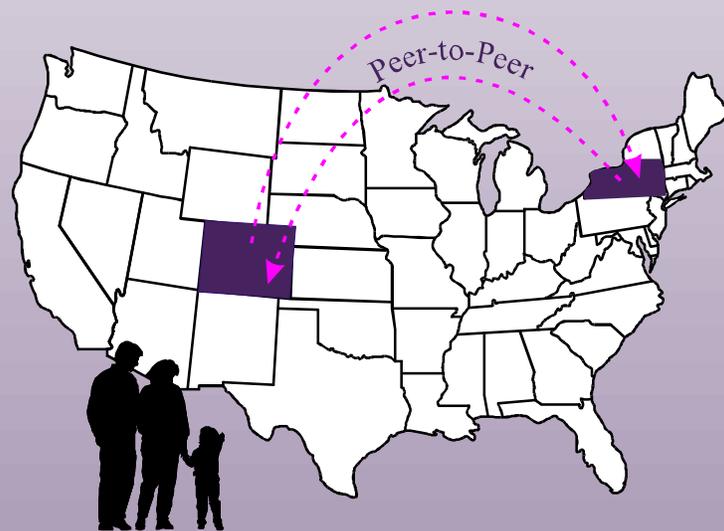


Progress and Promise of TANF Implementation

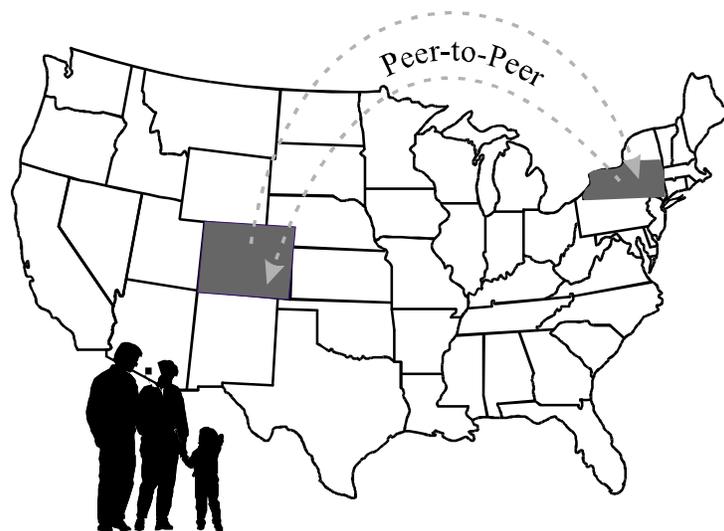


Findings of the National Needs Assessment

Prepared by:

Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network
AFYA, Inc./Caliber Associates

Progress and Promise of TANF Implementation



Findings of the National Needs Assessment

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY—KEY FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), enacted into law on August 22, 1996, replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) and Emergency Assistance programs with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Under TANF, states receive block grants to provide time-limited services to needy families. The new law gives states a new level of flexibility in program design and operation, but also requires them to follow Federal rules and regulations to maintain their block grant funding.

States face significant challenges in carrying out their new TANF responsibilities and are struggling to design creative strategies that effectively move people quickly from welfare to work, remove barriers to employability, support families, and safeguard children. States need easy access to good information about what is being tried by other states and localities as they address the challenges of transportation, child care, hard-to-serve populations, and the changing of welfare culture from an income maintenance system to an employment placement program. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF) has recognized states' need for good information about "what is working," and has supported this effort, *The Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network*, as a response to this identified need.

During FY 1998, *The Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network* was launched. The objective of this project was to develop a peer-to-peer technical assistance network for states, counties, localities, and community-based organizations implementing TANF. The contractors for the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network are AFYA, Inc. and Caliber Associates. The AFYA/Caliber team is responsible for conducting a thorough needs assessment and developing peer technical assistance strategies. The Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network will provide for the transfer of successful, cost-effective welfare-to-work implementation strategies and management practices between and among states, counties, localities, and community-based organizations. Agencies on the front lines of the welfare-to-work process will learn about the strengths, weaknesses, and unique characteristics of strategies that their counterparts across the country are using. This new Network will connect possible solutions to real problems that arise as states, counties, localities, and community-based organizations implement their welfare reform efforts.

During the months of November 1997-May 1998, the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network conducted a national *Needs Assessment* regarding the challenges and successes of implementation of state welfare reform initiatives. Out of this baseline of information, a technical assistance plan was developed that made recommendations for specific technical

assistance interventions, and opportunities for peer-to-peer information exchanges. Based on information gathered through the Needs Assessment, the top 12 challenges to TANF implementation are:

- Data Gathering
- Transportation Issues
- Clients with Substance Abuse Problems
- Post-Employment Services
- Management Information Systems
- Rural Clients
- Clients with Learning Disabilities
- Evaluation and Monitoring
- Culture Change
- Domestic Violence Victims
- Clients with Mental Health Problems
- Child Care—Odd Hour/Shift Work.

There were only a few differences in concerns voiced by states when analyzing the issues by geographic region, population size, or administrative locus of control of the TANF program (state- or county-administered). Overwhelmingly, data gathering, transportation, clients with substance abuse problems, and post-employment services were issues that were raised in all regions, by small and large states alike, and regardless if the program was state- or county-administered. States said that they needed technical assistance in all of the challenge areas highlighted above, with the exception of “management information systems.” States’ concerns with management information systems stemmed from outdated technologies and antiquated systems. States suggested that this issue was more a matter of available resources versus technical assistance on “how to.” Also, states proposed that the identified need regarding “data gathering” would be best met by technical assistance via the Federal ACF central office or regional office staff, and not through a peer-to-peer network.

All states said that they would be willing to participate as technical assistance providers, given reasonable resource and time constraints. States suggested that the best mechanisms for technical assistance provision would be through small, 1-day, interactive workshops, moderated

teleconferences, and via the Online Forum. They stated a frustration with “information overload” and a desire to get quick and easily accessible information that focuses on what’s working, why it’s working, and how it can work in their state.

In addition to the immediate challenges presented by the first and second waves of “welfare reform sea change,” it is also pointed out that the third wave of challenges will shortly be upon us. These include the issues of effectively and efficiently linking TANF programs with housing programs and addressing the issue of long-term health care coverage for TANF families and the working poor. As culture change permeates through TANF agencies—Food Stamps, Medicaid, and labor programs—there will be a continuum of culture or systems change as other agencies become involved with the mission of moving people on the pathway of self-sufficiency. Also, the issue of “teen parents,” obviously missing from the list of challenges, might likely resurface as a concern for states, particularly if these young families recycle through the system as child welfare or criminal justice clients.

There are a variety of emerging innovations discovered through this *Needs Assessment*. Many of these “innovations” are occurring on the community level. It is proposed that future efforts at knowledge development be directed at the county/community level and that these innovations be verified and shared across the nation via the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network. In addition to the technical assistance strategies and events scheduled this fiscal year, it is recommended that additional technical assistance be made available to states over the next 2 years via this peer-to-peer network and that a follow-up *Needs Assessment* of states’ progress in meeting the challenges of TANF implementation be conducted in 1999.

In essence, much has been learned about the challenges and successes states are having in implementing Federal welfare reform. Also identified are the next steps that need to be addressed by the Federal government, particularly the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in its new role as a catalyst for change. Much has been done, and much is left to do, if we are to be successful as a nation in moving people from welfare to self-sufficiency.

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Title I of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 has substantially altered the nation's welfare system. The welfare delivery system that has functioned for at least the last three decades is being rapidly replaced by a "new" delivery system that is primarily state-based. In order to learn more about the challenges and successes being encountered by the states as they implement the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, and to stimulate the cross-fertilization of ideas across states, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF) funded the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network.¹ The contractors for the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network are AFYA, Inc. and Caliber Associates.

There are two major components of the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network: knowledge development and peer-to-peer technical assistance exchanges. The primary objectives of the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network are to:

- Assess key challenges that states and localities are confronting in implementing TANF
- Identify emerging innovations and lessons learned that might be shared with other states and counties
- Facilitate a variety of peer-to-peer exchanges that link staff with expertise to share with staff who have requested technical assistance.

The first two objectives have been met through the completion of the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network's *Needs Assessment*. The information gathered through the *Needs Assessment* has formed the basis of a database on the challenges and successes of TANF implementation on the state level. From this baseline of information, a technical assistance plan has been developed that makes recommendations for specific technical assistance interventions and offers suggestions about opportunities for peer-to-peer information exchanges. The preliminary findings of the national *Needs Assessment* have been shared with DHHS/ACF central and regional offices, as well as members of the Technical Assistance Group (TAG). In addition, the recommended *Technical Assistance Delivery Plan* has been informally presented to DHHS/ACF staff. This document, *Progress and Promise of TANF Implementation*, formally reports the final findings of the national *Needs Assessment* and makes recommendations regarding technical assistance delivery.

¹ This project is funded under contract number 105-97-8401.

To attain the third objective, the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network is currently facilitating a variety of both proactive and reactive technical assistance events based on the tentatively approved *Technical Assistance Plan*. The Network is providing for the transfer of successful, cost-effective, welfare-to-work implementation strategies and management practices between and among states, counties, localities, and community-based organizations. Agencies on the front lines of welfare reform are learning about the strengths, weaknesses, and unique characteristics of strategies that their counterparts across the country are using. This new Network connects possible solutions to real problems that arise as states, counties, localities, and community-based organizations implement their welfare reform efforts. In addition to our interactive Website located at <http://www.calib.com/peerta>, a variety of services and products is being made available to expedite this cross-state sharing of information.

In this report, the first chapter briefly reviews the overall context of welfare reform and the changing roles and responsibilities of a variety of players in the welfare reform arena—particularly Federal and state governments. The second chapter describes the research design, methodology, and findings of the national *Needs Assessment*. It provides a national profile of the challenges and successes of TANF implementation and highlights the 12 top challenges facing the states. The third chapter discusses the commonalities and differences among states that exist across the 10 Federal regions and furnishes an individual profile for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories of Puerto Rico and Guam. The fourth chapter briefly highlights what we anticipate will be the next wave of challenges facing states. Finally, the last chapter offers recommendations for technical assistance delivery and future investment in capacity building for TANF implementation.

I. A NATIONAL STRATEGY

I. A NATIONAL STRATEGY

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), enacted into law on August 22, 1996, replaced the Federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program, and Emergency Assistance programs with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Under TANF, states receive block grants to provide time-limited services to needy families. The new law gives states a new level of flexibility in program design and operation, but also requires them to follow Federal rules and regulations to maintain their block grant funding.

States face significant challenges in carrying out their new TANF responsibilities and are struggling to design creative, effective strategies that move people quickly from welfare to work, remove barriers to employability, support families, and safeguard children. States need to know how other states and localities have addressed the challenges of transportation, child care, hard-to-serve populations, and the changing of the welfare culture from an income maintenance system to an employment placement program. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF) recognized states' need for good information about what is working and specifically designed this technical assistance project, the *Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network*, as part of the national strategy to respond to this need.

The two primary activities of the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network are: (1) to conduct a national *Needs Assessment* that identifies the key challenges that states and localities are confronting in implementing TANF as well as emerging innovations and lessons that might be shared among states and counties; and (2) to facilitate a variety of peer-to-peer exchanges between staff with expertise to share and staff who have requested technical assistance. This report, *Progress and Promise of TANF Implementation*, reflects an analysis of the data gathered from 50 states, 2 territories, and the District of Columbia (for simplicity, referred to as states in the remainder of the document) regarding the most challenging issues encountered and successes attained as they implement their welfare reform initiatives. The findings from this *Needs Assessment* have formed a baseline of knowledge from which a *Technical Assistance Plan*, including specific interventions and peer-to-peer exchanges, has been launched.

This chapter briefly describes the overall context for welfare reform initiatives across the country. The chapter also highlights the various transitions under way as the Federal government repositions and redefines itself as a catalyst for change, and states step up to address the challenges of welfare reform.

1. THE CONTEXT OF WELFARE REFORM

Welfare policy in America evolves from societal perceptions and expectations of welfare recipients. Societal assumptions about the need for welfare have changed significantly since the inception of the program in the 1930s and its expansion in the 1960s. As the numbers of working women, divorced parents, and unwed mothers have increased, the level of public support has decreased for a welfare program that primarily provides financial support to women who stay at home and do not work. The Public Agenda, in its 1996 survey of U.S. households, reported that Americans were frustrated and offended by welfare because they believed that it fostered an addictive and self-destructive lifestyle. The survey found that the public wants government to help those truly in need, but with assistance that is time-limited and focused on employment. There was a broad consensus that welfare needs to be decentralized, decategorized, streamlined, and enhanced with incentives to move people toward employment and independence (Farkas et al., 1996).

With the passage of P.L. 104-193, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), the core concepts of welfare—an entitlement program for the poor and a Federal safety net for families living in poverty—were eliminated. PRWORA changed the playing field, altered the rules of the game, and in many states, even changed the players. The passage of PRWORA began an era of rapid reform, moving welfare toward a different economic support structure focused on a philosophy of work rather than entitlements (see Exhibit I-1 for an outline of the key provisions of PRWORA). In comparison with recent efforts to reform the nation’s welfare system—most notably the Family Support Act of 1988—PRWORA has been characterized by experts in the policy and research establishments as a relative sea change in the way the nation approaches families who apply for and receive public assistance (Corbett, 1997).

Thomas Corbett, associate director for the Institute for Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, suggests that powerful changes are transforming the character of government and the structure of social policy in America. He characterizes many of the challenges around welfare reform as the “three Rs” of welfare reform—reallocation, redirection, and reinvention. PRWORA has required a significant reallocation of power and purse from Washington to state capitals. Although block grants to states are not new, P.L. 104-193 broke new ground in giving governors primary responsibility for the nation’s welfare system. The scale of the shift of responsibilities has been called a “Devolution Revolution” (Nathan, 1995).

Occurring in tandem with this devolution is a redirection of the goals of welfare from a system that focuses on income maintenance to one that focuses on employment placement and behavior modification. This shift in goals and objectives reflects no less than a metamorphosis

EXHIBIT I-1

MAJOR PROVISIONS OF THE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1996 (P.L. 104-193)

Note: HHS Policy Announcement TANF-ACF-PA-97-1, dated January 31, 1997, provided guidance to state agencies concerning maintenance of effort, definition of assistance, use of Federal and state TANF funds and other provisions that clarifies some of the complex issues described below.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 eliminates AFDC's open-ended entitlement and creates a block grant for states to provide time-limited cash assistance for needy families, with work requirements for most recipients. The law also makes far-reaching changes to child care, the Child Support Enforcement Program, benefits for legal immigrants, the Food Stamp Program, and SSI for children. Modifications to the child nutrition program and reductions in the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) are also included.

TITLE 1: TANF BLOCK GRANT

Eliminates the AFDC program, JOBS, and Emergency Assistance (EA) and creates the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant. Annual TANF funding is \$16.38 billion in FYs 1997-2003. States receive their allotment based upon previous expenditures in AFDC, EA, and JOBS. States can transfer up to 30% of their TANF funds into the child care block grant and SSBG.

States may use their TANF funding in any manner "reasonably calculated to accomplish the purposes of TANF." These purposes are: to provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes; to reduce dependency by promoting job preparation, work and marriage; to prevent out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and to encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. States have broad flexibility to determine eligibility, method of assistance, and benefit levels. Individual Development Accounts, restricted accounts which can only be used for education, homeownership, or other self-sufficiency activity, are specifically mentioned as a possible use of funds. The state plan must have "objective criteria" which are "fair" and "equitable" for eligibility and benefits and must explain appeal rights.

Restrictions on use: Federal TANF dollars and state dollars that count toward the maintenance of effort must be spent on families that include a child or expectant mother. Several restrictions apply to federal TANF dollars. Restrictions on the use of federal funds include: (1) Assistance cannot be provided to families who have already received assistance under the program for a cumulative total of 60 months. Up to 20% of the caseload in any one year can be exempted from the five-year time limit. States can set time limits shorter than five years. (2) Unmarried teen parents must stay in school and live at home or in an adult-supervised setting. (3) Persons ever convicted of a drug-related felony are banned for life from TANF and the Food Stamp Program, although states can opt out of the ban or limit it. (4) Persons who do not cooperate with child support enforcement requirements including paternity establishment receive a reduced benefit or may lose it entirely. In addition, no more than 15 percent of a state's TANF grant may be used for administrative costs. State dollars which are a part of the federal TANF program are not subject to these restrictions, except for the child support enforcement requirements. Programs funded outside of TANF and funded by expenditures of state funds are not subject to any of these restrictions.

State maintenance of effort: To receive their full allocation, states must demonstrate they are spending on activities related to TANF 80% of the amount of non-federal funds they spent in FY 1994 on AFDC and related programs. If they meet minimum work requirements, their mandatory state effort is reduced to 75 %.

Additional funding: There are several ways that states can supplement their block grant funding, including: a \$2 billion (over 5 years) contingency fund for states experiencing economic downturns, an \$800 million (over 4 years) fund to provide supplemental grants for states with high population growth and low welfare spending, a \$1.7 billion federal loan fund, a \$1 billion (over 5 years) appropriation to make performance bonuses, and a \$100 million annual appropriation for bonuses to states that reduce the number of out-of-wedlock births and abortions.

Effective dates: States had until July 1, 1997 to submit their state plans and begin implementing TANF, although they could opt to implement earlier. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) reviews the plans only for completeness. States must allow for a 45-day comment period on the state plan by local governments and private organizations and consult with them.

Work requirements: The following work requirements are established under TANF

Unless a state opts out, non-exempt adult recipients who are not working must participate in community service two months after they start receiving benefits. Adults are required to participate in work activities two years after they start receiving assistance under the block grant. States **may exempt** parents with children **under age 1 from work requirements**, and may disregard them in calculating participation rates. States may not penalize parents with children under 6 for not working if child care is not available.

Each state must meet the following minimum work participation rates:

Fiscal Year	All Families		Two-Parent Families	
	Participation Rate	Weekly Hours of Work	Participation Rate	Weekly Hours of Work
1997	25%	20	75%	35
1998	30%	20	75%	35
1999	35%	25	90%	35
2000	40%	30	90%	35
2001	45%	30	90%	35
2002	50%	30	90%	35

The law provides for a pro rata reduction in the participation rates for caseload reductions below FY 1995 levels that are not due to changes in eligibility or federal law. The rules governing what activities count toward these work participation rates are complex. In general, participants must do real subsidized or unsubsidized work. Circumstances under which education (except in the case of teen parents), training or job search count toward meeting the requirements are limited.

Penalties: States can be penalized for misusing TANF funds and for failure to:

- Submit required reports
- Satisfy work requirements
- Participate in the Income and Eligibility Verification System
- Comply with paternity establishment and Child Support Enforcement requirements
- Repay a federal loan on time
- Meet state maintenance of effort requirements under either TANF or the contingency fund
- Comply with five-year limit on assistance
- Maintain assistance when parents cannot find child care for a child under age 6.

States are generally given the opportunity to claim reasonable cause and develop a corrective compliance plan before they can be penalized. The total penalty amount assessed in a given year may not exceed 25 percent of a state's block grant allotment.

Medicaid: Medicaid eligibility is delinked from receipt of family assistance, except that states are required to provide medical assistance to individuals based on income and resource eligibility requirements under Title IV-A as in effect prior to passage of the new law. Up to \$500 million is authorized for increased federal Medicaid matching for additional administrative costs related to this provision.

Tribal provision: Federally-recognized Indian tribes may apply to operate a TANF block grant program. TANF allotments for Indian tribes are based upon previous state expenditures of Federal dollars in AFDC, EA, and JOBS in fiscal year 1994. Tribal TANF programs can be implemented as early as July 1, 1997. Like states, Indian tribes may use their TANF funding in any manner reasonably calculated to accomplish the purposes of TANF, and they have broad flexibility to determine eligibility, method of assistance, and benefit levels.

of the welfare system. This shift significantly challenges the existing welfare delivery mechanisms and requires Federal, state, and local policy makers and administrators to redefine their roles and responsibilities in this new system. The requirement to “reinvent” the system is accompanied by the challenge to change the welfare culture at the Federal level, across state governments, in communities, and at the front line where services are rendered and expectations are placed on welfare recipients.

2. A NEW FEDERAL ROLE—CATALYST FOR CHANGE

With the new law, responsibility for America’s poor has shifted largely to states and localities. The historical roles of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and the Office of Family Assistance (OFA) have changed from that of manager and regulator of the welfare system to that of facilitator and catalyst for TANF implementation. This devolution of locus of control offers much flexibility in program design to meet community needs, but it significantly adds to the complexity of putting together all of the pieces of the welfare reform puzzle.

Some researchers suggest that the devolution of welfare policy, as well as its “redirection,” has been under way for more than a decade, in that states began to request waivers of Federal AFDC requirements under the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981. Initially, waivers were restricted to initiatives that contributed to a limited set of national questions, with a primary focus on welfare-to-work strategies. But by 1990, state objectives under the waiver authority expanded well beyond the original confines, and states began to use waivers to address such issues as labor supply, family formation and stability, fertility decisions, and parenting skills (Corbett, 1997; General Accounting Office, 1996). By 1996, 72 different waivers had been granted to 43 different states. Many of these “experiments in social engineering” laid the groundwork for the basic program elements of PRWORA.

Due to the extensive implementation of waiver demonstrations, variation in welfare policies across states has increased in recent years. At the time that Congress enacted PRWORA, almost all of the 50 states were at different places in welfare policy and program development. The passage of PRWORA launched states on a journey of reform in which they all started at different places, motivated by different objectives, and headed toward different goals. This diversity in TANF policy and program implementation has required new alliances to be built on the state and local levels. Given the focus on employment placement and worker participation rates, state welfare agencies must collaborate with other state agencies and their private sector and community partners if they are to succeed in moving people from welfare to work.

Given the magnitude of variance between state programs, it is difficult to fully grasp the nuances of each state effort and to evaluate the portability or adaptability of a seemingly promising practice from one state or community to another. Based on legislative mandates within PRWORA, however, it is still incumbent upon the Federal government to monitor state actions and provide oversight and guidance to the states as they develop new initiatives and strive to effectively implement their welfare reform agendas.

The Federal government has attempted to fulfill these monitoring and oversight responsibilities through a variety of research, technical assistance, and coordination efforts. First, through research conducted by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), and the Office of Community Services (OCS), DHHS has been a focal point for supporting welfare-to-work research and disseminating research results. ASPE has conducted a number of evaluation and research studies on cross-cutting program or policy issues of national importance. In particular, a number of studies have been done on various welfare reform approaches and the impacts of these programs on the populations served. In addition, OPRE, under the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families, has conducted specific research and evaluation on the effectiveness and efficiency of programs designed to improve the economic and social well-being of children and families under a variety of state waiver demonstrations. Finally, OCS has conducted a variety of evaluations of the Demonstration Partnership Program projects and supported the evaluation of projects funded under the Job Opportunities for Low-Income Individuals Program. These studies provide a great deal of insight into potentially promising practices in welfare reform already under way.

In addition to research coordination and dissemination, DHHS has launched extensive technical assistance efforts to help states implement TANF. The Child Care Bureau, the Office of Child Support and Enforcement, and the ACF/Office of Family Assistance have provided funding to states for technical assistance in the areas of child care, child support and enforcement activities, domestic violence assessment and referral pilots, and welfare culture change pilots. Furthermore, ACF has supported several contracts for technical assistance to states and localities specifically designed to ease TANF implementation or to deal with specific TANF populations.

DHHS has done an exceptional job of sponsoring needed research and evaluation and developing an array of technical assistance mechanisms for states and localities. In redefining itself as a catalyst for TANF implementation, ACF not only serves as a locus for the generation of ideas, but also as a center for the facilitation of information sharing across states and localities. Nonetheless, the traditional *vertical flow* of policy guidance from the Federal level to the state and local levels has become somewhat disrupted, and the creation of the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network is a critical component of the overall national strategy to effectively develop and nurture a new *horizontal flow* of information about what is working and not working

regarding TANF implementation. The Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network has developed a variety of cross-state mechanisms and opportunities for information sharing, teaming, and cooperating. Also, the Network serves as a vehicle for ACF to continue sharing its expertise in welfare policy and job programs. Through the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network, ACF has bridged the information exchange with multitudes of states and local entities, creating a new knowledge foundation through peer-to-peer exchanges.

3. STATES: FRONT AND CENTER

PRWORA places state governments “front and center” on policy development and program implementation. To carry out these new responsibilities, states need to develop new alliances with local governments to create collaborative cross-agency relationships; to develop public-private partnerships; and to establish a new level of cooperation with non-profit entities, foundations, and community leaders. This need for peer-to-peer sharing about “what’s working” becomes amplified as the welfare caseload decreases and a larger proportion of recipients face multiple barriers to employment placement, including fewer job skills and longer-term dependency on welfare. States recognize that their existing services and supports for TANF recipients need to evolve, and they want to learn from their peers across the nation who are dealing with the same issues.

As the clock on recipients’ time limits continues to tick, caseloads continue to decline, and states begin to work with harder-to-employ populations, there is an urgent need for quick and easy mechanisms by which to understand and interpret the lessons being learned throughout the country. Previous research and technical assistance mechanisms have focused primarily on welfare-to-work strategies developed to assist all welfare recipients, but there is a lack of research on programs targeting the multi-barrier population. Innovative strategies for dealing with multi-barrier populations and worker retention issues at the state and local level—many of which have been undergoing some level of evaluation—are beginning to emerge and evolve as tested practices. The following chapter details the lessons learned through the *Needs Assessment* and establishes a baseline of information regarding the specific challenges to TANF implementation, as well as a knowledge foundation about “what’s working” across the nation.

II. WHAT'S WORKING—WHAT'S NOT: FINDINGS FROM THE NATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

II. WHAT'S WORKING—WHAT'S NOT: FINDINGS FROM THE NATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This report, *Progress and Promise of TANF Implementation*, completes the knowledge development component for the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network. Essentially, this report reflects the first systematic analysis of TANF implementation on the state level since the passage of PRWORA. The following analysis is based on information gathered through the national *Needs Assessment* that was conducted by the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network staff. The *Needs Assessment* gathered in-depth information about the key challenges states are facing as well as critical information on the successes states are experiencing in moving people from welfare to work. This report analyzes the *Needs Assessment* data.

The first section in this chapter briefly describes the research design and methodology utilized in conducting the *Needs Assessment*. The second section provides an overview of the key challenges to TANF implementation from a national perspective. In this second section, we examine the top 12 challenges identified by the states and highlight several promising practices that have been uncovered during this *Needs Assessment* to address these challenges.

1. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network staff conducted a national *Needs Assessment* with 50 states, 2 territories, and the District of Columbia. The purpose of the *Needs Assessment* was to develop a knowledge base about states' experiences with the TANF program and the implementation of the new provisions under PRWORA. Knowledge development included two separate yet complementary objectives: (1) identify the challenges faced by states as they implement the TANF program; and (2) explore emerging innovations designed to address those challenges. Based on the information gathered through the *Needs Assessment*, the Network staff has developed recommendations on areas of interest for technical assistance and the most effective technical assistance delivery methods to be utilized.

To effectively conduct this *Needs Assessment*, the Network staff's strategy focused on the efficient collection of information and the production of quick results. This strategy consisted of four distinct phases: (1) grounding the assessment in existing knowledge about state-level implementation of TANF; (2) establishing collaborations with a variety of stakeholders working with states (on the Federal level, as well as advocates); (3) gathering data; and (4) analyzing data.

1.1 Grounding the Assessment in Existing Knowledge Base

Prior to contacting the states directly, the first phase of our strategy involved getting grounded in the knowledge base about states' early experiences with welfare reform. We began this process by conducting a thorough literature review to analyze the issues being tracked and evaluated by major research organizations, such as Mathematica, Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC), and the Urban Institute. To enhance and supplement this knowledge base, we met with staff members from the Federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), the Office of Community Service (OCS), and technical assistance staff members of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). OPRE provided up-to-date information on states' waiver demonstration projects and the existing evaluations either completed or under way of those projects. Similarly, OCS provided insight into states' early experiences with post-employment demonstration projects. The ACF technical assistance staff provided us with overall guidance and advice about how to proceed with the project and critiqued our *State Issue Guide* and discussion protocol.

In addition to the state-based information resident in the central office, the Network staff recognized the important role that the regional offices (ROs) play in any project involving the states and the wealth of information that exists on the regional level. From the onset of this project, it was clear that staff at the regional level have very close connections to the state offices and TANF staff in their regions. Furthermore, the RO staff is cognizant of the political culture at the state level and their advice and direction were an invaluable component to the successful completion of the *Needs Assessment*. The Network staff and our Federal Project Officer (FPO) held an introductory teleconference with representatives from all 10 regional offices. Following this phone call, the team scheduled site visits with each of the regional offices¹ to gather information about its perspective on the states in its region, as well as reflections on the state discussion guide and teleconference protocol. Prior to each regional office visit, an advance package was prepared that contained a project fact sheet and presentation materials. The visits/calls with the regional offices enabled the Network staff to have the best possible “intelligence” about the issues confronting the states and to obtain feedback on the discussion guide and receive input on how to best proceed with the state calls. Each regional office provided the Network staff with state contact names. In addition, the RO made introductory calls to each of the state contacts in their region, introducing the overall project and notifying the states that they would be contacted by the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network.

¹ Network staff visited 8 of the 10 regions in person. Teleconferences were held with regions IX and X.

1.2 Establishing Collaborations

ACF has funded a variety of technical assistance efforts regarding TANF implementation. The first of these ACF-funded initiatives is the Technical Assistance Group (TAG). TAG comprises state, Federal, employer, and community development corporation representatives who have a stake in the implementation of welfare reform. The purpose of TAG is to identify and disseminate information on ongoing and emerging state implementation and operational issues, as well as successful and problematic practices, as states operate welfare reform programs. In addition, ACF has contracted with the National Governors' Association Center for Best Practices (NGA) and the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) to provide cross-program technical assistance to the states. The NGA/NCSL team is working to address the cross-program and interagency challenges brought on by the new welfare system and will serve as a clearinghouse for information sharing and dissemination among states, Federal agencies, and the policy and research community. Finally, in coordination with the Departments of Education and Labor, ACF has funded the Job Skills Preparation Capacity-Building Initiative. This initiative is designed to replicate a successful welfare-to-work program model in which community colleges help welfare clients achieve self-sufficiency by preparing them for employment. Through this contract, a series of workshops are being hosted on community college campuses to disseminate information and facilitate discussions about the service delivery role community colleges can play in preparing welfare recipients for employment as well as skills enhancement. Conference participants learn how they can duplicate this model program in their community.

We were assiduous in our efforts to avoid duplicating the work of other organizations providing technical assistance or disseminating information to the states about welfare reform, and particularly diligent in collaborating with entities that ACF had funded. Before launching the *Needs Assessment*, the Network staff contacted and met with each of these entities to discuss ways in which we could effectively work together, build on existing research and information, and avoid going to the states with the same set of questions or concerns. In addition, given the critical role of the Welfare Information Network (WIN), and the fact that they had recently completed a state survey of issues, we also met with the Executive Director of WIN to talk about the objectives and planned activities of the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network. During these meetings, all of these entities provided their reflections on the *State Issue Guide* as well as the discussion protocol. These collaborations provided the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network with resounding connections to the welfare advocacy community, as well as to state policy makers and administrators.

1.3 Gathering Data

This solid grounding in state experiences assisted us when we launched our state calls and allowed us to assure the states that we had “done our homework” regarding their welfare reform initiatives. Thus, we could move quickly into meaningful dialogue with the states regarding the challenges and successes encountered in implementing TANF. Taking into consideration the information obtained from ACF central office staff, OPRE, OCS, TAG, NGA, NCSL, WIN, and the regional staff, the Network staff developed a structured discussion protocol and *State Issue Guide* to be utilized with the states (see Appendix). In addition to sharing this discussion protocol and guide with central office and regional ACF staff, NGA, NCSL, and WIN, we also pilot-tested the *State Issue Guide* with the state of Florida. Input from all of these sources was incorporated into the final instrument.

After obtaining state contact information from the RO, and after the RO introduced the project to each of their states, the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network staff proceeded to make telephone calls to each state to schedule a 1-hour conference call. Network staff suggested that states invite not only representatives from the TANF program, but also representatives from the Department of Labor, Child Care, Child Support Enforcement, and others whom they might deem appropriate. While this request posed somewhat of a challenge for states, the majority of states were successful in having a diverse representation at the table throughout the conference call. Regional office staff participated in most of the conference calls with the states. The Network staff provided the regional office and state staff with copies of the *State Issue Guide* prior to the state calls and used this instrument to record the information provided during the conference call. Calls with states took place from January 8, 1998, through May 15, 1998. Information was gathered from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories of Puerto Rico and Guam. Conference calls were conducted with 48 states and two territories. Faxed copies of the *State Issue Guide* were received from Alaska, New Mexico, and the District of Columbia.

1.4 Analyzing Data

The *State Issue Guide* consisted of open-ended questions regarding:

- The design of the state’s TANF program
- The state’s current and future challenges in implementing its welfare reform initiative
- The successes states were experiencing in implementing the provisions of PRWORA.

In addition, an ordinal scale measuring degree of “challenge” was utilized to gauge states’ responses to implementing a variety of strategic interventions, support services, management practices, and services to identified hard-to-employ populations. There were 39 issue areas ranked. This ordinal scale measured from 1 to 5, with 1 representing “least challenging” and 5 representing “most challenging.” The responses to this section of the *State Issue Guide* provided for a comparative analysis of state challenges and successes.

All of the self-reported data was coded and entered into a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) database. In addition, we added a variety of demographic and economic variables for each state.² We conducted an extensive data analysis using SPSS. Specifically, we examined the data to determine whether there was a trend across the states regarding challenge areas or areas of expertise. We investigated possible commonalities and differences between states within the same Federal region. We explored possible commonalities among states based on the size of the state’s population. Also, we examined whether there were differences in issues raised by state-administered welfare systems versus county-administered systems. In addition, we tried to determine if the level of urbanization influenced the issues raised by a state. These state discussions provided a wealth of information about the struggles states are encountering as they implement their welfare reform initiatives.

These state discussions also provided us with insights as to where states are developing emerging innovations to address some of these challenges. As anticipated, many of these innovations are occurring on the local or county level. Thus, in order to obtain a more complete picture of states’ experiences, particularly regarding their highlighted innovations, we also conducted discussions with seven county/local entities throughout the nation. These discussions added breadth and depth to the emerging picture. While all the states were asked to provide us with information for this portion of the *Needs Assessment*, given both time and financial constraints, we had to limit the number of county/local discussions. In choosing which organizations to include in the analysis, we considered the geographic location and the programmatic focus of the county/local entity. We included representation from community-based, faith-based, and non-profit organizations working on their own or with the state to serve the needs of families as they attempt to achieve self-sufficiency. These calls took place in May of 1998. The local discussions were conducted in the states of Arizona, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Dakota, and Ohio. The findings of these discussions are included with the state profile in Chapter III.

As a part of our effort to disseminate the information quickly, two separate presentations were conducted based on the preliminary analysis of information obtained from interviews with

² These demographic and socio-economic variables were drawn from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, mid-decade reports.

30 states and Puerto Rico. The first presentation was for ACF central office and regional staff. About 30 central office staff attended, along with Department of Labor representatives, and all 10 regions participated via a conference call hook-up. The second briefing was to the members of the Technical Assistance Group (TAG). Approximately 50 people attended this session—members of the TAG, as well as representatives from a number of Federal departments and other contractors for HHS. Both of these presentations took place in March of 1998. Although ACF central office staff has been informally briefed on these final findings, this report will be the first formal release of complete information from this *Needs Assessment*. The following section highlights our findings regarding the progress and promise of TANF implementation by the states.

2. A NATIONAL PROFILE—CHALLENGES TO TANF IMPLEMENTATION

In accordance with PRWORA, the total cash assistance block grant is \$16.4 billion for each year from FY 1996 to FY 2002. Each state receives a fixed amount based on its historical expenditures for the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, Emergency Assistance program (EA), and Job Opportunities and Basic Skills program (JOBS). Each state receives equal to or greater than (1) the average of Federal payments for these programs in FY 1992-94; (2) Federal payments in FY 1994, plus additional EA funding for some states; or (3) Federal payments in FY 1995. States can carry over unused grant funds from one year to subsequent years. (See Exhibit II-1 for state funding chart and caseload statistics.)

States must develop a state plan with “objective criteria for delivery of benefits and determining eligibility” and provide opportunities for individuals adversely affected by the state plan to be heard. PRWORA grants states much flexibility in program design and delivery options, and states exercise this flexibility extensively. Thus, it is difficult to do a cross-state comparison regarding TANF implementation because of this program diversity, but one of the objectives of the *Needs Assessment* was to determine if there were common concerns among the states that could be addressed through effective peer-to-peer technical assistance.

Although much diversity exists among states, we uncovered several challenge areas that the states had in common. Exhibit II-2 shows the issues identified by states as their top challenges based on the analysis of the information gathered in the *Needs Assessment*.³ This list of issues is based on those items that were rated “most challenging” or given a “5” by the greatest number of states. As highlighted in the previous section, there were 39 separate issues

³ This list reflects the top 12 issues because there were a variety of issues that were tied among the top 10 challenges. There was a tie for third place between clients with substance abuse problems and post-employment services; a tie for sixth place between clients with learning disabilities, rural clients, and evaluation and monitoring; and a tie for ninth place between culture change and domestic violence victims.

