NEW JERSEY STATE PLAN for TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE for NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

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INTRODUCTION

New Jersey, pursuant to the statutory requirements of the Work First New Jersey Act, Public Law 1997, c. 13, c. 14, c. 37, and c. 38, established the Work First New Jersey Program (WFNJ). WFNJ, which is New Jersey's assistance component of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, builds and expands upon the foundation of the basic principles set forth in the Federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, Public Law 104-193.

The WFNJ/TANF assistance program is designed specifically to emphasize personal responsibility, instill dignity, promote self-sufficiency and pride through work, and strongly reinforce all parents' responsibilities for their child(ren) through strict enforcement of child support requirements. WFNJ/TANF clearly recognizes that both parents, whether or not they are the custodial caretakers of their child(ren), share fully and equally in the responsibilities for the financial support of the child(ren), as well as all of the developmental aspects which occur throughout childhood. The primary responsibility of all adults is the support of both themselves and their families.

Aside from certain categories of Federally-exempt individuals, assistance benefits provided to adults under the WFNJ/TANF program are limited to a lifetime maximum of 60 cumulative months, and are considered a temporary cash subsidy to bridge the gap while individuals seek and obtain self-sufficiency through bona fide unsubsidized employment.

In addition to the provision of assistance benefits, the WFNJ program has been modified pursuant to final Federal Regulations at 45 CFR Part 260, et seq. to provide preventative and supportive services to keep families from entering/re-entering the welfare system. These include, but are not limited to, diversion from cash assistance, and pre- and post-TANF supportive services, such as transportation, child care, and case management services.

PUBLIC PROCESS

During the preparation of the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2015 renewal of the New Jersey TANF State Plan, the Department of Human Services solicited comments from the public and private sectors. The draft State Plan renewal was made available to agencies such as the County Human Services Directors, County Human Services Advisory Councils, County Welfare Agency (CWA) staff, New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault, New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women, the Anti-Poverty Network, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) Agencies, Legal Services of New Jersey, and Advocates for Children of New Jersey. The draft plan was also shared with the New Jersey Departments of Labor and Workforce Development, Health, Community Affairs, Education, and Children and Families.

Prior to finalization, the draft plan was posted to the Division of Family Development's website for a 45-day public comment period. No comments from the public were received.

PROGRAM GOALS

In accordance with the PRWORA and the final Federal Regulations at 45 CFR Part 260, et seq., New Jersey's WFNJ/TANF program is being operated in a manner designed to:

1) Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives or legal guardians standing "in loco parentis;"

2) End the dependence of needy parents on government assistance by promoting job preparation, work and marriage, and by establishing paternity and child support orders, obtaining health insurance coverage and enforcing and modifying support obligations;

3) Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies;

4) Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families;

5) Promote responsible parenting;

6) Address the work readiness needs of welfare recipients and noncustodial parents;

7) Divert able-bodied work ready families from the traditional welfare system by providing intervention and support services to help ensure the economic independence of these families;

8) Provide a variety of post-TANF supportive services to former welfare families to help them maintain their independence from the welfare cash assistance program and improve their family circumstances;

9) Identify cash assistance recipients with a past or present history of family violence and provide a waiver of program requirements and access to appropriate supportive services so the family can move toward self-sufficiency in a safe and enriching environment;

10) Provide work activity and support services to noncustodial parents so they can better contribute to the support of their child(ren);

11) Prevent and reduce instances of child abuse and neglect by offering comprehensive in-home visitation and nutritional education services; and

12) Increase the health and well-being of children and young adults reared within the welfare system.

The primary objectives of the WFNJ/TANF program are the following:

- To provide the channel by which temporary cash assistance and other services are made available;
- To emphasize the responsibility of individuals to support themselves and their families through wages and child support;
- To actively engage the cooperation and assistance of private/public employers to maximize available employment opportunities for WFNJ/TANF participants;
- To establish and implement, through the concept of mutual obligation, an Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) for all adult WFNJ/TANF recipients, and teen parents, which is directed at moving recipients off welfare into employment;
- To maximize the monetary support of noncustodial parents to help ensure the ongoing self-sufficiency of WFNJ/TANF participants;
- To address the work readiness needs of individuals who have not completed a high school education, or its equivalent, through the provision of alternative work programs combining education and job experience (work study);
- To provide assistance to welfare recipients to address problems of drug and alcohol abuse through assessment and appropriate treatment to enable these recipients to resolve their problem(s) and become self-sufficient through work;
- To report periodically on the WFNJ program, and its impact on clients, in order to enhance future planning and program development efforts;
- To conduct training of WFNJ/TANF agency staff in the dynamics of family violence and provide assistance to WFNJ/TANF recipients to address issues of family violence through assessments that include a safety and service plan which leads to work or participation in a work activity, to the extent possible;
- To coordinate and maximize the use of all public, private and community resources available through all levels of government and the private sector, to provide necessary services/supports to ensure that cash assistance recipients and noncustodial parents secure and keep a job, and do not cycle back onto public assistance;
- To provide a variety of viable choices and options to meet WFNJ/TANF participants' diverse child care needs during their work activities;
- To provide for a smarter and more efficient administration of all elements of the service delivery system through enhanced child support enforcement, delivery of

benefits via an electronic benefit program (EBT), and structuring the child care service delivery system by maintaining a single entity to coordinate and administer the provision of all child care services;

