
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Information Memorandum

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance
Washington, DC 20201

No. TANF-ACF-IM-2017-01

Date: August 30, 2017

TO: State and territorial agencies (hereafter, states) administering the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program and other interested parties.

SUBJECT: Rescinding guidance concerning waiver and expenditure authority under section 1115 of the Social Security Act.

REFERENCES: Section 1115 of the Social Security Act. [42 U.S.C. 1315]; Section 402 of the Social Security Act. [42 U.S.C. 602]

PURPOSE: To rescind TANF-ACF-IM-2012-03.

BACKGROUND:

On July 12, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) published the information memorandum (IM) TANF-ACF-IM-2012-03, notifying states of the Secretary's willingness to exercise waiver authority under section 1115 of the Social Security Act. That IM encouraged states to apply for waivers related to work participation requirements, which are set forth in section 407 of the Social Security Act.

One of the core goals of the 1996 welfare reform law, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), was to help needy families end dependency on government benefits through employment. PRWORA established work participation requirements to further this goal. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 and the final rule published in 2008 further emphasized the importance of work within TANF. The 2012 IM that invited states to waive work requirement provisions serves to undermine one of the core principles of TANF and the welfare-to-work spirit of welfare reform.

ACTION:

The achievement of gainful employment and economic independence is critically important for the well-being of persons and families. More than just a means of income, work creates opportunities for individual growth, instills personal dignity, and provides low-income families with a clear pathway to financial self-sufficiency. Moving forward, ACF reaffirms its commitment to increasing opportunities for family and individual advancement through work. To that end, this information memorandum rescinds the information memorandum TANF-ACF-

IM-2012-03. The Secretary will no longer consider waiver requests under section 1115 of the Social Security Act that seek to avoid requirements set forth in section 407.

INQUIRIES: Please direct inquiries to the TANF Program Manager in your region.

/s/

Clarence H. Carter
Director
Office of Family Assistance