

# Temporary Family Assistance (TFA)

## FACT SHEET



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 under age 18.
- Families with dependent children who are 18 years of age who are enrolled full time in high school or the equivalent in vocational or technical schooling.
- Pregnant women.
- Recipients must live in Connecticut and have income and assets under the program limits.
- The child or children in the household must live with a related adult or an adult who has filed for legal guardianship. Many TFA-eligible households are grandparents caring for grandchildren.

### **What are the requirements of TFA?**

- Adult recipients who are able to work 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 vary based on family size and whether the family has received TFA in the past. The 'Am I Eligible' prescreening tool at [www.connect.ct.gov](http://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.
- Active TFA-eligible households can earn up to the federal poverty level for their household size and remain eligible.
- Active TFA-eligible households whose earnings exceed the federal poverty level may be able to keep their benefits for up to an additional six months.

### **What are the asset limits to be eligible for TFA?**

- The household asset limit is \$6,000.
- One vehicle is excluded if the total value, minus any amount owed, is under \$9,500 or if used to transport a household member with a disability.
- The value of all other vehicles counts toward the asset limit.
- The value of home property for the primary residence is not counted.
- 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 36-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 36 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, such as a grandparent, who only receives cash for children in their care.
- A pregnant or postpartum woman, if certified by a physician to be unable to work.

### How do people apply for TFA?

**Online** – The fastest and easiest way to apply. Visit [www.connect.ct.gov](http://www.connect.ct.gov) and click on the “Apply Now” button.

**By Mail** – To request an application, call the DSS Benefits Center at 1-855-CONNECT (1-855-626-6632). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and have a TTD/TTY device can contact DSS at 1-800-842-4524. Persons who are blind or visually impaired, can contact DSS at 1-860-424-5040. You can also print a “W-1E Application for Benefits” from [Applications and Forms \(ct.gov\)](http://Applications and Forms (ct.gov)).

**In Person** – Visit any DSS Resource Center to complete an application. Office locations can be found at [www.ct.gov/dss](http://www.ct.gov/dss) under the “Office Locator” tab or call 2-1-1 to be referred to your nearest DSS Resource Center.