

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and State Family Assistance

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

Economic Services Administration • Community Services Division

Program Description

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and State Family Assistance¹ programs provide cash assistance to parents or caregivers with children and pregnant individuals to bolster their ability to meet their families' foundational needs. These programs offer families the opportunity to access employment and training-related activities that assist with reaching stability. In some situations, TANF assistance is provided solely for children in a household (i.e., child-only TANF). Child-only TANF households are not required to engage in participation requirements as a condition of assistance. See the child-only TANF one-pager for more information.

Tools and resources include:

- **Cash assistance to help children and families meet basic needs.** This includes a modest amount of cash each month to increase a family's ability to pay for things we all need to thrive, including a safe home, healthy food, reliable transportation and school supplies. The average benefit amount per day is less than \$20 – a small contribution toward the costs of meeting a family's basic needs.
- **Building a stable foundation so parents have access to good jobs.** Case managers connect families to such supports as mental health services, family violence counseling and/or substance-use treatment when needed.
- **Employment and training opportunities through WorkFirst.** Case managers connect parents and caregivers to education, job training and employment opportunities through WorkFirst, a partnership between DSHS, Employment Security Department, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Department of Commerce and community-based organizations.
- **Gateways to financial opportunity.** TANF and SFA are important gateways to many opportunities that provide a stable foundation for families, including health care, safe homes and early-learning opportunities that help children develop strong brains and bodies.

Highlights in State Fiscal Year 2023

- **Average number of cases per month: 32,643**
- **Average number of individuals per month: 82,813**
 - **Adults per month: 26,728**
 - **Children per month: 56,086**
- **68% of recipients are children; with an average age of 8 years old.**
- **The average benefit amount for a family is \$542 per month.**
- **34.5% of households include a pregnant parent or a child under the age of 1.**

¹State Family Assistance is a cash assistance program for certain families who are in ineligible for TANF. For eligibility rules see [WAC 388-400-0010](#).

More information:

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Washington State
Department of Social
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