

TANF WORK PROGRAM

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF) WORK PROGRAM SERVICES

A request for assistance in the State of Mississippi is a request for help in finding and keeping a job.

The goal of the TANF Program is to end the dependence on public assistance by preparing you for a job, by helping you with job readiness training, job skills training, vocational training and other educational training programs to help you become more marketable in today's job market. We can also assist you in gaining access to vocational rehabilitation services/resources.

Remember, there are time limits on receiving public assistance. In order to support yourself and your family, you must become self-sufficient through employment, which pays a livable wage.

Your participation in the TANF Work Program (TWP) may allow you to take advantage of childcare assistance, transportation allowance, help with work-related expenses, earned income disregards, as well as the earned income tax credit.

If your wages cause you to be ineligible for TANF, transitional supportive services such as childcare assistance, transportation allowance, job counseling services, and case management services are available to help you support your family.

If you receive SNAP, you may seek career and technical or workforce skills training through the SNAP E&T program, if available. Your wages and TANF transitional services can meet your family's needs while you earn a credential or gain additional skills to get a better job.

MDHS

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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www.mdhs.ms.gov

Training for in-demand jobs can help you be successful in today's job market.

MDHS provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetics.

WORK ACTIVITIES

Once you have been approved for TANF and are referred to the TWP, a case worker will assess your work readiness and work with you to develop a success plan to help determine the work activities and type of services you need to get ready for work and find employment.

Based on your individual needs, you will be required to participate in one or more of the following work activities:

- Employment
- Work Experience
- Community Service
- High School or equivalent
- Vocational Education
- Job Readiness/Job Search
- Job Skills Training
- Education Directly Related to Employment

As long as you participate satisfactorily, the following supportive services will be provided, if needed, to help you gain full-time employment as quickly as possible.

CHILD CARE

Once you select an approved childcare provider of your choice a referral will be sent to the Division of Early Childhood Care and Development (DECCD). The DECCD will issue a certificate for your child(ren) and pay your provider.

TRANSPORTATION

MDHS will provide a monthly work allowance, if needed. You will be responsible for making your own transportation arrangements.

WORK RELATED EXPENSES*

To assist you in finding and keeping a job, MDHS will pay fees for safety equipment, tools, work permits, birth certificates, uniforms, HSE tests, and other approved items required for employment.

**These items must be required by law or by the employer.*

INCOME DISREGARDS

If you find full-time employment (35 hours per week), at or above the federal minimum wage, you may be eligible to have the earned income received from this employment totally disregarded from the TANF budget for up to six months. This will allow you to receive both the TANF benefits and your paycheck when full-time employment is obtained under these conditions:

- Within thirty days after the initial approval for TANF benefits; or
- Within thirty days after the initial start date of the job readiness/job search work activity in TWP.

If you do not qualify to have your earned income disregarded for six months, you may be eligible to have your earned income disregarded for three months if your earned income will cause your TANF case to close and you are working at least 25 hours per week at or above the federal minimum wage.

Any TANF benefits you receive while using the total earnings disregards will be counted toward your 60-month lifetime maximum benefit limit.

EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT

If you are in a low-income family (with dependent children) and work part-time or full-time you may qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Your family does not have to owe any taxes to get the EITC.

MARRIAGE DISREGARD

If you marry for the first time after 10/01/99, you may have your new spouse's income and resources disregarded for six months. This may allow you to continue receiving TANF benefits for six months.

TRANSITIONAL SERVICES

If you stop receiving TANF benefits because of increased earned income and you continue to work, you may qualify for:

- Transitional Child Care
- Transitional work allowance if you work 25 hours or more per week at or above the federal minimum wage
- Case Management Services to help you resolve any problems you may have on your job.
- Job Counseling Services to help you with job retention and job advancement

Your family can continue to receive SNAP benefits, if eligible.

WOMEN-INFANTS-CHILDREN (WIC) PROGRAM

If you are pregnant, breast-feeding or have a child less than age 5, contact your local Health Department about WIC.

TANF benefits and TANF Work Program (TWP) services are provided through the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Field Operations.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL DHS COUNTY OFFICE ABOUT TANF & TWP SERVICES.

You will not be eligible for these services if the only eligible child leaves the home or you move out of the state of Mississippi.