

Temporary Family Assistance

TFA in Connecticut

As of October 31, 2016, 13,836 households received TFA benefits in Connecticut, including 10,166 adults.

In Connecticut, the average monthly payment for a TFA family in 2016 was \$479.

While federal law generally applies a 60-month time limit for receiving TANF-funded cash assistance, Connecticut applies a 21-month limit, but families may apply for 6-month extensions.

State and federal law also requires adults receiving assistance to participate in work activities unless they are exempt (e.g., caring for a family member with a disability).

As of October 31, 2016, 8,611 individuals were exempt from the state's time limit and work requirements in Connecticut.

Program Structure

Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) is Connecticut's cash assistance program funded in part by the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. States describe their TANF-funded programs in TANF state plans, which are subject to approval by the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

In Connecticut, the Department of Social Services (DSS) administers TFA, processing eligibility and distributing benefits on electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards. Connecticut's Department of Labor (DOL) administers the Jobs First Employment Program (JFES), which provides employment services to those TFA recipients not exempt from work requirements.

Program Financing

While states generally may use TANF funds to support a wide variety of programs and services, TANF-funded cash assistance is subject to federal rules, which include time limits and work requirements.

Enrollment Trends

Nationwide, cash assistance enrollment has declined from 5.1 million families in 1994 (prior to federal welfare reform) to 1.6 million families in 2015.

Who is Eligible for TFA in Connecticut?

Income and Asset Limits

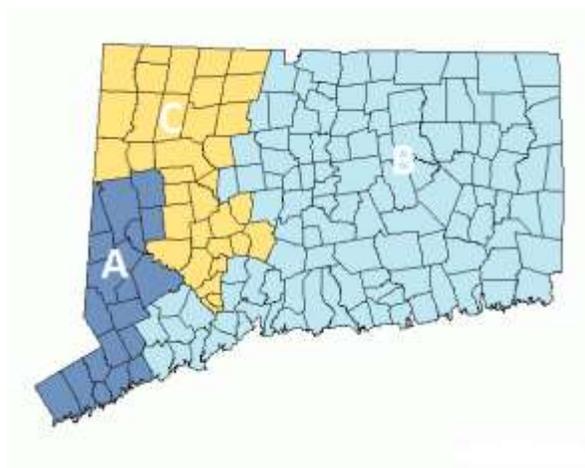
Under federal law, in order to be eligible for TANF-funded cash assistance, a family must have a dependent child (or pregnancy) and meet its state's financial eligibility rules. In Connecticut, the income limit for TFA applicants is known as the Standard of Need (SON), a monthly standard that represents the amount deemed necessary for the normal, recurring, basic needs of a family. The SON and the amount of the cash benefit depend on the (1) applicant's family size and (2) region of the state in which the family resides (see map below). The asset limit is \$3,000. DSS excludes certain types of income and assets when determining eligibility. Once a family begins to participate in the program, its allowable income rises to 100% of the federal poverty level.

Work Requirements

Unless exempt, adults receiving TFA benefits must participate in work activities or risk having their TFA benefit reduced or discontinued. DOL JFES staff develop an employment plan for each individual, which can include job search assistance, vocational education, adult basic education, or other services. Federal law imposes (1) numerical performance requirements states must meet regarding how many individuals participate in work activities and (2) parameters for state work requirements.

Citizenship Status

Federal law restricts eligibility for TANF-funded cash assistance to citizens and immigrants with legal status. Certain immigrants must reside legally in the country for five years before becoming eligible. Connecticut provides solely state-funded TFA to those immigrants with legal status who are not eligible for federal TANF benefits due to their citizenship status (e.g., those with less than five years of residency). Immigrants without legal status are not generally eligible for any TFA benefits (solely state-funded or TANF-funded).



TFA Payment Standard

Family Size	Region A	Region B	Region C
1	\$443	\$366	\$366
2	\$563	\$487	\$487
3	\$698	\$597	\$589
4	\$815	\$701	\$684

While the standard of need determines eligibility for TFA, the amount of the cash benefit is based on the payment standard, shown in the table above.

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More**

DSS [State of Connecticut Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF\) State Plan \(2014-2017\)](#)

DSS [Draft TANF State Plan \(2018-2020\)](#)

DOL [At-A-Squint Jobs First Employment Services, October 2016](#)

CRS [TANF Block Grant: Responses to FAQs, 2016](#)

