

**Department of Human Services
Health Services Committee
Senator Lee, Chairman
November 4, 2015**

Chairman Lee, members of the Health Services Committee, I am Carol Cartledge, Director of the Economic Assistance Division, for the Department of Human Services (Department). I am here today to provide information on the program limits with the Economic Assistance area and an update on the Jobs Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Arlene Dura will be providing separate testimony on Electronic Benefit Transfer retailers and information on the training and education component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Program Limits

The [attached charts](#) provide the current Economic Assistance program income limits. Program income limits are adjusted as follows:

- Child Care Assistance program (CCAP) income limits and co-payments are adjusted to 85% state median income July of each year.
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance program (LIHEAP) income limits are adjusted to 60% of state median income October of each year.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) income limits are adjusted to 130% of the Federal Poverty Level in October of each year.
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families – Based on appropriations for 2015-2017, 2% increase each year of the biennium. The TANF standard of need table was increased by 2% on August 1, 2015.

- Medicaid and Healthy Steps (CHIP) income limits are adjusted in April of each year as a result of any updates to the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

Jobs Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS)

JOBS is the companion program to the TANF Program, which combines components of education, training, and employment to enable TANF participants to become self-sufficient. Parents with a child younger than six must participate in a work activity for at least an average of 20 hours a week and parents with a child older than six must participate an average of 30 hours a week to count in the overall participation rate.

The federal work participation rate for all participants is 50%. North Dakota's TANF work participation rate for FFY 2014 was 71%. The average number of total participants is 1,806 for the March – September 2015 quarters. The average monthly cost per case paid to employment contractors for client services is \$324 per month. The average number of months a household is enrolled in TANF is currently at 10 months for March – August 2015.

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