

By: Senator(s) Hickman

To: Public Health and Welfare

SENATE BILL NO. 2331

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 43-1-7 AND 43-17-5, MISSISSIPPI CODE
2 OF 1972, TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT THAT FAMILIES MUST PARTICIPATE
3 IN DETERMINING PATERNITY OR OBTAINING CHILD SUPPORT AS A CONDITION
4 OF ELIGIBILITY FOR TANF BENEFITS OR FOOD STAMPS; AND FOR RELATED
5 PURPOSES.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 43-1-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
8 amended as follows:

9 43-1-7. (1) The Department of Human Services may establish
10 family resource centers to help families who are receiving or are
11 eligible to receive assistance from government agencies to
12 facilitate their access to services and resources that will lead
13 to increased family independence.

14 (2) The department shall carry out an intense public
15 information campaign to inform low-income workers, and especially
16 public assistance recipients, of the availability of and
17 application rules for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC),
18 in order to maximize the refund of federal income tax withheld
19 from those persons. The information campaign shall include



20 publishing and circulating bulletins or notices to recipients of
21 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits and other
22 public assistance that publicize and explain the EITC and the
23 criteria for family eligibility for the EITC. The department also
24 shall carry out an intense information campaign to inform
25 employers of the availability of and the criteria for eligibility
26 for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), which offers employers
27 a credit against their federal tax liability for hiring people
28 from certain target groups, including TANF recipients, and to
29 inform employers of the availability of and the criteria for
30 eligibility for the state income tax credit for employers who hire
31 persons receiving TANF benefits as authorized under Section
32 27-7-22.1.

33 (3) The department shall establish and maintain a statewide
34 incoming wide area telephone service hot line for the purpose of
35 reporting suspected cases of welfare eligibility fraud, food stamp
36 fraud and Medicaid fraud. The department is authorized, subject
37 to the extent of appropriations available, to offer financial
38 incentives to individuals for reporting such suspected cases of
39 public assistance fraud.

40 * * *

41 **SECTION 2.** Section 43-17-5, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
42 amended as follows:

43 43-17-5. (1) The amount of Temporary Assistance for Needy
44 Families (TANF) benefits which may be granted for any dependent



45 child and a needy caretaker relative shall be determined by the
46 county department with due regard to the resources and necessary
47 expenditures of the family and the conditions existing in each
48 case, and in accordance with the rules and regulations made by the
49 Department of Human Services which shall not be less than the
50 Standard of Need in effect for 1988, and shall be sufficient when
51 added to all other income (except that any income specified in the
52 federal Social Security Act, as amended, may be disregarded) and
53 support available to the child to provide such child with a
54 reasonable subsistence compatible with decency and health. The
55 first family member in the dependent child's budget may receive an
56 amount not to exceed Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00) per month; the
57 second family member in the dependent child's budget may receive
58 an amount not to exceed Thirty-six Dollars (\$36.00) per month; and
59 each additional family member in the dependent child's budget an
60 amount not to exceed Twenty-four Dollars (\$24.00) per month. The
61 maximum for any individual family member in the dependent child's
62 budget may be exceeded for foster or medical care or in cases of
63 children with an intellectual disability or a physical disability.
64 TANF benefits granted shall be specifically limited only (a) to
65 children existing or conceived at the time the caretaker relative
66 initially applies and qualifies for such assistance, unless this
67 limitation is specifically waived by the department, or (b) to a
68 child born following a twelve-consecutive-month period of
69 discontinued benefits by the caretaker relative.



70 (2) TANF benefits in Mississippi shall be provided to the
71 recipient family by an online electronic benefits transfer system.