EXHIBIT II-1 STATE FACT SHEET					
State Name	TANF Program Name	TANF Recipients Caseload as of 9/97	% Caseload Change 8/96 - 9/97	FY 98 TANF GRANTS (\$)	Allocated 97-98 Welfare-to-Work (\$)
Alabama	Family Assistance Program (FAP)	67,839	-32%	95,986,661	13,977,955
Alaska	Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP)	32,776	-8%	65,267,778	2,926,500
Arizona	Employing and Moving People Off Welfare and Encouraging Responsibility (EMPOWER)	138,846	-18%	228,181,526	17,417,668
Arkansas	Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA)	42,834	-24%	58,230,354	8,490,290
California	CalWORKS	2,225,893	-14%	3,733,817,784	190,417,247
Colorado	Colorado Works	59,065	-38%	139,324,514	9,878,865
Connecticut	Jobs First Program	151,631	-5%	266,788,107	12,005,943
Delaware	A Better Chance Program (ABC)	20,550	-13%	32,290,981	2,761,875
District of Columbia	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)	61,602	-11%	92,609,815	4,646,445
Florida	Work and Gain Economic Self-sufficiency (WAGES)	375,819	-30%	576,886,885	50,756,512
Georgia	Work First	237,191	-28%	339,720,207	28,409,496
Hawaii	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)	75,030	+13%	98,904,788	5,085,523
Idaho	Temporary Assistance for Families in Idaho Program (TAFI)	4,945	-77%	32,780,444	2,793,847
Illinois	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)	556,426	-13%	585,056,960	48,662,838
Indiana	Indiana Manpower Placement and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT)	106,710	-25%	206,799,109	14,552,407
Iowa	Family Investment Program (FIP)	73,816	-14%	131,524,959	8,331,799
Kansas	Kansas Works	45,603	-28%	101,931,061	6,668,399
Kentucky	Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program (K-TAP)	145,713	-15%	181,287,669	17,722,913
Louisiana	Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP)	127,752	-44%	168,072,394	23,707,338
Maine	Aid to Families with Dependent Children	44,213	-18%	78,120,889	5,156,417
Maryland	Family Investment Program (FIP)	145,435	-25%	229,098,032	14,940,556
Massachusetts	Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA)	194,401	-11%	459,371,116	20,692,295
Michigan	To Strengthen Michigan Families (TSMF)	415,487	-17%	775,352,858	42,226,331
Minnesota	Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)	145,220	-14%	267,984,886	14,503,409
Mississippi	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)	82,426	-33%	88,943,530	12,990,778
Missouri	Missouri Families Mutual Responsibility Plan (MF-MRP)	177,695	-20%	217,051,740	19,767,398
Montana	Families Achieving Independence in Montana Program (FAIM)	23,106	-18%	46,666,707	3,194,443
Nebraska	Employment First	38,111	-1%	58,028,579	4,021,585

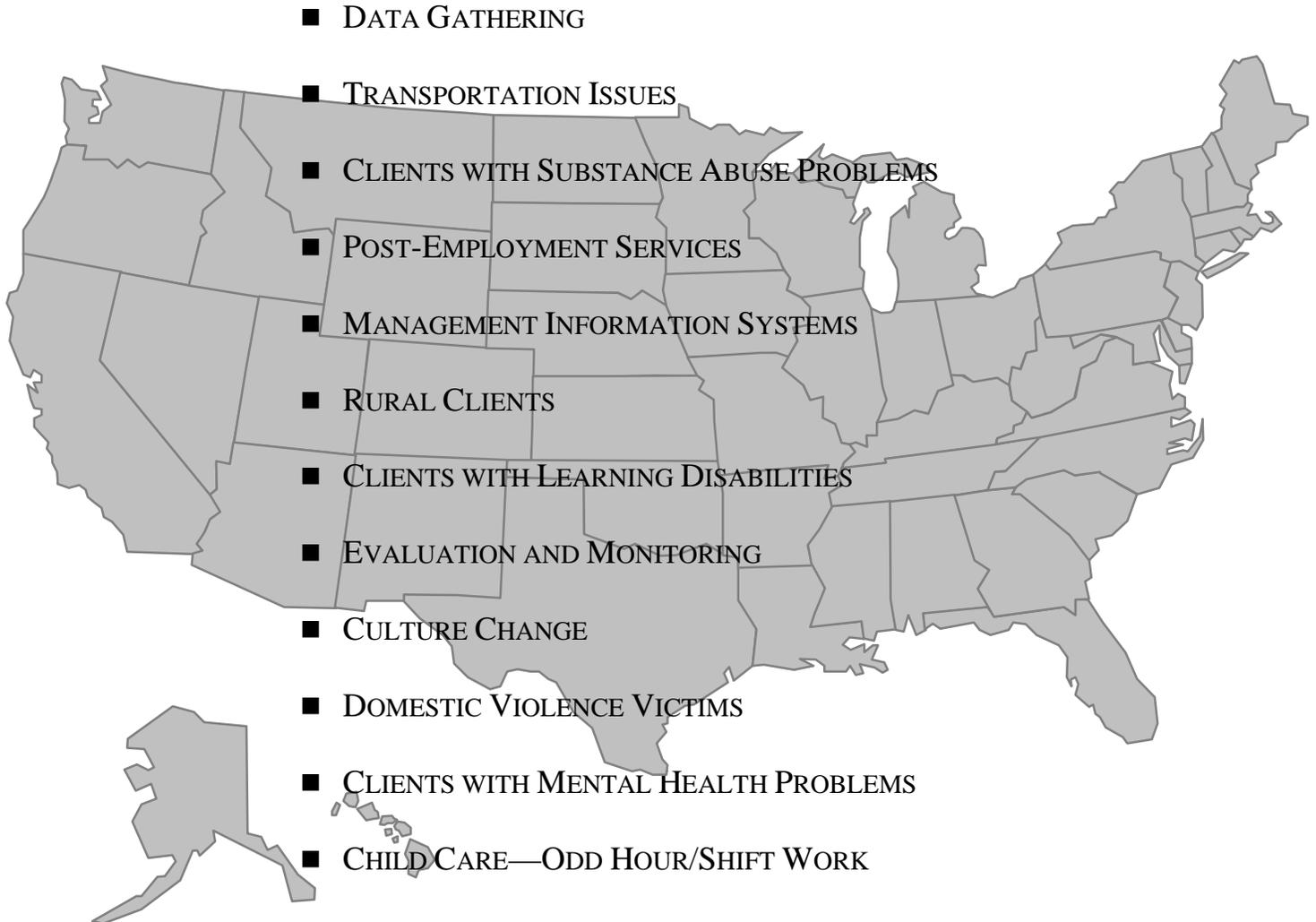
EXHIBIT II-1 (CONTINUED)
STATE FACT SHEET

State Name	TANF Program Name	TANF Recipients Caseload as of 9/97	% Caseload Change 8/96 - 9/97	FY 98 TANF GRANTS (\$)	Allocated 97-98 Welfare-to-Work (\$)
Nevada	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)	28,157	-17%	44,875,852	3,384,072
New Hampshire	Family Assistance Program (FAP)	16,553	-28%	38,521,261	2,761,875
New Jersey	Work First New Jersey (WFNJ)	247,200	-10%	404,034,823	23,257,092
New Mexico	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)	56,520	-43%	129,339,257	9,715,600
New York	Family Assistance Program	973,123	-15%	2,442,930,602	96,886,094
North Carolina	Work First Program (WF)	218,863	-18%	310,935,520	25,332,173
North Dakota	The Training, Education, Employment, and Management Project (TEEM Project)	9,962	-24%	26,399,809	2,761,875
Ohio	Ohio Works First (OWF)	418,830	-24%	727,968,260	44,608,022
Oklahoma	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)	72,393	-25%	148,013,558	11,741,519
Oregon	Oregon Options	52,364	-33%	167,924,513	8,636,930
Pennsylvania	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)	410,363	-23%	719,499,305	44,295,711
Rhode Island	Family Independence Program (FIP)	54,624	-3%	95,021,587	4,419,858
South Carolina	Family Independence Program (FIP)	75,624	-33%	99,967,824	12,006,432
South Dakota	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)	11,570	-27%	21,893,519	2,761,875
Tennessee	Families First (FF)	157,608	-34%	196,717,069	21,643,975
Texas	Achieving Change for Texans (ACT)	464,069	-28%	498,949,726	76,058,852
Utah	Family Employment Program	30,996	-21%	78,925,393	4,627,777
Vermont	Vermont's Welfare Restructuring Project (WRP)	21,817	-10%	47,353,181	2,761,875
Virginia	Virginia Independence Program (VIP)	114,450	-25%	158,285,172	16,548,621
Washington	Work First Program	236,763	-12%	404,331,754	22,674,526
West Virginia	West Virginia Works	74,093	-17%	110,176,310	9,805,500
Wisconsin	Wisconsin Works (W-2)	88,575	-40%	318,188,410	12,885,951
Wyoming	POWER Program (Personal Opportunities With Employment Responsibilities Program)	3,824	-76%	21,781,446	2,761,875
Puerto Rico	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)	138,045	-9%	71,562,501	34,566,095
Guam	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)	7,894	-5%	3,465,478	585,252

* Virgin Islands was not a part of the Needs Assessment.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families.

EXHIBIT II-2 NATIONAL TOP 12 TANF CHALLENGES



that the states were asked to respond to based on the scale of least challenging—“1”—to most challenging—“5”. These 39 issues were primarily focused on programmatic interventions, management practices, or concerns regarding caseload characteristics. States were specifically told not to rate the importance of the issue to their overall welfare reform agenda, but to rate the issue according to the degree of challenge to the state. Again, the focus of the study was to identify those areas of state concern that might lend themselves to peer-to-peer technical assistance.

Based on the findings, we can determine that there is much similarity among the concerns voiced by the states:

- Approximately 62 percent of the states rated data gathering and transportation as “most challenging.”
- More than half of the states, 53 percent, said that they were struggling with clients with substance abuse problems and in providing effective post-employment services that keeps TANF recipients in their jobs, or exposes them to opportunities for better jobs.
- Approximately 45 percent said that management information systems was a major concern.
- A little more than 38 percent of the states said that rural clients, clients with learning disabilities, and evaluation and monitoring were key issues for them.
- Over a third of the states said that they were most challenged by changing the welfare culture—within the organization, at the front line, with the employer community, and with the clients.
- Approximately 34 percent of the states were struggling with the development of effective screening and referral mechanisms for victims of domestic violence.
- An estimated one-third of the states shared concerns about clients with mental health problems, and voiced concerns about appropriate support structures and referral systems for these clients.
- Approximately 28 percent of the states also raised child care access, particularly during odd-hours or for shift workers, as a major challenge.

It is important to understand the similarity of concerns raised among states so that the Federal government can provide the most effective technical assistance mechanisms to address the issues of greatest concern. Establishing this national profile is critical, but it is also important to delve deeper into the database to determine if there are significant similarities or differences between subsets of states based on population, level of urbanization, or administrative locus of the TANF program, as well as by region.

2.1 Population

Based on population, the states were divided into three groups: the largest 10 states, the middle 30 states, and the smallest 10 states. This type of “grouping” is often utilized by researchers when doing comparative analyses of large state/small state distinctions. When breaking down this national data into three subsets, there are many issues that are essentially tied in ranking for “most challenging.” By limiting the issues to the top five concerns raised by states, however, we can clearly distinguish the top five issues for each of these groupings (see Exhibit II-3). Although there is some difference in the priority ranking of the issues, four issues are prevalent among the top five concerns for each of these groupings:

- Data gathering
- Transportation
- Post-employment services
- Clients with substance abuse problems.

Clearly, these issues cross all states regardless of size of state. The fifth issue varies widely. For large states it is management information systems, for middle-sized states, it is services for rural clients, and for small states, it is child care access.

EXHIBIT II-3 TOP FIVE ISSUES: DIFFERENCES AMONG STATES BY SIZE*		
LARGE	MIDDLE	SMALL
Data Gathering	Transportation Issues	Data Gathering
Post-Employment	Post-Employment Services	Transportation Issues
Management Information Systems	Clients with Substance Abuse Problems	Client with Substance Abuse Problems
Transportation Issues	Data Gathering	Child Care Access
Clients with Substance Abuse Problems	Rural Clients	Post-Employment Services

* Based on population.

Note: Shaded cells indicate top challenge unique to that group of states.

2.2 Urbanization

There was no correlation between urbanization and the issues raised by states. Assuming that more populated states are more urban, then there were slight, interesting nuances in the data, including the following:

- The issue of domestic violence screening and referral was rated by 7 out of the 10 largest states as “most” or “very” challenging, but only 4 out of the 10 small states rated domestic violence as “most” or “very” challenging
- 8 of the 10 largest states ranked “front-line culture change” as “most” or “very” challenging, but only 4 of the small states rated “front-line culture change” as “most” or “very” challenging.

These findings are potentially helpful to ACF in developing targeted assistance to rural states.

2.3 Administrative Locus

The Network staff also explored potential differences among states based on the locus of control of their TANF program. Twelve states have county-administered TANF programs.⁴ There is little variance in the top five issues for state- or county-administered programs (see Exhibit II-4). Once again, although the ranking of the priority of these issues shifts slightly, the same issues of data gathering, transportation, post-employment services, and clients with substance abuse problems appear on the top five concerns of states, regardless of whether they are state-administered or county-administered programs. The only item of difference is that in state-administered programs, the fifth greatest challenge is rural clients, whereas with county-based systems, it is management information systems.

EXHIBIT II-4	
STATE VS. COUNTY ADMINISTERED SYSTEMS	
STATE ADMINISTERED	COUNTY ADMINISTERED
1. Transportation Issues	1. Data Gathering
2. Post-Employment Services	2. Clients with Substance Abuse Problems
3. Data Gathering	3. Transportation Issues
4. Clients with Substance Abuse Problems	4. Post-Employment Services
5. Rural Clients	5. Management Information Systems

Note: Shaded cells indicate top challenge unique to that group of states.

⁴ The 12 states include: California, Colorado, Georgia, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

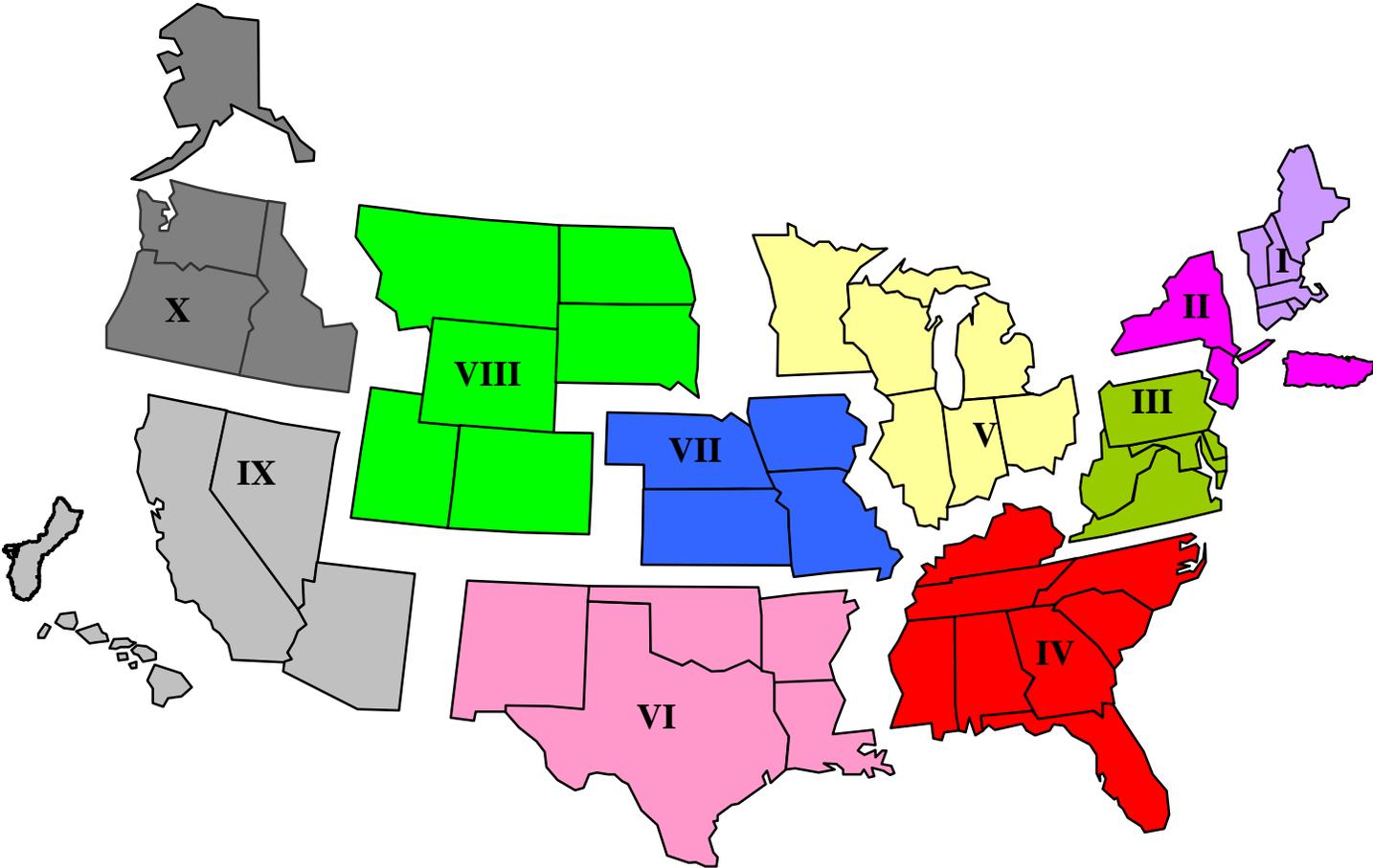
2.4 Regional Differences and Commonalities

A critical component of the analysis was an in-depth assessment of regional differences and commonalities. (See Exhibit II-5 for breakout of DHHS Federal Regions.) Specifically, we examined if there were certain geographic regions of the country that were experiencing particular problems regarding TANF implementation (see Exhibit II-6). Again the issues of transportation, post-employment services, clients with substance abuse problems, and data gathering appear almost across the board. But, outside of these four issues there seems to be quite a bit of variability among the regions. For the most part, the issues raised within each regional profile are on the top 12 issues for the nation.

Equally as important as understanding the commonalities among the regions is highlighting those concerns or issues that seem unique to one region and are not part of the national profile. There are seven separate challenges that fall into this category: (1) case management; (2) immigrant clients; (3) child care affordability; (4) non-custodial parents; (5) non-English speaking clients; (6) community service employment; and (7) affordable and adequate housing. States in Region I raised concerns with case management, child care affordability, and immigrant clients. Only 13 states ranked case management as most challenging, and only 6 states nationally ranked immigrant clients and child care affordability as “most challenging.” States/territories in Region II have listed working with “non-custodial parents” as a top challenge to TANF implementation. Although 12 states ranked this issue as most challenging, it was only within Region II that there was a general consensus within that region that this issue was pressing enough to be among the top five challenges. In Region III, the issue of non-English speaking clients was ranked as “most challenging,” whereas only 7 states nationwide ranked it as such. Similarly, within Region IV, the issue of “community service” was viewed by the Region IV states as one of the top five concerns. Only 9 states nationwide ranked this issue as a major challenge. Likewise, within Region V there was a consensus among the states that affordable and adequate housing was a critical issue to be addressed. Although there were 11 states in total to rank “housing” as a “most challenging” issue, only in Region V was there the general consensus among the states that this is one of the five most critical concerns.

The Network Staff also asked the states if they felt that technical assistance would be helpful in the areas identified as challenges. Across the board, states in all regions felt that peer-to-peer technical assistance would be very beneficial in the areas of transportation, post-employment services, clients with substance abuse problems, clients with learning disabilities, rural clients, and child care supports for odd-hour/shift workers. In the area of management information systems, there was general consensus that this was more an issue of Federal funding and state resources to update and develop new technological systems than a matter of peer technical assistance. In the area of data gathering, all the states felt that technical assistance was

**EXHIBIT II-5
DHHS FEDERAL REGIONS**



**EXHIBIT II-6
REGIONAL DIFFERENCES AND COMMONALITIES IN TANF CHALLENGES**

Issues	Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V	Region VI	Region VII	Region VIII	Region IX	Region X
Affordable and Adequate Housing					✓					
Case Management	✓									
Child Care Access	✓									
Child Care Affordability	✓									
Clients with Learning Disabilities	✓					✓				✓
Clients with Mental Health Problems	✓									✓
Clients with Substance Abuse Problems	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
Community Service				✓						
Culture Change		✓	✓						✓	✓
Data Gathering	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Domestic Violence Victims							✓			
Evaluation and Monitoring		✓						✓		✓
Immigrant Clients	✓									
Management Information Systems		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
Non-Custodial Parents		✓								
Non-English Speaking Clients			✓							
Post-Employment Services	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Rural Clients						✓	✓			✓
Transportation Issues	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

✓ indicates that this issue is a top concern for the majority of states in that region.

Shading indicates that the issue is unique to the region and deviates from the national profile.

needed, but that peer-to-peer provision of assistance would not be most helpful. The states need clarity and consistent direction from the Federal government regarding the necessary types of data to gather and report (see Exhibit II-7). All states stated that they welcomed the opportunity to be a TA provider, within reasonable time and resource constraints.

When questioned regarding the most effective mechanisms for technical assistance, states said that they wanted small, interactive workshops where there could be a lot of honest discussion about what's working, what's not and why. The states:

- Do not want workshops to be too long—not more than 1 day or 1½ days
- Suggested moderated teleconferences as a quick and easy way to share information
- Were highly supportive of the development of the Web site and the availability of the online forum.

States commented that they are very much victims of “information overload” and need quick and easy mechanisms to get information that they need.

3. UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRESS AND PROMISE OF TANF IMPLEMENTATION

Systematically and comprehensively developing this “ranking” of challenges for states is very important to any Federal technical assistance effort. It is also, however, critical to provide insights as to why the states said these issues were challenging and whether there have been emerging innovations developed to meet these challenges. The following sections provide some contextual information about these top 12 challenges and the work under way to address them. The following reflects information gathered primarily from the state discussions. It is sometimes uneven because state responses to the issues vary significantly.

3.1 Gathering and Reporting Meaningful Data

In late November 1997, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) published proposed regulations to govern important portions of the TANF program. These are the first proposed regulations provided to states regarding TANF implementation. They incorporate the core TANF accountability provisions, including work requirements, time limits, state penalties, and data collection and reporting requirements. These proposed regulations would require states to submit three quarterly reports—the TANF Data Report, the TANF Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Data report, and the TANF Financial Report. In addition, the

**EXHIBIT II-7
IDENTIFIED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS**

REGION/STATE		Data Gathering	Transportation Issues	Clients with Substance Abuse Problems	Post-Employment Services	Management Information Systems	Rural Clients	Clients with Learning Disabilities	Evaluation and Monitoring	Culture Change	Domestic Violence Victims	Clients with Mental Health Problems	Child Care
Region I	Connecticut										✓		✓
	Maine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
	Massachusetts		✓	✓	✓			✓				✓	
	New Hampshire		✓	✓	✓			✓				✓	✓
	Rhode Island	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
	Vermont		✓				✓					✓	✓
Region II	New Jersey					✓							
	New York		✓	✓		✓			✓				✓
	Puerto Rico	✓		✓		✓				✓	✓		
Region III	Delaware	✓			✓								
	District of Columbia							✓				✓	
	Maryland			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		
	Pennsylvania	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	Virginia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
	West Virginia		✓		✓		✓			✓	✓		
Region IV	Alabama	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			
	Florida												
	Georgia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
	Kentucky				✓				✓	✓			
	Mississippi					✓							
	North Carolina	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		
	South Carolina		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
	Tennessee												
Region V	Illinois		✓		✓					✓			
	Indiana		✓										
	Michigan												
	Minnesota	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
	Ohio				✓								
	Wisconsin												
Region VI	Arkansas	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓					
	Louisiana		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
	New Mexico												
	Oklahoma		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Texas			✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	

**EXHIBIT II-7 (CONTINUED)
IDENTIFIED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS**

REGION/STATE		Data Gathering	Transportation Issues	Clients with Substance Abuse Problems	Post-Employment Services	Management Information Systems	Rural Clients	Clients with Learning Disabilities	Evaluation and Monitoring	Culture Change	Domestic Violence Victims	Clients with Mental Health Problems	Child Care
Region VII	Iowa		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓
	Kansas		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
	Missouri		✓							✓	✓		
	Nebraska		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓
Region VIII	Colorado	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓	
	Montana	✓		✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	
	North Dakota		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓		
	South Dakota	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				✓
	Utah		✓				✓			✓			
	Wyoming	✓											
Region IX	Arizona		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	
	California	✓				✓							
	Guam	✓				✓			✓	✓			
	Hawaii		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	Nevada	✓			✓	✓			✓				
Region X	Alaska		✓				✓			✓			
	Idaho			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
	Oregon			✓	✓			✓				✓	
	Washington	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

Based on *Needs Assessment*—✓ indicates issues ranked as “most challenging” and wanted technical assistance.

states would be required to submit two annual reports—a program report and performance report—for inclusion into the DHHS annual report to Congress. These proposed regulations specifically require certain “data elements” that need to be collected and reported on by the states.

In 8 of 10 regions, states concurred that they need technical assistance on this issue. (Network staff suggest that the timing of the discussions soon after release of the proposed rules probably helped push “data gathering” to the top of states’ list of concerns.) States suggested that technical assistance be provided by Federal policy makers and that this issue is outside the purview of state peer-to-peer technical assistance.

3.2 Developing Transportation Initiatives

Transportation plays a crucial role in every person's life. The role of transportation is no different in the life of welfare recipients, and perhaps is even a larger issue for those who are seeking to make the transition from welfare-to-work. The lack of transportation is a major challenge for welfare recipients, because without it, they cannot have access to their local welfare office, training centers, jobs, or child care providers. The findings from the *Needs Assessment* confirm transportation—specifically rural, odd-hour and reverse commuting—as a major barrier to moving people from welfare to work and a major challenge for states as they implement TANF. Approximately 70 percent of the states rated transportation as a major challenge.

The Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) has encouraged states and metropolitan areas to collaborate with local human resource providers in developing local solutions to meet the needs of the welfare-to-work population. Specifically, the Administration's surface transportation reauthorization proposal includes a 6-year, \$600 million competitive grant program designed to help states and localities connect welfare recipients to jobs. In particular, the Department of Transportation is encouraging metropolitan areas and states to assess their transportation needs and collaborate with local human resource providers in developing local solutions to meet those needs. Several pilot projects have been funded to assist in creating these innovative strategies.

In response to the challenge posed by the lack of transportation for welfare recipients who are trying to achieve self-sufficiency, a number of states and localities have begun to experiment with ways in which they can provide transportation services to recipients. The strategies initiated by states to remove these barriers include van pooling, vehicle leasing, free bus passes, taxi service, and the use of school buses and headstart buses to transport welfare recipients to their interviews and jobs. Regardless of the strategies used, however, there is one commonality among them: they require the commitment and collaborative efforts of all parties involved.

A number of states have conducted studies to further define and solve the transportation barriers of their recipients. The state of New Jersey has used computer-based geographic information systems (GIS) mapping to determine where recipients live in comparison to where employment opportunities are located. Through a collaborative effort between the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Family Independence Agency (FIA), and the Michigan Jobs Commission (MJC), the state initiated the MichiVan program—statewide vanpooling program—and local ridesharing offices. By providing rides for extended hours, transportation services to day care centers, job interviews, and providing funds to extend service

hours and areas of operation in the state, the collaboration between these players has eliminated a great deal of the transportation barriers for welfare recipients in the state. Similarly, South Carolina's Department of Social Services' Office of Family Independence (FI) hired a project administrator from the state's Department of Transportation (SCDOT) to develop transportation strategies for the state. A number of strategies include temporary van rentals and the rotation of leased vehicles among county offices to transport recipients to their employment and training sites.

To help meet the transportation needs of its rural population, North Carolina's Department of Transportation is promoting rural vanpooling by providing vans to county transit systems. The agency expects that local employers and employees will facilitate this process by working with the transit authorities and contributing to the operating costs. The state of Oregon has been utilizing school buses and volunteer carpools to transport members of the Glendale and Azalea rural communities. In this part of the state, the local school district has allowed local residents to ride the school buses and volunteers provide rides to those who need access to education and employment opportunities in the nearby cities. TANF recipients in both Louisiana and Tennessee have the option to participate in vanpool programs that will provide them with access to employment, training and educational sites. In Tennessee, the vanpool services make stops at daycare centers to drop off and pick up children, and the cost of the children's ride is provided by the state's Department of Human Services. In Montana, headstart buses pick up parents along with children and transport the parent to either a job or training site.

In Buffalo, New York, the Niagara Frontier Transit Authority (NFTA) operates a request-a-stop program after 9 p.m. to service the transportation needs of residents working odd-hour shifts. Similarly, Chicago's Suburban Job-Link Corporation, a nonprofit community economic development organization, uses coach and school buses to provide inner-city residents with transportation services to jobs in the suburbs. New Jersey has two demonstration projects in Gloucester and Monmouth counties to provide employment and transportation solutions for the state's TANF recipients. The Monmouth County demonstration project will integrate employment and job-training trips of welfare recipients with transit services already established for the elderly and disabled. On the other hand, the project in Gloucester County will shuttle recipients from their homes to transit stations and from transit stops to their employment sites. The county also provides free-bus passes for recipients to get to work.

The Advantage Transportation Program in Anne Arundel County, Maryland goes further than removing the transportation barriers impeding recipients' employment placement. The program is an entrepreneurial program that trains recipients to drive vans. Once trained, recipients are given vans and hired to provide transportation services to other recipients. In

essence, the program provides employment opportunities as well as transportation services for recipients.

3.3 Overcoming Substance Abuse Barriers

Research studies indicate that between 10 percent and 20 percent of welfare recipients have substance abuse problems.⁵ In addition, an Urban Institute study found that substance abuse among welfare recipients was a significant barrier to steady work.⁶ PRWORA gives states the option of testing recipients for illegal drugs and sanctioning those who test positive, and permits states to sanction recipients if convicted of a drug-related felony after August 22, 1996. Time limits and work requirements necessitate that states address the issue of substance abuse among its welfare population and develop programs and options that make them employable. Although TANF funds can be used to fund wraparound services for substance abuse treatment, these dollars can not fund medical treatment under PRWORA. This policy places states in a most challenging predicament and potentially overloads the existing treatment facilities and programs. In this *Needs Assessment*, effectively addressing the needs of clients with substance abuse problems was cited as one of the top three challenges of TANF implementation.

In our state discussions, we found that while the majority of states ranked clients with substance abuse problems as one of the most challenging issues, a large number of states did not have the necessary data about caseload statistics and had only begun to study the issue and take the first steps to address the issue. For example, in New York, the Department of Labor, the Office of Substance and Alcohol Abuse, Office of Temporary Assistance, and the Department of Mental Health will be working together to invest \$12 million for wraparound substance abuse services for TANF families. In the past year, Kentucky has tested screening mechanisms for identifying and referring substance abuse clients for services. In Oregon, the state has developed screening tools assessment protocols for substance abuse and has conducted intensive staff training sessions on the use of the tool.

To better serve the needs of clients with substance abuse problems, New Jersey is conducting a study of its existing caseload through a survey and voluntary hair sample test done at intake. The goal of the study is to determine the severity of the substance abuse problem in the state's caseload. In August, the state will launch a comprehensive substance abuse program that will assess levels of addiction and provide appropriate treatment. Treatment providers are

⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, National Institute on Drug Abuse and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (1994). *Patterns of Substance Abuse and Substance-Related Impairment Among Participants in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children Program*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

⁶ Pavetti, L. and Olson, K. (1996) *Personal and Family Challenges to the Successful Transition from Welfare to Work*. Final Report. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

expected to offer a variety of services, such as bilingual staff and child care services. The treatment program will not be an intensive treatment clinic, but a flexible program that will allow recipients to engage in work activities as soon as they are able.

In 1995, North Carolina conducted a household telephone survey and found that approximately 35 percent of its Work First (WF) participants needed some type of substance abuse intervention. Based on those results, the state created a Task Force and began looking at model programs across the country dealing with this issue. North Carolina has created a substance abuse screening and assessment tool that is gender-sensitive, easy to use, reliable, and that recognizes issues of confidentiality. As of April 1998, the state has trained all front-line staff in its 100 counties on the use of this screening and assessment tool.

In addition, alcohol and substance abuse services are provided to recipients through the Enhanced Employee Assistance Program (EEAP) within the North Carolina Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services. The focus of the EEAP is to reduce the rate of alcohol and substance abuse use and increase the hiring rate of participants by businesses. A key component of the EEAP is the mentoring of WF participants. The “Mentoring Success” program has been added to the EEAP to educate the employer and provide guidance, advocacy, and support for WF participants.

3.4 Moving Toward a “Livable Wage”—Post-Employment Services

Many of the states’ recent welfare reforms focus on intensifying efforts to move individuals quickly from welfare into work. The quick labor market attachment strategies launched through the many “work first” agendas advanced by the states, though critical in getting clients engaged in finding employment quickly, have fallen short in keeping clients employed. Nonetheless, sustained employment is the primary route to self-sufficiency. Given this, as well as the evidence that many individuals who leave welfare for work return to welfare fairly quickly, it is important to identify strategies that help welfare recipients keep their jobs or find new ones quickly (Blank, 1989; Gritz and MaCurdy, 1991; Harris, 1991; Pavetti, 1992). States are hungry for good information about how to track clients once they are successfully employed, as well as how to meaningfully provide opportunities for wage progression and skill enhancement. In this national *Needs Assessment*, states identified post-employment services as another top challenging issue of successful TANF implementation.

Recognizing the importance of job retention issues, a number of recent initiatives have focused on the provision of post-employment services. Under the Post-employment Services Demonstration (PESD), ACF tested the delivery of indefinite services to recently employed clients through extended case management and enhanced support service payments. This study

centered on the effect of intensive case management efforts in four states: Illinois, Oregon, Texas, and California. Under this demonstration project, case managers offered counseling, advice and support; helped pay for work-related expenses in addition to child care and transportation, including clothing, shoes, car insurance, and union dues; helped clients maintain eligibility for transitional child care and Medicaid; provided information on how to apply for the Earned Income Tax Credit; and provided reemployment services when clients lost jobs (Rangarajan, 1996; Rangarajan et al. 1996; Haimson & Hershey, 1997). Only modest effects were identified in the preliminary analysis of the effectiveness of the post employment services demonstrations. Citing the “experimental and evolving nature of the programs,” only one site was modestly successful, with consistent patterns of job retention, increases in employment and earnings (Rangarajan et al, 1998).

Steps To Career Success (STEPS), funded by the Demonstration Partnership Program of the Office of Community Services (OCS), is an approach to providing post-employment services comparable to PESD that was developed by the Department of Community Services in Pierce County, Washington. Although not formally evaluated, intensive case management seemingly worked. A user’s guide has been published to assist other sites in the development of similar post-employment services (Barhnart & Weller, 1996).

A case study of the Oregon (PESD) experience highlights some of the critical issues in providing post-employment services. Following initial placement, most AFDC recipients left one or more jobs over the study period. It was difficult to predict who would lose a job and, therefore, difficult to know whether and when to intervene to prevent job loss. Consequently, Oregon made *reemployment* services the heart of their post-employment program. The program featured use of a resource room to facilitate reemployment. The resource room was a multipurpose center staffed by individuals familiar with the local labor market and equipped with word processors for updating resumes, telephones to call employers, and fax machines (Herr, Halpern, & Wagner, 1995).

Resource rooms and intensive case management can be found in post-employment programs elsewhere in the country. The Job Center in Anne Arundel County (Maryland), for example, has been credited with the low caseload recidivism rate of 8 percent (Sarney, 1996). At the Job Center, case managers develop meaningful connections with welfare recipients that continue post-employment. Postcards, letters, and flyers about training opportunities are continuously mailed out to the participants. Clients are encouraged to come back and use the services of the Job Center again when trying to find a new or better job. Also, services of the Job Center are available to any Anne Arundel resident, removing the potential stigma associated with the services.

Without opportunities for wage progression and skill enhancement, however, people are finding it difficult to attain self-sufficiency, even with all of these extended and expanded financial supports. Although work may “pay” over welfare, it is still not providing a way out of poverty. States are wrestling with the dilemma of balancing the provision of education and training opportunities for TANF recipients with strict work participation requirements under PRWORA. The Job Skills Preparation Capacity-Building Initiative, jointly funded by the Department of Education (ED), the Department of Labor (DOL), and the DHHS/ACF, has been specifically developed to foster collaborations among community colleges, local human services agencies, local economic development agencies, and employers to provide opportunities to TANF recipients for job training and skill enhancement opportunities.

3.5 Designing Management Information Systems

States are transforming their welfare system from an entitlement and cash assistance delivery program to a time-limited, employment-focused effort. The information systems that are mainly in place today were created largely to determine an individual’s eligibility for cash assistance and minimize payment error rates. As the mission and culture of welfare agencies change, so, too, must their information systems. States are struggling to develop and maintain complex integrated information systems that “talk” to other departments and can effectively track individual’s time limits and work activities. Also, as much of the program devolves to the front-line staff, it is critical that states have in place efficient and automated case management systems. In order to meet the Federal data requirements, states are facing significant investments in their large-scale computer systems, which need to be either replaced or significantly modified.

“Management information systems” was the fifth most challenging issue raised by states. Many of the concerns about management information systems and integrated databases stemmed from the lack of financial resources to dedicate to these purposes. States suggested that the problem was a culmination of a variety of concerns. First and foremost was a concern about software that allowed for integration of various data sources. Successful implementation of PRWORA requires that states collaborate across state agencies and often across levels of government, as well as sectors. The need to build and expand technological capacity to ease these implementation issues was voiced time and time again by the states. Several states proposed that significant new resources—both Federal and state—needed to be invested in both hardware and software purchases. Many states were simply at a loss as to how to make all their systems “talk” to one another and efficiently work with TANF recipients, while still effectively abiding by confidentiality concerns. However, several states are looking to private vendors to purchase data warehousing programs or are contracting with their universities to design and manage their integrated databases.

3.6 Developing Options for Rural Clients

One of the most challenging issues that states are dealing with as they attempt to help TANF recipients achieve self-sufficiency is working with clients who live in very remote or rural areas. The strict time limits and work requirements imposed on welfare recipients under PRWORA, as well as states' need to meet work participation rates in order to avoid reductions in their TANF grant, intensify the need to serve this population. Given the flexibility in program design provided to states under PRWORA, it is possible and necessary that states engage in innovative programs that help rural recipients become self-sufficient. At the same time, as states attempt to help recipients in these communities, it is important that they understand and address the unique implications of welfare reform policies in rural areas. States, particularly in the West, raised concerns with addressing the needs of Native Americans living on reservations.

Rural populations face unique challenges as they attempt to make the transition from welfare to work. TANF recipients living in rural and remote areas have very limited access to jobs because of a lack of employment opportunities in the area. In addition, recipients must often travel large distances to access any available job. Hindering recipient's ability to become employed and obtain access to services is also the lack of in other supportive services for rural recipients such as training opportunities and child care accessibility. It is not surprising that the majority of the states consider rural clients as a critical hard-to-serve population.

While there are numerous welfare reform evaluation projects being carried out across the nation, there is currently a dearth of research on the unique rural impacts of welfare reform. Nevertheless, it is important to document the initiatives that are taking place to assist rural welfare recipients make the transition from welfare to work. For example, West Virginia hired Job Developers in each county to market the West Virginia Works program and its recipients to prospective employers. These Developers work with employers to increase job creation and placement opportunities for rural recipients. As previously mentioned, North Carolina and Oregon have implemented transportation strategies to provide rural clients with access to employment and training services. Similarly, Alabama's Department of Human Resources has a contract with Rural Public Transit Associations in 10 rural areas and is starting two pilot projects to provide low-interest loans for clients to purchase low-cost vehicles.

Through a grant from the Office of Child Support Enforcement, Virginia is currently experimenting with using videoconferencing for intake purposes. The videoconferencing pilot program is taking place in the Petersburg District Office and is especially targeted for recipients in rural areas who do not have the capacity to travel to see a child support person, but instead can have a video interview. Such an innovative strategy would be critical for TANF recipients who cannot travel to welfare offices to meet with a case manager or an intake worker. As states

continue to implement welfare reform, it is imperative that they continue to experiment with methods by which to provide rural clients with greater avenues to self-sufficiency.

3.7 Addressing Needs of Clients with Learning Disabilities/Literacy Problems

Without question, the new work participation requirements have forced states to develop strategies that reduce exemptions and, therefore, have the effect of expanding the pool of participants that must work. In tandem with this regulatory change is the dynamic of caseload reductions. TANF recipients face any number of personal and family challenges, including low basic skills and learning disabilities. Welfare recipients ages 17-21 read, on average, at the 6th grade level, and almost 50 percent of adults on welfare do not have a high school diploma or GED.⁷ A significant proportion of recipients, estimated at approximately 25 percent, have no recent connection to the labor market. Given these conditions, some experts estimate that more than half of the welfare caseload is likely to require assistance beyond the standard welfare-to-work model to ever fare well on their own over the long term (Olson & Pavetti 1996). The states specifically identified clients with learning disabilities and literacy problems as one of the most challenging populations to work with when implementing the welfare-to-work requirements.

