Temporary Assistance For Needy Families (TANF)

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TANF History

- TANF block grant was created in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996
  - Original TANF funding set to expire at the end of 2002
    - Since then, Congress funds TANF through short-term extensions
- Notable change in 2005
  - The Deficit Reduction Act extended TANF through FY 2010 and changed work rules
- Most recently TANF was extended in the Consolidated Appropriations Act through September 2021
How it works

- Federal block grant program - requires a Maintenance of Effort (MOE) from every state
- States have significant flexibility in fund allocation by meeting one of four federally determined requirements:
  - Providing assistance to needy families.
  - Ending dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.
  - Preventing and reducing the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.
  - Encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.
Current TANF Activity

○ **Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act**
  • TANF extended at 2019 funding levels through Nov. 30, 2020

○ **Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021**
  • TANF extended, through end of September 2021

○ **Some administration flexibilities**
  • COVID-19 is likely to affect states’ ability to meet TANF work standards. These standards are in statute and cannot be waived other than through legislation.
    • “Health and Human Services (HHS) can waive financial penalties for states that do not meet standards. In policy guidance, HHS has said it would use its authority to provide relief from the penalty for not meeting work standards “to the maximum extent possible.”"
TANF and MOE Spending on Basic Assistance, Work, Education, & Training Activities, and Child Care, FY 2019

[Image: Map showing TANF and MOE spending by state for FY 2019.]

TANF and MOE Spending and Transfers by Activity, FY 2019: United States

TANF and MOE Spending and Transfers by Activity, FY 2019: Kentucky
Total Funds = $268,512,060

- Basic Assistance: 69.3%
- Work, Education, & Training Activities: 10.4%
- Child Care (Spent or Transferred): 11.4%
- Program Management: 4.3%
- Work Supports & Supportive Services: 2.7%
- Fatherhood & Two-Parent Family Programs: 1.0%

† May include Financial Education and Asset Development.

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TANF and MOE Spending and Transfers by Activity, FY 2019: Vermont

Total Funds = $96,147,136

- Child Care (Spent or Transferred): 33.5%
- Basic Assistance: 14.3%
- Refundable Tax Credits: 20.2%
- Program Management: 12.7%
- Out-of-Wedlock Pregnancy Prevention: 0.1%
- Transferred to SSBG: 4.9%
- Child Welfare Services*: 7.3%
- Work Supports & Supportive Services†: 1.6%
- Services for Children & Youth†: 2.3%
- Non-Recurrent Short Term Benefits: 1.5%
- Work, Education, & Training Activities: 2.0%

* May include Foster Care/Child Welfare authorized solely under prior law.
† May include Financial Education and Asset Development.
‡ May include Home Visiting.

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Vermont State Representative Ann Pugh

Kentucky State Senator Ralph Alvarado
Preview: Economic Mobility Database

NCSL 50–State Searchable Bill Tracking Databases

3/17/2021
NCSL Resources

• Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): Where it Stands Today
  • https://www.ncsl.org/research/health/temporary-assistance-for-needy-families-where-it-stands-today.aspx

• TANF Coalition and NCSL Letter to Congress 2019
Thank You!

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