72 (3) The Department of Human Services shall deny TANF
73 benefits to the following categories of individuals, except for
74 individuals and families specifically exempt or excluded for good
75 cause as allowed by federal statute or regulation:

76 (a) Families without a minor child residing with the
77 custodial parent or other adult caretaker relative of the child;

78 (b) Families which include an adult who has received
79 TANF assistance for sixty (60) months after the commencement of
80 the Mississippi TANF program, whether or not such period of time
81 is consecutive;

82 (c) Families not assigning to the state any rights a
83 family member may have, on behalf of the family member or of any
84 other person for whom the family member has applied for or is
85 receiving such assistance, to support from any other person, as
86 required by law;

87 (d) * * *[deleted];

88 (e) Any individual who has not attained eighteen (18)
89 years of age, is not married to the head of household, has a minor
90 child at least twelve (12) weeks of age in his or her care, and
91 has not successfully completed a high school education or its
92 equivalent, if such individual does not participate in educational
93 activities directed toward the attainment of a high school diploma



94 or its equivalent, or an alternative educational or training
95 program approved by the department;

96 (f) Any individual who has not attained eighteen (18)
97 years of age, is not married, has a minor child in his or her
98 care, and does not reside in a place or residence maintained by a
99 parent, legal guardian or other adult relative or the individual
100 as such parent's, guardian's or adult relative's own home;

101 (g) Any minor child who has been, or is expected by a
102 parent or other caretaker relative of the child to be, absent from
103 the home for a period of more than thirty (30) days;

104 (h) Any individual who is a parent or other caretaker
105 relative of a minor child who fails to notify the department of
106 the absence of the minor child from the home for the thirty-day
107 period specified in paragraph (g), by the end of the five-day
108 period that begins with the date that it becomes clear to the
109 individual that the minor child will be absent for the thirty-day
110 period;

111 (i) Any individual who fails to comply with the
112 provisions of the Employability Development Plan signed by the
113 individual which prescribe those activities designed to help the
114 individual become and remain employed, or to participate
115 satisfactorily in the assigned work activity, as authorized under
116 subsection (6) (c) and (d), or who does not engage in applicant job
117 search activities within the thirty-day period for TANF
118 application approval after receiving the advice and consultation



119 of eligibility workers and/or caseworkers of the department
120 providing a detailed description of available job search venues in
121 the individual's county of residence or the surrounding counties;

122 (j) A parent or caretaker relative who has not engaged
123 in an allowable work activity once the department determines the
124 parent or caretaker relative is ready to engage in work, or once
125 the parent or caretaker relative has received TANF assistance
126 under the program for twenty-four (24) months, whether or not
127 consecutive, whichever is earlier;

128 (k) Any individual who is fleeing to avoid prosecution,
129 or custody or confinement after conviction, under the laws of the
130 jurisdiction from which the individual flees, for a crime, or an
131 attempt to commit a crime, which is a felony under the laws of the
132 place from which the individual flees, or who is violating a
133 condition of probation or parole imposed under federal or state
134 law;

135 (l) Aliens who are not qualified under federal law;

136 (m) For a period of ten (10) years following
137 conviction, individuals convicted in federal or state court of
138 having made a fraudulent statement or representation with respect
139 to the individual's place of residence in order to receive TANF,
140 food stamps or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) assistance under
141 Title XVI or Title XIX simultaneously from two (2) or more states;

142 (n) Individuals who are recipients of federal
143 Supplemental Security Income (SSI) assistance; and



144 (o) Individuals who are eighteen (18) years of age or
145 older who are not in compliance with the drug testing and
146 substance use disorder treatment requirements of Section 43-17-6.

147 (4) (a) Any person who is otherwise eligible for TANF
148 benefits, including custodial and noncustodial parents, shall be
149 required to attend school and meet the monthly attendance
150 requirement as provided in this subsection if all of the following
151 apply:

152 (i) The person is under age twenty (20);

153 (ii) The person has not graduated from a public or
154 private high school or obtained a High School Equivalency Diploma
155 equivalent;

156 (iii) The person is physically able to attend
157 school and is not excused from attending school; and

158 (iv) If the person is a parent or caretaker
159 relative with whom a dependent child is living, child care is
160 available for the child.

