

Temporary Family Assistance (TFA)

FACT SHEET



JULY 2014

The Temporary Family Assistance Program (TFA) provides monthly cash and employment assistance to eligible families throughout Connecticut to support basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing. TFA is funded by the federal and state governments to provide a 'safety net' for families with children.

Who is eligible for TFA?

- Families with dependent children up to age 18.
- Families with dependent children who are 18 years of age or older – but the child must be full-time student in high school or vocational school.
- Recipients must live in Connecticut, have very little or no income, and be supporting a child or children. In some cases, a pregnant woman may qualify if she has no other means of support and meets other eligibility factors.
- The child or children in the household must live with a related adult or an adult who has filed for guardianship through probate court. Many TFA-eligible households are grandparents caring for grandchildren.

What are the requirements of TFA?

- Adult recipients must participate in Jobs First Employment Services activities, coordinated by the Department of Labor.
- Custodial parents must provide information to help in collecting child support from a parent who is not living in the home.

What are the income limits to be eligible for TFA?

- Income limits are extremely low and vary throughout the state. The 'Am I Eligible' prescreening tool at www.connect.ct.gov is a helpful information resource.
- Income of a non-parent relative or guardian does not count when the relative or guardian does not receive TFA for themselves. This is especially relevant when grandparents are caring for grandchildren.
- Active TFA-eligible households can earn up to the federal poverty level for their household size and remain eligible.

What are the asset limits to be eligible for TFA?

- The household asset limit is \$3,000.
- One vehicle is excluded as long as the total value, minus any amount owed, is under \$9,500, or used to transport a household member with a disability.
- The value of all other vehicles after the first vehicle counts toward the \$3,000 asset limit.
- Home property is not counted; however, a lien is placed so the state can recover benefit amounts paid after the sale of the owned property.
- Assets of a non-parent relative or guardian are not counted when the relative or guardian does not receive TFA for themselves.



What is the time limit for TFA?

- Connecticut has a 21-month time limit for benefits issued here, unless an exemption from the time limit is granted. See exemptions below.
- Under certain circumstances, benefits may continue beyond 21 months.
- Recipients cannot receive more than 60 months of TFA in a lifetime, counting benefits received in other states (federal rule).

Are there exemptions from time limits or work requirements?

Exemptions to the time limit or work requirements may be given under the following circumstances:

- A disability, either physical or mental, that prevents a person from working.
- If a recipient is 60 years of age or older, while caring for a dependent child.
- If a recipient is caring for a child under the age of 1.
- If a recipient is caring for a household member with a disability.
- A non-parent relative or guardian like a grandparent who only receives cash for children in his or her care.

How do people apply for TFA?

Online access – Visit the www.ct.gov/dss website and go to Clients/Applicants, then How to Apply. From here you can print an application for mailing to the agency. Or, click on the ConneCT icon at www.ct.gov/dss to apply online. You can also apply online at www.connect.ct.gov and click on the 'Apply for Benefits' button. The "Am I Eligible" button is also located on this web page where you can see if you qualify to receive medical benefits or help in buying food.

In Person – Visit any DSS Service Center to complete an application. Office locations can be found at www.ct.gov/dss; or call 2-1-1 for referral.

Phone – To request an application by mail. call the DSS Client Information Line and Benefit Center at 1-855-CONNECT (1-855-626-6632; TTD/TTY 1-800-842-4524 for persons with speech or hearing difficulties)