- To provide a non-assistance cash payment as well as supportive services through the Early Employment Initiative (EEI) to individuals who apply for cash assistance benefits. These otherwise eligible individuals will be diverted from receiving cash assistance if they are successful in securing employment prior to the case being granted cash assistance benefits;

- To provide special assistance and services to unemployable welfare recipients in their applications for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) to speed their acceptance into the SSI program;

- To provide working families with an income below 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) with short-term emergency services to prevent homelessness, stabilize housing, and prevent movement into the welfare cash assistance program;

- To provide enhanced housing assistance services to non-employable WFNJ cash assistance recipients who have utilized all housing benefits available; and

- To provide post-TANF supports such as child care and medical assistance to help ensure that working families do not return to the cash assistance welfare program.

THE WFNJ/TANF PROGRAM

1. Overview

The Department of Human Services' Division of Family Development (DHS/DFD) is the agency responsible for supervising the WFNJ/TANF program at the State level. WFNJ/TANF cash assistance and social services are administered at the local level by the 21 county agencies, under DFD supervision, and through various contracts with vendors for certain services. The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) is responsible for WFNJ employment-directed and workforce development activities. Employment-directed and workforce development activities are administered at the local One-Stop Career Centers (OSCC) under LWD supervision. By integrating the WFNJ/TANF population into the OSCC system, opportunities for self-sufficiency, employment retention and career advancement are maximized.

New Jersey's WFNJ/TANF program provides cash assistance to eligible needy families with children. In addition to cash assistance benefits, WFNJ provides a variety of supports to enable families to obtain and/or retain employment. These supports include, but are not limited to: medical assistance through NJ FamilyCare/Medicaid, child care, transportation, work activity allowances, substance abuse treatment, parenting

and nutritional education services, assistance to past or present survivors of family violence, and diversion through the EEI.

The program provides parents with job preparation, work experience, training, and support services to enable them to leave the cash assistance program and become self-sufficient. WFNJ also provides support services to income-eligible working families. These services are provided with Federal TANF funds, State Maintenance of Effort (MOE) dollars, and/or State funds, which are not designated as MOE. Services are provided either directly, or through contracts for services, and are available to working families with incomes up to 250 percent of the FPL.

Families applying for WFNJ cash assistance must comply with certain requirements in order to apply for WFNJ benefits. They must cooperate with child support requirements in order to establish paternity, and obtain, modify, or enforce child support and medical support orders, and, they must assign all rights to child and spousal support to the county agency. Once the family cooperates with child support, the family must agree to cooperate with work requirements. The initial step in the WFNJ work requirement process is registering for work with the OSCC, unless the individual is deferred from the work requirement. Once the family has demonstrated compliance with these requirements, the application process for WFNJ benefits may proceed. As part of the application process, families must:

- Be income and resource eligible,
- Provide all necessary documentation,
- Sign an Agreement to repay benefits in the event of receipt of income or resources,
- Obtain and provide a Social Security Number for all members of the assistance unit, and
- Comply with personal identification requirements, which may employ the use of systems technology processes for the detection of fraud.

When a family fails to comply with any of these requirements at the time of application or redetermination, the entire assistance unit is ineligible for WFNJ benefits. Families determined ineligible as a result of any of the requirements listed may reapply at any time and have their eligibility determined, provided they comply with all requirements.

An integral part of the ongoing self-sufficiency process for cash assistance recipients is the development of an Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP). This plan serves to identify the mutual obligations of both the participant and the county agency. Included in the plan are steps to be taken by the participant to achieve self-sufficiency, identification of any barriers to employment, and identification of any support services that the agency

will provide to assist the family's activities that are geared toward self-sufficiency. The IRP is a living document that is updated each time a participant enters a new activity or at the time of redetermination, in order that changes in family circumstances may be addressed, including the need for supportive services. WFNJ/TANF cases are re-determined for eligibility at least every 12 months.

Otherwise TANF-eligible adults with a recent work history may be directed to participate in the Early Employment Initiative while their application is being processed, thereby being diverted from cash assistance if employment is secured. Other adult WFNJ family members may be assigned to job search as their first work activity based on individual history or need. While in job search, the participant's skills are further assessed to determine the next appropriate activity. It may be determined that certain participants require basic education remediation, such as English as a Second Language or Adult Basic Education. Others may benefit from vocational education. Since WFNJ is a time-limited benefit, it is important to ensure that clients participate in appropriate work activities that will help them progress toward self-sufficiency.

For those families that find employment and leave WFNJ cash assistance, time-limited supportive services such as child care, transportation assistance, NJ FamilyCare, continued substance abuse treatment, and post-TANF Case Management Counseling Services are available to assist families in retaining employment. Other programs available to assist employed post-TANF recipients include the Career Advancement Voucher Program (CAVP) and the Supplemental Work Support (SWS) program.

For those families facing significant barriers to employment, cash assistance may be extended beyond the 60-month time limit through use of the 20 percent federal extreme hardship exemption provision via State defined exemptions or participation in the Supportive Assistance for Individuals and Families (SAIF) program.

WFNJ/TANF cash assistance is provided to eligible recipients through the Families First electronic benefit transfer (EBT) system. Administrative operations, such as the Families First EBT benefit issuance system, computer matching, and the Family Assistance Management Information System (FAMIS) automated eligibility system, are funded with Federal TANF funds and/or State MOE dollars.