161 The monthly attendance requirement under this subsection
162 shall be attendance at the school in which the person is enrolled
163 for each day during a month that the school conducts classes in
164 which the person is enrolled, with not more than two (2) absences
165 during the month for reasons other than the reasons listed in
166 paragraph (e)(iv) of this subsection. Persons who fail to meet
167 participation requirements in this subsection shall be subject to
168 sanctions as provided in paragraph (f) of this subsection.



169 (b) As used in this subsection, "school" means any one
170 (1) of the following:

171 (i) A school as defined in Section 37-13-91(2);

172 (ii) A vocational, technical and adult education
173 program; or

174 (iii) A course of study meeting the standards
175 established by the State Department of Education for the granting
176 of a declaration of equivalency of high school graduation.

177 (c) If any compulsory-school-age child, as defined in
178 Section 37-13-91(2), to which TANF eligibility requirements apply
179 is not in compliance with the compulsory school attendance
180 requirements of Section 37-13-91(6), the superintendent of schools
181 of the school district in which the child is enrolled or eligible
182 to attend shall notify the county department of human services of
183 the child's noncompliance. The Department of Human Services shall
184 review school attendance information as provided under this
185 paragraph at all initial eligibility determinations and upon
186 subsequent report of unsatisfactory attendance.

187 (d) The signature of a person on an application for
188 TANF benefits constitutes permission for the release of school
189 attendance records for that person or for any child residing with
190 that person. The department shall request information from the
191 child's school district about the child's attendance in the school
192 district's most recently completed semester of attendance. If
193 information about the child's previous school attendance is not



194 available or cannot be verified, the department shall require the
195 child to meet the monthly attendance requirement for one (1)
196 semester or until the information is obtained. The department
197 shall use the attendance information provided by a school district
198 to verify attendance for a child. The department shall review
199 with the parent or caretaker relative a child's claim that he or
200 she has a good cause for not attending school.

201 A school district shall provide information to the department
202 about the attendance of a child who is enrolled in a public school
203 in the district within five (5) working days of the receipt of a
204 written request for that information from the department. The
205 school district shall define how many hours of attendance count as
206 a full day and shall provide that information, upon request, to
207 the department. In reporting attendance, the school district may
208 add partial days' absence together to constitute a full day's
209 absence.

210 If a school district fails to provide to the department the
211 information about the school attendance of any child within
212 fifteen (15) working days after a written request, the department
213 shall notify the Department of Audit within three (3) working days
214 of the school district's failure to comply with that requirement.
215 The Department of Audit shall begin audit proceedings within five
216 (5) working days of notification by the Department of Human
217 Services to determine the school district's compliance with the
218 requirements of this subsection (4). If the Department of Audit



219 finds that the school district is not in compliance with the
220 requirements of this subsection, the school district shall be
221 penalized as follows: The Department of Audit shall notify the
222 State Department of Education of the school district's
223 noncompliance, and the Department of Education shall reduce the
224 calculation of the school district's average daily attendance
225 (ADA) that is used to determine the allocation of Mississippi
226 Adequate Education Program funds by the number of children for
227 which the district has failed to provide to the Department of
228 Human Services the required information about the school
229 attendance of those children. The reduction in the calculation of
230 the school district's ADA under this paragraph shall be effective
231 for a period of one (1) year.

232 (e) A child who is required to attend school to meet
233 the requirements under this subsection shall comply except when
234 there is good cause, which shall be demonstrated by any of the
235 following circumstances:

236 (i) The minor parent is the caretaker of a child
237 less than twelve (12) weeks old; or

238 (ii) The department determines that child care
239 services are necessary for the minor parent to attend school and
240 there is no child care available; or

241 (iii) The child is prohibited by the school
242 district from attending school and an expulsion is pending. This
243 exemption no longer applies once the teenager has been expelled;



244 however, a teenager who has been expelled and is making
245 satisfactory progress towards obtaining a High School Equivalency
246 Diploma equivalent shall be eligible for TANF benefits; or

247 (iv) The child failed to attend school for one or
248 more of the following reasons:

249 1. Illness, injury or incapacity of the child
250 or the minor parent's child;

251 2. Court-required appearances or temporary
252 incarceration;

253 3. Medical or dental appointments for the
254 child or minor parent's child;

255 4. Death of a close relative;

256 5. Observance of a religious holiday;

257 6. Family emergency;

258 7. Breakdown in transportation;

259 8. Suspension; or

260 9. Any other circumstance beyond the control
261 of the child, as defined in regulations of the department.

