

The information contained in this brochure is your guide when requesting Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits. Please read this brochure before applying for TANF benefits. If you have any questions, contact your county social service office.

GENERAL INFORMATION

What Is Temporary Assistance For Needy Families?

The TANF program provides cash assistance to qualifying low-income households with needy children.

Who may be eligible?

If you are a relative taking care of a child, you and the child may be eligible if the child is:

- Without parental support because of a parent's death, physical or mental disability, age or continued absence from the home; and
- Under age 18 or will graduate from high school by age 19.

You may also be eligible if you are in your third trimester of pregnancy.

A child born after July 1, 1998, who was conceived while the parent received TANF benefits, will not be eligible, unless the child is conceived as a result of rape or incest.

During the first 4 months of TANF eligibility, you will not receive your portion of the TANF grant unless you meet the work participation requirements. However, you may receive a benefit for your children during this period.

NOTE: In order to meet these requirements, you must participate in an approved work activity for an average of 20 hours per week if you have a child under age 6. If you do not have a child under age 6, you must participate an average of 30 hours per week. Your requirements are defined in your Employability Plan developed jointly between you and the JOBS Contractor.

You will not be eligible to receive benefits if:

- You have a drug-related felony; or

- You are a fleeing felon, parole or probation violator.
Note: If you are not eligible for benefits for one of these two reasons, your children may be eligible

Where can I apply for TANF?

- Apply for TANF at your local county social service office.
- You may print the application for assistance online at: www.nd.gov/dhs. Complete and submit the printed application to your county social service office.
- Applications may also be completed and submitted online at: <https://apply.dhs.nd.gov>

What are the income and asset limits?

Monthly income from wages, child support, social security, pensions, veterans' benefits, or other sources must be less than the TANF income limits. Please contact your local county social service office for the current limits.

Asset limits are \$3,000 for one individual, \$6,000 for a household of two individuals, and an additional \$25 per person for households of three and more.

Some assets are not counted such as:

- The home you live in
- One car
- Your household goods and furniture
- Your personal belongings and clothing

When will I receive benefits?

TANF applications are processed within 30 days from the date of application. Benefits for TANF applications are issued after the application is approved. Benefits for ongoing TANF cases are received the first working day of the month.

How do I receive my benefits?

You will receive an Electronic Payment Card (EPC) in the mail. Benefits are deposited into your EPC account, much like a bank account. (See the TANF ReliaCard Client Handbook for more information.)

How long can I receive TANF benefits?

You may receive TANF benefits for up to 60 months. There are some exceptions. You may contact your local county social service office about these exceptions, but for most people benefits are temporary.

What is Diversion Assistance?

Diversion Assistance provides short-term help to families to assist them in becoming or remaining self-sufficient. Diversion cash assistance is provided to qualified families for up to 4-months within a 12-month period, while helping individuals eliminate issues that might push them further into poverty. TANF rules that do not apply to Diversion Assistance will be explained during your interview with your worker.

What is Transition Assistance?

Transition Assistance promotes job retention by providing an extended period of cash assistance to qualified TANF households. TANF households with earnings from employment exceeding the TANF benefit for their household size may remain eligible for assistance for up to six months. Transition Assistance provides a safety net of financial support during this six-month period to assist households in attaining self-sufficiency; thereby reducing the need for future government benefits.

Are there any additional Financial Incentives available to my Household?

Individuals under age 21 who are eligible for Medicaid and TANF and who are screened through the preventive health program known as Health Tracks, are eligible for \$25 per individual. The incentive is available after completing the initial screening and each annual Health Tracks screening. It does not include the follow-up appointments or referrals to other physicians that may result from a screening.

What are the program rules?

Before you can receive benefits you must:

- Comply with Child Support Enforcement Requirements by completing required forms which will be provided to you by your local county social service office
- Contact the JOBS/Tribal NEW Employment Contractor within 7 days from the date of referral to schedule an appointment to complete Orientation; and attend the Orientation appointment
- Be a resident of North Dakota

Once you are eligible you must:

- Cooperate with the JOBS/Tribal NEW Program. (See the JOBS brochure for more information.)

