NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Jim Pillen, Governor

November 1, 2026

The Honorable Brian Hardin
Members of the Health & Human Services Committee
Nebraska Legislature
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509

Subject: TANF-Expenditures Allocated Pursuant to PRWORA

Dear Chairman Hardin:

Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-3144, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is required to issue a report to the Legislature on the current and anticipated expenditures for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program funds allocated pursuant to the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA). This report is based on data and expenditures from State Fiscal Year (FY) 2026.

Sincerely,



Barbara Lacina
Director, Office of Economic Assistance

Attachment

Department of Health and Human Services
Report

NEBRASKA
Good Life. Great Mission.

Division of Children and Family Services:

Office of Economic Assistance

TANF-Expenditures Allocated Pursuant to PRWORA

November 2026

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-3144

Overview of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Programs and Services

TANF is a federally administered program that helps low-income families with children achieve self-sufficiency. Nebraska's TANF cash assistance program is called Aid to Dependent Children (ADC), which provides direct payments to low-income families. Cash assistance is also provided to families through emergency assistance payments to cover unexpected costs and overcome barriers that other Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) services do not cover. Nebraska is also allowed the flexibility to fund services that are designed to address one or more of the following broad purposes:

1. Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;
2. End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
3. Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and
4. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

In FY26, Nebraska used a portion of TANF funds towards administration in the amount of $3,413,879 and information systems maintenance in the amount of $215,127, as these are required expenses to manage the program. The table below displays the TANF expenditures for FY26.

TANF Expenditures State Fiscal Year 2026	
Current Programs and Services	**Expenses**
Administration	$3,413,879
Alternative Response Supports for Child Welfare Families	$57,531
Cash Assistance [ADC]	$12,448,517
Child Advocacy Centers	$7,646,942
Child Care Development Fund	$14,409,787
Child Welfare Services	$15,408,262
Court Appointed Special Advocate Services	$349,224
Crisis Pregnancy Program	$2,927,606
Emergency Assistance	$155,488
Food Access and Services	$9,698,932
Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood	$1,825,517
Home Visiting Program	$4,101,079
Information Systems	$215,127
Jobs for America's Graduates	$6,776,651
Pregnant Youth Services – Cedars	$282,389
SNAP Employment and Training	$16,792
Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) Community Response Program	$1,530,362
SSBG Mommy & Me Program	$782,758
Work Activities [Employment First]	$9,737,468
Total	**$91,784,311**

Estimated Expenditures for Federal Fiscal Years 2027-2029			
Future Programs and Services	**FFY 2027**	**FFY 2028**	**FFY 2029**
Administration	$4,000,000	$4,000,000	$4,000,000
Alternative Response Supports for Child Welfare Families	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000
Cash Assistance [ADC]	$14,500,000	$14,500,000	$14,500,000
Child Advocacy Centers	$8,000,000	$0	$0
Child Care Development Fund	$14,409,787	$16,988,170	$16,988,170
Child Welfare CFS Prevention Services/Warmline	$6,000,000	$6,000,000	$0
Child Welfare Services	$10,100,000	$10,100,000	$10,100,000
Crisis Pregnancy Program	$2,950,000	$2,950,000	$2,950,000
Court Appointed Special Advocate Services	$500,000	$0	$0
Emergency Assistance	$140,000	$140,000	$140,000
Food Access and Services	$7,137,118	$0	$0
Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood	$2,000,000	$2,000,000	$2,000,000
Home Visiting Program	$4,500,000	$4,500,000	$4,500,000
Information Systems	$310,000	$310,000	$310,000
Jobs for America's Graduates	$6,512,282	$0	$0
Pregnant Youth Services - Cedars	$1,000,000	$0	$0
SNAP Employment and Training	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000
SSBG Community Response Program	$1,700,000	$0	$0
SSBG Mommy & Me Program	$878,383	$0	$0
Work Activities [Employment First]	$7,500,000	$7,500,000	$7,500,000
Total	**$92,462,570**	**$69,313,170**	**$63,313,170**

The following information outlines the programs and services supported in Nebraska by the TANF Block Grant and their impact on Nebraskan families. Due to subrecipient reporting requirements, the information below identifies either the number of households or individuals served by programs or services for FY26.

