



## OVERVIEW

Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP)	Alaska	U.S. Average or Total
Annual (federal-only) block grant amount	\$44,397,466	\$16,488,600,000 (total)
% of TANF block grants spent on cash assistance, 2024	47.7%	21.8%
% families who participated in TANF per 100 families with children living in poverty, 2022-23	14.0%	20%
Total # families receiving TANF in 2025	1,038	848,631 (total)
% of cases designated "Child-Only" in 2025	29.6%	39.3%
<b>"Unobligated balance" (or stockpiled amounts, which must be used for cash assistance or admin)</b>		
TANF Funds "unobligated balance," as of 2024	\$14,477,758	\$7,986,470,560 (total)
"Unobligated balance" as share of total block grant amount	32.6%	49.5%
Change (+ or -) in "unobligated balance" from 2023	+\$1,025,152	+\$241,306,628

## ALASKA'S CASH ASSISTANCE (TANF) POLICY

HOW MUCH CASH ASSISTANCE CAN A FAMILY OF THREE RECEIVE?		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Maximum benefit allowed</b></p> <p>What is the maximum monthly amount a family of three could receive in cash assistance?</p>	<p>\$923/month, or 33% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)</p>	<p><b>Consider providing 50% FPL as a maximum amount (for families with no income), which would elevate them above deep poverty.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> California, New Hampshire, and Minnesota provide maximum benefits above 50% FPL.</p>
<p><b>Recurring benefit increases</b></p> <p>Has Alaska mandated increases to these amounts, as costs of living increase?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p><b>Mandating increases tied to the costs of living would ensure sufficient support for families in future.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Wyoming benefits are tied to a state-specific index.</p>

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Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Deductions for calculation of benefit amount</b></p> <p>Can parents deduct some earnings or expenses from their income when calculating the benefit amount?</p>	<p>Allowable deductions in benefit calculation include \$150 and 33% of earned income during the first year. That percentage decreases in each year that a family receives TANF.</p>	<p><b>Providing a greater deduction of earned income encourages workforce participation while ensuring greater support for low-income families.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Idaho provides a deduction of 60% of gross income.</p>

**HOW ELSE DOES ALASKA DETERMINE THE GENEROSITY OF CASH ASSISTANCE?**

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Time limit</b></p> <p>Does Alaska allow families to receive cash assistance up to the federal limit of 60 months?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Transitional cash benefits for families who become ineligible after receiving cash assistance</b></p> <p>Will parents and caregivers who are newly ineligible for cash assistance receive additional cash support for a limited period?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p><b>Providing transitional cash benefits enables families to receive support during a vulnerable period.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> South Dakota and Utah provide transitional benefits for varying periods to families that no longer qualify.</p>
<p><b>Providing one-time cash payments to families with specific financial needs</b></p> <p>Does Alaska maintain a formal diversion program to support families with specific short-term needs?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p><b>Consider providing a generous one-time “diversion” payment that can help families with critical expenses (such as car repairs).</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Kansas and Idaho provide diversion payments.</p>

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Eligibility for monthly assistance less than six months after a diversion payment</b></p> <p>Can families who receive diversionary payments apply for monthly assistance within six months afterward?</p>	N/A	N/A
<p><b>Providing assistance with housing</b></p> <p>Does the state provide housing vouchers with TANF funds?</p>	No.	<p><b>Extending housing assistance to families alongside cash assistance may reduce parental stress and improve children’s developmental outcomes.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Hawaii, Maine, and North Dakota provide some form of housing assistance to those receiving cash assistance.</p>
<p><b>Providing assistance with diaper purchases</b></p> <p>Does Alaska provide assistance to families with diaper expenses using TANF funds?</p>	No.	<p><b>Providing additional support for diapers can help to stabilize the financial well-being of families with very young children.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Washington’s diaper subsidy program for TANF recipients increases the cash benefit by \$100 per month for households with a child under the age of three.</p>
<b>WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR CASH ASSISTANCE?</b>		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Maximum income</b></p> <p>How much can a family of three earn and still be considered for cash assistance eligibility?</p>	\$3,868/month or 139% FPL	<p><b>Alaska could consider providing gross eligibility to households with higher incomes.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Rhode Island screens for families with income under 225% FPL.</p>

