

**Testimony
Human Services Committee
Representative Delzer, Chairman
November 6, 2007**

Chairman Delzer, members of the Human Services Committee, I am Carol Cartledge, Director of Public Assistance of the Department of Human Services (DHS). I am here today to provide you with information requested for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) study.

TANF 60-month lifetime limit count started July 1, 1997 when the TANF program was implemented in North Dakota. The count does not apply in the following situations:

- Any month of receipt of assistance in a child only case.
- Any month for which an individual receives only noncash assistance.
- Any month of receipt of assistance by an adult while living in Indian country if the unemployment rate is greater than 50 percent.
 - Individuals living on Indian land in Rolette County have been exempt for all but October and November 2000.
 - Individuals living in Benson County have been exempt for all but four months in 2000 and five months in 2006.
 - Individuals living in Sioux County have been exempt since January 2005.

Job Service of North Dakota provides the reservation unemployment rates (see **Attachment A** which includes the reservation unemployment and the county unemployment rates). The reservation unemployment rates are used to determine exemption from the lifetime limit because the family is residing on Indian land. From July 1, 2001 through September 2007, 110 TANF cases have closed because the head-of-household

received 60 months of TANF (see **Attachment B**). Nineteen individuals/cases have received an exemption from the 60-month lifetime limit based on incapacity of self, incapacity of a spouse, incapacity of a dependent child, or domestic violence for this same time period.

Other reasons TANF cases close:

- Paid employment
- Sanctions for noncooperation with Child Support Enforcement or JOBS requirements
- Receipt of child support income
- Excess Resources
- Dependent children are no longer in the household
- Family requested the case close
- Other reasons a case may close include loss of contact with the family, the family not returning a monthly report, or the family moved out of state.

Attachment C provides a listing by county of reasons TANF cases have closed from July 2005 through June 2007.

The work participation rate for August 2007 was 50.64 percent. Each state must achieve a 50 percent minimum overall participation rate minus any caseload reduction credit. The caseload reduction credit is 6.1 percent for Federal Fiscal Year 2007. During this same time period, an average of 391 TANF clients were in paid employment. The quality of jobs being obtained by TANF clients is not available for this report. DHS plans to have this information for the next report.

From July 2001 through June 2007, following are statistics on the number of months a family receives TANF benefits:

- 10,242 clients have received TANF from zero – 12 months or two-thirds of the TANF cases
- 3,241 clients received TANF for 13-24 months
- 892 clients have received 37-48 months of TANF
- 489 clients received 49-60 months of TANF
- 413 clients have received 60 or more months of TANF or 2.7 percent

Attachment A provides a listing by county the months of assistance.

The numbers of TANF clients no longer receiving TANF benefits but continue to receive other assistance for the first and second quarters of 2007 are as follows:

	First Qtr	Second Qtr
• Child Care Assistance	141	130
• Food Stamps	522	510
• Medicaid	516	479

The number of closed TANF cases receiving heating assistance is not available at this time. Of the open TANF cases during 2006, 750 TANF households received heating assistance.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.