Learning disabilities and lack of literacy skills have been identified as major barriers for a recipient's employability. TANF agencies are beginning to uncover learning disabilities as a major employment barrier for a significant number of their caseload, and they are beginning to develop plans to address this issue. The TANF administrators who are beginning to wrestle with these issues expressed a two-fold concern: (1) assessing what in the past has been an undiagnosed literacy problem, and (2) providing the necessary support systems to remove literacy as a barrier to employment. States beginning to implement the new welfare-to-work programs⁸ are recognizing that basic education is a key component of welfare reform for many recipients. Many states have an unexpected Federal funding surplus due to caseload declines and are choosing to invest these funds in these education activities.

The State of Kansas, in conjunction with Washington State University, is developing a screening tool to identify what portion of the TANF population has a learning disability. The State of Washington has already developed a screening tool and has begun training its front-line staff on the use of the tool. On the other hand, Wisconsin created a case management resource guide to assist with up-front identification of people with special needs and barriers. Wisconsin is working with advocacy groups to develop curriculums and training programs for Wisconsin

⁷ *Fact Sheet on Literacy and Welfare*, 1998, National Institute for Literacy, Washington D.C.

⁸ The Department of Labor will award \$1.5 billion in new welfare-to-work grants to states and local communities. Approximately 75% of the funds are distributed to state governments by formula and 25% of the funds distributed through a competitive grant program.

Works (W-2) staff to address issues such as mental health, alcohol and drug abuse, learning disabilities, interpersonal skills, and domestic abuse.

Although these are the preliminary steps being taken by state level TANF agencies, these are not the only programs under way across the country to address the issue of learning disabilities. The National Institute for Literacy conducted a survey of approximately 100 institutions and organizations and identified eight model programs that are using basic skills instruction as a fundamental component to assist recipients make the transition from welfare to work. A forthcoming report from the Institute will describe these and other welfare-to-work programs and will provide information on program components and general characteristics.

3.8 Evaluating and Monitoring

Nationwide, states have embarked upon various welfare reform efforts aimed at moving welfare recipients quickly into jobs and onto a pathway of self-sufficiency. Some states may quickly want to declare a “victory” at ending “welfare as we know it” because of the phenomenal drop in welfare caseloads across the country—estimated at 30 percent since 1994 (Tweedie et al., 1998). Some suggest that this is a result of the country’s strong economy. Other researchers and members of the media attribute these reductions to sanctions levied against recipients because of non-compliance with tough new laws (*Washington Post*, March 23, 1998). Regardless, there is a significant interest in understanding what is happening to the families that leave welfare—on the Federal, state and community level.

Welfare reform is making new demands on Federal agencies, state and local TANF agencies, service providers, and advocates to evaluate its effects on communities and recipients. There is heightened interest on tracking recipients—what happens to them and their children. In particular there is interest in understanding who comes into the system, who does not come into the system, who is employed, who is sanctioned, and how families fare without TANF cash support, either because they are gainfully employed or because they are subjected to sanctions. A central focus of ACF’s welfare reform research and evaluation strategy is to develop reliable, credible information about how different welfare reform strategies are working in moving families to self-sufficiency.

There are a variety of different evaluation studies that have been funded by DHHS/ACF that examine the process of, and even in some cases, the impacts related to, a variety of state welfare reform efforts. Track 1 welfare reform waiver studies are comprised of experimental design evaluations undertaken prior to the passage of PRWORA but continued after TANF implementation (AZ, CT, FL, IN, IA, MN, TX, VT, and WI). Also, there have been a number of modified waiver evaluation studies conducted that do not involve experimental design (CA, IL,

IA, MD, MN, NE, NC, ND, OH, SC, and VA). These are known as Track 2 evaluations. In addition, ACF and ASPE co-funded a *Project on State-Level Child Outcomes*, which develops measures for child and family well-being. Five states (CT, FL, MI, IN, and IA) are committed to adding these measures to their outcome assessments of welfare reform. The Casey Foundation has funded an initiative in three states (IL, NC, and CA) to monitor the reciprocal effects of welfare to work and child welfare programs. Several states have begun independent efforts to redesign their TANF administrative data systems to permit longitudinal tracking of recipients (MN, CA, NC, and MD) and others are focusing on linking databases across agencies (SC, WI, and MA). Nevertheless, evaluating and monitoring remains a significant challenge of TANF implementation.

3.9 Changing the Welfare Culture

The passage of PRWORA has triggered culture changes by moving welfare toward a philosophy of work and eliminating the core concept of welfare as an entitlement program. States and localities also are responding to these policy challenges by altering how welfare agencies carry out the business of helping poor families, in effect changing the culture of organizations implementing welfare reform. States are wrestling with attempts to clarify the state's vision of welfare reform, while actively communicating this “work first” agenda and aligning various agencies' objectives with this vision. Culture change—both organizational and front-line—was ranked within the top challenges on TANF implementation.

The “culture” of the welfare delivery system has been linked to the success of welfare reform. Research on welfare culture change is limited. Thomas Corbett, in *Changing the Culture of Welfare*, stresses the importance of developing a consistent message about vision throughout the welfare delivery system and of reinforcing that vision with adequate resources for ongoing training and development of staff as they re-orient themselves to their new mission. An evaluation of California's welfare reform efforts, conducted by the University of California at Berkeley, found that staffing structures and clarity of new roles and responsibilities of “front-line” staff were crucial to the overall success of the welfare reform agenda (Meyers et al., 1996). Also, MDRC's *ReWorking Welfare*, and a series of *Issue Notes* released by the Welfare Information Network, suggest various organizational changes related to policy and program design, staff roles and responsibilities, co-location, and interagency linkages that are needed to implement welfare reform effectively.

Many welfare agencies have revised staff job descriptions and work responsibilities, but follow-through efforts also need to address values, attitudes, and philosophy. The welfare employment program administered by Riverside County, California, Department of Social Services is known for giving staff the flexibility to be creative and aggressive in getting clients placed in jobs. Performance evaluation and rewards are critical components to culture change.

Utah and Oregon are among the states that have worked to align various agencies' objectives or create a single workforce agency. Their strategies have helped them coordinate intake, case planning, and management across services and programs for each client, create one-stop shopping or co-locate service agencies, and use pay-for-performance based on collaborative goals and priorities.

States are developing various strategies to test what works and what doesn't. DHHS has advanced a culture change initiative that provides financial support for training and redevelopment of the welfare delivery system. DHHS awarded Culture Change Demonstration Grants to the following eight sites:

- Anne Arundel County, Maryland
- Oregon's Adult and Family Services Division
- Nevada Department of Human Resources, Welfare Division
- Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare
- Denver, Colorado, Department of Social Services
- Napa County Health and Human Services, California
- South Carolina Department of Social Services
- Alaska Department of Health and Human Services.

These sites will provide critical information on the success of different mechanisms for initiating and maintaining a "culture change."

3.10 Screening Effectively for Domestic Violence Victims

One finding in the existing welfare-to-work research is that a significant number of women on welfare are estimated to be victims of domestic violence. Women who are victims of domestic violence have much greater barriers to overcome as they attempt to embark on the path to self-sufficiency. The physical and/or emotional abuse encountered by domestic violence victims prevents them from seeking services that would remove and protect them from the aggressor and provide them with the education and training necessary to become employed. Even when services are made available, domestic violence victims refuse to utilize them not only for fear that they will be harmed, but for fear of placing their children's safety at jeopardy.

The abuse experienced by victims of domestic violence, who are in large part women, can take place in a variety of forms. Generally speaking, however, the abuse is categorized into two types, physical and mental abuse. Both types of abuse have a significant impact on a person's emotional and psychological well-being, regardless of their socioeconomic status. Keeping these issues in mind, it is alarming to note the increase in the number of states that are finding domestic violence victims as a large proportion of their TANF population. From our analysis of states' responses, working with clients who are victims of domestic violence was ranked as one of the top challenging issues by TANF agencies.

Given the link between domestic violence and welfare, states must decide how to respond to the needs of domestic violence victims in order to help them achieve self-sufficiency. In developing support services to assist victims of domestic violence, states must keep all of aforementioned issues in mind and must develop programs that will be appropriate and suitable to the specific needs of victims. To do this, however, states must work in conjunction with their community partners that may be able to assist in the provision of services. Among these community entities are health care providers, substance abuse service providers, businesses, non-profit organizations, and faith-based organizations. At the same time, TANF agencies may develop training curricula for staff and assessment tools and protocols for referrals. Staff will assess the needs of victims and refer them to service providers that can provide counseling, treatment, and supportive services. In addition to providing services, community entities can be instrumental in educating the community on issues of domestic violence and working to prevent this type of abuse from escalating.

Our survey indicates that states have been engaging in a number of initiatives to help victims of domestic violence. Some states have implemented screening and assessment policies to identify victims of domestic violence while other states have developed formal and informal agreements with community partners for service provision. In New York, an interagency collaboration is conducting a needs assessment of all the state's Districts on child care, domestic violence, and substance abuse, while the Department of Family Assistance has developed a process to successfully assess and screen drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence victims. With the support of the Pennsylvania Coalition against Domestic Violence, numerous advocacy groups, and community-based organizations, a domestic violence workgroup in Pennsylvania has created a cross training pilot project to train staff in the assessment and referral of domestic violence victims. Arizona has been very successful in providing for victims of domestic violence through its coordination with community action agencies. The state's TANF agency has been training staff for the identification of domestic violence victims, case management services, and temporary deferment of these recipients. In Alaska, there is coordination with the state's Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault to screen individuals for past or

current domestic violence victimization, refer domestic violence victims to specialized community-based services, and waive program requirements.

An initiative that was an outgrowth of the Culture Change Initiative discussed above is the Domestic Violence Awareness Training Pilot grant. The Department of Social Services in Anne Arundel County, Maryland used their grant to pilot test domestic violence training for frontline workers, including workers from Child Care, Child Support, Eligibility, Job Counseling, and Child Welfare. The training provided included domestic violence screening and referral services for TANF recipients.

3.11 Meeting the Needs of Clients with Mental Health Problems

There are few studies that examine the prevalence of mental illness among welfare recipients. This might be because mental health problems are harder to identify than physical disabilities or substance abuse problems. A recent report from the Urban Institute documents mental health problems among the TANF population. For example, The New Chance Demonstration project found that 28.4 percent of the young mothers it served were at high risk of clinical depression, and 22.5 percent were at some risk. Also, data from the FaDDS in Iowa indicates that 39 percent of its caseload statewide have mental health issues. Finally, a study of JOBS-eligible mothers with children between the ages of 3 and 5 in Fulton County, Georgia, found that 42 percent of this group of mothers showed a high level of depressive symptoms, more than twice the percentage found in community samples (Moore et al., 1996).

Although the literature documenting “mental health” as a key problem among the TANF population is not long, “clients with mental health problems” were identified as one of the top 12 challenges for states. Approximately 32 percent of the states voiced concern about this issue. In these discussions with states, they based this concern on anecdotal information and supposition about the “employability” problems of their clients. They did not have good data about what the real problems among this population are, nor did they have effective screening mechanisms and referral protocols in place. A major issue for these states is the issue of “dual diagnosis” among the TANF population—those that have both substance abuse and mental health issues. The State of Oregon recently convened a “Governor’s Task Force” to examine the incidence of “dual diagnosis” and make recommendations for policy and program changes to address the issue.

3.12 Creating Child Care Supports—Odd Hour/Shift Work

Another critical issue for TANF recipients is the availability of affordable and accessible child care. Recognizing the important role that child care plays in helping families support themselves through work, Congress revised existing child care subsidy programs to provide

states greater flexibility in developing programs that support low-income parents' work efforts. The new law combined four programs with different target populations into one program—the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)—creating a Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) with approximately \$20 billion in Federal funds available to states between fiscal years 1997-2002. In addition, states have the flexibility to transfer up to 30 percent of their TANF block grant allocations to the CCDF, or use TANF funds directly for child care programs. The new welfare law requires states to spend at least 4 percent of their CCDF expenditures on activities to improve the quality and availability of child care.

Given the significant Federal financial investment in child care, many states are working actively at removing the “child care barrier” to employment. Most states, when asked about the child care issue, stated that “there is a lot of money available to address the issue of child care affordability” but that “access” was still a major hurdle, particularly, infant care, school-age care, sick child care, and odd hour/shift work care. Child Care Bureau statistics indicate that 5 million school-age children are latch-key kids, and 70 percent of public schools do not offer extended-day programs. A recent GAO study examined child care supply and implications for welfare reform in Baltimore, Chicago, and Benton and Linn Counties in Oregon, and estimated that by the end of 1997, demand for infant care would outstrip supply by 20,000 spaces⁹. Most welfare recipients have very little control over the hours during which they work, and access to odd-hour child care remains the most significant issue in moving people on their pathway to self-sufficiency. Although there are a variety of innovations to address issues of increasing supply and reducing cost of child care, there are few effective and efficient efforts to address the issue of odd-hour care or child care for shift workers. It was specifically this issue of “access” to child care for odd-hour care that was raised by the states as one of the more challenging issues with which they are dealing.

4. CONCLUSION

Developing this national profile—the big picture—is crucial to creating a viable technical assistance delivery plan that responds to identified state needs. However, it is equally important to “see the trees in the forest” and thus, the next chapter brings this “big picture” into individual state focus. Chapter 3 highlights the challenges and successes individual states are experiencing as they implement their welfare reform initiatives.

⁹ “Welfare Reform and Child Care Supply,” GAO/HEHS – 97-75.

III. CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES—THE STATE EXPERIENCE

III. CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES—THE STATE EXPERIENCE

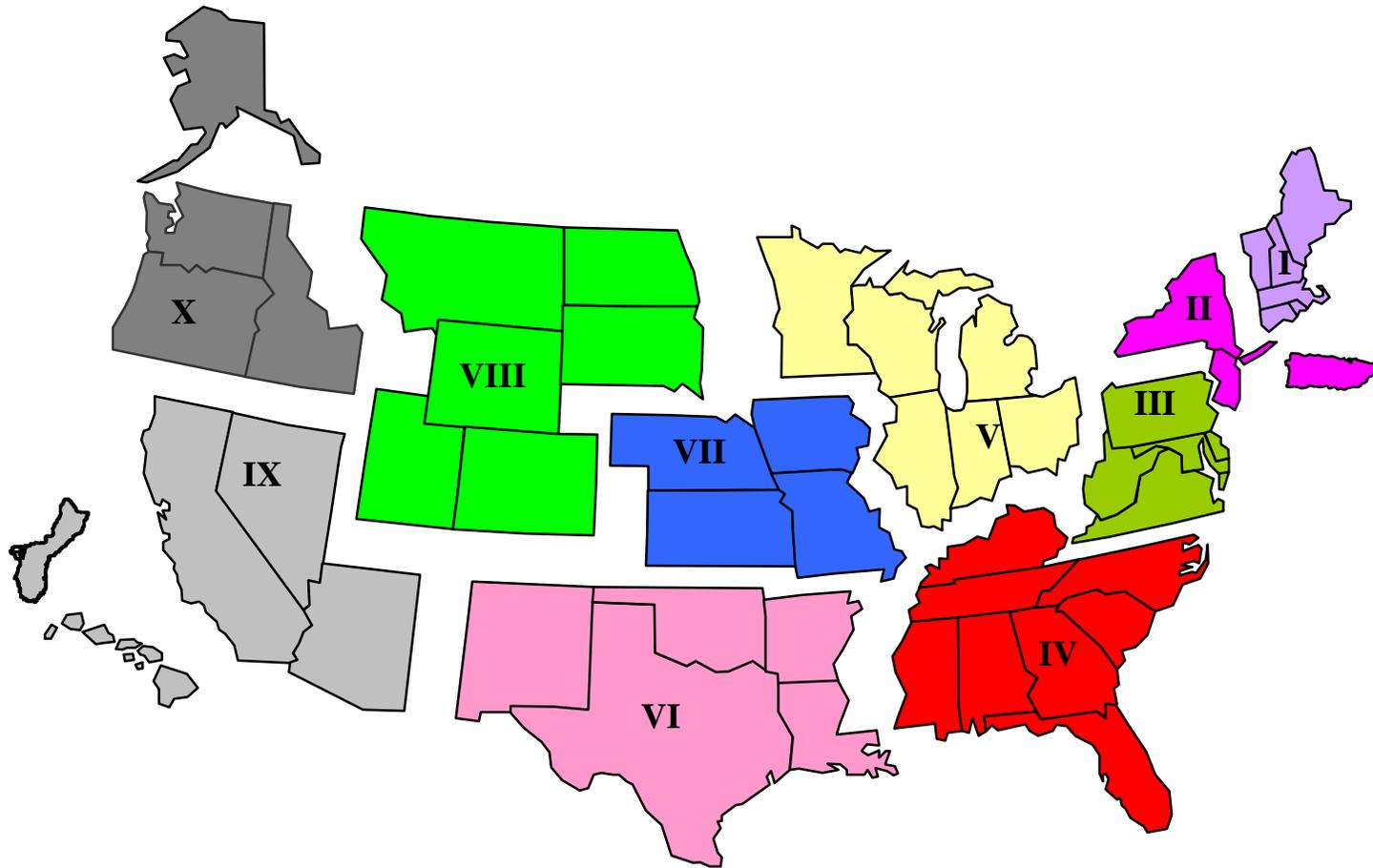
ACF provides national leadership and direction to plan, manage, and coordinate the nationwide administration of comprehensive and supportive programs for vulnerable children and families. ACF oversees and finances a broad range of programs for children, families, and communities—including Native Americans, persons with developmental disabilities, refugees, and legalized aliens—to develop children into healthy adults, lead families to economic independence, and support community prosperity. These programs, carried out by state, county, city, and tribal governments, and public and private local agencies, are designed to promote stability, economic security, healthy development, responsibility, and self-sufficiency.

To fulfill its national responsibility for children and families, ACF maintains 10 regional offices throughout the country, providing leadership for ACF programs in the field (see Exhibit III-1 for DHHS regional breakouts). Regional offices oversee the administration of programs, including: the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Tribal TANF, Head Start, Child Support Enforcement, Foster Care, Child Welfare, Adoption Assistance, Child Care, Runaway and Homeless Youth, and Developmental Disabilities. The ACF regional offices oversee the programmatic and financial management of ACF programs in the region and provide guidance to grantees and various entities responsible for administering these programs. All regional offices represent ACF to state, county, city, and tribal governments, grantees, and public and private organizations in the region.

Regional responsibilities include:

- Advising the Assistant Secretary of issues having significant regional/national impact
- Acting as a liaison with grantees, other Federal agencies, and private and public organizations
- Providing technical assistance to states, grantees, and partners
- Convening stakeholders to address regional/local needs
- Developing plans to meet ACF's goals and objectives
- Contributing to ACF national policy development
- Ensuring program compliance with applicable laws and policies
- Reviewing and certifying state/tribal plans for completeness
- Issuing grant awards for certain programs and recommending award approvals/disapprovals

**EXHIBIT III-1
DHHS FEDERAL REGIONS**



- Informing the public, in coordination with the Office of Public Affairs, about ACF’s programs
- Working with states/counties on systems automation.

Regional offices operate in a hub structure, building on each other’s strengths by geographic location. The hub structure is designated by five broad geographic areas, the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, West-Central, and Pacific-West. The five hub sites are located in the regional offices with the largest program caseloads and that serve the nation’s largest population centers (New York, Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, and San Francisco). Each of the remaining regional offices is part of a hub (Boston, Philadelphia, Kansas City, Denver, and Seattle). The hub structure reflects the following design:

HUB	REGIONAL OFFICES
Northeast	New York, Boston, and Philadelphia
Southeast	Atlanta
Midwest	Chicago and Kansas City
West-Central	Dallas and Denver
Pacific-West	San Francisco and Seattle

As already stated, the regional offices played a critical role in assisting the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network staff with conducting the initial state contacts, and for the most part, regional offices participated in each of the state conference calls. In Chapter II, as part of the discussion regarding the national profile, we examined the commonalities and differences of issues among the regions. This chapter provides a more detailed look at the alignment of issues within each region to this national profile (see Exhibit III-2).

The following sections highlight the challenges and successes individual states are experiencing in implementing TANF. These state profiles, organized alphabetically within each Federal ACF region, are not meant to document all issues that a state is addressing. Each profile is simply a brief synopsis of the information gathered as part of this *Needs Assessment* and reflects the perspective of the individuals from that state on the call with us. Each state profile includes a brief introduction that gives demographic information, a section highlighting TANF implementation, a discussion of the challenges to TANF implementation—reflecting responses to both the open-ended questions as well as the ranked issues—a summary of the state’s successes, and, finally, the areas of technical assistance requested. In addition, when a sub-state analysis has been completed, it is incorporated within the state profile. The following substate analyses were completed:

- Boston, Massachusetts, Boston Regional Employment Board
- Jefferson County, Kentucky, Project Live

EXHIBIT III-2													
STATE ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL PROFILE OF TOP TANF CHALLENGES													
REGION/STATE		Data Gathering	Transportation Issues	Clients with Substance Abuse Problems	Post-Employment Services	Management Information Systems	Rural Clients	Clients with Learning Disabilities	Evaluation and Monitoring	Culture	Domestic Violence Victims	Clients with Mental Health Problems	Child Care
Region I	Connecticut										✓		✓
	Maine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓
	Massachusetts		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	New Hampshire	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓	✓
	Rhode Island	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
	Vermont		✓				✓					✓	✓
Region II	New Jersey	✓				✓							
	New York	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				✓
	Puerto Rico	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		
Region III	Delaware	✓			✓								✓
	District of Columbia							✓				✓	
	Maryland	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		
	Pennsylvania	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	Virginia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
	West Virginia		✓		✓		✓			✓	✓		
Region IV	Alabama	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			
	Florida		✓		✓								
	Georgia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
	Kentucky	✓			✓				✓	✓			
	Mississippi					✓							
	North Carolina	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		
	South Carolina	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
	Tennessee										✓		
Region V	Illinois		✓		✓					✓			
	Indiana		✓										
	Michigan	✓											
	Minnesota	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
	Ohio				✓								
	Wisconsin												
Region VI	Arkansas	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓					
	Louisiana		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
	New Mexico												
	Oklahoma		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Texas	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	

EXHIBIT III-2 (CONTINUED)													
STATE ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL PROFILE OF TOP TANF CHALLENGES													
REGION/STATE		Data Gathering	Transportation Issues	Clients with Substance Abuse Problems	Post-Employment Services	Management Information Systems	Rural Clients	Clients with Learning Disabilities	Evaluation and Monitoring	Culture Change	Domestic Violence Victims	Clients with Mental Health Problems	Child Care
Region VII	Iowa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓
	Kansas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
	Missouri	✓	✓							✓	✓		
	Nebraska	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓
Region VIII	Colorado	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓	
	Montana	✓		✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	
	North Dakota		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓		
	South Dakota	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				✓
	Utah		✓				✓			✓			
	Wyoming	✓											
Region IX	Arizona		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
	California	✓				✓							
	Guam	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓			
	Hawaii	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	Nevada	✓			✓	✓			✓				
	Washington	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Region X	Alaska		✓				✓			✓			
	Idaho	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
	Oregon			✓	✓			✓				✓	
	Washington	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
TOTAL STATES		33	32	28	28	24	20	20	20	18	18	16	15

Based on *Needs Assessment*—✓ indicates issues ranked as “most challenging” for state.

- Atlanta, Georgia, Work Force Enterprise Program (WFEP)
- North Dakota, North Dakota County Directors’ Association
- St. Mary’s County, Maryland, County Office of the Department of Social Services
- Fulton County, Ohio, Works First County Office
- Arizona, Association for Community Action Agencies.

REGION I:

CONNECTICUT

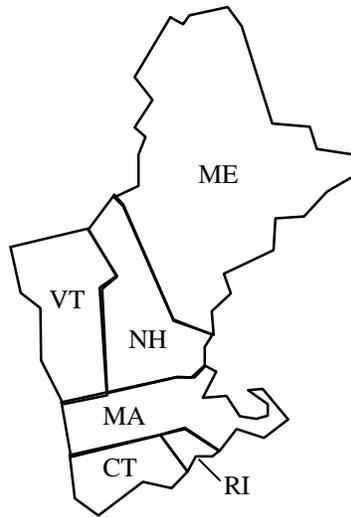
MAINE

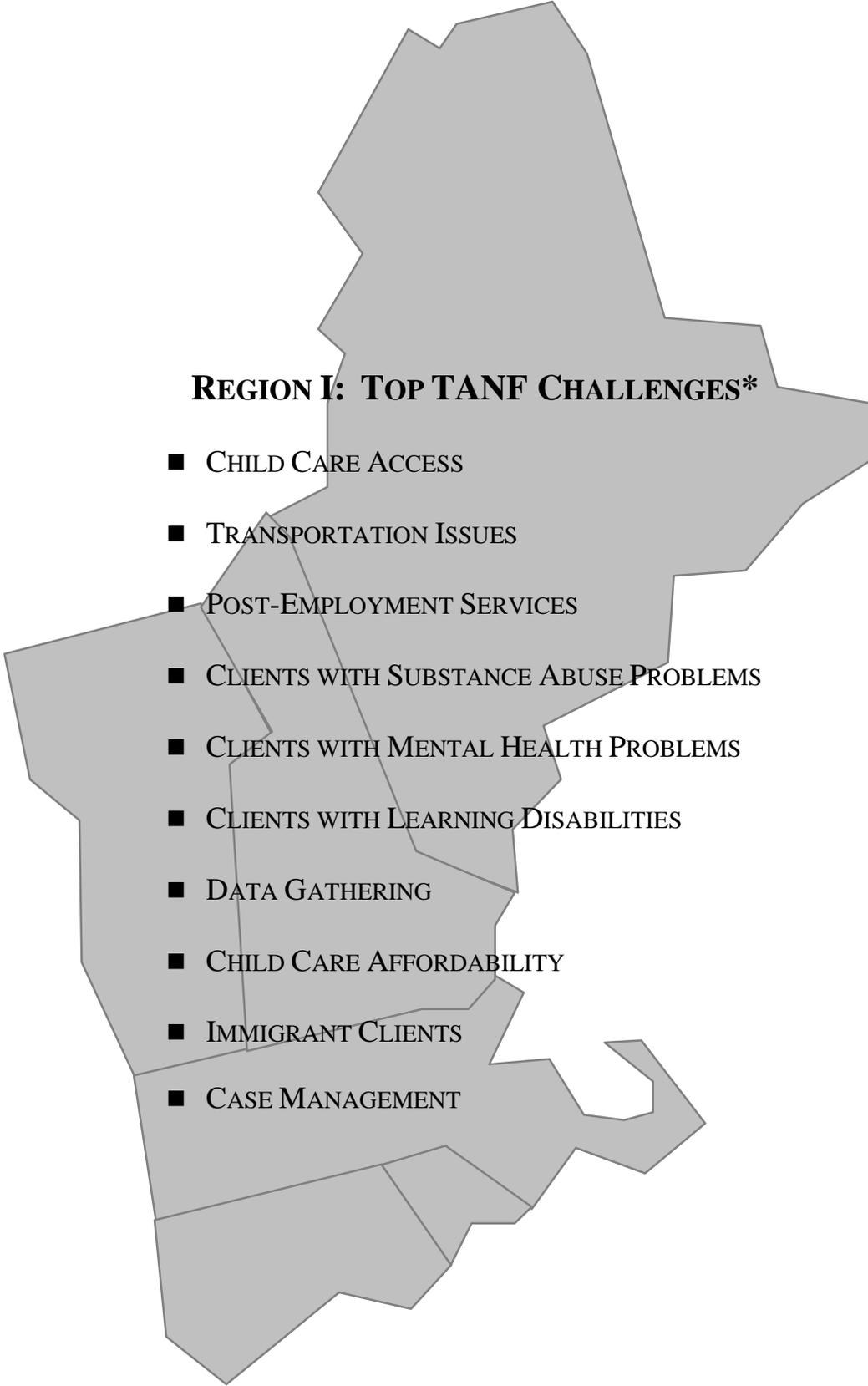
MASSACHUSETTS

NEW HAMPSHIRE

RHODE ISLAND

VERMONT





REGION I: TOP TANF CHALLENGES*

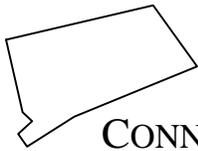
- CHILD CARE ACCESS
- TRANSPORTATION ISSUES
- POST-EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
- CLIENTS WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS
- CLIENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS
- CLIENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES
- DATA GATHERING
- CHILD CARE AFFORDABILITY
- IMMIGRANT CLIENTS
- CASE MANAGEMENT

*A majority of states within the region ranked these issues as “most challenging.”

REGION I
MOST CHALLENGING ISSUES BY STATE

CONNECTICUT	MAINE	MASSACHUSETTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up-front Diversion ▪ Child Care Affordability ▪ Child Care Access ▪ Domestic Violence Victims ▪ Linkages with State Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Child Care Access ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Rural Clients ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management ▪ One-Stop Centers ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Child Care Affordability ▪ Child Care Access ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Mental Health Problems ▪ Clients with Developmental Disabilities ▪ Clients with Physical Disabilities ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Domestic Violence Victims ▪ Immigrant Clients ▪ Culture Change
NEW HAMPSHIRE	RHODE ISLAND	VERMONT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Child Care Affordability ▪ Child Care Access ▪ Affordable and Adequate Housing ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Mental Health Problems ▪ Clients with Developmental Disabilities ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Teen Parents/Minor Mothers ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Streamlined Funding Sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intake and Assessment ▪ Case Management ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Child Care Access ▪ Affordable and Adequate Housing ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Immigrant Clients ▪ Non-English Speaking Clients ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems ▪ Partnerships with the Private Sector ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child Care Access ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Mental Health Problems ▪ Clients with Criminal Histories ▪ Immigrant Clients ▪ Non-English Speaking Clients ▪ Rural Clients ▪ Partnerships with the Private Sector ▪ Linkages with Faith-based Organizations ▪ Performance-Based Contracting

Note: State-reported data. For each state, respondents ranked the issues shown as “most challenging” from a list of issues provided.



In 1995, Connecticut ranked 27th among the states in population, with approximately 3.2 million residents with almost 80 percent of the population living within a metropolitan area in 1995.¹ Connecticut's poverty rate in 1995 was 9.4 percent, well below the national average, and the state's median per capita income was \$28,110. The number of AFDC/TANF recipients in Connecticut has been decreasing over the last 3 years. In January 1995, 170,719 residents received AFDC. From August 1996, when the new welfare law was enacted, to September 1997, the number of recipients declined by 5 percent.

TANF HISTORY

Connecticut continues to operate its statewide 1115 waiver demonstration project, *Reach for Jobs First*; this project serves as the foundation for the TANF program, Jobs First. Both the demonstration project and the TANF program focus on employment, personal responsibility, and training and education to enable aid recipients to achieve self-sufficiency. The state enforces a 21-month time limit on assistance for all families, with a 6-month extension available. Recipients engaged in work activities receive transportation and child care assistance. By November 1997, 9,000 families had reached the 21-month time limit, and 3,000 were granted 6-month extensions.

The Department of Social Services (DSS), which manages the Jobs First program, has been working with the Department of Labor (DOL) and the state's Regional Board to shift the responsibility of contracted employment programs to DOL. The Regional Board comprises professional staff who coordinate the procurement of services for TANF recipients. Most services are provided through contracts established between DSS and community-based organizations. DSS also is working with the state's Department of Education to coordinate the education and training opportunities available to recipients (e.g., adult basic education, ESL, and remedial education).

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Connecticut cited the following challenges:

- Bringing about the culture change necessary for staff and clients to fully understand the requirements and responsibilities of the new law
- Providing employment services and developing employability plans
- Coordinating effectively between DSS and the Department of Labor
- Meeting the 90 percent two-parent family participation rate, especially with the hard-to-serve population and with what may become a saturated or stagnant labor market
- Tracking clients and fulfilling Federal reporting requirements

¹ All demographic data in the state profiles is taken from the mid-decade census numbers of the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

- Failing to fill job slots offered by employers because of a lack of recipients with the needed skills.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Connecticut ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Up-front diversion
- Child care affordability
- Child care access
- Domestic violence victims
- Linkages with state partners.

THE SUCCESSES

The state estimates that 60 percent of its time-limited clients have been placed in employment activities. Through the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC), the state is conducting a study of a small cohort of families to determine what happens to them after they leave the TANF program. The state has implemented a time-limited rental assistance program for people who exhaust their time limit. The program provides recipients with 1 year of subsidized housing assistance. The state has a strong relationship with the private sector, especially employers, and has been able to obtain a large number of job slots for recipients. The state has set aside funds to purchase a computer system that will help address its tracking and reporting problems.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Connecticut is interested in learning more about how other states are building collaborations between the TANF program and the Department of Labor.

In 1995, Maine ranked 39th among the states with a population of 1.23 million. Although 45 percent of the state's population lives in a metropolitan area, Maine is considered a rural state. Maine's economic base consists of agricultural and fishing industries. In 1995, the state's poverty rate was 13.4 percent, and the median per capita income was \$18,895. In January 1995, there were 60,973 AFDC recipients in Maine. Maine's caseload dropped 18 percent from August 1996 to September 1997.

TANF HISTORY

Maine implemented the TANF program in November 1996 under the old program name of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). The state's JOBS component, called ASPIRE-JOBS, provides case management and support services to families. Under the program, the state enforces the 24-months-and-work time limit. All recipients must be engaged in work activities such as on-the-job training, apprenticeship, self-employment, non-traditional employment, and full-time employment. Teen-age parents receive benefits in the form of vouchers, shelter, utilities, and third-party payees.

To ease the implementation of TANF, the state's Department of Human Services (DHS) has built relationships with state partners who are involved in providing services to recipients. These interagency partnerships have been especially strong with the Department of Labor, the Department of Education, and the Department of Transportation. Also, a TANF Advisory Council comprising a variety of different department directors, discuss program implementation and client issues. DHS has also established informal contracts through Memorandums of Understanding with the United Way and the Chamber of Commerce to promote the program and provide recipients with employment opportunities.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Maine cited the following challenges:

- Data collection—Because the state does not currently track TANF recipients who exit the program, fulfillment of the Federal reporting requirements regarding closed cases is a top concern.
- Community service employment—The state has used community service employment options for TANF recipients and is concerned about the application of the Fair Labor Standards Act for these community service employment placements.
- Transportation barriers—In this primarily rural state, the availability of affordable, reliable transportation constitutes a major employment issue.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Maine ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Post-employment services
- Child care access
- Transportation issues

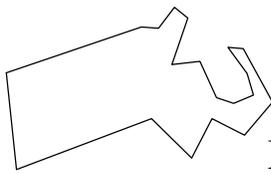
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Rural clients
- Data gathering
- Management information systems

THE SUCCESSES

Maine has succeeded in providing recipients with the support services they need to obtain employment. Maine has eliminated the 12-month limit on child care subsidies, successfully expanding both child care access and subsidies. Also, DHS has created the Parents as Scholars Program, which allows parents to pursue a 2-year or 4-year degree and to be exempt from the work requirement during the first 24 months of study.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Maine cites technical assistance in the areas of post-employment services and transportation as most important.



Ranking 13th, Massachusetts' population in 1995 was approximately 5.9 million; approximately 84.3 percent of the population lived in metropolitan areas. The poverty rate in 1995 was 13.5 percent, and the median per capita income was \$20,453. The number of AFDC/TANF recipients in January 1995 was 286,175. Massachusetts' caseload declined to 219,580 by August 1996 and continued to decline the following year. By September 1997, 1 year after the enactment of the new welfare law, the state's caseload had dropped by 11 percent to 194,401.

TANF HISTORY

In 1995, Massachusetts began to build its welfare reform efforts under an 1115 waiver demonstration project. The state has continued those efforts in its state TANF plan. The TANF program establishes a time limit of 24 months within the 60-month lifetime limit. The basis of the waiver program was the replacement of cash assistance with work activities and community service. Massachusetts reduces benefits levels by 2.75 percent for all non-exempt recipients, but families subject to the benefit reduction may keep \$30 plus half of the balance of their monthly income.

The state understands the important role of the business sector, specifically employers, in helping recipients obtain self-sufficiency. The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), which manages the TANF program, has established collaborations for employment services with the Massachusetts Job Council under the Department of Employment Training. Similarly, the Department realizes that recipients will not be able to achieve self-sufficiency through employment alone, unless the appropriate support mechanisms are in place. Hence, the Department has secured child care and child support services through the Division of Revenue and transportation services through the Regional Transit Authority.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Massachusetts cited the following challenges:

- Convincing recipients that the time limit is real. The Department notes that the issue of time limits is most challenging for caseworkers when dealing with parents with young children who are exempt from the work requirements, but not from the time limit.
- Working with the hard-to-serve population, especially:
 - Providing the post-employment services that recipients will need to move up the pay scale
 - Providing child care and transportation services
 - Providing "sheltered work experience" for clients who will not be able to obtain employment.
- Determining the state's responsibility for individuals whose time limit expires and who are not employed.
- Avoiding a duplication of efforts with Welfare-to-Work and TANF.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Massachusetts ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Case management
- One-stop centers
- Post-employment services
- Child care affordability
- Child care access
- Transportation issues
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with developmental disabilities
- Physically handicapped clients
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Domestic violence victims
- Immigrant clients
- Culture change.

THE SUCCESSES

Massachusetts has succeeded in increasing the number of people employed and decreasing its caseload. DTA also cites as a success the relationships it has built with the Department of Labor and employers to implement a Work-First approach while emphasizing continuing education and training to support job advancement.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Massachusetts is interested in learning about what states outside the New England area are doing, especially urban states. The state also is interested in learning more about the automobile purchase program implemented in a number of states.

SUB-STATE SNAPSHOT
BOSTON REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT BOARD

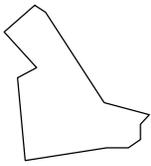
Massachusetts

The Boston Regional Employment Board, also identified as the Boston Private Industry Council, is a business-led partnership between government, education, labor, and the community. The purpose of the Board is to connect youth and adults to employment and to broker opportunities for Boston residents to become employed. From the state's Welfare-to-Work formula grant, the Regional Employment Board will receive approximately 6 million dollars to assist hard-to-serve welfare recipients achieve self-sufficiency.

A representative of the Board notes that there are three major challenges in getting welfare recipients to achieve self-sufficiency. First and foremost is being able to engage recipients who are coming close to their time limit in a structured program that will develop their employability skills. Currently, recipients are being steered toward community service jobs that are not helping them develop those skills. Secondly is identifying job opportunities that are appropriate, such as entry level jobs that do not require a work history or a General Equivalency Degree (GED) and that have pathways to career advancement. The third challenge is developing retention strategies to keep recipients employed, such as providing child care and transportation services and the skills needed to advance in the workplace.

The Board is building partnerships with several employers and organizations to provide recipients with the opportunities needed to become employed and achieve self-sufficiency. Marriott hotels and the Pathways program are procuring community-based organizations to work with the hotels to provide case management and retention services. There is also a plan to work with the Roxbury Community College to put together an education component for recipients employed by Marriott. Another initiative being developed is to work with the Partners HealthCare Hospital to employ and train recipients to work in a Roxbury nursing home.