Alternative Response Supports for Child Welfare Families

Purpose 1: Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives Purpose 2: End dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage by supporting parents' job and career advancement activities	
Number of Households Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
185	$57,531

Families involved in Alternative Response services receive support services such as shelter, clothing, household supplies, or transportation with TANF funding. Alternative Response participants require individual problem-solving, and for unique situations, a purchase is made by DHHS for a family. This service helps the family achieve self-sufficiency by providing concrete supports that address a specific need and reduce the likelihood of a formal investigation. The services are reported as the number of

households served rather than persons served because the services vary based on the household's needs. This service is provided within DHHS's Division of Children and Family Services (CFS).

Child Advocacy Centers (CACs)

This service is approved based on the exception contained in Section 404(a)(2) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA). Section 404(a)(2) of PRWORA allows a State to use TANF "in any manner that the State was authorized to use amounts received under part A or F, as such parts were in effect on September 30, 1995."	
Number of Persons Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
8,117	$7,646,942

TANF funds are appropriated for services provided through CACs to families and for coordination activities of the state chapter of CAC as defined in 34 U.S.C. 20302. CACs provide support for child abuse investigations and significant life stressors such as poverty, exposure to violence or substance abuse, teen parenting, or military families with one or both parents in service. The Nebraska Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers provides technical assistance and coordinating support to CACs across the state. CAC services are provided at no cost to the family and include medical exams, forensic interviews, and mental health referrals that families would likely be unable to afford or access if this program was unavailable. There are seven CACs and the Nebraska Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers that have entered into agreements with DHHS. Awards are issued to the following providers:

- Bridge of Hope;
- CAPStone;
- Faith Regional;
- Family Advocacy Network;
- First Light;
- Lincoln/Lancaster County;
- Project Harmony; and
- Nebraska Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers.

The funding appropriated for the CAC programs was allocated through FY27. No additional funds were appropriated beyond this biennium budget period. Due to the reduction in the TANF balance, no additional funds will be available to support this program after FY27.

Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)

States may transfer up to 30% of their TANF block grant to CCDF.	
Number of Persons Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
12,525	$14,409,787

CCDF administers Child Care Subsidy, which provides child care assistance to low-income families who are working or participating in education and training. Child Care Subsidy currently serves children under the age of 13 or children with special needs through age 18. DHHS administers this program through the Office of Economic Assistance (OEA) and assists families with becoming more economically mobile by ensuring quality child care environments are available to their children. TANF funds are used to pay for Child Care Subsidy services to families specifically.

Child Welfare Services

Purpose 1: Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives Purpose 4: Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families	
Number of Households Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
2,039	$15,408,262

Community-based services are provided to families involved in or at risk of entering the child welfare system. Services, including parenting classes, case management, assessment of family circumstances, and counseling, are designed to strengthen and stabilize families so that children may remain in or return to their homes. These services are not available on a private-pay basis, and all provide support to help families become more self-sufficient outside the child welfare system. The services are reported as the number of households served rather than persons served because the services vary based on the household's needs. CFS administers this program within DHHS.

Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Services

Purpose 3: Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies	
Number of Children Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
1,802 (includes all funding sources)	$349,224

CASA services are provided by screened, trained, and highly qualified community volunteers who advocate in court for the best interests of children who have experienced abuse or neglect. Volunteers stay with each case until it is closed, and the child is in a safe, permanent home. They get to know the child and work with legal and child welfare professionals, educators, and service providers to ensure judges have all the information they need to make well-informed decisions. Volunteers provide information to the court through a report with recommendations about the child's placement, visitation, education, and service needs. TANF funds accounted for approximately 7.5% of all funding sources used for CASA services. The TANF funds and other funding sources support staff who manage advocacy services and recruit, train, and supervise CASA volunteers. The CASA agreement was renewed with the Nebraska CASA Association for the performance period of October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026. According to the association, children with a CASA volunteer are half as likely to spend time in long-term foster care, and fewer than 10% of children with a CASA volunteer re-enter the foster care system. This service is not a private-pay service, and the cost savings of engaging CASA with a family help them reduce the time involved with foster care and child welfare systems that they otherwise would not have access to.

The funding appropriated for the CASA program was allocated through FY27. No additional funds were appropriated beyond this biennium budget period. Due to the reduction in the TANF balance, no additional funds will be available to support this program after FY27.

