

## OVERVIEW

Family Independence Temporary Assistance (FITAP) (TANF)	Louisiana	U.S. Average or Total
Annual (federal-only) block grant amount (for 2024)	\$163,430,877	\$16,488,600,000 (total)
% of TANF block grants spent on cash assistance, 2024	9.5%	21.8%
% families who participated in TANF per 100 families with children living in poverty, 2022-23	3%	20%
Total # families receiving TANF in 2025	4,718	848,631 (total)
% of cases designated "Child-Only" in 2025	43.1%	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	\$0	\$7,986,470,560 (total)
"Unobligated balance" as share of total block grant amount	0%	49.5%
Change (+ or -) in "unobligated balance" from 2023	-\$4,110,429	+\$241,306,628

## LOUISIANA'S CASH ASSISTANCE (TANF) POLICY: FAMILY INDEPENDENCE TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE (FITAP)

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>	\$484/month, or 23% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).	<p><b>Consider increasing the maximum benefit level to support families with children during challenging periods.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Maryland provides a maximum benefit of \$753/month.</p>
<p><b>Recurring benefit increases</b></p> <p>Has Louisiana mandated increases to these amounts, as costs of living increase?</p>	No.	<p><b>Consider making recurring increases, tied to a cost-of-living or poverty measurement.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Nebraska and Texas mandate recurring increases.</p>

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>Parents can deduct \$120 for each employed adult.</p>	<p><b>Consider increasing earned income deductions to better support families and incentivize work participation.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Arkansas allows a 20% “work-related” deduction as well as a 60% “work incentive” deduction.</p>
<b>HOW ELSE DOES LOUISIANA DETERMINE THE GENEROSITY OF CASH ASSISTANCE?</b>		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Time limit</b></p> <p>Does Louisiana allow families to receive cash assistance up to the federal limit of 60 months?</p>	<p>No, families may receive assistance for no more than 24 out of the prior 60 months.</p>	<p><b>Consider maintaining the lifetime limit of 60 months, as many states do, so that families can easily return to the program after setbacks like job loss.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Alabama and Kentucky maintain the 60-month limit without restrictions.</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>Consider providing a portion of the benefit once parents increase earnings, to avoid benefit cliffs and support economic stability.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Georgia and West Virginia provide some transitional assistance to families no longer receiving assistance.</p>

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Providing one-time cash payments to families in with specific financial needs</b></p> <p>Does Louisiana provide 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), enabling caregivers to remain employed and deferring the need for cash assistance.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Florida and Georgia provide diversion payments.</p>
<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>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Providing assistance with housing</b></p> <p>Does the state provide housing vouchers with TANF funds?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p><b>Providing housing vouchers alongside cash assistance can ease high costs for eligible families.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Hawaii and Maine provide housing vouchers worth several hundred dollars along with TANF cash assistance.</p>
<p><b>Providing assistance with diaper purchases</b></p> <p>Does Louisiana provide assistance to families with diaper expenses using TANF funds?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p><b>Providing assistance with diaper costs provides significant support for families with young children.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Hawaii and Washington provide assistance with diapers for families with very young children.</p>

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR CASH ASSISTANCE?		
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>	<p>A single parent with two children can earn no more than \$604/month for eligibility.</p>	<p><b>Consider increasing gross the income limit to provide potential eligibility to more families, including those experiencing sudden job loss.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Florida maintains a gross income limit of 185% FPL, or \$4,109/month.</p>
<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>Families can deduct \$120 per working adult and a dependent care deduction in some cases.</p>	<p><b>Consider providing a higher deduction to provide greater support to employed parents.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> In Arkansas, parents may deduct 20% of earned income for eligibility.</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>There is no limit on family savings for eligibility.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Eligibility during pregnancy for parents without children</b></p> <p>Are pregnant individuals with no children in the household eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Yes, starting during the sixth month of pregnancy.</p>	<p><b>Providing cash assistance during pregnancy is critical for early development outcomes and in reducing parental stress.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Oklahoma provides cash assistance from the start of pregnancy.</p>

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<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 Louisiana once they have been in the country <i>for five years or longer</i>?</p>	Yes.	N/A
<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 Louisiana if they have been in the country <i>for less than five years</i>?</p>	No.	<p><b>Consider using state funds to provide cash assistance to these parents.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Maryland provides cash assistance to some caregivers before five years' residence, using state funds.</p>
<p><b>HOW DOES LOUISIANA TREAT CHILD SUPPORT OWED TO A FAMILY APPLYING FOR AND RECEIVING CASH ASSISTANCE?</b></p>		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Child support pass-through</b></p> <p>Does Louisiana “pass through” a portion of the payments received by the state in child support for the family?</p>	No.	<p><b>Consider “passing through” at least a portion of child support payments collected by the state for this family, to contribute to the household’s economic stability.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Mississippi provides up to \$100 of any child support to the household.</p>

WHAT ARE LOUISIANA'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 Louisiana provide eligibility to parents without a search for employment?</p>	<p>Yes, there is no job search required.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Counting educational activities as "core" work requirements</b></p> <p>Does Louisiana provide credit for all educational activities, including college, as "core" work activities for cash assistance?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p><b>Consider allowing postsecondary attendance and vocational education to count as "core" work participation.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Ohio and Kentucky, allow specific types of postsecondary education to exempt parents from work activities.</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>No exemptions apply for parents of children of any age.</p>	<p><b>Consider providing an exemption from work requirements for the first year of life, to support children's development and reduce parental stress.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Georgia and Mississippi provide exemptions for parents with children up to twelve months of age.</p>
<p><b>Other exemptions from work requirements</b></p> <p>What are other conditions for exemptions from work requirements?</p>	<p>Another condition for exemptions include care for a disabled family member in the home.</p>	<p>Consider adding other exemptions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pregnancy</li> <li>• Caregiver's disability</li> <li>• Domestic violence</li> </ul>

WHICH RESTRICTIONS ON CASH ASSISTANCE HAS LOUISIANA EASED?		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<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 withdraws the benefit for the entire household.</p>	<p><b>In cases of non-compliance with work requirements, consider only reducing the benefit amount instead and eliminating full-family sanctions.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Arkansas merely withdraws a portion of the benefit, never enacting a full-family sanction.</p>
<p><b>Lifting drug felony bans</b></p> <p>Are persons convicted of drug-related felonies eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Refraining from drug testing applicants or recipients</b></p> <p>Does Louisiana refrain from enforcing drug testing of caregivers who are either receiving or applying for cash assistance?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p><b>Consider making treatment available to all parents and refrain from any drug testing, since it does not effectively support low-income parents or children.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Alabama, Florida, and Iowa refrain from drug testing applicants and recipients.</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, Louisiana has 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