

# STATE OF ALASKA

**DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**  
*DIVISION OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE*

**SEAN PARNELL, GOVERNOR**

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December 30, 2010

Ann Barbagallo,  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Family Assistance  
Aerospace Building, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW  
Washington, DC 20447

Dear Ms. Barbagallo:

Enclosed are the Annual Reports on TANF and State Maintenance-of-Effort Programs (Form ACF-204) for Fiscal Year 2010. We are providing two reports for Alaska's State Maintenance-of-Effort Programs: the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program and the Native Family Assistance Programs.

Please let me know if you have any questions about the reports or require further information.

Sincerely,



Ellie Fitzjarrald  
Director of Public Assistance

cc: Stephen S. Henigson, Regional Administrator  
Region X

Enclosures (3)

**ALASKA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE  
ANNUAL REPORT ON TANF PROGRAMS  
FY 2010**

**DEFINITION OF WORK ACTIVITIES**

The Alaska Temporary Assistance Program requires parents or caretaker relatives to participate in one or more of the following work activities:

**Work search** prepares participants for immediate entry into the workforce. Following the Work First philosophy that any job is a good job, Job Search is usually the first work activity assigned to Temporary Assistance participants. Job Search is customized to take into consideration local resources and labor market conditions. It may be structured and delivered in a group format or it may be conducted informally relying on individual guidance by a case manager.

Job search includes activities such as: Job Clubs that require daily job hunts and applying for paid work; literacy assessments; learning about self-employment opportunities; learning to write a resume and prepare job applications; developing interview skills, learning self-presentation skills and occupational expectations, and analyzing skills; and identifying the hidden job market.

**Job readiness activities** help participants compete successfully in the labor market by providing instruction and/or guidance in work place expectations, work ethics, Life Skills workshops, and interview skills. Job Readiness activities may or may not be included as part of Job Search.

**Job readiness assessment** is the process of examining characteristics affecting the participant's employability and determining the participant's need for services to achieve self-sufficiency. Assessment begins during the Temporary Assistance application process and continues as needed throughout the participant's Temporary Assistance involvement. The results of the initial and ongoing assessments guide the self-sufficiency planning process.

**On-the-job-training (OJT)** offers the participant paid employment while learning marketable job skills needed to achieve their employment goal. The participant learns these skills by performing them at a work site under the supervision of their employer. The employer must agree to train the participant to perform entry level worker tasks by the end of the OJT placement, not to exceed 180 calendar days. TANF funds are used to reimburse the employer for costs associated with the training. The employer may retain the participant as a regular employee following completion of the OJT.

**Vocational training** is an organized educational program designed to prepare a participant for paid employment. The training leads to the acquisition of specialized knowledge, abilities or job skills. Vocational training may lead to diplomas or other formal certifications of skill levels. Vocational education includes post-secondary education when it prepares a participant for professional or para-professional occupations consistent with their employment goals. It is expected that the education will prepare the individual to enter paid employment that quickly allows them to leave Temporary Assistance.

**ALASKA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE  
ANNUAL REPORT ON TANF PROGRAMS  
FY 2010**

**Education activities** include remedial, basic skills, or literacy training as a prerequisite to occupation-specific training or necessary for success in work search or general work performance. Participation in education activities may lead to the award of a high school or General Educational Development (GED) diploma, to improvements in elementary reading and writing skills, or to learning English as a second language.

**Community Work Experience** is an activity assigned or approved by the case manager that achieves a useful public purpose and contributes to the common good of the community. It is unpaid work assigned when paid employment is not available. Community Work Experience provides opportunities for participants to learn, improve or apply job skills and to acquire work experience and employer references.

When paid employment, other types of work activities, or other Community Work Experience options are unavailable, an individual may participate in subsistence activities as their Community Work Experience. Subsistence activities means the noncommercial, customary, and traditional harvest of wild, renewable resources for use as food, shelter, fuel, clothing, tools, or transportation. Subsistence activities must contribute to the common good of the community and achieve a useful public purpose.

**Business Work Experience** is unpaid work with a private sector for profit employer that provides an individual with an opportunity to acquire the general skills, training, knowledge, and work habits necessary to obtain paid employment. The purpose of work experience is to improve the employability of those who cannot find unsubsidized employment.

