

2023 National TANF Directors' Meeting

August 30–31, 2023 • Hyatt Regency Hotel • Long Beach, CA

A Blueprint for the Future of TANF and Economic Mobility

Participant Packet

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Overview

Theme

"A Blueprint for the Future of TANF and Economic Mobility"

Meeting Objectives

The objectives for the 2023 National State TANF Directors Meeting are as follows:

- Increase the Office of Family Assistance's (OFA) and states/territories' understanding about the challenges and the opportunities facing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs.
- 2. Identify critical TANF program components and issues to increase program participation and achieve sustainable economic mobility.

Meeting Overview

Since the inception of TANF, much has been learned about poverty, trauma, and more effective program designs to achieve economic mobility for TANF clients. Additionally, the Fiscal Responsibility Act has initiated the first major changes to national TANF policy in many years. For these reasons, 2023 presents an opportunity to take a step back and consider how the TANF program might respond to these issues while charting a future to increase the sustainable economic mobility of TANF users. Accordingly, this year's national convening will focus on interactive opportunities to discuss, learn about, and develop recommendations about building enhanced TANF program capacity and effectiveness in the years ahead.

The 2023 National TANF Directors' Meeting: A Blueprint for the Future of TANF and Economic Mobility was planned around five topics identified as top priorities by state, regional, and federal staff. In consultation with state and regional representatives, the OFA STAR team organized the meeting around four topic sessions that include traditional learning components and facilitated audience centered conversations to identify opportunities, challenges, and recommendations about the future of the TANF program. Each session will provide you with an opportunity to develop your own blueprint for building enhanced TANF participation, capacity, and effectiveness back home. Throughout the meeting, notetakers will record critical challenges, questions, innovations, and insights to promote reflection and inter-state/territory networking and knowledge sharing, and to guide future TA efforts.

About the Participant Packet

This packet is a digital guide to support your participation and engagement during the national meeting. You will find a copy of the agenda below along with information on points-of-contact if you have any questions onsite.

This packet is organized around meeting topics, although you may not complete it in order. Each section has a session description, information about the subject matter experts and

facilitators, instructions for the session, questions, sample question responses to guide your thinking, space for digital notetaking, and a resource bank for additional information related to each topic. You can refer to these resources before and after the meeting.

Please use this guide in a manner that best serves your engagement and retention of information during the meeting. We also have paper notetaking materials available for your use as well.

Agenda

	DAY 1 (WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30 TH)
Time and Location	Activity
12:30 p.m. PT Seaview AB	The conference hall is open to participants.
1:30 – 2:00 p.m. PT Seaview AB	 Conference Welcome and Opener Speaker: Ann Flagg, Director, Office of Family Assistance (OFA)
2:05 – 4:40 p.m. PT	Ideation and Innovation in Action: Session 1
	 Schedule: 2:05 – 3:15 p.m. PT: Participants will divide into two groups based on their name tag sticker. The Green Group (green sticker) will focus on Topic 1 in Seaview AB and the Blue Group (blue sticker) will focus on Topic 2 in Shoreline AB. 3:15 – 3:30 p.m. PT: Break. Facilitators will swap rooms. At the conclusion of the break, participants will return to the same rooms and work in the same groups. 3:30 – 4:40 p.m. PT: After the break, the Green Group (green sticker) will focus on Topic 2 in Seaview AB and the Blue Group (blue sticker) will focus on Topic 1 in Shoreline AB.
Green Group:	Topic 1: Creating Outcomes-Based TANF Programs
Seaview AB	Outcome-based work involves services or activities that lead to observable and intended changes for participants. What does that mean for your program? Through a continuous cycle of program assessment and implementation, TANF programs can make more informed policy decisions and help create a more client-centered service delivery system

