

Secondary School Diploma Attainment Rate: Working with State Education Agencies or Longitudinal Data System Organizations

As part of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023, all states are required to submit the *Secondary School Diploma or its Recognized Equivalent Attainment Rate* report annually, with the first report due on November 14, 2027. This outcome measure is intended to assist federal and state policymakers to better understand the effectiveness of TANF programs in promoting successful education credential attainment. The outcome is defined as the percentage of applicable TANF recipients and exiters who, during the reporting period, attained a secondary school diploma or a recognized equivalent credential.

TANF agencies may opt to collect the data necessary for this report from their state education agency or longitudinal data system. This document contains a series of **questions to begin a conversation with these data providers** about the possible use of their data.

Appendix A outlines how the rate is calculated, including eligibility criteria to determine who should be included in this reporting, and Appendix B shows the information that states are required to submit.

General Questions

- Please provide the name and contact information for a person who will work directly with the TANF agency on issues of data collection and extraction.
- Have you shared data with other social services agencies in the past?

Access and Permission

- What is the process for requesting access to educational data?
- How long does this process usually take?
- What legal or policy restrictions should we be aware of (e.g., FERPA, state-level privacy rules)?
- Do you provide de-identified student-level data, or only aggregate data?
- Are there any costs or fees associated with a data request?

Data Availability and Coverage

- What student-level or aggregate data on secondary enrollment do you collect and maintain? Are the following included:
 - High school graduation status (completed, dropout)

- Credential type (diploma, GED, certificate of completion)
- Post-secondary enrollment (if data is part of a longitudinal system)
- For what years do you have data available? How far back does your longitudinal dataset go, and how current is the most recent year of data?

Data Matching

- Does your system allow linking student records to other administrative data?
- What unique identifiers are available to facilitate matching TANF participants with education records?
- Does your system allow linking records with only name and date of birth?

Data Quality and Definitions

- How do you define and measure secondary school enrollment (e.g. official enrollment count date vs. daily attendance)?
- How is attainment defined? Do you track GED or alternative credential completions separately from diplomas?
- Are there any known data limitations with the enrollment or attainment data (missing data, underreporting for certain groups such as private schools)?
- How often are the data updated? Is there a data lag?

Questions on Data Extraction

- Once we have agreed on the data to be extracted, what would be the likely process of data extraction?
 - **Matching procedure:** The TANF agency will send a file with key fields for matching to the school records data. If only aggregate data is to be provided, the TANF agency will send two files, one including current TANF recipients and one with TANF exiters. What are the key fields that should be included?
 - **File format:** What would be the likely format of the extract file(s)? Are other formats possible? The TANF agency would ideally like to receive the data in the following format: [csv, .xls, .dbf, ASCII].
 - **Frequency:** We are likely to request data extracts [*fill in frequency, such as semi-annually*]. Would you be able to extract data for the TANF agency on this schedule?
 - **Timing of requests:** How much time will it take you to process the data and provide the requested information to us once a request has been made?