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Deductions for assessment of benefit eligibility</b></p> <p>Can families deduct a portion of earnings or some expenses from their income to meet income eligibility requirements?</p>	<p>Allowable deductions in eligibility assessment include \$150 and 33% of earned income.</p>	<p><b>Consider providing a higher deduction to provide support to more families.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Several states permit families to disregard 50% of their income during eligibility assessment.</p>
<p><b>Asset limit</b></p> <p>How much can a family maintain in savings while still being eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>The asset limit is \$2,000, or \$3,000 if the household includes a person over 60 years of age.</p>	<p><b>Increasing or eliminating asset limits enables families to retain savings for their longer-term financial stability.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Washington state has increased asset limits for cash assistance to \$12,000, and Alabama eliminated asset limits.</p>
<p><b>Eligibility during pregnancy for parents without children</b></p> <p>Are pregnant people with no children in the household eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Yes, they are eligible beginning in the third trimester.</p>	<p><b>Providing cash assistance earlier during pregnancy would support early development outcomes.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Kansas and North Dakota provide cash assistance during the first trimester of pregnancy for a pregnant person without other children.</p>
<p><b>Provision of federal TANF cash assistance to immigrant families who are lawful permanent residents (LPRs) *after* five years' residence in US</b></p> <p>Can parents who hold green cards access cash assistance in Alaska once they have been in the country <i>for five years or longer</i>?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Use of state funds to provide cash assistance to immigrant families who are lawful permanent residents (LPRs) with less than five years' residence in US</b></p> <p>Can parents who hold green cards access cash assistance in Alaska if they have been in the country for <i>less than five years</i>?</p>	No.	<p><b>States may use their own funds to support families in these circumstances.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Wyoming, Wisconsin, and Utah provide cash assistance to some LPR immigrant caregivers before five years' residence, using state funds.</p>

**HOW DOES ALASKA TREAT CHILD SUPPORT OWED TO A FAMILY APPLYING FOR AND RECEIVING CASH ASSISTANCE?**

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Child support pass-through</b></p> <p>Does Alaska “pass through” a portion of the payments received by the state in child support for the family?</p>	Yes, it will pass through as much as \$50 to families in addition to their TANF benefit.	N/A

**WHAT ARE ALASKA’S WORK REQUIREMENTS FOR CASH ASSISTANCE?**

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Provision of cash assistance to out-of-work parents before they search for a job</b></p> <p>Does Alaska provide eligibility to parents without a search for employment?</p>	Yes. There is no requirement to search for jobs before the application is processed.	N/A

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Counting postsecondary educational activities as “core” work requirements</b></p> <p>Does Alaska provide credit for all educational activities, including college, as “core” work activities for cash assistance?</p>	<p>No, Alaska follows federal guidelines, allowing just twelve months of vocational training below the BA level to count as work requirements.</p>	<p><b>Providing cash assistance to parents and caregivers while they engage in educational activities beyond the federal minimum is an investment in families’ economic mobility.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Georgia, Kentucky, and Maine enable parents and caregivers to be exempt from work requirements if they are engaging in educational activities beyond the federal minimum.</p>
<p><b>Exemption for caregivers of infants</b></p> <p>Are parents or caregivers caring for a child under twelve months of age exempt from work requirements?</p>	<p>Yes, exemptions apply for parents of children under twelve months.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Other exemptions from work requirements</b></p> <p>What are other conditions for exemptions from work requirements?</p>	<p>Other exemptions in Alaska include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking care of a disabled relative</li> <li>• Medically unable to participate in work activities</li> <li>• Survival of domestic violence</li> <li>• Inability to find childcare for children under 6</li> </ul>	<p>N/A</p>

<b>WHICH RESTRICTIONS ON CASH ASSISTANCE HAS ALASKA EASED?</b>		
<b>Flexibility</b>	<b>Current policy</b>	<b>Potential improvement</b>
<p><b>Lifting full-family sanctions</b></p> <p>Are other family members able to continue receiving cash benefits if an adult does not meet work requirements?</p>	<p>No, the state will enact full-family sanctions although not immediately.</p>	<p><b>Alaska could continue to provide cash assistance to families with children even while reducing the amount to exclude a parent or caregiver who is noncompliant with work requirements.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Arkansas and Oregon will only reduce the benefit amount, never enact a full-family sanction.</p>
<b>Flexibility</b>	<b>Current policy</b>	<b>Potential improvement</b>
<p><b>Lifting drug felony bans</b></p> <p>Are persons convicted of drug-related felonies eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Yes, if individuals are in treatment or in compliance with probation terms.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Refraining from drug testing applicants or recipients</b></p> <p>Does Alaska refrain from enforcing drug testing of caregivers who are either receiving or applying for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Lifting the family cap for a new birth</b></p> <p>Can families receive additional cash assistance if they have another child while receiving assistance?</p>	<p>Yes, Alaska never enacted a family cap.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

## NOTES ON SOURCES:

TANF state profiles were compiled by extensive review of administrative guidelines including those published in state TANF manuals. Additionally, NCCP researchers referred to enacted state legislative resources.

NCCP gratefully acknowledges the of states' TANF-to-poverty ratios as developed and provided by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities:

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2025, April 11). *AFDC and TANF caseload and poverty data*. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/income-security/afdc-and-tanf-caseload-and-poverty-data>

We have drawn on the publication of federal data on states' TANF block grant spending, including financial data, spending allocations, and caseload information:

Office of Family Assistance. (2026, February 10). *TANF and MOE spending and transfers by activity, FY 2024*. Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://acf.gov/ofa/data/tanf-and-moe-spending-and-transfers-activity-fy-2024>

Office of Family Assistance. (2025). *TANF caseload data 2025*. Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://acf.gov/ofa/data/tanf-caseload-data-2025>