2. WFNJ/TANF Cash Assistance

A. Who is Eligible for Cash Assistance?

An "eligible assistance unit" is comprised of those individuals who are living together and functioning as one economic unit and whose relationship is based upon a blood and/or legal relationship. A legal relationship is one that is created through marriage, adoption, or legal guardianship procedures. Thus, the assistance unit includes the parent(s), related parent person(s), or legal guardian(s), along with his, her, or their children within the age limit specified under the "Eligible Needy Families" section.

Children must be living with a relative or legal guardian standing "in loco parentis" in order to be eligible for WFNJ/TANF.

A parent can be either biological or adoptive. Under New Jersey Statute, relatives or persons who adopt children become legally related to such adopted children to the same extent that they are related to the biological children of the adopting parent.

The term "related parent-person" includes, but is not limited to, grandparents, siblings, great-grandparents, uncles or aunts, nephews or nieces, great-great grandparents, great-uncles or aunts, first cousins, great-great-great-grandparents, great-great uncles or aunts, or first cousins once removed. Spouses of parent-persons may also be considered parent-persons, even though death or divorce has terminated the marriage. The establishment of relationship to the child is required.

A legal guardian is defined at N.J.S.A. 9:3-38, N.J.S.A. 3B:12-12, N.J.S.A. 3B:12-23, N.J.S.A. 3B:12-73d, N.J.S.A. 3B:12A-1 to-6, and N.J.S.A. 30:4C-84 to-88, and serves as a parent-person who has "the right to exercise continuing control over the person or property or both of a child which includes any specific right of control over an aspect of the child's upbringing, pursuant to a court order." The legal guardian parent-person stands "in loco parentis."

Both needy and non-needy parent-persons may apply for assistance and services on behalf of needy children in their care through the Kinship Care Subsidy Program.

Eligible Needy Families

Under WFNJ/TANF, cash assistance is provided to needy and otherwise eligible one-parent families with a child(ren) under the age of 18, or under the age of 19 who is a full-time student in secondary school or in an equivalent level of vocational or technical training, and is reasonably expected to complete the program before reaching age 19. WFNJ assistance is also provided to families with children up to the age of 21, if they are enrolled in a special education program. If the special education child is 18 or older and is the only child in the family, WFNJ is provided through a separate State program and the expenditures are claimed as MOE.

In addition, New Jersey will maintain a "State Only" WFNJ Program for two-parent households. Determination of non-financial and financial eligibility will remain consistent with Federal TANF and WFNJ criteria. Benefits provided to families under this WFNJ two-parent program will be provided solely with State funding.

Minor Parent Requirements

In addition to complying with all of the nonfinancial eligibility requirements listed below, applicants/recipients who are less than 18 years of age, never married, and the biological parent of a dependent child(ren), and who are caring for the dependent child(ren) must, as a condition of eligibility, reside in a home maintained by, and have

benefits paid to, the individual's parent, legal guardian, or other adult relative, and regularly attend a high school or equivalency program of study, or engage in a work activity if the individual has completed secondary education.

WFNJ/TANF allows the following exceptions to the minor parent requirements:

- An alternate adult-supervised living arrangement is required for a minor parent if, the parent, legal guardian, or other adult relative poses a threat to the emotional health or physical safety of the minor parent or the minor parent's child, or is unable to allow the minor parent or minor parent's child to reside in that adult's home.

- An alternative educational or training program for a minor parent is permitted if, based upon an assessment of the person's ability and aptitude, it is determined that the minor parent lacks a reasonable prospect of being able to successfully complete the academic requirements of a high school or equivalency program of study.

Failure of the minor parent to cooperate with the nonfinancial eligibility requirements and the minor parent provisions renders only the minor parent and the minor parent's child ineligible for WFNJ/TANF cash assistance, not the entire assistance unit with whom the minor parent resides.

Non-citizen Eligibility

Only those persons who are either United States citizens or eligible non-citizens shall be eligible for WFNJ/TANF benefits. "Eligible non-citizen" means an individual defined in the provisions of section 431 of the PRWORA, as amended (8 U.S.C. 1641). Eligible non-citizens will be eligible for WFNJ/TANF benefits to the maximum extent permitted by Federal law.

The following individuals who were present in the United States prior to August 22, 1996, are considered to be qualified aliens: legal permanent residents, refugees, asylees, conditional entrants, non-citizens paroled into the United States for at least one year, non-citizens whose deportation has been withheld, battered non-citizen spouses, battered non-citizen children, non-citizen parents of battered children, non-citizen children of battered parents who fit certain criteria, and Cuban/Haitian entrants.

Non-citizens who entered the United States on or after August 22, 1996 are barred from receiving WFNJ/TANF for their first five years in the United States with the following exceptions: veterans and persons on active duty in the U.S. military, their spouses or unmarried dependent children, refugees, asylees, non-citizens whose deportation is being withheld, Cuban or Haitian entrants, and certain Amerasian immigrants.