	DAY 1 (WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30 TH)
Time and Location	Activity
	that moves beyond collecting and reporting data for work participation rates. Dr. Teresa Derrick-Mills (Urban Institute) will provide an overview of how to develop outcomes focused on client success. Meeting participants will have the opportunity to share and learn from examples of using informal and formal assessment results to create and refine outcomes-based TANF programs.
	 Speakers: Patrick Heiman, Region X Program Specialist, OFA (Green Group Facilitator)
	 Rachel Johnson, Management and Program Analyst, OFA (Blue Group Facilitator) Teresa Derrick-Mills, Principal Research Associate, Urban Institute
Blue Group: Shoreline AB	 "If you can't measure it, you can't improve it." This well-known adage reminds program administrators how strengthening data collection is tied to reporting and improved program outcomes. Dr. Lauren Banks Amos (Mathematica) will provide insight on how TANF programs can bolster data quality for reporting purposes. Meeting participants will have the opportunity to share their own examples of policies or initiatives related to ensuring quality data and accurate reporting. Speakers: Shantel Mickens Regions I & II TANF Regional Program Manager, OFA (Green Group and Blue Group Facilitator) Dr. Lauren Banks Amos Deputy Area Director, Mathematica
4:45 p.m. PT Seaview AB	 Day 1 Closeout Speaker: LaSherra Ayala, Deputy Director, OFA Participants will sit with their Region for closing remarks and the Conference Hall will remain open until 5:30 p.m. PT for networking.
6:00 – 7:00 p.m. PT Hotel Lobby	 Optional Networking Activity: Sunset Walk Participants will meet in the lobby at 5:50 p.m. PT. There is a path around the hotel where participants can walk together to connect and take in the Long Beach sunset.

	DAY 2 (THURSDAY, AUGUST 31 ST)
Time and Location	Activity
8:30 – 8:45 a.m. PT Seaview AB	Day 2 Welcome and Opener Speaker: LaSherra Ayala, Deputy Director, OFA
8:45 – 9:30 a.m. PT Seaview AB	Peer Inspirations
	 Lisa Washington-Thomas, Director, Division of TANF Technical Assistance and Special Initiatives (TTASI), OFA Participants will have the opportunity to: Meet with other states/territories and share their TANF experiences and lessons learned while working in the field. Volunteer for future peer mentorship/learning communities of practice on selected topics that will continue following the meeting.
9:35 – 11:45 a.m. PT	Ideation and Innovation in Action: Session 2
	 9:35 – 10:35 a.m. PT: Participants will divide into two groups based on their name tag sticker. The Green Group (green sticker) will focus on Topic 3 in Seaview AB and the Blue Group (blue sticker) will choose between Topic 4A in Shoreline A or Topic 4B in Shoreline B.
	• 10:35 – 10:45 a.m. PT: Break. Participants will swap rooms for topics. At the conclusion of the break, <u>facilitators will return to the same room and continue to present on the same topic.</u>
	• 10:45 – 11:45 a.m. PT: After the break, the Green Group (green sticker) will choose between Topic 4A in Shoreline A <u>or</u> Topic 4B in Shoreline B and the Blue Group (blue sticker) will focus on Topic 3 in Seaview AB.
Topic 3: Seaview AB	Topic 3: Overcoming Barriers to Program Participation
	TANF customers often face barriers to program participation, and many face co-occurring barriers. From lack of access to childcare, transportation, physical or mental health problems, substance use disorder, intimate partner violence and beyond, there is no uniform approach to supporting program participants in overcoming these barriers as they attempt to successfully participate in TANF

DAY 2 (THURSDAY, AUGUST 31ST)

Time and Location

Activity

programming, and ultimately overcome these barriers to employment. Dr. Kristin Abner (ICF) will provide an overview of strategies that range from identifying an individual's unique barriers to methods for successfully engaging clients in program participation. Meeting participants will have the opportunity to learn from one another about the various strategies TANF programs use to engage and support clients for long-term program participation and gainful employment.

Speakers:

- LaMonica Shelton, Region IV TANF Regional Program Manager, OFA (Green Group Facilitator)
- *Mika Smith*, Region IX TANF/NEW Regional Program Specialist, OFA (Blue Group Facilitator)
- *Dr. Kristin Abner*, Director, Workforce Innovation and Poverty Solutions, ICF

Topic 4A: Shoreline A

Topic 4A: Addressing Equity in TANF

With the President's call for equity within services, OFA has a renewed commitment to and refocus on improving the equitable administration of its programs for all eligible families, including the TANF program. Currently, many TANF program implementation policies and practices are based on racial stereotypes, inaccurate assumptions about safety net programs, and little understanding of the economic and social realities of the families that are served. OFA is dedicated to equity and is investing in "changing the narrative" that informs policy and attitudes about American families in the lowest economic strata.

Racial equity is crucial to supporting community economic well-being. Opening this session, Rebekah Sides (APHSA) will discuss the importance of elevating racial equity for improving both TANF program and client outcomes, and how purposeful program planning and policy development is essential to serving client families. Participants will have the opportunity to learn how other programs are addressing equity and share what steps their programs have taken to increase racial equity—from policy development to implementation—and the successes and challenges along the way.

