

Oklahoma

TANF State Profile Summary 2025/2026

OVERVIEW

Oklahoma Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)	Oklahoma	U.S. Average or Total
Annual (federal-only) block grant amount (in millions, for 2023)	\$138,007,998	\$16,488,600,000 (total)
% of TANF block grants spent on cash assistance, 2024	3.5%	24.6%
% families who participated in TANF per 100 families with children living in poverty, 2022-23	5%	21%
Total # families receiving TANF in 2025	3,097	826,345 (total)
% of cases designated "Child-Only" in 2025	66.9%	46.6%
"Unobligated balance" (or stockpiled amounts, which must be used for cash assistance or admin)		
TANF Funds "unobligated balance," as of 2024	\$96,605,599	\$7,745,163,932 (total)
"Unobligated balance" as share of total block grant amount	70%	47.7%
Change (+ or -) in "unobligated balance" from 2023	-\$96,605,600	N/A

OKLAHOMA'S CASH ASSISTANCE (TANF) POLICY

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>\$292/month, or 13% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).</p>	<p>Consider increasing the maximum benefit level to provide more support to families with children during challenging periods.</p> <p>Examples: Kansas provides \$429/month, Nebraska provides \$584/month, and Utah provides \$662/month.</p>
<p>Recurring benefit increases</p> <p>Has Oklahoma mandated increases to these amounts, as costs of living increase?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>Consider making recurring increases, tied to a cost-of-living or poverty measurement.</p> <p>Examples: Nebraska mandates regular increases.</p>

Oklahoma

TANF State Profile Summary 2025/2026

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p>Deductions for calculation of benefit amount</p> <p>Can parents deduct some earnings or expenses from their income when calculating the benefit amount?</p>	<p>Earnings disregards are either \$120 or \$240 and 50% of remaining income for eligibility.</p>	<p>Consider providing an additional deduction for the first few months of employment to further stabilize the family's circumstances.</p> <p>Example: In Rhode Island, when an adult family member becomes employed, 100% of their earned income can be deducted for six months, as long as the household's gross countable income is less than or equal to 185% FPL.</p>

HOW ELSE DOES OKLAHOMA DETERMINE THE GENEROSITY OF CASH ASSISTANCE?

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p>Time limit</p> <p>Does Oklahoma allow families to receive cash assistance up to the federal limit of 60 months?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Transitional cash benefits for families who become ineligible after receiving cash assistance</p> <p>Will parents and caregivers who are newly ineligible for cash assistance receive additional cash support for a limited period?</p>	<p>Yes. A "new Job disregard" can allow families to receive full benefits for three months.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Providing one-time cash payments to families in with specific financial needs</p> <p>Does Oklahoma provide a formal diversion program to support families with specific short-term needs?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Oklahoma

TANF State Profile Summary 2025/2026

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p>Eligibility for monthly assistance less than six months after a diversion payment</p> <p>Can families who receive diversionary payments apply for monthly assistance within six months afterward?</p>	<p>No, Oklahoma imposes a 12-month period of ineligibility.</p>	<p>Consider shortening the period of ineligibility.</p> <p>Examples: In Florida and Arizona, families cannot be ineligible for longer than three months. Arkansas also maintains a shorter (100-day) period of ineligibility.</p>
<p>Providing assistance with housing</p> <p>Does the state provide housing vouchers with TANF funds?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>Providing housing vouchers alongside cash assistance can ease high costs for eligible families.</p> <p>Examples: Hawaii and Maine provide housing vouchers worth several hundred dollars along with TANF cash assistance.</p>
<p>Providing assistance with diaper purchases</p> <p>Does Oklahoma provide assistance to families with diaper expenses using TANF funds?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>Providing assistance with diaper costs provides significant support.</p> <p>Examples: Hawaii and Washington provide assistance with diapers.</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 for cash assistance eligibility?</p>	<p>Families may earn up to \$1,193/month for eligibility.</p>	<p>Consider increasing the income limit in order to provide more working families with assistance.</p> <p>Example: Nevada's income eligibility limit is \$2,888/month.</p>