Pursuant to section 431 of the PRWORA, as amended (8 U.S.C. 1641), certain non-citizens who are survivors of family violence are considered eligible for WFNJ/TANF benefits when the non-citizen (or parent of a battered child, or children of battered

parents) has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty in the United States by the spouse or parent of the non-citizen. If the individual responsible for the battery or cruelty continues to reside in the same household or family assistance unit as the individual who was subjected to such battery or cruelty, then the non-citizen shall be ineligible for benefits. During the five-year period in which these survivors of family violence (and their families, as described above) are prohibited from receiving Federal TANF benefits, New Jersey will provide services to these survivors of family violence with State MOE funding.

Ineligibility of Pregnant Women with No Other Children

WFNJ/TANF does not provide cash assistance to pregnant women with no other children. These individuals are served under the State-funded General Assistance component of WFNJ and the State funds are not claimed as MOE.

Assistance Unit: Ineligible Individuals

Individuals who are not eligible for assistance include:

- Non-needy parent-persons or guardians,
- SSI recipients,
- Persons who have legal custody of a child(ren) but who are unable to prove a permanent legal or blood relationship to such child,
- Individuals who do not meet the citizenship and alien requirements,
- Persons incarcerated in correctional facilities,
- Persons fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody or confinement after conviction, for a crime or attempt to commit a crime which is a felony or high misdemeanor, or who are in violation of probation or parole,
- A person found, on or after August 22, 1996, to have willfully and knowingly fraudulently misrepresented his or her residence in order to obtain means-tested, public assistance benefits in two or more states or jurisdictions is ineligible for 10 years from the date of conviction in a Federal or State court,
- Persons who, after July 1, 1997, intentionally make false or misleading statements or misrepresent, conceal or withhold facts for the purpose of receiving benefits are ineligible for a period of six months for the first violation, 12 months for the second violation, and permanently for the third violation,
- A parent or needy parent-person who fails to notify the county agency of the absence of a minor child from the home at the end of the five-day period that begins

with the date that it becomes clear to the parent or parent-person that the minor child will be absent for more than 180 consecutive days shall be ineligible for benefits for a period of three months, and

- Adult recipients who voluntarily quit a job without good cause are ineligible for TANF cash assistance.

  - If the adult recipient is a member of a family that is applying for TANF cash assistance, the adult who quit the job is ineligible for TANF for a period of 90 days from the date of the quit. The adult may apply for TANF cash assistance on behalf of all other family members.

  - If the adult recipient is a member of an active TANF case at the time of the quit, the entire assistance unit is ineligible for TANF cash assistance benefits for a period of two months from the date the county agency makes the determination that the recipient quit the job.

B. WFNJ/TANF Cash Assistance Non-Financial Eligibility Requirements

WFNJ/TANF applicants/recipients, in addition to having to be either U.S. citizens or eligible aliens and residents of New Jersey, must:

- Cooperate with child support enforcement requirements in establishing paternity and obtaining, modifying and enforcing child support and medical support orders,
- Assign all rights to child and spousal support to the county agency,
- Cooperate with work requirements,
- Make application for any other assistance for which members of the assistance unit may be eligible,
- Be income and resource eligible, including the deeming of income and resources as appropriate,
- Provide all necessary documentation,
- Sign an Agreement to Repay benefits in the event of receipt of income or resources,
- Satisfy any sanction or repayment obligation incurred pursuant to any Federal or State law governing public assistance,
- Obtain and/or provide Social Security Numbers for all members of the assistance unit, and
- Comply with personal identification requirements, which shall employ the use of sophisticated technology processes for the detection of fraud.

In accordance with WFNJ statute, New Jersey limits an adult recipient's receipt of cash assistance to a lifetime limit of 60 cumulative months, whether or not consecutive. At the end of the adult recipient's 60 cumulative months of receipt of cash assistance, the assistance unit shall no longer be eligible to receive WFNJ/TANF. Individuals under age 18 are subject to the 60-month time limit as long as they remain in the same

household in which the 60 months of assistance was received. In the event that an individual received cash assistance as a dependent child and later becomes a member of another adult's assistance unit or an adult head of household, the time during which such dependent child had previously received benefits shall not count towards the 60 cumulative months lifetime limit. Individuals under age 18 in child-only cases are not subject to the 60-month time limit. Minor parents are not subject to the 60-month time limit in New Jersey because they are not permitted, under WFNJ statute, to be a head of household. In the event that an individual received cash assistance as a minor parent and later becomes a member of another adult's assistance unit or an adult head of household, the time during which such minor parent had previously received benefits shall not count towards the 60 cumulative months lifetime limit.

Federally countable extreme hardship exemptions are permitted via State exemptions or participation in the Supportive Assistance for Individuals and Families program. State exemptions are not time limited for individuals who are over 60 years of age, permanently disabled, sole caretaker of a dependent, chronically unemployable, or subject to family violence.

The SAIF program serves WFNJ recipients who have received benefits for at least 48 months, and who do not meet State criteria for an exemption from the time limit. Recipients receive cash assistance benefits and intensive case management services through the SAIF program for up to 24 months.

New Jersey will not spend TANF funds for adult recipients receiving public assistance beyond 60 months, unless they are part of New Jersey's 20 percent extreme hardship categories. Cases in excess of the permitted 20 percent will be funded as separate State program expenditures and counted as MOE.

Residency

With respect to the level of WFNJ/TANF assistance issued, New Jersey treats families who move into New Jersey from another State no differently than families who have been residing in New Jersey.