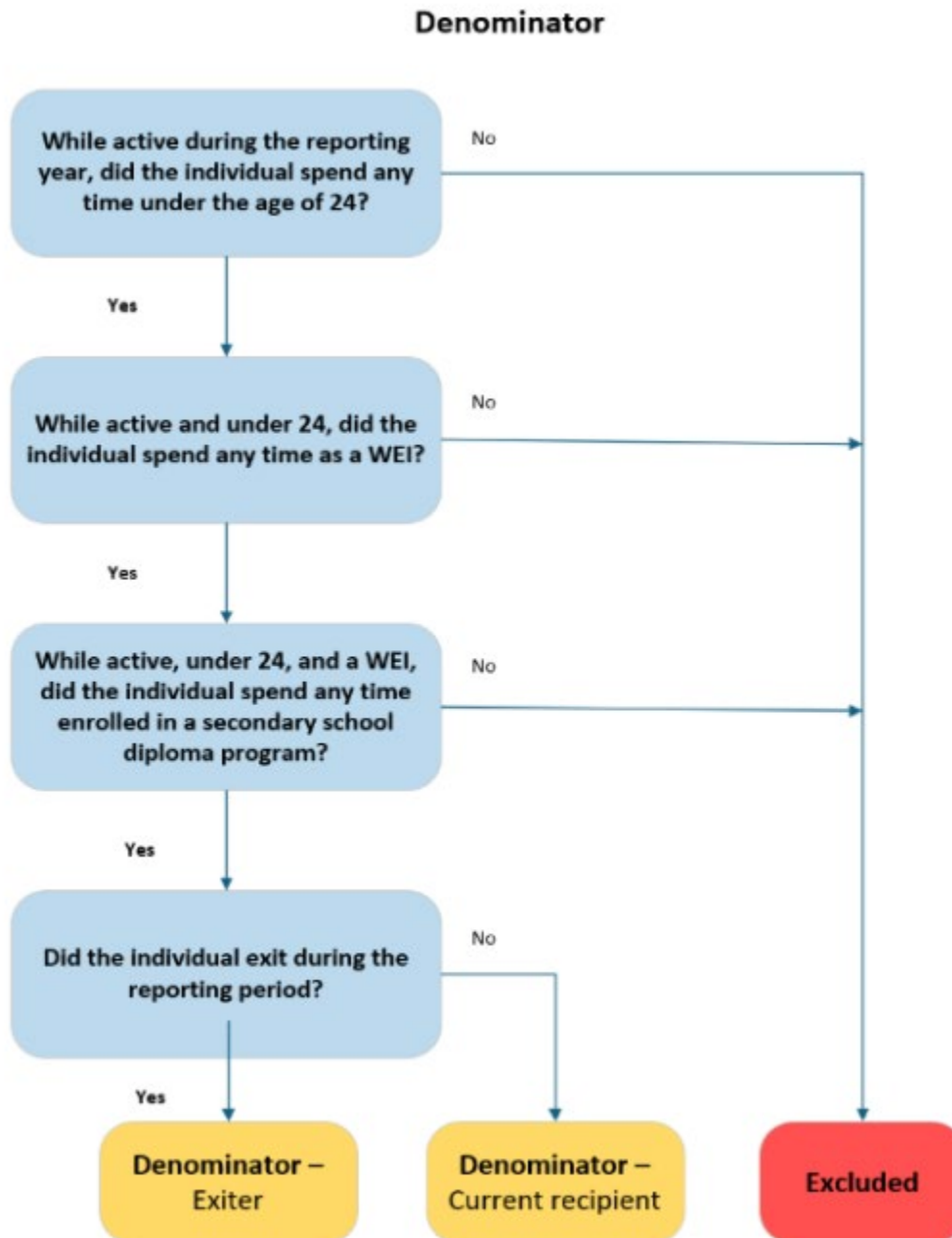
Questions on Secure Data Transfer

Note: If data received from school records will include PII, secure data transfer should be discussed with agency.

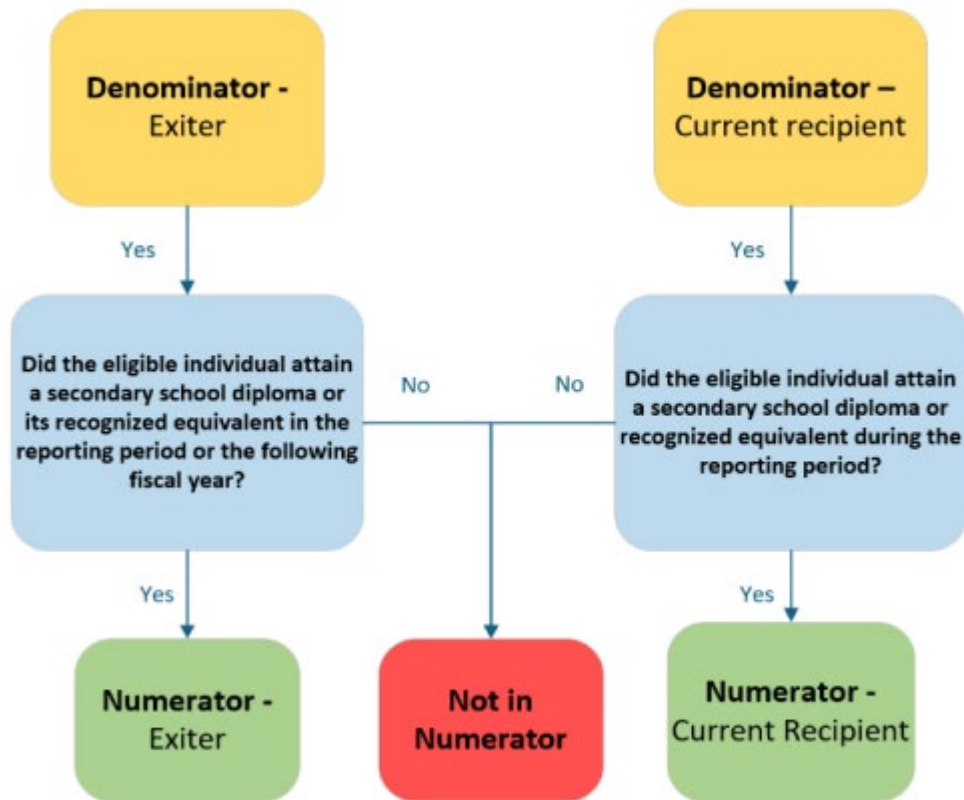
- **Secure data transmission:** The TANF agency uses an application called *[fill in preferred application, such as Box]* as our preferred method of secure data transmission. Do you have a preference on how data should be transferred?
- **Documentation:** What metadata or documentation is available (data dictionaries or codebooks)?

Appendix A – Rate Calculation

This chart includes the steps used to determine whether a work-eligible individual (WEI) should or should not be counted towards the Secondary School Diploma or its Recognized Equivalent Attainment Rate.



Numerator



Appendix B – Information to Be Submitted

For the secondary education outcomes report, TANF agencies are to complete the form below in the [TANF Data Portal \(TDP\)](#). (Note that an accompanying description of the data sources used is also required – item 9 in the form.)

B	C	D	E
TANF Secondary School Diploma or its Recognized Equivalent Attainment Rate			
1. Reporting period covered:	mm/yyyy - mm/yyyy		
2. Current recipient - denominator	Number of eligible individuals, current recipients who did not exit		
3. Exiter - denominator	Number of eligible individuals who exited during reporting period		
4. Current recipient - numerator	Number of eligible individuals, current recipients who did not exit, who attained diploma in reporting period		
5. Exiter - numerator	Number of eligible individuals who exited during reporting period, who attained diploma within 1 year of exit		
6. Current recipient - calculated rate	Current recipient secondary school attainment rate	#DIV/0!	
7. Exiter - calculated rate	Exiter secondary school attainment rate	#DIV/0!	
8. Total calculated rate	Combined secondary school attainment rate	#DIV/0!	
9. Data Sources: Attach a description of the data sources.			