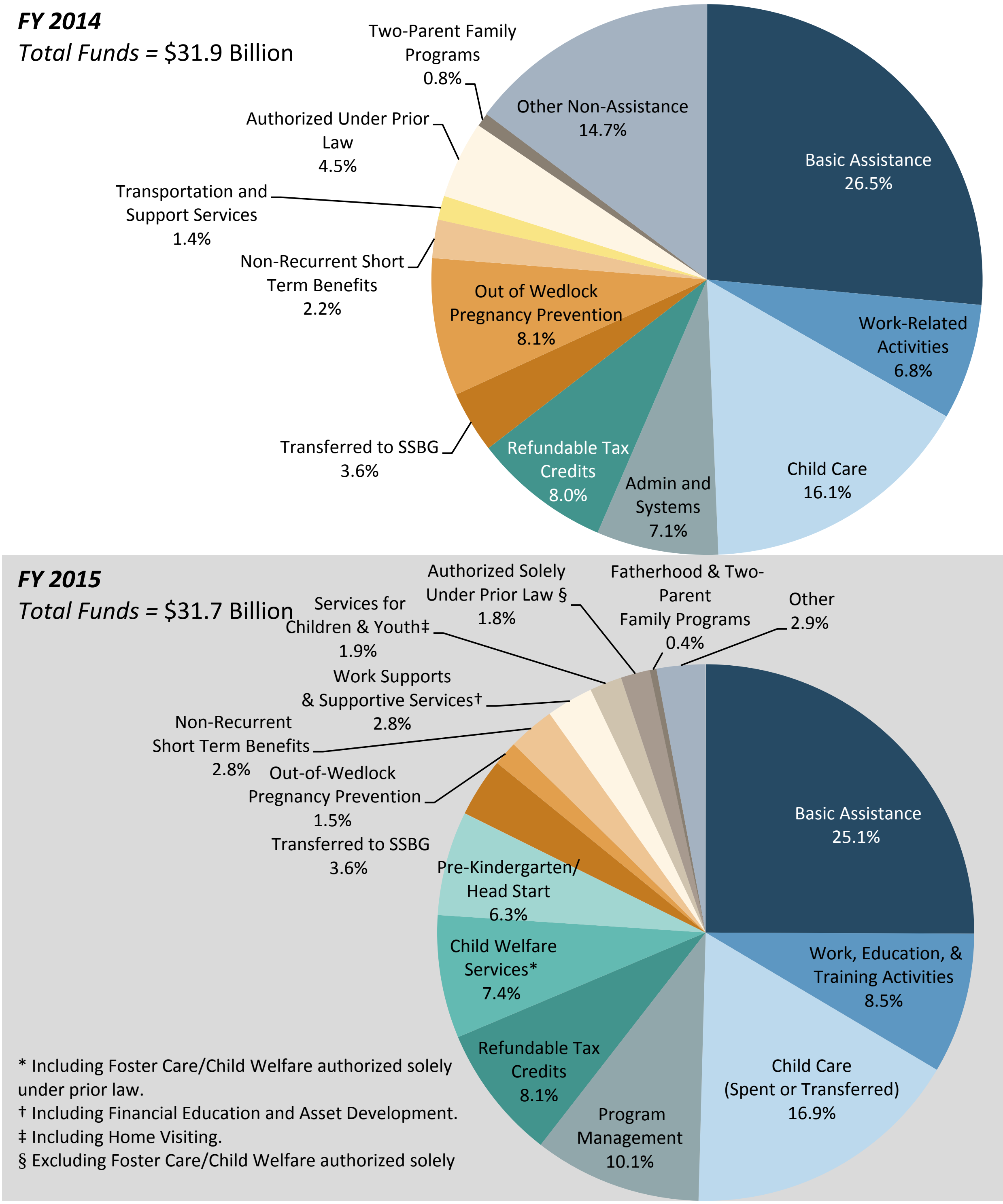
[5] Activities that are not otherwise consistent with the purposes of TANF and/or with the prohibitions in section 408, but are allowable expenditures of federal TANF funds as activities that were in effect on September 30, 1995, or (at the option of the state) August 21, 1996.

Figure 1-A: Federal TANF and State MOE Expenditures and Transfers Summary by Category and Funding Stream, FY 2015

Spending Category	Federal Funds	State MOE in TANF and Separate State Programs	All Funds	Percent of Total Funds Used
Basic Assistance	$4,273,006,781	$3,664,573,037	$7,937,579,818	25.1%
Basic Assistance (exc. Relative Foster Care Maintenance Payments and Adoption and Guardianship Subsidies)	$4,105,466,768	$3,550,040,478	$7,655,507,246	24.2%
Relative Foster Care Maintenance Payments & Adoption/ Guardianship Subsidies	$167,540,013	$114,532,559	$282,072,572	0.9%
Assistance Authorized Solely Under Prior Law	$673,865,094		$673,865,094	2.1%
Foster Care Payments	$357,387,339		$357,387,339	1.1%
Juvenile Justice Payments	$50,184,304		$50,184,304	0.2%
Emergency Assistance Authorized Solely Under Prior Law	$266,293,451		$266,293,451	0.8%
Non-Assistance Authorized Solely Under Prior Law	$654,434,734		$654,434,734	2.1%
Child Welfare or Foster Care Services	$410,343,831		$410,343,831	1.3%
Juvenile Justice Services	$64,859,342		$64,859,342	0.2%
Emergency Services Authorized Solely Under Prior Law	$179,231,561		$179,231,561	0.6%
Work, Education, and Training Activities	$2,129,207,799	$557,177,053	$2,686,384,852	8.5%
Subsidized Employment	$155,900,616	$30,509,342	$186,409,958	0.6%
Education and Training	$734,480,508	$210,451,829	$944,932,337	3.0%
Additional Work Activities	$1,238,826,675	$316,215,882	$1,555,042,557	4.9%
Work Supports	$420,499,695	$47,683,012	$468,182,707	1.5%
Early Care and Education	$1,305,882,561	$4,779,378,046	$6,085,260,607	19.2%
Child Care (Assistance and Non-Assistance)	$1,253,443,722	$2,842,869,574	$4,096,313,296	12.9%
Pre-Kindergarten/Head Start	$52,438,839	$1,936,508,472	$1,988,947,311	6.3%
Financial Education and Asset Development	$1,544,074	$23,688	$1,567,762	0.0%
Refundable Earned Income Tax Credits	$166,587,560	$1,821,745,304	$1,988,332,864	6.3%
Non-EITC Refundable State Tax Credits	$0	$584,162,935	$584,162,935	1.8%
Non-Recurrent Short Term Benefits	$319,027,445	$565,106,139	$884,133,584	2.8%
Supportive Services	$227,995,481	$197,400,204	$425,395,685	1.3%
Services for Children and Youth	$226,206,406	$352,782,561	$578,988,967	1.8%
Prevention of Out-of-Wedlock Pregnancies	$129,317,099	$339,638,896	$468,955,995	1.5%
Fatherhood & Two-Parent Family Formation/ Maintenance Programs	$88,017,124	$40,287,809	$128,304,933	0.4%
Child Welfare Services	$1,016,785,664	$560,704,036	$1,577,489,700	5.0%
Family Support/ Family Preservation/ Reunification Services	$545,042,188	$297,505,301	$842,547,489	2.7%
Adoption Services	$12,982,617	$13,288,464	$26,271,081	0.1%
Additional Child Welfare Services	$458,760,859	$249,910,271	$708,671,130	2.2%
Home Visiting Programs	$21,662,270	$7,629,312	$29,291,582	0.1%
Program Management	$2,119,618,203	$1,074,686,869	$3,194,305,072	10.1%
Administrative Costs	$1,155,524,828	$798,826,417	$1,954,351,245	6.2%
Assessment/Service Provision	$760,089,396	$204,455,525	$964,544,921	3.0%
Systems	$204,003,979	$71,404,927	$275,408,906	0.9%
Other	$188,992,662	$740,225,420	$929,218,082	2.9%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	$13,962,650,652	$15,333,204,321	$29,295,854,973	92.5%
Transferred to CCDF Discretionary	$1,251,209,372		$1,251,209,372	4.0%
Transferred to SSBG	$1,125,205,136		$1,125,205,136	3.6%
Total Transfers	$2,376,414,508		$2,376,414,508	7.5%
TOTAL FUNDS USED	$16,339,065,160	$15,333,204,321	$31,672,269,481	100.0%
Federal Unliquidated Obligations	$1,446,369,454		$1,446,369,454	
Unobligated Balance	$2,625,294,837		$2,625,294,837	

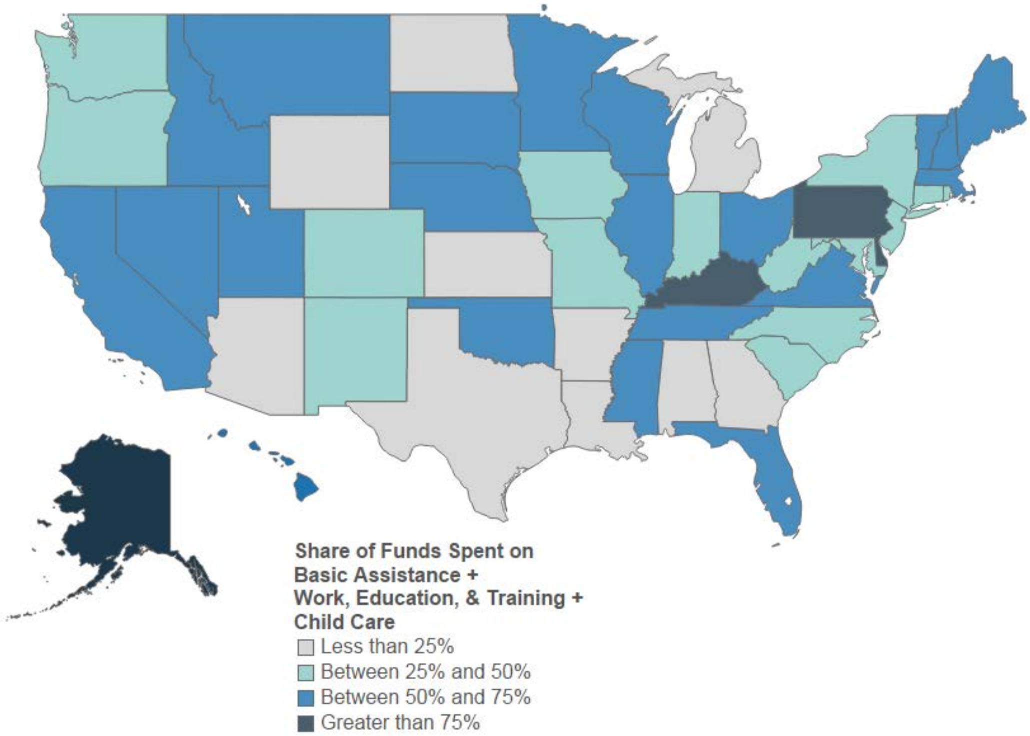
Source: [TANF Financial Data – FY 2015](), Table A.1. FY 2014 data can be found at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tanf-financial-data-fy-2014, Table A.1.

Figure 1-B: TANF and MOE Spending and Transfers by Category, FY 2014 and FY 2015



Source: TANF Financial Data – FY 2014 and TANF Financial Data – FY 2015. See definitions of categories at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tanf-moe-spending-and-transfers-2015-definitions.

Figure 1-C: FY 2015 TANF and MOE Spending on Basic Assistance; Work, Education, and Training Activities; and Child Care



Source: [TANF Financial Data – FY 2015](#).

Figure 1-D: Percentage of TANF and MOE Funds Used for Basic Assistance; Work, Education, and Training Activities; and Child Care, FY 2015

State	Basic Assistance	Work, Education, & Training Activities	Child Care (spent or transferred)	Total
U.S. Total	25.1%	8.5%	16.9%	50.4%
Alabama	18.6%	2.1%	3.5%	24.1%
Alaska	52.9%	11.5%	21.3%	85.7%
Arizona	11.2%	0.3%	0.6%	12.1%
Arkansas	6.4%	11.0%	0.3%	17.7%
California	42.8%	16.0%	13.5%	72.3%
Colorado	25.5%	3.6%	1.4%	30.4%
Connecticut	13.8%	3.2%	11.2%	28.2%
Delaware	21.3%	6.1%	51.2%	78.5%
Dist. of Columbia	28.8%	14.3%	22.3%	65.4%
Florida	18.7%	5.0%	31.8%	55.5%
Georgia	18.0%	2.3%	4.1%	24.4%
Hawaii	19.1%	35.9%	1.8%	56.9%
Idaho	18.0%	11.9%	23.5%	53.4%
Illinois	5.0%	1.5%	63.1%	69.7%
Indiana	6.9%	5.1%	34.1%	46.1%
Iowa	18.5%	5.9%	22.5%	47.0%
Kansas	12.1%	2.1%	8.7%	22.9%
Kentucky	55.0%	12.9%	18.4%	86.3%
Louisiana	8.2%	12.4%	2.3%	22.9%
Maine	47.5%	3.6%	11.3%	62.4%
Maryland	18.5%	5.6%	4.3%	28.4%
Massachusetts	23.9%	15.8%	29.8%	69.6%
Michigan	10.9%	0.3%	1.6%	12.8%
Minnesota	15.6%	10.3%	24.8%	50.7%
Mississippi	12.1%	17.7%	20.3%	50.1%
Missouri	18.4%	6.4%	10.6%	35.3%
Montana	31.5%	23.2%	19.6%	74.3%
Nebraska	22.0%	13.9%	21.6%	57.4%
Nevada	50.5%	1.2%	0.0%	51.7%
New Hampshire	31.7%	11.1%	14.4%	57.1%
New Jersey	16.1%	7.2%	9.5%	32.8%
New Mexico	22.4%	4.7%	12.9%	40.0%
New York	28.8%	2.9%	7.6%	39.3%
North Carolina	9.2%	1.5%	33.6%	44.4%
North Dakota	12.3%	8.7%	2.9%	23.9%
Ohio	25.4%	6.6%	35.4%	67.4%
Oklahoma	13.2%	5.6%	35.7%	54.5%
Oregon	36.4%	5.8%	3.7%	45.9%
Pennsylvania	26.0%	9.7%	39.9%	75.6%
Rhode Island	12.2%	5.8%	17.5%	35.5%
South Carolina	22.6%	10.0%	2.3%	34.9%
South Dakota	48.8%	13.9%	2.8%	65.5%
Tennessee	32.0%	12.8%	12.5%	57.3%
Texas	5.8%	7.4%	0.0%	13.2%
Utah	21.3%	29.5%	19.5%	70.3%
Vermont	18.2%	0.2%	33.5%	51.9%
Virginia	30.4%	18.2%	13.8%	62.4%
Washington	14.7%	15.3%	19.9%	49.9%
West Virginia	19.5%	0.5%	7.2%	27.3%
Wisconsin	20.6%	6.4%	29.8%	56.8%
Wyoming	17.4%	2.0%	0.0%	19.4%

Source: TANF Financial Data – FY 2015.

Figure 1-E: Summary of Federal TANF Funds, FY 2015

STATE	FY 2015 FEDERAL AWARDS	CARRYOVER	TOTAL FEDERAL FUNDS	TRANSFERRED TO CCDF	TRANSFERRED TO SSBG	FEDERAL FUNDS MINUS TRANSFERS	TOTAL FEDERAL EXPENDITURES	UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATIONS	UNOBLIGATED BALANCE
U.S. TOTAL	$16,982,643,588	$3,428,085,863	$20,410,729,451	$1,251,209,372	$1,125,205,136	$18,034,314,943	$13,962,650,652	$1,446,369,454	$2,625,294,837
ALABAMA	$103,710,675	$29,562,828	$133,273,503	$0	$9,331,520	$123,941,983	$70,858,290	$11,250,000	$41,833,693
ALASKA	$44,607,376	$62,437,185	$107,044,561	$8,921,475	$4,460,737	$93,662,349	$36,245,126	$0	$57,417,223
ARIZONA	$222,437,375	$18,035,637	$240,473,012	$0	$20,014,129	$220,458,883	$215,624,871	$0	$4,834,012
ARKANSAS	$63,052,990	$34,540,903	$97,593,893	$0	$0	$97,593,893	$53,309,969	$33,432,731	$10,851,193
CALIFORNIA	$3,653,771,968	$134,992,001	$3,788,763,969	$0	$365,119,521	$3,423,644,448	$3,248,535,706	$175,108,742	$0
COLORADO	$151,213,631	$61,803,605	$213,017,236	$773,392	$0	$212,243,844	$133,334,672	$0	$78,909,172
CONNECTICUT	$266,788,107	$0	$266,788,107	$0	$26,678,810	$240,109,297	$240,109,296	$0	$1
DELAWARE	$35,888,252	$7,217,838	$43,106,090	$0	$0	$43,106,090	$33,199,783	$375,566	$9,530,741
DIST.OF COLUMBIA	$102,926,698	$82,157,344	$185,084,042	$0	$3,935,917	$181,148,125	$91,149,343	$0	$89,998,782
FLORIDA	$562,340,120	$34,797,439	$597,137,559	$82,996,516	$42,175,507	$471,965,536	$386,397,767	$43,843,760	$41,724,009
GEORGIA	$330,741,739	$77,349,604	$408,091,343	$0	$6,723,084	$401,368,259	$359,267,266	$32,078,204	$10,022,789
HAWAII	$109,922,947	$90,485,097	$200,408,044	$0	$9,890,000	$190,518,044	$56,014,482	$8,555,471	$125,948,091
IDAHO	$30,412,562	$30,264,204	$60,676,766	$7,831,234	$323,133	$52,522,399	$22,080,836	$0	$30,441,563
ILLINOIS	$585,056,960	$14,356,736	$599,413,696	$0	$1,200,000	$598,213,696	$598,213,696	$0	$0
INDIANA	$206,799,108	$303,748,944	$510,548,052	$62,039,732	$0	$448,508,320	$119,347,102	$323,911,218	$5,250,000
IOWA	$131,028,542	$23,987,347	$155,015,889	$26,332,712	$12,962,008	$115,721,169	$93,567,610	$20,353,541	$1,800,018
KANSAS	$101,931,061	$52,624,636	$154,555,697	$7,500,078	$10,193,106	$136,862,513	$77,078,021	$980,785	$58,803,707
KENTUCKY	$181,287,668	$1,747,811	$183,035,479	$0	$0	$183,035,479	$152,807,377	$0	$30,228,102
LOUISIANA	$163,971,985	$0	$163,971,985	$0	$16,397,198	$147,574,787	$134,624,833	$12,949,954	$0
MAINE	$78,120,889	$58,817,282	$136,938,171	$0	$0	$136,938,171	$44,924,875	$0	$92,013,296
MARYLAND	$254,619,936	$0	$254,619,936	$0	$22,909,803	$231,710,133	$231,710,133	$0	$0
MASSACHUSETTS	$510,545,831	$0	$510,545,831	$91,874,224	$45,937,110	$372,734,497	$372,734,497	$0	$0
MICHIGAN	$775,352,858	$38,917,102	$814,269,960	$2,017,045	$77,535,285	$734,717,630	$677,285,007	$0	$57,432,623
MINNESOTA	$261,969,844	$60,526,936	$322,496,780	$50,099,000	$4,790,000	$267,607,780	$184,507,186	$83,100,593	$1
MISSISSIPPI	$86,767,577	$21,167,665	$107,935,242	$17,353,515	$8,676,758	$81,904,969	$46,124,884	$0	$35,780,085
MISSOURI	$241,231,670	$9,657,073	$250,888,743	$0	$21,701,176	$229,187,567	$212,771,283	$16,132,797	$283,487
MONTANA	$38,039,116	$42,365,368	$80,404,484	$8,700,000	$2,575,839	$69,128,645	$26,211,556	$0	$42,917,089
NEBRASKA	$56,833,778	$56,265,177	$113,098,955	$17,000,000	$0	$96,098,955	$36,117,040	$0	$59,981,915
NEVADA	$48,778,314	$6,530,118	$55,308,432	$0	$0	$55,308,432	$48,946,951	$6,361,481	$0
NEW HAMPSHIRE	$38,521,261	$29,273,890	$67,795,151	$4,200,000	$936,937	$62,658,214	$18,118,750	$0	$44,539,464
NEW JERSEY	$404,034,823	$29,508,709	$433,543,532	$76,000,000	$16,938,000	$340,605,532	$326,367,769	$8,237,763	$6,000,000
NEW MEXICO	$122,896,685	$75,218,058	$198,114,743	$30,527,500	$0	$167,587,243	$74,036,140	$93,551,103	$0
NEW YORK	$2,715,077,191	$44,926,274	$2,760,003,465	$312,331,000	$181,119,543	$2,266,552,922	$2,103,882,091	$70,427,896	$92,242,935
NORTH CAROLINA	$335,015,340	$24,575,170	$359,590,510	$71,773,001	$12,239,700	$275,577,809	$259,595,826	$15,981,983	$0
NORTH DAKOTA	$26,399,809	$14,116,239	$40,516,048	$0	$0	$40,516,048	$29,542,661	$0	$10,973,387
OHIO	$727,968,260	$277,178,304	$1,005,146,564	$0	$60,593,787	$944,552,777	$580,067,942	$227,461,862	$137,022,973
OKLAHOMA	$145,281,442	$61,807,859	$207,089,301	$29,056,288	$14,528,144	$163,504,869	$111,056,589	$52,448,280	$0
OREGON	$185,380,277	$0	$185,380,277	$0	$0	$185,380,277	$163,300,112	$0	$22,080,165
PENNSYLVANIA	$719,499,305	$791,695,931	$1,511,195,236	$110,912,000	$23,232,750	$1,377,050,486	$549,128,692	$55,938,593	$771,983,201
RHODE ISLAND	$95,021,587	$0	$95,021,587	$13,029,940	$7,126,618	$74,865,029	$63,399,018	$0	$11,466,011
SOUTH CAROLINA	$111,104,406	$36,119,668	$147,224,074	$0	$0	$147,224,074	$122,757,736	$24,466,338	$0
SOUTH DAKOTA	$21,279,651	$19,382,859	$40,662,510	$0	$2,127,965	$38,534,545	$18,072,739	$0	$20,461,806
TENNESSEE	$212,859,869	$153,078,285	$365,938,154	$8,397,592	$0	$357,540,562	$114,712,299	$0	$242,828,263
TEXAS	$540,426,574	$188,722,368	$729,148,942	$0	$33,573,455	$695,575,487	$570,787,223	$124,788,262	$2
UTAH	$75,609,475	$121,567,279	$197,176,754	$15,121,895	$7,560,947	$174,493,912	$53,638,638	$0	$120,855,274
VERMONT	$47,353,181	$1,636,422	$48,989,603	$9,224,074	$4,735,318	$35,030,211	$34,855,455	$0	$174,756
VIRGINIA	$158,285,172	$54,278,512	$212,563,684	$16,037,729	$15,825,500	$180,700,455	$102,506,515	$79,669	$78,114,271
WASHINGTON	$422,938,318	$65,856,332	$488,794,650	$109,326,286	$4,675,000	$374,793,364	$328,940,261	$0	$45,853,103
WEST VIRGINIA	$110,176,310	$3,724,171	$113,900,481	$0	$11,017,631	$102,882,850	$80,528,662	$0	$22,354,188
WISCONSIN	$348,864,545	$54,781,887	$403,646,432	$61,833,144	$15,443,200	$326,370,088	$238,222,494	$0	$88,147,594
WYOMING	$18,500,530	$26,281,766	$44,782,296	$0	$0	$44,782,296	$16,033,582	$4,552,862	$24,195,852

Note: The annual TANF expenditures are calculations in spending during the fiscal year from all of the open grant year reports.

Source: TANF Financial Data – FY 2015, Table A.6. FY 2014 data can be found at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tanf-financial-data-fy-2014, Table A.6.

Figure 1-F: Comparisons of MOE Spending between FY 2014 and FY 2015

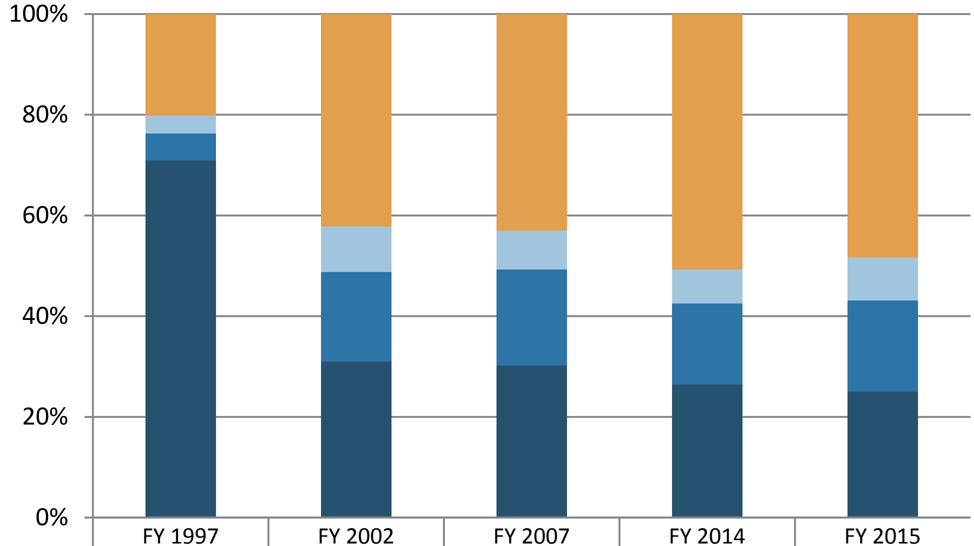
STATE	FY 2014 Total MOE	FY 2015 Total MOE	Δ Total MOE
U.S. TOTAL	$15,323,822,040	$15,333,204,321	$9,382,281
ALABAMA	$105,651,972	$89,771,072	-$15,880,900
ALASKA	$37,088,381	$37,749,638	$661,257
ARIZONA	$132,359,685	$237,336,490	$104,976,805
ARKANSAS	$93,755,027	$91,002,210	-$2,752,817
CALIFORNIA	$3,129,938,751	$3,024,634,814	-$105,303,937
COLORADO	$169,106,784	$167,516,533	-$1,590,251
CONNECTICUT	$230,354,250	$237,839,424	$7,485,174
DELAWARE	$59,202,736	$65,656,807	$6,454,071
DIST.OF COLUMBIA	$184,453,024	$171,808,083	-$12,644,941
FLORIDA	$438,315,444	$437,014,292	-$1,301,152
GEORGIA	$173,368,528	$173,368,527	-$1
HAWAII	$180,622,433	$207,591,914	$26,969,481
IDAHO	$14,484,633	$13,025,379	-$1,459,254
ILLINOIS	$637,374,514	$775,403,081	$138,028,567
INDIANA	$121,093,891	$113,852,341	-$7,241,550
IOWA	$100,195,718	$85,925,147	-$14,270,571
KANSAS	$65,945,199	$67,641,400	$1,696,201
KENTUCKY	$78,103,498	$101,334,410	$23,230,912
LOUISIANA	$55,415,288	$78,837,502	$23,422,214
MAINE	$40,296,038	$40,296,039	$1
MARYLAND	$339,581,418	$347,158,676	$7,577,258
MASSACHUSETTS	$594,939,273	$601,622,173	$6,682,900
MICHIGAN	$616,806,907	$618,101,663	$1,294,756
MINNESOTA	$256,709,798	$306,453,119	$49,743,321
MISSISSIPPI	$21,724,308	$21,724,309	$1
MISSOURI	$165,541,781	$185,378,052	$19,836,271
MONTANA	$13,491,225	$15,241,794	$1,750,569
NEBRASKA	$55,539,761	$55,884,348	$344,587
NEVADA	$43,835,054	$41,859,305	-$1,975,749
NEW HAMPSHIRE	$39,102,134	$37,754,734	-$1,347,400
NEW JERSEY	$862,895,953	$763,420,596	-$99,475,357
NEW MEXICO	$118,288,753	$131,298,176	$13,009,423
NEW YORK	$2,859,021,977	$2,868,069,032	$9,047,055
NORTH CAROLINA	$289,579,387	$223,692,001	-$65,887,386
NORTH DAKOTA	$9,069,286	$9,069,286	$0
OHIO	$439,121,237	$426,778,717	-$12,342,520
OKLAHOMA	$60,119,714	$60,119,714	$0
OREGON	$140,110,803	$184,438,662	$44,327,859
PENNSYLVANIA	$407,988,771	$408,692,949	$704,178
RHODE ISLAND	$93,108,423	$83,514,077	-$9,594,346
SOUTH CAROLINA	$182,976,671	$57,598,147	-$125,378,524
SOUTH DAKOTA	$8,540,000	$8,540,000	$0
TENNESSEE	$149,931,720	$133,265,869	-$16,665,851
TEXAS	$389,599,388	$394,567,886	$4,968,498
UTAH	$24,889,035	$24,889,035	$0
VERMONT	$45,162,006	$48,375,508	$3,213,502
VIRGINIA	$145,289,620	$138,169,611	-$7,120,009
WASHINGTON	$551,697,290	$606,337,064	$54,639,774
WEST VIRGINIA	$34,446,446	$34,446,446	$0
WISCONSIN	$305,584,372	$267,152,727	-$38,431,645
WYOMING	$12,003,735	$11,985,542	-$18,193

Source: TANF Financial Data – FY 2015, Table A.4.

TANF Spending Trends

Spending patterns have shifted since TANF was enacted, reflecting the decline in cash assistance caseloads and increased spending on supportive non-assistance services and other "non-assistance" such as pre-kindergarten, child welfare, tax credits, etc. Figure 1-G compares state spending of federal TANF and state MOE funds (in the TANF program and in SSPs) by category over time. In FY 1997, over 70 percent of TANF and MOE funds were used for basic assistance. However, by FY 2015, that figure fell to 25 percent; with 6 states reporting that they spent less than 10 percent of their combined TANF and MOE funds on basic assistance.

Figure 1-G: TANF and MOE Spending by Category, Selected Years FY 1997 – FY 2015



	FY 1997	FY 2002	FY 2007	FY 2014	FY 2015
Remaining Categories	$3,935,595,169	$12,807,566,418	$12,921,827,721	$16,150,969,499	$15,303,253,606
Work Activities	$715,511,268	$2,726,866,731	$2,338,496,223	$2,168,260,121	$2,686,384,852
Child Care (Including Transfers)	$1,050,302,519	$5,430,557,655	$5,745,051,205	$5,126,605,070	$5,745,051,205
Basic Assistance	$13,901,705,312	$9,408,233,518	$9,115,204,492	$8,443,419,131	$7,937,579,818

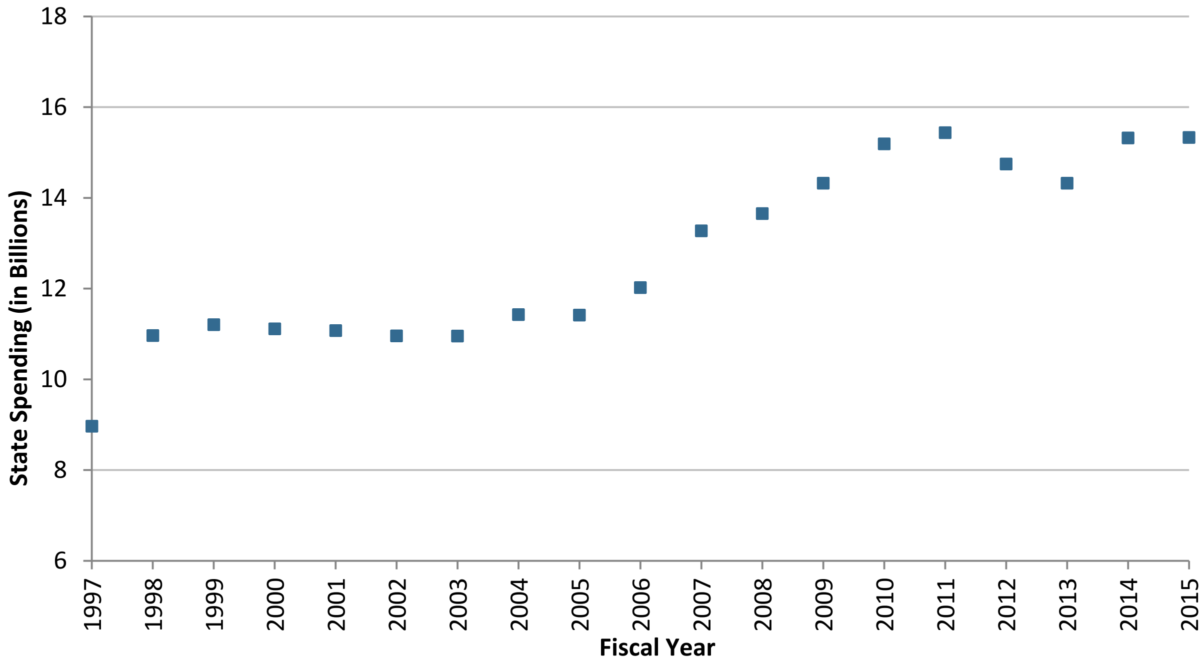
Note: Dollar amounts are in Current Dollars (not adjusted for inflation). For a full list of "remaining categories" see Figure 4 in https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/state-tanf-spending-2015-factsheet.
Source: AFDC and TANF Financial Data – FY 1997 through FY 2015.

Over this same time period, there also has been an increase in reported MOE spending, as demonstrated in Figure 1-H. This growth, however, does not necessarily reflect an increase in state spending on benefits and services targeted to low-income families and children. States can claim existing state spending[6] (such as pre-kindergarten, child care, after school programs, and state child welfare services) and third-party non-governmental expenditures (such as food banks,

[6] Subject to a "new spending test." For more information, see the Program Instruction on guidance on the application of the "new spending test," available at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tanf-acf-pi-2016-04PI.

domestic violence shelters, and Boys and Girls Clubs) as MOE spending as long as the activity furthers a TANF purpose and relates to the TANF-eligible population only. In February 2016, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) published *Update on States Counting Third-Party Expenditures toward Maintenance of Effort Requirements*, which found that 16 states reported counting third-party non-governmental expenditures toward their state MOE spending in FY 2015.

Figure 1-H: Maintenance of Effort Spending, FY 1997-FY 2015



Source: TANF Financial Data – FY 1997 through FY 2015.

States have reasons to increase the amount of MOE they claim. For example, states are allowed to reduce their required work participation rate (WPR) by earning a "caseload reduction credit." This credit is calculated by accounting for two factors: (1) any decrease in a state's TANF caseload from its 2005 level, and (2) "excess MOE," which is the level of state spending in TANF or SSPs above the required amount (see Chapter III). This second factor provides an incentive for states to increase the amount of MOE they claim.

Furthermore, states that qualify for and access the TANF Contingency Fund also face a more stringent MOE requirement. Namely, if a state receives any provisional payments of Contingency Funds during a fiscal year, then it must meet a Contingency Fund MOE requirement that equals 100 percent of the state's share of FY 1994 expenditures in its former

AFDC and JOBS programs (excluding SSP expenditures and child care expenditures).[7] In order to keep any Contingency Funds, a state must spend beyond its required 100 percent Contingency Fund MOE level; specifically, a state may keep only the amount of Contingency Funds that match qualified state expenditures (excluding SSP expenditures and child care expenditures) made in excess of the state's 100 percent Contingency Fund MOE level.

Revisions to Financial Data Reporting

Through FY 2014, states submitted the ACF-196 Financial Report Form quarterly to ACF's Office of Family Assistance (OFA) in order to provide information on how they spend their TANF block grant, state MOE funds, and other federal TANF funds (e.g., Contingency and Emergency Contingency funds). The ACF-196 was designed to monitor expenditures by grant year and ensure compliance with various statutory requirements governing the use of federal funds (e.g., the 30 percent cap on transfers and the 15 percent limit on administrative costs) and state MOE expenditures (e.g., compliance with the 75 or 80 percent historic spending requirements and the 15 percent administrative cap). However, the expenditure categories did not wholly reflect the wide range of benefits and services for which states spend their federal and state MOE funds, causing states to categorize many activities simply as "other" and allowing certain activities to fall into multiple categories at once. This created confusion and inconsistencies that made analyzing spending information and comparing data across states problematic. Additionally, it was difficult to understand exactly how much money had been spent in a given fiscal year, due to the cumulative reporting nature of the accounting method used with the ACF-196. HHS, Congress, research organizations, and other stakeholders use the data collected to gain an understanding of the types of activities on which states are spending their funds and analyze trends on how states choose to distribute their program funds. Accurate and complete expenditure data is crucial as it provides the foundation for a well-informed policy analysis.

In an effort to increase transparency and accuracy of the TANF financial data and eliminate ambiguities and inconsistencies without placing an undue burden on states, OFA implemented the revised reporting form ACF-196R, which accomplishes two things:

1. The ACF-196R modifies and expands the list of expenditure categories and accompanying definitions. It includes new categories such as child welfare, services to children and youth, and pre-kindergarten/Head Start. It also requires narrative descriptions of expenditures reported as "Other," and "Authorized Solely Under Prior Law."

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[7] Only qualified state expenditures within the state's TANF program may count toward the state's 100 percent Contingency Fund MOE requirement. Qualified state expenditures in separate state programs (SSP) or any child care expenditures do not count towards this requirement.

2. The ACF-196R changes the accounting method to require states to report actual expenditures made in a fiscal year and make any subsequent revisions or corrections to the report for the fiscal year in which that expenditure occurred.

Effective in FY 2015, the TANF financial data collection involves two forms: the ACF-196R, which states will submit on a quarterly basis, and the ACF-196, which states will use to adjust expenditures submitted during fiscal years prior to FY 2015. After a state expends all funds for grant years prior to FY 2015, it will no longer need to use the ACF-196.

The ACF-196R State TANF Financial Report Form and Instructions are available on OFA's website by accessing TANF-ACF-PI-2014-02 at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/resource/tanf-acf-pi-2014-02.