Crisis Pregnancy

Purpose 4: Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families	
Number of Persons Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
4,997	$2,927,606

The Crisis Pregnancy Program utilizes TANF funds for the following core services:

- Activities that strengthen families and promote healthy relationships and education for two-parent and co-parenting families;
- Parenting education classes for parents to enhance their parenting skills; and
- Mentoring with parents, which includes education and counseling to support and maintain families. Topics covered include prenatal care and development, co-parenting, healthy relationships, budgeting for a family, maternity leave, childbirth, newborn care, postpartum depression, sleep strategy, car seat training, home babyproofing, child vaccinations, and daycare.

A subaward agreement with the Nebraska Parent Care Network (NPCN) was in place for a two-year performance period beginning July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026. The agreement was renewed beginning July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. NPCN awards funds to multiple agencies that administer the program throughout the state.

Food Access and Services

Purpose 1: Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives	
Number of Households Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
319,940 (duplicated households)	$9,698,932

TANF grants are provided to eligible agencies that distribute food in 10 or more counties in Nebraska and qualify for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). These agencies coordinate with food pantries, schools, churches, emergency shelters, and other nonprofit organizations to supply emergency and supplemental food to needy children and families throughout Nebraska. The eligible agencies can collect food and funds from individuals, businesses, foundations, government, and other organizations to make the biggest impact in serving the high need of food insecurity. Individually providing clients money for food would not have the same value or impact on as many individuals, as the eligible agency services provide because of the bulk they can maintain at a lower cost than individual purchasers. The following agencies were awarded TANF funds to provide this service:

- Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Omaha, Inc.;
- Food Bank for the Heartland; and
- Food Bank of Lincoln.

The funding appropriated for the Food Access and Services programs was allocated through FY27. No additional funds were appropriated beyond this biennium budget period. Due to the reduction in the TANF balance, no additional funds will be available to support this program after FY27.

Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF)

Purpose 4: Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families	
Number of Persons Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
493	$1,825,517

The Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF) Initiative services aim to strengthen positive father-child engagement, promote healthy relationships and marriages, and improve family economic

stability for noncustodial fathers. This is a no-cost program for participants that provides teaching and coaching to fathers to help set goals and follow a trauma-informed approach to develop parenting skills and reconnect with their children. Increasing direct cash assistance would not provide participants with the opportunity to learn this skill, as these services are not available through a private-pay method. The agreement awarding TANF funds was renewed with Lutheran Family Services, Inc., from January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026.

Home Visiting Program

Purpose 3: Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies	
Number of Households Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
1,185	$4,101,079

The Nebraska-Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (N-MIECHV) Network Program, through DHHS's Division of Public Health, utilizes the Healthy Families America home-visiting model, which is evidence-based and family-centered. N-MIECHV programs offer support for pregnant or parenting families of children from birth to age five who may struggle with significant life stressors such as poverty, exposure to violence or substance abuse, teen parenting, or military families with one or both parents in service. Because these services are not available for private pay, the program helps families achieve self-sufficiency in a way that increased cash assistance would not. TANF funds are subawarded to the following providers to provide this service:

- Central District Health Department;
- Four Corners District Health Department;
- Lincoln-Lancaster Co Health Department;
- Loup Basin Public Health District;
- Nebraska Children's Home Society – North Platte;
- Nebraska Children's Home Society – Omaha;
- Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership;
- Panhandle Public Health District;
- Public Health Solutions;
- South Heartland District Health Department;
- Southeast District Health Department;
- Two Rivers Public Health District;
- Visiting Nurse Association; and
- Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department.

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)

Purpose 3: Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies	
Number of Students Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
5,200	$6,776,651

JAG services assist youth in developing skill sets and overcoming hurdles to set them up for success in the classroom and the workplace. Students eligible for the JAG program must have at least five of the barriers to success, as recognized by JAG national standards, which make them more at risk for not graduating from high school, pursuing a postsecondary education, and/or having a successful attachment to the labor force. The United Way of the Midlands has an agreement administered through

the Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL), in partnership with DHHS, to provide JAG services. Through partnerships with community and business partners, participants develop real-world skills that make self-sufficiency achievable. Because this is a partnership-based program, JAG provides opportunities for participants that would otherwise not be available to help them achieve economic mobility or self-sufficiency.

DHHS has supported the JAG program through TANF funding for several years. However, due to the reduction in the TANF balance, no additional TANF funding is available to support this program after FY27. NDOL has identified a funding source that will enable the JAG program to continue receiving support starting FY28.