Family Violence Option (FVO)

The WFNJ/TANF Program has availed itself of the PRWORA option regarding protections for survivors of family violence, including rape or incest, through the establishment of standards and procedures designed to screen for, identify, and where appropriate, refer survivors of family violence to an approved Domestic Violence or Sexual Assault Service Program. The WFNJ/TANF program provides the flexibility needed to address the specific problems of survivors of family violence, as well as survivors of rape and incest. These individuals may utilize the PRWORA option at any point in the WFNJ/TANF process.

Trained county agency staff will conduct an initial screening to identify survivors of family violence. Where family violence is identified as a barrier, a referral will be made to an approved domestic violence or sexual assault agency for a risk assessment, service and safety plan. The plan will set forth goals to removing barriers so that the

recipient can move forward toward safety and self-sufficiency. Updates to the Family Violence Option (FVO) risk assessment are handled at six-month intervals. These recipients will also be referred for appropriate supportive services such as the New Jersey Address Confidentiality Program (ACP), as well as any other appropriate community services.

Survivors of family violence who have been assessed by an approved domestic violence or sexual assault agency may be temporarily exempt from certain WFNJ/TANF program requirements where compliance with such requirements would make it more difficult for a recipient to escape family violence, or where it would unfairly penalize the recipient who is or has been victimized by any such violence, or who is at risk of further family violence. The requirements that may not apply include, but are not limited to, child support good cause exceptions, emergency assistance, time limits on benefits, the family cap provision, and work requirements.

C. WFNJ/TANF Cash Assistance Financial Eligibility Requirements

Once non-financial eligibility status appears to be satisfied, the assistance unit's financial need must be established. Financial eligibility entails evaluating the resources and income available to the assistance unit.

Resources

Resources are defined as all real and personal property, including bank accounts, which is within the control of one or more members of the eligible assistance unit. Resources are considered either countable or exempt. Countable resources are all those resources which are not considered to be exempt. A listing of some exempt resources can be found in Attachment A. Exempt resources are not subject to any liquidation requirement and are not considered in determining WFNJ/TANF financial eligibility or in determining the cash assistance benefit.

The WFNJ/TANF resource limit is $2,000 for an assistance unit. An exemption to the resource limit is allowed for a minor parent living in an alternate adult supervised living arrangement. In this circumstance, the full amount of a special teen alternate living arrangement savings account and all interest and/or dividend earnings from the account are exempt. In addition, Individual Development Accounts are exempt from the WFNJ/TANF resource limit. WFNJ/TANF exempts all motor vehicles, except recreational vehicles.

A voluntary assignment or transfer of income or resources for the explicit purpose of qualifying for WFNJ/TANF cash assistance benefits renders the applicant/recipient and all assistance unit members ineligible for benefits for a period of up to one year from the date of discovery of the transfer. This disqualification period is applied if the income or resources are transferred knowingly in the one-year period prior to application, or if the assistance unit acquires assets after being certified for benefits and then transfers such assets knowingly in order to qualify for cash assistance.

Income

Income can be earned or unearned. Income includes, but is not limited to, child support, commissions, salaries, self-employment earnings, spousal support payments, interest and dividend earnings, wages and unemployment compensation. Income is either countable or exempt. WFNJ/TANF, utilizing prospective budgeting, considers the countable income of all persons in an assistance unit, including any income deemed to assistance unit members as a result of deeming from parents to adolescent parents and from sponsors to eligible aliens, to determine financial eligibility. Exempt income is not considered in determining financial eligibility or in computing the amount of the cash assistance benefit. A listing of some exempt income can be found at Attachment A.

Initial financial eligibility for cash assistance is determined through a test for an assistance unit applying as a new applicant, re-applicant or reopened case by comparing the total countable income with the maximum income allowed for the appropriate unit size in accordance with Schedule I (See Attachment B). Schedule I income allowances are 150 percent of the maximum benefit levels in Schedule II (See Attachment B). If the assistance unit's income is less than the maximum allowable income level for the appropriate unit size, initial financial eligibility exists. As long as the assistance unit's countable income is less than the applicable benefit level in Schedule II, WFNJ/TANF financial eligibility continues to exist. When the total countable income equals or exceeds the applicable benefit level in Schedule II, then the assistance unit is no longer eligible for WFNJ/TANF cash assistance benefits.

In computing the monthly cash assistance benefit, WFNJ/TANF allows for the application of certain disregards for earned income. If a recipient is employed for 20 hours or more per week, 100 percent of the gross earned income is disregarded for the first full month of employment, 75 percent is disregarded for six consecutive months and 50 percent is disregarded for each additional month of employment thereafter. If a recipient is employed for less than 20 hours per week, 100 percent of the gross earned income is disregarded for the first full month of employment and 50 percent is disregarded for each additional month of employment thereafter.

The earned income disregards are not applied to the earned income of an individual who is not in the eligible assistance unit because of a sanction for failure or refusal to comply with a WFNJ program requirement. The earned income disregards are also not applied to the earned income of an individual who is disqualified for an intentional program violation. In the case of an overpayment caused by a recipient's failure, without good cause, to report earned income on a timely basis, the amount of the overpayment is calculated without application of the earned income disregards. New Jersey requires that recipients report all changes that may affect their eligibility within 10 days of the date of the change except for cases with earned income that are subject to simplified reporting requirements. Only assistance units with countable earned income are eligible for simplified reporting. Such cases need not report changes in earned income until such time as the assistance unit's total income exceeds 130 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) or until the next redetermination, whichever occurs first.