Expenditure Categories

The categories on the ACF-196 had remained essentially unchanged since FY 2000. Over time, state spending on cash assistance has declined and states have used more of their TANF and MOE funds to support a broad array of services for children and families. This trend is reflected to a large degree by the increase in expenditures reported in the category of "Other." Additionally, the ACF-196 collected little meaningful information about a significant share of spending that is classified as assistance and non-assistance "Authorized Solely under Prior Law." The Claims Resolution Act of 2010 required states to submit additional data on expenditures reported in these categories for two periods in 2011. This limited-time collection provided ACF with a greater understanding of how states were spending their funds and also demonstrated the limitations of the ACF-196 reporting categories.

Another shortcoming of the ACF-196 categories is that expenses can be reported under more than one category. For example, a state may report TANF spending for pre-school under "Prevention of Out-of-Wedlock Pregnancies," "Other," or possibly even "Child Care," although the instructions specifically exclude such expenditures under child care. If reporting is not consistent across states, it is difficult to do accurate cross-state comparisons or trend analyses.

In order to address these issues, ACF revised the expenditure categories and accompanying definitions used in TANF financial data collection. ACF also added ACF-196R–Part 2, which requires narrative descriptions of expenditures reported as "Other" and assistance and non-assistance "Authorized Solely Under Prior Law." It also requires an explanation of the methodology used to estimate expenditures. ACF permits estimating in limited circumstances. Estimating is not permitted when actual data is available. If a state uses an expenditure estimate, it must provide a rationale for doing so and explain the methodology used.

Figure 1-I displays a crosswalk between ACF-196 Categories (used from FY 1997 to FY 2014) to ACF-196R Categories (used starting in FY 2015), with the amounts spent in these categories in FY 2014 and FY 2015.

Figure 1-I. Federal TANF and State MOE Expenditures by ACF-196 and ACF-196R Spending Categories: Comparisons between FY 2014 and FY 2015

Former (FY 1997 – FY 2014) ACF-196 Spending Categories	ACF- 196R FY 2015 Spending Categories	Combined TANF & MOE Funds		Share of All Spending	
		FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2014	FY 2015
Basic Assistance	Basic Assistance	$8,443,419,131	$7,937,579,818	26.5%	25.1%
Assistance Authorized Solely Under Prior Law	Assistance Authorized Solely Under Prior Law	$571,524,430	$673,865,094	*1.8%*	*2.1%*
Non-Assistance Authorized Solely Under Prior Law	Non-Assistance Authorized Solely Under Prior Law	$876,895,435	$654,434,734	*2.7%*	*2.1%*
Work-Related Activities/Expenses	Work, Education, and Training Activities	$2,168,260,121	$2,686,384,852	*6.8%*	*8.5%*
(1) Transportation (2) Other Support Services - Assistance, and Transportation	Work Supports	$449,825,144	$468,182,707	*1.4%*	*1.5%*
(1) Child Care Assistance (2) Child Care Non-Assistance	Child Care (Assistance & Non-Assistance)	$3,744,187,723	$4,096,313,296	*11.7%*	*12.9%*
Individual Development Accounts	Financial Education and Asset Development	$843,685	$1,567,762	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
Refundable Earned Income Tax Credits	Refundable Earned Income Tax Credits	$2,018,419,848	$1,988,332,864	*6.3%*	*6.3%*
Other Refundable Tax Credits	Non-EITC Refundable State Tax Credits	$547,154,997	$584,162,935	*1.7%*	*1.8%*
Non-Recurrent Short Term Benefits	Non-Recurrent Short Term Benefits	$716,173,910	$884,133,584	*2.2%*	*2.8%*
Prevention of Out-of-Wedlock Pregnancies	Prevention of Out-of-Wedlock Pregnancies	$2,579,635,389	$468,955,995	8.1%	1.5%
Two-Parent Family Formation & Maintenance	Fatherhood & Two-Parent Family Formation & Maintenance Programs	$257,709,645	$128,304,933	0.8%	0.4%
Administration	Administrative Costs	$2,053,840,331	$1,954,351,245	6.4%	6.2%
Systems	Systems	$221,406,541	$275,408,906	0.7%	0.9%
Other	Other (Total)	$4,701,630,766	$6,493,876,248	14.7%	20.5%
	Pre-K/Head Start		*$1,988,947,311*		*6.3%*
	Home Visiting		*$29,291,582*		*0.1%*
	Child Welfare Services		*$1,577,489,700*		*5.0%*
	Supportive Services		*$425,395,685*		*1.3%*
	Services for Children and Youth		*$578,988,967*		*1.8%*
	Assessment/Service Provision		*$964,544,921*		*3.0%*
	Other (remaining)		$929,218,082		2.9%
Total Expenditures		**$29,350,927,096**	**$29,295,854,973**	**92.0%**	**92.5%**
Transferred to CCDF Discretionary		$1,382,417,347	$1,251,209,372	*4.3%*	*4.0%*
Transferred to SSBG		$1,155,909,378	$1,125,205,136	*3.6%*	*3.6%*
Total Transfers		**$2,538,326,725**	**$2,376,414,508**	***8.0%***	***7.5%***
TOTAL FUNDS USED		**$31,889,253,821**	**$31,672,269,481**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**
Federal Unliquidated Obligations		$1,730,114,572	$1,446,369,454		
Unobligated Balance		$1,621,952,261	$2,625,294,837		

Source: TANF Financial Data – FY 2015.

Accounting Method

Under the law, federal TANF funds (excluding Contingency Funds) remain available for spending in future years without fiscal year limitation. Thus, the ACF-196 reporting was structured to require reporting of cumulative expenditures by category until all the funds in a grant year award had been expended. Additionally, on the ACF-196, when a state discovered an error in prior reporting, it made an adjustment in the current quarter's reporting, obscuring any distinction between actual expenditures in the fiscal year and upward or downward adjustments from prior years. As a result, it was impossible to determine the actual TANF expenditures that occurred in a fiscal year.

In order to resolve this problem, the revised ACF-196R effective in FY 2015 requires states to report actual expenditures made in a fiscal year with each open grant year award. If a state needs to adjust an expenditure reported in a prior year, it will revise the report for the fiscal year in which that expenditure occurred, rather than account for that adjustment in the current year's report.

To facilitate grants monitoring, the ACF-196R data collection system generates a report displaying the cumulative expenditures made with each open grant year's award. The data collection system also generates a report that sums expenditures made with each open grant year award during the fiscal year. The data collection system automatically updates these reports each time a state revises expenditures reported in a prior year.

II. Caseload

In FY 2015, a monthly average of 1.63 million families, with 4.17 million recipients, received TANF assistance funded either by federal TANF block grant funds or state MOE funds, including assistance funded through separate state programs (SSPs).[8] Notably, these caseload figures only reflected the number of families that received "assistance," which is largely comprised of monthly cash assistance payments to families. The TANF statute does not authorize HHS to collect caseload information for families receiving benefits and services classified as "non-assistance." As noted in the previous chapter, 24.6 percent of TANF and MOE funds were used in FY 2015 for basic assistance.

Caseload Trends

Figure 2-A shows the average monthly number of families receiving AFDC or TANF/SSP assistance from FY 1959 through FY 2015. Historical caseload data can be found online through the OFA Data & Reports page at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/programs/tanf/data-reports.

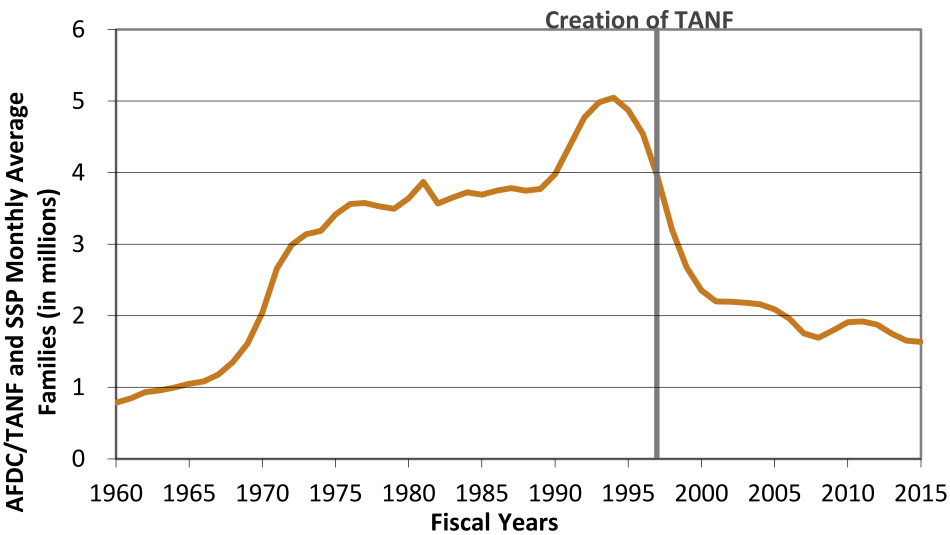
In FY 1994, the assistance caseload reached a monthly average high of 5.05 million families; six years later, the assistance caseload declined by more than half to a monthly average of 2.36 million families in FY 2000. This decline has been attributed to a host of events, including economic growth (and the concomitant drop in poverty), welfare reform implementation, and other policies designed to promote work among low-income families with children (such as expansions in the Earned Income Tax Credit and child care subsidies). Throughout this period, there was a dramatic increase in the number of single mothers leaving welfare for work.

Beginning in FY 2000, the caseload decline slowed, but continued through FY 2008, when it fell to a monthly average of 1.69 million families. Following the onset of a recession in December 2007, caseloads began to rise beginning in mid-2008, peaking in December 2010 at 1.95 million families—a 15.4 percent increase over the average monthly caseload in FY 2008.

As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), states received additional funding from the TANF Emergency Contingency Fund for increases in basic assistance caseloads (relative to a base period of either FY 2007 or FY 2008) or for increases in certain types of expenditures in FY 2009 and FY 2010.

[8] As described in Chapter I of this report, states may spend MOE funds in separate state programs (SSPs) operated outside of the TANF program. These expenditures are flexible and not subject to some of the general TANF requirements. Prior to the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, this exception included TANF's work requirements, but since FY 2007, separate state program families with a work-eligible individual have been subject to work requirements. SSPs must be consistent with the goals of the TANF statute and other MOE requirements.

Figure 2-A: AFDC/TANF and SSP Monthly Average Families, FY 1960 – FY 2015



Fiscal Year	AFDC/TANF Families
1960	785,000
1965	1,049,000
1970	2,045,000
1975	3,415,000
1980	3,642,000
1985	3,692,000
1990	3,974,000
1995	4,871,000
2000	2,356,000
2005	2,090,000
2010	1,911,000
2011	1,921,000
2012	1,876,000
2013	1,751,000
2014	1,653,000
2015	1,634,000

Source: TANF Data Reporting System.

FY 2015 TANF/SSP Caseload

State-level Caseload Data

Between FY 2014 and FY 2015, the average monthly caseload decreased slightly by about 19,000 families (1.1 percent), while the average monthly number of recipients increased by about 276,000 (7.1 percent). These diverging trends can be explained by state policies, and most notably, policy changes in California. As further discussed in the following chapter, California provided small cash assistance payments in FY 2015 to families receiving SNAP. These families were more likely to be two-parent families and to have more children than typical TANF families. Since California accounts for about 38 percent of the national caseload, this increase in average family size in the state led to the nationwide increase in the number of assistance recipients. It also resulted in a 73 percent increase in the average monthly number of two-parent families from FY 2014 to FY 2015.

There was variation in TANF/SSP caseload changes among the states between FY 2014 and FY 2015. Figures 2-B and 2-C show the average monthly number of families and recipients, respectively, by state for FY 2014 and FY 2015, and the percent change between the two years. The average monthly number of families receiving TANF or SSP-MOE assistance declined in 48 states and territories from FY 2014 to FY 2015, increased in two states, and was essentially unchanged in four states over that same time period. Two states had caseload increases greater than 10 percent (California and Oregon), while 28 states had a decline greater than 10 percent, while three states had a decline greater than 20 percent: Alabama (-20.4 percent), North Carolina (-39.9 percent), and Ohio (-21.1 percent).

Figure 2-B. Average Monthly Number of TANF & SSP Families, FY 2014 and FY 2015

	FY 2014				*FY 2015*				*Percent Change FY 2014 - FY 2015*			
State	**Total Families**	**Two Parent Families**	**One Parent Families**	**No Parent Families**	**Total Families**	**Two Parent Families**	**One Parent Families**	**No Parent Families**	**Total Families**	**Two Parent Families**	**One Parent Families**	**No Parent Families**
U.S. Totals	***1,652,996***	***82,211***	***866,275***	***704,511***	***1,634,061***	***142,578***	***885,094***	***606,389***	***-1.1%***	***73.4%***	***2.2%***	***-13.9%***
Alabama	17,078	178	9,870	7,030	13,595	119	7,047	6,430	*-20.4%*	*-33.4%*	*-28.6%*	*-8.5%*
Alaska	3,523	417	2,188	918	3,139	367	1,931	841	*-10.9%*	*-12.1%*	*-11.7%*	*-8.3%*
Arizona	13,159	444	6,902	5,813	11,551	320	5,382	5,849	*-12.2%*	*-27.9%*	*-22.0%*	*0.6%*
Arkansas	6,000	140	3,503	2,357	4,861	104	2,717	2,039	*-19.0%*	*-25.7%*	*-22.4%*	*-13.5%*
California	537,583	52,420	252,173	232,991	623,160	113,093	342,482	167,585	*15.9%*	*115.7%*	*35.8%*	*-28.1%*
Colorado	17,098	1,240	9,931	5,927	17,135	1,395	9,916	5,824	*0.2%*	*12.5%*	*-0.1%*	*-1.7%*
Connecticut	14,458	-	8,470	5,988	13,144	-	7,629	5,515	*-9.1%*	-	*-9.9%*	*-7.9%*
Delaware	4,697	20	1,591	3,085	4,535	20	1,414	3,102	*-3.4%*	*-2.0%*	*-11.1%*	*0.5%*
District of Columbia	6,491	-	4,206	2,286	6,244	-	4,091	2,154	*-3.8%*	-	*-2.7%*	*-5.8%*
Florida	50,146	585	11,181	38,381	49,046	593	10,382	38,070	*-2.2%*	*1.5%*	*-7.1%*	*-0.8%*
Georgia	15,390	-	3,272	12,118	13,337	-	2,637	10,701	*-13.3%*	-	*-19.4%*	*-11.7%*
Guam	1,248	154	401	692	1,084	96	260	728	*-13.1%*	*-37.7%*	*-35.1%*	*5.1%*
Hawaii	8,470	1,974	4,878	1,618	7,600	1,739	4,336	1,525	*-10.3%*	*-11.9%*	*-11.1%*	*-5.8%*
Idaho	1,867	-	138	1,729	1,862	-	90	1,772	*-0.3%*	-	*-34.9%*	*2.5%*
Illinois	20,050	-	6,903	13,147	18,643	-	6,390	12,253	*-7.0%*	-	*-7.4%*	*-6.8%*
Indiana	10,587	129	2,799	7,659	9,183	130	2,200	6,853	*-13.3%*	*1.4%*	*-21.4%*	*-10.5%*
Iowa	15,529	903	9,263	5,363	13,553	814	7,606	5,134	*-12.7%*	*-9.9%*	*-17.9%*	*-4.3%*
Kansas	7,087	444	3,507	3,135	6,099	387	2,765	2,946	*-13.9%*	*-12.9%*	*-21.2%*	*-6.0%*
Kentucky	28,587	699	9,986	17,902	25,301	586	7,935	16,779	*-11.5%*	*-16.1%*	*-20.5%*	*-6.3%*
Louisiana	5,770	-	1,536	4,234	5,266	-	1,446	3,820	*-8.7%*	-	*-5.8%*	*-9.8%*
Maine	25,608	616	22,574	2,418	22,404	1,039	19,140	2,225	*-12.5%*	*68.7%*	*-15.2%*	*-8.0%*
Maryland	20,770	-	13,279	7,492	19,333	-	11,900	7,434	*-6.9%*	-	*-10.4%*	*-0.8%*
Massachusetts	68,598	4,925	45,563	18,110	59,578	4,152	38,474	16,952	*-13.1%*	*-15.7%*	*-15.6%*	*-6.4%*
Michigan	26,721	-	14,170	12,551	21,513	-	10,632	10,881	*-19.5%*	-	*-25.0%*	*-13.3%*
Minnesota	21,939	-	11,503	10,436	19,469	-	9,560	9,908	*-11.3%*	-	*-16.9%*	*-5.1%*
Mississippi	8,694	-	4,390	4,304	6,967	-	3,244	3,723	*-19.9%*	-	*-26.1%*	*-13.5%*
Missouri	30,582	-	23,474	7,108	27,738	-	21,126	6,612	*-9.3%*	-	*-10.0%*	*-7.0%*
Montana	3,060	291	1,654	1,115	3,044	274	1,496	1,274	*-0.5%*	*-5.8%*	*-9.6%*	*14.2%*
Nebraska	6,009	-	2,771	3,238	5,564	-	2,485	3,079	*-7.4%*	-	*-10.3%*	*-4.9%*
Nevada	12,134	1,455	5,904	4,775	11,115	1,172	5,053	4,890	*-8.4%*	*-19.4%*	*-14.4%*	*2.4%*
New Hampshire	5,924	65	4,453	1,406	5,530	49	4,060	1,422	*-6.6%*	*-24.7%*	*-8.8%*	*1.1%*
New Jersey	28,052	-	19,701	8,352	24,277	-	16,560	7,718	*-13.5%*	-	*-15.9%*	*-7.6%*
New Mexico	13,161	1,089	6,599	5,472	12,018	940	5,826	5,252	*-8.7%*	*-13.7%*	*-11.7%*	*-4.0%*
New York	150,461	2,947	94,604	52,910	148,545	3,123	94,905	50,518	*-1.3%*	*6.0%*	*0.3%*	*-4.5%*
North Carolina	16,554	173	4,020	12,360	9,955	142	3,579	6,234	*-39.9%*	*-18.3%*	*-11.0%*	*-49.6%*
North Dakota	1,304	-	653	651	1,176	-	542	634	*-9.8%*	-	*-16.9%*	*-2.6%*
Ohio	76,140	2,954	27,243	45,942	60,074	1,372	12,862	45,840	*-21.1%*	*-53.6%*	*-52.8%*	*-0.2%*
Oklahoma	7,162	-	2,352	4,810	7,131	-	2,324	4,807	*-0.4%*	-	*-1.2%*	*-0.1%*
Oregon	46,333	368	39,898	6,067	57,058	4,285	46,046	6,727	*23.1%*	*1065.3%*	*15.4%*	*10.9%*
Pennsylvania	69,295	1,042	48,832	19,421	65,236	1,347	50,612	13,277	*-5.9%*	*29.2%*	*3.6%*	*-31.6%*
Puerto Rico	12,207	710	11,161	336	10,838	662	9,902	275	*-11.2%*	*-6.8%*	*-11.3%*	*-18.3%*
Rhode Island	5,597	406	3,384	1,807	4,878	294	2,865	1,720	*-12.8%*	*-27.7%*	*-15.3%*	*-4.8%*
South Carolina	11,252	-	5,428	5,823	10,451	-	4,779	5,672	*-7.1%*	-	*-12.0%*	*-2.6%*
South Dakota	3,122	-	777	2,345	3,014	-	644	2,370	*-3.5%*	-	*-17.2%*	*1.1%*
Tennessee	47,692	231	28,852	18,610	38,228	160	20,860	17,208	*-19.8%*	*-30.8%*	*-27.7%*	*-7.5%*
Texas	36,500	-	9,505	26,994	32,406	-	8,055	24,351	*-11.2%*	-	*-15.3%*	*-9.8%*
Utah	4,320	-	2,225	2,095	3,869	-	1,876	1,993	*-10.5%*	-	*-15.7%*	*-4.9%*
Vermont	3,557	362	1,727	1,467	3,343	340	1,565	1,438	*-6.0%*	*-6.2%*	*-9.4%*	*-2.0%*
Virgin Islands	423	-	423	-	358	-	314	44	*-15.3%*	-	*-25.7%*	-
Virginia	27,777	-	16,676	11,100	25,336	-	14,724	10,613	*-8.8%*	-	*-11.7%*	*-4.4%*
Washington	41,044	3,883	21,354	15,807	33,734	2,739	16,376	14,620	*-17.8%*	*-29.5%*	*-23.3%*	*-7.5%*
West Virginia	8,591	-	3,674	4,917	7,689	-	2,821	4,868	*-10.5%*	-	*-23.2%*	*-1.0%*
Wisconsin	27,240	938	14,625	11,677	23,520	721	11,120	11,680	*-13.7%*	*-23.1%*	*-24.0%*	*0.0%*
Wyoming	357	8	128	221	333	6	114	214	*-6.7%*	*-31.6%*	*-10.9%*	*-3.2%*

Source: TANF Data Reporting System; TANF Caseload Data 2014 and TANF Caseload Data 2015.

Figure 2-C. Average Monthly Number of TANF & SSP Recipients, FY 2014 and FY 2015

State	*FY 2014* Total Recipients	*FY 2014* Adults	*FY 2014* Children	*FY 2015* Total Recipients	*FY 2015* Adults	*FY 2015* Children	*Percent Change FY 2014 - FY 2015* Total Recipients	*Percent Change FY 2014 - FY 2015* Adults	*Percent Change FY 2014 - FY 2015* Children
U.S. Totals	***3,894,213***	***959,631***	***2,934,582***	***4,170,107***	***1,168,690***	***3,001,417***	*7.1%*	*21.8%*	*2.3%*
Alabama	40,903	10,195	30,708	31,774	7,210	24,564	*-22.3%*	*-29.3%*	*-20.0%*
Alaska	9,466	3,096	6,370	8,471	2,732	5,740	*-10.5%*	*-11.8%*	*-9.9%*
Arizona	29,409	7,925	21,485	24,902	6,163	18,739	*-15.3%*	*-22.2%*	*-12.8%*
Arkansas	13,493	3,734	9,759	10,855	2,880	7,975	*-19.5%*	*-22.9%*	*-18.3%*
California	1,298,103	276,395	1,021,708	1,803,873	550,255	1,253,618	*39.0%*	*99.1%*	*22.7%*
Colorado	45,018	13,154	31,865	45,168	13,372	31,796	*0.3%*	*1.7%*	*-0.2%*
Connecticut	28,806	8,542	20,264	26,274	7,698	18,576	*-8.8%*	*-9.9%*	*-8.3%*
Delaware	13,209	5,132	8,077	12,789	4,976	7,813	*-3.2%*	*-3.0%*	*-3.3%*
District of Columbia	16,687	4,060	12,628	15,670	3,993	11,677	*-6.1%*	*-1.6%*	*-7.5%*
Florida	86,765	14,615	72,150	84,148	14,113	70,035	*-3.0%*	*-3.4%*	*-2.9%*
Georgia	29,948	3,340	26,608	25,853	2,712	23,141	*-13.7%*	*-18.8%*	*-13.0%*
Guam	2,971	671	2,300	2,414	486	1,928	*-18.8%*	*-27.6%*	*-16.2%*
Hawaii	24,399	8,143	16,257	21,773	7,134	14,639	*-10.8%*	*-12.4%*	*-10.0%*
Idaho	2,803	141	2,662	2,735	91	2,643	*-2.4%*	*-35.1%*	*-0.7%*
Illinois	44,546	7,810	36,736	41,886	7,322	34,565	*-6.0%*	*-6.3%*	*-5.9%*
Indiana	21,296	2,246	19,050	18,397	1,804	16,593	*-13.6%*	*-19.7%*	*-12.9%*
Iowa	39,028	11,356	27,671	33,633	9,385	24,248	*-13.8%*	*-17.4%*	*-12.4%*
Kansas	16,990	4,530	12,461	14,384	3,630	10,754	*-15.3%*	*-19.9%*	*-13.7%*
Kentucky	57,766	11,462	46,304	50,185	9,188	40,997	*-13.1%*	*-19.8%*	*-11.5%*
Louisiana	12,889	1,575	11,314	11,859	1,479	10,380	*-8.0%*	*-6.1%*	*-8.3%*
Maine	53,208	23,763	29,445	48,181	21,227	26,954	*-9.4%*	*-10.7%*	*-8.5%*
Maryland	50,146	13,225	36,921	46,493	11,845	34,648	*-7.3%*	*-10.4%*	*-6.2%*
Massachusetts	162,239	52,596	109,643	140,722	44,897	95,825	*-13.3%*	*-14.6%*	*-12.6%*
Michigan	61,280	14,199	47,081	52,225	11,723	40,501	*-14.8%*	*-17.4%*	*-14.0%*
Minnesota	48,805	11,381	37,425	44,032	9,444	34,588	*-9.8%*	*-17.0%*	*-7.6%*
Mississippi	18,036	4,614	13,423	13,972	3,281	10,692	*-22.5%*	*-28.9%*	*-20.3%*
Missouri	73,733	23,164	50,569	67,268	20,662	46,607	*-8.8%*	*-10.8%*	*-7.8%*
Montana	7,418	1,899	5,519	7,113	1,715	5,398	*-4.1%*	*-9.7%*	*-2.2%*
Nebraska	14,410	2,673	11,737	13,417	2,379	11,038	*-6.9%*	*-11.0%*	*-6.0%*
Nevada	31,869	8,893	22,976	28,802	7,526	21,277	*-9.6%*	*-15.4%*	*-7.4%*
New Hampshire	14,442	4,622	9,820	13,436	4,198	9,239	*-7.0%*	*-9.2%*	*-5.9%*
New Jersey	66,125	18,075	48,050	56,644	15,048	41,596	*-14.3%*	*-16.7%*	*-13.4%*
New Mexico	36,143	8,778	27,366	31,120	7,688	23,432	*-13.9%*	*-12.4%*	*-14.4%*
New York	383,880	108,976	274,904	382,006	110,071	271,936	*-0.5%*	*1.0%*	*-1.1%*
North Carolina	31,223	4,367	26,857	19,905	3,849	16,055	*-36.3%*	*-11.8%*	*-40.2%*
North Dakota	3,274	653	2,621	2,917	542	2,375	*-10.9%*	*-17.0%*	*-9.4%*
Ohio	163,521	33,789	129,732	113,806	16,094	97,713	*-30.4%*	*-52.4%*	*-24.7%*
Oklahoma	15,707	2,352	13,355	15,802	2,324	13,477	*0.6%*	*-1.2%*	*0.9%*
Oregon	119,618	39,161	80,457	171,457	63,521	107,936	*43.3%*	*62.2%*	*34.2%*
Pennsylvania	171,544	48,162	123,382	162,233	45,003	117,230	*-5.4%*	*-6.6%*	*-5.0%*
Puerto Rico	33,703	12,615	21,089	29,733	11,256	18,478	*-11.8%*	*-10.8%*	*-12.4%*
Rhode Island	13,423	4,109	9,314	11,565	3,386	8,179	*-13.8%*	*-17.6%*	*-12.2%*
South Carolina	25,356	5,238	20,118	23,572	4,587	18,985	*-7.0%*	*-12.4%*	*-5.6%*
South Dakota	6,237	777	5,460	5,935	644	5,291	*-4.8%*	*-17.2%*	*-3.1%*
Tennessee	113,749	30,289	83,459	88,505	22,123	66,383	*-22.2%*	*-27.0%*	*-20.5%*
Texas	80,118	9,530	70,588	70,524	8,055	62,469	*-12.0%*	*-15.5%*	*-11.5%*
Utah	10,562	2,878	7,684	9,518	2,576	6,943	*-9.9%*	*-10.5%*	*-9.6%*
Vermont	8,177	2,462	5,715	7,688	2,266	5,422	*-6.0%*	*-8.0%*	*-5.1%*
Virgin Islands	1,245	355	890	1,126	360	766	*-9.5%*	*1.5%*	*-13.9%*
Virginia	60,724	16,253	44,472	55,257	14,360	40,897	*-9.0%*	*-11.6%*	*-8.0%*
Washington	94,337	29,394	64,943	75,739	22,106	53,633	*-19.7%*	*-24.8%*	*-17.4%*
West Virginia	18,649	4,710	13,939	16,139	3,659	12,480	*-13.5%*	*-22.3%*	*-10.5%*
Wisconsin	66,071	17,415	48,656	55,537	13,530	42,007	*-15.9%*	*-22.3%*	*-13.7%*
Wyoming	743	145	598	675	125	549	*-9.1%*	*-13.5%*	*-8.1%*

Source: TANF Data Reporting System; TANF Caseload Data 2014 and TANF Caseload Data 2015.

Figure 2-D. Average Monthly Number of TANF & SSP Recipients, Adults, and Children, FY 2014 and FY 2015

State	FY 2014					FY 2015				
	Total Recipients	Adults	Children	Percent Adults	Percent Children	Total Recipients	Adults	Children	Percent Adults	Percent Children
U.S. Totals	***3,894,213***	***959,631***	***2,934,582***	***24.6%***	***75.4%***	***4,170,107***	***1,168,690***	***3,001,417***	***28.0%***	***72.0%***
Alabama	40,903	10,195	30,708	24.9%	75.1%	31,774	7,210	24,564	22.7%	77.3%
Alaska	9,466	3,096	6,370	32.7%	67.3%	8,471	2,732	5,740	32.2%	67.8%
Arizona	29,409	7,925	21,485	26.9%	73.1%	24,902	6,163	18,739	24.7%	75.3%
Arkansas	13,493	3,734	9,759	27.7%	72.3%	10,855	2,880	7,975	26.5%	73.5%
California	1,298,103	276,395	1,021,708	21.3%	78.7%	1,803,873	550,255	1,253,618	30.5%	69.5%
Colorado	45,018	13,154	31,865	29.2%	70.8%	45,168	13,372	31,796	29.6%	70.4%
Connecticut	28,806	8,542	20,264	29.7%	70.3%	26,274	7,698	18,576	29.3%	70.7%
Delaware	13,209	5,132	8,077	38.9%	61.1%	12,789	4,976	7,813	38.9%	61.1%
District of Columbia	16,687	4,060	12,628	24.3%	75.7%	15,670	3,993	11,677	25.5%	74.5%
Florida	86,765	14,615	72,150	16.8%	83.2%	84,148	14,113	70,035	16.8%	83.2%
Georgia	29,948	3,340	26,608	11.2%	88.8%	25,853	2,712	23,141	10.5%	89.5%
Guam	2,971	671	2,300	22.6%	77.4%	2,414	486	1,928	20.1%	79.9%
Hawaii	24,399	8,143	16,257	33.4%	66.6%	21,773	7,134	14,639	32.8%	67.2%
Idaho	2,803	141	2,662	5.0%	95.0%	2,735	91	2,643	3.3%	96.7%
Illinois	44,546	7,810	36,736	17.5%	82.5%	41,886	7,322	34,565	17.5%	82.5%
Indiana	21,296	2,246	19,050	10.5%	89.5%	18,397	1,804	16,593	9.8%	90.2%
Iowa	39,028	11,356	27,671	29.1%	70.9%	33,633	9,385	24,248	27.9%	72.1%
Kansas	16,990	4,530	12,461	26.7%	73.3%	14,384	3,630	10,754	25.2%	74.8%
Kentucky	57,766	11,462	46,304	19.8%	80.2%	50,185	9,188	40,997	18.3%	81.7%
Louisiana	12,889	1,575	11,314	12.2%	87.8%	11,859	1,479	10,380	12.5%	87.5%
Maine	53,208	23,763	29,445	44.7%	55.3%	48,181	21,227	26,954	44.1%	55.9%
Maryland	50,146	13,225	36,921	26.4%	73.6%	46,493	11,845	34,648	25.5%	74.5%
Massachusetts	162,239	52,596	109,643	32.4%	67.6%	140,722	44,897	95,825	31.9%	68.1%
Michigan	61,280	14,199	47,081	23.2%	76.8%	52,225	11,723	40,501	22.4%	77.6%
Minnesota	48,805	11,381	37,425	23.3%	76.7%	44,032	9,444	34,588	21.4%	78.6%
Mississippi	18,036	4,614	13,423	25.6%	74.4%	13,972	3,281	10,692	23.5%	76.5%
Missouri	73,733	23,164	50,569	31.4%	68.6%	67,268	20,662	46,607	30.7%	69.3%
Montana	7,418	1,899	5,519	25.6%	74.4%	7,113	1,715	5,398	24.1%	75.9%
Nebraska	14,410	2,673	11,737	18.5%	81.5%	13,417	2,379	11,038	17.7%	82.3%
Nevada	31,869	8,893	22,976	27.9%	72.1%	28,802	7,526	21,277	26.1%	73.9%
New Hampshire	14,442	4,622	9,820	32.0%	68.0%	13,436	4,198	9,239	31.2%	68.8%
New Jersey	66,125	18,075	48,050	27.3%	72.7%	56,644	15,048	41,596	26.6%	73.4%
New Mexico	36,143	8,778	27,366	24.3%	75.7%	31,120	7,688	23,432	24.7%	75.3%
New York	383,880	108,976	274,904	28.4%	71.6%	382,006	110,071	271,936	28.8%	71.2%
North Carolina	31,223	4,367	26,857	14.0%	86.0%	19,905	3,849	16,055	19.3%	80.7%
North Dakota	3,274	653	2,621	20.0%	80.0%	2,917	542	2,375	18.6%	81.4%
Ohio	163,521	33,789	129,732	20.7%	79.3%	113,806	16,094	97,713	14.1%	85.9%
Oklahoma	15,707	2,352	13,355	15.0%	85.0%	15,802	2,324	13,477	14.7%	85.3%
Oregon	119,618	39,161	80,457	32.7%	67.3%	171,457	63,521	107,936	37.0%	63.0%
Pennsylvania	171,544	48,162	123,382	28.1%	71.9%	162,233	45,003	117,230	27.7%	72.3%
Puerto Rico	33,703	12,615	21,089	37.4%	62.6%	29,733	11,256	18,478	37.9%	62.1%
Rhode Island	13,423	4,109	9,314	30.6%	69.4%	11,565	3,386	8,179	29.3%	70.7%
South Carolina	25,356	5,238	20,118	20.7%	79.3%	23,572	4,587	18,985	19.5%	80.5%
South Dakota	6,237	777	5,460	12.5%	87.5%	5,935	644	5,291	10.8%	89.2%
Tennessee	113,749	30,289	83,459	26.6%	73.4%	88,505	22,123	66,383	25.0%	75.0%
Texas	80,118	9,530	70,588	11.9%	88.1%	70,524	8,055	62,469	11.4%	88.6%
Utah	10,562	2,878	7,684	27.2%	72.8%	9,518	2,576	6,943	27.1%	72.9%
Vermont	8,177	2,462	5,715	30.1%	69.9%	7,688	2,266	5,422	29.5%	70.5%
Virgin Islands	1,245	355	890	28.5%	71.5%	1,126	360	766	32.0%	68.0%
Virginia	60,724	16,253	44,472	26.8%	73.2%	55,257	14,360	40,897	26.0%	74.0%
Washington	94,337	29,394	64,943	31.2%	68.8%	75,739	22,106	53,633	29.2%	70.8%
West Virginia	18,649	4,710	13,939	25.3%	74.7%	16,139	3,659	12,480	22.7%	77.3%
Wisconsin	66,071	17,415	48,656	26.4%	73.6%	55,537	13,530	42,007	24.4%	75.6%
Wyoming	743	145	598	19.5%	80.5%	675	125	549	18.6%	81.4%

Source: TANF Data Reporting System; TANF Caseload Data 2014 and TANF Caseload Data 2015.

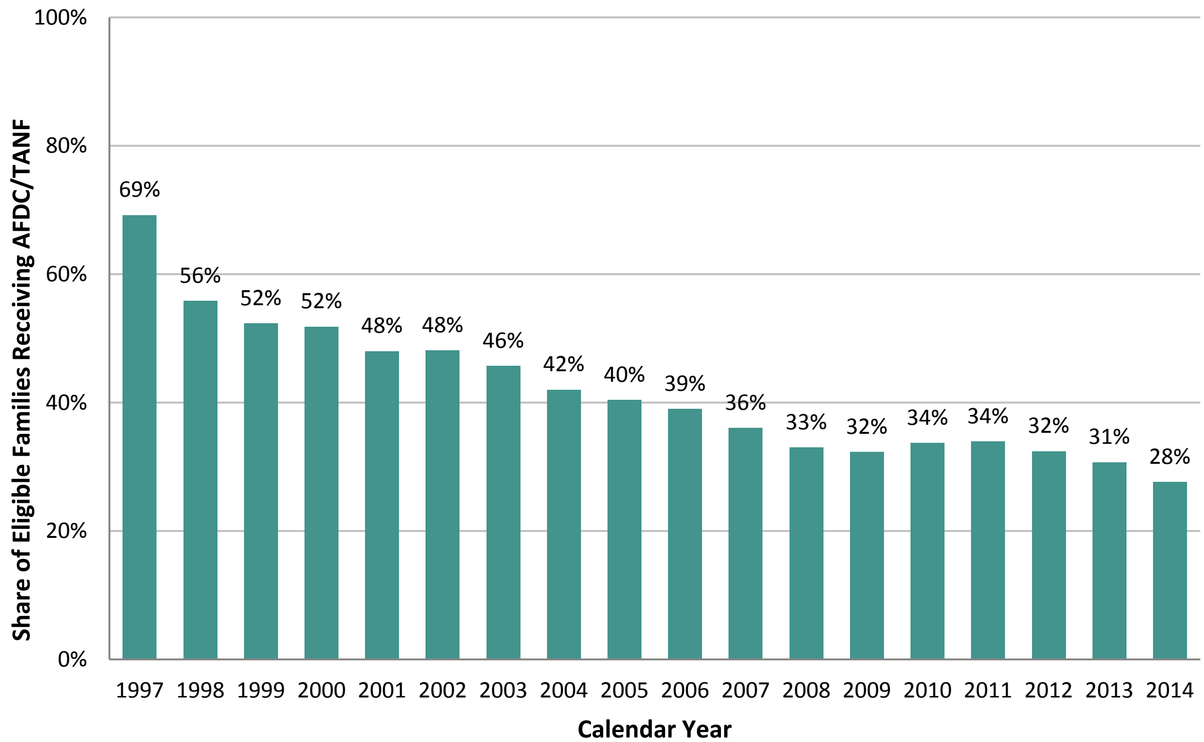
Proportion of Adults and Children in the TANF/SSP Caseload

In FY 2015, 28.0 percent (1.17 million) of TANF/SSP recipients were adults and 72.0 percent (3.00 million) were children, as shown in Figure 2-D. Over time, a growing proportion of TANF cases have been considered "child-only." These are cases in which no adult receives assistance; assistance payments are only for the child or children. Characteristics of child-only cases are discussed in Chapter IV.