262 (f) Upon determination that a child has failed without
263 good cause to attend school as required, the department shall
264 provide written notice to the parent or caretaker relative
265 (whoever is the primary recipient of the TANF benefits) that
266 specifies:

267 (i) That the family will be sanctioned in the next
268 possible payment month because the child who is required to attend



269 school has failed to meet the attendance requirement of this
270 subsection;

271 (ii) The beginning date of the sanction, and the
272 child to whom the sanction applies;

273 (iii) The right of the child's parents or
274 caretaker relative (whoever is the primary recipient of the TANF
275 benefits) to request a fair hearing under this subsection.

276 The child's parent or caretaker relative (whoever is the
277 primary recipient of the TANF benefits) may request a fair hearing
278 on the department's determination that the child has not been
279 attending school. If the child's parents or caretaker relative
280 does not request a fair hearing under this subsection, or if,
281 after a fair hearing has been held, the hearing officer finds that
282 the child without good cause has failed to meet the monthly
283 attendance requirement, the department shall discontinue or deny
284 TANF benefits to the child thirteen (13) years old, or older, in
285 the next possible payment month. The department shall discontinue
286 or deny twenty-five percent (25%) of the family grant when a child
287 six (6) through twelve (12) years of age without good cause has
288 failed to meet the monthly attendance requirement. Both the child
289 and family sanction may apply when children in both age groups
290 fail to meet the attendance requirement without good cause. A
291 sanction applied under this subsection shall be effective for one
292 (1) month for each month that the child failed to meet the monthly
293 attendance requirement. In the case of a dropout, the sanction



294 shall remain in force until the parent or caretaker relative
295 provides written proof from the school district that the child has
296 reenrolled and met the monthly attendance requirement for one (1)
297 calendar month. Any month in which school is in session for at
298 least ten (10) days during the month may be used to meet the
299 attendance requirement under this subsection. This includes
300 attendance at summer school. The sanction shall be removed the
301 next possible payment month.

302 (5) All parents or caretaker relatives shall have their
303 dependent children receive vaccinations and booster vaccinations
304 against those diseases specified by the State Health Officer under
305 Section 41-23-37 in accordance with the vaccination and booster
306 vaccination schedule prescribed by the State Health Officer for
307 children of that age, in order for the parents or caretaker
308 relatives to be eligible or remain eligible to receive TANF
309 benefits. Proof of having received such vaccinations and booster
310 vaccinations shall be given by presenting the certificates of
311 vaccination issued by any health care provider licensed to
312 administer vaccinations, and submitted on forms specified by the
313 State Board of Health. If the parents without good cause do not
314 have their dependent children receive the vaccinations and booster
315 vaccinations as required by this subsection and they fail to
316 comply after thirty (30) days' notice, the department shall
317 sanction the family's TANF benefits by twenty-five percent (25%)



318 for the next payment month and each subsequent payment month until
319 the requirements of this subsection are met.

320 (6) (a) If the parent or caretaker relative applying for
321 TANF assistance is work eligible, as determined by the Department
322 of Human Services, the person shall be required to engage in an
323 allowable work activity once the department determines the parent
324 or caretaker relative is determined work eligible, or once the
325 parent or caretaker relative has received TANF assistance under
326 the program for twenty-four (24) months, whether or not
327 consecutive, whichever is earlier. No TANF benefits shall be
328 given to any person to whom this section applies who fails without
329 good cause to comply with the Employability Development Plan
330 prepared by the department for the person, or who has refused to
331 accept a referral or offer of employment, training or education in
332 which he or she is able to engage, subject to the penalties
333 prescribed in paragraph (e) of this subsection. A person shall be
334 deemed to have refused to accept a referral or offer of
335 employment, training or education if he or she:

336 (i) Willfully fails to report for an interview
337 with respect to employment when requested to do so by the
338 department; or

339 (ii) Willfully fails to report to the department
340 the result of a referral to employment; or



341 (iii) Willfully fails to report for allowable work
342 activities as prescribed in paragraphs (c) and (d) of this
343 subsection.