The Boston Regional Employment Board notes that in order to succeed at helping recipients become self-sufficient, agencies will need to form partnerships and be innovative about how they conduct business.



In 1995, New Hampshire ranked 42nd among the states in population with approximately 1.13 million residents. By the year 2000, the state's population is expected to grow by 3.2 percent to 1.2 million. About half the population lived in a metropolitan area in 1995. The poverty rate in 1995 was 8.6 percent, and the median per capita income was \$22,659. In January 1995, there were 28,671 recipients in the AFDC program. From August 1996 to September 1997, the number of AFDC/TANF recipients declined by 28 percent from 22,940 to 15,553.

TANF HISTORY

New Hampshire replaced AFDC with TANF and portions of two proposed waiver demonstration projects. The state's TANF program operates under two names: the Family Assistance Program (FAP), for families with non-able bodied adults, and the New Hampshire Employment Program (NHEP), for families with able-bodied adults. The state enforces the 60-month lifetime limit on assistance along with 26 weeks of job search and 26 weeks of work required in NHEP. The state provides benefits in the form of cash assistance and support services. Support services may include medical assistance, transportation, child care, child support enforcement, food stamps, and other services.

Two years before TANF was implemented, the state formed a tri-agency collaboration between the Department of Health and Human Services, the Job Training Council, and the Employment Security Agency. Collaborative efforts have included interagency teams for staff training. At the local level, teams have been established with representatives from the job training council, the New Hampshire Security Offices, and the Family Assistance Program. Because the agencies perform the same functions for clients, the caseloads for social workers have evened out.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, New Hampshire cited the following challenges:

- Fostering culture change for front-line staff
- Coping with the physical relocation of offices and the reorganization of staff
- Coping with front-line resource issues, such as learning a new computer system, training staff, assuming different tasks, and setting priorities
- Working with the hard-to-serve population and recipients who reach their time limit.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, New Hampshire ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Case management
- Post-employment services
- Child care affordability

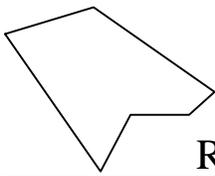
- Child care access
- Affordable and adequate housing
- Transportation issues
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with developmental disabilities
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Teen parents/minor mothers
- Data gathering
- Streamlined funding sources.

THE SUCCESSES

The state reports that it has been very successful at keeping track of what is happening to clients who leave the program. New Hampshire created tracking and performance measures to determine where clients are going once they exit the program. To help recipients obtain jobs, the Department has worked continuously with communities to involve employers and service agencies in the program and provide services to recipients and help them become self-sufficient.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

New Hampshire is interested in learning more about successful community service employment activities for non-custodial parents. Another area of interest is transportation issues and innovative solutions to the transportation barriers faced by rural states.



Rhode Island ranked 43rd among the states in population in 1995 with 1.0 million residents. A majority of the state's residents (86%) lived in the metropolitan area in 1995. Rhode Island's poverty rate that year was 12 percent, and the median per capita income was \$21,096. Rhode Island's population is expected to decline 0.3 percent by the year 2000, down to 0.99 million. In January 1995, there were 62,407 AFDC/TANF recipients in Rhode Island. A year later, in August 1996, the number of TANF recipients had declined to 56,460. Since the enactment of the new welfare law in August 1996 to September 1997, the state's caseload decreased by 0.3 percent.

TANF HISTORY

The Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS) is responsible for managing the state's TANF program under the Family Independence Act. The thrust of the program is to help recipients become self-sufficient and independent through short-term programs of cash and medical assistance. In addition, the program offers rehabilitation services, if necessary, and training and educational opportunities. DHS has devoted a great amount of energy and attention to collaboration building as a way of easing the process of implementing TANF. The state's Department of Labor has set up three service delivery areas in the state to provide rapid job search and placement. The Department also holds weekly meetings with community-based organizations to discuss issues around the TANF program. To roll out one-stop centers, the state has collocated staff from the community colleges, JTPA, Department of Elderly Affairs, and Job Placement that provide education, training, and job search services for recipients. The DHS has issued performance-based contracts to providers to specifically target non-English speaking clients and non-custodial parents.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Rhode Island cited the following challenges:

- Reaching consensus on the assessments to use with families
- Tracking families who are no longer on the program and determining the role of the Department in those situations
- Effectively changing its management information system to match the case management model in use and the requirements of the new program.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Rhode Island ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Intake and assessment
- Case management
- Post-employment services
- Child care access

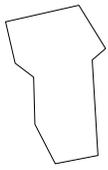
- Affordable and adequate housing
- Transportation issues
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Immigrant clients
- Non-English speaking clients
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Partnerships with the private sector
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

Rhode Island has successful initiatives in place for teen parents. The teen parent services work closely with the Department of Young Parents, which is a collaboration of the Department of Health and the Department of Education, to work on pregnancy prevention, supervised living, and to reduce the state's out-of-wedlock births. The state has an entitlement program for child care subsidies for anyone below 185 percent of the poverty level. Rhode Island has a child care training system in place for child care providers, and through a linkage with the R.I.T.E. CARE program, the state pays the health coverage of all family child care providers. The state has a number of initiatives under way to provide recipients with the support services necessary to become self-sufficient.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

A possible area of interest for technical assistance delivery is a holistic approach or system for service delivery.



In 1995, Vermont ranked 49th among the states in population with 0.58 million residents. By the year 2000, the state's population is expected to increase by 2.2 percent to approximately 0.62 million. In this still largely rural state, approximately 32.2 percent of the population lived in a metropolitan area. The state's poverty rate in 1995 was 10.4 percent, and its median per capita income was \$19,467. In January 1995, 27,716 Vermont residents received AFDC/TANF. Vermont's TANF population has decreased over time. Between August 1996, when TANF was enacted, and September 1997, the state's TANF caseload declined by 10 percent, from 24,270 to 21,817.

TANF HISTORY

Vermont has continued to operate its statewide waiver program under TANF. The Vermont's Welfare Restructuring Demonstration Project requires adult single-parents to be engaged in subsidized employment within 30 months, and adults in two-parent families within 15 months. Program recipients must be engaged in work through Reach UP, the state's JOBS program. Vermont's program emphasizes reducing teen-age pregnancies and out-of-wedlock births.

To ease the process of implementing TANF, the Department of Social Welfare has established interagency collaborations with numerous state agencies and departments to move parents into employment, including the Social and Rehabilitation Services Agency, the Department of Labor, and the Small Business Development Center. The Department of Education and the Human Resources Investment Council have a Welfare-to-Work and a School-to-Work component for the development of the Vermont workforce. The Department of Social Welfare has been seeking the involvement and support of community action programs, community and state colleges, and employers to help recipients achieve self-sufficiency.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Vermont cited the following challenges:

- Dealing with the hard-to-serve population of single parents who reach their time limit for mandatory work requirements. To better serve this population, the state will enhance the Reach Up program and expand the availability of child care, especially during odd hours and for shift work.
- Meeting the transportation needs of rural clients.
- Preserving the state's waiver provisions in relationship to TANF.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Vermont ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Child care access
- Transportation issues
- Clients with mental health problems

- Clients with criminal histories
- Immigrant clients
- Non-English speaking clients
- Rural clients
- Partnerships with the private sector
- Linkages with faith-based organizations
- Performance-based contracting.

THE SUCCESSES

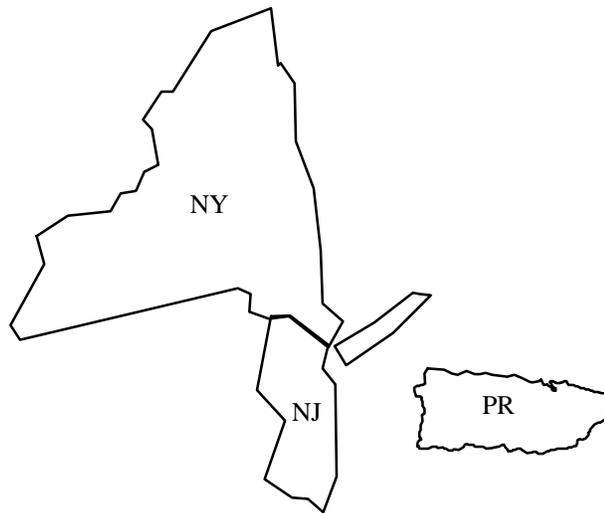
The state describes itself as successful in pregnancy prevention efforts aimed at minor parents and teen parents. Vermont is very proud of its case management services and its community service program that provides clients with subsidized employment.

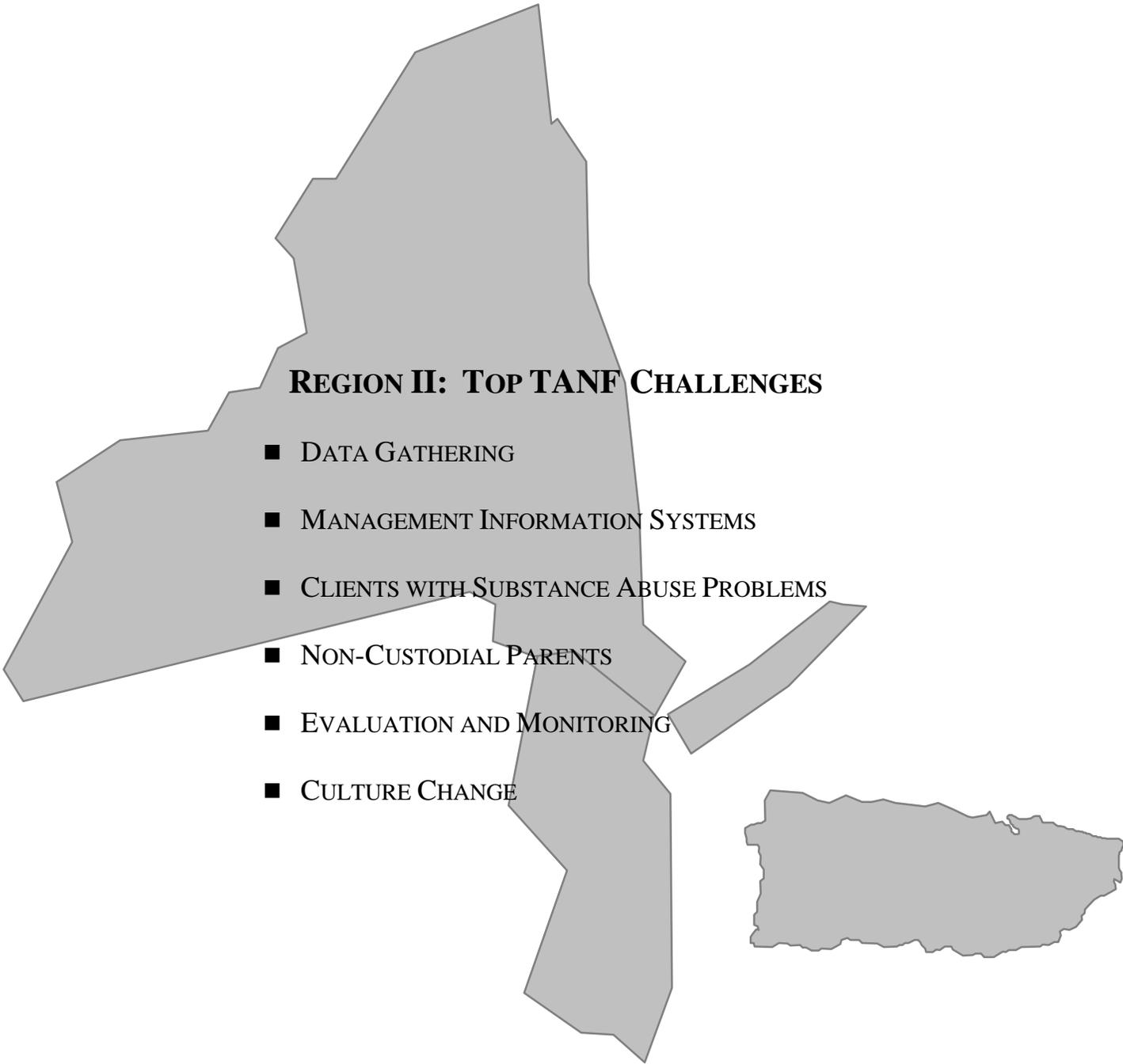
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Vermont is interested in learning more about Utah's up-front diversion program and Rhode Island's child care program. The state is specifically interested in the payment issues and quality aspects around Rhode Island's child care program.

REGION II:

**NEW JERSEY
NEW YORK
PUERTO RICO**





*A majority of states within the region ranked these issues as “most challenging.”

REGION II
MOST CHALLENGING ISSUES BY STATE

NEW JERSEY	NEW YORK	PUERTO RICO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Affordable and Adequate Housing ▪ Culture Change ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management ▪ Child Care Access ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Non-Custodial Parents ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Domestic Violence Victims ▪ Immigrant Clients ▪ Non-Custodial Parents ▪ Culture Change ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems ▪ Partnerships with the Private Sector ▪ Streamlined Funding Sources ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring

Note: State-reported data. For each state, respondents ranked the issues shown as “most challenging” from a list of issues provided.



The State of New Jersey ranked 9th in population in the nation in 1995. Total population in 1995 was 7.9 million and is expected to grow to 8.1 million by the year 2000, an increase of 2.5 percent. In 1995, the state's poverty rate was 10 percent, which was 3.8 percent below the national average. The state's median per capita income for all persons in 1995 was \$26,967. In January 1995, the number of AFDC recipients in New Jersey totaled 321,151. New Jersey's caseload has been decreasing steadily over the past 2 years. The state's caseload decreased by 10 percent since the enactment of the new welfare law, from 275,700 in August 1996 to 247,200 in September 1997.

TANF HISTORY

The state implemented Work First New Jersey (WFNJ) in March 1997. The guiding philosophy of Work First is that only through work will recipients become economically and socially self-sufficient. WFNJ sets a 60-month lifetime limit on assistance. During those 60 months, recipients are expected to engage in intensive job search and work readiness activities, including job placement, community service employment, work/study, vocational and on-the-job training, and supported employment. While recipients are engaged in work activities, WFNJ provides cash assistance benefits; support services, such as child care and health benefits; and emergency assistance.

Through Work First, the state emphasizes building collaborations with community partners to facilitate the process of implementing TANF and to ensure the successful transition of recipients into the labor market. The New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) is working closely with the state's Department of Labor to roll out the Workforce Investment Board and One-Stop Centers in order to better integrate the work activities under TANF. A joint venture between these two departments seeks to obtain business sponsors for WFNJ that will commit to hiring recipients. DHS is also cultivating a relationship with the state's Department of Transportation and has begun to pilot transportation initiatives in several counties. In addition, DHS is working with the banking community to set up mentoring programs to teach clients how to obtain and use checking accounts. And finally, DHS has launched a variety of discussions with several communities to address the issue of the state's lack of affordable and adequate housing.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, New Jersey cited the following challenges:

- Technology issues—The state cites challenges related to its Management Information System, particularly finding a process that will allow the systems in various departments to interface with each other.
- Culture change—The state implemented a substantial "change the culture" training, but it is still trying to determine how to change the mindset of state and local employees from one of determining client eligibility to one of managing cases to help clients achieve self-sufficiency.
- Housing—The lack of affordable and adequate housing is a critical concern.

- Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP)—Interface between TANF populations and health care funding for children in poverty.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, New Jersey ranked the following as the state’s greatest challenges:

- Affordable and adequate housing
- Culture change
- Data gathering
- Management information systems.

THE SUCCESSES

New Jersey has been very successful at working with one of the most difficult to serve populations: clients with substance abuse problems. To better serve the needs of this population, the state is conducting a study of its existing caseload through a survey and voluntary hair sample test done at intake. The goal of the study is to determine the severity of the substance abuse problem in the state’s caseload. In August 1998, the state will launch a comprehensive substance abuse program that will assess levels of addiction and provide appropriate treatment. Treatment providers are expected to offer a variety of services, such as bilingual staff and child services. The treatment program will not be an intensive treatment clinic, but a flexible program that will allow recipients to engage in work activities as soon as they are able to do so.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

New Jersey specifically requested technical assistance in several areas primarily focused on “state economics and cost of living.” The state would like to know more about programs in place elsewhere that deal with the creation of affordable housing options, substate economies, and wage progression strategies. Also, New Jersey wants assistance in the development of an up-front diversion strategy or program.



New York State was home to 18.1 million residents in 1995, making it the third most densely populated state. By the year 2000, however, the state's population is expected to increase only 0.3 percent. New York's poverty rate in 1995 was 15.3 percent, while its per capita income was \$24,623. New York's total AFDC caseload in January 1995 was 1,266,350; its caseload decreased to 1,200,847 by January 1996 and to 950,232 by November 1997

TANF HISTORY

New York's Family Assistance program is a work-first program administered by counties. The state legislature enacts the laws that govern the program, and the state sets program policy, but counties have considerable flexibility in how they implement the program. In some instances, the legislature has given 100 percent funding to counties and other entities to create initiatives addressing particular TANF issues. The Family Assistance program sets a 24-month time limit on assistance. The state is reserving the right to decide whether to implement the option of community service after 2 months of benefits. New York did not have any statewide waivers in place when TANF was implemented. The state has maintained the Child Assistance Program (CAP), which was a voluntary alternative to AFDC under TANF. CAP is designed to motivate recipients to take steps toward financial and self-sufficiency. It contains explicit incentives for clients to work and to seek child support order.¹ All counties are allowed to participate in CAP and currently 14 do so. Five more counties are expected to enter the program shortly.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, New York cited the following list of challenges:

- Meeting the worker participation rate
- Collecting data
- Fostering culture change
- Working with multi-barrier populations.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, New York ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Case management
- Child care access
- Transportation issues
- Clients with substance abuse problems

¹ New York TANF Program, 1997.

- Non-custodial parents
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

New York State's Department of Family Assistance is well aware of the importance of collaborations in easing the implementation of TANF. To coordinate the Family Assistance program, the Department has been engaging in ongoing meetings and collaborations with the Department of Labor, the Office of Children and Family Services, the Office of Temporary Assistance, the Department of Health, and the Office of Substance Abuse and Alcohol Abuse. The Department also has been working with the Departments of Mental Health, Education, Aging, Mental Hygiene, and Mental Retardation; and the Office of Domestic Violence. The Governor's Office of Employee Relations has begun an interagency collaboration to conduct a needs assessment of all the state's districts on child care, domestic violence, and substance abuse. This initiative is taking place through collaborations between the Department of Labor, Office of Substance and Alcohol Abuse, Office of Temporary Assistance, and the Department of Mental Health.

New York has begun dealing with a portion of the hard-to-employ population. The Department of Family Assistance has developed a process to successfully assess and screen drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence victims. Furthermore, through a collaboration between the Department of Labor, the Office of Substance and Alcohol Abuse, the Office of Temporary Assistance, and the Department of Mental Health, the Department will be investing \$12 million for substance abuse services for TANF families.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

New York is interested in attending meetings with other states through a panel process and participating in presentations made by researchers and other states. These events should focus around specific issues, such as up-front diversion, case management, one-stop centers, community service employment, post-employment services, child care access and affordability, transportation, hard-to-serve populations, culture change, relationships with non-profits, and performance-based contracting.



Puerto Rico's AFDC caseload in January 1995 was 171,932. By September 1997, the number of recipients on TANF had decreased to 138,045. From August 1996 to September 1997, when the new welfare law was enacted, Puerto Rico's caseload decreased 9 percent.

TANF HISTORY

The Territory's TANF program is entirely administered by the Territory. One central office manages the program with 10 regional offices and 112 local offices under its supervision. The Socioeconomic Development Administration, Department of the Family has been involved in intra-agency collaborations over the past year. Specifically the Department has established a working agreement with the Department of Labor and the Bureau of Employment Services. The goal of this agreement is to ensure that participants register with these agencies in their search for employment. The Department also has issued performance-based contracts to eight private agencies for case management services. To maintain these contracts and receive payment for services, contracting agencies are expected to place a percentage of the TANF population in employment.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your [Territory] in TANF implementation?" In response, Puerto Rico cited the following challenges:

- Culture change, especially getting clients to internalize the responsibility of work and lose their welfare dependency
- Transportation issues, especially in rural areas and during unusual hours
- Insufficient child care quality and access.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Puerto Rico ranked the following as its greatest challenges:

- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Domestic violence victims
- Immigrant clients
- Non-custodial parents
- Culture change
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Partnerships with the private sector

- Streamlined funding sources
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

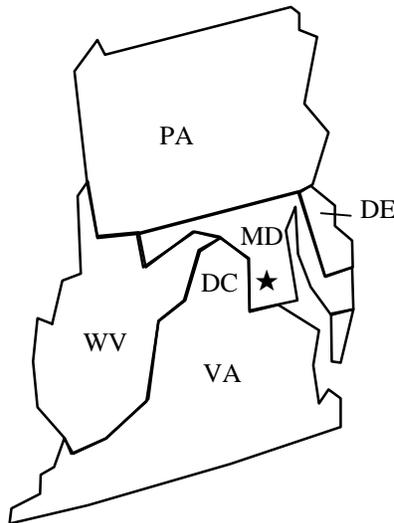
Puerto Rico has been successful at delegating case management services to eight private agencies. It has organized and structured its departments to physically integrate its JOBS and AFDC personnel into TANF personnel by training case workers and supervisors. The agency is also conducting client profiles when clients are referred for case management to assess their educational background and work experience.

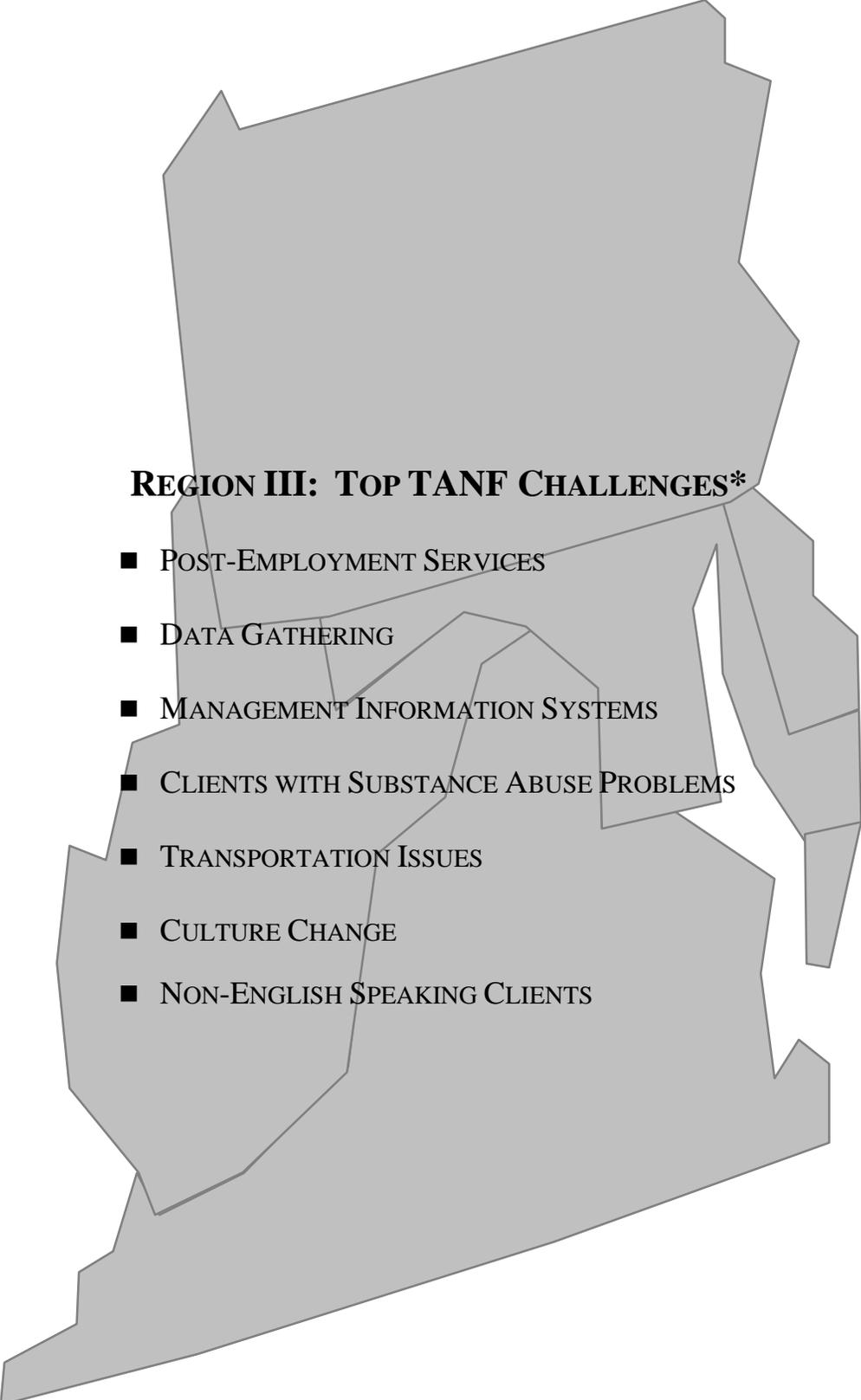
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Puerto Rico would like to receive technical assistance on tracking recipients. Other areas of interest include: case management training, job retention and other post-employment service, working with the hard-to-serve population, and culture change.

REGION III:

DELAWARE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MARYLAND
PENNSYLVANIA
VIRGINIA
WEST VIRGINIA





REGION III: TOP TANF CHALLENGES*

- **POST-EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**
- **DATA GATHERING**
- **MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS**
- **CLIENTS WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS**
- **TRANSPORTATION ISSUES**
- **CULTURE CHANGE**
- **NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING CLIENTS**

*A majority of states within the region ranked these issues as “most challenging.”

**REGION III
MOST CHALLENGING ISSUES BY STATE**

DELAWARE	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	MARYLAND
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Child Care Access ▪ Data Gathering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child Support Enforcement ▪ Clients with Mental Health Problems ▪ Clients with Developmental Disabilities ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Non-English Speaking Clients ▪ Partnerships with the Private Sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management ▪ Community Service ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Affordable and Adequate Housing ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Domestic Violence Victims ▪ Culture Change ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring
PENNSYLVANIA	VIRGINIA	WEST VIRGINIA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intake and Assessment ▪ Community Service ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Mental Health Problems ▪ Clients with Developmental Disabilities ▪ Clients with Physical Disabilities ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Immigrant Clients ▪ Non-English Speaking Clients ▪ Non-Custodial Parents ▪ Teen Parents/Minor Mothers ▪ Rural Clients ▪ Culture Change ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Non-English Speaking Clients ▪ Non-Custodial Parents ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Domestic Violence Victims ▪ Rural Clients ▪ Culture Change

Note: State-reported data. For each state, respondents ranked the issues shown as “most challenging” from a list of issues provided.



Delaware, one of the smallest states, ranked 46th in population in 1995. The state's total population in 1995 was 0.72 million, 73 percent of which lived in a metropolitan area. Delaware's population is expected to increase 5.6 percent by the year 2000 to 0.76 million. The state's poverty rate in 1995 was 7.6 percent, well below the national average of 13.8 percent, while its median per capita income was \$21,481. In January 1995, 26,314 Delaware residents were receiving AFDC. The state's caseload had dropped slightly to 23,650 by August 1996 when the new welfare law was enacted and declined 13 percent by September 1997 to 20,550.

TANF HISTORY

Delaware implemented its welfare reform program, *A Better Chance (ABC)*, in October 1995 as a waiver demonstration project. In 1997, the state rolled its waiver demonstration program into TANF. ABC emphasizes work and parental responsibility and sets a 2-year time limit on assistance for all adults. The state addresses the needs of its welfare-dependent population by focusing on specific objectives and requirements according to age. Participants receive child care while engaging in work-related activities and transitional child care for 2 years once they leave welfare for work.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Delaware cited the following challenges:

- Training staff to interact with clients and to coach clients to obtain jobs
- Complying with the formal evaluation requirements of the state's waiver
- Implementing a new management information system
- Keeping track of Federal rules and regulations and verifying the accuracy of collected data based on those rules and regulations
- Administering the state's Workfare program and the redesign and reorganization of the state's services.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Delaware ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Post-employment services
- Child care access
- Data gathering.

THE SUCCESSES

To ensure the success of ABC, Delaware established the ABC Council, composed of social services agencies, the Delaware Department of Labor, the Delaware Development Office, and the state's Private Industry Council (PIC). The Division of Family Services has worked closely with the Council to ensure a clear division of responsibilities among these entities. The social services agencies are responsible for eligibility and case management. Job readiness, job search, and job development activities are carried out by the Department of Labor. The Development Office and PIC are responsible for working with the private sector to attract and maintain employers in the state. Delaware has been very successful at building and maintaining its interagency collaborations to get more clients employed.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Delaware is interested in receiving technical assistance on the issue of post-employment services, specifically on contracts for job retention.



In 1995, the District’s population was 570,000. Its median per capita income was \$24,080. The number of TANF recipients in the District declined by 11 percent from August 1996 to September 1997, or from 69,290 to 61,602.

TANF HISTORY

The District of Columbia will enforce the 60-month lifetime limit on assistance and the 24-months of TANF benefits before work. Under its TANF plan, the District will require recipients to sign a personal responsibility plan that requires them to attain specific employment goals, have their children immunized, and keep their children in school. Individuals who fail to comply with their responsibility plan may be subject to sanctions. The District requires that individuals receiving TANF participate in work activities.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state (in this case, the District) is addressing: “What are the top challenges facing [the District] in TANF implementation?”

- Operating in a local economy that has a surplus of labor and deficit of jobs suitable to TANF recipients’ skill levels
- Ensuring the availability of child care
- Serving the hardest-to-employ portion of its caseload.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, the District of Columbia ranked the following as its greatest challenges:

- Child support enforcement
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with developmental disabilities
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Non-English speaking clients
- Partnerships with the private sector.

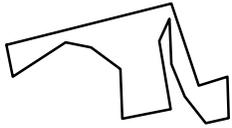
THE SUCCESSES

The Department of Human Services is collaborating with other District agencies such as the Department of Employment Services, District of Columbia Public Schools, and the Department of Recreation to design the District’s TANF program. The Income Maintenance Administration, which is responsible for the TANF program, has a grantee relationship with the designated community action

agency and has conducted numerous public forums with Community Business Organizations. This approach has enabled the Income Maintenance Administration to maximize and utilize the expertise of other organizations in designing appropriate programs for TANF applicants and recipients. Also, over the past year, the District has succeeded in facilitating community participation in the welfare reform effort and obtaining support for its welfare reform initiatives.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The District is not interested in receiving technical assistance at this time.



The State of Maryland ranked 19th in population in the nation in 1995. The total population in 1995 was 5 million and is expected to grow at a rate of 4.8 percent by the year 2000. In 1995, 81.3 percent of Maryland's population lived in a metropolitan area. The state's poverty rate was 11.6 percent, and its median per capita income was \$24,044. Since enactment of the new welfare law, Maryland's AFDC/TANF caseload decreased 25 percent from August 1996 to September 1997.

TANF HISTORY

Before the implementation of TANF, Maryland was operating the *Family Independence Program (FIP)* waiver demonstration project. In 1996, the state enacted the Welfare Innovation Act, which provides for a vast array of reforms under a new FIP. The new FIP emphasizes work, creates the *Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA)* program, and sets a 60-month lifetime limit on assistance. The FIP includes a diversion program called Welfare Avoidance Grant.

All of Maryland's major state agencies have collaborated to ensure the successful implementation of the new program. The FIP Advisory Committee comprises representatives from the Departments of Labor, Health, and Housing; the Office of Economic Development; the private sector; and non-profit and advocacy groups. At the local level, there are contractual partnerships with various organizations to provide employment opportunities and support services to program participants.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Maryland cited the following challenges:

- Screening and treating program participants who have substance abuse problems
- Providing and paying for the services necessary to get participants who reach the 24-month time limit employed
- Providing the post-employment services that clients need to remain employed.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Maryland ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Case management
- Community service
- Post-employment services
- Affordable and adequate housing
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Domestic violence victims

- Culture change
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

Through collaborations with universities and community colleges, Maryland has conducted impact studies and econometric and demographic forecasting of the TANF program. These studies have helped the state determine the economic and demographic characteristics of its TANF population and the potential impact of FIP on the population it seeks to serve. The state also has succeeded at using reinvestment strategies that allow program funds remaining at the end of the fiscal year to be used to pay for child care, education, training, and other services that help participants become self-sufficient. Also, the state recently began a Job Coach/Job Shadow program in Allegheny County to provide post-employment services,

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Maryland is interested in learning about strategies that other states have in place to provide post-employment services. The state also is interested in receiving technical assistance on the issue of transportation, particularly in urban areas.

SUB-STATE SNAPSHOT
PATUXENT NAVAL BASE
St. Mary's County, Maryland

The Patuxent Naval base is the strongest economic base for St. Mary's County. In the past few years, over 13,000 new jobs have been created due to the naval base and its contractors. The majority of these jobs are highly technical and require employees with higher education. There are, however, quite a number of service and lower-technical jobs. St. Mary's County decided to use its reinvestment dollars to work with the local partners already in the community, thereby strengthening the relationship with the community.¹ To better serve the needs of its welfare recipient population, the County divided recipients' needs into the following categories:

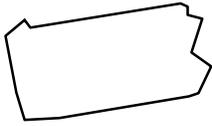
- Pre-job readiness
- Retention
- Education
- Child care
- Job placement.

Contracts were then issued to community organizations that could provide the services necessary to meet these needs.

Nevertheless, and despite these efforts, there are a number of challenges that the County must overcome to help recipients achieve self-sufficiency. St. Mary's County is a very rural county without a mass transit system in place. Therefore, one of the challenges that has been the most difficult for the county to address is transportation. Currently, some of the transportation needs of recipients are being met through the use of vans from the Health Department and bus passes for use on the St. Mary's County Transit System. This coming year, the County will try to influence transportation services in the tri-county area (Charles County, St. Mary's County, and Calvert County) because county residents work in various areas within these counties and need the appropriate transportation services to commute to work. Another challenge is finding child care providers for odd hours and shift work and for children with special needs. The County is currently working recruiting providers that can provide these services. Other challenges for the County are data gathering and caseload profiles and working with recipients who are close to meeting their 24-month time limit.

The County notes that although it is very difficult to get people who are not accustomed to working together to work as a team, St. Mary's County has been very successful at bridging these differences and has established a large number of partnerships. Furthermore, these partnerships have been essential as the County designed its plan for welfare reform.

¹ In Maryland, if the TANF caseload decreases stays down, the state is able to reinvest its TANF funds to provide recipients with the services they need, such as child care and training.



Pennsylvania ranked 5th in the nation in population in 1995. The state's population was 12.1 million and is expected to increase by 1.3 percent by the year 2000 to 12.3 million. In 1995, 68.9 percent of the population lived in an urban metropolitan area. The poverty rate in 1995 was 11.7 percent. Pennsylvania's median per capita income in 1995 was \$21,351. In January 1995, there were 611,215 AFDC/TANF recipients in the state. From August 1996 to September 1997, the number of recipients declined by 23 percent, from 530,520 to 410,363.

TANF HISTORY

Pennsylvania implemented its TANF program in March 1997. The program is administered and supervised by the Department of Public Welfare. The program enforces the Federal 5-year limit on benefits and the 2-year limit on assistance. TANF recipients must sign a written Agreement of Mutual Responsibility and must engage in work activities. Work activities include: job search, job readiness/job preparation, subsidized employment, work experience, on-the-job training, workfare, and community service. The state reports that 62,000 recipients obtained jobs between March 1996 and September 1997.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Pennsylvania cited the following challenges:

- Effecting culture change and dispelling denial and myths about welfare reform on the part of the state's constituency and advocacy groups
- Automating its management information systems, especially to keep track of child care subsidies and for data gathering
- Providing services to the hard-to-employ population
- Addressing issues related to drug, alcohol, and emotional problems
- Meeting the requirements of the state's Fair Labor Standard Act for clients to participate in community service employment.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Pennsylvania ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Intake and assessment
- Community service
- Post-employment services
- Transportation issues
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with developmental disabilities

- Clients with physical disabilities
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Immigrant clients
- Non-English speaking clients
- Non-custodial parents
- Teen parents/minor mothers
- Rural clients
- Culture change
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

Pennsylvania has succeeded in reducing its TANF caseload and helping recipients obtain employment by strongly emphasizing rapid attachment to employment, increasing its income disregard, and compensating employers for keeping clients employed. In the initial stages of the TANF program, Pennsylvania held statewide and regional conferences with state, local, and community partners such as the United Way, the Pennsylvania Human Services Department, community-based organizations, county governments, and advocacy groups. The conferences helped build community collaborations to address the implications of TANF. The state is working with partners at the community level, especially through contracts, to offer employment and training services to TANF participants.

Pennsylvania also has created work groups to look at specific issues. With the support of the Pennsylvania Coalition against Domestic Violence and numerous advocacy groups and community-based organizations, the domestic violence work group has created a cross-training pilot project to train staff in the assessment and referral of domestic violence victims. To ease the job search and placement process, the state has consolidated employment and training activities through the Workforce Development Planning Group.

In the area of performance-based contracting, the state has done specific outreach to community-based providers to encourage them to apply for the state's contracts for services. Although culture change remains an issue for the state, the Department of Public Welfare finds that it is making progress and that case managers are able to help clients understand the implications of time limits and work requirements.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Pennsylvania is interested in a peer-to-peer match with the State of Wisconsin. Pennsylvania is specifically interested in learning how the County of Milwaukee was divided into six separate service delivery areas and what models the city's contractors are using to provide services to TANF recipients. Pennsylvania also is interested in viewing Milwaukee's data system, office management, and client flow. Pennsylvania is willing to serve as a peer-match in the area of performance-based contracting.



Virginia ranked 12th in population in the nation in 1995. The state's population was approximately 6.6 million and is expected to rise by 6 percent in the year 2000 to 7 million. In 1995, 69.4 percent of Virginia's population lived in a metropolitan area. Virginia's poverty rate at the time was relatively low, at 9.4 percent compared with the national rate of 13.8 percent. Virginia's median per capita income in 1995 was \$21,634. In January 1995, there were 189,493 AFDC/TANF recipients in the state. From August 1996, when the new welfare law was enacted, to September 1997, the number of recipients declined by 25 percent to 114,450.

TANF HISTORY

Virginia began its welfare reform efforts in July 1995 with a variety of waiver demonstration projects. The state continues to operate and has built its TANF program on two of those waiver projects. The *Virginia Independence Program (VIP)* is a statewide reform initiative that focuses on the development of self-sufficiency through employment and provides services designed to eliminate barriers to independence. The *Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW)* is a work program that allows participants to receive up to 24 months of cash assistance in any 60-month period. To be eligible for benefits, participants must be employed or must participate in subsidized employment or community work experience. Under VIEW, the state provides transitional assistance for up to 1 year in the form of day care and transportation. The state also offers a diversionary assistance (DA) program that provides families with one-time cash payments in times of crisis (up to 4 months of eligible assistance) to prevent the family from entering the welfare rolls.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Virginia cited the following challenges:

- Understanding the Federal regulations and fitting them into the state's waivers
- Getting its management information systems up fast enough to meet all the necessary requirements
- Equipping clients with the skills, training, and education they need to retain jobs and to obtain better jobs
- Helping the hard-to-employ population achieve self-sufficiency.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Virginia ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Post-employment services
- Transportation issues
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Non-English speaking clients

- Non-custodial parents
- Data gathering
- Management information systems.

