

Montana’s Cash Assistance (TANF) policy: Successful Families Program		
HOW MUCH CASH ASSISTANCE CAN A FAMILY OF THREE RECEIVE?		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p>Maximum benefit allowed</p> <p>What is the maximum monthly amount a family of three could receive in cash assistance?</p>	<p>\$725/month, or 34% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) in 2024</p>	<p>Consider increasing the maximum benefit level.</p> <p>Examples: North Dakota’s maximum benefit for a family of three is \$872/month, or 45% FPL. Minnesota’s maximum benefit for a family of three is \$1,370/month, or 62% FPL.</p>
<p>Recurring benefit increases</p> <p>Has the state mandated increases to these amounts, as the cost of living rises?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>Make recurring increases to state benefit amounts, tied to a cost-of-living or poverty measurement.</p> <p>Example: Ohio requires scheduled cost-of-living updates to TANF benefit amounts each year on January 1st.</p>
WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR CASH ASSISTANCE?		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p>Maximum income</p> <p>How much can a family of three earn and still be considered eligible to receive cash assistance?</p>	<p>There is a gross income limit of \$1,465/month (68% FPL).</p>	<p>Consider increasing the income limit for eligibility.</p> <p>Examples: Iowa’s gross income limit is \$1,571/month (73% FPL). Nevada’s gross income limit is \$2,693/month (125% FPL)</p>

<p>Asset limit</p> <p>How much can a family maintain in savings while still being eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Families can retain assets up to \$3,000 in savings, checking and other accounts.</p>	<p>Consider either increasing or eliminating the asset limit to promote economic mobility by enabling families to save.</p> <p>Examples: Indiana has increased the asset limit for cash assistance to \$10,000, and Ohio has eliminated the asset limit.</p>
<p>Eligibility during pregnancy for parents without children</p> <p>Are pregnant people with no children eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Yes, during the last trimester of the pregnancy.</p>	<p>Consider providing eligibility to low-income pregnant people with no other children from the first month of pregnancy, in order to support basic needs required for maternal health and children’s early development (e.g., North Dakota, Colorado).</p>
<p>ADDITIONAL RULES AND RESTRICTIONS</p>		
<p>Flexibility</p>	<p>Current policy</p>	<p>Potential improvement</p>
<p>Time limit</p> <p>Does the state allow families to receive cash assistance up to the federal limit of 60 months?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Lifting full-family sanctions</p> <p>Are other family members able to continue receiving cash benefits if an adult does not meet work requirements?</p>	<p>Yes, but only for the first instance of noncompliance with work requirements, which leads to a one-month reduction of the benefit. Subsequent instances result in withdrawal of the entire benefit amount.</p>	<p>Consider eliminating full-family sanctions by only <i>reducing</i> the benefit, so that children may continue receiving cash assistance (e.g., California).</p>

<p>Lifting drug felony bans</p> <p>Are persons convicted of drug-related felonies eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Montana has modified its ban for TANF cash assistance so that individuals with drug-related felony convictions are eligible if they participate in required drug treatment programs or have completed such programs.</p>	<p>Consider eliminating the ban entirely (e.g., Wyoming).</p>
<p>Lifting the family cap for a new birth</p> <p>Can families receive additional cash assistance if they have another child while receiving assistance?</p>	<p>Yes. Montana never enacted a family cap.</p>	<p>N/A</p>