However, if the assistance unit does report a change, the county/municipal agency shall act on that change. The only change reporting to be encouraged is one that will result in the assistance unit obtaining higher benefits.

These income tests and benefit determinations are applied uniformly for all WFNJ/TANF cash assistance applicants/recipients on an objective and equitable basis. Actions on applications for cash assistance must be taken in a timely manner. Assistance is provided from the date of application, provided the family was then eligible.

Non-recurring lump sum income will be subject to repayment of past cash assistance benefits in accordance with the Agreement to Repay, which is signed at the time of application/redetermination. After an Agreement to Repay is satisfied, any remaining amount of countable income, if any, will be used to determine a period of ineligibility. It should be noted that this treatment of non-recurring lump sum income applies primarily in cases of unexpected windfalls, but is not applicable in situations where any received lump sum income is designated for a special purpose, such as back medical bills resulting from an accident or injury. SSI payments are not subject to lump sum payment rules. If assistance payments (including emergency assistance) are repaid to a county or municipal agency, in accordance with the agreement to repay, the months of assistance for which cash payments were repaid shall not count toward a recipients' five year time limit on receipt of public assistance.

D. Cash Assistance Recipients' Self Sufficiency Requirements

Overview

In accordance with PRWORA, New Jersey requires parents or caretakers receiving cash assistance under WFNJ/TANF, unless they are 62 years old or over, a survivor of family violence, or a non-needy caretaker adult in a child only case, to engage in work for a minimum of 35 hours per week, once the State determines that the individual is ready to engage in work or at some time prior to the individual having received 24 months of cash assistance benefits (whether or not the receipt of such cash assistance is consecutive), whichever comes first. Under WFNJ, an individual may be required to participate up to 40 hours per week. WFNJ/TANF temporarily defers people who are unable to work from the work requirement.

Assistance benefits provided under the WFNJ/TANF program are time-limited and generally considered a temporary cash subsidy to bridge the gap and assist individuals in seeking and obtaining self-sufficiency through bona fide unsubsidized employment. Applicants are informed that receipt of WFNJ/TANF cash assistance benefits is limited to a lifetime maximum of 60 months and that seeking and accepting employment is the primary requirement for receipt of continuing cash assistance. These services are provided with Federal TANF funds and/or State MOE dollars.

In accordance with the provisions of Section 402(a)(1)(B)(iv), New Jersey elected not to require parents or parent-persons who have received assistance for two months to

participate in community service, unless exempt or participating in a work activity. New Jersey requires all such participants to enter an appropriate work activity as soon as the first month of receipt of WFNJ/TANF.

The Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP)

An IRP is developed jointly by the WFNJ and LWD caseworkers and the WFNJ/TANF parent or parent-person, including teen parents, survivors of family violence, and recipients with substance abuse problems, to outline services and activities needed by family members in order to establish goals toward achieving self-sufficiency. New applicants who become eligible for WFNJ/TANF must complete an IRP at the time of application and each time their activity changes. The IRP emphasizes personal responsibility and is designed as an evolutionary tool that is modified to address changing needs/circumstances. A WFNJ/TANF parent or caretaker relative must comply with all provisions agreed upon in the IRP including, but not limited to, attending activities or services to improve his or her skill levels or to address educational needs, participating in other services provided through referrals (such as medical services and/or rehabilitation for purposes of restoring or improving employability), or by maintaining employment, when appropriate.

Employment and Job-Readiness Activities

Most cash assistance recipients are required to participate in employment and work readiness activities.

Elder Care Training

New Jersey has a long tradition of assisting its TANF participants in obtaining the skills necessary to enable them to enter the growing field of elder care. Entering the elder care field provides the opportunity for qualified TANF participants to re-enter the work force and achieve self-sufficiency.

New Jersey will continue to assist qualified TANF participants in training for, seeking and maintaining employment in providing direct care in long-term facilities and in other appropriate occupations related to caring for the elderly. Such assistance includes comprehensive assessment and testing to identify potential candidates for such occupations. Those already possessing the requisite skills are placed into an intensive job search program in order to assist them in re-entering the workforce as quickly as possible. Those individuals that require training to obtain the necessary skills are placed into the appropriate training for positions such as Certified Nurses Aides, Home Health Aides and administrative support. Upon completion of training, these individuals are placed into the job search assistance component.

New Jersey has also initiated two subsidized employment programs which offer employers wage reimbursement incentives for a designated amount of time. These employer incentive programs have proven successful in moving the less skilled customers to employment and off welfare cash assistance.

Work activities under New Jersey's WFNJ/TANF program include the following:

1. Unsubsidized employment: includes all full or part-time paid employment that is not subsidized by TANF or any other public program. Unsubsidized employment includes paid employees of private and public sector employers, self-employed individuals such as paid family child care providers, and participants in registered paid apprenticeship programs.

2. Subsidized private sector employment: includes paid employment in the private sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing a recipient. Subsidized private sector employment includes:
   - Supported employment which provides mentoring services to employers and employees with disabilities while they are working.
   - A grant diversion or work supplementation program to subsidize up to 100 percent of wages. This program involves employment on a temporary basis with a promise of permanent employment once the individual satisfactorily completes the training program.
   - Sheltered workshops which are used for chronically unemployable and severely disabled individuals. These workshops involve light assembly work or collation of materials for mailing for which employees receive minimum wage and are subsidized by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation or through TANF.