**Unsubsidized employment** means the participant receives income in cash or in-kind as wages, salary, or commission from an employer in exchange for work performed. The employer pays the entire cost of the participant's wages and benefits, and receives no wage subsidy from a public agency in exchange for employing the participant. Unsubsidized (paid) employment also includes self-employment.

**Subsidized employment** is paid employment in which the participants wage is financed, in part, by their Temporary Assistance cash benefits. Participants in subsidized employment remain eligible for other program supports such as supportive services, ongoing case management, and child care.

## **DESCRIPTION OF TRANSITIONAL SERVICES**

The TANF-funded transitional services provided to families no longer receiving assistance from the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program due to employment are extended case management and supportive services. In addition, these families may receive child care assistance, Medicaid and Food Stamps through other funding sources.

**Extended case management and supportive services include:**

- Family problem-solving and mentoring;

**ALASKA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE  
ANNUAL REPORT ON TANF PROGRAMS  
FY 2010**

- Job retention or re-employment counseling;
- Child care consumer education and referrals;
- Short-term supportive services; and,
- Referrals to community resources that are able to provide employment-related assistance.

**PASS II child care assistance** is available to families whose Temporary Assistance case closes while an adult in the family is employed. This assistance is available for 12 months after case closure. The PASS II program is funded by the CCDF, transfers from TANF to the CCDF, and direct TANF funds. In some situations, child care assistance is available for the month after the case closes from the PASS I program, funded by TANF, if this is necessary for the employed individual to retain their job and make the transition to PASS II.

**Other public assistance programs** provide key supports for families transitioning from welfare to work. Continued food and medical assistance can help stabilize a family's economic situation while they adjust to the challenges of a new way of supporting themselves. Case workers evaluate a family's eligibility for these programs when their Temporary Assistance ends:

- **Food stamp categorical eligibility:** Families that qualify for extended case management are categorically eligible for the Food Stamp Program for the first six months following the month the TANF case closes.
- **Transitional Medicaid benefits:** When a family becomes ineligible for Family Medicaid benefits because of employment, the family may be entitled to Transitional Medicaid for up to twelve months. Because of differences between Family Medicaid and Temporary Assistance policy, families may remain eligible for Family Medicaid after their Temporary Assistance case closes. Children may also qualify for other categories of Medicaid such as through Alaska's Denali Kid Care Program (CHIP).

**DESCRIPTION OF REDUCTIONS TO THE AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL REFUSES TO ENGAGE IN WORK WITHOUT GOOD CAUSE**

**Job Quit**

If an adult refuses or voluntarily separates from suitable employment without good cause, the family is ineligible for Temporary Assistance benefits for one month for the first job quit, six months for the second, and twelve months for any subsequent job quit.

**Self-Sufficiency Planning and Work Activities**

When an adult member of the family refuses without good cause to comply with the Family Self-Sufficiency Plan, or work activity requirements, the adult is penalized from program participation and the family's cash assistance amount is reduced. The family's assistance amount is reduced by 40% of the maximum payment amount for that family's

**ALASKA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE  
ANNUAL REPORT ON TANF PROGRAMS  
FY 2010**

size for the first four months. After a home visit is attempted and a determination made that the health, safety and well-being of the children in the family will not be significantly jeopardized by further reduction, the penalty amount may increase to 75% for the next four months. Thereafter, the penalty may result in a full family sanction and the family will be ineligible for assistance. The penalty ends whenever the family demonstrates good cause or comes into compliance with requirements.

The above penalty measures are also described in the Alaska TANF State Plan.

**AVERAGE MONTHLY NUMBER OF PAYMENTS FOR CHILD CARE SERVICES MADE BY THE STATE THROUGH THE USE OF DISREGARDS (BY TYPES OF PROVIDERS)**

On average, 26 families a month received a child care disregard for out-of-pocket child care expenses during FY 2010. The disregards are given as a deduction from gross earnings. Families only receive the child care disregard if they have earned income and child care costs are not paid by the Temporary Assistance program. Since this is a disregard for a payment that the family has made directly to the provider, we do not receive detailed information about the type of child care or about the provider who receives payment from the client.

**DESCRIPTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE OPTION STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES**

Alaska has implemented special provisions for victims of family violence in coordination with the State Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. The application of this exemption includes:

- ❖ Screening individuals during the intake interview and continuously throughout case management;
- ❖ Referring domestic violence victims to specialized, community-based services including counseling and shelters;
- ❖ Preparing individual service strategies consistent with safety needs;
- ❖ Waiving the requirements to participate in work activities and cooperate with child support;
- ❖ Waiving program ineligibility due to exceeding benefit time limits when compliance with these requirements would risk the physical, mental, or emotional well-being of the victim; and,
- ❖ Redetermining the need for a waiver, at a minimum every six months.

Due to the sensitivity of information in domestic violence situations, and the need to keep information about the family confidential and the family protected, Alaska did not implement system changes to track families who receive good cause domestic violence

**ALASKA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE  
ANNUAL REPORT ON TANF PROGRAMS  
FY 2010**

waivers. We are in the process of developing a means to collect this information and will be able to better report data on families receiving domestic violence waivers in the future.

At this time, we only record and track the number of families receiving domestic violence counseling if it is assigned as a work activity. We estimate this number to be about 28 families in FY 2010. This represents a 39% decrease since FY 2009 when approximately 46 families received domestic violence counseling.

Family Violence option provisions are also described in the Alaska TANF State Plan.

**DESCRIPTION OF NONRECURRENT, SHORT-TERM BENEFITS**

**Diversion**

Alaska Temporary Assistance offers a diversion program as an alternative to long-term public assistance dependency for families with a job-ready worker. Families that qualify for the diversion program may choose a one-time payment in lieu of ongoing assistance and services. Diversion payments provide short-term financial assistance to meet critical needs in order to secure or retain employment. The payment amount is based on actual, immediate needs and may not exceed three months' worth of cash assistance benefits. A diversion payment counts as income if the family reapplies for Temporary Assistance within three months. A family may receive a diversion grant once in a twelve-month period and is limited to a lifetime maximum of four eligibility periods for diversion payments.

Diversion is an option available only to **applicants** for Temporary Assistance. Temporary Assistance **recipients** are not eligible for Diversion. An applicant who meets Diversion criteria is offered the choice of having the application processed for a Diversion payment or regular Temporary Assistance benefits.

To qualify for Diversion, a family must:

- Include an adult who is working or is ready to work;
- Have specific short-term needs which must be met to help the adult secure or maintain employment;
- Have no other means available, apart from a Diversion payment, to meet the identified needs; and,
- Otherwise appear to meet factors of Temporary Assistance eligibility.

**Job-ready:** For the purposes of Diversion, job-ready means currently working or having prospects for employment within 30 days. A prospect for employment means the adult has a bona fide job offer or has marketable skills and/or work experience and can reasonably expect to find a job within 30 days.

**ALASKA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE  
ANNUAL REPORT ON TANF PROGRAMS  
FY 2010**

Short-term needs: Short-term needs are necessities or financial obligations which prevent the adult from accepting or keeping a job. Short-term needs include but are not limited to: shelter; child care; vehicle costs (such as repairs and insurance, or towards purchase of a vehicle); driver's or occupational licenses; clothing and tools needed to perform a job; and relocation to accept employment.

Lack of resources: The family does not have the personal resources to meet their identified needs. Personal resources considered in the Diversion determination are countable cash on hand and other liquid resources that can be readily used to meet the short-term needs.

A common application is used for all Public Assistance programs, which includes Temporary Assistance, Diversion, Food Stamps and Medicaid. All applicants for Temporary Assistance are screened for diversion. As part of the screening process, case workers are instructed to talk with applicants about their options and the best way to meet their needs. They help the applicant identify and access services that may help the applicant to remain self-supporting, which includes the Food Stamps and Medicaid programs. The case worker that determines eligibility for diversion provides information about the Food Stamps and Medicaid programs and may make those eligibility determinations as well.

