

ECONOMIC SERVICES ADMIN Means Testing for Non-Parent Caregivers



2016 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

Request	FY16	FY17	15-17
FTE	0.0	0.1	0
GF-State	\$0	\$108,000	\$108,000
Total	\$0	\$108,000	\$108,000

DECISION PACKAGE SUMMARY

The Economic Services Administration (ESA) requests increased funding of \$108,000 GF-State for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grants in order to implement a 100 percent unearned income disregard for means-tested child only cases. By funding this request, TANF eligibility requirements for child-only cases with caregivers who live on a fixed income will be more consistent with those of child-only cases with caregivers who are employed.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Effective November 1, 2011, ESSB 5921 established new means-testing rules (RCW 74.12.037) for non-parental caregivers who receive a TANF child-only grant. Under these new rules, most caregivers with incomes above 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) were ineligible to receive a TANF grant to help provide for the children in their care. Non-parental caregivers with incomes between 200 and 300 percent of FPL receive a reduced TANF grant. Caregivers of children who have been placed by a state or tribal child welfare agency where the case is still active are not subject to means testing.

Implementing this policy created an unintended consequence of adversely affecting the ability and willingness of non-parental caregivers to care for vulnerable children in need of safe and stable homes.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

This proposal repeals the means-test policy so that the income of non-parental caregivers will not be used to determine the eligibility of the needy children in their care. By doing so, caregivers living on fixed income would not be financially penalized for caring for needy children who are not their financial responsibility.

EXPECTED RESULTS

This proposal is expected to encourage non-parental caregiving and ease the financial burden for families living on fixed income by making additional resources available to care for vulnerable children.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

The advocate community will support this proposal.



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DSHS MISSION

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DSHS VALUES

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