3. Subsidized public sector employment: includes paid employment in the public sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing a recipient. Employment opportunities could include library workers, community recreational workers, teachers' aides, and municipal service employees. Subsidized public sector employment includes:
   - Supported employment which provides mentoring services to employers and employees while they are working, and
   - A grant diversion/work supplementation program to subsidize up to 100 percent of wages. This program involves employment on a temporary basis with a promise of permanent employment once the individual satisfactorily completes the training program.

4. Work experience: is a work activity performed in return for public assistance that provides an individual with an opportunity to acquire the general skills, training, knowledge, and work habits necessary to obtain employment. The purpose of work experience is to improve the employability of those who cannot find unsubsidized employment. Work Experience includes Community Work Experience Programs (CWEP), a program with employers who agree to provide training opportunities at local worksites. Sponsorship is limited to non-profit

agencies, such as federal, local, State government, and not-for-profit community based employers. CWEP activity is limited to public service projects in fields such as health, social services, environmental protection, education, urban and rural development and/or redevelopment, welfare, recreation, public activities, public safety, and child and adult care. Some examples of work experience positions include receptionist at a local housing authority; grounds worker at a municipal park or child care assistant at a childcare provider. The primary purpose is to provide work experience and training to enable participants to adjust to and learn how to function in an employment setting.

5. On-the-job training (OJT): is an on-the-job training position with an employer in the private or public sector given to a qualified WFNJ/TANF participant. A qualified participant is one who has completed an objective assessment, an Employability Plan Development Tool (EPDT), and an IRP, and who has been referred to and hired by the employer. An agreement is developed with the employer to provide occupational training in exchange for reimbursement of up to fifty percent (50%) of the participant's wage rate to compensate for the employer's extraordinary costs. OJT providers may be contracted for up to 6 months.

6. Job search and job readiness: consists of activities designed to help an individual find employment or improve an individual's employment prospects, including: the act of seeking or obtaining employment, preparation to seek or obtain employment, life skills training as well as short-term substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, or rehabilitation activities for those who are otherwise employable. (Such treatment or therapy must be determined to be necessary and certified by a qualified medical or mental health professional).

7. Community service: is an activity for participants who cannot otherwise obtain employment and need to increase their employability by improving interpersonal skills, job retention skills, stress management, and job problem solving, and by learning to attain a balance between job and personal responsibilities. Community service programs are structured programs and activities in which TANF recipients perform work for the direct benefit of the community under the auspices of public or nonprofit organizations. Community service programs are limited to projects that serve a useful community purpose in fields such as health, social service, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, welfare, recreation, public facilities, public safety, and child care. Activities could include work with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, AmeriCorps, Big Brother/Big Sisters, and volunteer work in hospitals, libraries, or shelters.

8. Vocational education/career and technical education: consists of organized educational programs that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for employment in current or emerging occupations. Vocational education involves instruction to provide skills required for entry-level employment in specific occupational areas and career clusters (such as customer service and retail

trades). Schools that provide this type of activity must be on the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development Eligible Training Provider List and be an approved/licensed school in New Jersey. These schools include, but are not limited to, community-based organizations, private for-profits, community/county colleges, vocational-technical schools, and adult high schools. Vocational educational training includes: Associate or Baccalaureate Degrees in the following categories: Business Administration, Culinary Management, Dental Hygiene, Drafting and Design, Early Childhood Management, Electronics Technology, Interior Design, Legal Assisting, Medical Laboratory Technician, Registered Nurse, Radiography, Respiratory Care, and other degree categories that are listed as demand occupations. Vocational Certificate categories are: Automotive Service Technician, Barbering, Brick Masonry, Carpentry, Child Care Center Operator, Corrections Officer, Cosmetology, Credit Union Service Marketing, Dental Assisting, Electricity, Facials Specialty, Heating and Air Conditioning, Massage Therapy, Medical Secretary, Customer Service and Retail Trades, Network Support Services, Office Systems Specialist, Paramedic, Plumbing, Practical Nursing, Teller Training, Travel Agency Operations, Webmaster and Web Development, and other certificate categories for demand occupations.

9. Job skills training directly related to employment: means training or education for job skills required by an employer to provide an individual with the ability to obtain employment or to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace. Job skills training directly related to employment promotes basic skills including English as a second language, computer and workplace literacy, work values, occupational and transferable skills, personal career portfolio development, and other skills necessary for the individual to obtain employment. All training and basic skills will be targeted to a particular occupation. This activity could include certificates that enhance occupational skills such as a Forklift and Hazardous Material Certificate or Associate or Bachelor degree programs for specific occupational skills at State certified colleges or universities. It also includes all services and programs described in the vocational education/career and technical education section.

10. Education directly related to employment: is an activity for adult clients who have not received a high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED) and need further education to obtain a specific occupation, job, or job offer. Specific occupational skill development can be provided by the Workforce Learning Links through the OSCC. This activity includes a course of study to attain a GED, when required by the individual's career goals.

11. Satisfactory school attendance at a secondary school or course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school: This activity requires regular attendance, in accordance with the requirements of a secondary school or course of study, leading to a certificate of general equivalence, for recipients who have not completed secondary school or received such a certificate.

