



TANF Update, August 2011

TANF Reauthorization:

- TANF Reauthorization was scheduled for last year, but the Administration decided to not forward a full reauthorization request in light of economic conditions in the States and at the federal level, and State engagement in the TANF Emergency Fund implementation.
- HHS urged Congress to extend the Emergency Fund, because the Department was particularly excited by the creativity that States displayed in implementing Emergency Fund programs, including subsidized employment programs. HHS was disappointed that this extension did not occur.
- It is not known when Congress will take up reauthorization, but HHS continues to listen carefully to the input from States, Territories, and Tribes in preparation for future discussions with Congress.

Administrative Flexibility:

- HHS is committed to working with States to help them understand the flexibility they have within existing law.
- In addition, the Presidential Memorandum on Administrative Flexibility issued in February 2011 requires a six-month process of identifying areas where increased flexibility could improve program outcomes throughout the Federal government. HHS is currently seeking input from States, localities and Tribes about ways in which existing TANF regulations and policies might be revised to increase the effectiveness of the TANF program to help individuals get jobs, keep jobs, and progress in the labor market. HHS is interested in both regulatory and statutory barriers to effective programs, but it is up to Congress whether to make any changes to the statute.

New Data Reporting:

- The Claims Resolution Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-291) was signed by President Obama on December 8, 2010. The Act extended the TANF block grant through the end of fiscal year 2011. The extension included two new reporting requirements, requiring States, the District of Columbia, and Territories to provide additional detail about: (1) work participation for families that currently do not meet the TANF program's requirements to count toward State work participation rates; and (2) TANF spending in two broad categories known simply as "other non-assistance" and "authorized solely under prior law."
- States are required to submit two reports with these data – one for the month of March 2011 and a second for the months of April, May, and June, 2011.
- Section 812 of the Claims Resolution Act requires the Secretary to submit a Report to Congress on the information submitted by States. The Report to Congress reflecting State reports for March 2011 is now available on the OFA website. To view the full report please visit: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/index.htm>. A subsequent report will cover the April-June period.

Questions?

If you have any questions about the TANF program, please contact the TANF Regional Program Manager for your State or Territory. Contact information is attached.



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