Participation of Eligible Families

HHS estimates the percentage of families eligible for assistance under state rules that are receiving TANF assistance using the Transfer Income Model (TRIM), a micro-simulation model, through a contract with the Urban Institute.[9] As shown in Figure 2-E, this participation rate data shows that the share of eligible families receiving TANF declined from 69.2 percent in 1997 to 27.6 percent in 2014 (the latest year for which the estimate is available).

Figure 2-E: Participation of Eligible Families in TANF, 1997 – 2014

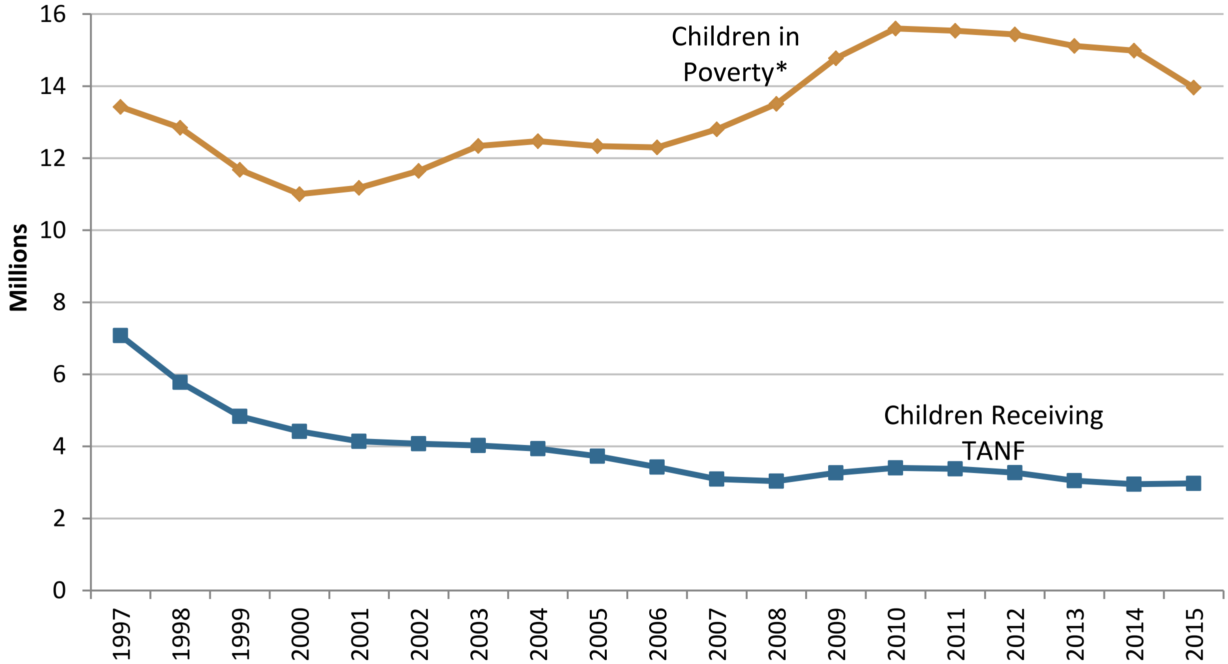


Source: Data are from HHS/ACF and the Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, microsimulation model TRIM3. See the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Welfare Indicators and Risk Factors Sixteenth Report to Congress, available at https://aspe.hhs.gov/pdf-report/welfare-indicators-and-risk-factors-sixteenth-report-congress.

[9] AFDC/TANF participation rates are estimated by an Urban Institute model (TRIM3) that uses Current Population Survey (CPS) data to simulate AFDC/TANF eligibility and data on participation for an average month from administrative records, by calendar year.

Figure 2-F displays the number of children receiving TANF cash assistance relative to the number of children in poverty from 1997 through 2015.

Figure 2-F: Children in Poverty and Children Receiving TANF, 1997–2015



*Related children in subfamilies under 18 years of age.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC). TANF Data Reporting System, http://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tanf-caseload-data-2015.

TANF Applications and Closures

Figure 2-G shows the yearly total monthly averages for TANF applications received as well as the number and percentage of applications approved and the number of cases closed. As discussed in a report on the TANF application process prepared for ACF by Abt Associates, states have varying definitions and procedures for TANF applications, approvals, and case closures. Differences include whether states count individuals applying for other programs as TANF applicants, treatment of individuals returning to TANF after a recent case closing, and the method of counting applicants who withdraw their application before an eligibility determination. Notwithstanding the differences, the percentage of applications received that are approved has been declining rather steadily between FY 2000 and FY 2015. The full report can be accessed at: http://www.abtassociates.com/Reports/2003/Study-of-the-TANF-Application-Process--Final-Repor.aspx.

Figure 2-G: Average Monthly Number of TANF Applications Received and Approved, and Cases Closed, FY 2000-FY 2015

Fiscal Year	U.S. Monthly Average TANF Applications Received	U.S. Monthly Average TANF Applications Approved	Percentage Approved	U.S. Monthly Average TANF Cases Closed
2000	270,922	147,369	54.4%	171,511
2001	281,987	158,087	56.1%	165,376
2002	296,772	157,266	53.0%	170,367
2003	310,077	160,561	51.8%	166,266
2004	310,900	155,623	50.1%	165,981
2005	297,901	143,280	48.1%	156,333
2006	293,635	134,897	45.9%	150,591
2007	297,527	137,810	46.3%	149,565
2008	298,680	135,685	45.4%	142,238
2009	321,086	139,098	43.3%	142,729
2010	334,033	142,707	42.7%	150,974
2011	315,556	139,497	44.2%	157,215
2012	314,855	122,024	38.8%	153,887
2013	300,604	110,434	36.7%	135,154
2014	275,606	106,612	38.7%	119,542
2015	267,377	95,550	35.7%	111,972

Source: TANF Data Reporting System. See TANF Application Data.

The reasons for case closures are discussed in Chapter IV; however, it is difficult to determine the accuracy of case closure responses as well as the reasons for application denials because of the variety of codes that states use, the lack of clearly defined response categories, and the fact that caseworkers may not always know the reason for case closure.

Time Limits

Under the former AFDC program, families could receive assistance without being subject to a time limit if they continued to meet program eligibility rules. PRWORA, which created the TANF program, stipulates that states may not use federal TANF funds to provide assistance to a family that includes an adult who has received assistance for more than a cumulative total of 60 months (whether or not consecutive) after the establishment of a state's TANF program. States only count months for which an adult received federally-funded assistance as the head-of-household or as the spouse of the head-of-household. Any month when a pregnant minor or minor parent received assistance as the head-of-household or married to the head-of-household counts toward the 60-month limit.

In FY 2015, the average countable months of receipt for families with an adult receiving federally funded assistance was 26.9 months, with about 34.4 percent receiving such assistance for 12 months or less.[10]

There are several circumstances in which receipt of assistance does not count toward the 60-month time limit. These include:

1. Any month of assistance by an individual who is not the head-of-household or married to the head-of-household.
2. Any month of assistance by an adult while living in Indian country (as defined in 18 U.S.C. 1151) or a Native Alaskan village where at least 50 percent of the adults were not employed.
3. Any month of assistance funded solely with state maintenance-of-effort (MOE) funds, using either segregated state funds or a separate state program. (Note: the data included in this report reflecting the number of families exempt from the accumulation of months toward the 60-month time limit reflect only those families funded with segregated state funds. Families receiving assistance under a separate state program are not included in this data collection.)

States have the option to extend assistance paid by federal TANF funds beyond the 60-month time limit for up to 20 percent of the average monthly number of families receiving assistance during the fiscal year or the immediately preceding fiscal year, whichever the state elects. States are permitted to extend assistance to families only on the basis of: (1) hardship, as defined by the state, or (2) the fact that the family includes someone who has been battered, or subjected to extreme cruelty, as specified in the statute. Assistance can also be extended for families with an adult while (s)he lives in Indian country (as defined in 18 U.S.C. 1151) or a Native Alaskan village where at least 50 percent of the adults were not employed. In addition, states can extend assistance beyond 60 months by funding it solely with state MOE funds, using either segregated state funds or through a SSP.

In FY 2015, 1.7 percent of families nationally with an adult head of household receiving federally funded assistance had received aid beyond the 60-month limitation due to the hardship exception, far below the 20 percent limit. Most states reported that less than 1 percent of all such families received assistance beyond 60 months due to a hardship exemption or domestic violence waiver. Only two states (Pennsylvania and Hawaii) reported more than 10 percent of cases receiving assistance beyond 60 months for these reasons.

[10] Table 5 Temporary Assistance For Needy Families TANF Federal Five-Year Time Limit Average Monthly Number Of Countable Months Fiscal Year 2015
https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ofa/timelim_2015_web.pdf

III. Work Participation Rates

Work participation rates measure the degree to which families receiving assistance in TANF and SSPs are engaged in work activities specified under federal law.

Work Participation Rate Requirements

Overall and Two-Parent Work Participation Rates

The TANF statute specifies the work participation rate requirements for states. States must meet both an overall (also called "all families") work participation rate and a two-parent work participation rate, or face a financial penalty. The overall work participation rate for a state requires that at least 50 percent of TANF/SSP families with a work-eligible individual (WEI) engage in one or more of 12 specified work activities (see Figure 3-B) for a minimum average of 30 hours per week (or 20 hours per week for a single parent with a child under six years of age) over the course of a month. The two-parent work participation rate requires states to have at least 90 percent of two-parent families with two WEIs in work activities for at least an average of 35 hours per week (or 55 hours per week for a family receiving federally subsidized child care) over the course of a month.

Figure 3-A: Definition of Work-Eligible Individual (45 CFR Part 261.2(n))

Work-eligible individual means an adult (or minor child head-of-household) receiving assistance under TANF or a separate state program or a non-recipient parent living with a child receiving such assistance unless the parent is:

(i) a minor parent and not the head of household;
(ii) a non-citizen who is ineligible to receive assistance due to his or her immigration status; or
(iii) at State option on a case-by-case basis, a recipient of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits or Aid to the Aged, Blind, or Disabled in the Territories.

The term also excludes:

(i) a parent providing care for a disabled family member in the home, provided that there is medical documentation to support the need for the parent to remain in the home to care for this disabled family member;
(ii) at state option on a case-by-case basis, a parent who is the recipient of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits; and
(iii) an individual in a family receiving MOE-funded assistance under an approved tribal TANF plan, unless the state includes the tribal family in calculating work participation rates under §261.25.

The original TANF statute also allowed states to exclude three categories of families from the calculation of the work participation rates, including those: (1) with a single parent caring for a child under the age of one (limited to a lifetime maximum of 12 months); (2) under a sanction for noncompliance with work requirements (for up to three months in the preceding 12-month period); and (3) participating in a tribal TANF or tribal work program.

The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA) required work participation rates to include families in SSPs. This change took effect with the FY 2007 work participation rates, and caused many states to create solely state-funded (SSF) programs to serve families that may have trouble meeting all of the work participation guidelines, such as two-parent families, that had previously been served in SSPs. Expenditures in SSF programs do not count as MOE.

Countable Activities

Prior to the DRA, states were allowed to develop their own reasonable definitions for the work activities specified in the TANF statute. The DRA required HHS to define each of the countable work activities and establish verification requirements that a state must meet in order to count an hour of participation. The work activities are listed in Figure 3-B.

The TANF statute imposes some restrictions on when certain activities may count toward the state's work participation rate. Specifically, under the law, for a family to count in the state's overall work participation rate for a month, a WEI in the family must participate for an average of 30 hours per week, of which at least an average of 20 hours per week must be in one or more of the nine "core" activities. The three other "non-core" activities may count for any remaining hours beyond the "core hours" requirement (see Figure 3-B). For the two-parent rate, 30 of the 35 average weekly hours (or 50 of 55 hours for a family receiving federally subsidized child care) must come from the same nine "core" work activities.

Current law also restricts the amount of time individuals can spend on some qualified activities and still count toward the state's participation rate hours. Allowable hours for job search and job readiness assistance are limited to no more than six weeks in a 12-month period (or up to 12 weeks if a state has an unemployment rate at least 50 percent greater than the unemployment rate of the United States or meets the definition of a "needy state" for purposes of the TANF Contingency Fund) and no more than four consecutive weeks. Allowable hours for vocational educational training are limited to 12 months per individual. A teen parent (under age 20) who is a WEI, however, may count toward the work participation rate without regard to the hours and activities requirements if he or she maintains satisfactory attendance in secondary school (or the equivalent) or participates in education directly related to employment for an average of at least 20 hours per week in the month. No more than 30 percent of those counting toward a state's participation rate for a month may participate in vocational educational training or teen parent educational activities. The OFA Information Memorandum (IM) on Supporting Career Pathways for TANF Recipients (TANF-ACF-IM-2016-05) discusses how states can work within these limitations to combine career pathway activities for TANF recipients. The IM also

reminds states that activities that do not count toward the work participation rate may still be allowable uses of TANF funds.

Figure 3-B: Current Countable Work Activities (45 CFR Part 261.2)

"Core" Activities (at least 20 hours/week from these)	**"Non-Core" Activities (only countable for hours in excess of 20)**
Unsubsidized employment	Job skills training directly related to employment
Subsidized private sector employment	
Subsidized public sector employment	Education directly related to employment
Work experience	Satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in a GED program
On-the-job training	
Job search /job readiness assistance	
Community service programs	
Vocational educational training	
Providing child care to a participant in a community service program	

Caseload Reduction Credits

The statute sets required work participation rates of 50 percent for all families and 90 percent for two-parent families, reduced by the credit the state qualifies for under the TANF caseload reduction credit.

A state's caseload reduction credit equals the percentage point decline (for reasons other than changes in eligibility rules) in its average monthly caseload between FY 2005 (the current base year) and a comparison year.[11]

In addition, in determining the amount of caseload decline, a state that spends MOE funds in excess of its basic MOE requirement need only include the proportion of caseloads receiving assistance that is necessary to meet basic MOE requirements. In other words, it may exclude from its comparison year caseload the share of cases funded with "excess MOE." The final rule implementing the DRA, promulgated in February 2008, set forth a specific methodology for calculating the number of cases funded with "excess MOE" for the caseload reduction credit.[12]

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[11] Normally, the comparison year is the previous year (e.g., FY 2014 for the FY 2015 caseload reduction credit), but the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) allowed a state the option of using FY 2007 or FY 2008 as the comparison year for rates in FY 2009, FY 2010, and FY 2011. This hold-harmless provision was intended to prevent a state's work participation requirement from rising if state caseloads rose as a result of the economic recession.

[12] TANF-ACF-PI-2008-04 (Federal TANF Contingency Funds) https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/policy/pi-ofa/2008/200804/pi200804?page=all.

FY 2014 and FY 2015 Work Participation Rates and Trends over Time

The national average overall participation rate achieved in FY 2015 was 48.4 percent, an increase from the FY 2014 national average overall rate of 36.6 percent. The national average two-parent rate achieved in FY 2015 was 60.6 percent, nearly twice as high as FY 2014's 30.8 percent national average.

Many states that have achieved high participation rates have done so by counting individuals in unsubsidized employment, either because they have generous earnings disregards or because they pay modest payments (e.g. $10 a month) to families with children who work enough hours to count in the work rate. These families are often either participating in the SNAP program or would otherwise stop receiving TANF cash assistance. The practice of providing modest payments to such families has been practiced by a number of states in recent years (including Arkansas, California, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington), but it does not necessarily suggest an increase in states' efforts to engage families in work. Other states are able to engage a significant number of TANF/MOE families because they serve only a small proportion of poor families in the state or because they use solely state funded programs, rather than TANF or MOE-funded programs, to serve families that cannot be counted.

For example, in FY 2015 California adopted new policies and practices that changed the composition of the caseload subject to the work participation rate to add families that were likely to be working for sufficient hours to meet the rate. California did this by providing $10 assistance payments to working SNAP families likely to have enough hours in employment to meet the work rate. California also excluded certain families unlikely to meet the rate by shifting them to solely state funded programs, which are programs funded with state-only dollars that do not count toward their MOE requirement.

The national increase between FY 2014 and FY 2015 was due primarily to these state policy changes that significantly increased California's work participation rate, as California accounts for about 47 percent of the cases included in the national overall work participation rate and about 85 percent of families in the two-parent work participation rate calculation.

An overview of state strategies to meet the work rates can be found on the ACF Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) website at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/tanf-work-requirements-and-state-strategies-to-fulfill-them.

Figure 3-C demonstrates the trend in TANF work participation rates achieved from FY 1997 to FY 2015.

Figure 3-C: National Average TANF Work Participation Rates, FY 1997 – FY 2015

Fiscal Year	Overall	Two-Parent
1997	30.7%	44.5%
1998	35.3%	42.4%
1999	38.3%	54.7%
2000	34.0%	48.9%
2001	34.4%	51.1%
2002	33.4%	49.4%
2003	31.3%	48.4%
2004	32.0%	47.4%
2005	33.0%	42.6%
2006	32.5%	45.9%
2007	29.7%	35.7%
2008	29.4%	27.6%
2009	29.4%	28.3%
2010	29.0%	33.4%
2011	29.5%	32.0%
2012	34.4%	33.9%
2013	33.5%	32.9%
2014	36.6%	30.8%
2015	48.4%	60.6%

Note: Beginning in FY 2007, the work rates included SSP-MOE cases.
Source: TANF Data Report

The caseload reduction credit—including caseload adjustments due to excess MOE spending—reduced the overall rate requirement below the 50 percent statutory standard for all but 11 states in FY 2014 and all but 13 states in FY 2015. Fourteen states had credits large enough to reduce their overall target to zero in FY 2015 and only 25 states had a target rate of more than 20 percent. Figure 3-D shows the number of states with effective overall rates less than 20 percent from FY 2000 through FY 2015.

Figure 3-D: WPR Adjusted Standards Under 20 Percent, FY 2000 – FY 2015

Fiscal Year	Number of States with an Adjusted Standard of 0%	Number of States with an Adjusted Standard Greater than 0% and Less than 20%	Total Number of States with an Adjusted Standard Less than 20%
2000	32	18	50
2001	28	22	50
2002	21	28	49
2003	20	28	48
2004	18	28	46
2005	17	30	47
2006	19	28	47
2007	4	11	15
2008	22	10	32
2009	22	11	33
2010	22	11	33
2011	23	10	33
2012	4	10	14
2013	5	12	17
2014	7	19	26
2015	14	15	29

Source: TANF Data Reporting System.

Figures 3-E and 3-F show the work participation rate that each state achieved in FY 2014 and FY 2015 respectively, the standards adjusted for each state's caseload reduction credit, and whether the state met its target for the overall rate and the two-parent rate. In FY 2014 and in FY 2015, twenty-eight states operated programs subject to the two-parent participation rate. For states that had no TANF and/or SSP-MOE families subject to the two-parent rate, the two-parent rate is left blank in the figures.

Twenty states failed one or both work participation rates in FY 2014. Nine states failed the overall rate alone or both rates, and 11 states failed the two-parent rate only. By way of comparison, in FY 2013, 11 states failed the overall rate alone or both rates, and 11 states failed the two-parent rate only

Fifteen states failed one or both work participation rates in FY 2015. Of these states, 5 failed both rates and 10 failed just the two-parent rate.

More information about the FY 2014 and FY 2015 TANF Work Participation Rates can be found on the OFA data and reports page at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/programs/tanf/data-reports.

Figure 3-E: Combined TANF And SSP-MOE Work Participation Rates, FY 2014

STATE	ALL-FAMILIES RATE: Rate	ALL-FAMILIES RATE: Adjusted Standard	ALL-FAMILIES RATE: Met Target	TWO-PARENT FAMILIES RATE: Rate	TWO-PARENT FAMILIES RATE: Adjusted Standard	TWO-PARENT FAMILIES RATE: Met Target
United States	36.6%	—	—	30.8%	—	—
Alabama	51.9%	21.7%	Yes	54.5%	40.6%	Yes
Alaska	41.5%	38.1%	Yes	46.8%	62.4%	No
Arizona	19.3%	4.8%	Yes	57.0%	44.8%	Yes
Arkansas	42.2%	0.0%	Yes	28.7%	36.4%	No
California	29.8%	50.0%	No	25.5%	90.0%	No
Colorado	22.5%	32.0%	No	18.3%	72.0%	No
Connecticut	46.7%	24.1%	Yes		—	—
Delaware	34.7%	13.0%	Yes		—	—
District of Columbia	45.0%	38.0%	Yes		—	—
Florida	44.5%	31.1%	Yes	54.9%	42.0%	Yes
Georgia	57.1%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Guam	36.5%	50.0%	No	66.1%	90.0%	No
Hawaii	47.8%	2.2%	Yes	60.0%	42.2%	Yes
Idaho	49.5%	45.1%	Yes		—	—
Illinois	68.7%	50.0%	Yes		—	—
Indiana	30.3%	13.3%	Yes	24.3%	20.4%	Yes
Iowa	36.3%	18.9%	Yes	30.0%	32.7%	No
Kansas	34.4%	6.9%	Yes	37.0%	46.9%	No
Kentucky	56.5%	30.5%	Yes	60.5%	70.5%	No
Louisiana	23.1%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Maine	69.1%	50.0%	Yes	15.9%	90.0%	No
Maryland	49.7%	24.1%	Yes		—	—
Massachusetts	57.8%	48.0%	Yes	93.5%	88.0%	Yes
Michigan	62.1%	12.2%	Yes		—	—
Minnesota	46.2%	39.9%	Yes		—	—
Mississippi	63.8%	50.0%	Yes		—	—
Missouri	19.8%	19.0%	Yes		—	—
Montana	42.6%	22.4%	Yes	38.8%	36.0%	Yes
Nebraska	48.2%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Nevada	31.0%	50.0%	No	42.4%	90.0%	No
New Hampshire	77.9%	50.0%	Yes		—	—
New Jersey	25.0%	2.2%	Yes		—	—
New Mexico	39.3%	3.8%	Yes	45.1%	43.8%	Yes
New York	31.5%	17.2%	Yes		—	—
North Carolina	38.2%	8.9%	Yes	46.6%	48.9%	No
North Dakota	71.1%	0.6%	Yes		—	—
Ohio	59.5%	30.2%	Yes	63.6%	70.2%	No
Oklahoma	25.1%	14.2%	Yes		—	—
Oregon	51.7%	50.0%	Yes	99.4%	90.0%	Yes
Pennsylvania	23.6%	25.2%	No	47.4%	40.4%	Yes
Puerto Rico	20.6%	31.6%	No		—	—
Rhode Island	12.1%	0.0%	Yes	8.7%	46.1%	No
South Carolina	34.8%	6.1%	Yes		—	—
South Dakota	57.0%	50.0%	Yes		—	—
Tennessee	26.9%	7.9%	Yes	12.5%	47.9%	No
Texas	18.3%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Utah	20.7%	0.6%	Yes		—	—
Vermont	41.0%	43.6%	No	46.9%	83.6%	No
Virgin Islands	15.2%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Virginia	43.9%	32.3%	Yes		—	—
Washington	16.2%	19.9%	No	17.5%	59.9%	No
West Virginia	42.2%	19.6%	Yes		—	—
Wisconsin	36.0%	50.0%	No	31.7%	90.0%	No
Wyoming	72.2%	50.0%	Yes	76.3%	90.0%	No

Source: TANF Data Reporting System.

Figure 3-F: Combined TANF And SSP-MOE Work Participation Rates, FY 2015

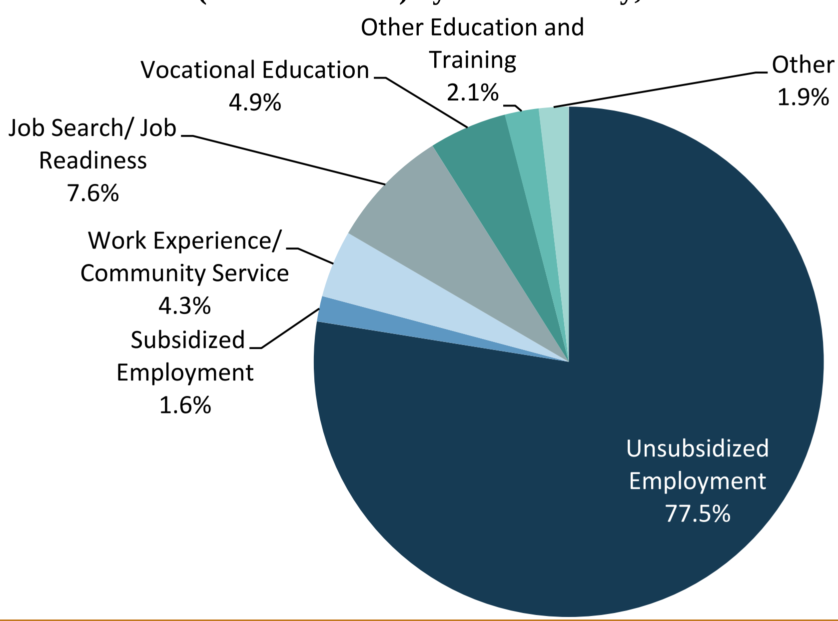
STATE	ALL-FAMILIES RATE: Rate	ALL-FAMILIES RATE: Adjusted Standard	ALL-FAMILIES RATE: Met Target	TWO-PARENT FAMILIES RATE: Rate	TWO-PARENT FAMILIES RATE: Adjusted Standard	TWO-PARENT FAMILIES RATE: Met Target
United States	48.4%	—	—	60.6%	—	—
Alabama	54.4%	3.0%	Yes	61.4%	26.8%	Yes
Alaska	39.8%	36.7%	Yes	52.8%	65.6%	No
Arizona	29.9%	0.0%	Yes	69.7%	36.3%	Yes
Arkansas	44.4%	0.0%	Yes	31.2%	24.7%	Yes
California	55.7%	50.0%	Yes	61.4%	90.0%	No
Colorado	18.0%	34.2%	No	14.8%	74.2%	No
Connecticut	49.7%	19.9%	Yes		—	—
Delaware	33.1%	15.8%	Yes		—	—
District of Columbia	50.0%	31.7%	Yes		—	—
Florida	45.3%	24.8%	Yes	49.4%	29.4%	Yes
Georgia	61.7%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Guam	16.3%	50.0%	No	22.0%	90.0%	No
Hawaii	44.7%	0.0%	Yes	57.0%	32.2%	Yes
Idaho	64.6%	50.0%	Yes		—	—
Illinois	65.9%	50.0%	Yes		—	—
Indiana	30.3%	18.7%	Yes	28.1%	3.9%	Yes
Iowa	36.4%	5.0%	Yes	32.4%	24.0%	Yes
Kansas	34.5%	2.7%	Yes	42.2%	35.8%	Yes
Kentucky	55.4%	30.4%	Yes	54.6%	70.4%	No
Louisiana	21.0%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Maine	71.3%	50.0%	Yes	28.6%	90.0%	No
Maryland	51.5%	21.0%	Yes		—	—
Massachusetts	59.8%	50.0%	Yes	94.6%	90.0%	Yes
Michigan	69.4%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Minnesota	37.9%	28.1%	Yes		—	—
Mississippi	63.0%	50.0%	Yes		—	—
Missouri	22.4%	8.9%	Yes		—	—
Montana	40.1%	19.2%	Yes	36.8%	35.9%	Yes
Nebraska	42.6%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Nevada	38.3%	50.0%	No	45.2%	90.0%	No
New Hampshire	78.6%	50.0%	Yes		—	—
New Jersey	26.9%	5.9%	Yes		—	—
New Mexico	36.1%	0.0%	Yes	38.5%	29.7%	Yes
New York	31.7%	14.6%	Yes		—	—
North Carolina	19.8%	4.5%	Yes	20.8%	44.5%	No
North Dakota	68.3%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Ohio	57.2%	37.7%	Yes	59.9%	75.5%	No
Oklahoma	24.2%	9.1%	Yes		—	—
Oregon	68.0%	50.0%	Yes	99.1%	90.0%	Yes
Pennsylvania	24.5%	21.7%	Yes	42.5%	11.2%	Yes
Puerto Rico	18.2%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Rhode Island	14.9%	0.9%	Yes	11.0%	40.9%	No
South Carolina	36.6%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
South Dakota	57.9%	50.0%	Yes		—	—
Tennessee	27.3%	0.0%	Yes	12.0%	39.4%	No
Texas	20.3%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Utah	16.3%	0.0%	Yes		—	—
Vermont	43.6%	46.3%	No	50.7%	86.3%	No
Virgin Islands	12.4%	11.0%	Yes		—	—
Virginia	44.8%	20.6%	Yes		—	—
Washington	20.3%	13.2%	Yes	24.9%	53.2%	No
West Virginia	42.2%	24.4%	Yes		—	—
Wisconsin	38.9%	50.0%	No	40.0%	90.0%	No
Wyoming	72.4%	50.0%	Yes	81.3%	90.0%	No

Source: TANF Data Reporting System.

In FY 2015, 11.6 percent of TANF families with a WEI had some hours of participation but did not attain sufficient hours to qualify toward the work rate. States reported zero hours of participation in qualified activities for 51.7 percent of families. Families with WEIs that are reported as having zero hours of participation may in fact be engaged in activities that do not meet TANF's work participation requirements, such as in cases where a state chooses not to report a WEI's hours because he/she did not work enough hours in countable activities to be considered "engaged." Alternatively, a WEI may be participating in activities that are not included in the countable work activities, such as self-sufficiency activities or activities for which they have surpassed statutory limitations (e.g. more than 12 months of vocational education). Zero hours of participation also may result from a range of situations, including individuals who are non-compliant and are in the sanction process; individuals who the state or local agency has failed to engage; individuals who are not participating due to illness, disability, having a very young child, or a lack of needed child care; and individuals not participating because they are in their first month of assistance or are awaiting the beginning of activity. More information about families with WEIs that are reported as having zero hours of participation is available in the OPRE report located at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/improving-engagement-of-tanf-families-understanding-work-participation-and-families-with-reported-zero-hours-of-participation-in.

Figure 3-G shows the percent distribution of total hours of participation for all work-eligible individuals in TANF and SSP programs by work activity in FY 2015.

Figure 3-G: Percent Distribution of Total Hours of Participation for All Work-Eligible Individuals (TANF and SSP) by Work Activity, FY 2015



Note: Work-eligible individuals could have participated in more than one activity; hours reported in "Other" are not counted toward the work participation rates. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
Source: Table 7A of the FY 2015 TANF Work Participation Rate Tables.

Work Participation Penalties

When a state fails the TANF work participation rate requirement for a fiscal year, it is subject to a financial penalty. OFA notifies the state of its failure, the amount of the penalty, and its options for resolving it. The state's options are: (a) dispute the data OFA used; (b) claim that it should not be penalized because it had "reasonable cause" for failing to meet the requirement; (c) request that OFA reduce the penalty because the failure was due to "extraordinary circumstances" (e.g., regional recession); (d) enter into a corrective compliance plan under which the penalty will not be assessed if the state comes into compliance; or (e) accept the penalty. The state may elect these options consecutively. If the state exhausts these options or chooses not to pursue any, the state may appeal the penalty to the HHS Departmental Appeals Board.

IV. Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients

TANF program data is collected monthly and reported quarterly to HHS, as required of states. The data include disaggregated case record information on the families receiving assistance, families no longer receiving assistance, and families newly-approved for assistance.

This chapter provides a summary of FY 2015 characteristics and financial circumstances of the TANF recipient population, as well as trends over time. These data, as well as state-level data and data on SSP-MOE families,[13] can be accessed from online at: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/characteristics-and-financial-circumstances-of-tanf-recipients-fiscal-year-2015.

The FY 2015 TANF population was composed of 1.3 million families (or what is commonly referred to as cases or caseload) receiving TANF assistance. In FY 2015, the average number of recipients in TANF families was 2.3, including an average of 1.8 child recipients. Among TANF recipient families, 50.1 percent had one child. Only 7.4 percent of families had four or more children.

Note that the caseload data presented in this chapter may vary from that presented in Chapter II of this report. The data here represents updated data collection and reporting of TANF families using state TANF population and sample data (as described at the end of this chapter). This chapter displays individual- or family-level data and excludes separate state program (SSP) cases. Data presented elsewhere displays the aggregated caseload using data reported by states.

The average monthly amount of assistance for TANF recipient families was $398 in FY 2015. Monthly cash payments to TANF families averaged $332 for families with one child, $418 for those with two children, $502 for those with three children, and $606 for the small number of families with four or more children. In FY 2015, 18.4 percent of TANF families had non-TANF income. The average monthly amount for those with non-TANF income was $813 per family. 12.8 percent of TANF families had earned income with an average monthly amount of $946, while 6.0 percent of the TANF families had unearned income with an average monthly amount of $447 in FY 2015. Unearned income includes a variety of income sources, most notably Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Unemployment Insurance, and Workers' Compensation.

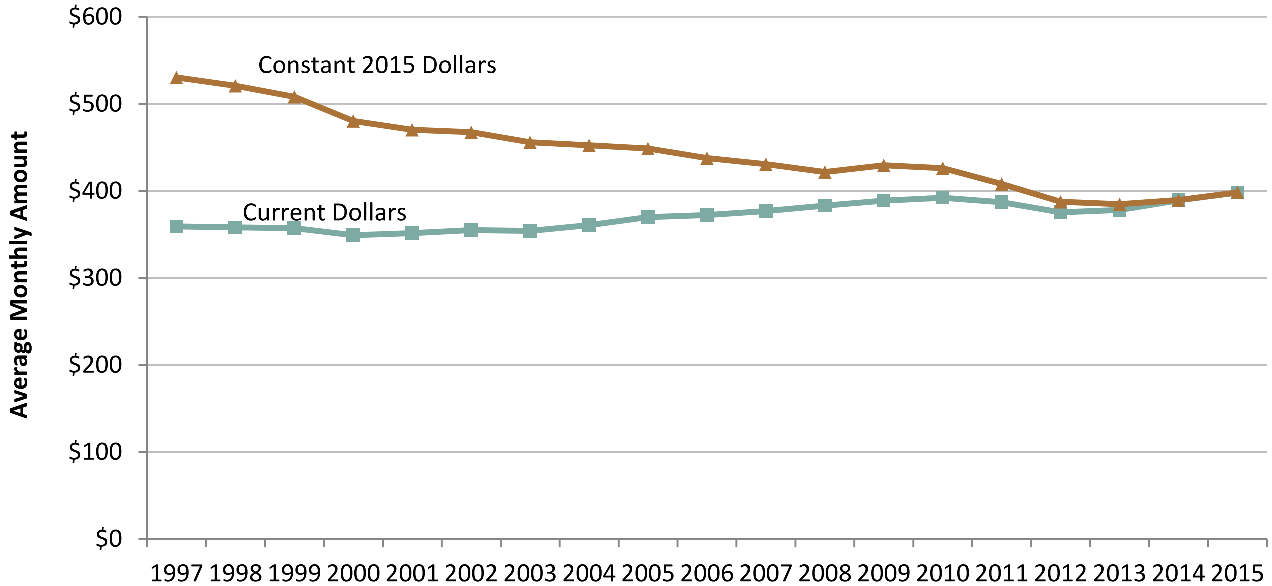
[13] Each state that claims MOE expenditures for a separate state program (SSP) must file disaggregated information on families receiving SSP-MOE assistance. For more information on SSP-MOE funding see Chapter I and for SSP caseload data see Chapter II.

Some 11.4 percent of TANF families received child support in FY 2015, with an average monthly amount of $209. Additionally, 10.9 percent of TANF families had some cash resources (e.g., cash on hand, bank accounts, or certificates of deposit) with an average amount of $231. As described in Chapter VI of this report, states define what counts toward cash resources for purposes of eligibility determination. The reported values are limited to those cash resources required for eligibility purposes.

States reported that 84.3 percent of TANF families received SNAP benefits in FY 2015, which is consistent with levels over the previous decade. These families received average monthly SNAP benefits of $378. In addition, in 28 states, over 98 percent of TANF families participated in Medicaid or in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in FY 2015.

In FY 2015, the average monthly amount of TANF cash assistance for families, regardless of family size, was $398. Figure 4-B shows trends over time in TANF cash assistance for all families in current dollars and in constant (adjusted for inflation) 2015 dollars. When inflation is taken into account, the average monthly amount of assistance declined by 25 percent between FY 1997 and FY 2015. In addition to inflation, changes over time are a result of changes in family size and in the maximum benefit amount.

Figure 4-B: Average Monthly Amount of TANF Cash Assistance for All Families, FY 1997 – FY 2015



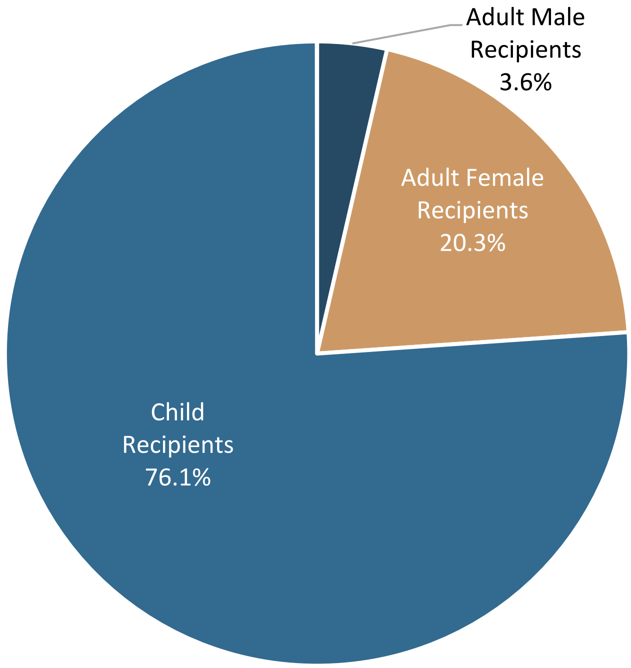
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Current Dollars	$359	$358	$357	$349	$351	$355	$354	$360	$370	$372	$377	$383	$389	$392	$387	$375	$378	$389	$398
Constant 2015 Dollars	$530	$521	$508	$480	$470	$467	$456	$452	$449	$438	$431	$422	$429	$426	$408	$387	$385	$389	$398

Note: The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Consumer Price Index (CPI) is used to calculate the inflation adjustment.
Source: TANF administrative records. *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients*.

