

# Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

## Quick Facts

**TANF is a critical safety net for low income families and children.**

- Most TANF families have one or two children. The birthrate in TANF families is slightly lower than the general population.

**The maximum cash grant amount for a family of three is \$478 per month, or 30-percent of the federal poverty level (FPL).** In order to be eligible for TANF, a three-person household's income must be below this amount.

- Only 10% of TANF population lives in subsidized housing. The rest are paying market rates.
- There are no undocumented recipients of TANF.

**Despite a 60-month limit, the average stay on TANF is only 18 months. In addition, 49% of families are on TANF for less than a year and then do not return to the program. Only 5% of recipients stay on TANF persistently**

- TANF recipients are required to participate in activities designed to lead them to work in exchange for receiving a grant. Families that do not participate are sanctioned by having their grant reduced by 40%. After four months of noncooperation the grant is terminated altogether.
- Washington has a hard five year time limit. The hardship exceptions to that limit are very narrow and only apply if:
  - The parent receives federal disability benefits or cares for a disabled family member;
  - The family has its first open child welfare case;
  - The caretakers is over 55;
  - There is an approved service plan for domestic violence;
  - The parents working more than 32 hours a week
- A TANF family is only permitted to have \$1000 in assets and \$5000 of equity in a car. Any excess disqualifies the family from assistance.

<b>Caseload demographics</b>	39,467 cases; 57,089 children. Average TANF family has 1.6 children. (November 2014)
<b>Child only proportion of caseload</b>	Approximately 35%
<b>TANF grant for family of 3 in January 2015</b>	\$478.00
<b>Average length of stay</b>	18 months
<b>Fast leavers</b>	49% less than a year and never return
<b>Long stayers</b>	5% stay five years
<b>Number of Homeless TANF families</b>	5,350 in November 2014 this is 15% of the caseload
<b>Families affected by adults in sanction status</b>	2,372 In October 2014 (this has increased despite a dropping caseload)
<b>Amount of child support currently passed through to TANF families</b>	\$0
<b>Connection between TANF and Working Connections Child Care</b>	65% of child care recipients were previously on TANF

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