Pregnant Youth Services – Cedars

Purpose 1: Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or the homes of relatives	
Number of Persons Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
19 teen parents and 11 children	$282,389

Pregnant Youth Services are provided through Cedars Youth Services, Inc., with TANF funds to support pregnant and parenting teens with income below 200% of the federal poverty level. TANF funds were awarded to Cedars beginning July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. The services provided engage and support the development of skills necessary for self-sufficiency. Additionally, the services help teens establish the knowledge and abilities to access resources throughout their community while strengthening parenting skills and building a strong foundation for their families. Services focus on:

- Child screening and assessment tools;
- Childcare strategies;
- Employment readiness skills;
- Financial literacy and budgeting;
- Health and nutrition;
- Parenting curricula to improve parent and child outcomes; and
- Parenting skills and child development.

The funding appropriated for the Pregnant Youth Services program was allocated through FY27. No additional funds were appropriated beyond this biennium budget period. Due to the reduction in the TANF balance, no additional funds will be available to support this program after FY27.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E&T)

Purpose 2: End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage	
Number of Persons Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
27 individuals	$16,792

The SNAP Next Step E&T Program helps SNAP participants gain skills, training, or work experience that moves them towards self-sufficiency. Through SNAP E&T, participants have access to training and

supportive services to help them enter or move up in the workforce. This program helps reduce barriers to work by providing support services to increase their ability to obtain regular employment and achieve economic mobility. SNAP E&T is administered through the OEA within DHHS.

Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) Community Response Program

TANF funds transferred to SSBG, take on the federal requirements for SSBG. Activities are no longer required to meet TANF federal requirements. Services are available to families with income below 200% of the federal poverty level.	
Number of Persons Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
7,284 Children; 4,519 Adults	$1,530,362

States can transfer up to 10% of their annual TANF block grant to SSBG. The Community Response Program is funded by the SSBG transfer and is designed to reduce unnecessary involvement with the child welfare system through a community-based Central Navigator. This program develops and coordinates an array of local resources to identify, screen, and provide short-term support to qualified families when no other public or private money is available. The program aims to strengthen family resilience, increase self-sufficiency, and improve overall life outcomes by offering a range of formal and informal services, such as child care and neighborhood groups. The Nebraska Children & Families Foundation (NCFF) provides these services through a subaward with DHHS.

DHHS has been able to support the Community Response Program for several years. However, due to the reduction in the TANF balance, no additional funds will be available to support this program after FY27.

SSBG Mommy and Me Program (Mom and Parenting Program, Project Mother Child, & Women are Sacred)

TANF funds transferred to SSBG, take on the federal requirements for SSBG. Activities are no longer required to meet TANF federal requirements. Services are available to families with income below 200% of the federal poverty level.	
Number of Persons Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
38 children; 56 Adults	$782,758

States can transfer up to 10% of their annual TANF block grant to SSBG. Two different Mommy and Me Parenting programs are funded by this SSBG transfer, providing services for expectant mothers and their children in a residential drug treatment facility. Both programs provide comprehensive treatment that focuses on overcoming addiction and enhancing a mother's readiness to change. These programs focus on relapse prevention, community reintegration, spiritual assessments and counseling, family counseling, and aftercare planning services. DHHS has subaward agreements with St. Monica's and The Bridge, Inc., to provide services to participants at no cost, helping them work toward self-sufficiency while maintaining their parenting bond with their children.

DHHS has been able to support the Mommy and Me Programs for several years. However, due to the reduction in the TANF balance, no additional funds will be available to support this program after FY27.

Work Activities [Employment First]

Purpose 2: End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage	
Number of Persons Served:	Expenditure of Program in SFY 2026:
3,559	$9,737,468

Parents receiving ADC who are able to work must participate in Employment First (EF), Nebraska's federally required mandatory work program. EF assists individuals with long-term economic stability through employment. It emphasizes education and training to meet work requirements, making it a key tool for enhancing the job prospects of low-income families. Equus Workforce Solutions provides EF case management, while OEA monitors and evaluates the program's outcomes. The Nebraska EF program will begin participating in the Federal Fiscal Responsibility Act 2023 TANF Pilot beginning October 1, 2026. The six-year pilot aims to improve TANF outcomes by shifting the focus from the current "work participation rate" (WPR) measure, which tracks hours of work, to measuring meaningful outcomes such as increased employment and earnings, reduced dependency, and improved family stability.