344 (b) The Department of Human Services shall operate a
345 statewide work program for TANF recipients to provide work
346 activities and supportive services to enable families to become
347 self-sufficient and improve their competitive position in the
348 workforce in accordance with the requirements of the federal
349 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of
350 1996 (Public Law 104-193), as amended, and the regulations
351 promulgated thereunder, and the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005
352 (Public Law 109-171), as amended. Within sixty (60) days after
353 the initial application for TANF benefits, the TANF recipient must
354 participate in a job search skills training workshop or a job
355 readiness program, which shall include resume writing, job search
356 skills, employability skills and, if available at no charge, the
357 General Aptitude Test Battery or its equivalent. All adults who
358 are not specifically exempt shall be referred by the department
359 for allowable work activities. An adult may be exempt from the
360 mandatory work activity requirement for the following reasons:

361 (i) Incapacity;

362 (ii) Temporary illness or injury, verified by
363 physician's certificate;

364 (iii) Is in the third trimester of pregnancy, and
365 there are complications verified by the certificate of a



366 physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or any other
367 licensed health care professional practicing under a protocol with
368 a licensed physician;

369 (iv) Caretaker of a child under twelve (12)
370 months, for not more than twelve (12) months of the sixty-month
371 maximum benefit period;

372 (v) Caretaker of an ill or incapacitated person,
373 as verified by physician's certificate;

374 (vi) Age, if over sixty (60) or under eighteen
375 (18) years of age;

376 (vii) Receiving treatment for substance abuse, if
377 the person is in compliance with the substance abuse treatment
378 plan;

379 (viii) In a two-parent family, the caretaker of a
380 severely disabled child, as verified by a physician's certificate;
381 or

382 (ix) History of having been a victim of domestic
383 violence, which has been reported as required by state law and is
384 substantiated by police reports or court records, and being at
385 risk of further domestic violence, shall be exempt for a period as
386 deemed necessary by the department but not to exceed a total of
387 twelve (12) months, which need not be consecutive, in the
388 sixty-month maximum benefit period. For the purposes of this
389 subparagraph (ix), "domestic violence" means that an individual
390 has been subjected to:



- 391 1. Physical acts that resulted in, or
392 threatened to result in, physical injury to the individual;
393 2. Sexual abuse;
394 3. Sexual activity involving a dependent
395 child;
396 4. Being forced as the caretaker relative of
397 a dependent child to engage in nonconsensual sexual acts or
398 activities;
399 5. Threats of, or attempts at, physical or
400 sexual abuse;
401 6. Mental abuse; or
402 7. Neglect or deprivation of medical care.

403 (c) For all families, all adults who are not
404 specifically exempt shall be required to participate in work
405 activities for at least the minimum average number of hours per
406 week specified by federal law or regulation, not fewer than twenty
407 (20) hours per week (thirty-five (35) hours per week for
408 two-parent families) of which are attributable to the following
409 allowable work activities:

- 410 (i) Unsubsidized employment;
411 (ii) Subsidized private employment;
412 (iii) Subsidized public employment;
413 (iv) Work experience (including work associated
414 with the refurbishing of publicly assisted housing), if sufficient
415 private employment is not available;



416 (v) On-the-job training;

417 (vi) Job search and job readiness assistance
418 consistent with federal TANF regulations;

419 (vii) Community service programs;

420 (viii) Vocational educational training (not to
421 exceed twelve (12) months with respect to any individual);

422 (ix) The provision of child care services to an
423 individual who is participating in a community service program;

424 (x) Satisfactory attendance at high school or in a
425 course of study leading to a high school equivalency certificate,
426 for heads of household under age twenty (20) who have not
427 completed high school or received such certificate;

428 (xi) Education directly related to employment, for
429 heads of household under age twenty (20) who have not completed
430 high school or received such equivalency certificate.

