

Where do I Apply for TANF?

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) application process has **two components**:

- ✓ The **work component** is handled by employment specialists at Department of Social Services (DSS) offices in reservation areas or Department of Labor Career Centers.
- ✓ The **eligibility component** is handled by benefits specialists at local DSS offices.

TANF is a work program. You begin the application process with an employment specialist, unless you are not required to participate in a work program. You are not required to participate if you meet one of the following conditions:

- ✓ You are a dependent child under 16 years old or a full-time student in high school.
- ✓ You are a parent taking care of a baby who is under 12 weeks old. (This only applies to one parent per household.)
- ✓ You are approved to receive Social Security Disability or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments from the Social Security Administration.
- ✓ You are a veteran who has 100 percent disability and are approved to receive disability payments from the Veteran's Administration.

What are the TANF Work Program Penalties?

If you do not follow the TANF Work Program rules you will be penalized, which may affect your monthly cash payments as well as your TANF eligibility.

The penalty system progresses as follows:

- ✓ You will receive a written warning. This does not affect your monthly payment or eligibility.
- ✓ You will lose 50 percent of your monthly cash benefits.
- ✓ Your case will be closed and you will not receive a monthly payment.

Contact Us

For more information, contact the Department of Social Services' office nearest you or see below.

Department of Social Services:

Phone: 605-773-4678

Email: TANF@state.sd.us

Website: www.dss.sd.gov/tanf

Department of Labor:

Phone: 605-773-3101

Website: www.state.sd.us/dol

TANF Work Program

South Dakota's
Temporary
Assistance for
Needy Families

DSS 
Strong Families - South Dakota's Foundation and Our Future
A program administered by the Departments of Social Services and Labor.

What is TANF?

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a temporary public assistance program administered by the Department of Social Services and the Department of Labor. The goal of the TANF Work Program is to help families help themselves move from public benefits to work by:

- ✓ promoting family responsibility and accountability.
- ✓ encouraging self-sufficiency through work.

TANF is a needs-based program for families with children under age 18 (or under age 19 if the child is in high school) who need financial support because of:

- ✓ a death of a parent,
- ✓ a parent is absent from the home or
- ✓ physical or mental incapacity or unemployment of a parent.

Families with serious financial needs may qualify for TANF monthly cash payments.

Your TANF payment is based on who lives with your family, who is eligible in your household, and other income and resources available to your family.

If your family's monthly TANF cash payment is less than \$10, no payment will be issued.

Is there a Time Limit for TANF Benefits?

An adult TANF recipient may not receive TANF benefits for more than 60 months, (five years). The 60 months do not have to be consecutive months in a row and are not limited to assistance in South Dakota, but may be from any other state.

During this 60-month life time limit, recipients are required to participate in work activities. Adult TANF recipients are expected to become self-sufficient within this time limit.

What work requirements must I follow?

TANF participants are required to participate in approved work activities for a minimum of 30 hours each week. If you have a child under age six, your weekly minimum requirement is 20 hours. The following work activities count towards the number of hours you need to work:

- ✓ Working in a job.
- ✓ On-the-job training.
- ✓ Secondary education.
- ✓ Vocational training (limit of 12 months).
- ✓ Teenage parent attending high school.
- ✓ Job search/job readiness activities.
- ✓ Community service.

Your employment specialist will assess your job skills and strengths. They will also identify and help with any problems that limit or prohibit your ability to become self-sufficient.

The assessment will cover: work history, housing, child care, special family needs, education, transportation, life circumstances and personal support.

What is a Personal Responsibility Agreement?

A Personal Responsibility Agreement (PRA) is a written and signed agreement between you and the TANF program. You must agree to the following:

- ✓ TANF assistance is temporary.
- ✓ TANF is a work program.
- ✓ It is your responsibility to find and keep work.
- ✓ You will accept responsibility for yourself and your children.
- ✓ You will follow all program conditions such as developing a work plan, keeping appointments, participating in a work activity, completing and submitting time sheets, and making sure your children attend school.

What is a Personal Responsibility Plan?

Your employment specialist will work with you to develop your own Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP). You should think of this plan as a guide to help you become self-sufficient and employed. Your plan shows your strengths and skills and outlines ways for you to reach your work goals. Your plan will specify your work activity and how many hours you are required to participate.