This program is also described in the Alaska TANF State Plan.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES TO RESOLVE DISPLACEMENT COMPLAINTS**

The State of Alaska Division of Public Assistance is the lead agency responsible for resolution of complaints by employees who allege displacement by Temporary Assistance participants. State labor laws and division policies protect current employees. Any worker covered by a collective bargaining agreement may use agreement procedures to address complaints about Temporary Assistance participants and job displacement. Otherwise, the Division of Public Assistance conducts a hearing to determine the validity of a complaint.

Hearing Procedures

To seek resolution, the aggrieved employee must make an oral or written complaint to the Division of Public Assistance within 30 days of the Temporary Assistance participant's assignment to the work site. Within 15 days of receipt of the complaint, the appropriate division regional manager or their designee must offer the employee an opportunity for an informal hearing. In addition to listening to the employee, the regional manager may also separately contact the employer and any involved labor organization to gain their perspective on the dispute.

**ALASKA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE  
ANNUAL REPORT ON TANF PROGRAMS  
FY 2010**

If there is a collective bargaining agreement containing an employee-employer grievance clause which covers the employee, the regional manager bases their finding on the outcome of this process. If the employee lacks collective bargaining protection, then the regional manager bases their finding on the information gathered from the involved parties.

If the regional manager finds the complaint to be warranted, the case manager terminates the Temporary Assistance participant's placement at the work site and then assigns the participant to another work activity.

If the regional manager does not find the complaint to be warranted, and if the employee disagrees with the manager's decision, they may appeal it to the Division Director. The Director shall accept written evidence and arguments submitted by the employee and the manager. The Director may also hold an oral hearing. The Director shall issue a final decision within 30 days after the written record is closed.

Public Notification

Case managers and service providers who develop community work experience, job sampling and on the job training placements are required by state regulations to meet specific assignment standards. These standards require that work participant placements not displace any workers. An employer who accepts a community work experience, job sampling or job training placement must sign an agreement which certifies that the placement does not violate these standards.

The standards for placements are found in state regulation which undergo a period of public review prior to adoption. Once adopted, state regulations are available to the public through a variety of mediums.

**SUMMARY OF STATE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES DIRECTED AT THE  
THIRD AND FOURTH STATUTORY PURPOSES OF TANF**

PREGNANCY PREVENTION

Alaska provides an array of services focused on reducing out-of-wedlock and teen pregnancies. The Divisions of Public Assistance and Public Health collaborate to sponsor initiatives through funding to community organizations. Services offered include family planning and public education on the problems and risks associated with out-of-wedlock and teen parent births. The Divisions are also working on enhancing current programs and introducing new initiatives to provide education and training on statutory rape. These programs are particularly designed to reach men.

Services are provided to:

- ◆ increase access to family planning services for unmarried women in census areas with high birth rates, and high numbers of unintended births to all ages;

**ALASKA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE  
ANNUAL REPORT ON TANF PROGRAMS  
FY 2010**

- ◆ promote partnerships between local community health and social service agencies to better serve clients at risk for out-of-wedlock pregnancies;
- ◆ improve knowledge about contraception and reproductive health with an emphasis on education for men as well as women;
- ◆ assess the extent of the statutory rape problem in Alaska and to develop methods and materials for public information, education, and training on the problem.

**ESTIMATE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN SUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT UNDER SEC. 261.30(b) or (c).**

Alaska developed both on-the-job training and Job Start programs as subsidized employment activities under its Temporary Assistance program. We estimate a total of 61 individuals participated in this activity in Federal Fiscal Year 2010, an increase of 27% over the 48 participants in FY 2009. This increase is due in part to a partnership with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development Summer Youth Employment Program which placed youth parents who received Alaska Temporary Assistance Program benefits into short-term subsidized employment placements July through September 2010.

# Annual Report on State Maintenance-of-Effort Programs: ACF-204

State Alaska

Fiscal Year 2010

Date Submitted 12-30-2010

Provide the following information for EACH PROGRAM for which the State claims MOE expenditures.