THE SUCCESSES

According to the state, the key in welfare reform has been involving everyone in the community, especially employers, in the program. There have been meetings and yearly statewide conferences to bring in community players (non-profits, churches, and employers) to talk about welfare reform and the coordination necessary to make the program work. The Department of Human Services has been working with the Employment Security Office and JTPA for employment placement and also has hired job developers to work with the state and private providers. The Child Support Enforcement Office also helps coordinate efforts to help families become self-sufficient. IV-A and IV-D staff have been co-located for intake purposes, and the state is experimenting with using videoconferencing for intake. A videoconferencing pilot program taking place in the Petersburg District Office is targeted to recipients in rural areas who lack the means to travel to see a child support person.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The state is interested in learning how other states have successfully conveyed to the business community that they should have child care available for their staff. Virginia is also interested in learning more about the types of testing tools that are available for intake and assessment and how other states are handling their case management.



West Virginia is a relatively sparsely populated state. In 1995 it ranked 35th in the nation in population with 1.82 million residents. The state's population is projected to grow only 0.8 percent by 2000 to 1.84 million. Of the total population in 1995, 36.1 percent lived in a metropolitan area. West Virginia's poverty rate in 1995 was 22.3 percent, well above the national average of 13.8 percent. In this same year, the state's median per capita income was \$16,209.

TANF HISTORY

The state's Bureau of Employment administers the *West Virginia Works (WV Works)* program. The program sets a 60-month lifetime limit on assistance and a 24-month limit on aid before a participant must participate in a work activity. The state will not require a participating family to engage in community service after receiving 2 months of benefits. Support services provided to participants will be determined on a need basis. Support services include transportation for participation in required work activities. Unsubsidized employment is the primary goal for all participants.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, West Virginia cited the following challenges:

- Lack of appropriate employment opportunities
- Difficulty in connecting clients to jobs
- Services for the hard-to-employ population, including child care, transportation, mental health care, and substance abuse treatment
- Attainment of required participation rates to avoid penalties.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, West Virginia ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Post-employment services
- Transportation issues
- Domestic violence victims
- Rural clients
- Culture change.

THE SUCCESSES

As a rural state, West Virginia has grappled extensively with the issue of transportation. The Department of Health and Human Resources has been working closely with the Department of Transportation to help identify and resolve the transportation barriers of TANF participants. The Department of Transportation has provided funds for a pilot demonstration project that will allow recipients to lease cars and has instituted a charity car program to obtain used vehicles for recipients. The Department of Health and Human Resources also has been working with the Bureau of Employment program that provides the case managers that assess and work with the TANF recipients and evaluate the program. The Department of Health and Human Resources has an informal agreement with the Office of Economic Development to work with the business community to provide employment opportunities. The Department also has a specialized employment training program for recipients through the Department of Education and contractual arrangements to tailor curricula for job recipients.

West Virginia's outreach efforts have succeeded in strengthening community involvement in, and ownership of, the new program. At the local level, Family Resource Networks convene and organize the community to respond to the local needs of its clients. For example, Wayne County has a program that provides families with vouchers to purchase clothing for school. The Huntington Community in Cabell County is working on a proposal to provide diagnostic screening and appropriate services to public housing residents through One-Stop Centers.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

To continue working on its transportation issues, the state would like to learn more about Florida's charity car program. West Virginia is also interested in learning more about how the states of Nebraska and Georgia have managed to meet their participation rates, specifically for two-parent families, and how these states have dealt with the issues of hour requirements and the unavailability of jobs.

REGION IV:

ALABAMA

FLORIDA

GEORGIA

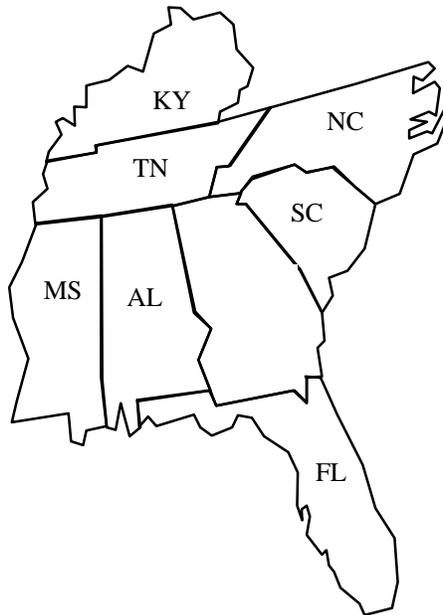
KENTUCKY

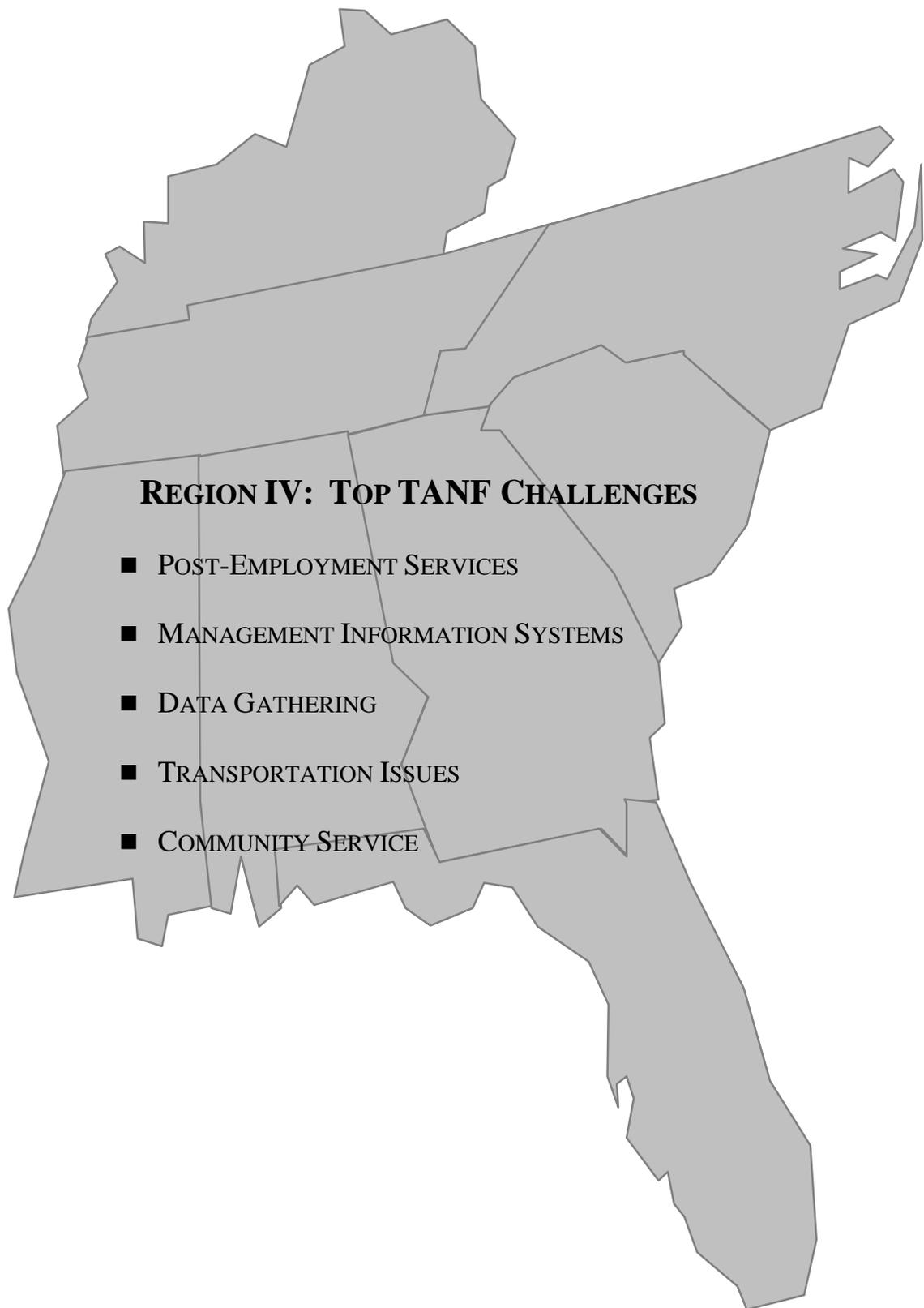
MISSISSIPPI

NORTH CAROLINA

SOUTH CAROLINA

TENNESSEE





*A majority of states within the region ranked these issues as “most challenging.”

REGION IV
MOST CHALLENGING ISSUES BY STATE

<p>ALABAMA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Service ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Rural Clients ▪ Culture Change ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems ▪ Linkages with Faith-based Organizations 	<p>FLORIDA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Service ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Privatization 	<p>GEORGIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management ▪ One-Stop Centers ▪ Community Service ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Developmental Disabilities ▪ Clients with Physical Disabilities ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Rural Clients ▪ Management Information Systems ▪ Partnerships with the Private Sector ▪ Streamlined Funding Sources
<p>KENTUCKY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Culture Change ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring 	<p>MISSISSIPPI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Management Information Systems ▪ Community-based Collaborations 	<p>NORTH CAROLINA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Service ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Domestic Violence Victims ▪ Non-Custodial Parents ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring
<p>SOUTH CAROLINA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Child Care Access ▪ Affordable and Adequate Housing ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Domestic Violence Victims ▪ Teen Parents/Minor Mothers ▪ Rural Clients ▪ Culture Change ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring 	<p>TENNESSEE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Domestic Violence Victims 	

Note: State-reported data. For each state, respondents ranked the issues shown as "most challenging" from a list of issues provided.



In 1995, Alabama ranked 22nd in population in the nation, with approximately 4.3 million residents. Of these, 60.4 percent lived in a metropolitan area. The state's population is expected to grow 4.9 percent by 2000 to 4.5 million. In 1995, Alabama had a poverty rate of 17.1 percent and a median per capita income of \$17,234. The total number of AFDC recipients in January 1995 was 121,837. Since the enactment of the new welfare law, the number of TANF recipients declined by 32 percent, from 100,510 in August 1996 to 67,839 in September 1997.

TANF HISTORY

Alabama's *Family Assistance Program* enforces the 60-month time limit on assistance and provides assistance to all needy families. Under the Family Assistance Program, recipients are required to participate in work activities unless they are exempt. Non-exempt recipients are assessed and placed in work activities and must remain in work activities as long as child care is available. Individuals who agree to drug, alcohol, or mental health treatment programs are temporarily excused from work activities.

The state has not initiated or altered any formal collaborations under welfare reform because it had built an infrastructure of partnerships under its JOBS program. Over the years, Alabama has maintained and strengthened those partnerships, especially with the Department of Labor and the Department of Education, to train recipients and get them employed. The state has provided guidelines for counties for contacting industries and setting up partnerships to assist in the hiring of TANF recipients.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Alabama cited the following challenges:

- Automating and developing major systems required under TANF, especially those related to data gathering
- Working with the hard-to-employ population
- Removing transportation barriers.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Alabama ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Community service
- Transportation issues
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Rural clients

- Culture change
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Linkages with faith-based organizations.

THE SUCCESSES

The state has implemented a program to match recipients with mentors from churches and community organizations to ease the recipient's transition from welfare to work. Through its work with different community organizations, Alabama has succeeded at generating work activity for TANF recipients to meet and exceed the work participation rates. The state believes that by implementing a 100 percent, 3-month income disregard, it has successfully simplified the TANF program and made it much more user-friendly.

In the area of transportation, the Department of Human Resources has a contract with public transportation systems in urban areas to provide bus passes for recipients. The Department has a similar contract with the Rural Public Transit Association covering 10 rural areas and is starting two pilot projects to provide low-interest loans for clients to purchase low-cost vehicles.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Alabama is interested in receiving technical assistance through contacts with similar states that may be facing similar issues, perhaps through sub-regional meetings. The state is interested in receiving technical assistance in the following areas: up-front diversion, post-employment services, and child care affordability for low-wage earners.



With 14.2 million residents, Florida ranked 4th in the nation in population in 1995. By the year 2000, the state's population is expected to grow 7.8 percent to 15.3 million. In 1995, the state had a poverty rate of 15.3 percent and a median per capita income of \$20,857. Florida's AFDC/TANF caseload in January 1995 was 657,313. By August 1996, when the new welfare law was enacted, the number of recipients had decreased to 533,800. From August 1996 to September 1997, Florida's caseload declined by 30 percent to 375,819.

TANF HISTORY

Florida's *Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency (WAGES)* program creates a two-tier time limit structure with child-only cases and SSI-eligible exempt. Recipients are limited to a maximum 24 months of assistance in a 60-month period, with a 48-month lifetime limit. Benefits may be in the form of a state warrant, electronic benefit, voucher, payment to a payee, payment for subsidized employment, or pay-after-performance with public and private non-profit agencies. The state provides 12 months of transitional medical assistance and may provide support services, education, and training. The state instituted the WAGES Coalitions to tailor the program to fit local welfare caseloads. These coalitions are bringing together communities and building community buy-in to ensure the long-term success of the program. Partnerships at the local level are primarily determined by the design of the program and services offered to recipients.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Florida cited the following challenges:

- Modifying its management information systems
- Planning for recipients who meet the time limit without getting a job and determining how to avoid placing the children of those recipients at risk.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Florida ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Community service employment
- Post-employment services
- Transportation issues
- Privatization.

THE SUCCESSES

Florida has been successful at changing an entire program and implementing a new one within a short period. As noted above, the state has had a remarkable decrease in its TANF caseload. In part, the state's success is due to its unique state governance. Early in 1996, Governor Chiles and the state legislature enacted Florida's statewide vision of welfare, WAGES, into law. WAGES created a new and

unique governance structure, establishing 24 local WAGES coalitions to design and manage their communities' programs to help people move from welfare to work. The state has begun to put programs in place to deal with the hard-to-serve population. Local service providers are creating integrated systems to address the multiple employment barriers facing this population. Also, the State WAGES Board has established Business Bonuses for employers that hire participants who are close to their time limit. Public-Private Ventures is initiating a 2-year demonstration project to provide post-employment services and to train WAGES participants in Dade County.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Although Florida is willing to participate in a peer-to-peer match for technical assistance, the state does not feel that it needs technical assistance at the moment. The state notes that it has learned a great deal from other states and that, therefore, it is willing to share its experiences and help other states.



Georgia's population in 1995 was 7.1 million, ranking the state 11th in the nation in total population. Out of this population, 63.2 percent lived in a metropolitan area. By the year 2000, Georgia's population is expected to rise by 7.5 percent to 7.6 million. The state's poverty rate in 1995 was 17.8 percent, and its median per capita income was \$19,278. Georgia's AFDC/TANF caseload in January 1995 totaled 388,913. The state's caseload decreased by 28 percent from August 1996, when the new welfare law was enacted, to September 1997.

TANF HISTORY

Georgia's WorkFirst program emphasizes the value of work and enforces a 4-year time limit on cash assistance. The Division of Family and Children Services has collaborated with the business community in the state to operate a Work Supplementation program. Under the Work Supplementation program, businesses hire and train welfare recipients and, in turn, receive a subsidy for training and tax credits. The program includes a family cap provision for families receiving assistance; families receiving assistance for 10 months will not be eligible to receive additional cash assistance for the birth of a child.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Georgia cited the following challenges:

- Shifting the culture from one of eligibility to one of self-sufficiency
- Upgrading its management information system
- Serving the hard-to-employ population.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Georgia ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Case management
- One-stop centers
- Community service
- Post-employment services
- Transportation issues
- Clients with developmental disabilities
- Clients with physical disabilities
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems

- Data gathering
- Rural clients
- Management information systems
- Partnerships with the private sector
- Streamlined funding sources.

THE SUCCESSES

Throughout the state, there have been major collaborations between the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Labor, and the Post-Secondary Education System. The focus of these partnerships has been to look at ways to simplify and reshape the workforce development process. The state has co-located Division of Family and Children Services and Department of Labor staff and has conducted trainings for these staff. The agencies want to take the co-location of services one step further and are looking to consolidate the intake and assessment processes across agencies. The agencies are also trying to modify their management information systems so that they may “talk to each other” across agencies.

The state plans to launch a pilot project to convert its new MIS to track recipients who obtain employment. The state plans to respond to the hard-to-employ population by enhancing the skills of its caseworkers and finding resources within communities to provide the post-employment services needed by this group of recipients.

In the area of child care access (especially for people who work odd hours or shifts), the state has implemented a pilot project in Douglass County and is working with Head Start agencies to extend hours and offer non-traditional care. The state also has started working with for-profit child care vendors to provide these services. The state enforces the sharing of information across county lines and has incorporated a Best Practices format in its online system to facilitate this sharing of information.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The state is interested in learning about what other states are doing in the area of up-front diversion and performance-based contracting, particularly how to develop criteria for performance-based contracting.

SUB-STATE SNAPSHOT
WORK FORCE ENTERPRISE PROGRAM
Atlanta, Georgia

The Housing Authority of the City of Atlanta, Georgia (AHA) created the Work Force Enterprise Program (WFEP) for public housing residents who may or may not be TANF or Food Stamp recipients. The purpose of the program is to help residents become employed by providing support services, training classes, work readiness support, and community and work experience. Participants may stay in the program for a maximum of 2½ years and must participate in the following activities:

- Motivational and “life skills” training classes
- Testing for alcohol and drug abuse and treatment and rehabilitation if necessary
- Education testing, followed by remedial classes, if necessary
- Technical skills job training classes.

The program provides child care, transportation, and assistance purchasing training tools for program participants. Upon completion of program activities, participants must engage in job search activities and must be employed within 6 months of program completion. To help participants become employed, WFEP conducts research on job availability, arranges interviews, collaborates with the area’s employers to hire WFEP participants, and provides transportation services during the job search phase.

The WFEP program is a partnership between the Fulton County Department of Family and Children Services, the AHA, and community-based organizations that provide services to program participants. The AHA has agreements for services provision with the Goodwill Industries of Atlanta, the Southwestern Management and Business Development Company, the YMCA of Metropolitan Atlanta, the Fulton County Alcohol and Drug Treatment Center, the Atlanta public schools, the Boys and Girls clubs, and the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA).



Kentucky ranked 24th in the nation in population in 1995 with 3.8 million residents. Of these residents, 51.8 percent lived in a metropolitan area. The state's population is expected to grow by 3.6 percent to 3.9 million in 2000. In 1995, Kentucky's poverty rate was 19.7 percent, and its median per capita income was \$17,173. In January 1995, there were 193,722 recipients of AFDC in the state. From August 1996 when the new welfare law was enacted to September 1997, the state's caseload dropped 15 percent, from 170,890 to 145,713.

TANF HISTORY

Kentucky's Transitional Assistance Program (K-TAP) promotes economic development, education, and services that lead directly to full-time employment. The state plans to engage the business community in its efforts to move recipients into self-sufficiency through a tax credit. K-TAP will enforce the 24-month time limit for becoming employed and the 60-month lifetime limit on assistance. Individuals not participating in work activities after 24 months will have their cash assistance grant reduced on a pro rata basis, and the rest of the grant will go to a protective third party payee. The state will operate a diversion program to assist families who may need short-term assistance and do not need to enter the program. Diversion assistance may include cash or vendor payments, child care, housing assistance, and referral to child support enforcement.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Kentucky cited the following challenges:

- Effecting culture change—client expectations are very different from the staff's roles and responsibilities
- Effecting policy and procedural changes on the agencies' management information systems
- Dealing with Medicaid issues
- Providing post-employment services to support clients
- Structuring and getting evaluations in place
- Employing the hard-to-serve to meet the participation rates.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Kentucky ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Post-employment services
- Culture change
- Data gathering
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

To ease the process of implementing TANF and getting recipients employed, the state has formed collaborations between the employment and adult education agencies and the Department for Social Services. The state has formed partnerships at the local level with entities that provide clients with supportive services. A number of counties have partnered with the local housing authorities to better coordinate the services available to recipients who live in public housing.

In the past year, Kentucky has successfully identified and referred substance abuse clients for services. The state believes that it has acquired sufficient experience in this area and would be willing to share its experiences with other states. The state has established short-term intensive service delivery programs for recipients and has effectively utilized TANF and welfare-to-work dollars to eliminate recipients' transportation barriers.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Although Kentucky has implemented a system to provide up-front diversion, the state feels that it needs technical assistance in this area and would like to know how other states are implementing their up-front diversion programs. Another area of interest for the state is linkages with faith-based organizations; the state has done very little in this area, but would like to do more.

SUB-STATE SNAPSHOT:
PROJECT LIVE
Jefferson County, Kentucky

In its effort to implement welfare reform, Louisville City in Jefferson County, Kentucky has formed a partnership project called Project Live. Partnerships were established with the state's and the county's Human Services Department, the Jefferson County Board of Education, and the local Private Industry Council. Project Live has been operating for 14 months and has successfully brought on-board approximately 30 of the area's employers as corporate sponsors and partners to employ welfare recipients. Through this project, employers specify what skills and abilities they are seeking in employees, and in a 3-week class sponsored by the Board of Education, recipients are taught the basic skills required by their prospective employers. In the class recipients learn, among other things, resume writing, interviewing skills, and employers' expectations. Employers agree to hire those recipients who successfully complete the class. The project has successfully employed about 1,000 clients since its inception.

Despite the success of the project, a number of challenges remain as project staff begin to work with recipients who are less willing to work or who present larger challenges. Currently, the project provides supportive services for those it deems "alternative track people"; for example, recipients without a General Equivalency Degree (GED). It will be most challenging, however, to employ recipients with disabilities (either physical or mental), alcohol and other drug problems, or a criminal record.



Mississippi ranked 31st in the nation in population in 1995, with a total population of 2.6 million. In 1995, 47.1 percent of Mississippi's population lived in a metropolitan area. The state's poverty rate at the time was 24.5 percent, and the median per capita income was \$14,894. Mississippi's population is expected to grow by 3.1 percent to 2.7 million in 2000. The state's AFDC/TANF caseload in January 1995 was 146,319. Since the enactment of the new welfare law, the state's caseload decreased by 33 percent, from 122,750 in August 1996 to 82,426 in September 1997.

TANF HISTORY

Mississippi's WorkFirst program emphasizes unsubsidized employment and the 60-month lifetime limit on assistance. Work requirements vary by political subdivisions because of employment availability and access to services in certain localities. Recipients who are not engaged in unsubsidized employment may be placed with an employer for short-term training to develop the skills necessary for potential employment opportunities.

The WorkFirst program stresses the importance of community involvement in moving families into self-sufficiency. Collaborations have resulted in a network of business, education, religious, local government, and non-profit organizations. The state's Department of Human Services (DHS) has built collaborations with the Department of Transportation to resolve the transportation needs of recipients. DHS is also working with the Department of Education, Head Start, Employment Security, and Child Support Enforcement.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Mississippi cited the following challenges:

- Software and hardware concerns for management information systems
- Culture change; changing the mindset and attitude of staff
- Performance-based contracting; job placement under these contracts.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Mississippi ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Management information systems
- Community-based collaborations.

THE SUCCESSES

Mississippi has contracted out post-employment services with the provision that 60 percent of pay is based on the vendor's ability to keep clients employed. In the area of child care access, the state has created a three-tier reimbursement payment for child care services. To

further help recipients obtain employment, DHS has added a resource development staff to interface with employers and community leaders on the benefits of hiring TANF recipients.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Mississippi would like to receive technical assistance on providing transportation for rural clients and on working with the hard-to-serve population of clients with mental health problems and substance abuse problems. Other areas for technical assistance include culture change, management information systems, and community-based collaboration.



In 1995, North Carolina ranked 10th in population in the nation, with a total population of 7.2 million. Half of the state's population lived in a metropolitan area. North Carolina's poverty rate in 1995 was 15.7 percent, and its median per capita income was \$18,702. By the year 2000, the state's population is expected to grow by 6.5 percent to 7.6 million. In January 1995, the number of AFDC recipients in the state totaled 317,836. By the time the new welfare law was enacted, on August 1996, the number of recipients had declined to 266,470. North Carolina's TANF caseload continued to decline thereafter and reached 218,863 by September 1997—an 18 percent decrease from the previous year.

TANF HISTORY

North Carolina's Work First plan began on July 1995 with an emphasis on helping families move off welfare and into jobs. Recipients must move off welfare in 2 years and can reapply for benefits after 3 years. Work First requires recipients to sign a personal responsibility contract detailing their plans for getting off welfare and looking for and accepting work. Recipients are required to get a job, paid or unpaid, or be in short-term job training within 12 weeks for at least 30 hours a week to avoid losing benefits. To help recipients find and keep a job, the program provides short-term training (when needed), transportation, child care, and health care.

The Local Government Partnership Council is a Human Services Task Force comprising representatives from the business sector, the advocacy community, the legislature, the Department of Labor, the Department of Transportation, the Employment Security Commission, and the Department of Health and Human Services. The goal of this Task Force is to make recommendations to the state on policies to be incorporated into the State TANF plan. At the local level, collaborations have been established with the business community and non-profit and faith-based organizations to serve clients' needs.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, North Carolina cited the following challenges:

- Selecting the counties to participate in the new TANF programs—a highly political issue
- Automation
- Legal challenges from counties
- Federal reporting requirements.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, North Carolina ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Community service

- Post-employment services
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Domestic violence victims
- Non-custodial parents
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

The state notes that a great deal of the state's success in serving clients' needs has been due to relationships with local partners that have hired Work First participants, provided transportation to work or training activities, and provided classes on job readiness, parenting, and financial planning. Specifically, the state has refocused the program to a Work First vision and has achieved considerable caseload decline without changing eligibility criteria. The state is also proud of partnerships developed with the Departments of Mental Health and Commerce and with the Employment Security Commission. While still early in the process, North Carolina notes that its devolution of the TANF program to the counties can also be considered a success.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

North Carolina is interested in receiving technical assistance in the areas of post-employment services, specifically on job retention and wage upgrade. The state would also like to know what initiatives other states have in place for teen parents and minor mothers.



In 1995, South Carolina ranked 25th in the nation in total population with 3.73 million residents, of which 54.6 percent lived in a metropolitan area. The state's poverty rate was 18.9 percent, and the median per capita income was \$16,923. South Carolina's population is expected to grow by 5.4 percent to approximately 3.9 million in 2000. The state's AFDC/TANF caseload has steadily decreased over the past 3 years. In January 1995, the number of AFDC/TANF recipients totaled 133,567. From the enactment of the new welfare law in August 1996 to September 1997, South Carolina's caseload decreased by 33 percent from 113,430 to 75,624.

TANF HISTORY

South Carolina's *Family Independence Program (FIP)* is administered by the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS). The program emphasizes employment and training and sets the 24-month limit on benefits before engaging in work, and the 60-month lifetime limit on assistance. Under FIP, recipients must engage in 2 weeks of job search as a condition of eligibility assistance. During this time, an applicant must document contact with a minimum of 5 employers a week. Applicants deemed job-ready are referred to up to 60 days of job search/job club activities. Individuals not employed or involved in training and education activities are required to participate in the Alternate Work Experience Program (AWEP). The state provides transitional Medicaid for 12 additional months.

In its TANF plan, South Carolina sets forth the changed mission of the SCDSS from one of a welfare agency to an employment and training agency. To accomplish this mission, the agency has established a range of collaborations with various state partners through formal Memorandums of Agreement. These agreements exist between the SCDSS and the Departments of Employment Security, Education, Child Welfare, Alcohol and Drug Abuse, and Vocational Rehabilitation as well as the South Carolina Office of Work Support, the Governor's Office, and local providers. Through these collaboratives, the Department has established a pilot program to train DSS staff to screen and refer domestic violence victims for services and discuss drug testing and treatment for participants referred for services and has developed an integrated child care program.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, South Carolina cited the following challenges:

- Securing sufficient resources, including time, systems, support services, and data
- Identifying and providing services for recipients who will meet the 24 month time limit
- Transportation issues, specifically in rural areas.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, South Carolina ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Case management

- Post-employment services
- Child care access
- Affordable and adequate housing
- Transportation issues
- Domestic violence victims
- Teen parents/minor mothers
- Rural clients
- Culture change
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

South Carolina has been very successful at getting recipients employed. The Business and Industry Relations Division hired a workforce consultant to develop marketing materials and policy procedures to “sell” clients to businesses. In the past year, the state placed approximately 1,000 persons each month, achieving a caseload reduction of 45 percent. The state has also been working with the hard-to-serve population, particularly on the issues of alcohol abuse and vocational education. Through the Center for Child Care Career Development (CCCCD), the state combines jobs with child care. The CCCCCD administers statewide child caregiver training through the 16 state technical colleges and provides program participants entry-level child care credential.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The state is interested in sharing its experiences and learning from other states. South Carolina is particularly interested in obtaining a regional perspective around TANF implementation through workshops, roundtables and “issue fairs.” The state would like technical assistance in the areas of post-employment services, affordable and adequate housing, clients with mental health problems, and performance-based contracting.

Tennessee ranked 17th with a population in 1995 of 5.2 million. The population is expected to increase 5.9 percent by 2000 to 5.5 million. The poverty rate in 1995 was 17.0 percent, and the median per capita income was \$18,434. In 1995, 60.9 percent of the state's population lived in a metropolitan area. Tennessee's AFDC/TANF caseload in January of 1995 was 281,982. From the enactment of the new welfare law in August 1996 to September 1997, the state's caseload declined by 34 percent from 238,890 to 157,608.

TANF HISTORY

Tennessee's *Families First* program places an emphasis on personal responsibility, work, and training. The program enforces the 5-year lifetime limit on benefits and provides individualized work plans for all recipients. Cash assistance is tied to the achievement of work plan goals, school attendance, and immunization. The state offers transitional medical assistance through TennCare and child care for 18 months.

The state is devolving the TANF program to the county or community level through the establishment of Families First Councils. The councils approve training in the counties based on the local job market, choose service contractors, and promote the *Families First* program. The councils comprise local employers, local advocacy groups, the religious community, and local welfare office managers. To date, the state has contracted with 14 child care and transportation brokers across the state to provide supportive services to TANF recipients.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Tennessee cited the following challenges:

- Collecting and extracting data and tracking recipients
- Working with hard-to-serve populations of domestic violence victims, participants with substance abuse and mental health problems, and participants with transportation barriers
- Instituting performance-based contracting and creating contracts that are more outcome-based.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Tennessee ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Domestic violence victims.

THE SUCCESSES

Tennessee has already begun working toward eliminating the challenges mentioned above and created an infrastructure to resolve these issues. While the state continues to identify data collection and the tracking of recipients as a challenge, the state also notes that it has made significant strides in this area. Tennessee is particularly proud of the automation and integration

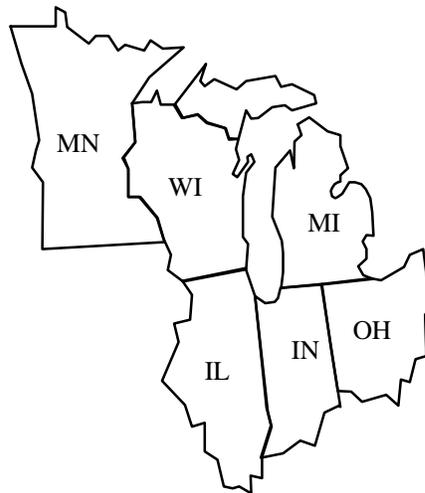
of child care services. The state has implemented mentoring programs in approximately one-half of its counties, with over 500 mentors in the state. The Families First Councils are actively working with employers and community members to provide recipients with the services necessary to become self-sufficient.

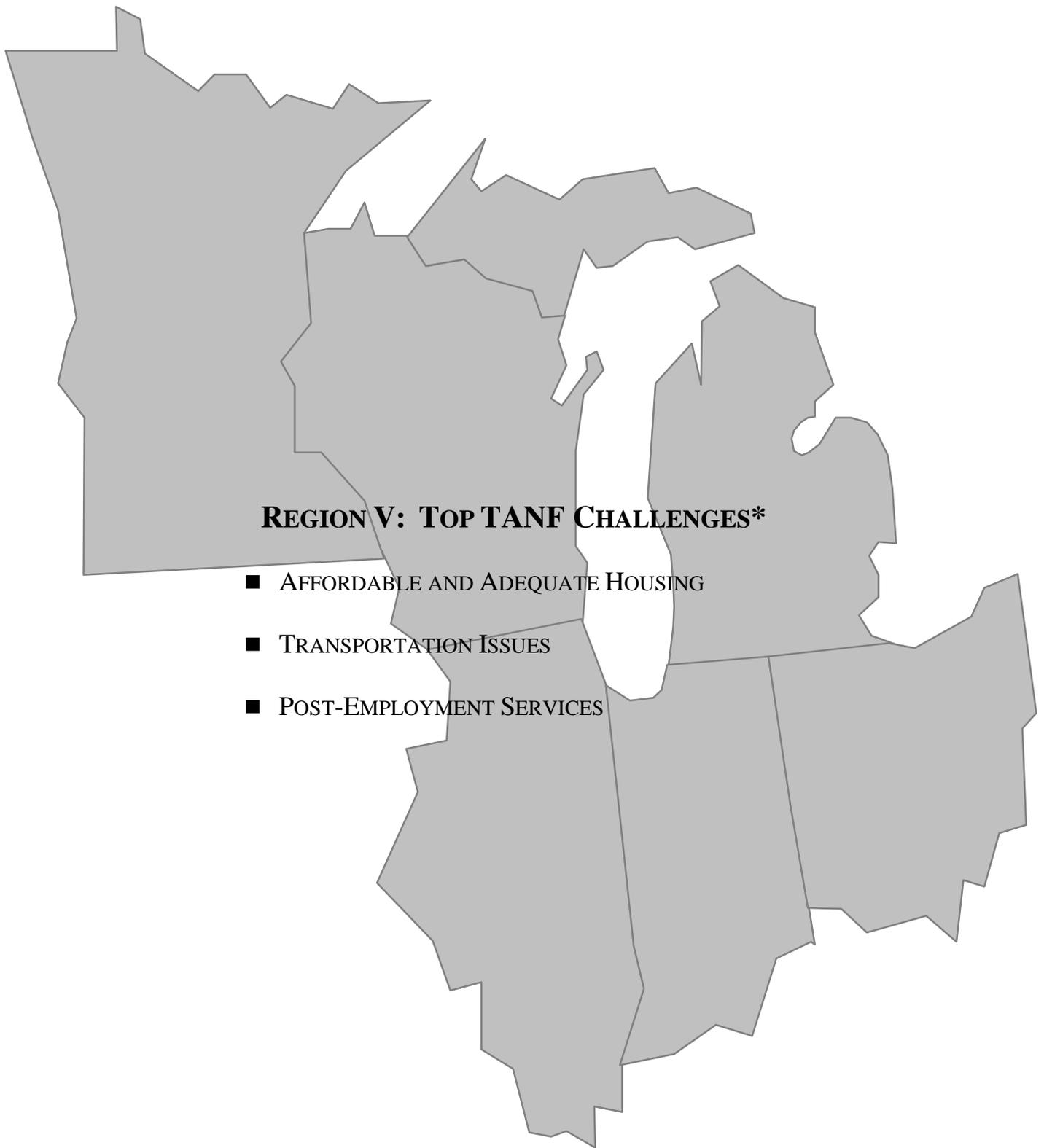
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Tennessee is interested in technical assistance in the area of domestic violence, substance abuse, and performance-based contracting, but the state already conducts screening in these areas. The state is interested in learning more about transportation initiatives in other states as well as automation systems that incorporate TANF, Welfare-to-Work, and JTPA.

REGION V:

**ILLINOIS
INDIANA
MICHIGAN
MINNESOTA
OHIO
WISCONSIN**





*A majority of states within the region ranked these issues as “most challenging.”

REGION V
MOST CHALLENGING ISSUES BY STATE

ILLINOIS	INDIANA	MICHIGAN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Affordable and Adequate Housing ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Culture Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transportation Issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Streamlined Funding Sources
<p>MINNESOTA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Child Care Access ▪ Affordable and Adequate Housing ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Mental Health Problems ▪ Clients with Developmental Disabilities ▪ Clients with Physical Disabilities ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Clients with Criminal Histories ▪ Domestic Violence Victims ▪ Immigrant Clients ▪ Non-English Speaking Clients ▪ Non-Custodial Parents ▪ Teen Parents/Minor Mothers ▪ Rural Clients ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Partnerships with the Private Sector ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring 	<p>OHIO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up-Front Diversion ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Partnerships with the Private Sector 	<p>WISCONSIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Affordable and Adequate Housing ▪ Privatization

Note: State-reported data. For each state, respondents ranked the issues shown as “most challenging” from a list of issues provided.



The state's population in 1995 was 11.8 million, ranking 6th in the nation. The population is expected to increase by 2.6 percent in 2000 to approximately 12.2 million. Out of the total population in 1995, 84.6 percent lived in the metropolitan area. Illinois's poverty rate in 1995 was 15.3 percent, and the median per capita income was \$22,582. In January 1995, the number of AFDC recipients totaled 710,032. By August 1996, the state's caseload declined to 640,870, and by September 1997 it decreased by 13 percent to 556,426.

TANF HISTORY

Illinois's TANF plan focuses on transitional services and requires clients to work or participate in work-related activities while setting a time limit on benefits. The state is continuing the Work Pays program under its 1115 waiver, which allows clients to begin work at any job while receiving a reduction of \$1 for every \$3 earned and continued medical coverage, child care payments, and food stamps. Illinois is enforcing the 60-month lifetime limit on assistance and the 24-month limit for work.

In its efforts to implement welfare reform, Illinois underwent a major reorganization in July of 1997. The state combined parts of seven different state agencies, affecting approximately 20,000 employees. This reorganization was not only to implement welfare reform, but also to reform the state's human services program. The state has also developed extensive collaborations at the local level. In the initial stages of TANF implementation, the state conducted community forums and town hall meetings to solicit the input of local entities about the state's TANF plan. With funding from the Casey Foundation, Illinois set up five TANF pilot programs with families in various communities for 2-years to study the outcomes of service delivery in those communities and determine how they could be improved. These initiatives helped set the direction and focus of the state's TANF plan and eased the process of implementation.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Illinois cited the following challenges:

- Changing the program's underlying philosophy and transforming the mind-set of the staff from one of income maintenance to a work first ideology
- Meeting work performance targets and the requirement to transition recipients from 20 hours of work per week to 25 hours per week
- Maintaining staff motivation and momentum as performance benchmarks get higher and increasingly more difficult to reach
- Ensuring that recipients with substance abuse problems obtain treatment
- Strengthening relationships with the business community to ensure that employers are willing and ready to receive TANF applicants.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Illinois ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Post-employment services
- Affordable and adequate housing
- Transportation issues
- Culture change.

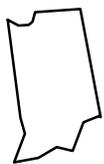
THE SUCCESSES

The state has a number of TANF initiatives in place to help recipients achieve self-sufficiency. The Targeted Work Initiative (TWI) program provides families without a job with cash assistance for 24 months. The Get A Job program is for clients whose youngest child is age 5-12. Recipients receive an orientation, assessment, and assignment to job search activities and are responsible for making 20 employer contacts a month. Last, the Employment and Training program provides job training, education, and support services such as transportation and child care to help clients move from welfare to work.

