

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 Department of Social and Health Services' Economic Services Administration's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and State Family Assistance (SFA) programs provide cash assistance to parents/caregivers with children and pregnant individuals to bolster their ability to meet their families' foundational needs. These programs also offer families the opportunity to access employment and training-related activities that assist them on their way to reaching their potential and fully contributing to their communities.

We provide the tools and resources to support well-being through:

- **Cash assistance to help children and families meet basic needs.** TANF/SFA provides a small amount of cash each month to increase a family's ability to purchase the things we all need to thrive, including a safe home, healthy food, reliable transportation and school supplies. The average benefit for a family is \$13.59 per day, a small contribution toward the costs of meeting a family's basic needs.
- **Building a stable foundation so parents have access to good jobs.** One-quarter (26%) of people receiving TANF/SFA need support to build a stable foundation prior to seeking employment. TANF/SFA case managers connect children and families to services that help them even out rough terrain, such as mental health services, family violence counseling and/or substance use treatment.
- **Employment and training opportunities through WorkFirst.** TANF/SFA case managers connect parents and caregivers to education, job training and employment opportunities through WorkFirst, a partnership between DSHS, Employment Security Department, State Board of Community and Technical Colleges and Department of Commerce as well as many community-based organizations.
- **Gateways to financial opportunity.** TANF/SFA is an important gateway to many opportunities that provide a stable foundation for children and families, including health care, safe homes and early learning opportunities that help children develop strong brains and bodies.

Highlights

- **76% of WorkFirst participants take part** in work or training activities that strengthen their skillsets
- **75% of people who exit TANF remain off** the program for at least a year
- **In FY 2018, 53% of families exiting TANF in Washington reported leaving** due to reaching financial stability, ranking seventh highest in the nation.
- **73% of all TANF/SFA recipients are children.**

More information:

Alexis Marx, Chief, Office of Programs and Policy
Phone: 360.819.0675
Email: Alexis.Marx@dshs.wa.gov

TANF and SFA Facts

Trends

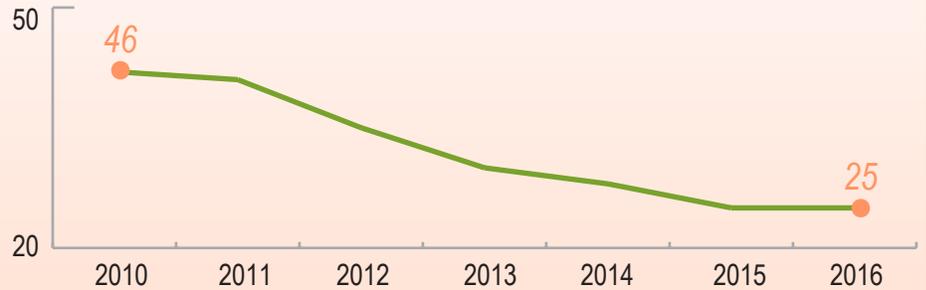
The number of people served by TANF and SFA has dropped since 2010.

FY 2010 **156,317**
 FY 2017 **57,432**

Decrease

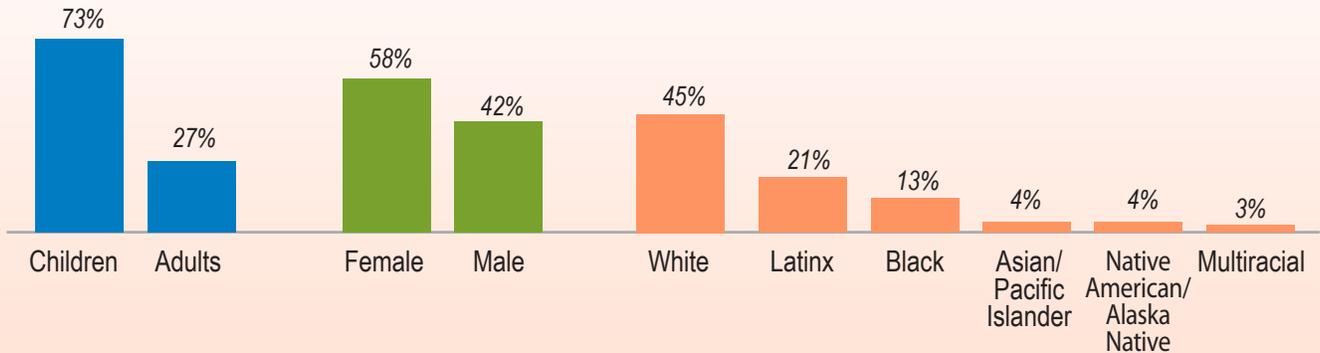
Meeting the Need

The ability of the TANF program to meet the need for assistance has weakened over time. In 2016, 25 families were served by TANF for every 100 families living below the poverty level, dropping from 46 families in 2010.



Characteristics of People Served

Children, females and people who racially identify as white make up the majority of the caseload.



Average Benefit

The average benefit for a family receiving TANF.

\$13.59
per day

Average Length of Stay

Two-parent households exit TANF at twice the rate of single-parent households.



Budget

TANF accounted for less than 1% of state spending in the 2017-2019 biennium.