TANF Adult Recipients

The TANF recipient population, shown in Figure 4-C, included 744,257 adult recipients, representing 23.9 percent of recipients in FY 2015. A large majority (89.8 percent) of these adult recipients identified as the head of household. While 50.2 percent of adults in an assistance unit were TANF recipients, the other half were not, meaning the state considers their income when determining eligibility but they are not a cash assistance recipient themselves. Of those adults not receiving assistance, 64.3 percent were parents, 33.3 percent were non-parent caretakers, and 2.2 percent were other persons whose income was considered in determining eligibility. Parents in a household may not receive TANF assistance if they receive an SSI benefit, they have an unknown citizenship/immigration status, they have a sanction status for failure to comply with requirements, or another reason. More information on these "child-only" cases can be found later in this chapter.

Figure 4-C: Percentage Distribution of TANF Recipient Population, FY 2015

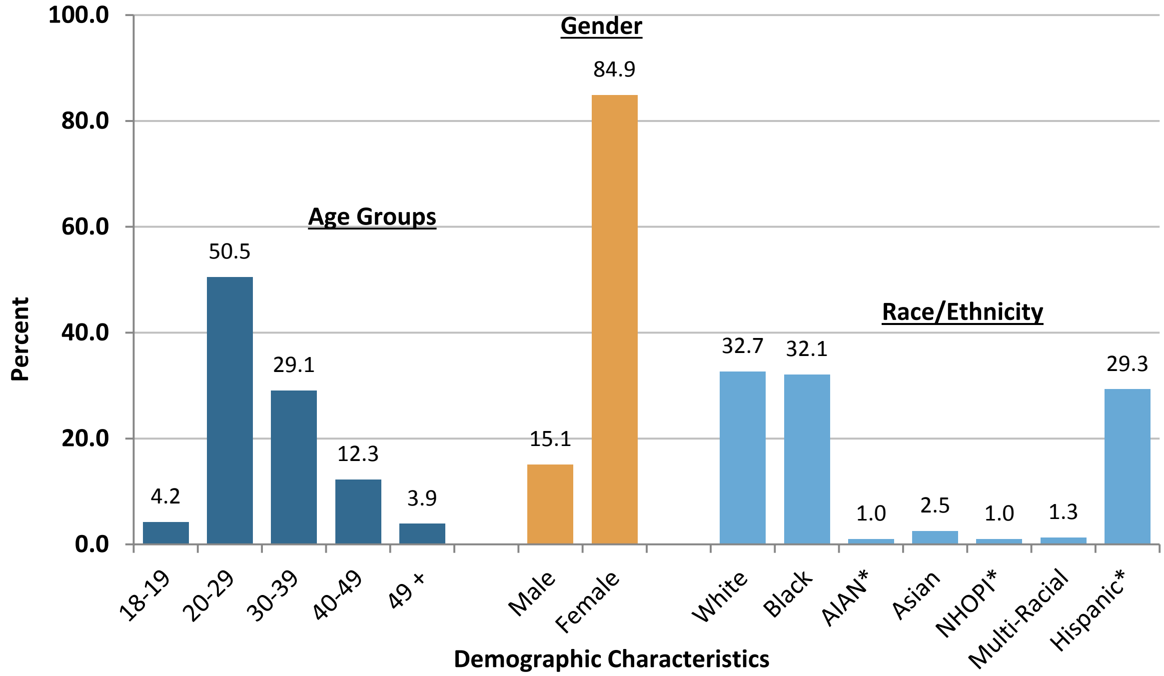


Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
Source: TANF administrative records. *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients*.

As shown in Figure 4-D, just over half (50.5 percent) of the TANF adult recipient population are between the ages of 20 and 29. Moreover, 83.8 percent of adult recipients have not reached the age of 40. Women make up the vast majority of adults receiving TANF assistance, as they are more likely to be custodial parents. Additionally, the majority of TANF adult recipients are people of color, but Whites adults still make up the largest percentage of adult recipients (32.7

percent). The marital status data show that adults receiving TANF assistance are primarily single parents (70.9 percent).

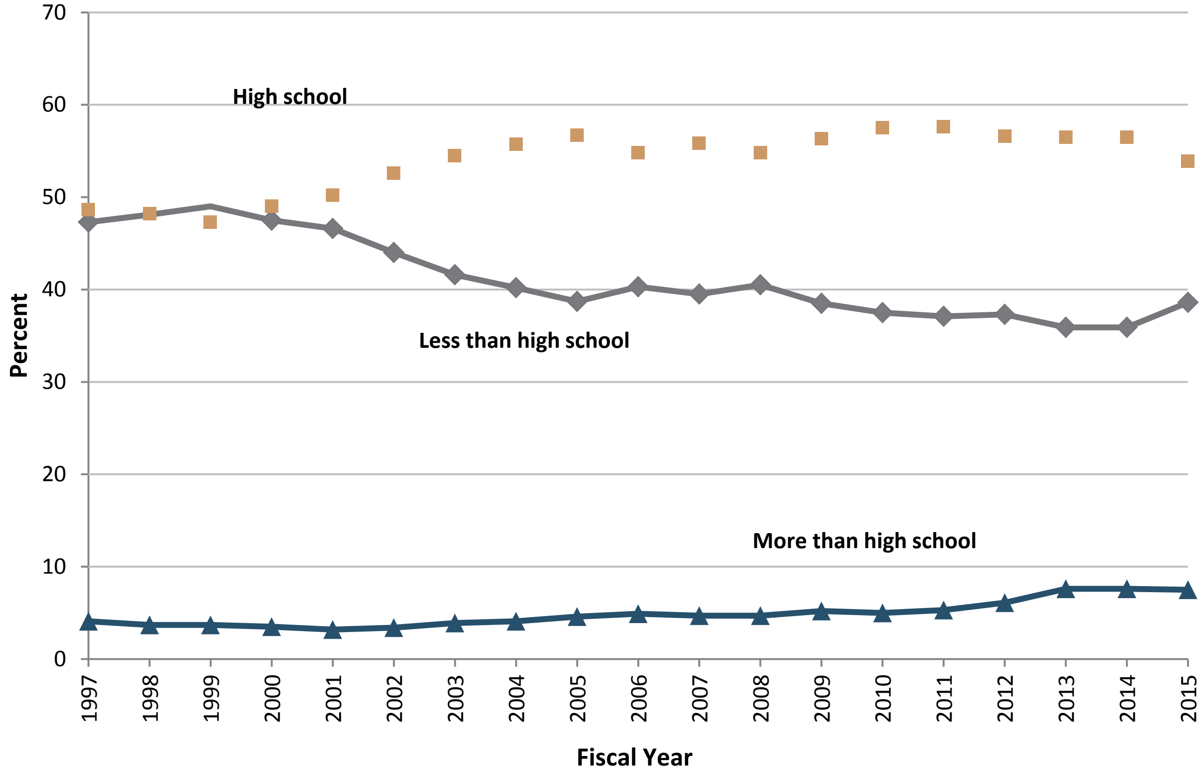
Figure 4-D: Percentage of TANF Adult Recipients by Demographic Characteristics, FY 2015



*Hispanic may be of any race. AIAN=American Indian or Alaska Native; NHOPI=Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.
Source: TANF administrative records. *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients*.

In terms of educational attainment, 53.9 percent of TANF adult recipients in FY 2015 had completed high school (or its equivalent), 38.6 percent had less than a high school level of education, and 7.5 percent of adult recipients had achieved more than a high school level of education. Figure 4-E shows trends in the educational attainment of TANF adult recipients over time. The percentage of TANF adult recipients with more than a high school education has increased from 4.1 percent in FY 1997 to 7.5 percent in FY 2015.

Figure 4-E: Percentage of TANF Adult Recipients by Educational Attainment, FY 1997 – FY 2015



Source: TANF administrative records. *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients*.

It is important to note that the employment data presented in this chapter are different from the Work Participation Rate data in Chapter III and the job entry rate data in Chapter V of this report. The data presented here represent the labor market status of adult TANF recipients as reported by states, and classify individuals as either employed or not employed. Conversely, the data in Chapter III are based on families with work-eligible individuals. This includes some non-recipient parents and those in SSPs; it also excludes some adult recipients, most notably those who are not considered work-eligible individuals because they are caring for a disabled family member.

In FY 2015, the employment rate of TANF adult recipients was 26.7 percent. Of this group, women were employed at a rate of 26.5 percent, while men were employed at a greater rate of 27.8 percent. Note that this is a measure of employment while receiving TANF assistance; in many states, a family may lose TANF eligibility when or shortly after an adult enters employment, and this is not a measure of employment in the period before or after receiving TANF assistance.

Demographic characteristics of race and ethnicity for TANF adult recipients over time are shown in Figure 4-F. This historical data show the Hispanic adults' share of the caseload steadily increasing since 2004 and White and Black adults' share decreasing over the last decade. The

percentage of adult recipients that were in the White and Black categories each decreased by about four percentage points between FY 2014 and FY 2015, from 36.4 percent to 32.7 percent and from 35.9 percent to 32.1 percent, respectively. Hispanic adults were 21.5 percent of adult recipients in FY 1997 and 29.3 percent in FY 2015, an increase of 7.8 percentage points.

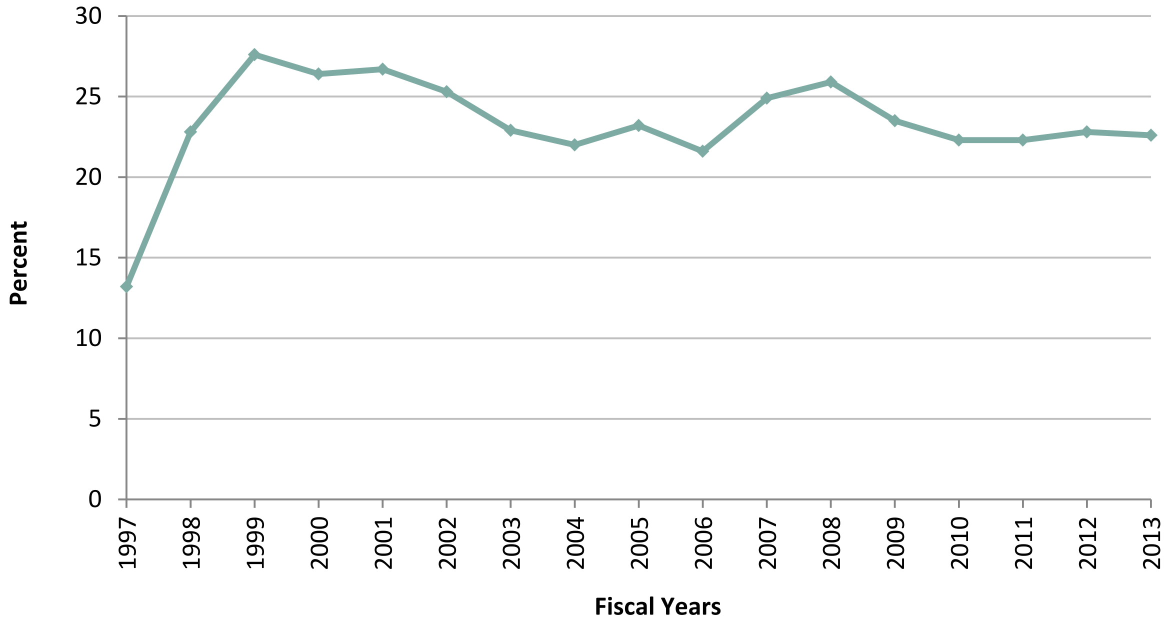
Figure 4-F: Percentage of TANF Adults by Race/Ethnicity, FY 1997 – FY 2015

Year	White	Black	AIAN*	Asian	NHOPI*	Multi-Racial	Hispanic*
1997	36.4	35.9	1.4	4.1	—	0.7†	21.5
1998	35.8	37.3	1.6	4.6	—	0.6†	20.1
1999	32.7	36.6	1.7	5	—	0.7†	23.3
2000	33.0	38.1	1.8	2.6	0.5	0.1	23.9
2001	32.4	39.3	1.3	2.5	0.6	0.2	23.7
2002	34.4	39.3	1.6	2.2	0.5	0.3	21.7
2003	35.5	39.2	1.7	2.0	0.6	0.3	20.7
2004	37.2	39.3	1.7	1.5	0.6	0.3	19.4
2005	36.6	38.9	1.6	1.9	0.5	0.5	20.0
2006	38.3	37.5	1.5	1.7	0.5	0.4	20.1
2007	36.2	36.7	1.4	2.0	0.5	0.4	22.8
2008	35.6	35.3	1.5	2.6	0.7	0.8	23.5
2009	35.9	34.4	1.4	2.3	0.7	0.9	24.4
2010	37.2	33.4	1.2	2.4	0.9	0.9	24.0
2011	34.8	35.3	1.2	2.4	1.0	0.9	24.4
2012	34.5	33.9	1.2	2.4	1.0	1.0	26.0
2013	33.4	33.1	1.1	2.3	1.1	1.3	27.7
2014	32.3	32.9	1.0	2.4	1.1	1.5	28.8
2015	32.7	32.1	1.0	2.5	1.0	1.3	29.3

*Hispanic may be of any race; AIAN=American Indian or Alaska Native; NHOPI=Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.
† Categorized as "other."
Source: TANF administrative records. *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients*.

As shown in Figure 4-G, the rate at which adult recipients were employed increased significantly during the 1990s. The employment rate increased from 13.2 percent in FY 1997 to 27.6 percent in FY 1999, reflecting both increases in employment and changes in state earnings disregard rules that affected whether an adult entering employment remained eligible for assistance. After this peak in FY 1999, the rate declined to 21.6 percent in 2006 and then rose back to 25.9 percent in FY 2008 before the Great Recession. From 2009 through 2014, the employment rate remained between 22 and 24 percent. In FY 2015, the employment rate for adult recipients increased to 26.7 percent. Multiple factors contribute to these trends including, but not limited to, macroeconomic conditions and state policies.

Figure 4-G: Employment Rate of AFDC/TANF Adult Recipients, FY 1997 – FY 2015



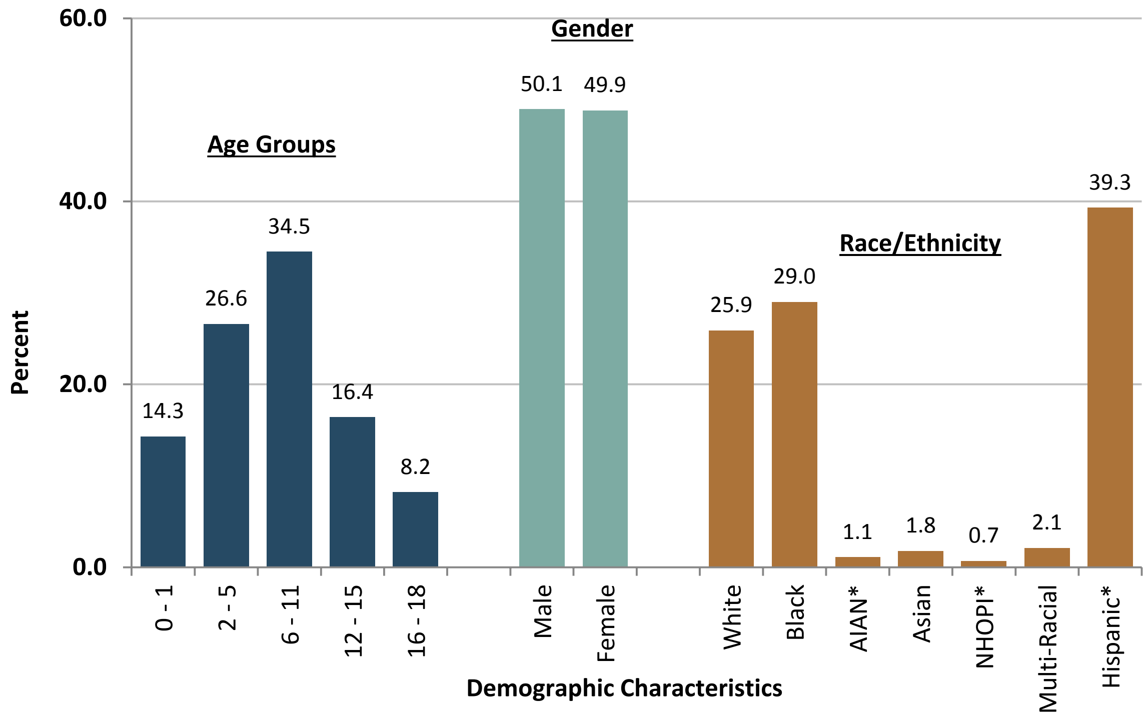
Source: TANF administrative records. *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients*.

TANF Children

In FY 2015 most child recipients were children of the head of the household in TANF families (83.0 percent), and only 11.6 percent were grandchildren of the head of the household. Among TANF families, 50.1 percent reported having only one child recipient.

As shown in Figure 4-H, 75.4 percent of children receiving TANF assistance in FY 2015 were young children under the age of 12. Race/ethnicity data demonstrate that Hispanic children comprised 39.3 percent of children receiving TANF assistance in FY 2015, while 29.0 percent of TANF children were Black, and 25.9 percent were White.

Figure 4-H: Percentage of TANF Child Recipients by Demographic Characteristics, FY 2015



*Hispanic may be of any race. AIAN=American Indian or Alaska Native; NHOPI=Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.
Source: TANF administrative records. *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients*.

Figure 4-I displays trends for TANF child recipients by age group from FY 1997 through FY 2015. More than two-fifths of children receiving TANF cash assistance (40.9 percent) were very young children, age 5 and under. More than one-third of children receiving TANF cash assistance (34.5 percent) were between the ages of 6 and 11.

Figure 4-I: Percentage of TANF Child Recipients by Age Group, FY 1997 – FY 2015

Fiscal Year	Under 2	2-5	6-11	12-15	16-19
1997	13.8	29.9	33.9	15.9	6.5
1998	12.4	27.8	35.7	16.5	7.5
1999	12.4	26.4	36.3	17.0	7.9
2000	13.1	25.6	36.3	17.4	7.6
2001	13.4	24.9	35.8	18.4	7.5
2002	14.6	25.1	34.4	18.3	7.6
2003	14.6	25.4	33.5	18.8	7.7
2004	14.7	25.7	32.2	19.4	8.0
2005	14.5	25.0	31.8	19.9	8.8
2006	14.5	25.5	31.1	19.7	9.2
2007	15.4	25.3	30.6	19.2	9.5
2008	16.0	25.5	30.5	18.5	9.5
2009	16.1	26.9	29.9	17.9	9.2
2010	16.0	28.0	30.1	16.7	9.2
2011	15.7	28.9	30.3	16.6	8.5
2012	15.1	28.8	30.9	16.8	8.4
2013	14.3	28.7	32.2	16.4	8.4*
2014	14.3	27.9	33.0	16.6	8.1*
2015	14.3	26.6	34.5	16.4	8.2*

*Ages 16-18 due to changes in data reporting.
Source: TANF administrative records. *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients*.

The trends shown in Figure 4-J detail the race/ethnicity of TANF recipient children from FY 1997 to FY 2015. Over this time period, while the share of children receiving TANF assistance who were Black decreased, the share of children who were Hispanic increased. Since 2009, Hispanic children have comprised the largest share of children receiving TANF assistance in the country. This demographic shift corresponded with a significant increase in the share of all children who were Hispanic, from 15.2 percent in 1997 to 24.8 percent of all children in 2015, according to the Census Bureau.

Figure 4-J: Percentage Distribution of TANF Child Recipients by Race/Ethnicity, FY 1997 – FY 2015

Fiscal Year	White	Black	AIAN*	Asian	NHOPI*	Multi-Racial	Hispanic*
1997	29.9	40.9	1.6	3.4	—	—	24.2
1998	29.0	41.2	1.5	4.3	—	—	24.0
1999	26.4	40.6	1.7	4.7	—	—	26.6
2000	27.2	40.6	1.6	2.8	0.6	0.0	27.2
2001	26.0	41.4	1.2	2.7	0.5	0.0	28.2
2002	27.2	40.4	1.4	2.7	0.5	0.0	27.8
2003	27.5	40.0	1.4	2.5	0.6	0.0	28.0
2004	28.5	39.6	1.4	2.2	0.5	0.0	27.8
2005	28.2	38.3	1.3	2.5	0.5	0.0	29.2
2006	29.3	37.1	1.3	2.1	0.5	0.0	29.7
2007	28.2	37.0	1.2	2.3	0.6	0.0	30.7
2008	26.9	35.1	1.2	2.7	0.7	0.0	33.4

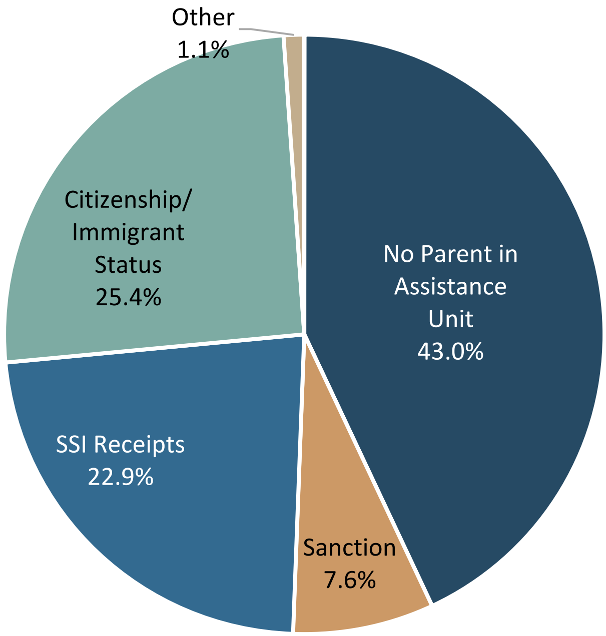
2009	26.9	34.2	1.2	2.6	0.7	0.0	34.4
2010	28.0	32.4	1.0	2.1	0.7	0.0	35.8
2011	26.0	32.9	1.0	2.0	0.8	1.5	35.8
2012	25.8	31.6	1.1	2.1	0.8	1.5	37.1
2013	25.5	30.5	1.0	1.8	0.7	1.9	38.6
2014	25.4	29.7	1.0	1.8	0.8	2.0	39.3
2015	25.9	29.0	1.1	1.8	0.7	2.1	39.3

*Hispanic may be of any race; AIAN=American Indian or Alaska Native; NHOPI=Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.
Source: TANF administrative records. *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients*.

TANF Child-Only Cases

In FY 2015, there were approximately 649,000 child-only cases (i.e., those in which no adult's needs are taken into account in the calculation of TANF assistance), which accounted for 48.6 percent of the total TANF caseload. Of the total TANF cases with no adult recipients, well over half had a parent living in the household but not receiving benefits. These parents did not receive benefits for a number of reasons, including receipt of a SSI benefit; an unknown citizenship/immigration status; or a sanction status for failure to comply with work requirements, attend school, or cooperate with child support. Figure 4-K illustrates the reasons that parents who are living in the household are not included in the assistance unit, as a percentage of all child-only cases.

Figure 4-K: Percentage Distribution of TANF Child-Only Families (No Adult Recipient) by Reason for Parent(s) not Receiving Assistance, FY 2015

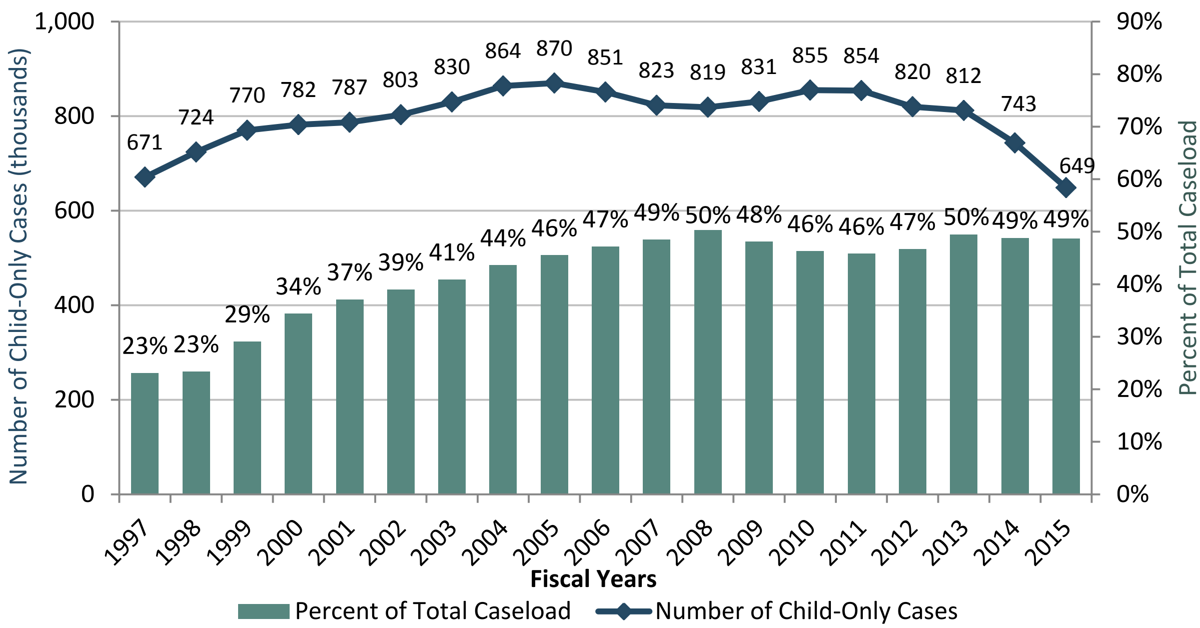


Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. There could be no parent in the assistance unit because the child or children are living with a relative other than a parent or a nonrelative.
Source: TANF administrative records. *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients*.

In FY 1997, the number of child-only cases was approximately 671,000, representing 23.1 percent of the TANF caseload.

As shown in Figure 4-L, the percentage of child-only cases as a share of the total caseload more than doubled between 1997 and 2007, from 23 percent to 49 percent. Child-only cases have made up about half of the TANF caseload since 2007. The number of child-only cases peaked at 870,000 cases in FY 2005, and then fluctuated before the number declined to its current low of 649,000 cases in FY 2015, a trend reflecting the overall decline in the TANF caseload.

Figure 4-L: Number of TANF Child-Only Cases and Percentage of Total Caseload, FY 1997 – FY 2015



Source: TANF administrative records. *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients*.

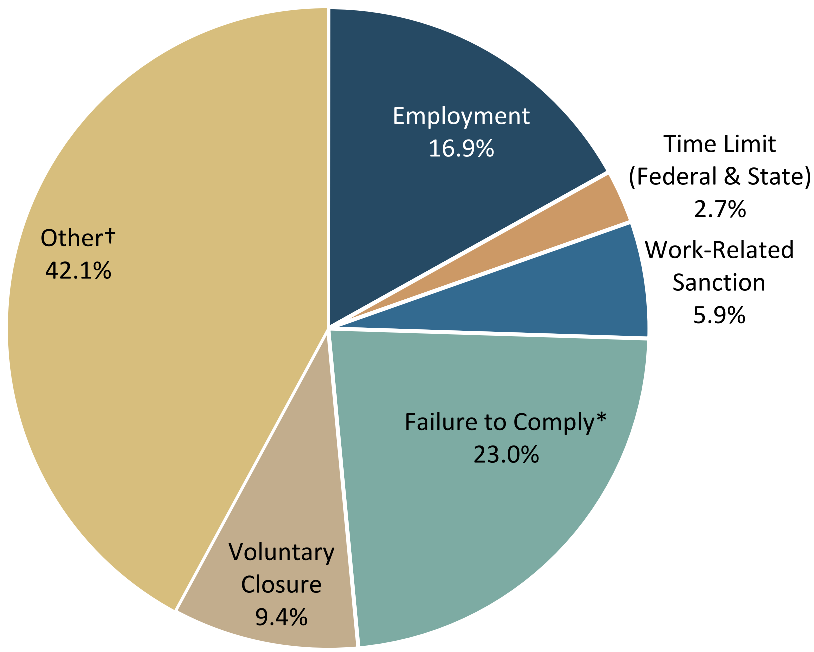
TANF Time Limits and Case Closures

Time limit data for TANF families with an adult (TANF head-of-household or spouse) receiving federally-funded assistance show that 34.4 percent of cases in FY 2015 were in the first year of assistance, 21.3 percent in the second year, 15.4 percent in the third year, 11.9 percent in the fourth year, and 16.9 percent were receiving assistance beyond four years. (These data exclude families in which an adult does not receive federally funded assistance, including all child-only cases and families funded with segregated or SSP-MOE funds.)

Case closure data in Figure 4-M illustrates the reasons states reported for TANF case closure in FY 2015. Just over one-sixth (16.9 percent) of cases are reported as closed due to employment.

However, it is possible that many closures due to employment reasons are coded as "voluntary" (9.4 percent) or as "failure to comply" (23.0 percent) due to the state agency's lack of information at the point of closure that a recipient became employed.

Figure 4-M: Percentage Distribution of TANF Families by Reason for Case Closure, FY 2015



* Includes failure to comply with: child support requirements; teen parent school attendance requirements; teen parent requirement to live in a supervised adult setting; the development of an individual responsibility plan; or an individual responsibility plan or other behavioral requirement. Also includes failure to appear at an eligibility appointment, submit required verification materials, and/or cooperate with eligibility requirements.
† Includes reasons of marriage; youngest child aging out or absent; case transferred to a separate state MOE program; excess income or resources including child support collected and other excess unearned income or resources such as cash and automobiles; and other reasons not captured in one of the other categories.
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
Source: TANF administrative records. *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients*.

There are a number of reasons why more TANF case closures are not attributable to the federal five-year time limit. One reason is that many families exit TANF long before they reach the time limit. Additionally, about half of TANF families are not subject to the federal time limit, primarily because they do not have an adult who receives federally-funded assistance as the head-of-household or as the spouse of the head-of-household. In addition, many states extend assistance beyond five years under the hardship provision, although in most states this represents a relatively small portion of the total caseload.

States also may establish shorter time limits than five years, and many states do so, as described in Chapter VI of this report. During FY 2015, a majority of states reported closing less than one percent of cases due to state time limits, in addition to those closed due to the federal time limit.

Of all closed-case families in FY 2015, 38.6 percent had non-TANF income with an average monthly amount of $935 in the month the case closed. In TANF closed-case families, 24.2 percent of adults had earned income and 69.3 percent received SNAP benefits in the month that the case closed in FY 2015. Furthermore, 32 states reported that over 90 percent of closed-case families participated in Medicaid and/or CHIP in the month of closure.

TANF Data Collection and Reporting

The TANF data reporting system allows states the option to submit either sample data or their entire TANF population (universe) data to HHS. In FY 2015, 31 states and territories submitted universe data; the remaining 23 submitted sample data. The statistical data presented here are estimates derived from samples and are therefore subject to sampling and non-sampling error. The TANF population characteristics described here are as estimated at the national level. Percent distributions are based on collected and reported responses. This chapter does not include discussion of SSP-MOE cases.

V. TANF Performance Measures

HHS is required under Section 413(d) of the Social Security Act to annually measure and rank state performance in moving TANF recipients into private sector employment. Beginning with performance year FY 2001, ACF has calculated state job entry, job retention, and earnings gains rates based on matching monthly listings of adult TANF recipients against the quarterly wage files on the National Directory of New Hires. ACF continues to use this data source to report employment among TANF recipients, though these rates are affected by economic and demographic factors and state eligibility rules as well as state performance. Additionally, states that report sample data have been excluded from the national calculations, as HHS has deemed the sample data unreliable due to data limitations and sampling error. This exclusion limits the generalizability of the national figures, especially because the two states with the largest TANF caseloads (California and New York) submit sample data and therefore are not included in the national figure.

The job entry rate measures the percent of the number of unduplicated unemployed adult recipients who entered employment for the first time during the year. An adult is considered to have entered employment for the first time in a calendar quarter if he/she had no earnings in any of the prior quarters of the year.

The job retention rate measures the share of the unduplicated number of employed adult recipients in each quarter of the year who also were employed in the first and second subsequent quarters.

The earnings gain rate measures the rate of change in earnings of employed adult recipients who were employed in both an initial and the second subsequent quarter in each of the four quarters of the year.

Figure 5-A shows the national figures for these performance measures in years FY 2001 through FY 2014, the most recent year for which data are available.[14] States varied in whether they reported sample or universe data, and a few switched methods from one fiscal year to the next. While excluding sample data states from the national calculations limits the generalizability of the findings, HHS deemed the sample data unreliable due to data limitations and sampling error. As a result, states that reported sample data, including New York and California, have been excluded from the calculation of the national rates for FY 2001 through FY 2014.

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[14] States excluded for sample unreliability include: AR, CA, CO, CT, FL, IL, KS, MA, MD, MI, MS, NM, NV, NY, OH, PA, SC, SD, TX, and WV. KY was also excluded due to incorrect data in FY 2010.

Figure 5-A: TANF Work-Related Trend Information, FY 2001 – FY 2014

Fiscal Year	Job Entry Rate	Job Retention Rate	Earnings Gain Rate
2001	33%	63%	26%
2002	36%	59%	33%
2003	34%	59%	33%
2004	35%	59%	37%
2005	34%	64%	36%
2006	36%	65%	34%
2007	37%	64%	38%
2008	35%	63%	33%
2009	28%	62%	29%
2010	29%	63%	31%
2011	30%	64%	34%
2012	30%	65%	34%
2013	32%	68%	35%
2014	31%	67%	38%

Source: Calculations based on TANF Data Reporting System.

VI. Specific Provisions of State TANF Programs

Each state must submit a state plan to the Secretary that outlines how it intends to conduct a program in all political subdivisions of the state (not necessarily in a uniform manner), provide cash aid to needy families with (or expecting) children, and provide parents with job preparation, work, and support services. States may determine what benefit levels to set and what categories of families are eligible. States have the flexibility to design and operate a program that best matches their residents' needs and helps families gain and maintain self-sufficiency.

Through a series of contracts, ACF has provided resources to facilitate updating and expanding the Welfare Rules Database (WRD). The Urban Institute began developing the WRD in early 1997, as part of the Assessing New Federalism project. The database was conceived as a single location where information on program rules could be researched across states and/or across years, without the need to consult multiple documents, and it was intended to provide a resource for researchers working on both descriptive and quantitative projects. ACF has funded updates to the database, as well as publication of figures summarizing state TANF policies for each year since then. Unless otherwise noted, the information in the following figures is current as of July 2015.

Form of Administration

Figure 6-A outlines how each state administers its TANF cash assistance program.

Figure 6-A: State TANF Implementation			
		State or County Discretion	
State	Form of Administration	Eligibility and Benefits	Available Services
Alabama	State	State	State
Alaska	State	State	State
Arizona	State	State	State
Arkansas	State	State	State
California	State Supervised/ County Administered	State	State
Colorado	State Supervised/ County Administered	County	County
Connecticut	State	State	State
Delaware	State	State	State
District of Columbia	State	State	State
Florida	State	State	State
Georgia	State	State	County
Guam	Territory	Territory	Territory
Hawaii	State	State	State
Idaho	State	State	State
Illinois	State	State	State
Indiana	State	State	State
Iowa	State	State	County
Kansas	State	State	County
Kentucky	State	State	State
Louisiana	State	State	State
Maine	State	State	State
Maryland	State Supervised/ County Administered	State	County
Massachusetts	State	State	State
Michigan	State	State	State
Minnesota	State Supervised/ County Administered	County	State or County
Mississippi	State	State	State
Missouri	State	State	State
Montana	State	State	State
Nebraska	State	State	State
Nevada	State	State	State
New Hampshire	State	State	State
New Jersey	State Supervised/ County Administered	State	State[1]
New Mexico	State	State	State
New York	State Supervised/ County Administered	State	County
North Carolina	State Supervised/ County Administered	County[1]	County
North Dakota	State Supervised/ County Administered	State	State
Ohio	State Supervised/	State	County

Figure 6-A: State TANF Implementation			
		State or County Discretion	
State	**Form of Administration**	**Eligibility and Benefits**	**Available Services**
	County Administered		
Oklahoma	State	State	State
Oregon	State	State	State
Pennsylvania	State	State	State
Puerto Rico	Territory	Territory	Territory
Rhode Island	State	State	State
South Carolina	State	State	State
South Dakota	State	State	State
Tennessee	State	State	State
Texas	State	State	State[1]
Utah	State	State	State
Vermont	State	State	State
Virginia	State Supervised/ County Administered	State	State
Virgin Islands	Territory	Territory	Territory
Washington	State	State	State
West Virginia	State	State	State
Wisconsin	State Supervised/ Locally Administered	State	Other[2]
Wyoming	State	State	State

[1] The state TANF agency sets the rules regarding cash assistance. Policies related to work activities are established at the state level and implemented by the county welfare agencies in conjunction with the state Department of Labor, also at the county level. The Department of Labor has discretion while working with the client to determine the proper approach and work activities relative to each client; however, they must adhere to certain agreed upon rules regarding any expenses and the approach itself.

[2] Wisconsin Works contracts with private for profit, and private not for profit agencies to administer the program.