Speakers:

- Julie Fong, Region X TANF Regional Program Manager, OFA (Blue Group Facilitator)
- *Kisha Russell*, Regions VI and VIII TANF Regional Program Manager, OFA (Green Group Facilitator)
- Rebekah Sides, Policy Associate, APHSA

	DAY 2 (THURSDAY, AUGUST 31 ST)
Time and Location	Activity
Topic 4B: Shoreline B	Topic 4B: Building Strategic Partnerships with Child Welfare
	As TANF programs and Child Welfare agencies work with similar populations, developing dynamic collaborations with one another helps support families without duplicating services. With the enhanced services provided through these partnerships, programs can collaborate to stabilize and keep families together before intensive interventions are needed. Yasmin Grewal-Kök (Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago) will provide an overview of the importance of strategic partnerships between TANF and Child Welfare programs in supporting whole families, including specific steps with which TANF agencies can engage Child Welfare programs. Participants will have the opportunity to share their own program strategies in implementing successful collaborations and discuss how these strategies support vulnerable families.
	 Speakers: Karen Beckerman, Regions V, VII & X TANF Regional Program Manager, Office of Family Assistance (Blue Group Facilitator) Eileen Friedman, Region III TANF Regional Program Manager, Office of Family Assistance (Green Group Facilitator) Yasmin Grewal-Kök, Policy Fellow, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago
11:50 – 12:00 p.m. PT Seaview AB	Day 2 Closeout
	 Ann Flagg, Director, Office of Family Assistance Conference Hall will remain open until 1:00 p.m. PT for

Meeting Resources

- 2023 National TANF Directors' Meeting Website
- POC/Location for Meeting Issues Pat Smith (psmith@blhtech.com) / OFA STAR Staff Office

networking.

Topic #1: Creating Outcomes-Based TANF Programs

Session Description

Outcome-based work involves services or activities that lead to observable and intended changes for participants. What does that mean for your program? Through a continuous cycle of program assessment and implementation, TANF programs can make more informed policy decisions and help create a more client-centered service delivery system that moves beyond collecting and reporting data for work participation rates. Dr. Teresa Derrick-Mills (Urban Institute) will provide an overview of how to develop outcomes focused on client success. Meeting participants will have the opportunity to share and learn from examples of using informal and formal assessment results to create and refine outcomes-based TANF programs.

- Green Group Facilitator: Patrick Heiman (Region X Program Specialist, OFA)
- Blue Group Facilitator: Rachel Johnson (Management and Program Analyst, OFA)
- **SME:** Teresa Derrick-Mills (Principal Research Associate, Urban Institute)
- Room Monitors: Sujeena Badal (BLH); Brian Holland (BLH)

How to Prepare for this Session Prior to the Meeting

Take some time ahead of this session to review the resources below and think about how your program focuses on outcomes through the program planning cycle. Specifically:

- What outcomes does your program measure? What outcomes are being considered?
- How have participants benefitted from an outcomes-driven program?
- What are successes you can share with others about your program's ability to connect outcomes to data?
- What do you want to learn from other programs?

Instructions

This session will begin with a brief introduction from the facilitator and a 20-minute flash learning session provided by the SME. The visual from the SME presentation can be found in the resources section below.

Following the flash learning session, you will have 10 minutes to consider your responses to the questions below.

Questions to Consider

- What do I need to learn about this topic that I don't already know?
- What do I hope OFA can do to support progress in my state/territory on this topic?
- What do I hope my agency can do to support progress in my state/territory on this topic?
- What do I hope I can do to support progress in my state/territory on this topic?

For 45 minutes, you will participate in a facilitated discussion around these questions; please share the ideas you wrote down during your individual ideation. You will be able to ask questions of the SMEs and of ACF staff on hand.

Enjoy a 15-minute break before the next session begins.

- Measuring What Matters: Shifting TANF to an Outcome-Based Model
- Measuring Employment Outcomes in TANF
- TANF Provisions in Debt Ceiling Agreement

Topic #2: Strengthening Data and Reporting

Session Description

"If you can't measure it, you can't improve it." This well-known adage reminds program administrators how strengthening data collection is tied to reporting and improved program outcomes. Dr. Lauren Banks Amos (Mathematica) will provide insight on how TANF programs can bolster data quality for reporting purposes. Meeting participants will have the opportunity to share their own examples of policies or initiatives related to ensuring quality data and accurate reporting.

- **Green Group and Blue Group Facilitator:** Shantel Mickens (Regions I & II TANF Regional Program Manager, OFA)
- SME: Lauren Banks Amos (Deputy Area Director, Mathematica)
- Room Monitors: Emilee Haselton (BLH); Lynn Moore Hill (BLH)

How to Prepare for this Session Prior to the Meeting

Take some time ahead of this session to review the resources below and think about how your program collects and uses data for reporting purposes. Specifically:

- How do you decide what data is necessary to collect for both internal and external reporting?
- How do you use reports to inform current program operations?
- Has your program ever faced a situation where you needed to collect additional data to strengthen your data quality and reporting? How did you address that?

