

TANF

Work Program Services

A request for assistance in the State of Mississippi is a request for help in **FINDING** and **KEEPING** a job!

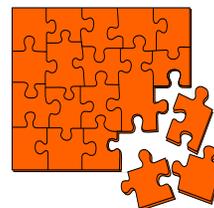
- ▶ The goal of the TANF Program is to end the dependence on public assistance by preparing you for a job by helping you with job readiness training, job skills training, vocational training, other educational training programs and assisting you in finding and keeping a job.
- ▶ Remember, there are time limits on receiving public assistance. In order to support yourself and your family, you must become self-sufficient through employment.
- ▶ Your participation in the TANF Work Program (TWP) will mean that you may take advantage of all the following services:

- ✓ Child Care
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Work Related Expenses
- ✓ Participation Stipend
- ✓ Income Disregards
- ✓ Earned Income Tax Credit

There are also transitional services to help you after you find a job and your TANF case closes!



- ✓ Child Care
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Job Retention Bonuses
- ✓ Job Counseling Services
- ✓ Case Management Services



WORK ACTIVITIES - Once you have been approved for TANF and are referred to the TWP, your Case Manager will assess your skills and abilities to get and keep a good job and help you with your Employability Development Plan. This will help determine the work activities and type of services you need to get ready for work and find employment.

Based on your individual needs, you will be referred to a work activity. While you participate in one of the following activities you may continue to receive your TANF and Food Stamp benefits:

- ☞ Employment
- ☞ Work Experience
- ☞ Community Service
- ☞ High School or GED
- ☞ Job Readiness/Job Search
- ☞ Vocational Education
- ☞ Job Skills Training
- ☞ Education Directly Related to Employment

As long as you participate satisfactorily in one of these activities, the supportive services discussed below will be provided, if needed, so that you may continue on your way to self-sufficiency.

CHILD CARE - MDHS will refer you to a Designated Agent for child care services. The Designated Agent will pay for child care with a provider of your choice.



TRANSPORTATION - MDHS will issue you a bus pass or provide a monthly transportation stipend, up to \$300. If you receive a monthly stipend, you will be responsible for making your own transportation arrangements.



WORK RELATED EXPENSES* - To assist you in finding and keeping a job, MDHS will pay fees for:

- Safety Equipment - Tools - Work Permits
- Birth Certificates - Uniforms
- GED Tests - Other Approved Items



* These items must be required by law or by the employer.



PARTICIPATION STIPEND - Depending on your work activity assignment and satisfactory attendance, you may be eligible for a \$5 per day participation stipend.



INCOME DISREGARDS - If you find full-time employment (35 hours per week), at or above the federal minimum wage, you can have the earned income received from this employment totally disregarded from the TANF budget for up to six (6)

months. This will allow you to receive both the TANF benefits and paycheck when full-time employment (35 hours per week) is obtained. To be eligible for this disregard, the employment must begin:

- ▶ within thirty (30) days after the initial approval for TANF benefits after July 1, 1997; or
- ▶ within thirty (30) days after the initial start date of the job readiness/job search work activity in TWP.

If you do not qualify for the six-month total earned income disregard, you may be eligible for a three-month total earned income disregard if your TANF case is subject to closure because of increased earnings and the employment is at least 25 hours per week at or above the federal minimum wage.

Any TANF benefits you receive while using the total earnings disregards will be counted toward your 60-month lifetime maximum benefit limit.



EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT - If you are in a low income family (with children) and work part-time or full-time you can get more take-home pay through the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The amount of money depends on income and family size. **Your family does not have to owe any taxes to get the EITC.**

There are two ways your family can get the extra

EITC money:

- You can get all the extra EITC money when you file your federal tax return,
- OR
- You can get part of the extra EITC money in advance with each paycheck and the rest when you file your tax return.



MARRIAGE DISREGARD - If you marry for the first time after 10/01/99, you may have your new spouse's income and resources disregarded for six months. This may allow you to continue receiving TANF benefits for six months.



TRANSITIONAL SERVICES - if you stop receiving TANF benefits because of increased earned income you may qualify for:

- ★ **Transitional Child Care** (up to 24 consecutive months).
- ★ **Transitional Transportation** (up to 12 consecutive months).
- ★ **Job Retention Bonuses** totaling \$3000 over a 12-month period if you work 30 hours or more per week at or above the federal minimum wage and verify that you have kept your job for a certain period of time.
- ★ **Case Management/Job Counseling Services** (up to 12 months) will continue so you may get any help you need with problems you may encounter on your job.



NON-TANF SERVICES

FOOD STAMPS - Your family can continue to receive Food Stamp benefits as long as you qualify for them after your TANF case closes.



WOMEN-INFANTS-CHILDREN PROGRAM - If you are pregnant, breast feeding, or have a child less than age 5, contact your local Health Department about WIC.

TANF and the TANF Work Program are provided through the Economic Assistance Division of the Mississippi Department of Human Services. Ask your local county office Case Manager about TWP services.

YOU WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR THESE SERVICES IF THE ONLY ELIGIBLE CHILD LEAVES THE HOME OR YOU MOVE OUT OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI.

MDHS IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER AND PROVIDER