431 (d) The following are allowable work activities which
432 may be attributable to hours in excess of the minimum specified in
433 paragraph (c) of this subsection:

434 (i) Job skills training directly related to
435 employment;

436 (ii) Education directly related to employment for
437 individuals who have not completed high school or received a high
438 school equivalency certificate;

439 (iii) Satisfactory attendance at high school or in
440 a course of study leading to a high school equivalency, for



441 individuals who have not completed high school or received such
442 equivalency certificate;

443 (iv) Job search and job readiness assistance
444 consistent with federal TANF regulations.

445 (e) If any adult or caretaker relative refuses to
446 participate in allowable work activity as required under this
447 subsection (6), the following full family TANF benefit penalty
448 will apply, subject to due process to include notification,
449 conciliation and a hearing if requested by the recipient:

450 (i) For the first violation, the department shall
451 terminate the TANF assistance otherwise payable to the family for
452 a two-month period or until the person has complied with the
453 required work activity, whichever is longer;

454 (ii) For the second violation, the department
455 shall terminate the TANF assistance otherwise payable to the
456 family for a six-month period or until the person has complied
457 with the required work activity, whichever is longer;

458 (iii) For the third violation, the department
459 shall terminate the TANF assistance otherwise payable to the
460 family for a twelve-month period or until the person has complied
461 with the required work activity, whichever is longer;

462 (iv) For the fourth violation, the person shall be
463 permanently disqualified.

464 For a two-parent family, unless prohibited by state or
465 federal law, Medicaid assistance shall be terminated only for the



466 person whose failure to participate in allowable work activity
467 caused the family's TANF assistance to be sanctioned under this
468 paragraph (e), unless an individual is pregnant, but shall not be
469 terminated for any other person in the family who is meeting that
470 person's applicable work requirement or who is not required to
471 work. Minor children shall continue to be eligible for Medicaid
472 benefits regardless of the disqualification of their parent or
473 caretaker relative for TANF assistance under this subsection (6),
474 unless prohibited by state or federal law.

475 (f) Any person enrolled in a two-year or four-year
476 college program who meets the eligibility requirements to receive
477 TANF benefits, and who is meeting the applicable work requirements
478 and all other applicable requirements of the TANF program, shall
479 continue to be eligible for TANF benefits while enrolled in the
480 college program for as long as the person meets the requirements
481 of the TANF program, unless prohibited by federal law.

482 (g) No adult in a work activity required under this
483 subsection (6) shall be employed or assigned (i) when any other
484 individual is on layoff from the same or any substantially
485 equivalent job within six (6) months before the date of the TANF
486 recipient's employment or assignment; or (ii) if the employer has
487 terminated the employment of any regular employee or otherwise
488 caused an involuntary reduction of its workforce in order to fill
489 the vacancy so created with an adult receiving TANF assistance.
490 The Mississippi Department of Employment Security, established



491 under Section 71-5-101, shall appoint one or more impartial
492 hearing officers to hear and decide claims by employees of
493 violations of this paragraph (g). The hearing officer shall hear
494 all the evidence with respect to any claim made hereunder and such
495 additional evidence as he may require and shall make a
496 determination and the reason therefor. The claimant shall be
497 promptly notified of the decision of the hearing officer and the
498 reason therefor. Within ten (10) days after the decision of the
499 hearing officer has become final, any party aggrieved thereby may
500 secure judicial review thereof by commencing an action, in the
501 circuit court of the county in which the claimant resides, against
502 the department for the review of such decision, in which action
503 any other party to the proceeding before the hearing officer shall
504 be made a defendant. Any such appeal shall be on the record which
505 shall be certified to the court by the department in the manner
506 provided in Section 71-5-531, and the jurisdiction of the court
507 shall be confined to questions of law which shall render its
508 decision as provided in that section.