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Enjoy a 15-minute break before the next session begins.

- Expanding Data Use and Evidence in the TANF Program: Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth Across the U.S.
- TANF Data Collaborative Pilot Profiles: A Collection of Data Analytics Projects from State and County TANF Agencies
- Expanding TANF Program Insights

Topic #3: Overcoming Barriers to Program Participation

Session Description

TANF customers often face barriers to program participation, and many face co-occurring barriers. From lack of access to childcare, transportation, physical or mental health problems, substance use disorder, intimate partner violence and beyond, there is no uniform approach to supporting program participants in overcoming these barriers as they attempt to successfully participate in TANF programming, and ultimately overcome these barriers to employment. Dr. Kristin Abner (ICF) will provide an overview of strategies that range from identifying an individual's unique barriers to methods for successfully engaging clients in program participation. Meeting participants will have the opportunity to learn from one another about the various strategies TANF programs use to engage and support clients for long-term program participation and gainful employment.

- Green Group Facilitator: LaMonica Shelton (Region IV TANF Regional Program Manager, OFA)
- Blue Group Facilitator: Mika Smith (Region IX TANF/NEW Regional Program Specialist, OFA)
- **SME:** Dr. Kristin Abner (Director, ICF)
- Room Monitor(s): Emilee Haselton (BLH); Brian Holland (BLH)

How to Prepare for this Session Prior to the Meeting

Take some time ahead of this session to review the resources below and think about how your program helps program participants overcome barriers to program participation. Specifically:

- What things do I need to learn about overcoming barriers to program participation that I don't already know?
- What barriers to program participation exist in my city and my state?
- What concrete steps can I take to dismantle these barriers?

Instructions

This session will begin with a brief introduction from the facilitator and a 20-minute flash learning session provided by the SME. The visual from the SME presentation can be found in the resources section below.

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Enjoy a 10-minute break before the next session begins.

- <u>Elevating Family Input in TANF and Child Support Programs: Resources for Program Staff,</u> Leaders, and Families
- Strategies for Improving Public Benefits Access and Retention
- Using Data To Advance Digital Skills: A State Playbook
- Exploring Remaining Needs and Opportunities for Improvement in Rural Communities: A
 Focus on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Programs
- Customer Service Experiences and Enrollment Difficulties Vary Widely across Safety Net Programs
- Improvements in Public Programs' Customer Service Experiences Could Better Meet Enrollees' Needs and Help Build Trust in Government
- Trauma: The Most Powerful Hidden Barrier to Employment
- Case Study of a Program Addressing Participants' Barriers Before Providing Training and Other Work-Related Activities: Rhode Island Works
- Advancing Promising Practices to Support Transportation Needs of Families in TANF

Topic #4A: Addressing Equity in TANF

Session Description

With the President's call for equity within services, OFA has a renewed commitment to and refocus on improving the equitable administration of its programs for all eligible families, including the TANF program. Currently, many TANF program implementation policies and practices are based on racial stereotypes, inaccurate assumptions about safety net programs, and little understanding of the economic and social realities of the families that are served. OFA is dedicated to equity and is investing in "changing the narrative" that informs policy and attitudes about American families in the lowest economic strata.

Racial equity is crucial to supporting community economic well-being. Opening this session, Rebekah Sides (APHSA) will discuss the importance of elevating racial equity for improving both TANF program and client outcomes, and how purposeful program planning and policy development is essential to serving client families. Participants will have the opportunity to learn how other programs are addressing equity and share what steps their programs have taken to increase racial equity—from policy development to implementation—and the successes and challenges along the way.

- Blue Group Facilitator: Julie Fong (Region IX TANF Regional Program Manager, OFA)
- Green Group Facilitator: Kisha Russell (Region VI and VIII TANF Regional Program Manager, OFA)
- SME: Rebekah Sides (Policy Associate, American Public Human Services Association)
- Room Monitor: Sujeena Badal (BLH)

How to Prepare for this Session Prior to the Meeting

Take some time ahead of this session to review the resources below and think about how your TANF program has elevated racial equity within your program policies and implementation. Specifically:

- What things do I need to learn about equity that I don't already know?
- What areas of service delivery most impact equity in my city and my state?
- How comfortable am I and my team in discussing matters of equity?
- How might I (or OFA) support TANF administrators in engaging in this discussion?
- What do I want to learn from other programs?

