

TANF

The Montana Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program



**Montana
TANF
Advisory
Council
Meeting**

**Holiday Inn Express
Helena, MT
April 28, 2016**

Welfare Reform Basics

- In August of 1996, President Clinton signed a welfare reform bill, officially titled the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWORA).
- PRWORA ended AFDC and was replaced by the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.
- TANF was reauthorized in 2005 with the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) and has been operating under short-term extensions since 2010.

The Four Purposes of TANF

- 1) Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own home or in the homes of relatives.
- 2) End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.
- 3) Reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numeric goals for decreased incidence of these pregnancies.
- 4) Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

What is TANF “eligible” ?

- Families who are citizens or aliens,
- Are lawfully present in the US,
- Must include a child living with a custodial parent or other adult caretaker relative (or a pregnant woman) ;
and
- Are financially eligible according to income and resource standards established by the State and contained in the State Plan.

Categories under federal rule

The term “assistance” includes cash, payments, vouchers, and other forms of benefits designed to meet a families ongoing basic needs (i.e., for food, clothing, shelter, utilities, household goods, personal care items and general incidental expenses.)

The term “non-assistance” includes benefits that are:

- short-term (less than 4 months), designed to deal with a crisis or episode of need, does not cover recurrent ongoing needs
- can include case management, transitional services, job retention, job advancement or other employment related needs, etc.

Montana's TANF participants

In SFY 2015 TANF provided:

- 3,062 households with a monthly cash benefit. That equates to 7,179 adult and child recipients per month.
- 1,225 (40%) of those households are caretaker relatives caring for a child, in “Child Only grants”.
- 876 adults and youth received employment and training services such as; adult basic education, short term training, subsidized employment or participated in a financial literacy courses.

TANF Time Clock

- Under federal rule Individuals may only receive TANF “assistance” for 60 months.
- Montana has Exemptions to the time clock:
 - participating teen parents
 - individuals residing in “Indian Country”. Indian Country is all land within the limits of any Indian reservation where at least 50% of the adults were not employed. Currently, all but Flathead Reservation have an exemption.
 - Adults in “Child Only” cases who do not participate in E&T

Federal Reporting

States are required to submit:

- Financial /Spending categories
 - Types of services
- Demographics
- E&T participation rates called Work Participation Rates

The Montana TANF program

Questions?