1. Name of Benefit or Service Program: Alaska Temporary Assistance Program

2. Description of the Major Program Benefits, Services, and Activities:

Eligible families receive financial assistance to help pay for basic living expenses, and case management, supportive services and child care to help them move towards self-sufficiency. Families must complete a family self-sufficiency plan and participate in assigned work activities. Work activities include: job search, job readiness activities, assessment, on-the-job training, vocational training, education activities, community work experience, subsidized and unsubsidized employment. Supportive services include tuition payments, expenses related to obtaining transportation, interview clothing and grooming, professional licenses, special tools and equipment, relocation, remedial medical and start-up expenses. These benefits include associated administrative and system activities.

3. Purpose(s) of Benefit or Service Program:

The goal of the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program is to move Alaskans from welfare into jobs so they can support their families, and maintain a safety net for those truly in need.

4. Program Type. (Check one)

This Program is operated under the TANF program.  
 This Program is a separate State program.

5. Description of Work Activities in the SSP-MOE program (I.e., Complete only if this program is a separate State program):

Not applicable

6. Total State Expenditures for the Program for the Fiscal Year:

\$29,732,931



# Annual Report on State Maintenance-of-Effort Programs: ACF-204

State Alaska

Fiscal Year 2010

Date Submitted 12-30-2010

Provide the following information for EACH PROGRAM for which the State claims MOE expenditures.

1. Name of Benefit or Service Program: Native Family Assistance Programs

2. Description of the Major Program Benefits, Services, and Activities:

Provide state MOE funds to support Tribal TANF programs in Alaska. These programs are substantially similar to the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program. Seven Native organizations have taken advantage of this opportunity to design and run their own culturally relevant and regionally focused temporary assistance programs, apart from the State. They are Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC), the Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA), the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), the Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC), the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA), the Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA), and Maniilaq Association.

3. Purpose(s) of Benefit or Service Program:

The state MOE funding supplements direct federal TANF funding to federally-approved Tribal Family Assistance Programs and is used for the purpose of providing temporary assistance benefit payments to eligible Native families.

4. Program Type. (Check one)

This Program is operated under the TANF program.

This Program is a separate State program.

5. Description of Work Activities in the SSP-MOE program (I.e., Complete only if this program is a separate State program):

Not applicable

6. Total State Expenditures for the Program for the Fiscal Year: \$11,536,083

7. Total State Expenditures Claimed as MOE under the Program for the Fiscal Year:  
\$11,289,578

8. Total Number of Families Served under the Program with MOE Funds: 1,641

This last figure represents (check one):

The average monthly total for the fiscal year.

The total served over the fiscal year.

(The number is the average monthly total for all three Tribal TANF programs).

## Annual Report on State Maintenance-of-Effort Programs: ACF-204

### 9. Eligibility Criteria for Receiving MOE-funded Benefits or Services under the Program:

For purposes of claiming state funds granted to Native TANF grantees as maintenance of effort (MOE), Alaska has adopted the eligibility criteria of the Tribal TANF programs as its own. The families served are described in their federally approved tribal plans, as follows:

- Tanana Chiefs Conference - those within the Native organization's service area in which the head of the household is an enrolled member of, or eligible for membership in, a federally recognized tribe.
- Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska - those within the Native organization's service area in which at least one adult, or one child in a child-only case, is an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe.
- Association of Village Council Presidents - AVCP operates a regional program that serves all families within the service area, including both Native and non-Native families.
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council – those within the Native organization's service area in which at least one adult, or one child in a child-only case, is an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe.
- Bristol Bay Native Association – BBNA operates a regional program that serves all families within the service area, including both Native and non-Native families.
- Kodiak Area Native Association – those within the Native organization's service area in which at least one adult, or one child in a child-only case, is an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe.
- Maniilaq Association - operates a regional program that serves all families within the service area, including both Native and non-Native families.

10. Prior Program Authorization: Was this program authorized and allowable under prior law (i.e., as defined at §260.30)?

(check one)

Yes  No

11. Total Program Expenditures in FY 1995. \_\_\_\_\_

(NOTE: provide only if the response on to question 10 is No.)

This certifies that all families for which the State claims MOE expenditures for the fiscal year meet the State's criteria for "eligible families."

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

*Ellie Fitzjarrald*

NAME: Ellie Fitzjarrald

TITLE: Director, Public Assistance