TANF Assistance Eligibility

Figure 6-B displays the maximum amount of earnings an applicant can have and still be technically eligible for TANF cash assistance in each state. The calculation of this amount combines various financial rules related to initial eligibility to provide information on the maximum amount of income a family of three can earn and still be eligible for TANF cash assistance. Specifically, the calculation incorporates information on the income eligibility rules for applicants, earned income disregards for eligibility and benefit computation, benefit computation policies, and the eligibility and payment standards (see the Welfare Rules Databook for these detailed tables).

The maximum monthly earnings a family of three can have at application and be eligible for TANF varies significantly across states. The values for a family of three range from $269 in Alabama to $1,740 in Hawaii.

Figure 6-B: Maximum Income for Initial Eligibility for a Family of Three, July 2015[1]

State	Maximum monthly earnings an applicant can receive and still be eligible for assistance
Alabama	$269
Alaska	$1,679
Arizona	$585
Arkansas	$279
California [2]	$1,346
Colorado	$511
Connecticut [2]	$908
Delaware	$428
District of Columbia	$588
Florida	$393
Georgia	$514
Hawaii	$1,740 [3]
Idaho	$972
Illinois [2]	$837
Indiana	$378
Iowa	$1,061
Kansas [2]	$519
Kentucky	$908
Louisiana	$360
Maine	$1,023
Maryland	$795
Massachusetts	
Nonexempt	$1,143
Exempt	$1,129
Michigan	$803
Minnesota	$1,089
Mississippi	$458
Missouri	$557
Montana	$817
Nebraska	$991
Nevada	$1,660
New Hampshire	$844
New Jersey	$636
New Mexico	$883

Figure 6-B: Maximum Income for Initial Eligibility for a Family of Three, July 2015[1]	
State	**Maximum monthly earnings an applicant can receive and still be eligible for assistance**
New York [2]	$879
North Carolina	$681
North Dakota	$1,331
Ohio	$838
Oklahoma	$824
Oregon	$616
Pennsylvania [2]	$677
Rhode Island	$1,277
South Carolina	$1,524
South Dakota	$837
Tennessee	$1,315
Texas	$402
Utah	$668
Vermont [2]	$1,103
Virginia [2]	$640
Washington	$1,042
West Virginia	$565
Wisconsin	n.a. [4]
Wyoming	$1,251

Source: Table I.E.4 Maximum Income for Initial Eligibility for a Family of Three, July 2015 from the Urban Institute's Welfare Rules Database, funded by HHS/ACF and HHS/ASPE.

[1] The values in this table represent the maximum amount of earnings an applicant can have and still be technically eligible for assistance in each state. Technical eligibility does not mean that the unit will necessarily receive a cash benefit, but it will have passed all the eligibility tests and is eligible for some positive benefit. Most states only distribute a cash benefit equaling $10 or more. Initial eligibility is calculated assuming that the unit is employed at application, has only earned income, has no child care expenses, contains one adult and no children subject to a family cap, has no special needs, pays for shelter, and lives in the most populated area of the state.

[2] Dollar amount used to calculate benefit varies within the state, either by county or by region of the state. Calculations are based on the dollar amount that applies to the majority of the state. See WRD for more information.

[3] This threshold applies to units that have received assistance for no more than two months in a lifetime. For units applying for their third and subsequent months of benefits, the eligibility threshold for a family of three is $1,441.

[4] Units with earnings at application will not receive a cash benefit, except for some Community Service Job participants who may qualify for a prorated cash benefit. Applicants may earn up to $1,925 and still be eligible for nonfinancial assistance.

Treatment of Earnings

TANF does not specify how states should treat earnings in calculating TANF benefits. Thus, states have the flexibility to establish rules regarding the treatment of earnings, which are displayed in Figure 6-C. Most states disregard a portion of a family's earned income when determining benefit levels.

Figure 6-C: Earned Income Disregards for Benefit Computation, July 2015

State	Earned income disregards[1]
Alabama	100% in first 12 consecutive months of earnings, 20% thereafter [2]
Alaska	$150 in all months, plus 33% of remainder in first 12 consecutive months of earnings, 25% of remainder in months 13-24, 20% of remainder in months 25-36, 15% of remainder in months 37-48, 10% of remainder in months 49-60 [3]
Arizona	
All, except JOBSTART	$90 and 30% of remainder in all months
JOBSTART	100% of subsidized wages, plus $90 and 30% of remainder of non-subsidized wages [4]
Arkansas	No disregards - flat grant amount
California	$225 and 50% of remainder in all months [5]
Colorado	67% in all months
Connecticut	100% up to federal poverty guideline in all months
Delaware	$90 in all months, plus $30 in first 12 consecutive months of earnings, plus 33% of remainder in first 4 consecutive months of earnings
District of Columbia	$160 and 67% of remainder in all months [6]
Florida	$200 and 50% of remainder in all months
Georgia	$90 in all months, plus $30 in first 12 consecutive months of earnings, plus 33% of remainder in first 4 consecutive months of earnings
Hawaii	20% and $200 of remainder in all months, plus 55% variable rate deduction for months 1-24 and 36% thereafter
Idaho	60% in all months
Illinois	75% in all months
Indiana	75% in all months
Iowa	20% and 58% of remainder in all months
Kansas	$90 and 60% of remainder in all months
Kentucky	100% in first 2 months earnings would affect eligibility; $120 and 33% of remainder in first 4 months of earnings, $120 in months 5-12, $90 thereafter [7]
Louisiana	$120 in all months, plus $900 in any 6 months over a unit's lifetime [8]
Maine	$108 and 50% of remainder in all months
Maryland	40% in all months
Massachusetts	
Nonexempt	$180 and 50% of remainder in all months
Exempt	$180 and 33% of remainder in all months
Michigan	$200 and 50% of remainder in all months [9]
Minnesota	50% in all months
Mississippi	$90 in all months [10]
Missouri	$90 in all months, plus 67% in first 12 consecutive months of earnings [11]
Montana	$200 and 25% of remainder in all months
Nebraska	20% in all months
Nevada	100% in first 3 months of earnings, then 85% in months 4-6, 75% months 7-9, 65% months 10-12, greater of $90 or 20% thereafter [12]

Figure 6-C: Earned Income Disregards for Benefit Computation, July 2015	
State	**Earned income disregards**[1]
New Hampshire	50% in all months
New Jersey	100% in first month of earnings, 75% in months 2-7, 50% thereafter [13]
New Mexico	$125 and 50% of remainder in all months [14]
New York	$90 and 50% of remainder in all months
North Carolina	28% in all months
North Dakota	Greater of $180 and 27% in all months, plus 50% of remainder for months 1-6, 35% for months 7-9, 25% for months 10-13, no disregard thereafter [15]
Ohio	$250 and 50% of remainder in all months
Oklahoma	$240 and 50% of remainder in all months [16]
Oregon	50% in all months
Pennsylvania	50% in all months
Rhode Island	$170 and 50% of remainder in all months
South Carolina	50% in first 4 consecutive months, $100 thereafter [17]
South Dakota	$90 and 20% of remainder in all months
Tennessee	$250 in all months [18]
Texas	$120 in all months, plus 90% of remainder (up to $1,400) for 4 out of 12 months [19]
Utah	$100 and 50% of remainder in all months
Vermont	$250 and 25% of remainder in all months [20]
Virginia	Varies by unit size [21]
Washington	50% in all months
West Virginia	40% in all months
Wisconsin	No disregards - flat grant amount
Wyoming	$600 in all months [22]

Source: Table II.A.1 Earned Income Disregards for Benefit Computation, July 2015 from the Urban Institute's Welfare Rules Database, funded by HHS/ACF and HHS/ASPE.

[1] The table describes the earned income disregards used to compute a recipient's benefit. If different disregards are used to compute an applicant's benefit in the first month, they are footnoted. Only earned income disregards are described in the table. Child care disregards and other special disregards, such as deductions for units subject to time limits and family caps, are not included. When no duration is specified for the disregards, they remain for the entire period of benefit receipt.

[2] The earned income disregard cannot be applied to the earnings of an individual receiving assistance beyond the 60th month under an extension. The disregard can only be applied to earnings reported within 10 days of receipt.

[3] These disregards also apply to applicants who have received assistance in one of the previous four months.

[4] In addition to the 100 percent disregard of all subsidized JOBSTART wages, recipients can disregard the standard $90 and 30 percent of the remainder for any non-JOBSTART earned income.

[5] If recipient applies for TANF benefits within three calendar months of his or her subsidized employment placement ending, he or she will be considered for the recipient earned income disregard rather than the applicant $90 income disregard.

[6] The unit may disregard $160 per employed member.

[7] Recipients are eligible for a one-time 100 percent disregard for two months if they become newly employed or report increased wages acquired after approval.

[8] The six months in which the extra $900 is disregarded need not be consecutive, but the recipient may use this extra disregard in no more than six months over the course of his or her lifetime.

[9] Applicants may disregard $200 and 20 percent of remainder.

[10] Recipients are eligible for a one-time 100 percent disregard for six months if they find employment of 35 hours a week within 30 days of either their initial approval for TANF or the beginning of job-readiness training. If work is not found, the recipient will never be eligible to receive the disregard again. An additional 100 percent disregard is available to units for three months when the unit's case is subject to closure because of increased earnings and the individual is employed for at least 25 hours a week at the federal minimum wage or higher. The recipient may not have already received the six-month disregard, unless there has been at least a 12-month break in receipt of TANF benefits. The three-month disregard may be received more than once during the 60-month TANF benefit period,

provided there is a period of at least 12 consecutive months in which a family does not receive TANF benefits before the family reapplies for assistance. If a recipient marries for the first time, his or her new spouse may receive a one-time 100 percent disregard for six consecutive months.

[11] These disregards apply only to recipients who gained employment before receiving TANF. Those who become employed while receiving TANF are allowed to disregard 66.7 percent and $90 of remainder in the first 12 months, and $90 thereafter.

[12] The first 12 months of disregards are available to the recipients again if they have been off TANF for at least 12 months.

[13] If a recipient who is receiving the 75 percent disregard reports that his or her hours decreased below 20 during the six-month period, he or she may qualify for the 50 percent disregard for each month of employment. If the recipient's hours increase back to 20 or more per week during the same six-month period, the 75 percent disregard is reapplied for the remainder of the original six-month period. If a recipient initially becomes employed less than 20 hours and his or her hours increase to 20 or more per week, he or she is eligible for the 75 percent disregard for six consecutive months following the increase in hours. The 50 percent disregard may be applied for each month thereafter. If a recipient loses employment through no fault of his or her own and then becomes re-employed, the 100 percent disregard and the 75 percent disregard may be applied only once every 12 months. Otherwise, the 50 percent disregard may be applied for each continuous month of employment.

[14] Two-parent units may disregard $225 and 50 percent of the remainder. An additional $125 may be disregarded for each non-benefit group member whose income is deemed available.

[15] If a parent marries while receiving assistance, the income of his or her new spouse is disregarded for the first six months. The disregard for the new spouse only applies if his or her needs were not previously included in the unit. Each participant has a lifetime limit of one 13-month cycle of the extra disregards, unless the recipient is employed less than six consecutive months, in which case the 13-month cycle can start over upon re-employment.

16 These disregards apply to individuals working full time, defined as 20 hours a week for recipients caring for a child under age 6 and 30 hours a week for all other recipients. Individuals working less than full time may disregard $120 and 50 percent of the remainder.

17 The 50 percent disregard is available only once in a lifetime and may only be applied to consecutive months.

[18] If a parent marries while receiving assistance, the unit may choose to exclude the new spouse from the unit for three months. At the end of the three-month period, the new spouse becomes a mandatory member of the assistance unit, and his or her income is counted in benefit computation calculations.

[19] Once the recipient has received four consecutive months of the 90 percent disregard, he or she is not eligible to receive the disregard again until the TANF case has been denied and remains denied for one full month and 12 calendar months have passed since the denial. The 12-month ineligibility period begins with the first full month of denial after the client used the fourth months of the 90 percent disregard. The earnings of a TANF recipient's new spouse are disregarded for six months if the total gross income of the budget group does not exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty guideline.

[20] These disregards apply to recipients with income from unsubsidized employment or a combination of subsidized and unsubsidized employment. For recipients with earnings from subsidized employment only, the disregard is $90.

[21] The disregard is calculated by excluding varying earned income amounts based on the unit size, followed by a 20 percent disregard of the remainder regardless of unit size in all months. The dollar amounts excluded are: $155 for one to three unit members, $165 for four unit members, $193 for five unit members, and $221 for six or more unit members. A recipient who is participating in unsubsidized employment is eligible for an enhanced earned income disregard, provided the TANF recipient's income does not exceed 100 percent of the federal poverty guidelines or 150 percent of the federal poverty guidelines for TANF-UP households. Income received for deployment or service in a combat zone will be disregarded as income unless received before deployment.

[22] Married couples with a child in common may disregard $1,200.

Resource Limits

States have the flexibility to determine whether to use an asset limit for TANF assistance, and if the state has an asset limit, to determine its level and the resources that should count against that limit. State policies on asset limits and vehicle exemptions are displayed in Figure 6-D.

Figure 6-D: Asset Limits for Applicants, July 2015

State	Asset limit	Vehicle exemption[1]
Alabama	No Limit	n.a.
Alaska	$2,000/$3,000 [2]	All vehicles owned by household [3]
Arizona	$2,000	All vehicles owned by household
Arkansas	$3,000	One vehicle per household [4]
California	$2,250/$3,250 [5]	$9,500/one vehicle per licensed driver [E, 6]
Colorado	No Limit	n.a.
Connecticut	$3,000	$9,500 [E, 7]
Delaware	$10,000	All vehicles owned by household
District of Columbia	$2,000/$3,000 [2]	All vehicles owned by household
Florida	$2,000	$8,500 [E]
Georgia	$1,000	$4,650 [E, 8]
Hawaii	No Limit	n.a.
Idaho	$5,000	One vehicle per adult
Illinois	No Limit	n.a.
Indiana	$1,000	5,000 of one vehicle per household [E]
Iowa	$2,000 [9]	One vehicle per household [10]
Kansas	$2,250	One vehicle per adult [11]
Kentucky	$2,000 [12]	All vehicles owned by household
Louisiana	No Limit	n.a.
Maine	$2,000	One vehicle per household
Maryland	No Limit	n.a.
Massachusetts	$2,500	$15,000 [F]
Michigan	$3,000	All vehicles owned by household
Minnesota	$2,000	$10,000 [F, 13]
Mississippi	$2,000 [14]	All vehicles owned by household [E, 15]
Missouri	$1,000	First vehicle 100% / Second vehicle $1,500 [E, 16]
Montana	$3,000	One vehicle per household
Nebraska	$4,000/$6,000 [17]	One vehicle per household [18]
Nevada	$6,000	One vehicle per household
New Hampshire	$1,000	One vehicle per licensed driver
New Jersey	$2,000	All vehicles owned by household
New Mexico	$3,500 [19]	All vehicles owned by household [20]
New York	$2,000/$3,000 [2]	$4,650 [F, 21]
North Carolina	$3,000	All vehicles owned by household
North Dakota	$3,000/$6,000/+$25 [22]	One vehicle per household
Ohio	No Limit	n.a.
Oklahoma	$1,000	$5,000 [E]
Oregon	$2,500 [23]	$10,000 of all vehicles owned by household [E]
Pennsylvania	$1,000	One vehicle per household
Rhode Island	$1,000	One vehicle per adult [24]
South Carolina	$2,500	One vehicle per licensed driver [25]
South Dakota	$2,000	One vehicle per household [26]

Figure 6-D: Asset Limits for Applicants, July 2015		
State	**Asset limit**	**Vehicle exemption**[1]
Tennessee	$2,000	$4,600 [E]
Texas	$1,000	$4,650 of all vehicles owned by household [F, 27]
Utah	$2,000	All vehicles owned by household
Vermont	$2,000 [28]	One vehicle per adult
Virginia	No Limit	n.a.
Washington	$1,000	$5,000 [E, 29]
West Virginia	$2,000	One vehicle per household
Wisconsin	$2,500	$10,000 [E]
Wyoming	$2,500	One vehicle per household [E, 30]

Source: Table I.C.1 Asset Limits for Applicants, July 2015 from the Urban Institute's Welfare Rules Database, funded by HHS/ACF and HHS/ASPE.

[1] States may have separate policies for non-standard vehicles, such as income-producing vehicles, recreational vehicles, and vehicles that are used as homes. See the Welfare Rules Database for more information. Policies that distinguish between the equity value and fair-market value of vehicles are marked as follows: (E) equity value of the vehicle; (F) fair-market value of the vehicle.

[2] Units including an elderly person may exempt $3,000; all other units exempt $2,000.

[3] Vehicles are exempt if used to meet the family's basic needs such as getting food, medical care, or other essentials; to go to and from work, school, training, or work activity (such as job search or community service); or to transport a disabled family member, whether or not he or she is a part of the assistance unit. If the vehicle does not meet one of these requirements, the equity value of the vehicle is counted in the determination of resources.

[4] If the family has more than one vehicle, then the market value of any additional vehicles will be considered in full.

[5] Units including an elderly or disabled person may exempt $3,250; all other units exempt $2,250.

[6] Each vehicle must be evaluated for its equity value. Before this calculation, a vehicle is excluded if it: (1) is used primarily for income-producing purposes; (2) is necessary for long-distance travel that is essential for employment; (3) is used as the family's home; (4) is necessary to transport a physically disabled household member; (5) would be exempt under previously stated exemptions but the vehicle is not in use because of temporary unemployment; (6) is used to carry fuel or water to the home and is the primary method of obtaining fuel or water; and (7) is a gift, donation, or family transfer. For each remaining vehicle, the state excludes one additional vehicle per adult and one additional vehicle per licensed child who uses the vehicle to travel to school, employment, or job search. For each remaining vehicle not completely excluded, the equity value that exceeds $9,500 counts against the family's asset limit.

[7] The unit may exempt up to $9,500 of the vehicle's equity, or the entire value of one vehicle used to transport a handicapped person. The motor vehicle exclusion is applied to the registered vehicle with the highest fair market value.

[8] If the vehicle is used to look for work, or to travel to work or education and training, the unit may exclude $4,650 of the value. If the vehicle is not used for these purposes, $1,500 of the equity value is excluded.

[9] If at least one member of the household applying was a program recipient in the month prior to the month of application, then the asset limit is increased to $5,000.

[10] $5,880 of the equity value of an additional vehicle is exempt for each adult and working teenager whose resources must be considered in determining eligibility.

[11] One licensed vehicle per adult household member is exempt. Additional vehicles may be exempt if they are used by a minor for employment, training, education, or seeking employment, used primarily for producing income, essential to employment, used as the household's home, necessary to transport a household member with a physical disability, used to carry the primary source of fuel and water for the home, or valued at $1,500 or less.

[12] Only liquid resources are considered for eligibility determinations. Liquid resources include cash, checking and savings accounts, CDs, stocks and bonds, and money market accounts.

[13] The amount is the vehicle's average trade-in value, which has not already been totally excluded under the following provisions: (1) exclude all motor vehicles essential to operating a self-employment business; (2) exclude any vehicle used as the unit's home; (3) exclude one vehicle per physically disabled unit member as long as the vehicle is primarily used for the transport of the disabled unit member; (4) exclude the value of special equipment added to a vehicle for a handicapped member of the assistance unit; (5) exclude any vehicle used for certain long-distance traveling for the employment of a unit member; and (6) exclude any vehicle if at least 50 percent of its use

is to produce income. $7,500 of the trade-in value of additional vehicles is also exempt. For the fair-market value, Minnesota uses the loan value as listed in the current NADA Used Car Guide, Midwest edition.
[14] If the unit is considered broad-based categorically eligible, it is not subject to asset limits. Households that include a convicted drug felon or a member currently disqualified for an intentional program violation are not considered broad-based categorically eligible.
[15] Determination of whether to count a vehicle is made case by case.
[16] $1,500 of the equity value of the unit's second vehicle is exempt.
[17] The asset limit is based on unit size: one person receives $4,000, and two or more people receive $6,000.
[18] The entire vehicle is exempt only if used for employment, training, or medical transportation. If a unit has more than one vehicle that meets the exemption criteria, only the vehicle with the greatest equity value will be exempt.
[19] The total limit is $3,500, but only $1,500 of that amount can be in liquid resources and only $2,000 can be in non-liquid resources.
[20] The entire vehicle is exempt only if used for transportation to work, work activities, or daily living requirements. If the vehicle is not used for these purposes, the entire equity value of the vehicle is subject to the asset test.
[21] One automobile is exempt, up to $4,650 of the fair market value. If the automobile is needed for employment the exemption will be increased to $9,300 of the fair market value, or such other higher dollar value as the local social services district may elect to adopt.
[22] The asset limit is based on unit size: one person receives $3,000, two people receive $6,000, and another $25 is allowed for each additional person thereafter.
[23] The asset limit for new TANF applicants is $2,500. Once the participant enters the pre-TANF program or becomes a TANF recipient, the asset limit increases to $10,000.
[24] Exemptions for adult drivers cannot exceed two vehicles per household. Additionally, the entire value of a vehicle is exempt if it is used primarily to provide transportation for a disabled family member, used primarily to produce income, or used as the family's home.
[25] Vehicles owned by or used to transport disabled individuals or that are essential to self-employment are also exempt.
[26] In addition to one primary vehicle, an assistance unit may totally exclude a vehicle used to transport water or fuel to the home when it is not piped in, or to transport a disabled member or SSI recipient in the household. The assistance unit may also exclude $4,650 of the fair-market value of a vehicle used to transport members of the unit for education or employment.
[27] All licensed vehicles used for transporting a disabled household member are exempt.
[28] Other excluded resources include assets accumulated from earnings, interest earned on assets, and non-liquid assets purchased with savings from earnings.
[29] The entire equity value of a vehicle used to transport a disabled household member is also exempt.
[30] This exemption applies to a single-parent unit. Two vehicles are exempt for a married couple.

Benefits

States are free to set the benefit levels that apply under their TANF assistance programs. State benefit levels in current dollars for a family of three with no other income are shown below in Figure 6-E for the years 1996, 2002, 2009, and 2015. Benefit levels vary widely across states. Twenty-three states have either not increased benefits or have reduced them since 1996. In general, when inflation is taken into account, benefits have decreased over time (see Figure 6-F).

Figure 6-E: Maximum Monthly Benefit in *Current Dollars* for a Family of Three with No Income, 1996-2015 (July)

State	1996	2002	2009	2015
Alabama	$164	$164	**$215**	$215
Alaska	$923	$923	$923	$923
Arizona	$347	$347	**$277**	$277
Arkansas	$204	$204	$204	$204
California [2]				
Nonexempt	$594	**$679**	**$694**	**$704**
Exempt	$663	**$758**	**$776**	**$788**
Colorado	$356	$356	**$462**	$462
Connecticut [2]	$543	$543	**$560**	**$597**
Delaware	$338	$338	$338	$338
District of Columbia	$415	**$379**	**$428**	**$434**
Florida	$303	$303	$303	$303
Georgia	$280	$280	$280	$280
Hawaii	$712	**$570** [3]	**636** [4]	**$610** [5]
Idaho	$317	**$309**	$309	$309
Illinois [2]	$377	**$396**	**$432**	$432
Indiana	$288	$288	$288	$288
Iowa	$426	$426	$426	$426
Kansas [2]	$429	$429	$429	$429
Kentucky	$262	$262	$262	$262
Louisiana	$190 [2]	**$240**	$240	$240
Maine	$418	**$485**	$485	$485
Maryland	$373	**$472**	**$574**	**$636**
Massachusetts				
Nonexempt	$565	**$618**	$618	$618
Exempt	$579	**$633**	$633	$633
Michigan	$459 [2]	$459 [2]	**$492**	$492
Minnesota	$532	$532	$532	$532
Mississippi	$120	**$170**	$170	$170
Missouri	$292	$292	$292	$292
Montana	$425	**$507**	**$504**	**$586**
Nebraska	$364	$364	$364	$364
Nevada	$348	$348	**$383**	$383
New Hampshire	$550	**$625**	**$675**	$675
New Jersey	$424	$424	$424	$424
New Mexico	$389	$389	**$447**	**$380**
New York [2]	$577	$577	**$691**	**$789**
North Carolina	$272	$272	$272	$272
North Dakota	$431	**$477**	**$527**	**$486**
Ohio	$341	**$373**	**$434**	**$473**
Oklahoma	$307	**$292**	$292	$292

Figure 6-E: Maximum Monthly Benefit in *Current Dollars* for a Family of Three with No Income, 1996-2015 (July)				
State	**1996**	**2002**	**2009**	**2015**
Oregon	$460	**$503**	**$514**	**$506**
Pennsylvania [2]	$403	$403	$403	$403
Rhode Island	$554	$554	$554	$554
South Carolina	$200	**$204**	**$271**	**$277**
South Dakota	$430	**$483**	**$539**	**$599**
Tennessee	$185	**$185** [6]	$185 [6]	$185 [6]
Texas	$188	**$208**	**$249**	**$281**
Utah	$426	**$474**	**$498**	$498
Vermont [2]	$597 [7]	**$638** [8]	**$640** [8]	$640 [8]
Virginia [2]	$291	**$320**	$320	**$389**
Washington	$546	$546	**$562**	**$521**
West Virginia	$253	**$453**	**$340**	$340
Wisconsin	$518 [2]			
W-2 Transition	n.a.	**$628**	$628	**$608**
Community Service Jobs	n.a.	**$673**	$673	**$653**
Unsubsidized Employment	n.a.	**n.a.** [9]	n.a. [9]	n.a. [9]
Wyoming	$360	**$340**	**$546**	**$652**
Mean[10]	**$393**	**$413**	**$434**	**$437**
Median[10]	**$377**	**$396**	**$429**	**$428**

Source: Table L5 Maximum Monthly Benefit for a Family of Three with No Income, 1996-2015 (July) from the Urban Institute's Welfare Rules Database, funded by HHS/ACF and HHS/ASPE.

[1] Bolded text indicates a change from the previous year shown. Maximum benefits are calculated assuming that the unit contains one adult and two children who are not subject to a family cap, has no special needs, pays for shelter, and lives in the most populated area of the state. Only earned income disregards are included in the table. Child care disregards and other special disregards, such as deductions for units subject to a time limit or a family cap, are not included. The table includes benefit computation disregards for recipients. If the disregards differ for applicants, it is footnoted. Data shown in the table for the year 1996 reflect states' AFDC policies; data shown in the table for all subsequent years reflect states' TANF policies.

[2] Dollar amount used to calculate benefit varies within the state, either by county or by region of the state. Calculations are based on the dollar amount that applies to the majority of the state. See WRD for more information.

[3] The benefit amount applies to units that have received assistance for two or more months in a lifetime. For units applying for their first or second months of benefits, the maximum monthly benefit for a family of three is $712.

[4] The benefit amount applies to units that have received assistance for two or more months in a lifetime. For units applying for their first or second month of benefits, the maximum monthly benefit for a family of three is $795.

[5] Thee benefit amount applies to units that have received assistance for two or more months in a lifetime. For units applying for their first or second months of benefits, the maximum monthly benefit for a family of three is $763.

[6] For units where the caretaker is over age 65, disabled, caring full-time for a disabled family member, or excluded from the assistance unit, the maximum monthly benefit for a family of three is $232.

[7] In addition to the maximum benefit, a family of three with no income outside of Chittenden County may receive a housing allowance of $371. A family of three with no income within Chittenden County may receive a housing allowance of $450 in addition to the maximum benefit.

[8] In addition to the maximum benefit, a family of three with no income outside of Chittenden County may receive a housing allowance of $400. A family of three with no income within Chittenden County may receive a housing allowance of $450 in addition to the maximum benefit.

[9] The benefits in these components are based on the wages earned by individual recipients.

[10] The calculations only include one value per state (the policy affecting the most populous area).

Figure 6-F provides the same information from the Welfare Rules Database regarding state benefit levels for a family of three with no other income, but adjusts levels for inflation to 2015 constant dollars. After accounting for inflation, it is possible to see the change over time in benefit levels.

Figure 6-F: Maximum Monthly Benefit in *2015 Constant Dollars* for a Family of Three with No Income, 1996-2015 (July)

State	1996	2002	2007	2015	Percent Change 1996-2015
Alabama	$248	$216	$238	$215	-13.2%
Alaska	$1,394	$1,216	$1,020	$923	-33.8%
Arizona	$524	$457	$306	$277	-47.2%
Arkansas	$308	$269	$225	$204	-33.8%
California [1]					
Nonexempt	$897	$895	$767	$704	-21.5%
Exempt	$1,002	$999	$857	$788	-21.3%
Colorado	$538	$469	$510	$462	-14.1%
Connecticut [1]	$820	$715	$619	$597	-27.2%
Delaware	$511	$445	$373	$338	-33.8%
District of Columbia	$627	$499	$473	$434	-30.8%
Florida	$458	$399	$335	$303	-33.8%
Georgia	$423	$369	$309	$280	-33.8%
Hawaii	$1,076	$751	$703	$610	-43.3%
Idaho	$479	$407	$341	$309	-35.5%
Illinois [1]	$570	$522	$477	$432	-24.1%
Indiana	$435	$379	$318	$288	-33.8%
Iowa	$644	$561	$471	$426	-33.8%
Kansas [1]	$648	$565	$474	$429	-33.8%
Kentucky	$396	$345	$289	$262	-33.8%
Louisiana	$287	$316	$265	$240	-16.4%
Maine	$631	$639	$536	$485	-23.2%
Maryland	$563	$622	$634	$636	12.9%
Massachusetts					
Nonexempt	$854	$814	$683	$618	-27.6%
Exempt	$875	$834	$699	$633	-27.6%
Michigan	$693	$605	$544	$492	-29.0%
Minnesota	$804	$701	$588	$532	-33.8%
Mississippi	$181	$224	$188	$170	-6.2%
Missouri	$441	$385	$323	$292	-33.8%
Montana	$642	$668	$557	$586	-8.7%
Nebraska	$550	$480	$402	$364	-33.8%
Nevada	$526	$458	$423	$383	-27.1%
New Hampshire	$831	$823	$746	$675	-18.8%
New Jersey	$641	$559	$468	$424	-33.8%
New Mexico	$588	$513	$494	$380	-35.3%
New York [1]	$872	$760	$763	$789	-9.5%
North Carolina	$411	$358	$301	$272	-33.8%
North Dakota	$651	$628	$582	$486	-25.4%
Ohio	$515	$491	$479	$473	-8.2%
Oklahoma	$464	$385	$323	$292	-37.0%
Oregon	$695	$663	$568	$506	-27.2%
Pennsylvania [1]	$609	$531	$445	$403	-33.8%
Rhode Island	$837	$730	$612	$554	-33.8%

Figure 6-F: Maximum Monthly Benefit in *2015 Constant Dollars* for a Family of Three with No Income, 1996-2015 (July)					
State	**1996**	**2002**	**2007**	**2015**	**Percent Change 1996-2015**
South Carolina	$302	$269	$299	$277	-8.3%
South Dakota	$650	$636	$595	$599	-7.8%
Tennessee	$279	$244	$204	$185	-33.8%
Texas	$284	$274	$275	$281	-1.1%
Utah	$644	$624	$550	$498	-22.6%
Vermont [1]	$902	$841	$707	$640	-29.0%
Virginia [1]	$440	$422	$354	$389	-11.5%
Washington	$825	$719	$621	$521	-36.8%
West Virginia	$382	$597	$376	$340	-11.0%
Wisconsin	$783				
W-2 Transition	n.a.	$827	$694	$608	n.a.
Community Service Jobs	n.a.	$887	$744	$653	n.a.
Unsubsidized Employment	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Wyoming	$544	$448	$603	$652	19.9%
Mean	$594	$544	$479	$437	-26.4%
Median	$570	$522	$473	$428	-24.9%

Source: Table L5 Maximum Monthly Benefit for a Family of Three with No Income, 1996-2015 (July) from the Urban Institute's Welfare Rules Database, funded by HHS/ACF and HHS/ASPE, and adjusted for inflation by ACF using the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Note: See Table 6-E for full footnotes.

[1] Dollar amount used to calculate benefit varies within the state, either by county or by region of the state. Calculations are based on the dollar amount that applies to the majority of the state. See Welfare Rules Database for more information.

Time Limiting Assistance

States generally may not use federal funds to provide assistance to a family that includes an adult head-of-household or a spouse of the head-of-household who has received assistance for 60 months (whether or not consecutive). However, states may extend federally-funded assistance beyond 60 months to 20 percent of the caseload, without penalty, based on hardship or domestic violence. States also have the option to set shorter time limits on the receipt of TANF benefits.

State policies, related to time limiting assistance, as shown in Figure 6-G, vary greatly. Additionally, because time limit restrictions only apply to the use of federal TANF funds, a state may use segregated or separate state-only funds to provide assistance to families that it wishes to exempt from the limit or to families that have reached the federal time limit, without counting against the 20 percent cap.

Figure 6-G: State Lifetime Time Limit Policies, July 2015

State	Lifetime limit (months) [1]	Whose Benefits Are Terminated:	
		Entire unit	Adult only
Alabama	60	Yes	No
Alaska	60	Yes [2]	No
Arizona	24	Yes	No
Arkansas	24	Yes	No
California	48 [3]	No	Yes
Colorado	60	Yes	No
Connecticut	21 [4]	Yes	No
Delaware			
All, except TWP	36 [5]	Yes	No
TWP	n.a	n.a.	n.a.
District of Columbia	60 [6]	Yes	No
Florida	48	Yes	No
Georgia	48	Yes	No
Hawaii	60	Yes	No
Idaho	24 [7]	Yes	No
Illinois	60	Yes [2]	No
Indiana	60	Yes [2]	No
	24 [8]	No	Yes
Iowa	60 [9]	Yes	No
Kansas	36	Yes	No
Kentucky	60	Yes	No
Louisiana	60	Yes	No
Maine	60	Yes	No
Maryland	60	Yes	No
Massachusetts	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Michigan	48	Yes	No
Minnesota	60	Yes	No
Mississippi	60	Yes	No
Missouri	60	Yes	No
Montana	60	Yes	No
Nebraska			
Time-limited assistance	60	Yes	No
Non-time-limited assistance	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Nevada	60	Yes	No

Figure 6-G: State Lifetime Time Limit Policies, July 2015			
State	Lifetime limit (months) [1]	Whose Benefits Are Terminated:	
		Entire unit	Adult only
New Hampshire			
New Hampshire Employment Program	60	Yes	No
Family Assistance Program	n.a. [10]	n.a.	n.a.
New Jersey	60	Yes	No
New Mexico			
New Mexico Works Program	60	Yes	No
Educational Works Program	24	Yes	No
New York	60 [11]	Yes	No
North Carolina	60 [12]	Yes [12]	No [12]
North Dakota	60 [12]	Yes [12]	No [12]
Ohio	60 [13]	Yes	No
Oklahoma	60	Yes	No
Oregon	60 [14]	No	Yes
Pennsylvania	60	Yes	No
Rhode Island	48	Yes	No
South Carolina			
All, except CARES	60	Yes	No
CARES	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
South Dakota	60	Yes	No
Tennessee	60 [15]	Yes	No
Texas	60	Yes	No
Utah	36	Yes	No
Vermont	60 [16]	Yes	No
Virginia	60	Yes	No
Washington	60	Yes	No
West Virginia	60	Yes	No
Wisconsin	60	Yes	No
Wyoming	60	Yes	No

Source: Table IV.C.1 State Lifetime Time Limits Policies, July 2015 from the Urban Institute's Welfare Rules Database, funded by HHS/ACF and HHS/ASPE.

[1] Families may qualify for exemptions from or extensions to the time limit. See tables IV.C.3 and IV.C.4 for details about state exemption and extension policies.

[2] If the adult who has reached the 60-month lifetime limit is not the parent of any child in the assistance unit, only the adult is ineligible for benefits. Children who do not live with a parent can therefore continue to receive assistance after their caretaker reaches the 60-month limit.

[3] California's TANF funding began December 1996, but recipients' benefit months did not begin to count against units' 60-month limit until January 1998. Using state funds, California will extend recipients' benefits beyond 48 months if the unit received assistance between December 1996 and January 1998. The length of the extension equals the number of months the unit received benefits during this period.

[4] Recipients may apply for extensions after 21 months of benefits, but they may not receive more than 60 total months of assistance.

[5] The 36-month time limit applies to assistance units that applied for benefits on or after January 1, 2000. Units that received benefits before this date are eligible for 48 months of assistance.

[6] After 60 months, eligibility and benefits are computed using a Reduced Payment Level, which equals 35 percent of the standard Payment Level for the unit's size.

[7] When there is more than one adult in the family, the adult with the greatest number of months of participation must be used to determine when the family reaches the time limit.

[8] The income of the ineligible individual is still counted in determining the unit's benefits; however, the needs of the ineligible individual are not included when determining the unit's benefits.

[9] In addition to the 60-month lifetime limit, units must establish a time frame with a specific ending date, during which the recipient expects to become self-sufficient (i.e., when income will be above eligibility limits).
[10] Groups eligible for or receiving the Family Assistance Program are automatically exempt from the 60-month time limit and must have eligibility continued beyond 60 months for as long as the family continues to meet FAP eligibility criteria.
[11] Units in compliance with TANF program rules may continue to receive benefits through a separate state program beyond 60 months.
[12] In certain circumstances, a child may be able to continue receiving benefits after the 60 months. Because the time limit follows the adult, a child may enter a new household and become eligible in a new assistance unit.
[13] Ohio has a 36 month limit on assistance. However, units are eligible for additional assistance, up to the federal time limit of 60 months, through either a hardship or good cause extension. For good cause, a unit must have been ineligible for 24 months and show good cause for reapplying in order to receive additional assistance.
[14] All months of benefit receipt since July 2003 are counted against a unit's 60-month limit.
[15] If clients marry with different months of assistance, the number of months counted towards the time limit will be the higher of the two. If a marriage dissolves, the number of countable months of the two-parent unit will be the same if the parents reapply for assistance regardless of months earned prior to the marriage.
[16] Adults in compliance with post-60-month program requirements may continue to receive benefits beyond 60 months, but they are placed in a solely state-funded program.

