TANF-Workforce Partnership in Arkansas

ACF Systems to Family Stability
National Policy Academy
July 27, 2016
Overview of TANF programs in Arkansas

Multiple workforce development programs and services are offered through the Arkansas Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):

- **Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA)** - a 24 month time-limited program to accelerate single and two parent families get off public assistance and into a job
- **Work Pays** – a job retention program unique to the State of Arkansas, where job seekers getting off TEA due to employment get one-on-one career coaching to secure their existing jobs or get promoted to a higher wage job. Supportive services are extended
- **Career Pathways Initiative** – Short-term career and technical education / training to help job seekers gain skills necessary to pursue careers in high-demand occupations
- **Individual Development Accounts** – a financial literacy and savings program that enables low income families to save and build assets
## TANF partnerships and major stakeholders

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major stakeholders</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Role in TANF Service Delivery</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department of Human Services</td>
<td>Large Geographical footprint, Services like SNAP, Medicaid, and other programs targeted to the typical TANF Customer segment</td>
<td>Intake, Enrollment &amp; Eligibility, Benefits Delivery</td>
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<td>Department of Workforce Services (DWS)</td>
<td>One-stop work readiness services through various Workforce Development programs, Certification programs in IT and non-IT, one-stop business development resources for local employers, WIOA Administrator</td>
<td>The TANF Division is administered under DWS, offers work readiness assessment, self-sufficiency planning and case management</td>
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<td>Department of Adult Education, Arkansas</td>
<td>Short and medium term education and training courses leading to careers in high-demand occupation lists</td>
<td>Education, training, and wrap around services for TANF clients to help meet work-activity requirements, as well as get into high-skill, high-wage jobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Higher Education, Dept. of Career Education, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service</td>
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<td>Non-Governmental Sector – Goodwill Industries, Lewis and Burnett Employment Finders, various local businesses</td>
<td>Custom employment pathway programs to support TANF clients with special challenges</td>
<td>Provide valuable Work Experience, OJT, (Un)Subsidized Employment opportunities to fast track TANF clients into work</td>
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TANF and DWS – the context

TANF @ DHS is a welfare program rather than a workforce development program.

DWS offers multiple workforce development programs

- IT Academy, Skills based training
- Work Readiness Assessments and Career Planning
- TORQ, AJL
- OSA

TANF @ DHS
TANF and DWS – Synergy

- Over $56 mil a year
- Reduce social program dependency and promote independence
- Expand DWS Customer base – the TANF applicant pool provides an opportunity to offer workforce programs to both TANF eligible and ineligible
- Positive relationships with workforce training and adult education agencies and partners
- Reusable Digital Services, integrate with other DWS workforce programs
Evolving Service Demands

- WIOA
- Arkansas Works (Healthcare Independence Program)
- SNAP E&T
- Arkansas TANF Transition and Optimization Project – Focused specifically on just TANF
TANF – WIOA Alignment

TANF in Arkansas is well positioned to be proactive and take a leadership role in getting low income and needy families off public assistance. Its strategic relationships with education, training, health and human services, and the state’s workforce department pre-dates WIOA.

- **Barrier assessment** and barrier reduction plans across a multitude of factors – education, employment, transportation, health (physical, mental, domestic violence), child care & parenting, housing
- **Career interest profiler** is triaged with the high demand occupations in the local area to determine the best occupations and employment goals for the recipient
- Develop an **employment plan** that integrates education and training program supports offered by local community & technical colleges
TANF – WIOA Alignment

- TANF has worked with the WIOA administrator to develop and submit a **combined state plan** – this is a first step in realizing a true common intake and case management system across programs administered by different divisions and state agencies.
- **Integrate labor market information in work readiness assessments and employment planning** recommendations across programs.
- Leverage career one stop, O*net and other resources offered by the Department of Labor under the WIOA umbrella, and **integrate this information within TANF case management**.
- **Arkansas Wins!! Arkansas Workforce Integrated Network System (ARWINS)** – and IT system to further sharing of information and reporting across the various partners.
**TANF initiatives for a better WIOA alignment**

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<th>ATTOP (Arkansas TANF Transformation &amp; Optimization Project) and ARWINS (Arkansas Workforce Integrated Network System)</th>
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<td>Increase the number of low income people on government assistance getting into workforce through the TANF program (Caseload)</td>
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<td>Improve Work Participation Rates and Program Performance / Data Integrity</td>
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<td>Reduce Overpayments, and eliminate benefits issuance before work activity compliance</td>
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<td>Improve client outcomes and service delivery</td>
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<td>Improve Case Management practices, and integration with CPI (Career Pathways Initiatives) / E&amp;T services</td>
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<td>Reduce Administrative costs incurred during intake and eligibility determination</td>
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<td>Create a sustainable healthy workforce driven TANF program that can operate independently within DWS, or, in partnership with external partners</td>
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ARWINS – Digital by Default Services

ARWINS Platform

- Registration & Eligibility Determination
- Employer Services
- Program Performance
- Document Management System
- WRA and EP
- Benefits Management

Employer Services

WRA and EP

Program Performance

Document Management System

Benefits Management
TANF – WIOA Concerns

• While TANF and WIOA customers aim to serve low income people, TANF’s customers are typically the most hard-to-serve with multiple barriers
• Different regulations and requirements specific to TANF and DOL, as well as operational details to be worked out in the coming months and years
• Combat economic weakness and low demand for employees in certain areas
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