Instructions

This session will begin with a brief introduction from the facilitator and a 20-minute flash learning session provided by the SME. The visual from the SME presentation can be found in the resources section below.

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Questions to Consider

- What do I need to learn about this topic that I don't already know?
- What do I hope OFA can do to support progress in my state/territory on this topic?
- What do I hope my agency can do to support progress in my state/territory on this topic?
- What do I hope I can do to support progress in my state/territory on this topic?

For 45 minutes, you will participate in a facilitated discussion around the questions below; please share the ideas you wrote down during your individual ideation. You will be able to ask questions of the SMEs and of ACF staff on hand.

Enjoy a 10-minute break before the next session begins.

Resources

- Applying a Race Equity Lens: A Call to Action for Human Services
- Reducing Stigma To Increase Participation In Safety Net Programs
- Creating an Equitable, Resilient Workforce System: New Ideas for WIOA
- Championing Change: A Practitioner Guide for Leading Inclusive and Equity-Infused Rapid-Cycle Learning
- Assessing and Serving TANF Recipients with Disabilities
- Launching Urban's Financial Well-Being Data Hub: A New Approach to Improving Financial Security and Advancing Equity
- Mental Health Resources For Black, Indigenous, And People Of Color
- Behavioral Health Equity
- Advancing Race Equity in TANF via Training & Staff Development Video
- Advancing Race Equity in TANF via Training & Staff Development Toolkit
- Tips for Mobilizing Data to Advance Race Equity in TANF Tip Sheet
- Tips for Mobilizing Data to Advance Race Equity in TANF Video
- Threading Equity Throughout Child Welfare
- Why Process Matters for Achieving Equity Goals
- Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Through Coaching and Navigation: Insights from Convening Panelists
- Immigrant Families Faced Multiple Barriers to Safety Net Programs in 2021
- Understanding the Intersection Between TANF and Refugee Cash Assistance Services Serving Refugee Families through TANF: Lessons from the Field

Topic #4B: Building Strategic Partnerships with Child Welfare

Session Description

As TANF programs and Child Welfare agencies work with similar populations, developing dynamic collaborations with one another helps support families without duplicating services. With the enhanced services provided through these partnerships, programs can collaborate to stabilize and keep families together before intensive interventions are needed. Yasmin Grewal-Kök (Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago) will provide an overview of the importance of strategic partnerships between TANF and Child Welfare programs in supporting whole families, including specific steps with which TANF agencies can engage Child Welfare programs. Participants will have the opportunity to share their own program strategies in implementing successful collaborations and discuss how these strategies support vulnerable families.

- **Blue Group Facilitator:** Karen Beckerman (Regions V, VII & X TANF Regional Program Manager, OFA)
- Green Group Facilitator: Eileen Friedman (Region III TANF Regional Program Manager, OFA)
- SME: Yasmin Grewal-Kök (Policy Fellow, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago)
- Room Monitor: Lynn Moore Hill (BLH)

How to Prepare for this Session Prior to the Meeting

Take some time ahead of this session to review the resources below and think about the partnerships your TANF program has with Child Welfare agencies, either formal or informal. Specifically:

- What things do I need to learn about partnerships with child welfare services that I don't already know?
- Who (or what) are three partners in my city or state I can reach out to regarding this issue?
- What are the most critical issues facing TANF customers under 18 years of age in my city or state?

Instructions

This session will begin with a brief introduction from the facilitator and a 20-minute flash learning session provided by the SME. The visual from the SME presentation can be found in the resources section below.

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Questions to Consider

- What do I need to learn about this topic that I don't already know?
- What do I hope OFA can do to support progress in my state/territory on this topic?
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- What do I hope I can do to support progress in my state/territory on this topic?

For 45 minutes, you will participate in a facilitated discussion around these questions; please share the ideas you wrote down during your individual ideation. You will be able to ask questions of the SMEs and of ACF staff on hand.

Enjoy a 10-minute break before the next session begins.

- TANF & Child Welfare Collaboration: Preventative Strategies Focused on Family Well-Being
- Collaboration With TANF/Public Assistance
- Power in Partnerships: Prioritizing Lived Expertise in Child Welfare: Child Welfare Virtual Expo
- A Child-Focused Approach to TANF Reform
- Coordinating Services for TANF and Child Welfare Families
- <u>Elevating Family Input in TANF and Child Support Programs: Resources for Program Staff, Leaders, and Families</u>
- How are states building community-based pathways to prevention services through Family First?
- Kinship Care and the Child Welfare System
- State-level Data for Understanding Child Welfare in the United States