Family Violence Option

Each state has the option to certify in its state plan that it has established and is enforcing standards and procedures to: (1) screen and identify individuals with a history of domestic violence (while maintaining their confidentiality); (2) refer such individuals for counseling and supportive services; and (3) waive program requirements, as appropriate, based on safety and fairness concerns. This provision is commonly referred to as the Family Violence Option. Figure 6-H shows domestic violence provisions by state. "Federal Certification" signifies that a state submitted a signed certification that it has established and is enforcing standards and procedures to screen and identify individuals with a history of domestic violence, refer such individuals to counseling and supportive services, and waive program requirements based on safety and fairness concerns (commonly called the Family Violence Option, or the Wellstone Murray Amendment). Forty states and the District of Columbia had federal certification of the family violence option as of 2015. "State program" (or "territory") signifies that a state is addressing the issue of domestic violence under its TANF program, but did not submit the specified certification. Eleven states and two territories had not elected the federal family violence option as of 2015.

Figure 6-H: Domestic Violence Provisions

State	Federal Certification or State/Territory Program
Alabama	Federal
Alaska	Federal
Arizona	Federal
Arkansas	Federal
California	Federal
Colorado	Federal
Connecticut	State
Delaware	Federal
District of Columbia	Federal
Florida	Federal
Georgia	Federal
Guam	Territory
Hawaii	Federal
Idaho	State
Illinois	Federal
Indiana	State
Iowa	Federal
Kansas	State
Kentucky	Federal
Louisiana	Federal
Maine	State
Maryland	Federal
Massachusetts	Federal
Michigan	State
Minnesota	Federal

Figure 6-H: Domestic Violence Provisions	
State	**Federal Certification or State/Territory Program**
Mississippi	State
Missouri	Federal
Montana	Federal
Nebraska	Federal
Nevada	Federal
New Hampshire	Federal
New Jersey	Federal
New Mexico	Federal
New York	Federal
North Carolina	Federal
North Dakota	Federal
Ohio	Federal
Oklahoma	State
Oregon	Federal
Pennsylvania	Federal
Puerto Rico	Federal
Rhode Island	Federal
South Carolina	Federal
South Dakota	State
Tennessee	Federal
Texas	Federal
Utah	Federal
Vermont	Federal
Virginia	State
Virgin Islands	Territory
Washington	Federal
West Virginia	Federal
Wisconsin	State
Wyoming	Federal

Family Cap

Under TANF, states may determine whether to increase cash assistance after the birth of an additional child to a family already receiving TANF benefits. Providing for no additional assistance when an additional child is born is commonly referred to as the family cap. PRWORA did not include a specific family cap provision, but some states have chosen to adopt such a provision (see Figure 6-I). In 2015, 16 states had a family cap policy and 34 states and the District of Columbia did not.

Figure 6-I: Family Cap Policies, July 2015

State	Family cap policy [1]	Special treatment if child born more than X months after case opening	Increase in cash benefit for an additional child (and special provisions)	Special treatment discontinued if case closed X months [2]
Alabama	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Alaska	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Arizona	Yes	10 [3]	None (disregard) [4]	n.a., always capped [5]
Arkansas	Yes	n.a. [6]	None	6
California	Yes	10 [7]	None	24
Colorado	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Connecticut	Yes	10	$50 per child	n.a., always capped
Delaware	Yes [8]	10	None	n.a., always capped
District of Columbia	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Florida	Yes	10 [9]	Half of normal increase for adding first child; none for additional children	n.a., always capped
Georgia	Yes	10	An amount less than the maximum benefit calculated excluding the capped children [10]	n.a., always capped
Hawaii	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Idaho	No [11]	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Illinois	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Indiana	Yes	10	None	n.a., always capped
Iowa	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Kansas	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Kentucky	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Louisiana	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Maine	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Maryland	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Massachusetts	Yes	10 [12]	None (disregard) [13]	20 [12]
Michigan	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Minnesota	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Mississippi	Yes	10	None	n.a., always capped
Missouri	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Montana	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Nebraska	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Nevada	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
New Hampshire	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
New Jersey	Yes [14]	10	None	12 [15]
New Mexico	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
New York	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
North Carolina	Yes	10 [16]	None	n.a., always capped
North Dakota	Yes	8	None	12

Figure 6-I: Family Cap Policies, July 2015				
State	Family cap policy [1]	Special treatment if child born more than X months after case opening	Increase in cash benefit for an additional child (and special provisions)	Special treatment discontinued if case closed X months [2]
Ohio	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Oklahoma	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Oregon	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Pennsylvania	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Rhode Island	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
South Carolina	Yes	10	None (voucher) [17]	n.a., always capped
South Dakota	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Tennessee	Yes	10	None	1 [18]
Texas	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Utah	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Vermont	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Virginia	Yes	10	None	n.a., always capped
Washington	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
West Virginia	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Wisconsin	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Wyoming	No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Source: Table IV.B.1 Family Cap Policies, July 2015 from the Urban Institute's Welfare Rules Database, funded by HHS/ACF and HHS/ASPE.

Note: Some units may be exempt from the family cap policies. See the WRD for more details on exemption policies.

[1] Some units may be exempt from the family cap policies. See the WRD for more details on exemption policies.

[2] This column describes the number of months a unit must remain off assistance to regain eligibility for a previously capped child. Some states permanently exclude capped children, even if the unit cycles on and off assistance, while other states may include previously capped children in benefit and eligibility calculations if the unit has not received assistance for a specified period.

[3] The 10-month grace period only applies to the first child born after November 1, 1995. All subsequent children born to the family are capped unless they were conceived during a 12-month or longer period of non-receipt.

[4] Units subject to the family cap receive an additional earned income disregard equal to the lost benefit amount. This additional disregard is allowed for each month the member is excluded due because of the cap.

[5] The child is considered benefit-capped until the month after the child's 18th birthday. A benefit-capped child may receive cash assistance prior to the child's 18th birthday if the child becomes a minor parent or is adopted.

[6] Any child born to a parent receiving assistance will not be included in the unit. This is applicable to both children conceived prior to a unit's certification as well as to those children conceived after a unit's certification.

[7] The family cap provision does not apply to units who did not receive notification of the rule at least 10 months before the birth of the child or units who leave assistance for at least two consecutive months during the 10-month period leading up to the birth.

[8] In addition to the family cap policy, any child born after December 31, 1998 to an unmarried minor parent is ineligible for cash assistance, regardless of whether the minor was receiving aid at the time of the birth. If the minor received benefits within 10 months of the birth of the child, the child will always be capped. If the minor did not receive benefits within 10 months of the birth of the child, the child will be eligible for assistance once the minor turns 18. Units in which the child is not permanently capped may receive noncash assistance services in the form of vouchers upon request, but he or she will not be automatically given vouchers each month. Receipt is based on need, and the total monthly value of the vouchers is capped at $69.

[9] If the family reapplies for assistance after a break of six or more continuous months, the family cap will apply again to any child born more than 10 months from the date of reapplication, and there will be no increase in the benefit.

[10] The additional child increases the standard of need but not the family maximum. If the family has no income, the cash benefit will not increase. However, if the family has income, the benefit may increase, but cannot increase higher than the maximum payment for the family size excluding the capped child.

[11] The state provides a flat maximum benefit, regardless of family size. However, the work incentive payment increases with family size, so the benefit for a unit with income may increase with an additional child, but never beyond the maximum benefit level.
[12] Massachusetts has a rule that the Family Cap child is eligible if the child is born at least 20 months after the date that a grantee's eligibility for TAFDC has ended; the grantee remained ineligible for at least 12 consecutive months from the closing date; and the grantee received TAFDC for no more than 10 consecutive months immediately preceding the child's birth.
[13] Units subject to the family cap receive an additional earned income disregard equal to the first $90 of income received by or on behalf of a capped child in any month.
[14] Units in which at least one adult member of the unit is working (any number of hours) are not subject to the family cap.
[15] After case closure, if the recipient is employed for three months and loses the job by no fault of his or her own and then reapplies for assistance, the previously capped child is included in the unit. These units, however, do not receive a new 10-month grace period for any subsequent pregnancies.
[16] The family cap does not apply to adoptees or to parents receiving assistance from another state.
[17] Benefits are available in the form of vouchers up to the amount of increase in cash benefits the unit would have received for the child.
[18] The family cap will continue until the case is closed. If the case is reopened, the cap is discontinued unless the case was closed for noncooperation with child support requirements or noncompliance with the work activity requirement.

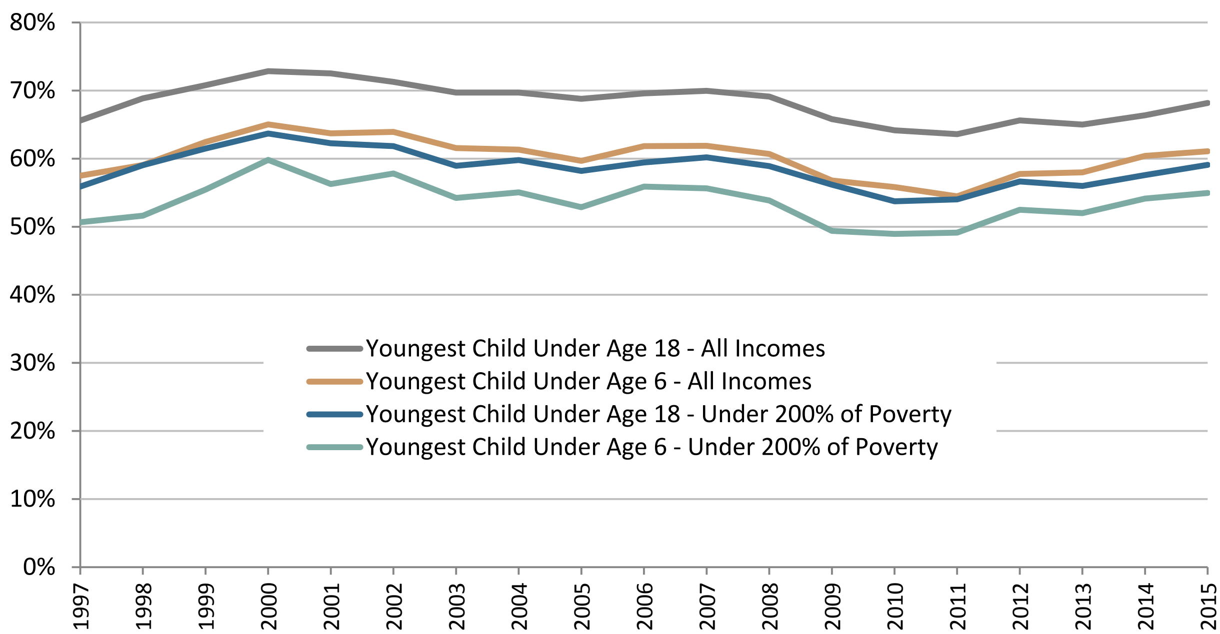
VII. Work and Earnings

This chapter reviews data on employment among TANF families and low-income single mothers generally.

Employment Among Low-Income Single Mothers

Employment among low-income single mothers (incomes below 200 percent of poverty), reported in the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey was 56 percent in 1997 when TANF was enacted. This employment rate reached its peak of 64 percent in 2000, and then declined to 59 percent in 2003, where it remained relatively stable through 2008. Employment rates for this group declined during the Great Recession, falling to 54 percent in 2011, and then rose again to 59 percent by 2015. Employment among low-income single mothers with children under age six has followed a similar trend. The trends since 1997 for low-income single mothers and single mothers of all incomes are displayed in Figure 7-A.

Figure 7-A: Employment Rates for Single Mothers Living with Children, 1997-2015

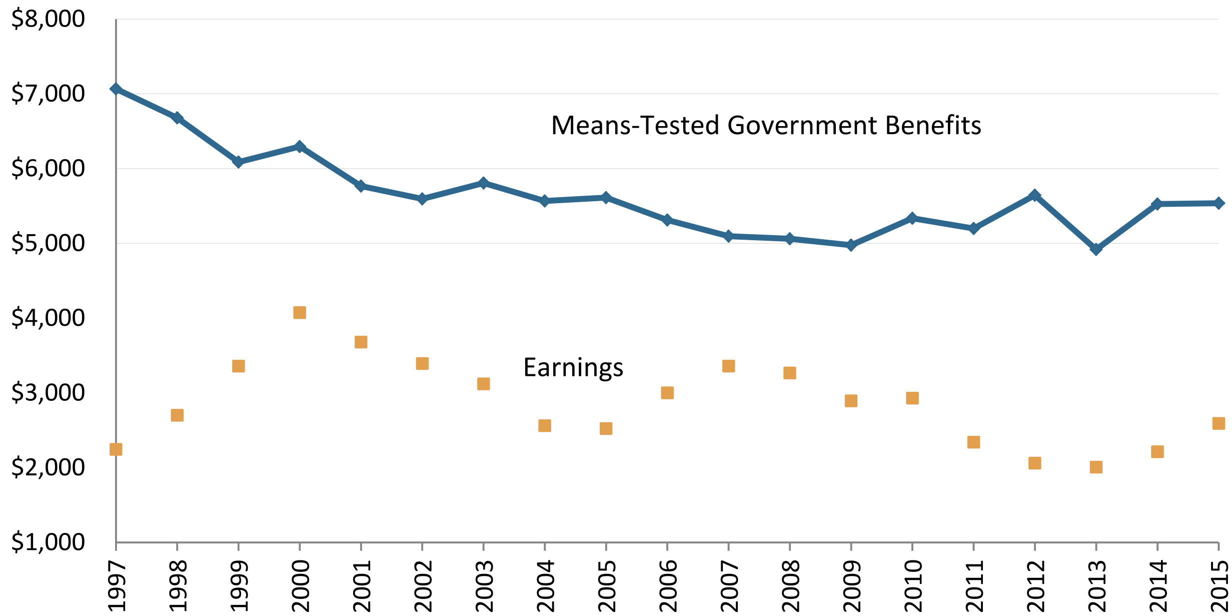


Note: "Single Mothers" include married-civilian spouse absent, never married, divorced, and separated women.
Source: ASPE tabulations from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, ASEC, (March 1998-2016).

As shown in Figure 7-B, for the one-fifth of female-headed families with the lowest income, the average annual earnings of the single mother families (in 2015 dollars, including those with and without earnings) was $2,240 in 1997 and rose to a peak of $3,679 in 2000. In 2012, the average annual earnings of the single mother families (with and without earnings) had declined to $2,007 (in 2015 dollars), and then rose to $3,068 in 2015.

Alongside changes in earnings since 1997 is an overall decline in total income from means-tested benefits.[15] Means-tested benefits are defined as cash assistance, SSI payments, the SNAP and National School Lunch Program benefits, housing benefits and certain veterans' benefits, and do not include the effects of tax credits or liabilities. As shown by Figure 7-B, means-tested government benefits declined from $7,066 in 1997 to $5,537 in 2015 (in 2015 dollars) for the lowest quintile group, fluctuating between $5,000 and $6,000 since 2001.

Figure 7-B: Government Benefits* and Earnings for Single-Mother Families with Children with Income in the Lowest 20th Percentile in 2015 Dollars, 1997-2015

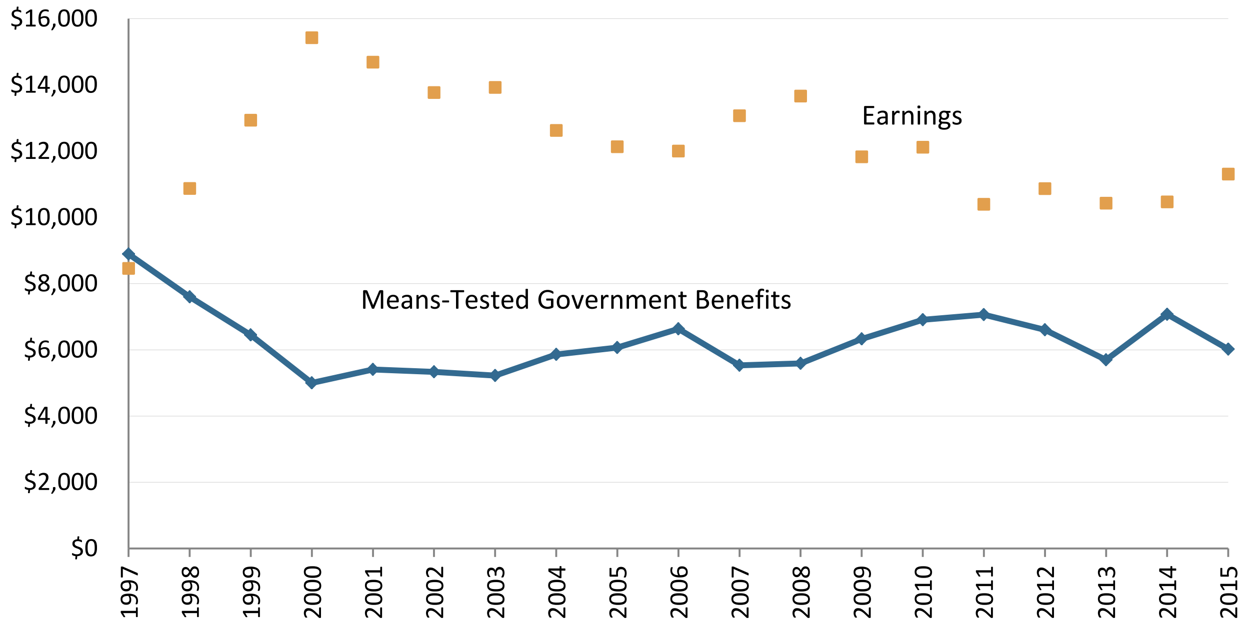


*Means-tested government benefits is the total of Supplemental Security Income, public assistance, certain veterans' benefits, SNAP, National School Lunch Program, and housing benefits.
Note: Income inflated using Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). Sorted into quintiles by comprehensive income divided by poverty line. Income estimated for persons with top-coded income.
Source: ASPE tabulations from U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey data (March 1998-2016).

Figure 7-C shows a similar case for the next 20 percent of single mother families, as means-tested government benefits decreased from $8,892 in 1997 to $6,019 in 2015 (in 2015 dollars). Much of the decrease happened between 1997 and 2000. These female-headed families displayed a steady rise in earnings after TANF was enacted, peaking at $15,426 in 2000 from $8,460 in 1997 (in 2015 dollars, including those with and without earnings). In 2015, the annual earnings among this quintile group was $11,308.

[15] These data do not account for underreporting of income.

Figure 7-C: Government Benefits* and Earnings for Single-Mother Families with Children with Incomes between the 20th and 40th Percentiles in 2015 Dollars, 1997 – 2015



*Means-tested government benefits is the total of Supplemental Security Income, public assistance, certain veterans' benefits, SNAP, National School Lunch Program, and housing benefits.
Note: Income inflated using Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). Sorted into quintiles by comprehensive income divided by poverty line. Income estimated for persons with top-coded income.
Source: ASPE tabulations from U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey data (March 1998-2016).

Employment While Receiving TANF Assistance

As discussed in Chapter IV of this report, the employment rate of adult TANF recipients was 26.7 percent in FY 2015 according to state-reported data. The average monthly earnings of adults employed while receiving TANF assistance was $946 in FY 2015.

VIII. Child Poverty

The official federal poverty statistics are generated from Census Bureau surveys of household income by looking at the amount of cash income received by the individual or family. Non-cash transfers (e.g., SNAP benefits and housing subsidies) are not included in the income definition, nor are subtractions or additions to income made through the tax system, or adjustments made for work- or health-related expenses. An individual or a family's poverty status is assessed by comparing its total cash income to a poverty threshold which varies by the size and composition of the family. In 2015, the federal poverty threshold for a family of four (two adults plus two children) was $24,036.

The percentage of children (persons under 18) in poverty declined from 21.1 percent in 2014 to 19.7 percent in 2015. The total number of children in poverty in 2015 was 14.5 million. Figure 8-A shows the child poverty rate from 1997 through 2015.

Figure 8-A: Poverty Rate of all Children under 18, 1997 – 2015

Calendar Year	Poverty Rate
1997	19.9
1998	18.9
1999	17.1
2000	16.2
2001	16.3
2002	16.7
2003	17.6
2004	17.8
2005	17.6
2006	17.4
2007	18.0
2008	19.0
2009	20.7
2010	22.0
2011	21.9
2012	21.8
2013	21.5
2014	21.1
2015	19.7

For more information see https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-people.html
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, (March 1998-2016).

In addition to the official federal poverty estimates, the Census Bureau has developed a supplemental poverty measure which draws on the recommendations of a 1995 National Academy of Sciences report and a federal interagency work group. This measure adds non-cash transfers and tax credits to the calculation of income while subtracting additional items such as tax payments, work expenses, and health expenses. In deriving the poverty thresholds, the supplemental measure includes expenditures on food, shelter, clothing, and utilities and adjusts for geographic differences in the cost of housing. (The threshold for the official poverty measure is based on food costs for an economy food plan in 1963-1964 and the relationship between these costs and other expenditures for families as observed in 1955 household consumption data.) The supplemental poverty measure provides additional insight into the economic well-being of families and how federal tax and transfer policies affect individuals and families.

For 2015, the overall supplemental poverty rate was 14.3 percent, which was higher than the official poverty rate of 13.7 percent (adjusted to include unrelated individuals under the age of 15). Unlike the current official poverty measure, the supplemental poverty measure can show the effects federal policies on various subgroups, particularly the impact of in-kind benefits, taxes, and certain work-related expenses. For children, the supplemental poverty rate was lower than the official rate: 16.1 percent compared with 20.1 percent (adjusted to include unrelated individuals under the age of 15). In contrast, the supplemental poverty rate for those 65 and older was 13.7 percent compared with only 8.8 percent using the official measure. Even though supplemental poverty rates were lower for children and higher for those 65 and older than under the official measure, the rates for children were still higher than the rates for 18- to 64-year-olds and people 65 and older.

For more about poverty in the United States, see the ASPE Report *Poverty in the United States: 50-Year Trends and Safety Net Impacts*.

The TANF Child Poverty Regulation

PRWORA includes a provision requiring each state to submit an annual statement of the state's child poverty rate to the Secretary of HHS (42 U.S.C. §613(i)(1)). The provision specifies that, if from one year to the next, a state's child poverty rate increases by five percent or more as a result of its TANF program, the state must submit and implement a corrective action plan to reduce the rate.

States that have had an increase of five percent or more in their child poverty rate are required to submit to HHS an assessment of the impact of their state TANF program on the rate. If the state or HHS determines the rise in the child poverty rate was due to the state's TANF program, the state must submit a corrective action plan to reduce the rate. To date, no state has had to submit a corrective action plan to HHS.

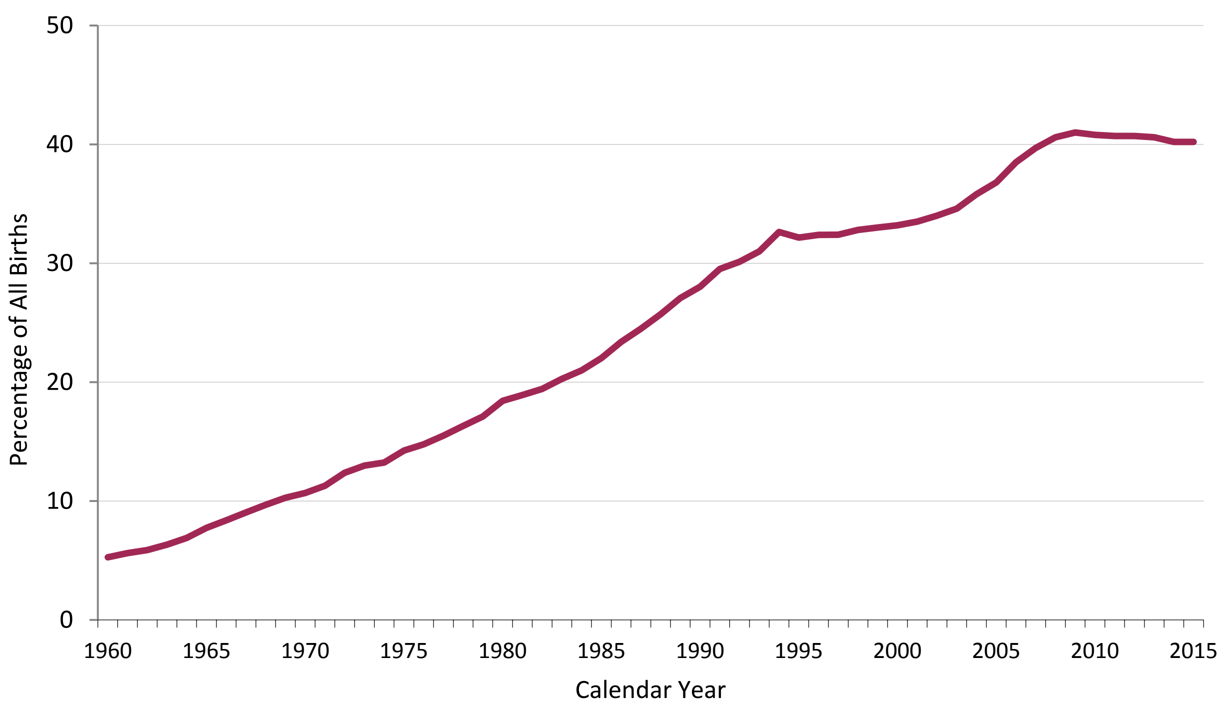
IX. Out-of-Wedlock and Teen Births

One of the statutory purposes of the TANF program is to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and for states to establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies. Section 411 of the Social Security Act requires HHS to report data on the extent to which states are decreasing out-of-wedlock pregnancies. However, since data on *pregnancies* are not collected, this section includes the latest available information about non-marital and teen *birth* trends, including birth rates for unmarried women, the share of all births that were by unmarried women, teen birth rates, and the ratio of out-of-wedlock to total births.

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is responsible for collecting and analyzing vital statistics data. Based on the preliminary data for 2015, NCHS data show that the birth rate for unmarried women aged 15 to 44 years decreased for seven consecutive years from 51.8 births per 1,000 unmarried women in 2008 to 43.5 births per 1,000 unmarried women in 2015.

Figure 9-A shows a different measure—the proportion of all births to unmarried women—which declined slightly from 41.0 percent in 2009 to 40.2 percent in both 2014 and 2015 after a steady increase since 1997.

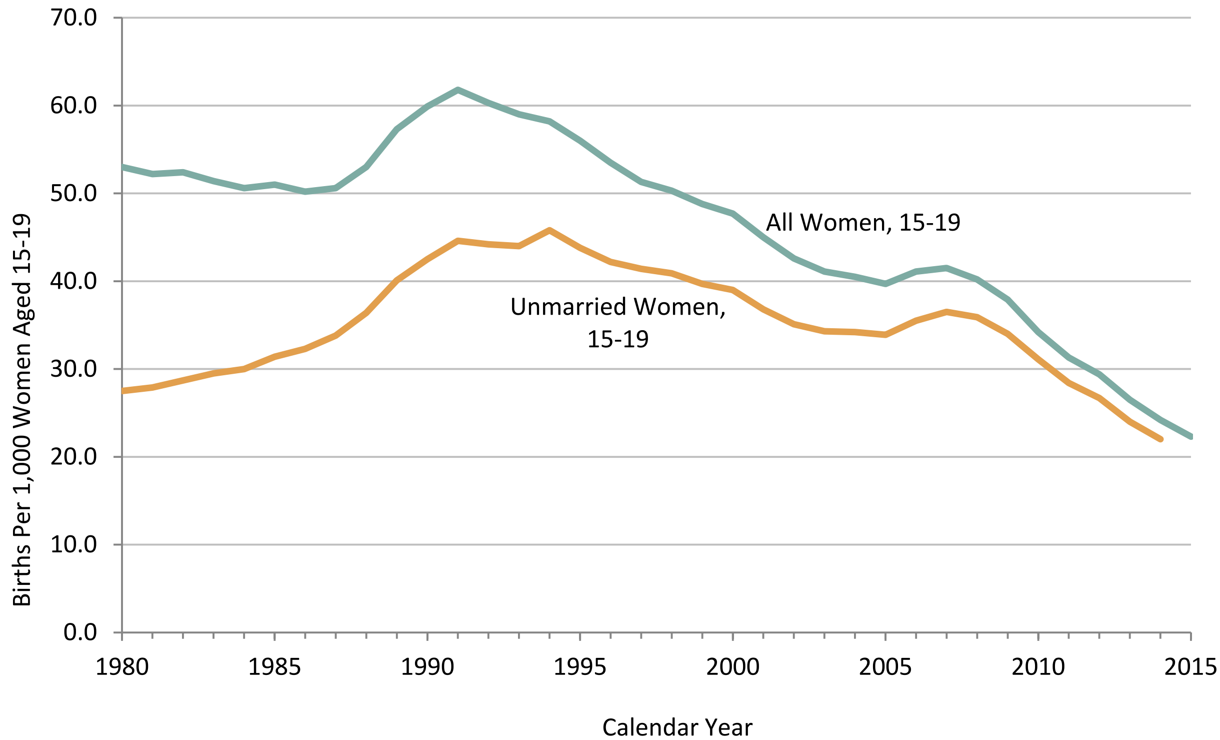
Figure 9-A: Percentage of All Births to Unmarried Women in United States, 1960 – 2015



Source: Division of Vital Statistics, National Center for Health Statistics. 2015 data are preliminary.

The U.S. birth rate for women aged 15 to 19 (married and unmarried) was 22.3 births per 1,000 teenagers in 2015, representing a 63.9 percent decline from the rate of 61.8 births per 1,000 teenagers in 1991. The trend in the teen birth rate, for all teens and for unmarried teens, since 1980 is illustrated in Figure 9-B.

Figure 9-B: National Birth Rates for Teens Aged 15-19, 1980 – 2015



Source: Division of Vital Statistics, National Center for Health Statistics. 2015 data are preliminary for all teens and unavailable for unmarried teens.

The latest available information about non-marital births in TANF is available in Figure 9-C.

Figure 9-C: Number and Ratio of Total and Out-of-Wedlock Births in TANF Families for FY 2014 and FY 2015

State	Fiscal Year 2014			Fiscal Year 2015			FY 2014 to FY 2015 Percent Change in Ratio
	Total Births in TANF Families	Out-of-Wedlock Births among TANF families	Ratio of Out-of-Wedlock Births to Total Births	Total Births in TANF Families	Out-of-Wedlock Births among TANF families	Ratio of Out-of-Wedlock Births to Total Births	
U.S. Total	134,328	105,276	78.4%	133,476	116,472	87.3%	11.4%
Alabama	312	264	84.6%	276	228	82.6%	-2.4%
Alaska	312	228	73.1%	228	192	84.2%	15.2%
Arizona	120	108	90.0%	120	108	90.0%	0.0%
Arkansas	876	60	6.8%	720	48	6.7%	-1.5%
California	64,920	50,160	77.3%	70,740	66,060	93.4%	20.8%
Colorado	600	420	70.0%	336	228	67.9%	-3.0%
Connecticut	1,608	1,488	92.5%	1,764	1,632	92.5%	0.0%
Delaware	180	156	86.7%	168	156	92.9%	7.2%
District of Columbia	168	144	85.7%	84	84	100.0%	16.7%
Florida	1,644	1,380	83.9%	1,596	1,344	84.2%	0.4%
Georgia	300	276	92.0%	204	192	94.1%	2.3%
Hawaii	504	396	78.6%	504	408	81.0%	3.1%
Idaho	84	60	71.4%	60	48	80.0%	12.0%
Indiana	2,196	1,920	87.4%	2,040	1,776	87.1%	-0.3%
Iowa	1,188	984	82.8%	960	804	83.8%	1.2%
Kansas	1,572	1,296	82.4%	1,212	996	82.2%	-0.2%
Kentucky	1,884	1,476	78.3%	1,440	1,176	81.7%	4.3%
Louisiana	492	432	87.8%	468	420	89.7%	2.2%
Maine	36	12	33.3%	12	—	—	—
Maryland	3,396	2,352	69.3%	3,096	2,496	80.6%	16.3%
Massachusetts	2,856	2,460	86.1%	2,448	2,124	86.8%	0.8%
Michigan	4,656	4,320	92.8%	3,552	3,264	91.9%	-1.0%
Minnesota	2,304	2,004	87.0%	2,160	1,896	87.8%	0.9%
Mississippi	2,352	1,848	78.6%	1,884	1,500	79.6%	1.3%
Missouri	444	408	91.9%	420	396	94.3%	2.6%
Montana	132	96	72.7%	120	108	90.0%	23.8%
Nebraska	312	204	65.4%	240	144	60.0%	-8.3%
Nevada	684	588	86.0%	660	576	87.3%	1.5%
New Hampshire	48	36	75.0%	36	36	100.0%	33.3%
New Jersey	240	216	90.0%	192	180	93.8%	4.2%
New Mexico	1,644	1,512	92.0%	2,256	1,884	83.5%	-9.2%
New York	10,668	6,792	63.7%	10,152	6,396	63.0%	-1.1%
North Carolina	312	132	42.3%	336	144	42.9%	1.4%
North Dakota	192	168	87.5%	168	120	71.4%	-18.4%
Ohio	2,040	1,596	78.2%	2,088	1,680	80.5%	2.9%
Oklahoma	684	540	78.9%	696	552	79.3%	0.5%
Oregon	1,440	1,236	85.8%	1,332	1,128	84.7%	-1.3%
Pennsylvania	7,272	6,084	83.7%	6,876	6,048	88.0%	5.1%
Rhode Island	408	384	94.1%	444	408	91.9%	-2.3%
South Carolina	204	192	94.1%	204	192	94.1%	0.0%
South Dakota	216	204	94.4%	204	192	94.1%	-0.3%
Tennessee	6,312	5,604	88.8%	5,580	4,884	87.5%	-1.5%
Texas	144	120	83.3%	144	120	83.3%	0.0%
Utah	468	204	43.6%	204	144	70.6%	61.9%
Vermont	144	132	91.7%	156	144	92.3%	0.7%
Virgin Islands	12	12	100.0%	12	12	100.0%	0.0%
Virginia	456	408	89.5%	396	360	90.9%	1.6%
Washington	2,808	2,160	76.9%	2,340	1,716	73.3%	-4.7%
West Virginia	192	156	81.3%	132	96	72.7%	-10.6%
Wisconsin	2,244	1,824	81.3%	1,980	1,620	81.8%	0.6%
Wyoming	24	24	100.0%	12	12	100.0%	0.0%

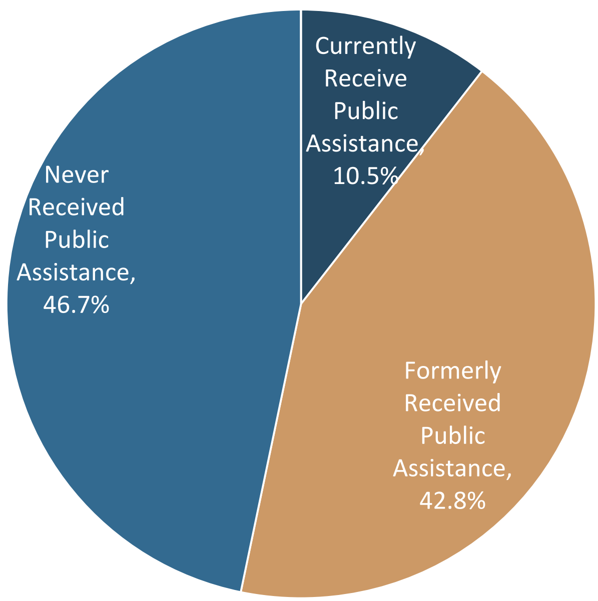
Note: Data were not reported for Guam, Illinois, and Puerto Rico. Source: TANF Data Reporting System.

X. TANF and Child Support

The goal of the nation's Child Support Enforcement Program is to promote parental responsibility so that children receive reliable support from both of their parents as they grow to adulthood. Child support services consist of locating parents; establishing paternity; establishing, modifying, and enforcing support orders; increasing health care coverage for children; and removing barriers to payment, such as referring parents to employment services. Custodial parents receiving TANF assistance are required to cooperate with child support enforcement efforts.

Preliminary data for FY 2015 show that the Child Support Enforcement Program served 15.9 million children nationwide. Figure 10-A shows that the vast majority of child support services are now provided to non-public assistance cases. This is due in large part to the TANF caseload decline over the past two decades. There were about 1.6 million child support cases in which the child was currently receiving public assistance in FY 2015, accounting for 10.5 percent of the total caseload. Cases in which the children were formerly receiving public assistance[16] constituted 42.8 percent of the FY 2015 child support caseload and cases in which the children have never received public assistance constituted 46.7 percent of the FY 2015 caseload.

Figure 10-A: Total Child Support Caseload, FY 2015



Source: OCSE-157 Report

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[16] Public assistance in this paragraph is defined as those families where the children are either recipients of TANF or entitled to Foster Care maintenance payments (IV-E).

Federal regulations require families that receive TANF assistance to assign their child support income to the state. States can then decide what portion, if any, of those collections to transfer back to TANF families and how much of that income should be considered during benefit and eligibility calculations. Figure 10-B describes each state's treatment of child support income for TANF recipients, as of July 2015 (this table and the following paragraph describing the table have been extracted from the Welfare Rules Databook).

The first column of the table displays the amount of collected child support that is counted for recipients' eligibility determination (regardless of whether any is transferred to the family). Those states that do not count child support collections for determining eligibility typically establish some method to ensure that families with high and continuing child support amounts do not remain on TANF indefinitely. The second column of the table shows what portion of the collected child support is transferred to the family as unearned income, while the third column indicates how much of that transferred amount is disregarded for benefit computation. For example, if "$50" is coded in both the second and third columns, then $50 is transferred to the unit as unearned income, and of that amount, all $50 is disregarded for benefit computation.

As noted in the Welfare Rules Databook, in FY 2015 32 states considered at least a portion of the child support income collected by the state for purposes of a recipient's eligibility. Twenty-five states did not transfer any portion of the child support collected to the family.