The Department of Human Services has been successful at establishing performance management and setting specific targets for the state's local TANF offices. The state is putting a One-Stop service delivery model in place. A pilot program was initiated in Sangamon County in May 1997. The state has been actively involving TANF staff in the reengineering of local offices to ensure that the outcome is one they believe in. The prevention section of the Department has created a program for teen mothers.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The state is interested in having an expert consultant spend a few days observing specific aspects of its program and providing constructive feedback.



The state ranked 14th in population in 1995 with a total population of 5.8 million, of which 64.9 percent lived in a metropolitan area. The poverty rate in 1995 was 11.7 percent, and the median per capita income was 19,203. Indiana's population is expected to increase by 3.9 percent to approximately 6 million by 2000. In January 1995, there were 197,225 AFDC/TANF recipients in the state. From the time the new welfare law was enacted in August 1996 to September 1997, the state's population declined by 25 percent from 141,850 to 106,710.

TANF HISTORY

Indiana continued to operate its statewide waiver Indiana Manpower Placement and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) program under TANF. The IMPACT program is located in the Division of Families and Children (DFC) under the Family and Social Services Administration. Under IMPACT, there is a time limit of 24 months for cash assistance. Recipients may earn credit for 1 month of assistance for each 6 months of full-time employment, but there is a limit of 24 months of credit at a time. The state enforces the wage subsidy program to allow recipients engaged in work activities to receive aid in the form of wages from an employer.

The DFC has collaborated with the Departments of Commerce, Health, and Education on Welfare-to-Work issues. The Departments have held a conference, have co-located for some programs, and have developed a One-Stop Center. The Department of Education has provided a staff person to look at educational needs and to work with employment and training programs. DFC collaborates with other agencies in the Administration, such as Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and the Department of Developmental, Aging and Rehabilitative Services.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Indiana cited the following challenges:

- Addressing substance abuse issues, particularly as they affect women and children
- Establishing linkages with Child Welfare
- Creating strategies for interacting with the faith community
- Resolving transportation issues
- Incorporating Federal reporting requirements into a user-friendly plan.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Indiana ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Transportation issues.

THE SUCCESSES

Indiana has been very successful at placing recipients in employment. In 1997, IMPACT made 27,349 job placements. According to DHS, most of the credit for this success goes to the Family Case Coordinators at the local offices who work continuously with their clients to get them employed. Indiana spent \$62 million for child care to build capacity and improve the quality of care. The state provided parental choice vouchers for family day care and is currently establishing requirements for unlicensed child care providers. The new requirements will address issues such as criminal background checks, first aid, and CPR training.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Indiana is interested in technical assistance activities that would bring common states together. Indiana also is interested in having consultants provide 2 to 3 days of technical assistance on specific issues.



Michigan ranked 8th in population in the nation in 1995. The state's population was approximately 9.6 million, and 70.5 percent of the population lived in a metropolitan area. By the year 2000, Michigan's population is expected to grow by 1.9 percent to 9.8 million. The state had a poverty rate of 13.5 percent in 1995 and a median per capita income of \$20,453. In January 1995, there were 612,224 AFDC/TANF recipients in the state. A year later in August 1996, the state's caseload had declined to 501,440. By September 1997, there were 415,487 TANF recipients in the state, down 17 percent from August 1996.

TANF HISTORY

The state's To Strengthen Michigan's Families (TSMF) program focuses on employment, support, personal responsibility, and community involvement. The program establishes a 12-month time limit on assistance for recipients who have not participated in work with a 25 percent benefit reduction for the first year of nonparticipation. Michigan will also enforce the 24-months-and-work limit on assistance and the 60-month lifetime limit on TANF assistance. Applicants are required to attend a Family Independence orientation before being approved for cash benefits. To meet eligibility requirements, all applicants must engage in work activities. The state provides supportive services for the first 90 days of employment, including transportation and vehicle-repair cost reimbursement and funds for one-time or ongoing work expenses.

As noted above, a focus of the TSMF program is to involve local communities in the service delivery of the program. Although the program is state-based, the Michigan Jobs Commission has awarded contracts to 26 workforce development boards for employment and training services. The workforce development boards, in turn, award subcontracts for employment training, counseling, assessment, job placement, job readiness, and post-employment training to other entities. The TANF program also collaborates with the Department of Community Health on Medicaid policy, teen parent programs, and pregnancy prevention and out of wedlock birth programs. The TANF program also collaborates with the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Michigan Jobs Commission on transportation strategies to get TANF recipients to work.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Michigan cited the following challenges:

- The constraints and reporting requirements of the proposed TANF regulations
- The state's ability to meet the participation rate
- Restrictions that the Fair Labor Standards Act places on training and working with non-profits
- The necessary and appropriate integration of TANF with Welfare to Work.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Michigan ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Data gathering
- Streamlined funding sources.

THE SUCCESSES

The state's caseloads continue to decrease, and the state continues to find jobs for people. Michigan restructured the local offices in April of 1997 and created Family Independence Specialist position responsible for Foods Stamps, Medicare, and day care services. The state is currently training people who fill these positions. Michigan notes that there has been a tremendous improvement in the coordination at the local level. The state established Project Zero with the goal to get the number of TANF recipients down to zero in these counties. The state began Project Zero with six sites and added six additional sites in October 1997.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Michigan did not express interest in receiving technical assistance at this time.



In 1995, the state ranked 20th in population in the nation with 4.6 million residents. Out of this population, 69.9 percent lived in a metropolitan area. The state's poverty rate in 1995 was 12.8 percent, and the median per capita income was \$21,063. By the year 2000, the state's population is expected to increase by 4.5 percent to 4.8 million. In January 1995, Minnesota had an AFDC caseload of 167,949. From August 1996 to September 1997, the state's caseload declined by 14 percent from 169,740 to 145,220 recipients.

TANF HISTORY

Minnesota is operating its welfare reform efforts through an AFDC waiver demonstration project. The definitions of activities under the *Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)* are broader than they are for TANF. Under MFIP, the state combines cash, Food Stamps, and General Assistance into one program, with one set of evaluation and eligibility criteria. The state provides transitional child care with payments made directly to the provider. Recipients are required to participate in MFIP employment and training services and are sanctioned for non-compliance.

The state collaborates with providers of employment services, counties, and other agencies in its efforts to implement welfare reform. The state is expanding its outreach efforts to work with other state agencies, such as the Department of Transportation and community colleges and universities. The state does not, however, collaborate much with the business sector, specifically, employers.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Minnesota cited the following challenges:

- Shifting the state from an education focus to a work focus. The state used to emphasize technical and vocational training, and community and 4-year colleges and now must focus on work first. This change represents a difficult transition because clients are being sent immediately to search for jobs and work without necessarily being assessed and provided educational opportunities.
- Reporting data and meeting expectations from the legislature, nonprofits, communities, and the media to produce all sorts of data.
- Working with the hard-to-employ population.
- Meeting worker participation rates.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Minnesota ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Case management
- Post-employment services

- Child care access
- Affordable and adequate housing
- Transportation issues
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with developmental disabilities
- Clients with physical disabilities
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Clients with criminal histories
- Domestic violence victims
- Immigrant clients
- Non-English speaking clients
- Non-custodial parents
- Teen parents/minor mothers
- Rural clients
- Data gathering
- Partnerships with the private sector
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

Minnesota successfully developed the Family Assistance Management Information System (FAMIS) to support policy changes. FAMIS is a statewide computer system developed with input from 10 work groups from different counties. The state believes that it has also been successful at obtaining legislative support for implementing a TANF program designed to move people out of poverty and not simply to reduce the welfare roles. Also, the state has developed a very productive relationship with its partners at the county level.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The state is interested in receiving technical assistance in the area of post-employment services, particularly in the rural areas of the state. Minnesota would like to learn more about this issue through the New York State Job Club programs. Another area of interest for technical assistance is on community-based collaborations. The state is interested in obtaining information on successful models for building relationships with nonprofits and faith-based organizations.



Ohio is one of the most populous states in the nation. In 1995, the state ranked 7th in population with approximately 11.2 million residents. Out of this population, 74.1 percent lived in a metropolitan area. In 1995, the state's poverty rate was 12.4 percent and its median per capita income was \$19,688. Ohio's population is only expected to grow by 2.2 percent by the year 2000 to approximately 11.4 million. In January 1995, there were 629,719 AFDC recipients in Ohio. By August 1996, when the new welfare law was enacted, the state's caseload had decreased to 418,830. Ohio's TANF population declined by 24 percent from August 1996 to September 1997.

TANF HISTORY

The *Ohio Works First (OWF)* program emphasizes employment, training, education, and support services. The program requires at least 30 hours per week of work participation for single heads of households and at least 35 hours a week for two-parent households. Adults who cannot participate in traditional work requirements must participate in alternative work activities based on the participant's circumstances. OWF sets the following time limits: participants can receive cash benefits for up to 3 years; after that time they cannot collect cash benefits for a least 2 years. They may then apply for another 2 years if they need additional assistance and show good cause. Under the OWF, Ohio is continuing to operate the Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEP) program for teen parents providing training and education.

Ohio has begun devolving the TANF program by providing money and resources to counties. The state has developed county Partnership Agreements. These agreements include a community plan that outlines a county's plan for service delivery. Although the state helps to broker some of the services provided by vendors for TANF recipients, it does not directly provide any of these services. Counties collaborate with 2-year colleges for education services and with other service providers for training, drug and alcohol services, child care, and transportation services. The state hopes that counties establish more partnerships with businesses and grassroots organizations as they continue to implement their community plans for the TANF program.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussion with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Ohio cited the following challenges:

- Moving from an eligibility-driven system to a system focused on self-sufficiency
- Developing more clear-cut standards and systems for its devolution efforts
- Reorganizing and restructuring the existing staff to meet new expectations
- Shifting the role of county-based state staff from information dissemination to technical assistance and problem-solving related to performance-based requirements.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Ohio ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Up-front diversions
- Post-employment services
- Partnerships with the private sector.

THE SUCCESSES

Ohio has successfully implemented its TANF program with a lot of support and buy-in throughout the state. The state was able to develop a process and framework for devolution and has begun to reorganize the state structure.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Ohio is interested in technical assistance on successful use of performance outcomes, interventions to improve performance, and wise use of performance-based contracting. The state is also interested in training activities focused on problem solving and improved service delivery.

SUB-STATE SNAPSHOT
PROJECT MATCH PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS
Fulton County, Ohio

Fulton County is one of the sites participating in the Project Match Pathways to Success Program through the Erickson Institute in Chicago. Through a holistic approach, the program attempts not only to assist TANF clients, but also Food Stamp, Children Services, and Non-Custodial clients. The program sets short- and long-term goals for participants, provides them with a support group, and uses a strength-based model to help participants achieve self-sufficiency. The strength-based model looks at the strengths of the person and builds upon those strengths. For supportive services such as transportation, child care, and substance abuse and mental health treatment, participants are referred to community-based service providers that can best serve their needs. Given that many of the area's employers hire through Temporary Placement Agencies, a great deal of work and collaboration also takes place with these entities. Agency representatives have the opportunity to meet and talk with prospective employees at the various workshops offered by the Pathways program.

While the Pathways program has been very successful in helping recipients achieve self-sufficiency, the program is currently working with the harder-to-serve population. The physical characteristics or circumstances preventing these participants from becoming employed are a major challenge for program staff as they attempt to help these recipients. As previously mentioned, there are support services in place to help these recipients. Staff note, however, that the biggest challenge in working with this population is shifting participants' mind-set from dependency to self-sufficiency. Changing this mind-set is the key to keeping participants employed and off the welfare rolls. Another challenge for Fulton County, given its rural community, is the issue of transportation. Notwithstanding these challenges, a project representative states that the Pathways Program is one of the best programs available to help TANF and other assistance recipients become self-sufficient.



In 1995 Wisconsin ranked 18th in population in the nation with a total population of 5.2 million. Out of this population, 65.7 percent were living in a metropolitan area at the time. The state's poverty rate in 1995 was 10.8 percent, and the median per capita income was \$19,811. Wisconsin's population is expected to grow by 4.3 percent to reach approximately 5.4 million by 2000. The state's welfare population has been steadily decreasing over the past 5 years. In January 1995, there were 214,404 AFDC recipients in Wisconsin. From the enactment of the new welfare reform law in August 1996 to September 1997, Wisconsin's TANF population declined by 40 percent from 148,890 to 88,575.

TANF HISTORY

Wisconsin implemented the *Wisconsin Works (W-2)* program statewide in September 1997. W-2 is a work-based system that provides services, subsidies, and opportunities to help parents establish their own means of support, primarily through work. The program emphasizes the 60-month lifetime limit on assistance and requires participants to engage in work activities. Work activities include unsubsidized employment, subsidized employment in the private sector, community service jobs, and W-2 transitions. Eligibility for cash assistance and benefits varies by the type of work activity that the recipient is engaged in. The state provides transitional assistance in the form of child care for families with income up to 165 percent of the poverty level. Families receiving subsidized child care are required to contribute to the cost through a co-pay based on income.

The state's welfare programs are under the Department of Workforce Development in the Division of Economic Support. Wisconsin has privatized the delivery of W-2 program services at the local level. Counties that met certain performance standards were offered the opportunity to design and develop their own responses to TANF; 57 of Wisconsin's 72 counties qualified. In areas where counties did not meet the performance standards, and in Milwaukee where the county has been divided into six service delivery areas, there was open competition for public, private, for-profit and non-profit entities to contract with the state to run the W-2 program.

There is strong collaboration at the state level between the Department of Workforce Development Job Center, Partnership for Full Employment (PFE), vocational rehabilitation services, Department of Health and Family Services programs such as Kinship Care (which replaces the previous population of AFDC non-legally responsible relatives) and Caretaker Support, Wisconsin Council for Developmental Disabilities, and Wisconsin Council for Children and Families. The state has established a Hotline in conjunction with the Wisconsin Councils, and created a case management resource guide to help identify people with special needs and barriers. The state also has worked with advocacy groups to develop curricula and training programs for W-2 workers that address issues such as mental health, alcohol and drug abuse, learning disabilities, interpersonal skills, and domestic abuse.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Wisconsin cited the following challenges:

- **Privatization.** There are a variety of issues around Wisconsin's privatization strategy. Although PRWORA allowed for the privatization of the State TANF Plan (W-2), the state has yet to receive permission from Federal agencies, such as the USDA Food and Nutrition Services and the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) to privatize the delivery of

these services. Although Milwaukee County has been completely privatized, and this county contains approximately 75 percent of the state's TANF caseload, these privatized case managers are not allowed to determine eligibility. Thus there must be two caseworkers for each client—a state/county worker for eligibility and a private caseworker for employment and related activities.

- **Automation and Federal reporting.** Federal reporting will be particularly difficult because the state has not implemented the infrastructure required by the new data, and it does not have clear definitions of what is required.
- **Federal participation requirements.** Wisconsin believes that the current participation requirements do not take into account the varying degrees of success that states have had in moving people from welfare to work.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Wisconsin ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Affordable and adequate housing
- Privatization.

THE SUCCESSES

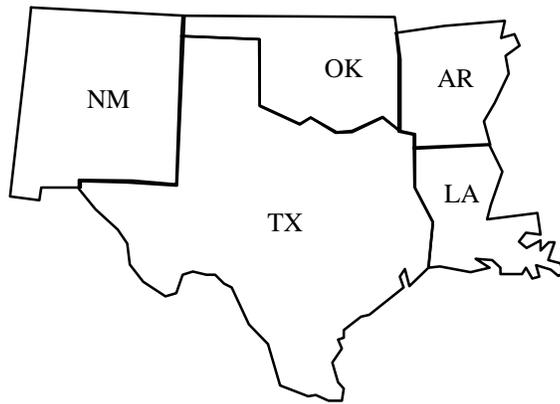
Wisconsin has had a tremendous reduction in caseload in the past 2 years without seeing an increase in reported child abuse and neglect. The state has successfully worked with advocacy groups to make them a part of W-2.

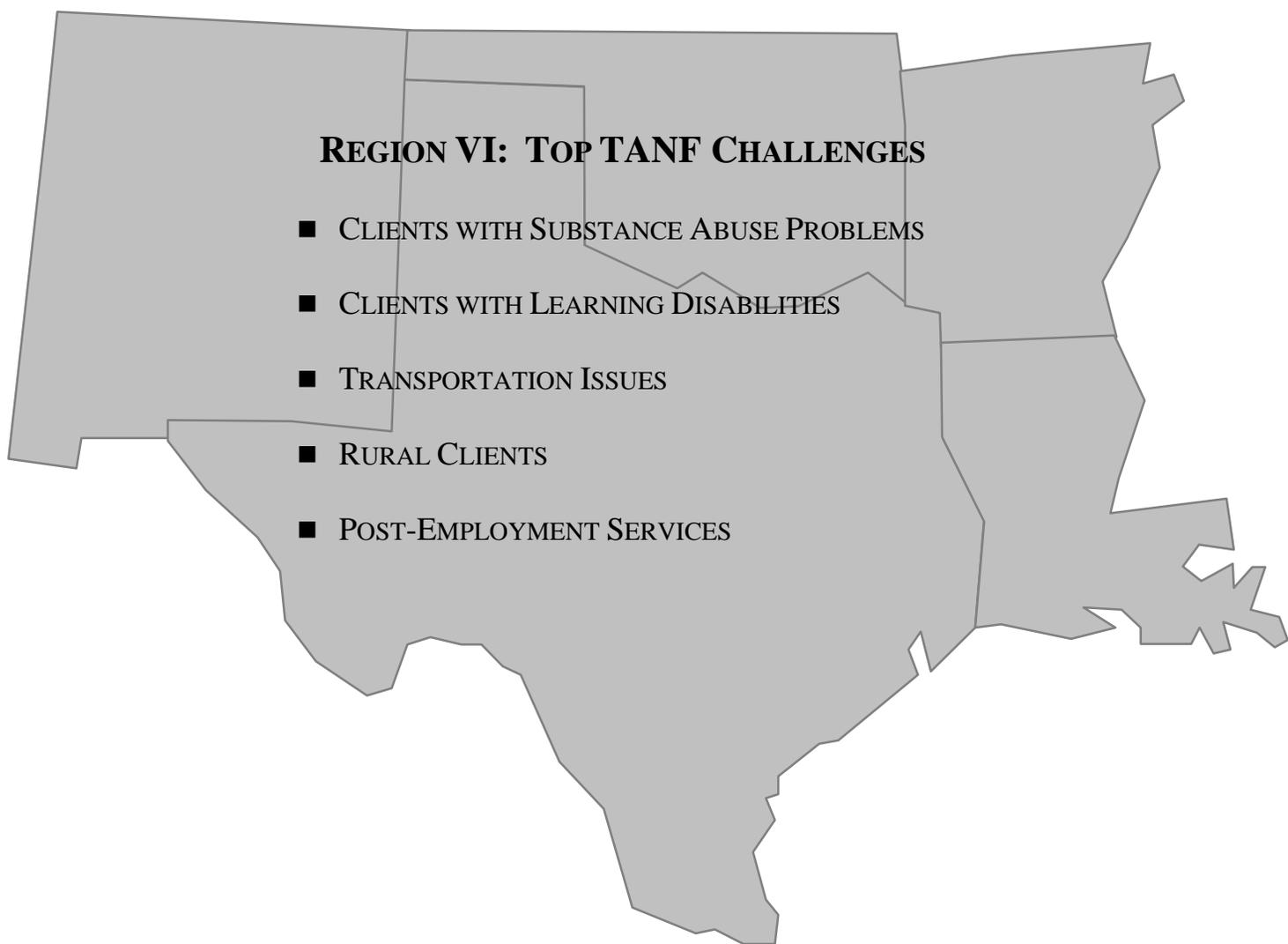
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Wisconsin is interested in working with other states on developing data systems that permit online analysis of data.

REGION VI:

**ARKANSAS
LOUISIANA
NEW MEXICO
OKLAHOMA
TEXAS**





*A majority of states within the region ranked these issues as “most challenging.”

**REGION VI
MOST CHALLENGING ISSUES BY STATE**

ARKANSAS	LOUISIANA	NEW MEXICO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management ▪ Housing ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Teen Parents/Minor Mothers ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management ▪ One-Stop Centers ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Teen Parents/Minor Mothers ▪ Rural Clients ▪ Culture Change ▪ Linkages with State Partners ▪ Community-based Collaborations ▪ Partnerships with the Private Sector ▪ University/Community Colleges ▪ Linkages with Faith-based Organizations ▪ Performance-based Contracting ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clients with Developmental Disabilities
<p>OKLAHOMA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intake and Assessment ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Child Care Affordability ▪ Child Care Access ▪ Child Support Enforcement ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Mental Health Problems ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Domestic Violence Victims ▪ Non-Custodial Parents ▪ Rural Clients ▪ Culture Change ▪ Linkages with State Partners ▪ Community-based Collaborations ▪ Linkages with Faith-based Organizations ▪ Performance-based Contracting ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring 	<p>TEXAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Clients with Mental Health Problems ▪ Clients with Developmental Disabilities ▪ Clients with Physical Disabilities ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Clients with Criminal Histories ▪ Non-Custodial Parents ▪ Rural Clients ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Streamlined Funding Sources 	

Note: State-reported data. For each state, respondents ranked the issues shown as “most challenging” from a list of issues provided.



In 1995, Arkansas rated 33rd in the nation in population. The state's population was approximately 2.5 million. By the year 2000, Arkansas' population is expected to increase by 4.4 percent to 2.6 million. In 1995, 53.5 percent of Arkansas' population lived in an urban metropolitan area. The state's poverty rate and per capita income were 17.4 percent and \$16,143, respectively. There were 65,325 recipients on the state's AFDC/TANF rolls in January 1995. The number of recipients declined to 56,320 in August 1996 and to 42,834 in September 1997, for a total caseload decline of 24 percent.

TANF HISTORY

Arkansas implemented the *Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA)* program on July 1, 1997. The program provides assistance for a maximum of 24 months and requires recipients who possess job skills to independently search for jobs. Recipients may engage in work activities that include subsidized and unsubsidized employment, micro-enterprise (self-employment), on-the-job-training, work experience, community service, education in conjunction with part-time work or community service, and skills training in conjunction with part-time work or community service. Recipients may also receive a one-time loan to take care of an immediate need. The state has a program to help teen parents prepare to enter the labor market. Arkansas offers transitional assistance in the form of Medicaid and child care services. The state sanctions a family when a recipient fails to cooperate with Child Support Enforcement and Employment.

To ease the process of implementing TANF, the state created a TANF Advisory Board comprising representatives from the Governor's office, the House, and the Senate. The Board approves the services, support, training and technical assistance offered to recipients as well as the resources to be used by the local coalitions in their service provision (i.e., funding, training, services, support team, etc.).

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Arkansas cited the following challenges:

- Working with the large number of coalitions providing services to TEA recipients (71 coalitions), especially to formulate a viable implementation plan, and upgrade staff capacity through training
- Changing implementation of the program and staff's focus from one of eligibility to one of case management
- Working with the hard-to-employ population
- Eliminating the transportation barriers faced by clients
- Creating jobs in the Delta area of the state.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Arkansas ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Case management
- Housing
- Transportation issues
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Teen parents/minor mothers
- Data gathering
- Management information systems.

THE SUCCESSES

Arkansas has been successful at tearing down the turf between different agencies and obtaining their commitment for collaboration. The state has also created viable coalitions with the business and faith communities to get clients into the labor force and provide them with the support services necessary to keep them employed. Local coalitions around the state have created "Adopt-a-Family" mentoring programs in approximately 20 counties and a variety of regional conferences have been held to create planning teams from the localities that will work with the private sector.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The State of Arkansas is interested in receiving technical assistance in the areas of job creation in rural areas, transportation, culture change, and working with the hard-to-employ and multi-barrier populations.

In 1995, Louisiana ranked 21st in population in the nation with a population of approximately 4.4 million. Out of this total, 68.1 percent lived in a metropolitan area. In 1995, the state had a poverty rate of 24.2 percent and a per capita income of \$16,667. By the year 2000, Louisiana's population is expected to grow by 10.3 percent to approximately 4.5 million. Louisiana had a total of 258,180 recipients in the AFDC program in January 1995. The state's AFDC/TANF caseload declined by 44 percent from the enactment of the new welfare law in August 1996 to September 1997.

TANF HISTORY

Louisiana implemented two programs under its TANF plan, the *Family Independence Temporary Assistance program (FITAP)* and the *Family Independence Work program (Find Work)*. The FITAP program limits cash assistance to 24 months within any 60-month period. The program requires an individual personal responsibility contract of all participants. The contract requires a participant to engage in work activities, cooperate with child support, immunize their children, attend parenting classes if under age 20, and ensure children's school attendance. Under FITAP, families are eligible for 12 months of transitional Medicaid and child care if they become ineligible for cash assistance due to an increase in earnings. Louisiana has contracted out the job placement and development services under the FIND Work program.

The state has established a number of collaborations and partnerships to ease the process of implementing the TANF program. Among these collaborations is the coordination at the state level between the TANF program and the Welfare-to-Work group and between the Department of Social Services and the Department of Labor. The FIND Work program brings in community leaders and key players in the area to discuss employment opportunities and employment development strategies for the program's participants.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Louisiana cites the following challenges:

- Changing staff roles and responsibilities from eligibility and JOBS workers to case managers. The state conducted extensive training in the initial stages on case management techniques, but continues to be challenged by this issue.
- Working with the first group of recipients to reach the time limit.
- Serving the hard-to-employ population.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Louisiana ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Case management
- One-stop centers

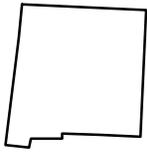
- Post-employment services
- Transportation issues
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Teen parents/minor mothers
- Rural clients
- Culture change
- Linkages with state partners
- Community-based collaborations
- Partnerships with the private sector
- University/community colleges
- Linkages with faith-based organizations
- Performance-based contracting
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

The State of Louisiana has successfully reduced its TANF caseload over the past year through job placements, placing approximately 13,000 recipients in jobs. The state attributes this high placement rate to having established good working relationships with employers, creating a Job Advisory Committee to research the types of jobs available, and contracting with outside entities for the necessary training required for these jobs.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

In the areas of technical assistance, Louisiana is interested in initiatives around child care access, especially for recipients working odd hours or shift work. The state is interested in conducting a needs assessment to find out where jobs are and where the population is located, and in learning how other states are putting programs and policies in place to meet those needs. Louisiana is also interested in learning more about what other states are doing in the area of collaboration.



In 1995, New Mexico ranked 36th in population in the nation. The state’s population was approximately 1.7 million with a large majority—73 percent—living in a metropolitan area. New Mexico’s poverty rate and per capita income in 1995 were 21.0 percent and \$16,297, respectively. The state’s population is expected to reach 1.8 million by the year 2000—up 8.8 percent from 1995. In January 1995, there were 105,114 AFDC recipients in the state. From August 1996 to September 1997, the number of recipients decreased by 43 percent from 99,660 to 56,520.

TANF HISTORY

New Mexico started its TANF program in April 1998, so little information is available. The program has been partly devolved to the county and/or community level; the WORK program has been contracted out to community organizations within the state.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: “What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?” In response, New Mexico cited the following challenges:

- Legislation and litigation
- Creation of a service delivery structure and program service activities for TANF recipients.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, New Mexico ranked the following as the state’s greatest challenges:

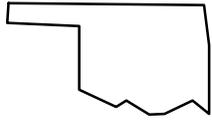
- Clients with developmental disabilities.

THE SUCCESSES

Because the program started so recently, the state did not have information to report on successful implementation efforts.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The state would like technical assistance on work experience alternatives.



Oklahoma ranked 28th in population in the nation in 1995. The state had a total population of approximately 3.3 million with 67.7 percent living in the metropolitan area. The poverty rate and per capita income at this time were 18.4 percent and \$17,020, respectively. Oklahoma's population is expected to rise by 3.4 percent in 2000 to approximately 3.4 percent. In January 1995, there were 127,336 AFDC recipients in the state. Between August 1996 and September 1997, the state experienced a 25 percent decline in the number of recipients receiving AFDC/TANF services.

TANF HISTORY

The Oklahoma TANF program was implemented on October 1, 1996 and is administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS). Oklahoma opted to continue the 1115 Waiver Demonstration LEARNFARE in its TANF plan. LEARNFARE requires school attendance of all children in the home. The TANF program sets a 24-month limit on assistance before engaging in work activities and a 60-month lifetime limit. Recipients are expected to engage in work activities. Non-cooperation with employment and training programs result in a recipient's termination from the program.

To ease the process of implementing TANF, the state has established collaborations with the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission for job placement and with the Department of Education for adult education and GED preparation. There are also ongoing collaborations with vocational schools and community colleges to provide training. By state law, Oklahoma is required to screen recipients for literacy problems; the DHS has grants with the Department of Labor for voluntary literacy problems and recently acquired a screening tool to test for literacy problems. Staff training on the use of the protocol will begin this summer. The DHS hopes to begin doing more multi-team assessments for literacy and substance abuse screening.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Oklahoma cited the following challenges:

- Shifting from a social services mode to a case management mode
- Bringing all the players together to do effective staffing so that clients receive the services they need
- Working with recipients who need help with child care, transportation, and substance abuse problems.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Oklahoma ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Intake and assessment
- Post-employment services
- Child care affordability

- Child care access
- Child support enforcement
- Transportation
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Domestic violence victims
- Non-custodial parents
- Rural clients
- Culture change
- Linkages with state partners
- Community-based collaborations
- Linkages with faith-based organizations
- Performance-based contracting
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

To alleviate the challenges posed by case management, the DHS has engaged in case management training and has successfully certified four trainers who are travelling around the state training local staff. Oklahoma changed the child care co-payment to family co-payment and raised the income ceiling to reward people who work. Further, the state is allowing flexible spending of TANF funds at the county level.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The state is interested in technical assistance that could build better services for child care, as well as innovative approaches for paying child care providers. Oklahoma is considering using the EBT system and would like to learn from the experiences of other states that have already utilized the system. Another area of interest for technical assistance is performance-based contracting.



Texas is the second largest state in the country. In 1995, the state had an approximate population of 18.6 million with 80.3 percent living in a metropolitan area. The state's population is expected to increase by 7.8 percent in the year 2000 to 20.0 million. Texas's poverty rate and median per capita income in 1995 were 17.8 percent and \$19,189, respectively. In January 1995, there were 765,460 AFDC recipients in the state. A year later, in August 1996, the number of AFDC/TANF recipients had declined to 647,790. The state's TANF caseload continued to decline and reached 464,069 in September 1997, a 28 percent decrease from August 1996.

TANF HISTORY

Texas implemented its TANF plan in November 1996, following the major provisions under its waiver demonstration project, *Achieving Change for Texans (ACT)*. The state's TANF program sets a time limit on cash assistance based on work experience and education. Recipients with 18 months of recent work experience and a high school diploma or GED can receive cash assistance for up to 12 cumulative months. Recipients with less than 6 months of recent work experience and less than 3 years of high school can receive cash assistance for up to 36 cumulative months. The state provides 18 months of transitional Medicaid for families that become ineligible for cash assistance due to an increase in earnings.

A number of collaborations at the state level have eased the process of TANF implementation in Texas. The Department of Human Services works with the Department of Health on teen pregnancy and out-of-wedlock birth issues. The Department of Education is currently providing basic education. A group of CEOs is working with the Governor's office on a welfare reform plan to deal with employment placement. The state is also working with Department of Transportation to eliminate the transportation barriers of recipients.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussion with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Texas cited the following challenges:

- Data gathering and reporting
- Devolving the administration of employment programs to the Local Boards
- Reconciling the differences between the state's waiver demonstrations and the TANF program
- Learning to effectively work with hard-to-serve populations
- Creating strategies to work with such a geographically large state
- Dealing with the high unemployment rates in rural areas.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Texas ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Post-employment services
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with developmental disabilities
- Clients with physical disabilities
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Clients with criminal histories
- Non-custodial parents
- Rural clients
- Data gathering
- Streamlined funding sources.

THE SUCCESSES

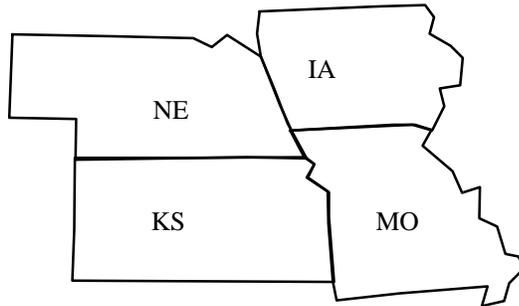
In the initial stages of the implementation of the program, DHS and the Texas Workforce Commission offered a series of orientation meetings for applicants to review the new program and promote the message of Work First. The “Texas Works” diversion program gives applicants the opportunity to apply for jobs available in the community. The program allows recipients to receive a one-time cash payment equivalent to 4 to 6 months—single and 2 parent families, respectively--of assistance to help them resolve emergency situations that would otherwise force them onto welfare. Once the payment is made, the recipient is not allowed to apply for assistance for 12 months. Texas also has a variety of “Wheels to Work” programs throughout the state that provide recipients with automobiles.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Texas would like technical assistance in the area of community service employment and community-based collaborations. Specifically, the state is interested in learning about new ideas in these areas, ways to set up these programs and priority areas.

REGION VII:

**IOWA
KANSAS
MISSOURI
NEBRASKA**





REGION VII: TOP TANF CHALLENGES

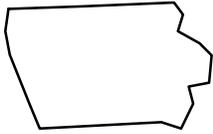
- TRANSPORTATION ISSUES
- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS
- DATA GATHERING
- CLIENTS WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS
- RURAL CLIENTS
- POST-EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

*A majority of states within the region ranked these issues as “most challenging.”

**REGION VII
MOST CHALLENGING ISSUES BY STATE**

IOWA	KANSAS	MISSOURI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intake and Assessment Post-Employment Services Child Care Access Transportation Issues Clients with Substance Abuse Problems Domestic Violence Victims Rural Clients Data Gathering Management Information Systems Streamlined Funding Sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-Employment Services Transportation Issues Clients with Mental Health Problems Clients with Developmental Disabilities Clients with Physical Disabilities Clients with Learning Disabilities Clients with Substance Abuse Problems Domestic Violence Victims Non-Custodial Parents Rural Clients Data Gathering Management Information Systems Evaluation and Monitoring Privatization Performance-based Contracting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation Issues Clients with Physical Disabilities Domestic Violence Victims Non-Custodial Parents Culture Change Data Gathering
<p>NEBRASKA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Management Post-Employment Services Child Care Access Transportation Issues Clients with Mental Health Problems Clients with Substance Abuse Problems Domestic Violence Victims Rural Clients Data Gathering Performance-based Contracting 		

Note: State-reported data. For each state, respondents ranked the issues shown as “most challenging” from a list of issues provided.



Iowa is a relatively small state in terms of population. In 1995, the state had a population of 2.9 million, ranking 30th in the nation. Approximately 60.6 percent of the population lived in a metropolitan area. Iowa's poverty rate and per capita income at the time were 11.3 percent and \$18,315, respectively. By the year 2000, the state's population is expected to grow by 2.4 percent to approximately 2.9 million. In January 1995, the number of AFDC recipients in the state totaled 103,108. A year later, in August 1996, when the new welfare reform law was enacted, the number of TANF recipients had declined to 85,940. The state's caseload continued declining, and by September 1997, it had decreased by 14 percent to reach 73,816.

TANF HISTORY

Iowa has operated its statewide waiver, the *Family Investment Plan (FIP)*, since 1993. The state intends to build upon its waiver and incorporate it into its TANF plan. Under the plan, families that have received assistance for 60 months, whether or not consecutive, will not be eligible for TANF-funded assistance. Iowa requires parents to develop a self-sufficiency plan that includes individually based time frames for achieving self-sufficiency. Those unable to achieve self-sufficiency, but demonstrating effort and satisfactory performance, will have their time frames extended, while those failing to develop a plan will be terminated from the program and not allowed to re-apply for 6 months. To receive assistance, recipients must participate in FIP activities or in paid or unpaid employment activities.

Iowa began welfare reform in the 1980s and has a history of collaboration among six state agency directors. In the past they have contracted with the Department of Economic Development and the Department of Workforce Development (JOBS). Iowa recently consolidated programs with the Department of Workforce Development. The TANF program also works closely with the Department of Human Rights and FADSS. Iowa has a Welfare Reform Advisory Group that includes six state agencies and representatives from the religious community, business, labor, and consumers.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Iowa cited the following challenges:

- Determining the degree of flexibility to hand down to the community level—how much, how fast, and with what parameters
- Effectively responding to the expectations for data collection and reporting because of system and staffing concerns
- Meeting the two-parent participation rate.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Iowa ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Intake and assessment
- Post-employment services

- Child care access
- Transportation issues
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Domestic violence victims
- Rural clients
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Streamlined funding sources.

THE SUCCESSES

Iowa has had a number of successes in implementing its welfare reform efforts. The state has:

- Expanded the FADSS program to 39 counties last year. The program gets community-based groups involved with Family Enrichment Centers, Family Resource Centers, and diversion initiatives. FADSS serves families with multiple barriers and involves a more intensive JOBS program. The state hopes to double the program in the next 2 years.
- Formed the Welfare Reform Advisory Group, which has resulted in widespread support and feedback from hundreds of people.
- Created One-Stop Centers, started moving to a seamless child care system, and begun laying the groundwork to reengineer the intake application process.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Iowa is interested in developing job readiness and substance abuse assessment tools for recipients and training staff on the use of these tools. The state is also interested in learning more about “Best Practices” related to the two-parent family participation rate. Another area of interest for technical assistance is on working with non-custodial parents.



In 1995, there were approximately 2.6 million persons in Kansas, ranking the state 32nd in population in the nation. A large portion of this population, 69.1 percent, lived in a metropolitan area. The poverty rate in 1995 was 11 percent, and the median per capita income was \$20,139. By the year 2000, Kansas' population is expected to grow by 4.6 percent to 2.7 million. In January 1995, there were 81,504 AFDC recipients in the state. The number of recipients has been declining over the past 3 years. From August 1996 to September 1997, the number of recipients declined by 28 percent from 63,780 to 45,603.

TANF HISTORY

The Kansas Works program places a strong emphasis on work and emphasizes partnering with the private sector through its Building Employment Success Together (BEST) program. Under Kansas Works, the state enforces the 24-months-and-work requirement. Recipients are required to engage in work activities and will receive support for education and training only when job search and work-related components are not successful. The BEST program places recipients in full-time work-experience sites with private-sector employers. Recipients who are hired wage-free continue to receive supportive services such as child care and transportation assistance.

Kansas collaborates with a state umbrella agency that provides vocational rehabilitation services. This collaboration involves referring and serving handicapped/disabled individuals. Kansas is working with the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education, the University of Kansas, and a private consultant to develop a screening tool for learning disabilities. The state also is collaborating with the aircraft company Cessna to train individuals to work in the aircraft industry. Boeing and Beechcraft provide work experience and training for TANF program participants and opportunities to work in the aircraft industry in Wichita. The Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services is collaborating on a State Department of Transportation-funded study of statewide transportation gaps. They are looking at issues that affect TANF participants, such as transportation to and from work and child care. The "Cars Project" is a collaboration with the Kansas Auto Dealers Association to provide low-cost cars to TANF participants.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Kansas cited the following challenges:

- Addressing the lack of transportation, especially facing residents of rural areas who cannot get to the jobs available in the urban areas
- Helping staff to develop an integrated approach to welfare
- Responding to the many demands placed on computer systems, including the year 2000 computer issue and the automation of child support activities
- Integrating the focus on jobs with the focus on day care

- Contracting for job-related services
- Job retention—developing more sophisticated assessment, case management, and follow-up services to keep recipients employed.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Kansas ranked the following as the state’s greatest challenges:

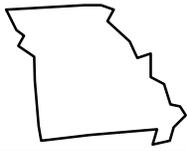
- Post-employment services
- Transportation issues
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with developmental disabilities
- Clients with physical disabilities
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Domestic violence victims
- Non-custodial parents
- Rural clients
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Evaluation and monitoring
- Privatization
- Performance-based contracting.