- Cooperate with Child Support Enforcement. (See the Child Support Enforcement section for more details.) If you are interested in receiving TANF and your cooperation with Child Support Enforcement might not be in the best interest of your child (example: domestic violence situation), you may claim "good cause." If you claim "good cause," you will need to provide information so "good cause" can be established. Refusal to cooperate, without good cause, will result in lower benefits and could result in case closure.

Do I get my child support while I receive TANF?

All child support that becomes due while your family is receiving TANF is assigned to the State of North Dakota. North Dakota will keep assigned child support up to the amount of TANF benefits your family received. If you receive a child support payment from any source other than North Dakota Child Support Enforcement (such as directly from the absent parent or from another state's child support enforcement agency), you must immediately give the payment to Child Support Enforcement. Failure to do so is fraud and prosecution through the state's attorney's office will be pursued.



Do I get my child support when I stop receiving TANF?

After you stop receiving TANF, the State of North Dakota will not keep any child support payments, unless the payment received is for a month in which you received TANF. Child support received for a month in which you did not receive TANF will be sent to you.

What if I have more Questions about child support?

See the Child Support brochure for more information. You may also contact Child Support Enforcement at www.ndchildsupport.com or your local county social service office.

What Information do I need to report if I am eligible?

Once you qualify for TANF, the following changes must be reported within 5 days of the time you learn of the change. Report changes in:

- **Gross monthly unearned income.**

Examples:

- Child or Spousal Support
- Social Security Benefits
- Unemployment Compensation
- Veterans'/Military Benefits
- Workers Compensation

- **Gross monthly earned income.**

Examples:

- Wages (including tips)
- Salary
- Self-Employment

You will also need to report:

- Changes in the source of income (a new job, a job loss, receipt or loss of unearned income)
- Changes in persons moving in and/or out of your home (This includes friends, family, relatives, etc.)
- If you are moving to a new address

What happens if I give false information on purpose?

If you:

- Give false information on purpose, it might result in legal action against you (criminal or civil). It might also mean we reduce your benefits, take money back from you or disqualify you from benefits temporarily or permanently
- Give false information about who you are or where you live, you may not get TANF for 10 years.

Is my information kept Confidential?

The information you provide is held in confidence and is used solely for the purpose of program administration.

Do I have to provide my Social Security Number and how is it used?

You will be asked to provide social security numbers (SSNs) for all persons for whom you want assistance. The social security number is used to check the identity of household members, to prevent duplicate participation, to monitor compliance with program regulation, for official examinations by federal or state agencies, and to help make mass changes. The social security number is also used to check information in our records against other federal, state, or local government computer matching



systems participating in the Income and Eligibility Verification System, including but not limited to the Internal Revenue Service, Social Security Administration, Department of Labor, and TANF, which may affect eligibility and the level of benefits.

Use of social security numbers provided for TANF benefits may be disclosed to law enforcement for purposes of apprehending fleeing felons.

What are my program rights?

You have the right to:

- Review the policy manual
- Withdraw your application at any time prior to your application being approved.
- Appeal and request a fair hearing if you disagree with any decision to deny, reduce, or terminate benefits. Appeals must be requested within 30 days TANF.



Non-discrimination in Federal Assistance Programs

The North Dakota Department of Human Services makes available all services and assistance without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability, or status with respect to marriage or public assistance, in accordance with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Age Discrimination Act, the Americans With Disabilities Act, and the North Dakota Human Rights Act.

Individuals needing accommodation or who have questions or complaints regarding the provision of services according to these acts may contact the Civil Rights Officer, North Dakota Department of Human Services, Judicial Wing, State Capitol, 600 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58505 (1-800-755-2671 voice or 1-800-366-6888 TTY); or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, Region VIII, Federal Office Building, 1961 Stout Street, Denver, CO 80294 (303-844-2028 voice or 303-844-3439 TTY).



North Dakota Department of Human Services
Public Assistance Division
600 E Boulevard Ave. Dept 325
Bismarck, ND 58505-0250
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email: dhseap@nd.gov
www.nd.gov/dhs

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TANF

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program



General Information

North Dakota Department
of Human Services