Figure 10-B: Treatment of Child Support Income for Recipients, July 2015[1]

State	Amount of child support collection counted for recipients' eligibility determination[2]	Portion of Child Support Collection Transferred to the Family: Amount transferred	Amount of transfer disregarded for benefit computation
Alabama	n.a.	None	n.a.
Alaska	All but $50	$50	$50
Arizona	None	None [3]	n.a. [3]
Arkansas	All	None	n.a.
California	All [4]	$50 [3]	All [3]
Colorado	All	None [5]	n.a.
Connecticut	All but $50 [6]	$50	$50
Delaware	All but $50	$50 plus child support supplement [7]	All
District of Columbia	n.a. [8]	$150	$150
Florida	All	None	n.a.
Georgia	All	Amount of unmet need [9]	n.a.
Hawaii	All	None	n.a.
Idaho	n.a.	All	All
Illinois	All but $50	$50	$50
Indiana	All	None	n.a.
Iowa	None	None [10]	n.a.
Kansas	All	None	n.a.
Kentucky	All	None	n.a.
Louisiana	n.a.	None	n.a.
Maine	All but $50	$50 plus amount of unmet need [11]	All
Maryland	All	None	n.a.
Massachusetts	All but $50 [12]	$50 [12]	$50 [12]
Michigan	n.a.	None	n.a.
Minnesota	n.a.	All	None
Mississippi	All	None	n.a.
Missouri	All	None	n.a.
Montana	None	All [13]	All
Nebraska	All	None	n.a.
Nevada	All	None	n.a.
New Hampshire	All	None	n.a.
New Jersey	n.a.	$100	$100
New Mexico	All but $100	$100	$100
New York	All but $100/$200 [14]	$100/$200 [14]	$100/$200 [14]
North Carolina	All	None	n.a.
North Dakota	n.a.	None	n.a.
Ohio	n.a.	None	n.a.
Oklahoma	All	None	n.a.
Oregon	All but $50/$200 [15]	$50/$200 [15]	$50/$200 [15]
Pennsylvania	All but $100/$200 [14]	$100/$200 [14]	$100/$200 [14]
Rhode Island	n.a.	$50	$50
South Carolina	All	Amount of unmet need [16]	All
South Dakota	n.a.	None	n.a.
Tennessee	None	Amount of unmet need [9]	n.a.
Texas	All but $75	None [17]	n.a.
Utah	All	None	n.a.
Vermont	n.a.	All	$50
Virginia	All but $100	$100	$100
Washington	None	None	n.a.

West Virginia	All but $100/$200 [14]	$100/$200 [14]	$100/$200 [14]
Wisconsin	None	75% of child support collected	All
Wyoming	n.a.	None	n.a.

Source: Table IV.A.2 of The Urban Institute's Welfare Rules Database, funded by HHS/ACF and HHS/ASPE.

[1] This table describes the treatment of child support collected by the state on behalf of a TANF recipient; it does not cover the treatment of child support received by the family directly from the absent parent. Child support collections may be counted as income for eligibility purposes regardless of whether they are transferred to the family; however, child support retained by the state is never counted for purposes of benefit computation. Although many states have created unique child support policies, some states still provide families with the traditional $50 pass-through used under AFDC. The traditional pass-through is represented in this table with "All but $50" in the first column, and "$50" in the second and third columns. This table does not cover the transfer of child support payments in excess of current or total TANF benefits.

[2] Some states with values displayed in this column do not have income eligibility tests for recipients; we do not display net income tests if the calculation of the test and the disregards allowed for the test do not differ from those used to calculate the benefit. However, for families with child support income, the net income eligibility test may differ from the benefit computation. For purposes of calculating eligibility when the family receives child support income, the net income test for recipients is equivalent to the benefit calculation in the state. States that do not count any child support collections for calculating recipients' eligibility (shown as "None" in this column) generally use other methods to ensure that families with high and continuing child support amounts do not remain on TANF indefinitely.

[3] Any child support collected on behalf of a child subject to a family cap is transferred to the family and treated as exempt income.

[4] Child support income is not treated as income for initial eligibility grant calculation, but child support income is included in the net nonexempt income calculation for determining ongoing recipient financial eligibility even when the support is redirected to the local child support agency.

[5] The county may pay the participant an amount equal to 50 percent of the state share and 100 percent of the county share of the child support collection made by the noncustodial parent. The county cannot consider the child support returned to the family as income for purposes of calculating the basic cash assistance grant. No counties have implemented this option, however.

[6] For income eligibility for an extension, all child support income, including the disregard, is counted.

[7] In addition to the $50 pass-through payment, Delaware provides a supplemental child support payment, which is calculated by subtracting a recipient's current disposable income from his or her disposable income as it would have been calculated in 1975.

[8] If the amount of child support paid by the noncustodial parent exceeds the monthly benefit by more than $150 for two consecutive months, the TANF case is closed.

[9] The amount of child support collected or the amount of unmet need, whichever is smaller, is transferred to the family as unearned income and disregarded for benefit determination. The unmet need, also called the gap payment, is calculated as the consolidated need standard for the unit's family size minus the maximum benefit for the unit's family size minus the unit's net income. For units affected by the family cap, the amount of unmet need is calculated using the standard of need for the family size that includes the capped child, but using the family maximum that excludes the capped child.

[10] If child support for a child in the assistance unit is paid directly to a recipient for any reason, $50 is disregarded and the remainder is counted as income. However, child support income that is received for a child who is not included in the assistance unit (for example, a child ineligible due to immigrant status, or a stepparent's child from a prior relationship when the stepparent is not included in the assistance unit) is not counted for TANF eligibility or benefits.

[11] After the initial $50 pass-through, the state then transfers child support in the amount of the unmet need, also known as the gap payment, to the family as unearned income and disregards the child support for benefit determination. The unmet need is calculated as the consolidated need standard for the unit's family size minus the maximum benefit for the unit's family size minus the unit's net income.

[12] All child support collected on behalf of a child subject to the family cap is transferred to the family. For children subject to the family cap, the first $90 of unearned income, including child support, is disregarded for eligibility and benefit computation; the rest is counted.

[13] Montana adds any child support collected up to $100 to the TANF payment. This money is considered an addition to the TANF payment, it is a pass-through of child support income, and is disregarded for eligibility purposes.

[14] The total pass-through amount is up to $100 if there is one child in the family and up to $200 if there is more than one child in the family.

[15] The total pass-through amount is $50 per child up to $200 if there is more than one child in the family.

[16] The unmet need, also called the gap payment, is calculated as 63.7 percent of the smaller of retained child support for the month or the maximum amount that would not make the family ineligible for TANF if counted as income. The state

defines "retained child support" as the amount equal to the smaller of the current month's collection, the basic TANF award for the month, or the current monthly obligation excluding arrears.
[17] The state will add to the TANF payment the smaller of the court-ordered payment amount, the amount the Office of the Attorney General received during that month, or $75. This money is considered an addition to the TANF benefit, not a pass-through of child support income, and is disregarded for eligibility purposes.

Until October 1, 2008, states were required to send the federal government a share (based on the state's federal medical assistance percentage [FMAP]) of all child support collected on behalf of TANF recipients regardless of whether the support was passed through to the families. However, the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 waived the federal government's share of collections that are transferred back to TANF families and disregarded in benefit calculations (up to $100 per month for one child and $200 per month for two or more children) beginning October 1, 2009, or as early as October 1, 2008.

More detailed information about the Child Support Enforcement Program's collections, expenditures, services, and caseload can be found on the Office of Child Support Enforcement's webpage: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/css.

XI. TANF and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014, provides new opportunities for employment and training activities to be extended to TANF recipients. In particular, TANF programs are required partners in the WIOA One-Stop system for a local workforce area (unless the Governor notifies the Secretaries of Labor and HHS otherwise). Further, states may coordinate TANF programs and services with other workforce programs administered by the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Department of Education (ED), and submit a combined state plan in lieu of submitting separate plans.

WIOA implementation provides an important opportunity to strengthen the participation of human services programs in workforce development efforts. Through the workforce one-stop system under WIOA, TANF recipients and other individuals with barriers to employment can have access to comprehensive employment and training services, job-driven training, and employers seeking workers. TANF agencies bring experience in addressing employment barriers and providing appropriate work supports to support job retention. A strong TANF/WIOA partnership has the potential to not only meet the needs of individuals and families, but also those of employers.

HHS has actively consulted with DOL and ED, and has strongly encouraged human services programs to participate in state and local planning around WIOA implementation. OFA has provided technical assistance to TANF agencies and other human services programs regarding strategies for and the benefits of collaboration. Through FY 2015, these efforts included disseminating information through webinars and correspondence with TANF stakeholders, hosting an expert roundtable on TANF-WIOA collaboration, and facilitating peer exchange to explore strategies for successful integration of TANF programs in the WIOA one-stops. OFA has also incorporated TANF-WIOA collaboration strategies into the office's broader technical assistance work, including the *Systems to Family Stability National Policy Academy* and the *Gateway to Opportunity: Improving Parental Employment and Family Well-Being Outcomes* national convening.

Webinars

In FY 2015, ACF hosted two webinars regarding partnerships between human service agencies, particularly TANF programs, and WIOA. The first, in November 2014, focused on how human service programs can draw upon the resources and experience of the workforce system to help low-income individuals attain employment. The webinar emphasized to human services stakeholders that WIOA provides an opportunity for ACF-funded programs to consider the best way to coordinate services with DOL and ED workforce programs so that participants have the most seamless experience possible with employment services as they progress toward self-sufficiency. During the second webinar, in January 2015, a panel of experts and officials from states and local areas discussed their experiences with collaboration between TANF and the

former Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program. The lessons shared from Iowa, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Utah regarding the coordination of TANF and WIA services provided insight to other states on the challenges and opportunities for including TANF in WIOA implementation.

Following the January webinar, the ACF Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) disseminated a final report and briefs from its *Descriptive Analysis of TANF/WIA Coordination* project in February 2015. The study identified 12 strategies for TANF/WIA coordination that 11 localities had previously used and could potentially be replicated by other locations as a part of WIOA implementation. More information on the study can be found in Chapter XIV of this report.

More resources on TANF and WIOA collaboration can be found in PeerTA's TANF/WIOA Resource Hub: https://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/ofa-initiative/426. Another resource, WorkforceGPS is an interactive online communication and learning technical assistance platform sponsored by the DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA).

Broader TANF Oversight and Guidance Initiatives

OFA has also incorporated technical assistance on TANF/WIOA coordination into the office's broader efforts to provide oversight, monitoring, and guidance to state, tribal, and local TANF administrators and other stakeholders. Two key technical assistance initiatives that started or took place in FY 2015, the *Systems to Family Stability National Policy Academy* and the *Gateway to Opportunity: Improving Parental Employment and Family Well-Being Outcomes* national convening, provided guidance and peer to peer engagement opportunities to TANF agencies on a range of topics focused on strengthening employment outcomes and child and family well-being outcomes within TANF, including coordination with WIOA.

The *Systems to Family Stability National Policy Academy* (the Academy) developed as a response to demonstrated interest of states and counties to redesign and re-energize TANF programs to ensure that families receive needed services and supports for successful transition to employment and economic stability. Over the course of 18 months, the Academy is assisting key leaders, administrators and stakeholders from a select group of eight TANF jurisdictions to develop and implement TANF program improvements. Connecticut, Colorado, Maryland, North Carolina, Ramsey County (Minnesota), Utah, Washington, and West Virginia are each focusing on a set of goals and desired outcomes that reflect their particular priorities and circumstances. Generally, Colorado, Washington, Connecticut, and Utah are focusing on comprehensive redesign of their TANF programs to address ongoing challenges to client success. Ramsey County, Utah, and Washington are seeking to better integrate multigenerational approaches to poverty reduction by integrating services targeted to child well-being and parental economic stability. Additionally, Maryland and North Carolina are seeking to improve coordination between state TANF and human services providers and workforce development stakeholders,

with a specific emphasis on infusing demand-driven approaches to increase employment outcomes for TANF recipients through the WIOA system. More specifically, Connecticut is interested in achieving whole-family success by incorporating non-custodial father and non-resident father services into TANF programming. West Virginia is prioritizing the successful transition of clients from TANF to work by focusing on careers with sustainable wages, while better utilizing program data sources to track client and family outcomes.

In addition to convening the eight TANF jurisdictions selected to be a part of the Academy, OFA also brought together all state and tribal TANF jurisdictions for national convenings in Washington, DC in FY 2015. The 2015 Tribal TANF Summit and the *Gateway to Opportunity: Improving Parental Employment and Family Well-Being Outcomes* national convening in Washington, DC provided an opportunity for tribal, state, and local TANF stakeholders to share promising practices, exchange ideas with leading researchers and national experts, and network with peers. Topics included developing job-driven and career pathways training, TANF-WIOA coordination, strengthening assessment and case management, the role of executive skills in employment success, and two-generation approaches to family economic security.

XII. Tribal TANF and Native Employment Works (NEW)

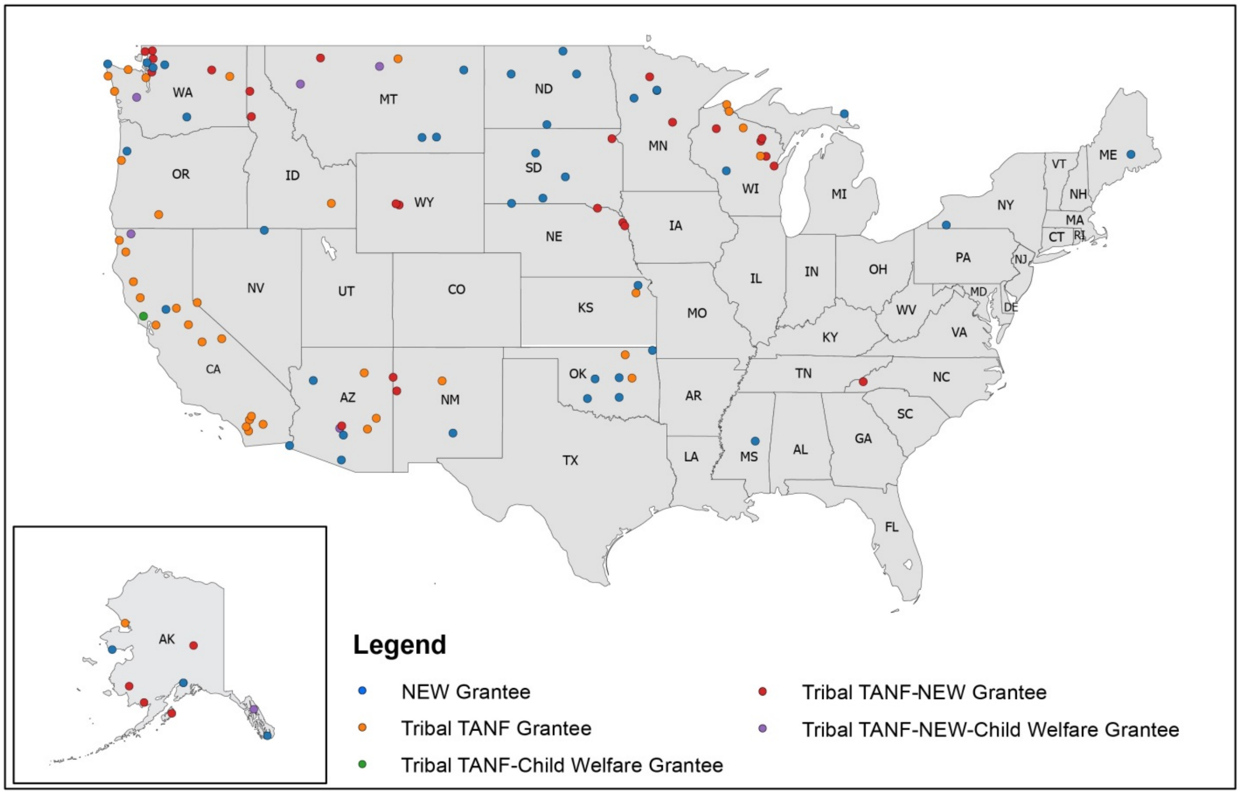
Federally-recognized American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native organizations may elect to operate their own TANF programs to serve eligible families. By the close of FY 2015, 70 Tribal TANF plans were approved to operate on behalf of 298 Tribes and Alaska Native villages, and serve the non-reservation area of 122 counties. In FY 2015, Tribal TANF programs received $192 million in federal funds.

Federally-recognized Tribes and Alaska Native organizations that were Tribal Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) program grantees under the former AFDC program are eligible to administer Native Employment Works (NEW) grants. NEW program grants support work activities and other employment and training services. During NEW Program Year (PY) 2014-2015 (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015), there were 78 NEW grantees.

In addition, eight Tribal TANF grantees operate discretionary grants for coordination of Tribal TANF and child welfare services to tribal families at risk of child abuse or neglect. These Tribal TANF – Child Welfare Coordination grantees were selected through a competitive process in 2015. The project period for these grants is September 30, 2015 – September 29, 2020.

Figure 12-A indicates the location of Tribal TANF, NEW, and Tribal TANF – Child Welfare Coordination grantees. A list of all current grant amounts can be found at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/programs/tribal/data-reports.

Figure 12-A: Office of Family Assistance Supported Tribal Programs – Tribal TANF, Native Employment Works (NEW), and Tribal TANF and Child Welfare Grantees



Note: As of February 2017.

The Tribal TANF Program

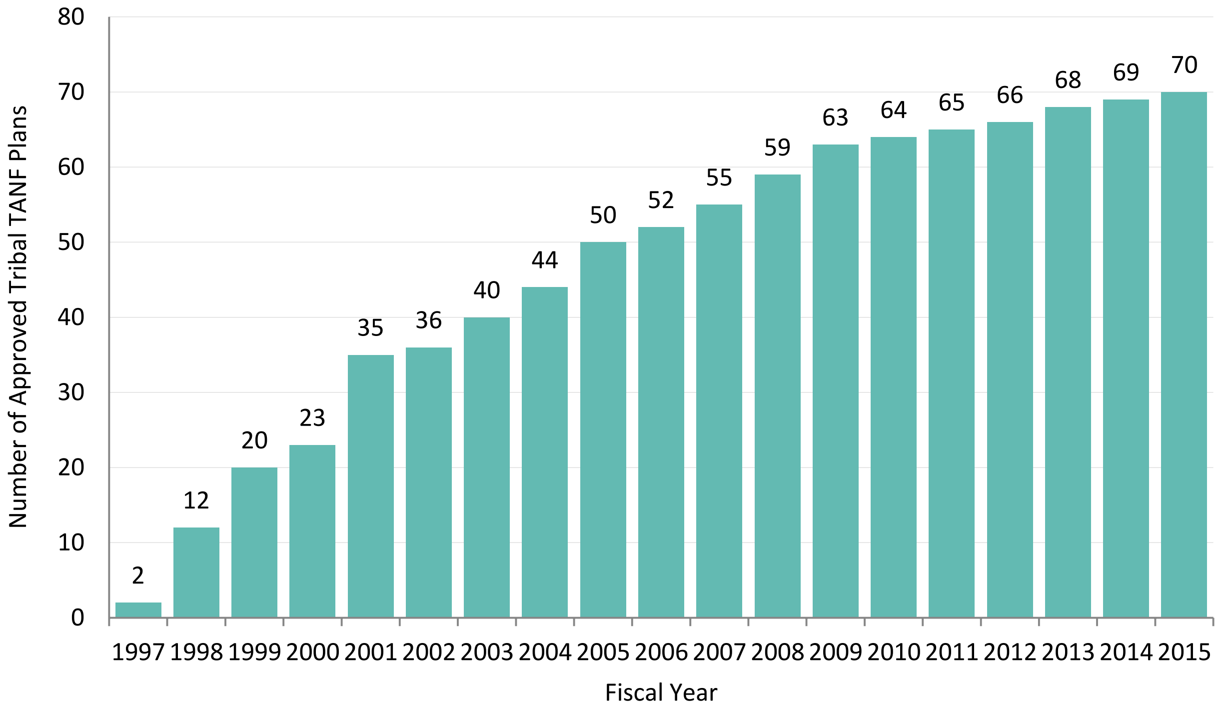
Each eligible tribe or Alaska Native organization that wants to administer its own TANF program must submit a Tribal Family Assistance Plan (TFAP) to HHS for review and approval. Although no specific format is required, a TFAP must contain elements specified in the law and regulations such as: how tribes will promote work and personal responsibility, the stability and health of families, work activities and support services, time-limited assistance, and sanctions for non-compliance with work requirements. Unlike State TANF plans, which are reviewed to certify only that they are complete, Tribal TANF plans must be approved by HHS.

Tribes administering their own TANF program have great flexibility in program design and implementation. They can define elements of their programs such as: service area, service population (e.g., all Indian families in the service area or only enrolled members of the tribe), time limits, benefits and services, family composition, eligibility criteria, and work and work activities. Tribes have the ability to establish, through negotiation with HHS, program work participation rate targets and required work hours. Also, they can establish what benefits and services will be available and develop their own strategies for achieving program goals, including how to help recipients move off welfare and become self-sufficient.

Successful administration of tribal programs depends on communication, collaboration, and coordination with states and locally-administered programs. Tribes can enter into partnerships with states and local governments to ensure that tribal families continue to receive the support services necessary to become self-sufficient, such as SNAP and Medicaid.

The number of approved Tribal TANF programs from FY 1997 through FY 2015 is displayed in Figure 12-B.

Figure 12-B: Growth in Number of Approved Tribal TANF Plans, FY 1997 – FY 2015

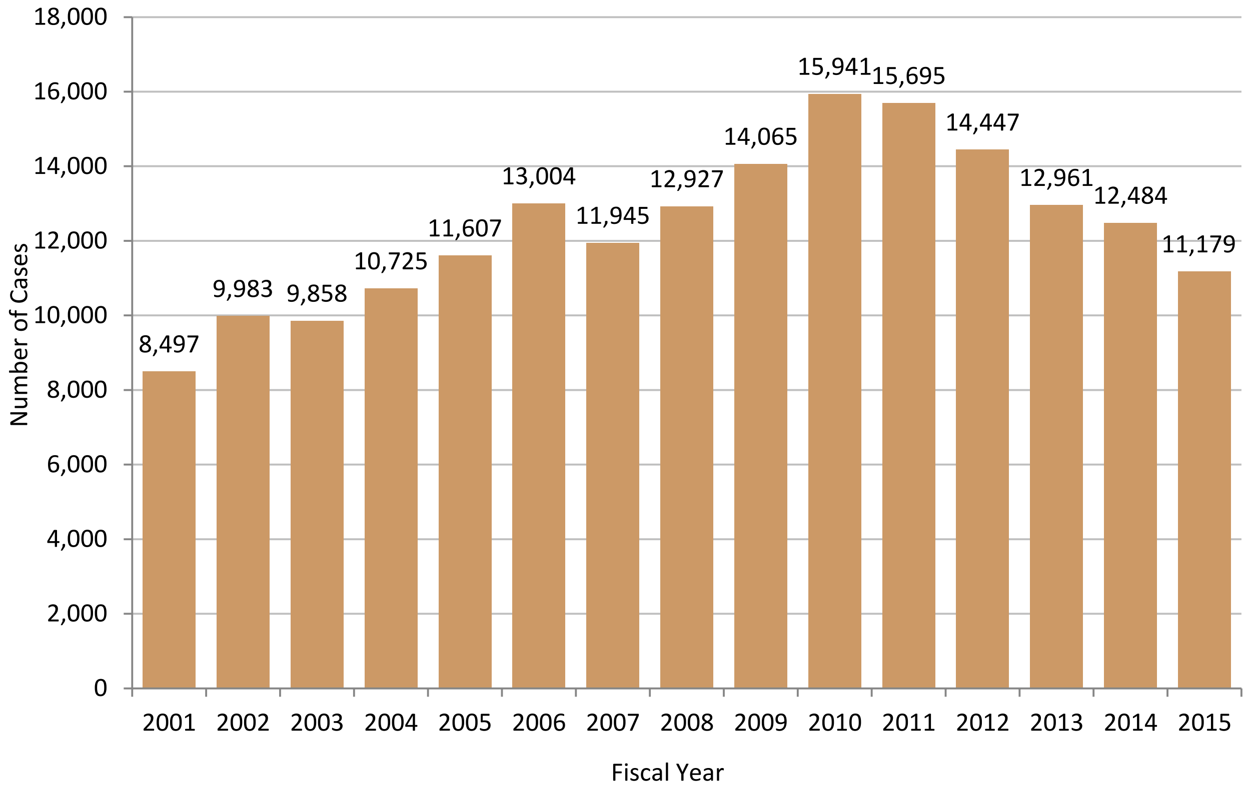


Tribal TANF Data

In FY 2015, OFA awarded $192 million in grants to 70 approved Tribal TANF programs**.** Tribal TANF grant amounts are based on the number of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) families served under state AFDC programs in FY 1994 in the tribal grantee's service area.

Figure 12-C shows the number of families served by Tribal TANF programs from FY 2001 through FY 2015. AI/AN families not served by Tribal TANF programs are eligible to be served by state TANF programs. In FY 2015, state TANF programs served approximately 25,600 AI/AN children and 7,500 AI/AN adults.

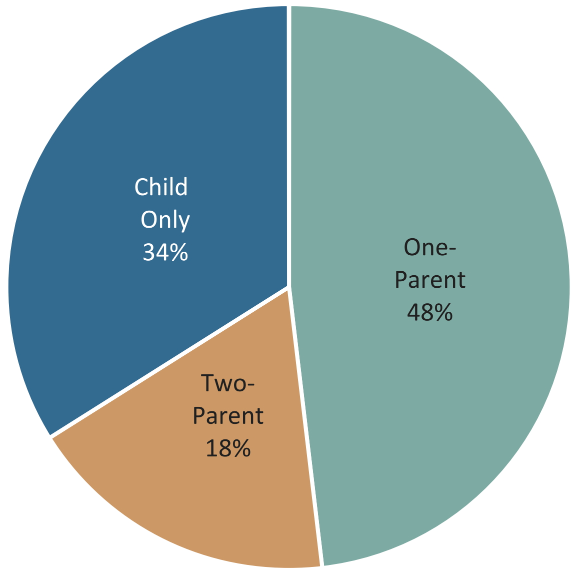
Figure 12-C: Tribal TANF Caseloads, FY 2001 – FY 2015



Source: Tribal TANF Database.

Figure 12-D indicates that in FY 2015, 33.9 percent of Tribal TANF families were child-only cases and 17.9 percent were two-parent families. The Tribal TANF caseload has a smaller proportion of child-only cases and a higher proportion of two-parent families than the state TANF caseload.

Figure 12-D: Percentage Distribution of Tribal TANF Families by Type of Family, FY 2015



Source: Tribal TANF Database.

The Native Employment Works (NEW) Program

The NEW program was authorized by Section 412(a)(2) of the Social Security Act, as amended by PRWORA in 1996. The NEW program began July 1, 1997, replacing the Tribal JOBS program. Federal regulations for the NEW program are found in 45 CFR Part 287.

As of June 30, 2015, there were 78 NEW grantees, 32 of which also operated Tribal TANF programs, with $7,558,020 awarded in funding. NEW programs provide work activities, supportive services, and job retention services to help clients prepare for and obtain permanent, unsubsidized employment. NEW grantees have the flexibility to design their programs to meet their needs, to select their service population and service area, and to determine the work activities and related services they will provide, consistent with statutory and regulatory requirements.

While NEW programs are not required to serve TANF participants, the majority of NEW participants are Tribal TANF or state TANF participants. Thus, NEW is an important partner with both tribal and state TANF programs.

In PY 2014-2015, 47 of the 78 NEW grantees did not include their NEW programs in a Pub. L. 102-477 project.[17] These 47 grantees served a total of 3,341 participants. In PY 2014-2015, 1,696 NEW participants also received TANF cash assistance and/or other TANF services through Tribal or state TANF programs.

Tribal TANF – Child Welfare Coordination Grants

OFA has funded three rounds of discretionary demonstration grants to improve coordination of Tribal TANF and child welfare services provided to tribal families at risk of child abuse or neglect. In FY 2015, eight tribes were funded for the third round of Tribal TANF – Child Welfare coordination (TTCW) grants, and have been funded for a five year project period (September 30, 2015 – September 29, 2020). Total annual funding for these grants is $2 million. The grants were awarded to Tribal TANF grantees through a competitive process with a review of applications by independent review panels using criteria in the funding opportunity announcement.

The statutory purpose of the TTCW grants is to demonstrate models of effective coordination by tribal governments or tribal consortia of Tribal TANF and child welfare services provided to tribal families at risk of child abuse or neglect. Consistent with the authorizing legislation, these grants must be used for one or more of the following:

- To improve case management for families eligible for assistance from a Tribal TANF program;
- For supportive services and assistance to tribal children in out-of-home placements and the tribal families caring for such children, including families who adopt such children; or
- For prevention services and assistance to tribal families at risk of child abuse and neglect.

For the prior round of TTCW grants, awards were made to 14 tribes and tribal organizations for project periods from September 30, 2011 through September 30, 2014. OFA worked in collaboration with OPRE to learn from these projects. The collaboration resulted in the publication of several reports addressing a variety of topics.[18] A descriptive study observed that the services the grantees provided to strengthen families commonly centered on parenting education and family violence prevention. A research-to-practice brief provided background on safety and risk assessments and gave examples of tribes' adaptations of assessments to fit their

[17] P.L. 102-477 is the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992. P.L. 102-477 (477) allows Indian tribes to establish demonstration projects to coordinate their Department of the Interior, HHS, DOL, and ED employment, training, and related services programs "in a manner that integrates program services involved into a single, coordinated, comprehensive program" and "consolidates administrative functions." The law authorizes, but does not require, federal agencies to allow programs to be included in 477 projects.

[18] See https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/study-of-coordination-of-tribal-tanf-and-child-welfare-services.

communities. Another report explored opportunities, considerations, and methods for using storytelling to understand and communicate information about social service programs in tribal communities.

XIII. Promotion of Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood

In FY 2005, OFA implemented HMRF grants—a $150 million discretionary grant program originally authorized under the DRA. These programs relied on a network of 209 grantees to offer workshops, resources, and a comprehensive set of activities to support families and children.

In 2010, Congress reauthorized these programs under the Claims Resolution Act of 2010 (CRA), specifying that funding should be equally divided between healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood activities. With consideration to the previous efforts in mind, OFA implemented the following grant programs in FY 2011: Community-Centered Healthy Marriage and Relationships, Pathways to Responsible Fatherhood, and Community-Centered Responsible Fatherhood Reentry Pilot Project grants. This funding opportunity yielded 121 new and previously-funded grantees to the HMRF program. The original project period for these grants ended September 29, 2014. The grants were then extended for one year through September 29, 2015.

Between 2006 and 2015, HMRF grantees provided education and services to more than 500,000 people in 44 states.

On September 30, 2015, OFA announced grant awards to 90 organizations in 27 states and one territory. The *Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education Grant Program* (HMRE), *New Pathways for Fathers and Families* (New Pathways), *Responsible Fatherhood Opportunities for Reentry and Mobility* (ReFORM), and *National Resource Center for Marriage and Families* (Resource Center) are part of HHS' community-based efforts to promote strong, healthy family formation and maintenance, responsible fatherhood and parenting, and reentry opportunities for fathers returning from incarceration.

With its FY 2015 grants, OFA emphasized the importance of activities related to employment, economic stability, and workforce development in each of the HMRF service delivery grant programs. OFA included as grantee requirements the provision of comprehensive employment and economic mobility-focused services, such as strategies to enhance the skills of low-income participants and help them secure employment. Additionally, programs include financial literacy activities to strengthen budgeting skills, financial planning and management, and asset development.

Programs are encouraged to offer job-driven program components that: (1) build from a solid understanding of local economic conditions and economic growth sectors; (2) include connections to education and training opportunities aligned to these sectors; (3) incorporate partnerships with employers in targeted sectors to increase the likelihood of placement and retention in work; and (4) use evidence-based or research-informed programs and practices.

HMRF programs are strongly encouraged to include other partners that can also provide resources or expertise.

Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education Grants

OFA funded 47 organizations across the country, and in one territory, to provide comprehensive healthy relationship and marriage education services as well as job and career advancement activities to promote economic stability and overall improved family well-being.

The HMRE grantees can provide a range of activities including:

- Public advertising campaigns on the value of healthy marriages.
- Education in high schools on the value of marriage, relationship skills, and budgeting.
- Marriage and relationship skills programs that may include parenting skills, financial management, conflict resolution, and job and career advancement.
- Premarital education and marriage skills training for engaged couples and for couples or individuals who are interested in marriage.
- Marriage enhancement and marriage skills training programs for married couples.
- Marriage mentoring programs that use married couples as role models and mentors in at-risk communities.
- Divorce reduction programs that teach relationship skills.
- Programs to reduce the disincentives to marriage in means-tested aid programs, if offered in conjunction with any activity described above.

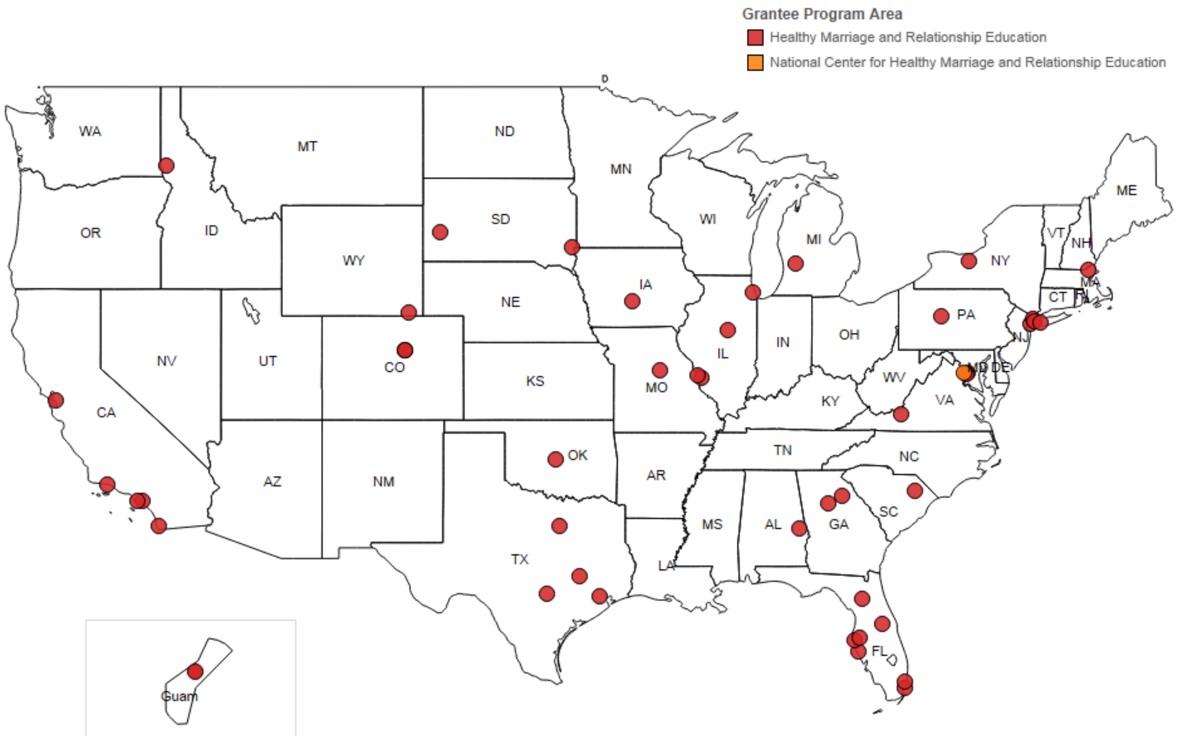
HMRE grantees provide a broad array of services designed to support healthy marriage and relationships through the provision of comprehensive services, including services designed to improve marriage and relationship skills and activities to promote economic stability and mobility. Services to address social and emotional needs include partnerships with and referrals to mental health, substance abuse treatment, and trauma-informed care systems. Economic stability activities include job and career advancement, and financial literacy activities, such as budgeting, financial planning and management, and asset development.

National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families

The Resource Center (http://www.healthymarriageandfamilies.org) supports state and local safety net service providers as they integrate healthy marriage and relationship education skills into service delivery systems as part of a comprehensive, culturally appropriate, family-centered approach designed to promote self-sufficiency.

Figure 13-A displays the location of Healthy Marriage programs across the country.

Figure 13-A: Healthy Marriage Grantees, FY 2015



Note: Includes the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families Grantee (VA)

New Pathways for Fathers and Families Grants

OFA funded 38 organizations to provide Responsible Fatherhood activities. Grantees are called upon to help fathers strengthen positive father-child engagement; improve employment and economic mobility opportunities for fathers; and improve healthy relationships (including couple and co-parenting) and marriage.

