

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services

600 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck ND 58505

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Human Services Seeks Comments on N.D. State Plan for Public Assistance Program Block Grant

BISMARCK, N.D. – The N.D. Department of Human Services is seeking comments on the latest State Plan for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, which provides time-limited assistance and employment and training services to qualifying low-income households with children.

The TANF program is funded through a federal block grant and provides temporary help to families with children who are deprived of the support of at least one parent due to a parent's absence or disability. Low-income, childless adults do not qualify for the TANF program. Block grant funds are also used to meet related needs such as foster care, kinship care, which is an alternative to foster care; and alternatives to abortion services.

Individuals can review the draft plan on the department's website at www.nd.gov/dhs/info/pubs/docs/tanf-draft-2013-state-plan-for-comment.pdf. Written comments about the State Plan can be submitted via mail, fax, or email until 5 p.m. (Central Time) on Tues., Dec. 3, 2013.

Please direct comments to Joan Schatz, TANF Administrator, N.D. Dept. of Human Services, 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Judicial Wing, Bismarck, ND 58505-0250, Fax: 701-328-1060, or jschatz@nd.gov.

The 1996 federal welfare reform legislation required many participating adults to work or take part in approved work-readiness activities in order to receive TANF public assistance. It also placed a 60-month lifetime limit on benefits.

The N.D. Department of Human Services contracts with Community Options, a private company; Job Service North Dakota; and Tribal Employment and Training in Belcourt, N.D., to provide work-readiness, job placement, and support services for TANF clients.

In September 2013, the TANF program served 1,426 North Dakota families that included 2,754 children. The average monthly TANF benefit per family that month was \$275.

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