

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

What Is TANF?

- TANF is cash assistance for low-income families with kids.
- If you are approved, you get cash each month. The amount you get depends on your monthly income, resources, expenses, family size, and how long your family has been getting TANF.
- Many TANF recipients must participate in work activities, such as a paid job or job search.

Who Can Get TANF?

- **You must be a D.C. resident** to get TANF in D.C. Other states have similar programs.
- TANF is for low-income parents (and, in some cases, relative caretakers) who live with their minor children. **A child must be under 18 years old** or 18 years old and in school.
- Your **family must have low income**. The income you can have depends on whether you work or have child care expenses.
- Your family's **resources must be under \$2,000**. Resources include cash in the bank. You can still own a car and a house. These do not count as resources.
- You **must be a U.S. Citizen or a certain category of immigrant**.

I'm Not a U.S. Citizen. Can I Still Get TANF?

- Maybe. If you are not a citizen, follow these steps to find out if you can get TANF.

STEP#1: Are you a "qualified immigrant"? A "qualified immigrant" is a lawful permanent resident, refugee, asylee, person whose deportation or removal has been withheld, Haitian/Cuban entrant, person paroled for 1 year, conditional entrant, and some battered spouses and children.

STEP #2: If you are a "qualified" immigrant, then you can get TANF only if you fall into one of these categories:

- ✓ Entered the U.S. before Aug. 22, 1996
- ✓ Entered the U.S. after Aug. 22, 1996 and have lived as a "qualified" immigrant for at least 5 years
- ✓ Veteran/active duty in the U.S. military or the spouse or child of such member
- ✓ Refugee, asylee, or person whose deportation or removal was withheld
- ✓ Cuban/Haitian entrant or Amerasian immigrant

STEP #3: If you are not a "qualified" immigrant, you must be one of these to get TANF:

- ✓ Victim of trafficking

- If you cannot get TANF because of your immigration status, you can apply for a family member who can. **A worker may ask for your income, but cannot ask for your immigration status or social security number** if you are not applying for yourself.

How Much Can I Get From TANF?

- This depends on the number of people in your family. If you work, your TANF grant may be reduced somewhat. This chart shows the most you can get each month from TANF.

<u>Family size</u>	<u>Monthly limit</u>	<u>Family size</u>	<u>Monthly limit</u>
1	\$270	5	\$602
2	\$336	6	\$708
3	\$428	7	\$812
4	\$528	8	\$897

What if my family has been getting TANF for over 60 months?

- If your family has been getting TANF for more than 60 months since 1997, then your benefit will be reduced by 20%. Some months don't count toward the 60-month limit. For example, months when you got SSI for yourself and TANF for your kids won't count toward the limit.

<u>Family size</u>	<u>Reduced payment</u>	<u>Family size</u>	<u>Reduced payment</u>
1	\$216	5	\$482
2	\$269	6	\$566
3	\$342	7	\$650
4	\$418	8	\$718

Where Do I Apply for TANF?

- To find out which DHS center services your address, call (202) 698-3900.
- DHS Service Center Locations:

Anacostia Service Center	2100 MLK Jr. Ave. SE	(202) 645-4614
Congress Heights Center	4001 South Capitol St. SW	(202) 645-4546
Fort Davis Service Center	3851 Alabama Ave. SE	(202) 645-4500
H Street Service Center	645 H Street NE	(202) 698-4350
Taylor Street Service Center	1207 Taylor Street NW	(202) 576-8000

How Do I Apply For TANF?

- You can pick up an application at a DHS center or have it mailed to you.
- You have the **right to an application on the day you walk into the center**. The center must accept it that day as long as it has your name, address and signature.
- After filling out your application, **you will have an interview**.
- **DHS will ask you for documents**, like a photo ID, proof of address (utility bill), birth certificates, social security card, and proof of income (pay stubs).
- You should get an **approval or denial notice within 45 days of the date you apply**. Once you are approved, you will get TANF benefits back to the day you applied.

I Do Not Speak English Well. Can I Still Apply for TANF?

- Yes. The DHS center must make sure that someone who speaks your language can help you fill out forms and answer questions in person or over the phone. (Note that the application is available in Spanish). You should also ask any agency to note your language preference in their records so that you can receive notices and language services in that language.

What Are the Work Requirements for TANF?

- Many parents must participate in a "work activity" for a certain number of hours a week. You may be excused if you are disabled, needed at home to care for a family member, a victim of domestic violence, without child care, or for other reasons. You may also be able to go to school or a training program.

What If I Am Denied or Cut Off From TANF?

- Request a "**fair hearing**." A fair hearing is a chance for you to explain to a judge why you believe the decision is wrong. You must **request a hearing within 90 days of getting a notice** that your TANF application or recertification was denied or that your TANF benefits were cut off. If you request a hearing within **10 days**, you may be able to keep getting TANF while waiting for the fair hearing.

NEED HELP? Call the Legal Aid Society of D.C. or come to one of our office locations:

Address: 1331 H Street, N.W., Suite 350, Washington, D.C. 20005 **Phone:** (202) 628-1161

Walk-in Hours: Mondays 12:30pm – 6:00pm; Thursdays 12:30pm – 4:00pm

Directions: Blue/Orange Line to McPherson Square or Red Line to Metro Center (13th Street)

The Anacostia Professional Building (the "Big Chair")

Address: 2041 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., S.E., Suite LL-1

Phone: (202) 628-1161

Walk-in Hours: Mondays and Thursdays from 12:30pm – 4:00pm

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