

TANF Funded Homeless Programs – New Jersey

The primary TANF funded program for the provision of homelessness and related services is Emergency Assistance. The Emergency Assistance component of TANF is county administered. Application for Emergency Assistance is made at the County Welfare Agency. TANF eligible families who have had a substantial loss of housing, food, clothing or household furnishings or utilities, are in a state of homelessness, or are imminently homeless; due to circumstances beyond their control or who did not have a realistic capacity to plan in advance; are provided with TANF funded emergency assistance. Allowances may be provided for retroactive rent, mortgage or utility payments, security deposits for rent and utilities, and advance rent, eviction related costs, reasonable costs of transportation to search for housing, reasonable costs of temporary storage of personal possessions, moving expenses, food, clothing, essential house furnishings, payment for emergency shelter , emergency temporary housing and temporary rental assistance. Emergency assistance is limited to twelve months with the ability to receive up to two six month extensions, if eligible as a hardship.

There are two emergency assistance pilots; a temporary rental assistance pilot providing up to twelve months of assistance and the Long Term Support program which can offer up to thirty-six months of emergency assistance. Eligibility criteria for each pilot must be satisfied in order to receive assistance.

Approximately \$49 million dollars is budgeted statewide for Emergency Assistance in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2004. State wide Emergency Assistance SFY 04 first quarter disbursements for the period July 1 through September 30 totaled \$13.5 million. First quarter SFY 04 county specific emergency assistance disbursements are as follows:

Mercer-	\$1,406,972
Hudson-	\$771,432
Essex-	\$3,681,374
Middlesex-	\$651,446

Please note: We are unable to provide city or municipal specific emergency assistance disbursements.

TANF emergency assistance benefits were provided to 4,376 unduplicated cases during the month of September 2003. This includes the provision of Temporary Rental Assistance to 1,053 cases, Motel Housing to 467 cases, Emergency Shelter to 485 cases and all other types of emergency assistance to 2,371 cases. County specific information for the month of September is as follows:

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WFNJ/TANF Families Receiving Emergency Assistance

County	Total	TRA	Motel	Shelter	Other
Mercer	541	203	12	19	307
Essex	1,310	412	21	267	610
Hudson	480	171	19	3	287
Middlesex	194	22	17	23	132

The total number of families receiving TANF funded Emergency Assistance statewide increased by nearly forty percent (40%) in the last year. The number of families receiving Temporary Rental Assistance has increased by over 250% in the last year. Motel utilization has decreased by 20%.

In addition to Emergency Assistance, a portion of the Social Services for the Homeless Program is TANF funded. The Social Service for the Homeless Program has four components: emergency shelter, homelessness prevention, case management and, emergency food. The program has a calendar year (CY) 2004 statewide budget of \$10,977, 141, of which \$2,189,524 is TANF funding. In order to be eligible for TANF funded Social Service for the Homeless services, a family must have a dependent child in the home and a household income below 250% of the federal poverty index. Additionally, a family may receive no more than four months of assistance. The TANF funded portion of this program is designed to provide short term homelessness assistance to families who are not eligible for TANF cash benefits for reasons other than non-compliance with TANF work requirements or intentional program violation. Prevention services include payment of back rent and utility bills and security deposits. The Division of Family Development contracts for this program with each county.

Specific county Social Service for the Homeless CY 04 TANF contract: allocations are as follows:

Mercer-	\$82,325
Essex-	\$394,114
Hudson-	\$299,965
Middlesex-	\$125,898

State Contact: Joseph Maag, New Jersey Department of Human Services
Division of Family Development
Phone: 609-588-2160