



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Office of Family Assistance

Addressing Family Homelessness

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The Issue

On a single night in 2012:

- **633,782 people** without stable housing
 - **394,379 homeless as individuals** (62 percent)
 - **239,403 were homeless in families** (38 percent)
- While the number of homeless individuals had declined by 1.4 percent since January 2011, family homelessness **had increased by the same amount.**
- A homeless family is defined as having at least one adult and one child.

(U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development annual point-in-time count)

At the National Level

- U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
 - *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* (2010)
 - 19 Federal member agencies
 - Goal: To prevent and end homelessness for families, youth, and children by the year 2020

“No one should experience homelessness – no one should be without a safe, stable place to call home.” -USICH

The Role of TANF

- TANF-ACF-IM-2013-01: Use of TANF Funds to Serve Homeless Families and Families at Risk of Experiencing Homelessness (published February 20, 2013)

Allowable Uses of TANF and MOE Funds

TANF agencies use federal TANF funds and state Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds to provide a wide range of benefits and services for needy families with a child (or a pregnant woman):

- **Assistance** – payments to cover basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter.
- **Non-assistance** – e.g., supportive services, work subsidies, programs that aim to prevent and reduce out-of-wedlock pregnancies or encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Addressing Housing Needs

- **Basic assistance:**
 - Federal TANF and MOE funds may be used to address the housing-related needs of families who are homeless or precariously housed, consistent with TANF rules on providing benefits and services to needy or eligible families.
- **Non-recurrent, short-term (NRST) benefits and services:**
 - Designed to extend no longer than four months; and
 - Must address a specific crisis situation rather than meet ongoing needs.
- **TANF funds can be used in coordination with other targeted homeless assistance grants programs to maximize resource impact.** (For example, TANF can be used to pay for rental assistance while the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program is used to pay for supportive services to help a family remain housed.)

Housing Programs: Examples

- Short-term rental or mortgage assistance (to prevent eviction or help a homeless family secure housing);
- Security and utility payments;
- Moving assistance;
- Motel and hotel vouchers;
- Case management services;
- Financial and credit counseling;
- Legal services;
- Etc.

Supportive Services

- Federal TANF and MOE Funds can be used for a wide variety of other supportive services, such as mental health or non-medical substance abuse treatment, and various employment services, that may be critically needed by homeless families.
- Employment services may include education, job training, job placement, and subsidized employment services.
- Federal TANF funds and commingled funds (a blend of federal TANF and MOE funds) cannot be used for medical services whereas segregated and separate MOE funds can.

Coordinating Services with Other Organizations

- TANF agencies, or community-based organizations they contract with, can offer comprehensive approaches that include multiple programs and supports, such as combining a housing benefit with transportation, childcare, and/or job placement services.
- TANF agencies can also partner with local homeless providers to coordinate and streamline services delivered across the two service systems.



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QUESTIONS(?)