



## TANF 302-2 Temporarily Absent

**Supersedes: TANF 302-2 (1/1/18)**

**Reference:** ARM 37.78.206 and .207

**Overview:** When the household reports that an individual is absent from the home, an evaluation of the intent to return to the home must be made. Information received on the HCS-262 "Household Member Absence" form will be used to make a determination of whether or not the member is considered to be temporarily absent.

If the absent member is required to participate in Employment and Training activities, the individual must continue with their E/SP activities or a new E/SP must be negotiated. If an E/SP cannot be negotiated, the household will fail eligibility as negotiation of an E/SP is an eligibility requirement.

### **TEMPORARY ABSENCE LESS THAN 90 DAYS:**

Temporary absence occurs when an assistance unit member is away from his/her home for a period of time not to exceed 90-consecutive days.

Benefits continue for these members as long as the following conditions are met:

1. The absent member intends to return to his home within 90 days;
2. While the individual is away, the caretaker relative continues to exercise responsibility and maintains a home for the child;
3. The caretaker relative plans to continue such responsibility for the child upon return to the home; and
4. The individual is not incarcerated.

If the individual does not meet the criteria to be considered temporarily absent from the home, even if they are expected to return to the home within 90 days, the individual must be removed from the assistance unit.

### **TEMPORARILY ABSENT MEMBER DOES NOT RETURN WITHIN 90 DAYS:**

If the household member who was temporarily absent does not return to the home within the 90 days, and does not have good cause, the individual is removed from the assistance unit unless special criteria apply.

### **ABSENCES LONGER THAN 90 DAYS:**

When an individual is expected to be absent from the home for longer than 90 days, and they do not meet special criteria, it is not considered a temporary absence and the individual must be removed from the assistance unit.

This includes absences for the following reasons:

1. An adult attending post-secondary education; or
2. An adult or child who is incarcerated.

### **TEMPORARY ABSENCE NOT REPORTED IN SPECIFIED TIME FRAME:**

A parent or specified caretaker relative must report the absence of a child, lasting more than 90 consecutive days by the end of the **five (5)-day period** which begins with the date on which it becomes clear to the parent or specified caretaker relative that the child will be absent for more than 90 consecutive days. Failure to report will disqualify the parent or parents in a two (2) parent household or specified caretaker relative(s) for one (1) month of TANF benefits. See Business Process Temporary Absence of Not Reported in Specified Time Frame.

### **SPECIAL CRITERIA:**

If the absent member meets the following special criteria, they are considered temporarily absent; he/she is not subject to the 90-day limit and, if otherwise eligible, may continue to receive benefits for an unspecified period of time:

1. Child or adult away from home for medical treatment;
2. An adult away from the home for a specific short-term training or employment; or
3. A child away from the home for the sole purpose of attending a boarding school as long as the child is expected to return home at the end of the school term and verification of school enrollment and attendance is provided.
  - a. Participating in a Job Corp Program or Montana Youth Challenge Program is not considered attending a boarding school.

**Effective Date:** August 1, 2021