THE SUCCESSES

The state has successfully integrated the delivery of services at the local level by combining eligibility functions with job preparation functions. As noted above, Kansas has established strong private sector partnerships at the local level. The state has also collaborated with Washington State University to develop a learning disabilities screening tool to identify what portion of the TANF population has a learning disability.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS

The state could provide technical assistance in the areas of integrating functions of field staff, applicant job search, establishing private sector partnerships at the local level, and initiatives to respond to learning disabilities.



Missouri ranked 16th in population in the nation in 1995 with a total population of 5.3 million. The state's population is expected to grow by 2.9 percent to 5.4 million by the year 2000. In 1995, 68.7 percent of Missouri's population lived in the metropolitan area. The state had a poverty rate of 15.6 percent and median per capita income of \$19,463. In January 1995, there were 259,595 AFDC/TANF recipients in the state. From August 1996 to September 1997, the number of AFDC/TANF recipients declined by 20 percent from 222,820 to 177,695.

TANF HISTORY

As part of a Federal waiver, Missouri instituted the Missouri Families Mutual Responsibility Plan (MF-MRP). The state intends to continue MF-MRP as part of its TANF plan. The MF-MRP focuses on providing teen parents with a support network to attain self-sufficiency through work and time-limited assistance. Missouri enforces the 60-month lifetime limit and the 24-months-and-work limit on assistance. Recipients engaged in allowable work activities receive support services in the form of child care, case management, work-related expenses, and transportation expenses.

In implementing welfare reform, the state has established a Welfare Reform Coordinating Committee and a One-Stop Executive Interagency Team. There are also local One-Stop Interagency Teams and local Self-Sufficiency teams responsible for marketing and coordinating welfare-to-work initiatives with employers and the community. The Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS) collaborates with the state's Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education, Labor, Corrections, Economic Development, Mental Health, Health, and Child Support to provide services to recipients. The DSS has projects with several school districts for school to work initiatives, efforts to keep families engaged in the educational system, and special work with teen mothers and other at-risk youth. These projects are not restricted to youth receiving public assistance. Currently under development is a collaborative effort between the Department of Social Services, Child Welfare, and Income Maintenance to purchase services for harder-to-serve families. Services will include intensive case management, assistance returning their children home from institutional care, and keeping the children out of institutional care.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Missouri cited the following challenges:

- Implementing policies that reflect community needs and are community-oriented
- Dealing with the issues of non-marital births and domestic violence
- Providing families with the necessary support services to keep them engaged in work, especially transportation services
- Developing a "transitional" policy that allows families to accumulate assets while receiving assistance and significantly changing both the community and bureaucratic structures to support these policies
- Ensuring, as the 2-year clock runs out, that families receive the opportunity to become self-sufficient.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Missouri ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Transportation issues
- Clients with physical disabilities
- Domestic violence victims
- Non-custodial parents
- Culture change
- Data gathering.

THE SUCCESSES

As part of its collaboration building, the DSS formed the Local Investment Commission (LINC) to refocus welfare in Jackson County. This community organization, comprised of public and private partners, developed the 21st Century Community project. The major impetus of the project is to help recipients achieve self-sufficiency by placing them in wage supplemented employment. The state has been successful in getting families involved in the assessment and overall welfare reform process. Missouri has also been successful at contracting for services and is just beginning to develop contractual relationships with the private sector.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The areas in which the state needs the most assistance are in providing post-employment services and determining how to remove recipients' transportation barriers.



A relatively sparsely populated state, Nebraska ranked 37th in population in the nation in 1995. The state's population at the time was approximately 1.6 million with 66.1 percent of the population living in the metropolitan area. Nebraska's poverty rate and per capita income in 1995 were 10.3 percent and \$19,726, respectively. The population is expected to grow by 3.6 percent in the year 2000 to reach 1.8 million. In January 1995, Nebraska had a total of 42,038 AFDC recipients. By August 1996 the number of AFDC/TANF recipients had declined to 38,510. Nebraska's caseload continued to decline and reached 38,111 recipients in September 1997.

TANF HISTORY

Nebraska plans to continue to operate the five-county welfare demonstration under the Employment First Federal waiver project. Families in the Employment First demonstration can opt to receive lower cash assistance but a higher income disregard, while all other families will receive financial assistance of not more than \$222 for the first person and \$71 for each additional person in the unit. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) collaborates with local and community entities, such as the Lincoln Housing Authority and Omaha Goodwill Industries. In rural areas, Nebraska collaborates with tribal and local community colleges and with four tribal governments.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Nebraska cited the following challenges:

- Moving from one automated system to another in the initial stages of implementing the program
- Responding to the task of data reporting/Federal reporting requirements
- Developing more resources
- Training staff to effectively deal with issues of substance abuse, mental illness, and domestic violence
- Setting up a case management model that sets criteria to be followed by all staff and contractors.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Nebraska ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Case management
- Post-employment services
- Child care access
- Transportation issues
- Clients with mental health problems

- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Domestic violence victims
- Rural clients
- Culture change
- Data gathering
- Performance-based contracting
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

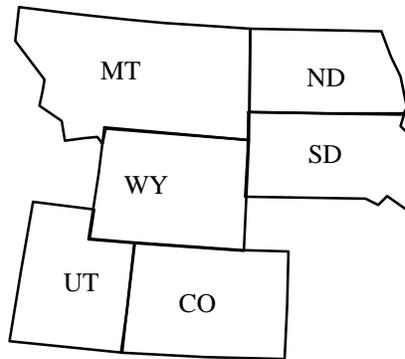
Nebraska has successfully established collaborations between industry, local Health and Human Services (HHS) offices, and community people to assist TANF recipients. For example, many people are migrating to Nebraska to work in the meat packing industry. In Dakota City, industry, local HHS offices, and the community came together to intervene on behalf of low-income workers who were being exploited by the owners of a trailer park. This collaborative group is called the Dakota Interagency Team. St. Monica's substance abuse recovery program in Lincoln has done an excellent job providing outpatient and inpatient treatment for women and children. Parents of All Ages, is a program that provides education for TANF recipients in a group setting. One of their projects, called RAMBO, provides training for women in non-traditional jobs.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The state would like to receive technical assistance in the areas of up-front diversion, post-employment services, and transportation. In the area of up-front diversion, the state is specifically interested in establishing a plan similar to Utah's up-front diversion program.

REGION VIII:

COLORADO
MONTANA
NORTH DAKOTA
SOUTH DAKOTA
UTAH
WYOMING



A map of Region VIII states (Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Colorado) is shown in light gray. A semi-transparent gray text box is overlaid on the map, containing the title and a list of challenges.

REGION VIII: TOP TANF CHALLENGES

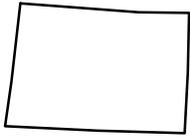
- TRANSPORTATION ISSUES
- CLIENTS WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS
- DATA GATHERING
- EVALUATION AND MONITORING

*A majority of states within the region ranked these issues as “most challenging.”

**REGION VIII
MOST CHALLENGING ISSUES BY STATE**

<p>COLORADO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Mental Health Problems ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Domestic Violence Victims ▪ Culture Change ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Performance-based Contracting ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring 	<p>MONTANA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clients with Physical Disabilities ▪ Domestic Violence Victims ▪ Non-Custodial Parents ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Clients with Learning Disabilities ▪ Clients with Mental Health Problems 	<p>NORTH DAKOTA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Service ▪ Post-Employment Services ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Domestic Violence Victims ▪ Teen Parents/Minor Mothers ▪ Rural Clients
<p>SOUTH DAKOTA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child Care Access ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Clients with Substance Abuse Problems ▪ Data Gathering ▪ Management Information Systems ▪ Evaluation and Monitoring 	<p>UTAH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Affordable and Adequate Housing ▪ Transportation Issues ▪ Non-Custodial Parents ▪ Rural Clients ▪ Culture Change ▪ Linkages with Faith-based Organizations 	<p>WYOMING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health Care Coverage and Cost ▪ Data Gathering

Note: State-reported data. For each state, respondents ranked the issues shown as “most challenging” from a list of issues provided.



In 1995, Colorado ranked 26th in population in the nation with a total population of 3.7 million. A majority of the population, 82.4 percent, lived in a metropolitan area. The state's population is expected to grow by 9.5 percent in the year 2000 to approximately 4.1 million. Colorado's poverty rate and median per capita income in 1995 were 11.3 percent and \$18,315, respectively. In January 1995, there were 110,742 AFDC recipients in the state. Colorado's AFDC/TANF caseload has continued declining over the past 3 years. From August 1996 to September 1997, the number of TANF recipients declined by 38 percent, from 95,790 to 59,065.

TANF HISTORY

The Colorado Department of Human Services (DHS) is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Colorado Works program. Each county in the state must develop its own plan for the TANF program and the services that will be provided under the program. Counties may provide services in the form of cash assistance, lump sum payments, payments for specific items, and vouchers according to their county plan. Prior to TANF, the state built capacity at the county level by providing training, ongoing TA, and meetings for county staff. These services continue to be provided. The state is enforcing the 60-month lifetime limit on assistance and the 24-month-and-work limit. To be eligible for benefits and avoid sanctions, recipients must participate in work activities. Work activities include unsubsidized and subsidized employment, work experience, on the job training, job search and job readiness assistance, community service programs, and vocational educational training.

Given the amount of flexibility that counties have in operating the TANF program, it is not surprising that most, if not all, counties have established collaborative efforts with different organizations and partners that can aid their TANF population. The larger counties have established collaborations with the JTPA organizations for One-Stop Centers, with the community colleges for short-term training programs, and with employers to provide work experience. There is also statewide collaboration between the IV-A and IV-D agencies to do joint client interviews and assessments.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussion with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Colorado cited the following challenges:

- state level and between the state and local partners
- Labor
- health problems, and undiagnosed disabilities to meet the worker participation rates
- to support program and the staff training that will be necessary to support that level of automation.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Colorado ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

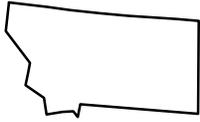
- Case management
- Transportation issues
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Domestic violence victims
- Culture change
- Data gathering
- Performance-based contracting
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

Colorado has been successful in its outreach activities. Teams from social service agencies travel throughout the state informing people about the program, the changes in the law, and how they are affected by these changes. Many of the state's counties are tracking recipients from their first day of employment until the first year, and some offer cash incentives to those who stay employed after a certain period of time. Colorado has an outstanding program to improve recipients' access to child care, especially during odd hours and shift work.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The state would like to receive technical assistance in developing evaluation and monitoring tools to determine what is happening with the caseload. Another area of interest is working with rural clients for training/job availability and transportation barriers.



In 1995, Montana ranked 44th in population in the nation with approximately 0.86 million people; 52.5 percent lived in a metropolitan area. The state's population is expected to grow by 6.6 percent by the year 2000 to reach 0.92 million. Montana's poverty rate and median per capita income in 1995 stood at 13.7 percent and \$17,322, respectively. In January 1995, the state's AFDC population was at 34,313. By August 1996, the caseload had declined to 28,240; it dropped by another 18 percent by September 1997.

TANF HISTORY

Montana's plan is based on the state's existing waiver demonstration project, *Families Achieving Independence in Montana (FAIM)*. FAIM has operated since February 1996 and enforces the 60-month lifetime limit on assistance. Assistance is available through the Job Supplement Program, Pathways Program, and Community Services Program. The Job Supplement Program functions as an up-front diversion program and provides child care, child support enforcement, Medicaid, and one-time employment-related assistance to obtain or maintain employment. The Pathways Program provides up to 24 months of time-limited cash assistance to help recipients become self-sufficient. The Community Services Program is available for recipients who underwent the Pathways program but were not able to achieve self-sufficiency. This program provides cash assistance but requires recipients to engage in community service activities.

While the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) manages the program, a number of collaborations have been established at the local level with service providers to create a seamless transition system for recipients. Employment and training activities are coordinated through the Office of Public Instruction and Vocational Education. The Department of Commerce and the Board of Investment works on creating micro-business initiatives. The DPHHS has also established memorandums of understanding and verbal agreements with other agencies, including the state's Department of Transportation.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Montana cited the following challenges:

- Management information systems
- Culture change
- Child support
- Tribal issues.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Montana ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Clients with physical disabilities
- Domestic violence victims

- Clients with learning disabilities
- Non-custodial parents
- Clients with mental health problems
- Data gathering
- Evaluation and monitoring
- Clients with substance abuse problems.

THE SUCCESSES

In partnership with Montana banks, the state has established a Family Friendly Business Loan Program that encourages employers to hire recipients and, in turn, receive a zero interest loan for up to \$40,000. The state has effectively co-located the services for families and child welfare and services provided to tribes. Montana has good open lines of communication with the tribes and has hired a Tribal Welfare Liaison who disseminates information on welfare reform and conducts survey of tribes' needs and how they can be met. The state is in the process of designing a work experience program to include training. The state also is partnering with the Domestic Violence Coalition for the referral and training of staff to conduct assessment, and possibly exempt, domestic violence victims.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Montana would like ideas about how to deal with more isolated clients living in rural areas and about job creation and transportation issues in tribal areas. The state is also interested in learning more about short-term training programs in partnerships with universities or community colleges.



North Dakota ranked 47th in population in the nation in 1995. The state's population was .637 million with approximately 53.5 percent of that population living in a metropolitan area. By the year 2000, North Dakota's population is expected to grow by only 0.9 percent to reach 6.4 million. In 1995, the state's poverty rate was 11.9 percent, and the median per capita income was \$17,488. From August 1996 to September 1997, North Dakota's AFDC/TANF population declined by 24 percent from 13,130 to 9,962.

TANF HISTORY

North Dakota is currently operating *the Training, Education, Employment and Management Project (TEEM)* under its Federal waiver demonstration. According to the state, once the TEEM waiver project ends on September 30, 1998, the TANF program will be rolled out statewide. The TEEM project requires families to sign a social contract specifying a time limit for becoming self-sufficient. If a recipient is not employed by the end of his or her time limit, the recipient is evaluated, and based on that person's circumstances, the recipient is either placed in a work experience program or granted an extension. Before reaching their time limits, recipients are required to cooperate with work and training requirements and with periodic screening, diagnosis, and treatment.

Given that 50 percent of North Dakota's recipients are Native American, the state is working closely with the Native American tribes in the states and holding periodic meetings to discuss the provision of services to these clients. Three tribes have built a consortium with the state on the Welfare-to-Work grant application process. The state also holds quarterly meetings with different state and community players (e.g., the Department of Labor, contractors, legislative committees, legal aid providers, the vocational education system, and community action agencies) to discuss employment and training issues, job services, and welfare-to-work issues.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, North Dakota cited the following challenges:

- Having a lack of control at state level and not knowing what programs tribes will decide to apply for and/or administer
- Addressing the child care needs of the TANF population
- Getting the harder-to-serve population of TANF recipients employed.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, North Dakota ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Community service
- Post-employment services
- Transportation issues

- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Domestic violence victims
- Teen parents/minor mothers
- Rural clients.

THE SUCCESSES

North Dakota has decreased the employment recidivism rate by increasing the income disregard and asset limits and thus has kept its caseload down. The state is also proud of having included an assessment and family contract component to the program.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

North Dakota would like to know how other states are working with tribes, how the relationships are faring, and who is administering the program. Other areas of interest for technical assistance are model projects on case management and how to provide services to rural clients.

SUB-STATE SNAPSHOT
COUNTY DIRECTORS' ASSOCIATION
North Dakota

The North Dakota County Directors' Association is composed of county directors in the state. According to the Association, the most challenging issues cited by county directors in helping welfare recipients achieve self-sufficiency are the following:

- Coping with a lack of public transportation in the Western part of the state, particularly in areas with Indian reservations
- Addressing a lack of adequate child care in larger cities
- Working with the hard-to-serve population, especially where there are problems with literacy and there is a lack of adequate training and education
- Providing jobs that meet the needs of recipients and pay more than the minimum wage
- Gathering data.

The Association notes that while there are quite a few entrepreneurial-type programs in the state that are working to help welfare recipients become employed, none qualify for any of the components under the TANF program. These programs are teaching recipients basic skills so that they may become employed, but the programs do not count toward work activities. Through a grant from the Association of Counties, over \$100,000 will be made available to provide and enhance child care services for welfare recipients. Also, there is a project in the development phase to increase the transportation services available for welfare recipients by providing free bus passes. The Association notes that every county has been involved in working with employers, either through marketing activities, working with the Chamber of Commerce, and ongoing relationship building.

According to the Association, the TANF program has been the most difficult program for counties to implement. While the state and the counties continue working with welfare reform, the issue of minimum wage jobs and lack of education will continue to be a challenge. Another challenge will be finding private funding sources to provide recipients with the necessary services to achieve self-sufficiency.



In 1995, South Dakota ranked 45th in population in the nation with a total population of 0.73 million; 50 percent lived in a metropolitan area. The state had a poverty rate of 14.8 percent and a median per capita income of \$17,666. South Dakota's population is expected to grow by 4.9 percent in 2000 to reach 0.77 million. In January 1995, the state's AFDC caseload totaled 17,652 recipients. The number of recipients has been continuously declining and between August 1996 and September 1997 decreased by 27 percent from 15,840 to 11,570.

TANF HISTORY

South Dakota wove elements of its Federal waiver demonstration, *Strengthening of South Dakota Families Initiative*, with the TANF requirements. The state allows recipients to meet the work requirements while engaged in educational activities. The education track approves training for clients in a 4-year education program, while the secondary education component allows recipients to work toward a high school diploma or General Equivalency Degree. Under the program, assistance is limited to 24 months out of a 60-month lifetime limit for job-ready recipients. Recipients in need of employment training are allowed to remain on cash assistance for the 60 months.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) has agreements with the Department of Labor to assist the administration of the State TANF program and formed an Advisory Committee to meet periodically and assess where they need to enhance efforts. There are also established relationships with the Tribal New Program serving clients and devoting funds and staff to serve TANF clients on reservations. The DSS works with Community Action Program (CAP) organizations to tap into services such as the Resourceful Living Series, which provides "how-to" and life skill workshops for recipients on child care, landlord issues, and car purchasing.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, South Dakota cited the following challenges:

- Bringing the Work program into the reservation areas and getting DSS staff trained to work with the large number of recipients that live on the reservations
- Collecting data and meeting reporting requirements
- Tracking of clients as cases are closed
- Evaluating and monitoring of the program.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, South Dakota ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Child care access
- Transportation issues

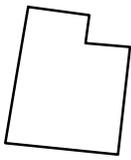
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

The DSS notes that it has established good working relationships with its partners at the Department of Labor, especially in the application process for benefits. Although the state is interested in doing more intensive tracking of clients, the state is currently doing follow-up at seven different intervals of case closures due to employment. Other successes include up-front diversion and the screening of hypothetical eligibility for TANF.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

South Dakota is interested in learning what other states are doing around post-employment services, partnerships with the private sector, and partnerships with universities and community colleges.



Utah ranked 34th in population in the nation in 1995. The state's population was approximately 1.9 million. Out of this population, 87 percent lived in a metropolitan area. In 1995, Utah's poverty rate was 9.3 percent, and its median per capita income was \$16,180. By the year 2000, the state's population is expected to grow to 2.1 million, a 10 percent increase from 1995. The number of AFDC recipients in Utah in January 1995 totaled 47,472. From August 1996 to September 1997, Utah's TANF caseload declined by 21 percent from 39,060 to 30,996 recipients.

TANF HISTORY

The *Family Employment Program (FEP)* includes Utah's former waiver demonstration project as well as the new TANF provisions incorporated by the state. In January 1997, Utah began imposing a 36-month lifetime limit on assistance for the majority of its TANF recipients. On a case-by-case basis, however, recipients can receive an extension to a maximum of 60 months. Families eligible for this extension must have worked at least 80 hours in the previous month and for 6 of the previous 24 months. The state provides supportive services such as transportation and child care to families participating in the FEP. Transitional self-sufficiency assistance in the form of case management, medical, and food stamp assistance may also be provided for 24 months.

In July 1997, the state combined the functions of the Departments of Labor, Employment Security, JTPA, Child Care, Family Support, and Turning Point agencies into the Department of Workforce Services. There are contracts with mental health providers for substance abuse and vocational rehabilitation services. The Chamber of Commerce has an initiative so that when employers make a commitment to hiring TANF clients, the Chamber commits to training those clients. The customized training is provided by the local community college. Employers receive financial payment for services when they agree to hire a recipient. They are reimbursed on a month-by-month basis for up to 6 months; after 6 months, employment is considered stable. The Chambers of Commerce and employers provide post-employment services in the form of specialized case management.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Utah cited the following challenges:

- Serving hard-to-serve or multi-barrier clients and getting them employed
- Bringing about culture change, especially for line staff
- Reporting and Management Information Systems
- Identifying and providing services for the hard-to-serve population
- Staffing and caseload size.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Utah ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Affordable and adequate housing

- Transportation issues
- Non-custodial parents
- Rural clients
- Culture change
- Linkages with faith-based organizations.

THE SUCCESSES

Utah has been very strong on assessment and case management. The state has successfully implemented an up-front diversion program and has created a department that focuses on the needs of families. Utah is also cashing out child care—instead of paying providers, the state pays parents (based on market rate) and parents choose the provider.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS

The state is interested in improving its case management services and needs help setting caseload standards. Other areas of interest include post-employment services and recipients who fall within the hard-to-serve population.



In 1995, Wyoming was the least populous state, with 0.486 million residents. By 2000, the state's population is expected to grow by 7.4 percent to 0.522 million. In 1995, 65 percent of residents lived in a metropolitan area. Wyoming's poverty rate and median per capita income at this time were approximately 10.3 percent and \$19,539, respectively. In January 1995, there were 15,434 AFDC recipients in the state. The state's caseload declined to 11,400 by August 1996 and 3,824 by September 1997. The number of TANF recipients in Wyoming declined by 76 percent from August 1996 to September 1997.

TANF HISTORY

Wyoming's *POWER* program stresses promoting and supporting individual and family responsibility and helping recipients achieve self-sufficiency through work. The program sets the 60-month lifetime limit on assistance and counts all months of assistance toward this 5-year period. The state's Pay After Performance program requires applicants to register for work with a local Employment Resources Division. Recipients are allowed 3 weeks of job search; after this time, if they are not employed, they are referred to a case manager who performs an employability assessment. The assessment will determine whether the recipient needs to engage in another work activity such as basic education, vocational training, work experience or community service; continue job search; or engage in some combination of both. Wyoming requires 40 hours a week of participation in work activities.

The state is working with the Department of Labor on the welfare-to-work grant competition, working with private contractors for case management, and working with the Department of Education, Department of Health, and Employment Security.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussion with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Wyoming cited the following challenges:

- Reporting requirements and the management information systems changes necessary to comply with the reporting requirements
- A high unemployment rate and lack of resources on reservations
- Cultural issues between Native American and white populations
- The needs of the hard-to-serve population.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Wyoming ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Health care coverage and cost
- Data gathering.

THE SUCCESSES

Wyoming's cites the following successes:

- High placement rate for employment and high retention rate
- Caseload down by 60 percent
- No increase in child protection issues or in Food Stamp/Medicaid rolls
- Switch to electronic benefit card.

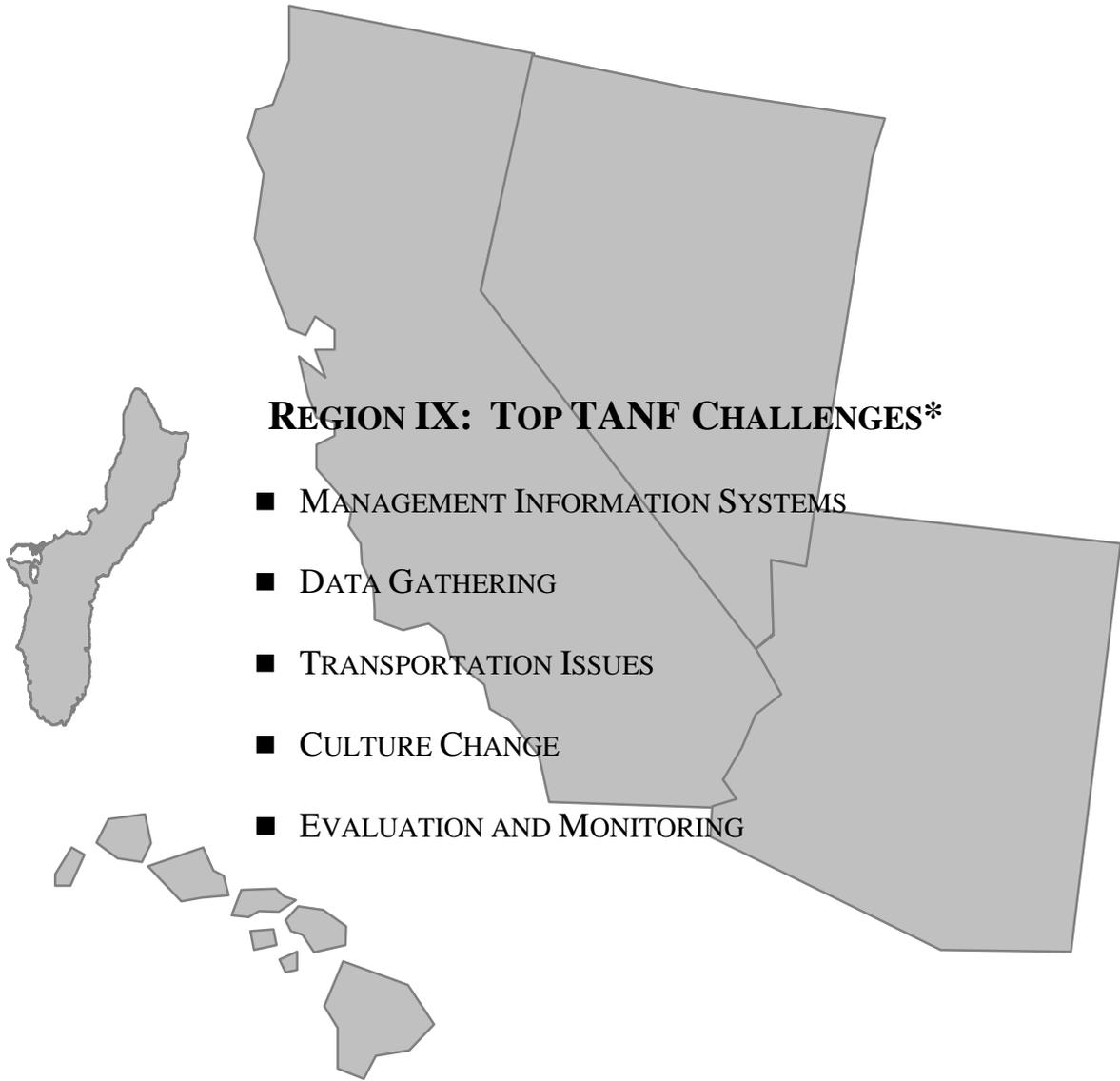
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Wyoming was particularly interested in technical assistance in the area of hard-to-employ populations.

REGION IX:

**ARIZONA
CALIFORNIA
GUAM
HAWAII
NEVADA**



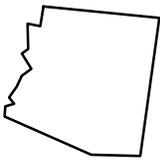


*A majority of states within the region ranked these issues as “most challenging.”

REGION IX
MOST CHALLENGING ISSUES BY STATE

ARIZONA	CALIFORNIA	GUAM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intake and Assessment Case Management Community Service Post-Employment Services Transportation Issues Clients with Mental Health Problems Clients with Developmental Disabilities Clients with Learning Disabilities Clients with Substance Abuse Problems Culture Change Domestic Violence Victims Teen Parents/Minor Mothers Rural Clients Management Information Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Service Data Gathering Management Information Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Care Affordability Child Support Enforcement Transportation Issues Teen Parents/Minor Mothers Culture Change Data Gathering Management Information Systems Performance-based Contracting Streamlined Funding Sources Evaluation and Monitoring
<p>HAWAII</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable and Adequate Housing Transportation Issues Clients with Mental Health Problems Clients with Developmental Disabilities Clients with Physical Disabilities Clients with Learning Disabilities Clients with Substance Abuse Problems Rural Clients Culture Change Data Gathering Management Information Systems Partnerships with the Private Sector Evaluation and Monitoring 	<p>NEVADA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up-Front Diversion One-Stop Centers Post-Employment Services Data Gathering Management Information Systems Performance-based Contracting Evaluation and Monitoring 	

Note: State-reported data. For each state, respondents ranked the issues shown as “most challenging” from a list of issues provided.



The state had a population of 4.1 million in 1995, ranking it 23rd in the nation. Most (87.5 percent) of the state's residents lived in a metropolitan area. Arizona's poverty rate in 1995 was 15.1 percent, and its median per capita income was \$18,121. The state's population is expected to increase to 4.4 million by the year 2000 for an approximate growth of 9 percent from 1995. In January 1995, there were 195,082 AFDC recipients in the state. The number of recipients has been steadily declining and was down to 169,440 in August 1996. From August 1996 to September 1997, the number of TANF recipients in the state declined by 24 percent.

TANF HISTORY

Arizona is operating its TANF program under the umbrella of its waiver program, *Employing and Moving People Off Welfare and Encouraging Responsibility (EMPOWER)*. Under the EMPOWER program, adult household members may only receive cash assistance for 24 months in a 60-month period. The program sets the 60-month lifetime limit and the 24-months-and-work limit on assistance. Arizona has established EMPOWER Centers with five service programs to serve recipients; diversion, rapid placement, short-term work transition, temporary deferment, and child only. The diversion program allows recipients to receive up to 3 months of TANF benefits as emergency assistance designed to keep them from entering the program. Rapid placement is intended for recipients who are assessed as employable and for recipients who are working a limited number of hours but are not self-sufficient. Recipients in this program receive cash assistance and supportive services to aid them in their job search. The temporary deferment program serves TANF recipients with a disabling condition, individuals who are the primary caretaker for a disabled family member, or victims of domestic violence. Last, the child-only program identifies child-only cases exempt from EMPOWER work requirements.

The state has an umbrella agency, the Department of Economic Security, that houses eligibility, welfare-to-work, child care, and child support enforcement. To provide TANF recipients with the services required to achieve self-sufficiency, the state has engaged in a variety of performance-based contracts with community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and the private sector.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Arizona identified the following challenges:

- Fulfilling the Federal reporting requirements
- Meeting the work participation rates
- Creating jobs and job opportunities in remote areas
- Providing recipients with post-employment services.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Arizona ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Intake and assessment
- Case management
- Community service
- Post-employment services
- Transportation issues
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with developmental disabilities
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Domestic violence victims
- Culture change
- Teen parents/minor mothers
- Management information systems
- Rural clients.

THE SUCCESSES

Arizona has been very successful in providing for victims of domestic violence. Through its coordination with community action agencies, the department has been training staff for the identification of domestic violence victims, case management services, and temporary deferment of these recipients. Another successful area has been in community service placement. The state has arranged with volunteer coordinator to work through contracted providers to place clients in unpaid work experience and community service. Also, the IV-A agency is offering volunteering partnership placements for TANF recipients.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The state is interested in learning from other states how to integrate the intake for the various functions that have to occur in one interview, specifically the intake instrument.

SUB-STATE SNAPSHOT

ARIZONA ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES

Arizona

The Association for Community Action Agencies in Arizona is comprised of 30 community action agencies, other agencies, and individuals concerned about poverty issues. Since 1995, the association has been heavily involved in the implementation of welfare reform. In preparation for welfare reform and prior to PROWRA, the association held meetings and discussions with members of the community on welfare reform. Out of these meetings and discussions emerged a document with eight guiding principles of what block grants for welfare reform should look like for the state.

Despite the work that was already taking place at the state level regarding welfare reform, the implementation process has been difficult for everyone involved. In particular, implementation has been difficult for the clients or recipients of the program. There were a large number of changes taking place at a very rapid pace, and there was a gap in the communication between the service providers and recipients. Due to misconceptions about the TANF program, some people, who may be in need of benefits, have failed to apply for benefits fearing that they might not be eligible under the new law. The new program has been especially challenging for populations living in rural areas. These areas do not have the infrastructure, caseworkers, or jobs necessary to help recipients achieve self-sufficiency. On the other hand, rural communities can have very high unemployment rates; in some border towns the unemployment rate has reached 70 percent. Nevertheless, these communities have to comply with the same rules as the larger urban areas that do have infrastructures in place and more productive economies.

A major concern of the Association is that there will be an increase in the state's poverty rate as people continue to leave the welfare rolls and others fail to enter the system. Community action agencies, food banks, and other community-based organizations in Arizona are attempting to provide services to the portion of the population not being served by the TANF program. As expected, the organizations are experiencing an increase in the number of people requesting emergency assistance; over the past year, there has been an increase of 30 percent in the request for emergency assistance and food boxes. Since emergency assistance cannot be provided using TANF funds, social service delivery systems are finding non-TANF funds to help those in need. Further, they are trying to be more flexible than the Federal laws in order to provide Arizona residents with the necessary services.

As in other states, Arizona is also dealing with the challenge of providing recipients with transportation, training, and child care. Last year, the legislature—through the advocacy work of community groups—addressed the issue of transportation by allocating additional funds for service providers to specifically provide welfare to work transportation services to TANF recipients. This initiative will continue this year with funding from the TANF program. In the area of child care, the state has expanded the eligibility of child care to 165 percent of the poverty level to include more low-income families and has a 2-year transitional assistance period for child care provision. Additional funds have been allocated to community colleges for training, to increase life skills training, and for community organizations providing training to male fathers. Lastly, to determine what is happening to recipients as they leave the TANF program, a survey instrument is currently being developed, the results of which will be available in December 1998.



In 1995, California was the most populous state in the nation with 32.3 million residents. Most of the state's residents (92.6 percent) lived in a metropolitan area. California's poverty rate in 1995 stood at 15.8 percent, and its median per capita income was roughly \$21,821. By the year 2000, the state's population is expected to rise by 7.7 percent to 41.1 million. In January 1995, there were 2.7 million AFDC recipients in the state. Between enactment of the new welfare law in August 1996 and September 1997, the number of AFDC/TANF recipients in California declined by 14 percent, from 2.6 million to 2.2 million.

TANF HISTORY

The California Department of Social Services (DSS) manages the *CalWorks program*. CalWorks encourages personal responsibility and accountability, fosters a "Work First" attitude through strict work requirements, and gives counties the flexibility they need to meet recipients' needs. Under the program, new applicants receive aid for 18 months and current recipients receive aid for 24 months. If the recipient is not employed when the time limit is reached, the recipient enters community service, provided the county certifies that "no job was available." Recipients participate in an initial 4-week period of job search, followed by work or engagement in work activities upon completion of an assessment. The state provides subsidized child care to recipients participating in welfare-to-work activities. Also, counties are authorized to determine if an applicant would benefit from "lump sum" services, or a cash payment, in order to avoid the need for public assistance.

DSS collaborates with the Department of Education, Employment Development Department (DOL), Alcohol and Drug Office, Trade and Commerce Department, and Department of Housing. DSS also works closely with the state's mental health services, although without a formal agreement. There are also interagency collaborations and agreements for the transfer of money from one entity to another.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, California cited the following challenges:

- Developing the legislative and administrative plans necessary to bring the program to fruition
- Meeting the job participation rates
- Developing community service employment
- Fulfilling the data requirements
- Providing child care, especially during odd hours and for infant care
- Removing the transportation barriers posed by reverse commute and rural areas.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, California ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Community service
- Data gathering
- Management information systems.

THE SUCCESSES

California notes that it has made significant strides over the past year in passing the state welfare-to-work law (CalWorks), getting people into jobs, and increasing available funding for child care.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The state would like to know what other states are doing to provide affordable and adequate housing to their recipients and how other states are dealing with the transportation issues of reverse commute and rural transportation. Another area of interest for technical assistance is data gathering.



In January 1995, there were 7,630 AFDC recipients in Guam. By August 1996, the number of recipients increased to 8,364. A year later, in September 1997, Guam's TANF caseload was down 5 percent from its August figure to 7,894 recipients.

TANF HISTORY

Guam's TANF program is an islandwide program administered by the Department of Public Health and Social Services. The program has a 5-year time limit with exemptions for the elderly and the disabled. The JOBS program requires recipients to work unless the parent has a child under 3 years old. Teenage parents are required to be in school and live in an adult-supervised setting. Guam provides transitional Medicaid for 4 months and child care for 12 months. In the initial development stages of the program, a Welfare Reform Task Force was created to look at how TANF applied to Guam and how it could be implemented and to make recommendations to the Governor. Members of the Task Force included the Department of Law, Family Division and Child Support, the Guam Housing Corporation (Housing Authority), Department of Labor, Department of Education, and the University of Guam. The Task Force ended on September 30, 1996.

Guam has ongoing agreements with the Division of Family Services for Child Support services, the Department of Labor, Agency for Human Resource Development for jobs, training, and employment, and Guam Community Colleges to provide education. There are also three agreements with the University of Guam for supportive services, child care training, cooperative extension to provide child and food nutrition services, and a talent search program to provide educational supportive services, such as mentoring.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your [Territory] in TANF implementation?" In response, Guam cited the following challenges:

- Lack of funds—Guam's TANF funding from the Federal government is capped at approximately \$4.65 million, but its budget has been in the range of \$8 million over the past few years. Therefore, the territory must seek additional funds each year to provide benefits to its clients.
- TANF policies regarding aliens—These policies do not allow aliens to receive TANF benefits or be eligible for Medicaid. Guam, however, has a very large number of aliens living in the island, and although they are not eligible for benefits, their U.S. born children are eligible, and the Territory is required to serve them. This year, the legislature excluded aliens from the Territory's budget, but did not take into account that the children of aliens require services. Therefore, the budget required to provide services exceeds Guam's current TANF budget.
- Sanctions—Guam will have to contend with an increasing number of hearings due to families being sanctioned for non-compliance.

- MIS—The Territory will have to deal with the inadequacy of its management information system to support data reporting requirements. Currently, the MIS does not interface with child support and the GURA (housing authority) systems for third party payments.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Guam ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

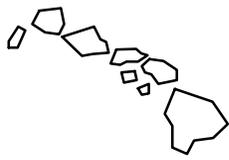
- Child care affordability
- Child support enforcement
- Transportation issues
- Teen parents/minor mothers
- Culture change
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Performance-based contracting
- Streamlined funding sources
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

Despite these challenges, Guam has been successful in getting other agencies to support welfare reform, with the Department of Public Health leading the initiative. Furthermore, the community has changed its image of welfare recipients and is willing to give them employment. There are more opportunities available for getting recipients employed. Similarly, the Territory has engaged in a number of outreach activities with tourism boards, hotels, and job fairs with the University of Guam. There is a plan to work with the media to do a monthly feature of successful TANF activities in the Territory.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Guam is interested in receiving technical assistance in the areas of up-front diversion, case management, post-employment services, performance-based contracting, and culture change.