509 (7) The Department of Human Services may provide child care
510 for eligible participants who require such care so that they may
511 accept employment or remain employed. The department may also
512 provide child care for those participating in the TANF program
513 when it is determined that they are satisfactorily involved in
514 education, training or other allowable work activities. The
515 department may contract with Head Start agencies to provide child



516 care services to TANF recipients. The department may also arrange
517 for child care by use of contract or vouchers, provide vouchers in
518 advance to a caretaker relative, reimburse a child care provider,
519 or use any other arrangement deemed appropriate by the department,
520 and may establish different reimbursement rates for child care
521 services depending on the category of the facility or home. Any
522 center-based or group home child care facility under this
523 subsection shall be licensed by the State Department of Health
524 pursuant to law. When child care is being provided in the child's
525 own home, in the home of a relative of the child, or in any other
526 unlicensed setting, the provision of such child care may be
527 monitored on a random basis by the Department of Human Services or
528 the State Department of Health. Transitional child care
529 assistance may be continued if it is necessary for parents to
530 maintain employment once support has ended, unless prohibited
531 under state or federal law. Transitional child care assistance
532 may be provided for up to twenty-four (24) months after the last
533 month during which the family was eligible for TANF assistance, if
534 federal funds are available for such child care assistance.

535 (8) The Department of Human Services may provide
536 transportation or provide reasonable reimbursement for
537 transportation expenses that are necessary for individuals to be
538 able to participate in allowable work activity under the TANF
539 program.



540 (9) Medicaid assistance shall be provided to a family of
541 TANF program participants for up to twenty-four (24) consecutive
542 calendar months following the month in which the participating
543 family would be ineligible for TANF benefits because of increased
544 income, expiration of earned income disregards, or increased hours
545 of employment of the caretaker relative; however, Medicaid
546 assistance for more than twelve (12) months may be provided only
547 if a federal waiver is obtained to provide such assistance for
548 more than twelve (12) months and federal and state funds are
549 available to provide such assistance.

550 (10) The department shall require applicants for and
551 recipients of public assistance from the department to sign a
552 personal responsibility contract that will require the applicant
553 or recipient to acknowledge his or her responsibilities to the
554 state.

555 (11) The department shall enter into an agreement with the
556 State Personnel Board and other state agencies that will allow
557 those TANF participants who qualify for vacant jobs within state
558 agencies to be placed in state jobs. State agencies participating
559 in the TANF work program shall receive any and all benefits
560 received by employers in the private sector for hiring TANF
561 recipients. This subsection (11) shall be effective only if the
562 state obtains any necessary federal waiver or approval and if
563 federal funds are available therefor. Not later than September 1,
564 2021, the department shall prepare a report, which shall be



565 provided to the Chairmen of the House and Senate Public Health
566 Committees and to any other member of the Legislature upon
567 request, on the history, status, outcomes and effectiveness of the
568 agreements required under this subsection.

569 (12) Any unspent TANF funds remaining from the prior fiscal
570 year may be expended for any TANF allowable activities.

571 (13) The Mississippi Department of Human Services shall
572 provide TANF applicants information and referral to programs that
573 provide information about birth control, prenatal health care,
574 abstinence education, marriage education, family preservation and
575 fatherhood. Not later than September 1, 2021, the department
576 shall prepare a report, which shall be provided to the Chairmen of
577 the House and Senate Public Health Committees and to any other
578 member of the Legislature upon request, on the history, status,
579 outcomes and effectiveness of the information and referral
580 requirements under this subsection.

581 (14) No new TANF program requirement or restriction
582 affecting a person's eligibility for TANF assistance, or allowable
583 work activity, which is not mandated by federal law or regulation
584 may be implemented by the Department of Human Services after July
585 1, 2004, unless such is specifically authorized by an amendment to
586 this section by the Legislature.

587 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
588 and after July 1, 2023.