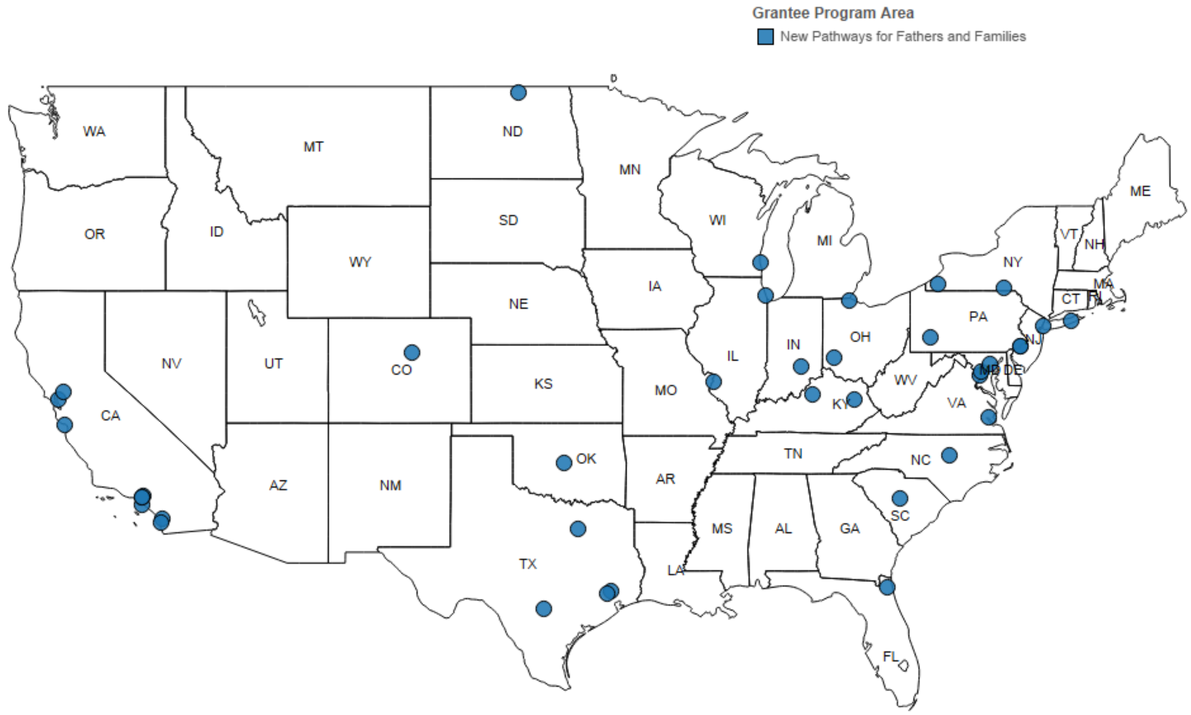
The following three Responsible Fatherhood activities are specified in the CRA and DRA:

1. Healthy Marriage – Activities to promote marriage or sustain marriage through activities, such as:
   - Enhancing relationship skills.
   - Disseminating information on the causes of domestic violence and child abuse.
   - Financial planning seminars.
2. Responsible Parenting – Activities to promote responsible parenting, such as:
   - Counseling, mentoring, and mediation.
   - Disseminating information about good parenting practices.
   - Encouraging child support payments.
3. Economic Stability – Activities to foster economic stability, such as:
   - Helping fathers improve their economic status by providing activities such as job training, employment services, and career-advancing education.

- Coordination with existing employment services such as welfare-to-work programs and referrals to local employment training initiatives.

Figure 13-B displays the geographic locations of Responsible Fatherhood grantees.

Figure 13-B: New Pathways for Fathers and Families Grantees, FY 2015



National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse (Clearinghouse)

Also authorized under the DRA and CRA, the Clearinghouse (http://www.fatherhood.gov) serves as a resource for responsible fatherhood information and was designed to promote and encourage the appropriate involvement of fathers in the lives of their children. The Clearinghouse provides access to curricula, webinars, research products, and other resources to improve the implementation and success of their programs.

Responsible Fatherhood Opportunities for Reentry and Mobility (ReFORM)

Formerly incarcerated fathers' ability to reintegrate into society successfully is often made difficult by challenges that prevent them from stabilizing their lives, establishing or reconnecting with their children and families, obtaining employment and achieving economic mobility. To meet these challenges, ACF funded ReFORM grants that are specifically tailored to the needs of fathers transitioning from incarceration to their families and communities. The ReFORM program funds projects that include the three New Pathways activities together with community-centered pre- and post-release responsible fatherhood and supportive services to fathers soon-to-

be and recently released from incarceration. Additionally, ReFORM projects focus on fathers who are within three to nine months of release or a father who has been released from confinement for six months or less.

These programs operate in five states — Kentucky, New York, Ohio, Washington, and West Virginia.

Grantee Performance and Evaluation

For the FY 2015 round of grants, OFA included an emphasis on key short- and long-term outcomes intended to enhance evaluation and strengthen program design. With the development of standardized performance measures, OFA has enhanced performance data collection. Additionally, local and national evaluations complement the emphasis on achieving short- and long-term programmatic outcomes. This learning agenda focuses on expanding the knowledge base to improve programming, ensure continuous quality improvement, and increase positive outcomes for individuals, couples, fathers, families, and children.

As a component of the learning agenda, grantees are expected to conduct either a descriptive or impact grantee-specific evaluation, called "local evaluations," to answer one or more grantee-specific research questions. The purpose of these evaluations is to learn from grantees in order to inform future programming.

Additionally, in collaboration with OPRE, OFA is conducting two, federally-led impact evaluations of the HMRF programs. These two impact evaluations, *Strengthening Relationship Education and Marriage Services* (STREAMS) and *Building Bridges and Bonds* (B3), are described in Chapter XIV. ACF is also conducting an implementation study examining how Responsible Fatherhood programs serve fathers soon-to-be released and recently released from incarceration. The study is following five grantees and documenting program operations, recruitment strategies, the experiences of staff and participants, and the types of activities and services offered to participants and their families.

Grantee Supports: Oversight, Monitoring, and Training and Technical Assistance

OFA and contractor staff provided a variety of training oversight and guidance to both Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood grantees in FY 2015, including roundtables, webinars, and site visits—designed to improve grantee program implementation, service delivery and continuous quality improvement.

Through the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse (www.Fatherhood.gov) and the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families (https://www.healthymarriageandfamilies.org/), grantees have access to curricula, webinars, research products, and other resources to improve the implementation and success of their programs.

XIV. Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability-Related Research

HHS sponsors, manages, and conducts research and evaluations pertaining to family self-sufficiency and stability, including projects relevant to management of the TANF program, studies of TANF recipients and low-income individuals, and low-income families more generally, while focusing on evaluations of service interventions to improve family economic well-being. HHS' research and evaluation activities in these areas are carried out primarily by OPRE and ASPE, who coordinate their research agendas with each other and with other government agencies, independent research organizations, and private foundations, and collaborate with university-based research centers.

OPRE and ASPE's family self-sufficiency and stability-related research and evaluation projects fall into five broad categories: (1) TANF and the safety net, (2) employment and the labor market, (3) education and training, (4) family strengthening, and (5) cross-cutting research. Select OPRE and ASPE current and past projects are summarized and discussed below and include multi-year experimental impact evaluations, implementation evaluations, descriptive studies, and other forms of analysis, as well as projects to build capacity in the field to conduct research in these areas.

TANF and the Safety Net

One goal of HHS' support for research and evaluation efforts is to provide a better understanding of the nature and consequences of the TANF program and policy choices, especially as they relate to the economic well-being of children and families. OPRE and ASPE are interested in TANF data and research, as well as populations enrolled in or eligible for the TANF program.

Understanding TANF Programs, Data, and Research

Since PRWORA created TANF in 1996, OPRE and ASPE have supported a number of descriptive studies of various aspects of state and local TANF programs. Study topics have included diversion and sanction policies and the relationship of these policies to federal work participation requirements, time limit policies, and TANF caseloads and leavers. These studies inform policymakers' understanding of TANF and help lay the groundwork for many of OPRE's and ASPE's research and evaluation projects.

One longstanding project focused on describing the TANF program is the State TANF Policies Database (Database) (and the related Welfare Rules Databook). With the creation of the TANF program, states gained considerable authority to design the parameters of their cash assistance programs and set their own rules. In order to document what was happening in states, OPRE, with ASPE support, contracted with the Urban Institute to develop the Database, a single location where information on TANF program rules can be researched across states and/or years.

The Database is intended to provide a resource for researchers working on both descriptive and quantitative projects. Updates to the Database have been funded each year since 1997.

Additionally, ASPE's Improving State TANF Performance Measures study, funded in 2010 and conducted by the Urban Institute, presented information about state-level TANF performance measurement systems.

OPRE contracted with the Urban Institute to produce the TANF Research Synthesis Briefs. Completed in 2012, these briefs summarize rigorous and relevant research related to TANF in a format that is designed to be useful for both researchers and policymakers. Topics covered in the briefs include: improving employment and earnings for TANF recipients, TANF recipients with barriers to employment, changes in the TANF caseload over time, disconnected families and TANF, TANF child-only cases, TANF work requirements and state strategies to fulfill them, TANF and the broader safety net, and facilitating post-secondary education and training for TANF recipients.

Through a contract with Mathematica Policy Research (MPR), OPRE designed a study to better understand the principal reasons why individuals are reported to have zero hours of participation in TANF work activities. The project's final report, Improving Engagement of TANF Families: Understanding Work Participation and Families with Reported Zero Hours of Participation in Program Activities (2011-2015), describes the perceptions of interviewed TANF administrators and staff regarding the policy and program reasons that lead families to have zero reported hours of participation in allowable work activities.

In addition, OPRE, also through a contract with MPR, conducted a Descriptive Analysis of TANF/WIA Coordination from 2011-2014. The similarities between the employment-related services for the TANF and WIA, reauthorized as WIOA, programs have generated interest in coordination and integration. OPRE launched this study to learn more about how and to what degree the programs coordinate at the state and local level and the considerations that influence coordination within selected locations.

While the majority of states centrally administer their TANF programs, eight states (California, Colorado, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, and Wisconsin) play a supervisory role and delegate the administration of the TANF program to their counties. The OPRE Descriptive Study of County vs. State TANF Administration, conducted by the Urban Institute from 2012 to 2014, examined the dynamics of county- and state-administered TANF programs and documented lessons learned from different county-level programmatic implementations and experiences.

Understanding TANF Populations

"Disconnected" Families

Low-income individuals and families who are not employed or receiving public assistance are often referred to as "disconnected." According to recent estimates, 20 to 25 percent of low-income single mothers are disconnected from work and TANF for some period of time over the course of a year. Over time, HHS has invested in better understanding the dynamics, characteristics, and circumstances of disconnected families. These efforts included research on disconnected families and TANF, the extent of economic hardship faced by disconnected families, and dynamics of disconnection.

The Understanding the Dynamics of Disconnection from Employment and Assistance project, initiated in 2011, began by convening a meeting of experts who discussed existing research on disconnection and offered input on the most important knowledge gaps and areas for future research. Based on this input, the project team designed and conducted a qualitative research study to address important knowledge gaps related to disconnected families' work, benefit receipt, economic coping strategies, material hardship, and overall well-being. The project team, led by The Urban Institute, conducted in-depth qualitative interviews with 51 unmarried low-income mothers from Southeast Michigan and Los Angeles, California. OPRE published a final report based on these qualitative findings in June 2014.

TANF and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Families

Numerous studies have identified that there is overlap in families and individuals served by TANF and SSI programs. The TANF/SSI Disability Transition Project (TSDTP) (2008-2013) examined the extent of the overlap between the TANF (low-income families with disabled parents receiving TANF) and SSI programs and populations and developed innovative pilot programs that can improve a variety of outcomes for individuals with disabilities and barriers to employment. TSDTP was a collaborative effort between ACF and the Social Security Administration, conducted under a contract to MDRC.

A joint project between ASPE and OPRE, performed under contract with MPR, examined variation in SSI Children participation levels across states and counties. The project conducted case studies for four diverse states and counties to examine varying policy and program environments, with a focus on programs such as TANF that may affect participation in the SSI Children program.

Child-Only Families

While adult TANF recipients have been the subject of most research on TANF, child-only cases – those in which no adult is included in the benefit calculation and only the children are aided – now constitute half of all cash assistance cases in the TANF program. In response to the need for research on this subject, OPRE and ASPE awarded a grant to Chapin Hall at the University of

Chicago to document differences in state policies that affect child-only TANF cases, describe characteristics and dynamics of such cases, and address the programmatic and policy context in which these cases exist. The Understanding the Child-Only TANF Caseload study used a mixed-methods approach, combining secondary administrative data analysis; informant interviews at the federal, state, and county levels; and a national survey of TANF administrators. The final report provides a broad overview of policies, demographic trends, and program challenges both nationwide and in four states – California, Florida, Illinois, and New York.

American Indian and Alaska Native Families

To add to our understanding of the characteristics, implementation, and promising practices of TANF programs serving American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations, OPRE published A Descriptive Study of Tribal TANF Programs, a study by the Urban Institute. This study explored and examined the implementation of four Tribal TANF programs. The study also identified and recommended potential approaches for further study. OPRE published the final report in February 2013.

OPRE also sponsored the Understanding Urban Indians' Interactions with ACF Programs and Services (2011-2014) project. This project, led by Westat, was an exploratory research study to better understand the challenges and context for barriers to accessing ACF services among low-income AI/ANs in urban areas. OPRE published the final report in May 2014.

Additionally, OPRE undertook a descriptive study to document the approaches and strategies utilized by tribal organizations awarded cooperative agreements under the Coordination of Tribal TANF and Child Welfare Services funding opportunity announcement and to document lessons to inform the field of practice as well as policymakers and funders at various levels. The purpose of these grants as prescribed by the statute (section 403(a)(2) of the Social Security Act, as amended), was to fund demonstration projects designed to test the effectiveness of tribal governments or tribal consortia in coordinating the provision to tribal families at risk of child abuse and neglect of child welfare services and services under tribal programs. The descriptive study of these programs serving tribal communities aimed to document the way in which tribal grantees are creating and adapting culturally relevant and appropriate approaches, systems and programs to increase coordination and enhance service delivery to address child abuse and neglect. The study also aimed to document challenges faced and lessons learned. Information developed through the contract is expected to be of value to ACF, to tribal communities, and to a range of stakeholders working with and serving tribal communities, specifically those addressing child abuse and neglect.

Supporting TANF Data, Research and Dissemination

Since the passage of PRWORA, there have been substantial changes in how federal and state governments develop, execute, and fund research and evaluation activities, as well as significant cutbacks in the collection, analysis, and reporting of administrative data. To fill gaps in federal

and state research and data activities and to complement its ongoing research, evaluation, and data analysis and reporting, OPRE developed a multi-faceted *Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Consortium*.

The Consortium includes the Family Self-Sufficiency and Stability Research Scholars Network (Scholars Network). In the fall of 2013, OPRE awarded 7 grants to Principal Investigators to join a network of scholars who investigate critical issues in family self-sufficiency and stability research. The Scholars Network is a collaborative enterprise of university-based scholars who undertake research in family self-sufficiency and stability that is both scientifically rigorous and highly relevant to family self-sufficiency programs and research. The members of the Scholars Network work independently and collectively with assistance from the Family Self-Sufficiency Data Center (Data Center). The Data Center serves as a hub to support the development of state and institutional capacity for data collection, linkage, and, where necessary, storage in order to provide access to high quality data to practitioners and policymakers in family self-sufficiency programs and research. The Data Center works independently as well as collaborating with members of the Scholars Network.

Additionally, OPRE supports the dissemination of research and evaluation on TANF and related safety net programs through the Self-Sufficiency Research Clearinghouse (SSRC). The SSRC is an ever-growing virtual portal of research on low-income and TANF families and an online hub for professional networking among researchers, policymakers and practitioners who serve these populations. The SSRC aims to improve policy and practice in such areas as employment, education and training, and family self-sufficiency by improving access to field-tested, evidence-informed, and evidence-based program strategies and high-quality research and by fostering professional connectivity among its targeted audiences.

Employment and the Labor Market

A major focus of OPRE's and ASPE's research involves strategies for helping TANF recipients and other low-income individuals find jobs, maintain employment, and advance in the labor market. State and local TANF officials and other service providers continually express the need for more information and guidance as they develop employment-focused strategies to work more effectively with TANF recipients who face substantial barriers to employment. Using labor market data to study factors that affect job retention and wage advancement among TANF recipients and other low-income and disadvantaged workers also is an important part of OPRE's and ASPE's work.

Finding Jobs, Maintaining Employment, and Advancing in the Labor Market

In 2010, OPRE launched the *Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration Project (STED)* to demonstrate and evaluate the next generation of subsidized employment models for critical low-income populations (e.g., TANF clients, non-custodial fathers, and low-income youth at risk of unsuccessful transition to the labor force). The project, led by MDRC, examines

strategies aimed at providing transitional and counter-cyclical employment strategies for successfully transitioning individuals from short-term subsidized employment to unsubsidized employment in the labor market. The evaluation includes a random assignment impact evaluation, an implementation evaluation at each project site, and an analysis of the costs and benefits (both financial and non-financial) of the subsidized employment programs included in the evaluation.

The STED Project is being conducted in close coordination with DOL's Enhanced Transitional Jobs Demonstration (ETJD). Implemented by DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA), ETJD supplies grant funds to provide temporary, paid work experiences to non-custodial parents and ex-offenders to improve their employability, earnings, and opportunities for advancement. Seven grantees received four-year grants, which required participation in a rigorous, experimental evaluation and partnerships with child support enforcement and criminal justice agencies, as appropriate. Given the complementary nature of these evaluations, OPRE and ETA have agreed to coordinate the STED and ETJD studies. This coordination includes shared data collection instruments, shared evaluation sites, and coordinated reporting efforts.

Reports from STED and ETJD include *Subsidizing Employment Opportunities for Low- Income Families: A Review of State Employment Programs Created through the TANF Emergency Fund* and *Testing the Next Generation of Subsidized Employment Programs: An Introduction to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration and the Enhanced Transitional Jobs Demonstration*.

In addition to transitional jobs, job search activities are a significant area of program attention and prior research. While job search activities are often included as an essential component of programs that have been the subject of OPRE-sponsored evaluations, they have not previously been the independent focus of rigorous examination. In the fall of 2011, OPRE launched the *Design Options of the Search for Employment (DOSE)* project to address these gaps in the literature. DOSE explored the potential to develop rigorous impact evaluations of alternative job search strategies.

Following the recommendations generated from DOSE, OPRE launched the *Job Search Assistance (JSA) Strategies Evaluation* in the fall 2013, which is being conducted by Abt Associates, Mathematica Policy Research, The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, and other consultants. The JSA evaluation will feature a multi-site random assignment evaluation to measure the relative impact of specific job search services offered by TANF programs on short-term labor market outcomes such as earnings and time to employment.

In 2013, OPRE launched the Employment Strategies for Low-Income Adults Evidence Review to conduct a comprehensive review of the evidence base on employment and training programs and strategies for low-income adults. The review was conducted by Mathematica Policy Research and systematically identified, assessed, and synthesized evidence from the existing

research literature and then used this synthesis to identify programs and strategies with the strongest evidence of effectiveness. Results of the review can be found at: http://employmentstrategies.acf.hhs.gov/ and accompanying materials and briefs are founds at: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/employment-and-training-evidence-review.

Using Labor Market Data

To move beyond job search and study the labor market factors that affect job retention and wage advancement among low-income and disadvantaged workers, ASPE has funded a series of analyses using panel data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), and data from the Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics (LEHD) program housed at the Census Bureau. These data programs provide longitudinal information that can be used to track the employment and economic outcomes over time of low-income and other disadvantaged populations, including TANF recipients, former recipients, and those at risk of entering TANF.

ASPE is conducting a project with MPR on Single Mothers and Unemployment. This project uses longitudinal SIPP data to identify and analyze the occurrence and duration of job loss among single mothers during the most recent recession. Using quarterly data from the CPS, ASPE conducted the *Employment Patterns among Persons with Children during the Recession* study. Analyses indicate that employment patterns of persons with children under age 18 have largely mirrored the employment patterns of the rest of the labor force during the recession, including a decrease in employment throughout 2008 and 2009. Findings show an increase in the percentage of couples with neither parent employed and an increase in the percentage of single mothers who were neither employed nor living with an employed cohabiting partner.

Currently, ASPE is continuing a study using the longitudinal LEHD data linked with TANF administrative data to examine the employment and earnings outcomes and performance measures for cohorts of individuals who left TANF at various points over the past 10 to 15 years. Initial results for those who left TANF in the early 2000s (in 35 states) show that quarterly employment rates were similar to employment rate outcomes found in studies of TANF leavers from the late 1990s, just after passage of PRWORA. Median quarterly earnings in the first year following TANF exit, however, were somewhat lower for TANF leavers in the early 2000s compared with TANF leavers in the late 1990s. Average quarterly earnings for employed TANF leavers increased by nearly 40 percent over this period.

In 2016 OPRE published a series of tools developed by Mathematica Policy Research to provide information to TANF programs and employment program administrators on using labor marker information to enhance employment placements and outcomes. The series' three briefs include:

(a) Promising Occupations Achievable Through Short-term Education or Training for Low-Income Families

- Details promising occupations expected to experience growth through 2022 that someone can enter after completing a relatively short-term training.

- Includes tables with state-level findings for each of the ACF Regions. The tables include information for the U.S. as a whole, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

(b) Resources for Connecting TANF Recipients and Other Low-Income Families to Good Jobs

- A collection of resources for TANF administrators and other practitioners on career exploration and assessment, career pathways and sector strategies, and labor market information.

(c) Using Data to Connect TANF Clients to Good Jobs: An Opportunity to Foster WIOA Partnerships

- Introduces administrators to labor market information, including what it is, who produces the data, uses for the data, and key distinctions among types of data to help TANF programs identify opportunities to use this data to improve TANF client employment outcomes and create a common language between TANF practitioners and staff in state departments of labor.

Education and Training

OPRE and ASPE have strong histories of sponsoring rigorous research on the effectiveness of education and training strategies for improving employment and earnings for TANF recipients and other low-income individuals. Beginning in 2007, with the launch of the Pathways to Advancing Careers and Education (PACE) project, and continuing with the creation of the Health Profession Opportunity Grants program (HPOG), ACF has developed a robust portfolio of research in the career pathways approach to education and training.

Pathways to Advancing Careers and Education (PACE) project

In 2007, ACF initiated the PACE project, a multi-site, random assignment evaluation of promising strategies for increasing employment and self-sufficiency among low-income families. Based on stakeholder input, the PACE team has come to focus on career pathways as the main intervention framework to study.

Career pathways are designed to allow entries, exits, and re-entries at each step in the program—depending on skill levels and prior training, employment, and changing personal situations.

To engage, retain, and facilitate learning among low-skilled adults, the career pathways framework includes four categories of service strategies: (1) assessments of skills and needs; (2) promising and innovative approaches to basic skills instruction and occupational training ("core curriculum"); (3) academic and non-academic supports to promote success; and (4) approaches for connecting students with career-track employment opportunities. Within each of these categories, a variety of strategies have emerged as emblematic, or signature, elements of promising approaches.

PACE partners include the Des Moines Area Community College (Prepared Learner Program), I-BEST Program in select colleges in Washington State, Instituto del Progresso Latino (Carreras en Salud), Madison Area Technical College (Center for Adult Learning), Pima Community College (Pathways to Healthcare), San Diego Workforce Partnership (Bridge to Employment), Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement, Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (Health Careers for All), and Year Up.

Random assignment for the PACE study concluded in the fall of 2014. Program impacts will be assessed using a follow-up survey administered 18-months after random assignment and administrative data on employment and earnings. The final PACE program reports will be submitted to ACF beginning in the spring of 2017. More information on the PACE project is available at http://www.career-pathways.org/.

Evaluation Portfolio for the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) Program

HPOG provides funds for demonstration projects to provide TANF recipients and other low-income individuals with opportunities for education, training, and advancement that lead to jobs that pay well and address the healthcare professions' workforce needs. In FY 2010, OFA awarded the first round of HPOG grants to 32 organizations in 23 states to carry out five-year programs (referred to as HPOG 1.0), with approximately $67 million dispersed annually. In FY 2015, OFA awarded a second round of HPOG grants to 32 organizations located across 21 states for a new five-year period (referred to as HPOG 2.0). HPOG grantees are postsecondary educational institutions, workforce investment boards, state or local government agencies, and community-based organizations. In both HPOG 1.0 and HPOG 2.0, five grantees are tribes or tribal organizations. These demonstration projects are intended to address two pervasive and growing problems: the increasing shortfall in supply of healthcare professionals in the face of expanding demand and the increasing requirement for a post-secondary education to secure a job with a living wage for families. Grant funds may be used for training and education as well as supportive services such as case management, child care, and transportation.

HPOG was authorized as a demonstration program with a mandated federal evaluation. OPRE is utilizing a multi-pronged evaluation strategy in the Evaluation Portfolio for the HPOG Program to assess the success of the HPOG program. OPRE's evaluation portfolio for HPOG includes a number of components, including implementation and impact studies of the non-tribal HPOG programs; implementation and outcomes studies of Tribal HPOG programs; additional impact studies of a subset of HPOG grantees through the Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education project (described above); and University Partnership Research Grants. Additionally, after the initial observation period the HPOG and PACE research samples will be observed at 36 months after program entry and then again at 72 months post random assignment. These research and evaluation activities aim to provide information on program implementation, systems change, outcomes, and impact. The various components are closely coordinated to avoid duplicative efforts, maximize the reuse of data and information that is collected, reduce

burden on grantees in terms of participating in the federal evaluation activities and meeting performance management requirements, and promote cross-project learning.

Family Strengthening

Given the large body of research on the strong link between family structure and relationships and a child's prospects for success, both ACF and ASPE include a focus on family strengthening research and evaluation. OPRE has undertaken a number of projects to assess the effectiveness of healthy marriage and relationship education programs in improving family life outcomes, including child well-being, for different target populations as well as responsible fatherhood programs.

Healthy Marriage and Relationships

In order to identify and evaluate strategies for improving the delivery and effectiveness of healthy marriage and relationship education (HMRE) programs, OPRE has initiated the *Strengthening Relationship Education and Marriage Services (STREAMS)* project. STREAMS is a large multi-site random assignment impact evaluation of HMRE programs serving adults and youth that is designed to answer multiple practice-relevant questions. During its first year, the project gathered input from practitioners, program developers, and research experts about priority research questions and how the study can best contribute to the field. Research questions of interest include what program elements or implementation strategies are key to achieving outcomes and how program engagement can be improved. After refining the study research questions, the study team identified and recruited six evaluation sites in which to conduct both an in-depth process study and rigorous random assignment impact evaluation of HMRE programs. This project is being conducted by MPR.

OPRE awarded a contract to the Urban Institute (with subcontractors Public Strategies and the Williams Institute) to provide an assessment of the current state of the HMRE practice field, and to identify and promote promising approaches for serving same-sex couples and lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals– whether adult or youth – who may become involved in same-sex relationships. A final report on the *Same-Sex Relationships: Updates to Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education Programming (SUHMRE)* project will be available in 2017.

The Family Strengthening Scholars grant program is designed to build research capacity in the healthy marriage/responsible fatherhood field (HM/RF). These grants are to support dissertation research on HM/RF policy issues and are meant to build capacity in the research field to focus research on questions that have direct implications for HM/RF decision-making and program administration. They are intended to focus particularly on underserved/understudied populations, such as low-income families and minority population, utilize rigorous methodology and help inform the development of future intervention research.

OPRE awarded eight cooperative agreements to fund research to conduct secondary data analysis of archived ACF data, specifically the Building Strong Families (BSF), Supporting Healthy Marriage (SHM), and Community Healthy Marriage Initiative (CHMI) datasets. The grantees are covering topics such as the economic benefits of marriage and relationship education (MRE) programs, child outcomes related to MRE, race/ethnic differences in marriage health and stability, and the experiences of fathers in MRE.

In 2013, OPRE awarded a contract for the *Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education – Models and Measures (3M)* project. The purpose was to bring together experts in the field to develop recommendations for "next-generation" marriage/relationship education models for diverse populations. The new models are expected to build on previous implementation and impact evaluation evidence, the experience and views of program operators, and other key sources of information. The project also aimed to refine existing measures and measurement methods related to healthy marriage/relationship education, as well as develop and validate alternative measures that better reflect the relationships of diverse couples and the interventions in which they participate. The products focused on two specific target populations who are served by healthy marriage and relationship education programs: parents in complex families and adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18. For each of these populations, we developed:

- A dynamic measures spreadsheet (available in both Excel and PDF) that summarizes the items and measures recommended for assessing a range of outcomes for the target population.
- A companion "tip sheet" with advice on collecting data from the target population.

Final products from the 3M project were released in June 2015.

Fatherhood

OPRE awarded the *Building Bridges and Bonds (B3)* contract to conduct a rigorous evaluation of responsible fatherhood programs designed to answer multiple practice-relevant research questions. B3 is testing three innovative approaches for serving fathers:

- A cognitive behavioral intervention, called Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Justice Involved Individuals Seeking Employment, designed to help fathers with criminal records find and retain better jobs.
- A play-based parenting intervention called Just Beginning designed to build parenting and co-parenting skills for fathers with children 3 years old or younger.
- A smartphone-based mobile application called DadTime, designed to improve fathers' attendance at Just Beginning program sessions and encourage involvement with their child between sessions.

The B3 team is working with six local Responsible Fatherhood programs to implement the interventions and conduct impact and process evaluations. All impact tests will be conducted

through random assignment. Interim reports will be released on an ongoing basis throughout the project. The contract was awarded to MDRC, in collaboration with MEF Associates and Abt SRBI.

In 2006, ACF and ASPE awarded a contract to RTI International to conduct the *Evaluation of the Marriage and Family Strengthening Grants for Incarcerated and Reentering Fathers and their Partners*. The evaluation will identify promising approaches to design interventions for couples where one partner is involved with the criminal justice system. The project includes an implementation evaluation of 12 sites and an impact evaluation in five sites, to evaluate what types of programs work best and what effects they may have on fostering healthy marriages, families, and children. This 11-year project has produced over sixteen different publications. Final implementation findings are available on ASPE's website. The final impact report is expected in 2017.

OPRE awarded a contract in 2011 to MPR to conduct the *Parents and Children Together (PACT) evaluation*. The evaluation has multiple components: separate impact and process studies for responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage programs and two sub-studies. Six ACF grantees (four responsible fatherhood grantees and two healthy marriage grantees) are involved in rigorous impact and process studies. The two PACT sub-studies being conducted involve 1) a series of three annual in-depth, in-person interviews with selected fathers participating in the responsible fatherhood study programs; and 2) a study of the program strategies and adaptations used by selected responsible fatherhood programs serving Hispanic fathers.

The Ex-Prisoner Reentry Strategies Study, being conducted by The Urban Institute, is documenting the implementation of selected reentry programs initially funded in FY 2011 under the Responsible Fatherhood grant program. A report on early implementation findings has been released, detailing experiences of staff and participants, and lessons useful to others in the field. Additional work and a final report will involve evaluation design recommendations and a focus on measures appropriate for use in evaluations of programs with similar goals and objectives as these grant programs.

In 2013, ASPE and ACF awarded a contract to RTI International to provide training and technical assistance to community-based organizations working with low-income men to help organizations with strategies to connect their clients with health coverage and care. In addition to several webinars and presentations, the project produced *Why Health Matters for Fathers*, which provides information to responsible fatherhood programs and other organizations working with low-income fathers.

OPRE funded the National Research Center on Hispanic Children and Families to generate new research and translate research across three priority areas—poverty reduction and self-sufficiency, healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood, and early care and education—to build knowledge and inform ACF programs and policies to better

serve Hispanic children and families. The Center's three primary goals are to: 1) Advance a cutting-edge research agenda; 2) build research capacity; and 3) translate emerging research.

Child Trends and Abt Associates lead the Center, in collaboration with university partners (University of Maryland-College Park; University of North Carolina at Greensboro; and New York University's Institute for Human Development and Social Change). In 2014, the Center launched a Summer Research Fellowship program supporting emerging scholars studying issues relevant to low-income and vulnerable Hispanic children and families. Within the healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood focus area, the National Research Center on Hispanic Children and Families aims to build knowledge of families and relationships as well as develop culturally-relevant information for programs and policies related to Hispanic families. For more information about the research activities and resources of the National Research Center on Hispanic Children and Families, see http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/. For more information on the Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood focus area, see http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/focus-areas/#healthy-marriage-and-responsible-fatherhood.

The *Home Visiting: Approaches to Father Engagement and Fathers' Experiences Study* was a qualitative project initiated by OPRE that collected information about innovative approaches that existing home visiting programs used to actively engage and serve fathers, and gathered fathers' perspectives on participating in such programs. The study involved interviews with program staff, home visitors, fathers, and mothers. The study goals were to document the following:

- Program operators' successes and challenges around engaging fathers.
- The views and opinions of fathers who were invited to and/or participated in home visiting programs.
- Lessons for other programs interested in more fully engaging men in their programs.

The project was conducted by the Urban Institute and concluded in late 2015.

Three publications from this project are available:

- Approaches to Father Engagement and Fathers' Experiences in Home Visiting Programs. This report discusses how home visiting programs engage fathers, the challenges they face, the strategies they use to overcome these challenges, and benefits of participating from the perspective of fathers and program staff.
- Engaging Low-Income Fathers in Home Visiting: Approaches, Challenges, and Strategies. This brief summarizes key findings from the larger report.

- Serving Young Fathers in Home Visiting Programs: Highlights from a Research Study. This brief describes the unique challenges that home visiting staff face in engaging and serving young fathers, and strategies for overcoming these challenges.

OPRE awarded *the Fatherhood and Marriage Local Evaluation and Cross-Site Project* is to support high quality data collection, strengthen local evaluations, and conduct cross-site analysis for Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage grantees. The project will answer three main research questions: (1) What strategies did grantees use to design well-conceived programs? (2) What strategies did grantees use to successfully implement well-conceived programs? (3) What were the reported outcomes for participants in the programs? In the process of answering these questions, the project will support ACF and Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage grantees by compiling evaluation resources, reviewing implementation plans, and reviewing local evaluation plans. In addition, it will support the grantees in their research endeavors by promoting rigorous research design and high-quality data collection, and assisting in dissemination of results. Taken together, these activities will further ACF's understanding the design, implementation, and outcomes of Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage programs. The project is being conducted by MPR.

OPRE awarded a cooperative agreement to Temple University in 2013 to establish the *Fatherhood Research and Practice Network (FRPN)*. The Network has three goals:

- To promote rigorous evaluations of fatherhood programs that serve low-income populations.
- To build evaluation capacity in the field by providing training and technical assistance to researchers and practitioners.
- To disseminate information that leads to more effective fatherhood practice and research.

The Network has awarded 13 sub-awards to researcher-practitioner teams to conduct fatherhood research, developed a number of research briefs, papers, conference presentations, and webinars, provided training in program evaluation for fatherhood practitioners, and maintains a website (www.frpn.org) with recent fatherhood research findings and other resources.

Cross-cutting Research

In addition to research that falls clearly within the substantive areas of TANF and the safety net, employment and the labor market, education and training, and family strengthening, OPRE's and ASPE's family self-sufficiency research portfolios include several projects, specifically in the fields of behavioral science, child care, and homelessness, that cut across these issues.

Behavioral Science

The *Behavioral Interventions to Advance Self-Sufficiency (BIAS)* project launched by OPRE in 2010 and conducted by MDRC was the first systematic attempt to apply a behavioral science lens to programs that serve low-income families in the United States. The purpose of the project was to apply behavioral insights to issues related to operations, implementation, structure, and efficacy of social service programs and policies to explore how behavioral insights and cues such as defaults, channel factors, and planning prompts can improve the ability of ACF programs, staff, and clients to efficiently achieve desired outcomes.

In the first stage of the project, the BIAS team developed a strong base of knowledge of the existing behavioral science literature and the needs of human services programs. The team engaged in detailed conversations with stakeholders from the academic, policy, and practitioner communities and created a glossary of behavioral interventions from a review of select field experiments. The BIAS report "*Behavioral Economics and Social Policy: Designing Innovative Solutions for Programs Supported by the Administration for Children and Families*" describes insights from this early stage of the project.

The BIAS team then worked with human services agencies in eight states and localities to diagnose program challenges using a behavioral science lens and design behaviorally-informed interventions using a process called behavioral diagnosis and design. Promising interventions have been tested using rigorous research designs and finds are available at: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/behavioral-interventions-to-advance-self-sufficiency-bias-research-portfolio. Positive impacts were found in child support and child care participation contexts; and particular to TANF, MDRC completed a study with the Los Angeles Department of Public Social Services to evaluate a county initiative to reengage parents in TANF program requirements. The Los Angeles program tested the effects of behaviorally informed notices aimed at helping engage participants in employment activities and found positive impacts from using low-cost behaviorally informed materials.

Child Care

OPRE, through a contract to NORC at the University of Chicago in partnership with Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago and Child Trends, is conducting the *National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE)*. The NSECE is a nationally-representative sample that includes families and providers in all fifty states and Washington, DC, and includes detailed employment information on all adults in the household and all child care arrangements for children birth to 13-years. These data allow researchers to analyze and better understand the interaction between employment schedules and utilization of non-parental care, and how access to child care and receipt of child care subsidies by low-income families may be related to employment, job stability, and type of employment.

Information about additional child care-related research conducted by ACF can be found through the website of OPRE's Division of Child and Family Development.

ASPE also engages in child care-related research. ASPE used its TRIM model to produce *Estimates of Child Care Eligibility and Receipt for Fiscal Year 2012*. This report showed that fewer than one out of six (15 percent of) children potentially eligible to receive subsidized care, based on the Federal eligibility parameters of CCDF, received subsidized care through CCDF or related government funding streams, including TANF, in an average month in FY 2012. Results from 2013 are expected to be published in 2017. ASPE also put out a report, *Trends in the Use of Early Care and Education, 1995-2011: Descriptive Analysis of Child Care Arrangements from National Survey Data*, which describes the use of different types of non-parental care by demographic subgroups (e.g., subgroups by race/ethnicity, parent levels of education, parental employment).

Homelessness

In 2010, ASPE undertook the *Linking Human Services and Housing Assistance for Homeless Families and Families at Risk of Homelessness* project to observe 14 communities that coordinate federally-funded housing supports and comprehensive services to more effectively serve homeless families and families at risk of becoming homeless. Of the 14 communities observed, four of the community models involved TANF in some way.

In addition to the study report, this project produced *Human Services and Housing Supports to Address Family Homelessness: Promising Practices in the Field*, which identified ten promising practices that were features of the 14 communities observed in the study. The project was conducted by Abt Associates and was completed in 2012.

ASPE and OPRE launched another project in 2014 to produce a series of Homeless Families Research Briefs examining the experience of families affected by homelessness, including their enrollment in TANF. Leveraging data collected by HUD's Family Options Study on 2,282 families in emergency shelter at baseline, and 20 and 37 months later, these briefs are examining a range of topics on the experiences of parents, adolescents, and young children after entering emergency shelter.