Oklahoma

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Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p>Deductions for assessment of benefit eligibility</p> <p>Can families deduct a portion of earnings or some expenses from their income to meet income eligibility requirements?</p>	<p>Earnings disregards are either \$120 or \$240 and 50% of remaining income for eligibility.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Asset limit</p> <p>How much can a family maintain in savings while still being eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>The families' assets, including cash and savings accounts, cannot exceed \$2,250.</p>	<p>Consider increasing or eliminating the asset limit to support families' ability to save.</p> <p>Examples: Nevada's asset limit is \$10,000. Colorado has eliminated the asset test entirely.</p>
<p>Eligibility during pregnancy for parents without children</p> <p>Are pregnant people with no children in the household eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Yes, during any month of pregnancy.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Provision of federal TANF cash assistance to immigrant families who are lawful permanent residents (LPRs) *after* five years' residence in US</p> <p>Can parents who hold green cards access cash assistance in Oklahoma once they have been in the country <i>for five years or longer</i>?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Oklahoma

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Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p>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</p> <p>Can parents who hold green cards access cash assistance in Oklahoma if they have been in the country for <i>less than five years</i>?</p>	No.	<p>Consider using state funds to provide cash assistance to more immigrant parents.</p> <p>Example: Colorado provides cash assistance to some LPR parents' families before five years' residence.</p>

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

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p>Child support pass-through</p> <p>Does Oklahoma "pass through" a portion of the payments received by the state in child support for the family?</p>	No.	<p>Consider "passing through" at least a portion of child support payments collected by the state to support economic stability.</p> <p>Examples: Colorado and Texas provide a portion of child support to the household.</p>

WHAT ARE OKLAHOMA'S WORK REQUIREMENTS FOR CASH ASSISTANCE?

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p>Provision of cash assistance to out-of-work parents before they search for a job</p> <p>Does Oklahoma provide eligibility to parents without a search for employment?</p>	Yes, there is no job search required.	N/A

Oklahoma

TANF State Profile Summary 2025/2026

Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p>Counting educational activities as “core” work requirements</p> <p>Does Oklahoma provide credit for all educational activities, including college, as “core” work activities for cash assistance?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>Consider allowing postsecondary attendance and vocational education to count as “core” work participation.</p> <p>Example: New Mexico allows specific types of postsecondary education for different periods to exempt parents from work activities.</p>
<p>Exemption for caregivers of infants</p> <p>Are parents or caregivers caring for a child under twelve months of age exempt from work requirements?</p>	<p>No, exemptions are only for those caring for children under four months.</p>	<p>Consider providing an exemption from work requirements for the first year of life, to support parents’ mental health and children’s development.</p> <p>Examples: Colorado and Texas provide exemptions for parents with children up to twelve months of age.</p>
<p>Other exemptions from work requirements</p> <p>What are other conditions for exemptions from work requirements?</p>	<p>There is an exemption for single custodial parents under 20 years of age who are full-time students.</p>	<p>Consider adding other exemptions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregiver’s disability • Domestic violence • Being a single parent and unable to find childcare for a child under six years • Being pregnant and unable to work

WHICH RESTRICTIONS ON CASH ASSISTANCE HAS OKLAHOMA EASED?		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<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>No, the full benefit is withdrawn.</p>	<p>In cases of non-compliance with work requirements, consider reducing the benefit amount instead.</p> <p>Examples: Arkansas merely reduces the benefit.</p>
<p>Lifting drug felony bans</p> <p>Are persons convicted of drug-related felonies eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Refraining from drug testing applicants or recipients</p> <p>Does Oklahoma refrain from enforcing drug testing of caregivers who are either receiving or applying for cash assistance?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>Consider making treatment available to all parents and refrain from any drug testing, since it does not effectively support low-income parents or children.</p> <p>Examples: Iowa and Texas refrain from drug testing applicants and recipients.</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, the family cap was repealed in 2009.</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>