Hawaii ranked 40th in population in the nation in 1995 with 1.22 million residents. A metropolitan area was home to 89 percent of this population. The state's poverty rate and median per capita income in 1995 were 11 percent and \$23,354, respectively. Hawaii's population is expected to grow by 8.7 percent to reach 1.3 million in 2000. In January 1995, Hawaii had 65,207 AFDC recipients. Hawaii is the only state that seen its AFDC/TANF caseload increase since the enactment of the new welfare law. From August 1996 to September 1997, Hawaii's caseload climbed by 13 percent from 66,480 to 75,030.

TANF HISTORY

Hawaii has continued operating several portions of its Federal waiver demonstration, *Pursuit of New Opportunities*, under its TANF program. The program is administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and provides financial assistance and employment training services for recipients who must overcome barriers to become employed and achieve self-sufficiency. The program enforces the 60-month lifetime limit on assistance, but extends eligibility indefinitely as long as recipients are complying with their work activities. This may explain why Hawaii's TANF caseload has not decreased in the past 2 years.

DHS provides services in collaboration with private sector entities in the communities that it serves. The State Workforce Development Council, which represents the Governor's office, oversees the employment and training program and works with the Department of Labor, JTPA entities, and Department of Education for employment services and adult education programming in community colleges. The Work Plus program is a volunteer program for clients in state agencies to develop skills and build their resume. Through the Transitional Employment Program with the private sector, recipients receive training, continue receiving assistance, and after 6 months of employment, can be hired as regular employees.

As part of an interagency task force and the HUD-sponsored Family Self-Sufficiency program, DHS works with the Hawaii Housing Authority as well as with the Department of Transportation for van pool programs for neighbor islands. The Department is also receiving assistance for families from public health nursing branches within the Department of Health and is extending its contracts to Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies to work with individuals who have greater need.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Hawaii cited the following challenges:

- Coping with the high unemployment rate and shortage of full-time jobs on the islands
- Meeting the participation rate, especially for two-parent families
- Getting people who are reaching the time limit employed
- Fulfilling the Federal data reporting requirements.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Hawaii ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Affordable and adequate housing
- Transportation issues
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with developmental disabilities
- Clients with physical disabilities
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Rural clients
- Culture change
- Data gathering
- Evaluation and monitoring
- Management information systems
- Partnerships with the private sector
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

Some of Hawaii's achievements over the past year include getting over 7,500 or 46.8 percent of able-bodied adult recipients employed, decreasing expenditures despite income disregard, and building a good relationship with AT&T for the Transitional Opportunity Program (TOP). Currently, the TOP program has employed 18 clients in full-time jobs and is training 22 other clients.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Hawaii is interested in technical assistance in the following areas: implementing workforce development and culture change; learning from states where the community is taking control and assuming responsibility for the program; establishing diversion programs; and establishing partnerships with faith-based groups.



In 1995, Nevada ranked 38th in population in the nation. The total population was 1.4 million, with approximately 88.3 percent living in a metropolitan area. Nevada's poverty rate in 1995 was 14.4 percent, and its median per capita income was \$22,729. It is expected that the state's population will rise 14.3 percent by the year 2000 to approximately 1.7 million. In January 1995, there were 41,846 AFDC recipients in the state. From August 1996, when the new welfare law was enacted, to September 1997, the number of AFDC/TANF recipients declined by 17 percent, from 33,920 to 28,157.

TANF HISTORY

Under its TANF plan, Nevada will implement the 24-months-and-work limit and the 60-month lifetime limit on assistance. The state's employment and training program, *New Employees of Nevada (NEON)*, defines work as unsubsidized employment, subsidized employment, work experience, on-the-job-training, job search and job readiness activities, community service programs, and vocational education training not to exceed 12 months.

In the initial stages of implementation, Nevada conducted meetings with state agencies and outside advocacy groups to talk about TANF and formed a Welfare Reform Task Force to look at policies and regulations and make them as simple as possible. Nevada notes that the Welfare-to-Work funds will be distributed to the Private Industry Councils and that one of these Councils will handle 14 of the state's counties and the other will handle 4 counties.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Nevada cited the following challenges:

- Effecting culture change
- Training staff to understand new issues and policies
- Upgrading the management information system and meeting automation requirements
- Integrating child support and child care
- Clarifying state and Federal guidelines and regulations
- Working with employers to bring them to the table for the marketing and retention of services.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Nevada ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Up-front diversion
- One-stop centers
- Post-employment services

- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Performance-based contracting
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

Over the past year, Nevada has been successful at:

- Customizing job training with employers and community college
- Recruiting and obtaining employers' commitment in the gaming industry
- Piloting a training program for non-custodial parents to get them employed.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The state has created several assessment forms that are currently being used by staff and has a case management process and procedures in place that the state would like to have reviewed by an expert. Nevada is also looking for creative ways to provide transportation services for clients living in rural and remote areas. The state would like more information on what other states are doing to form linkages with faith-based organizations and non-profit and foundation entities. Last, the state would like to move to full performance-based contracting and would like to know what other states have done and what positive results they have achieved in this area.

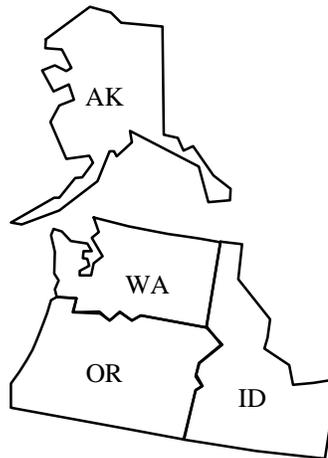
REGION X:

ALASKA

IDAHO

OREGON

WASHINGTON





REGION X: TOP TANF CHALLENGES

- CLIENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES
- POST-EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
- TRANSPORTATION ISSUES
- CLIENTS WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS
- RURAL CLIENTS
- DATA GATHERING
- MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS
- EVALUATION AND MONITORING
- CULTURE CHANGE
- CLIENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

*A majority of states within the region ranked these issues as “most challenging.”

REGION X
MOST CHALLENGING ISSUES BY STATE

ALASKA	IDAHO	OREGON
<p>One-Stop Centers Transportation Issues Rural Clients Culture Change</p>	<p>Up-Front Diversion Child Support Enforcement Clients with Learning Disabilities Clients with Substance Abuse Problems Domestic Violence Victims Rural Clients Linkages With State Partners Data Gathering Management Information Systems Evaluation and Monitoring</p>	<p>Post-Employment Services Affordable and Adequate Housing Clients with Mental Health Problems Clients with Learning Disabilities Clients with Substance Abuse Problems Non-Custodial Parents</p>
<p>WASHINGTON</p> <p>One-Stop Centers Post-Employment Services Child Care Access Transportation Issues Clients with Mental Health Problems Clients with Learning Disabilities Non-English Speaking Clients Teen Parents/Minor Mothers Culture Change Data Gathering Management Information Systems Community-based Collaborations Partnerships with the Private Sector Performance-based Contracting Evaluation and Monitoring</p>		

Note: State-reported data. For each state, respondents ranked the issues shown as “most challenging” from a list of issues provided.



Alaska ranked 48th in population in 1995. The state's population was approximately 0.634 million, 67.5 percent of which lived in a metropolitan area. Alaska's poverty rate was 10 percent, and its median per capita income was \$22,846. By the year 2000, it is expected that the state's population will rise 10.4 percent to 0.7 million. In January 1995, there were 37,264 AFDC recipients in the state. From August 1996 to September 1997, the number of recipients declined by 8 percent, from 35,540 to 32,776.

TANF HISTORY

Alaska's Department of Health and Social Services operates the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP). ATAP places a strong emphasis on work and job readiness by adopting a work first philosophy and setting a 5-year time limit on benefits for most families. The program offers a one-time diversion payment to provide short-term financial assistance and help families avoid dependency. Recipients who do not comply with their work requirements are sanctioned with a benefit reduction.

To implement the Work First approach, the Department developed strong partnerships and contracts with local governments, Native American organizations, and non-profit and for-profit organizations. These community-based organizations and businesses deliver training, job preparation, job readiness, and education services and develop job opportunities tailored to each region's economic characteristics. The Department is also coordinating with the State Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault to screen individuals for past or current domestic violence victimization, refer domestic violence victims to specialized community-based services, and waive program requirements.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Alaska cited the following challenges:

- Effecting culture change
- Addressing transportation, job match, post-employment services, and tribal issues.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Alaska ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- One-stop centers
- Transportation issues
- Rural clients
- Culture change.

THE SUCCESSES

The state has done a great deal of work in the welfare reform arena and has successfully mobilized the business community through strong partnership with the Department of Commerce. The Department of Commerce facilitated forums and formed the WorkStar initiative that solicits input from

business leaders and recognizes businesses for their commitment to develop employment opportunities for welfare recipients. Also, Alaska has been working through grants to Native organizations to leverage their resources and provide job search, case management and community service placements to their members who are TANF recipients.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Alaska would like to receive the following technical assistance on these challenges:

- Culture change (business analysis to identify areas of resistance and formulate strategic plan)
- Transportation (assistance in developing innovative initiatives to build infrastructure, especially in remote locations and small communities)
- Job matching (assistance in developing screening tools and database to quickly, within 23 hours, identify and refer recipients from any part of the caseload—state, Native organization, or contractor—to job interviews).

In 1995, Idaho ranked 41st in population in the nation, with a total population of 1.15 million. It is expected that Idaho's population will grow by 11.5 percent in the year 2000 to 1.3 million. The state's poverty rate in 1995 was 15 percent, and its median per capita income was \$17,646. In January 1995, there were 24,050 AFDC recipients in the state. By August 1996, the number of recipients had declined to 21,800. A year later, in September 1997, the number of recipients was down to 4,945, exhibiting the largest decrease in any state—down 77 percent.

TANF HISTORY

The Temporary Assistance for Families in Idaho Program (TAFI), managed by the Department of Health and Welfare, was implemented on July 1997. The goal of the TAFI program is to provide temporary cash assistance to families so they can achieve self-sufficiency. Recipients work with a Self-Reliance Specialist to design their own individual program or course to achieving self-sufficiency. Adult recipients are expected to begin participating in work activities immediately upon entering the program, beginning with job search, and must accept any legal work offered to them. All adults receiving benefits will be required to work 20 hours a week. Transitional assistance includes child care and transportation for working parents.

In developing the TAFI program, Idaho's Governor developed a Council comprised of business people, legislative staff, and community members to look at the implementation of the program in the state and obtain the community's input and feedback. Currently, the state is working with communities, employers, Department of Labor, and interest groups to provide employment opportunities for TAFI recipients. There is now a lot of interaction across divisions in the Department. Community Resource Developers in the regions have one-on-one contacts with employers, trying to partner and make them realize the benefits of hiring welfare recipients. One contractor is responsible for developing Work Opportunity Sites and placing TANF recipients, including at-risk recipients and non-custodial parents, in employment. The contractor works with community colleges to provide training.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Idaho cited the following challenges:

- Dealing with the Fair Labor Standard Act (FLSA)
- Making sure people get jobs that benefit them
- Working with the hard-to-serve population
- Dealing with people who reach the 2-year time limit
- Evaluating services
- Tracking participants once they leave the program.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Idaho ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

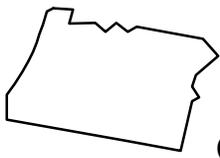
- Up-front diversion
- Child support enforcement
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Domestic violence victims
- Rural clients
- Linkages with state partners
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

The state's successes are in its diversion program. The state has a screening process set up in field offices where a person comes in, sits down with a skilled self-reliance specialist to look at assets, and does an assessment to determine their need (i.e., child support, child care, one time payment for employment related purposes, etc.). One-time payment is for a maximum of 3 months of assistance, and it counts against the recipient's time limit. Another successful area has been the community involvement and public participation on how the program is implemented.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Idaho is interested in learning more about working with clients with learning disabilities, specifically, how to get that person employed so that he or she can become self-sufficient. Another area of interest for technical assistance is evaluation and monitoring.



Oregon ranked 29th in population in the nation in 1995, with a total population of 3.1 million; 70.5 percent of this population lived in the metropolitan area. The state had a poverty rate of 11.3 percent and a median per capita income of \$19,443. By the year 2000, Oregon's population is expected to increase by 8.4 percent to approximately 3.4 million. In January 1995, the number of AFDC recipients in the state totaled 107,610. From August 1996 to September 1997, the number of recipients declined by 33 percent from 78,420 to 52,364.

TANF HISTORY

Oregon intends to continue its waiver-driven reforms under TANF, JOBS, and JOBS Plus programs. The JOBS program offers employment preparation, training, and placement services, while the JOBS Plus Program places people in newly created positions in public and private businesses. Oregon also intends to retain the Oregon Options demonstration project that sets a 24-month lifetime limit on assistance within an 84-month period. The state expects that recipients will become engaged in work or work related activities from the moment they apply for benefits. In addition to receiving 12 months of transitional medical assistance and child care, recipients participating in the JOBS program may be eligible for transitional benefits and services for up to 90 days. These benefits and services may include payment for tools, transportation, clothing, car insurance, and other items needed to support employment.

The nucleus of collaboration in Oregon is the planning committee. There are multiple organizations participating in the collaboration process to provide better services to TANF recipients, including the Vocational Redevelopment Division, Child Protective Services, and Domestic Violence Service providers. The Community Partnership Team (CPT) brings state and local partners together to define desired human services outcomes and develop strategies to achieve them. The CPT works with other public, private, and not-for-profit entities across Oregon to achieve results.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Oregon cited the following challenges:

- Dealing with the substance abuse and mental health issues of recipients
- Ensuring that clients stay employed and increase their wages.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Oregon ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- Post-employment services
- Affordable and adequate housing
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with learning disabilities

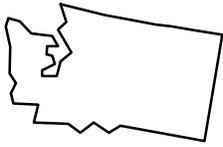
- Clients with substance abuse problems
- Non-custodial parents.

THE SUCCESSES

Oregon made significant strides in a number of areas. The state has successfully implemented an assessment program that first provides recipients with the benefits they need and then emphasizes labor market attachment and employment services by guiding the person through job search activities. The state is very proud that it has been able to transfer the health care management services to the TANF agency. Last, Oregon has successfully implemented culture change initiatives to ensure that staff provide recipients with the services they need to become self-sufficient.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Oregon would like to receive technical assistance in the areas of transportation, clients with substance abuse problems and developmental disabilities, and partnerships with the private sector.



In 1995, Washington ranked 15th in population in the nation. The state's population stood at 5.5 million, with 76.4 percent living in a metropolitan area. It is expected that Washington's population will continue growing into the 21st century—up 10.5 percent by the year 2000 to 6.0 million. The state's poverty rate and median per capita income in 1995 were approximately 11.0 percent and \$21,887, respectively. In January 1995, there were 290,940 AFDC recipients in the state. From August 1996 to September 1997, the number of recipients declined by 12 percent from 268,930 to 236,763.

TANF HISTORY

In implementing the state's Work First program, the state's legislature mandated that state agencies and their partners submit regional plans on how they would implement welfare reform. The local plans should deal with issues specific to the area and the population served. State agencies were also required to work with tribes, employers, local providers, and community development agencies as appropriate to each region to better serve the needs of the recipients.

At the state level, collaborations were formed between four main state agencies: the Department of Social and Health Services, Department of Trade and Economic Development, Employment Security Department, and the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges. The regional planning process includes collaborations with community-based organizations, Tribes, and Private Industry Councils.

THE CHALLENGES

As pointed out in the methodology section, there were two separate points during our discussions with states that we asked about the challenges they are facing. The first question was open-ended to elicit the most pressing concern(s) the state is addressing: "What are the top challenges facing your state in TANF implementation?" In response, Washington cited the following challenges:

- Building collaboration
- Radically changing the way business is conducted within a short time frame
- MIS and data collection and reporting
- Resolving the year 2000 issue
- Establishing performance measures
- Tracking clients who leave assistance
- Meeting requirements for data collection and reporting
- Devolving decision-making to the regional level
- Changing the role of the financial worker to case manager.

Also, as detailed in the methodology section, we sought specific ranked responses to a set of particular challenges. Given this list of challenges, Washington ranked the following as the state's greatest challenges:

- One-stop centers

- Post-employment services
- Child care access
- Transportation issues
- Clients with mental health problems
- Clients with learning disabilities
- Non-English speaking clients
- Teen parents/minor mothers
- Culture change
- Data gathering
- Management information systems
- Community-based collaborations
- Partnerships with the private sector
- Performance-based contracting
- Evaluation and monitoring.

THE SUCCESSES

Over the past year, Washington has successfully implemented the second Child Support Enforcement Case Management System in the country to get certified. The state has conducted several training and developed several screening tools for domestic violence, learning disabilities, substance abuse, and mental health.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

To continue its successes and provide recipients with the best services possible, Washington would like to receive the following forms of technical assistance:

- HHS Federal data collection and reporting contact person or number to get clarification on questions
- Development of performance measures
- Summaries of other state programs or best practices in issue areas such as transportation, child care, and post-employment services
- Long-term technical assistance from experts in other successful states
- A clearinghouse that would provide general information about all 50 states and would provide specific information as needed.

IV. THE NEXT WAVE

IV. THE NEXT WAVE

In Chapter II, we featured the top 12 challenges identified by the states, outlined why they were challenges, and highlighted a variety of emerging innovations designed to address these challenges. In Chapter III, we expanded this analysis by including extensive state profiles and selected sub-state “snapshots.” But, as the in-depth interviews with states made clear, the challenges do not exist as isolated pools of problems. Rather, these issues manifest the “sea change” taking place in welfare reform. In this chapter, we provide some interpretation of the challenges states are facing in implementing TANF. We suggest that these challenges are the waves of change—some already crashing, some cresting, and some barely visible yet as a ripple on the horizon.

The first wave encompasses concerns about Federal oversight and funding, including data gathering, management information systems, evaluation and monitoring, and culture change. The second wave encompasses issues of employment placement and job retention. And the third wave—still forming—will hit as families *leave* welfare with their well-being still in jeopardy.

1. THE FIRST WAVE

The first wave of challenges facing states reflect concerns about institutional capacity to manage all the TANF responsibilities. States are worried about Federal penalties and leveraging Federal bonuses. Under PRWORA, states have many new responsibilities for monitoring and reporting caseload changes. They expressed significant concerns about the lack of integrated databases and antiquated information systems, which inhibit their ability to effectively and efficiently monitor caseload dynamics, track clients after case closure, and report the required data to the Federal government. The timing of the interviews probably helped propel “data gathering” to the top of many states’ lists of challenges. The interviews were conducted shortly after the Federal government released its proposed rules and regulations regarding TANF for public comment. Given that the Federal regional ACF staff was represented on most of the calls, the states used this opportunity to point out their concerns with these proposed rules and regulations, including concerns about data gathering and reporting requirements.

Also key within this first wave of challenges is the replacement of the welfare delivery system that has functioned for at least the last three decades with a “new” delivery system. This new system requires a change in the “welfare culture,” as well as adjustments in relationships between the Federal government and state governments, within state institutional structures, and between states and communities. States and communities are learning how to go about the business of a “different kind of welfare.” Changing the culture of welfare involves complex, inter-related change processes that will take time and effort to implement effectively. Thus,

states voice concern about how to efficiently and effectively change organizational culture on the state level as well as on the front-line with staff and clients and in communities with employers and the public.

2. THE SECOND WAVE

The second wave of challenges upon states involves moving people from welfare to work—removing barriers to employability, reducing caseload, and meeting work participation rates. The general character and specific provisions of PRWORA increased the pressure on states by magnifying the focus on work—finding it, preparing for it, and sustaining it. Funding procedures under TANF link block grant funding levels to increasingly demanding work participation standards for recipients. States are responsible for removing barriers to employment by providing the necessary work and family supports to recipients, such as transportation and child care. States are wrestling with developing this necessary employment support infrastructure.

States must quickly move significant proportions of their welfare recipients into work and work-related activities to avoid Federal penalties, as well as for the benefit of the recipient whose welfare clock is ticking. Many states' Work First efforts focus on ensuring rapid labor market attachment. In many incidences, however, recipients are recycling through the system, resulting in high levels of recidivism. This low level of job retention has caused post-employment services to emerge as an increasingly major concern for states. In addition, as TANF caseloads shrink, the remaining cases present a significant employability challenge for the states, forcing them to rethink how their delivery systems can best serve the hard-to-employ populations, including clients with substance abuse problems, clients with learning disabilities, rural clients, victims of domestic violence, and clients with mental health problems.

3. THE THIRD WAVE

In examining the list of issues that states determined as “most challenging,” clearly there were several items missing when considering self-sufficiency of families. Thus, we suggest that there is a third wave of challenges comprised of issues that are critical, imminent—and as yet, barely visible. This section will look at three such issues: housing, health care, and the culture change continuum. The issues of housing and health care coverage will figure largely in the ability of families to attain self-sufficiency after they leave welfare and to maintain their well-being. It is suggested that the issue of expanded culture change will be an important factor for states to wrestle with in the future as they work to help families move down the pathway to self-sufficiency.

3.1 Housing and Welfare Reform

Only 11 states raised the issue of “housing” as a major concern in TANF implementation. For the most part, the states that voiced this concern had been operating under significant AFDC waivers prior to passage of PRWORA. Overall, when each state was questioned regarding the degree of challenge “housing” was for the state, the most common response was: “We don’t do that in this department. The housing policy and programs are handled elsewhere.” This silo mentality runs counter to successful implementation of TANF.

Federal Initiatives

A number of Federal initiatives are already under way to help low-income families achieve self-sufficiency. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides housing assistance to low-income families through public housing, Section 8 certificates and vouchers, and Section 8 project-based programs. The Department also has economic development programs in various communities that generate employment opportunities for low-income residents. The Family Self-Sufficiency program is an employment and training program that helps public housing and Section 8 residents become self-sufficient through education, training, and the provision of support services. The Economic Development and Supportive Services Grant program provides grants to public housing authorities and non-profit organizations. The grants allow participating organizations to provide social services to enhance the self-sufficiency of public housing residents.

HUD also funds demonstration projects specifically targeted to help low-income people move to work. Moving-to-Work (MTW) demonstrations give housing authorities the flexibility to use Federal funds to provide housing assistance to low-income families. The project is particularly important for TANF families where the head of the household is seeking work or participating in programs to obtain employment and become self-sufficient. Other components of the MTW demonstration are the Jobs Plus and the Bridges to Work programs, both of which provide job placement and the support services necessary to keep residents employed.

Links Between Housing and TANF

Housing assistance can play a crucial role in lessening welfare dependency and helping low-income families achieve self-sufficiency. As states continue implementing a welfare program that focuses on work requirements and sets time limits for assistance, there will be an increased need to build linkages between TANF agencies and state housing authorities to ensure that recipients obtain housing. It is especially important that housing services be provided to TANF and low-income families to prevent them from entering the ranks of the nation’s growing

homeless population. A study by the Urban Institute estimated that between 500,000 and 600,000 individuals were homeless in the United States during a 7-day period in March 1987.¹ The more stringent eligibility requirements under the new welfare law and a rise in housing costs can only increase the risk of homelessness for poor families.

Approximately 20 percent of the states interviewed for the needs assessment mentioned building linkages with housing as the next phase in the welfare reform process. Linkages and agreements between service agencies and housing authorities can provide some degree of flexibility in how programs are designed and services provided. Families receiving housing assistance typically pay 30 percent of their income in rent. As a result, families' required rent payments generally rise with an increase in income and fall with a decrease in income.² Therefore, families that are attempting to climb the self-sufficiency ladder by becoming employed and increasing their income are indirectly penalized for their efforts. A possible solution to this disincentive is for housing entities to maintain rents at a minimum or maximum for TANF recipients and to disregard an increase in a tenant's employment income until the recipient becomes self-sufficient. Similarly, TANF agencies can provide recipients with housing vouchers or rent subsidies. Some housing authorities are beginning to employ TANF recipients in reconstruction and maintenance work at public housing sites, and some are even starting micro-enterprises.

3.2 Health Care and Welfare Reform

Only one state ranked "health care" as a major challenge in TANF implementation. Most states stated that transitional Medicaid covered the TANF populations that became employed. Thus, for states, given the "newness" of TANF, health care was a "non-issue" for TANF implementation and health benefits a future issue to be dealt with by employers. As states successfully implement welfare reform and continue experiencing a decline in their TANF caseloads, there will be an increased need to consider the role of health care in the lives of poor and low-income families. Currently, most states are providing families with 1- to 2-year transitional Medicaid assistance. While this assistance will be paramount in providing families with health care coverage as they engage in work activities, it is also a short-term solution that will require enhancement. The question for states to ask is: What happens long-term to these families once their transitional Medicaid benefits expire and their employer does not provide health care coverage?

¹ Martha Burt and Barbara Cohen. *America's Homeless*. Urban Institute Press, 1989.

² Barbara Sard and Jennifer Daskal. *Housing and Welfare Reform: Some Background Information*. Center on Policy and Budget Priorities. February 1998.

Federal Initiatives

To protect children from falling through the cracks as their parents struggle to obtain livable wage jobs, the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 provides states with up to \$20.3 billion in Federal payments over the next 5 years to provide health care coverage to uninsured children. States have the option of extending coverage to more children through the Medicaid program, creating or expanding a separate state program that provides coverage to children, or supporting a combination of these two approaches. The flexibility embedded in how states utilize these funds may well benefit a large portion of children; however, the use of these funds does not require states to provide health care coverage to entire families. Families that are moving from welfare to work are, for the most part, moving to low-wage jobs that do not provide health care benefits. A study from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities notes that in 1996, more than half of poor, full-time workers lacked health insurance throughout the year.³ States must consider these realities as they help TANF families achieve self-sufficiency and as low-income families attempt to move out of poverty.

Links Between Health Care and TANF

The funds allocated to states through the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 provides states with control over a wide range of policy decisions affecting poor children—benefit packages, providers, delivery systems, administrative structures, and coordination with Medicaid. Based on conversations with TANF administrators through this *Needs Assessment*, it does not appear that states are making the appropriate connections between TANF families leaving the TANF delivery system and the health care coverage necessary as they exit the system. Given the declining caseload in the TANF population, states must carefully consider the link between TANF and health care. A possible avenue for states to consider as they begin to examine these issues is directing the extra savings in TANF dollars that are occurring as a result of the decline in states' caseloads toward a health care support system. States may consider using these savings to extend the health care benefits that are provided to TANF and low-income working families.

3.3 Welfare Reform and the Culture Change Continuum

As a new “culture” permeates state TANF agencies across the nation—moving an eligibility compliance culture toward an employment placement initiative—it forces institutional chaos throughout state government as agencies have different expectations placed upon them. The Food Stamp Program focus remains on compliance and error rate corrections, which runs counter to the new TANF “*Work First*” emphasis. The Medicaid Program is also

³ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (1997). “*Poverty Rate Fails to Decline as Income Growth in 1996 Favors the Affluent: Child Health Coverage Erodes as Medicaid for Children Contracts*”.

rule-bound. As welfare-to-work funds are distributed to departments of labor and community private industry councils, these entities need to understand how to work with a “different clientele” than they are used to assisting. Thus, they need to build linkages with state welfare departments or social services agencies. As caseloads continue to shrink and a larger proportion of the welfare caseload consists of individuals with substance abuse and mental health problems, or individuals with learning disabilities, new alliances must be built between TANF agencies and the health, mental health, and education entities within the state. Finally, as the “Devolution Evolution” continues, culture change within communities—within local governmental entities, community organizations, the business community, and the general public—is imminent. Welfare reform has launched a culture change that will need to expand and deepen within all levels government—Federal, state, and local—and throughout society if it is to be successful in truly ending welfare and dealing with the issue of family self-sufficiency.

4. CHANGING TIDES—WELFARE REFORM AND TEEN PARENTS/MINOR MOTHERS

The new welfare reform law requires states to submit state plans describing the special emphasis they will give to teenage pregnancy as part of their efforts to prevent out-of-wedlock births and outlining statutory rape education programs. Many states have responded by creating a number of different initiatives focused on teenage pregnancy prevention, primarily recognizing the link between teenage pregnancy and poverty. However, there does not seem to be the same attention being given to the existing caseload of teen parents.

Continuing with this analogy of “sea change,” we identified a “changing tide” regarding the way in which many states were “dealing with” the issue of teen parents. It surprised the Network staff that the issue of teen parents and minor mothers was missing from the list of “most challenging” issues in TANF implementation. Based on our conversations with states, most states were dealing with the issue of “teen parents” as an eligibility concern. States were focusing on implementing the Federal requirements regarding TANF assistance to teen parents. Teen parents must abide by the TANF time limits and work requirements. In addition, they are subject to stay-in-school and live-at-home provisions. States may not spend TANF funds on minor, unmarried, custodial parents who do not live at home or in an adult supervised setting. States also may not provide TANF funds to teen parents who are not participating in high school or other equivalent training programs. Thus, when teen parents do not abide by the Federal requirements, they are sanctioned and lose their cash assistance. Or, when household income is considered for the teen parents who do stay at home with their parents, in many cases they are found to become ineligible for TANF assistance. These “ineligible or sanctioned” teen parents, for the most part, are not being monitored or tracked. It might well be likely that these young families end up back in the system—through the door of the child welfare system, homeless programs, or the criminal justice system. In time, we anticipate a “changing tide” in the way in which the needs of these families are being addressed by the states.

5. CONCLUSION

Viewed as a whole, states' concerns fall into a continuum—from the most immediate challenges of Federal reporting requirements and work participation rates, to concerns about employment placement and job retention, to concerns about families who leave TANF, their potential for self-sufficiency, and their subsequent well-being. In the following and final chapter, we outline a technical assistance plan to address the key challenges raised by states in this *Needs Assessment*. We also suggest future knowledge development and technical assistance efforts that need to be undertaken so that states and communities are “not washed ashore” as they face the new waves of TANF implementation.

V. CONCLUSION—THE NEXT STEPS

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The passage of PRWORA launched states into an era of rapid reform, reflecting no less than a metamorphosis of the welfare system. Almost 2 years after passage of PRWORA, states are sorting out what is working and not working in implementing their welfare reform agendas. As states continue to build and expand their capacity to manage their new TANF responsibilities, they continue to need help.

Thus, continuation of the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network is critical. Much of the Network's first year has been dedicated to establishing a baseline of information about the key challenges that States and localities are confronting in implementing TANF. Technical assistance only became available in April 1998, after this baseline of needs was established. A 6-month infusion of assistance provided during the first year, though critical to launching some state initiatives and responding to several state concerns, is not enough to significantly affect the long-term implementation of states' welfare reform efforts. States and localities need ongoing technical assistance to successfully move people from welfare to work.

Currently, the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network makes technical assistance available through a two-prong strategy. The Network staff developed a proactive technical assistance plan to respond to concerns raised by states during the *Needs Assessment*. In addition, targeted technical assistance responds to individual Technical Assistance Requests made by states and localities. Also, ongoing exchange between states and localities is made available via the Online Forum, as well as other information provided via the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at <http://www.calib.com/peerta>.

The following sections outline the recommended technical assistance plan presented to our Federal project officer and briefly describe some future efforts that need to be undertaken to continue to expand capacity at the state and local level so that TANF implementation is successful and families are solidly placed on the pathway to self-sufficiency.

1. PROACTIVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

As part of the proactive technical assistance strategy, the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance staff has designed and will manage a range of peer-to-peer technical assistance activities such as site visits, work groups, and teleconferences based on needs identified in the *Needs Assessment*. The Network will distribute final written products to states and jurisdictions who participate in the event, as well as make the summaries of lessons learned available on the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at <http://www.calib.com/peerta>.

The Network is currently conducting a series of interactive workshops/roundtables, moderated conference calls, and information dissemination sessions. Each event focuses on the following themes: “Lessons Learned” and “Brainstorming—what’s working—what can work here—what needs to be done.” Participants in each of the proposed events will represent states that have expertise to share and states that ranked the issue topic as a high-priority challenge for their state. We have scheduled interactive workshops for a variety of states across the country in the issue areas of substance abuse, transportation, post-employment services, and multi-barrier populations. Also, we have had or will have moderated teleconferences on issues of substance abuse, domestic violence, culture change, employer outreach, and successful job retention strategies.

2. TARGETED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The targeted technical assistance strategy—the responsive strategy—will include events planned by the Network in direct response to requests received from state and local TANF agencies. Technical Assistance Request Forms have been mailed to each state contact for the *Needs Assessment*. States can request direct individualized technical assistance via the Welfare Peer-to-Peer Technical Assistance Network by completing this form. The form can also be downloaded via the Internet at <http://www.calib.com/peerta>.

Counties, community-based organizations, and other agencies operating within states can obtain copies of the Technical Assistance Request Form from their respective state TANF agencies or download the request from the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Website. States will be asked to review and comment on applications received from these organizations. The Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network encourages these organizations to work closely with their respective state TANF agencies when preparing their requests. Interested states, counties, localities, and community-based organizations may complete an application for assistance and forward it to their respective ACF Regional Office and to Network staff.

The ACF Central Office and Regional Office staff and the Network staff review each technical assistance request form based on the following criteria:

- The extent to which the technical assistance requested is likely to move TANF recipients from welfare to work
- The level of clarity with which the problem is described
- The level of urgency of the requested technical assistance
- The degree to which the requested technical assistance methods are appropriate matches for the identified problem

- The extent to which the technical assistance requested may have value for other states or programs
- The cost-effectiveness of the requested technical assistance.

3. FUTURE KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EFFORTS

The scale of the shift of responsibilities for “poor people” has been called a “Devolution Revolution” (Nathan, 1995). It is likely that this “devolution” of responsibility, if not money, will continue to evolve as delivery systems evolve. This “Devolution Evolution” will require a new level of cooperation and collaboration between states and communities. Some of the future efforts for the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network will need to be directed at this county and community level—where services are rendered and expectations placed on recipients. It is here—on the community level—that many emerging innovations can be found and “how to” questions resolved.

There are a variety of activities that should continue over the next 2 years, as well as new efforts that should be launched to help states implement TANF. We recommend that during the next 2 years, the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network provide ongoing management of the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Website. This resource to states is still new and underutilized. Also, given that 18 states (TANF offices) do not have ready access to the Internet, we propose that purposeful relationships be developed between Network staff and these state TANF offices, and that paper documentation of the variety of “lessons learned” be shared with these 18 state offices.

We also propose that during the 2-year period, intensive and extensive technical assistance events—approximately 50 peer-to-peer events based on the lessons learned from the first year—take place. Much can be learned through this horizontal mechanism of information sharing. These events will be both proactive and reactive in nature. The Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network will continue to provide for the transfer of successful, cost-effective welfare-to-work implementation strategies and management practices between and among states, counties, localities, and community-based organizations. Agencies on the front lines of the welfare-to-work process will learn about the strengths, weaknesses, and unique characteristics of strategies that their counterparts across the country are using. This new Network will connect possible solutions to real problems that arise as states, counties, localities, and community-based organizations implement their welfare reform efforts.

Given the possibility of this continuing “Devolution Evolution,” we suggest that a needs assessment be conducted at the county and community level to get richer information about what works and what’s not working in welfare reform. This effort can build on the Kellogg

Foundation Initiative being conducted by SUNY-Albany. As previously stated, it is at the community level where policy and program results can be seen. Many of the “emerging innovations” that have been identified during the first year can be verified and validated as national models. Concise briefs should be written on each of these innovations so that the information can be readily disseminated across the country and the lessons learned shared with other states and counties. Also, in year two, a follow-up *Needs Assessment* of the states should be conducted to determine the successes experienced after 3 years of welfare reform and the challenges that still remain. This information would provide ACF and the administration with critical data as they prepare for the reauthorization of PRWORA in 2001. Much has been accomplished. Much remains to be done.

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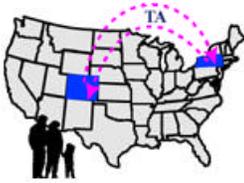
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APPENDIX



Administration for Children and Families Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network

STATE ISSUE GUIDE

Some of these questions seek to clarify your state's TANF program design, while other questions probe your perceptions about what is working and not working in the implementation of welfare reform in your state. This call should take no more than an hour. We appreciate your cooperation and assistance in this process.

For purposes of clarification about the design of your program:

1. Has your state devolved the TANF program to the county or community level?
 2. Is your state operating under an AFDC waiver demonstration program? Would you briefly explain the focus of the waiver?
 3. What collaborations exist between the State and other partners, and how has this collaboration eased the process of implementing TANF?
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1. Over the past year, what has been the single most challenging issue your state has had to struggle with in implementing its welfare reform efforts?
2. Over the course of the next year, what do you anticipate the three most challenging issues your state will face as it continues its welfare reform efforts?
3. Do you think your state could benefit from technical assistance in these areas, and if so, what would be the best mechanism to provide such assistance (i.e., workshops, roundtables, peer matches, etc.)?
4. Do you have any suggestions about who could assist you in this manner (i.e., have you learned about what other states are doing in this area that is of interest to you or that you would want to learn more about)?
5. Over the past year, what were the two or three areas in which you made significant strides and achieved considerable success?
6. Given your achievements in these areas, would you be willing to be a technical assistance peer match with another state that is wrestling with this issue?

7. Following are two clusters of issues for you to think through regarding their importance in your state and whether you believe some form of technical assistance would be beneficial to you. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the most challenging and 1 the least challenging, please rate the following issues:

Programmatic or Strategic Interventions

	1	2	3	4	5	TA YES	TA NO
Strategic Interventions							
1. Intake and Assessment							
2. Up-front Diversion							
3. Case Management							
4. One-Stop Centers							
5. Community Service							
6. Post-Employment Services							
Support Services							
1. Health Care Coverage and Cost							
2. Child Care Affordability							
3. Child Care Access—Odd hour/shift work care							
4. Child Support Enforcement							
5. Affordable and Adequate Housing							
6. Transportation Issues							
Hard-to-Serve Populations							
1. Client with Mental Health Problem							
2. Developmentally Disabled Client							
3. Physically Handicapped Client							
4. Client with Learning Disabilities or Illiteracy							
5. Client with Substance Abuse Problems							
6. Client with Criminal History							
7. Domestic Violence Victims							
8. Immigrant Client							
9. Non-English Speaking Client							
10. Non-Custodial Parents							
11. Teen Parent/Minor Mothers							
12. Rural Client							

Management Practices or Process Changes

	1	2	3	4	5	TA YES	TA NO
1. Culture Change within the Organization (i.e., Reorganization, Staff training and deployment)							
2. Culture Change at the Front Line							
3. Linkages with State Partners (e.g., DOL, Child Care)							
4. Data Gathering							
5. Management Information Systems (Hardware Concerns)							
6. Management Information Systems (Software Concerns)							
7. Community-Based Collaborations							
8. Privatization							
9. Partnerships with the Private Sector							
10. Partnerships with University/Community College							
11. Relationships with Non-Profit/Foundations							
12. Linkages with Faith-Based Organizations							
13. Performance-Based Contracting							
14. Streamlined Funding Sources							
15. Evaluation and Monitoring							

8. Are there issues that you would add to these lists?

9. Is there a county or community-based organization in your state that you would recommend we contact as part of this needs assessment?

10. Are there any closing comments you would like to make, or is there anything you would like to have included in your state's needs assessment?

Thank you