Sanctions

Failure to participate in a WFNJ work activity, without documented good cause or an identified barrier that prevents participation, is considered noncompliance and will result in a loss of cash assistance benefits.

Sanctions are imposed in a graduated manner for continued noncompliance (i.e., first month per capita reduction, second month case is suspended and no assistance is granted, and third month the case is closed). Sanction penalties differ according to whether the sanction applies to a single adult, two-parent family, minor parent, or dependent child 16 years of age or older. Agency staff will attempt to contact an individual before the sanction is imposed to address any issues that may be causing the individual not to comply. Any case that remains in sanction status for two consecutive months will be closed at the end of that two-month period. The individual may re-apply but must demonstrate compliance before the case is re-opened. A single custodial parent with a child under age 13 will not be sanctioned for failure to comply with a work requirement if it is substantiated that failure to participate is due to the parent's inability to secure child care or suitable child care.

E. Cash Assistance Program Supportive Services

Supportive service payments are allowed for services that a recipient needs to participate in WFNJ/TANF work or work activities. Such payments are not an entitlement. These services are provided only as a last resort when no other source of support is available. Supportive services primarily include child care payments, transportation services, a limited allowance to cover necessary work-related expenses, and family violence intervention. WFNJ/TANF services are provided either directly, or through contracts for services. These services are provided with Federal TANF funds and/or State MOE dollars.

Work Expense Allowances for Cash Assistance Recipients

The following work expense allowances may be provided:

- Transportation allowances up to $10.00 a day (or more with DFD approval), or transit passes;

- Employment-directed activities allowances, up to a lifetime maximum of $500.00 for items such as clothing (uniforms), tools, car maintenance, licenses, and testing fees. Based upon an assessment of individual needs and circumstances and approval by DFD, an additional allowance not to exceed $300.00 may be authorized over the lifetime of the case;

- An allowance, not to exceed $500.00, may be provided over the lifetime of the case for a one-time moving expense allowance when the recipient has a firm job offer and the allowance will ensure the employment. This allowance is in addition to the work expense allowances noted above, and is subject to DFD approval.

These allowances are provided with Federal TANF funds and/or State MOE dollars.

Family Violence Intervention for Cash Assistance Recipients

An individual, who may be subject to past or present family violence, will initially be screened by trained county staff. As a result of the initial screening, the individual and the individual's family may be referred to a certified domestic violence or sexual assault specialist at a DHS-designated Domestic Violence or Sexual Assault Service Program for further assessment and intervention. These services are provided with Federal TANF funds and/or State MOE dollars.

Child Care for Cash Assistance Recipients

Child care supportive service benefits are provided when child care is necessary to permit a WFNJ/TANF adult to accept employment, to remain employed, to participate in WFNJ/TANF employment-directed or educational activities, or to complete the initial determination of employability, or to allow a teen parent to remain in high school. Participants who are employed and in receipt of WFNJ/TANF cash assistance benefits shall be required to contribute toward the cost of child care services.

Child care and quality early childhood education services for TANF recipients are offered by a variety of providers, including but not limited to: publicly and/or privately funded non-profit child care centers and private for-profit child care centers licensed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF), youth camp programs licensed by the Department of Health (DOH), before and after school child care for pre-kindergarten programs operated under the auspices of the State Department of Education (DOE) and local school districts, family child care providers registered through the contracted sponsoring agencies, and Family, Friends and Neighbors providers approved under the auspices of DFD. Cash assistance recipients are also provided child care resource and referral services in addition to child care placement services. Child care services for cash assistance recipients are provided with both State MOE and Federal TANF funds. Services provided under DOE are funded as separate State program expenditures and counted as MOE.

Medical Support for Cash Assistance Recipients

Medical support services are provided through the New Jersey Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS). Prior to January 1, 2014, cash assistance recipients were provided with medical support services through the State's AFDC-Related Medicaid Program. Currently individuals who wish to receive medical assistance must apply for NJ FamilyCare and will be determined eligible based on a Modified Adjusted Gross Income test. NJ FamilyCare is funded with Federal Title XIX and XXI money and matching State funds, and is administered by DMAHS.

Substance Abuse Initiative/Behavioral Health Initiative

Under the Substance Abuse Initiative (SAI), a WFNJ/TANF recipient who identifies him or herself as having a substance abuse problem will be offered a referral to meet with a SAI Care Coordinator for substance abuse assessment and, if needed, will be placed in treatment. Cooperation in the SAI is voluntary if the recipient is not in sanction status. Substance abuse assessment and subsequent treatment are mandatory for TANF recipients who have failed in a work activity and are in sanction status, if there is evidence that indicates that substance abuse contributed to the failure to comply with the work activity. In order to remove the sanction, the individual is required to cooperate with the SAI program. Once the individual has cooperated, the sanction can be lifted.

The Behavioral Health Initiative (BHI) is designed to assist recipients who have a mental health barrier that poses an impediment to self-sufficiency. A WFNJ recipient is offered a referral to the SAI/BHI Care Coordinator for a mental health assessment. The specialized SAI/BHI Care Coordinators provide recipients with mental health issues access to the necessary mental health services that may enable them to become self-sufficient.

The SAI/BHI is funded with Federal TANF and/or State MOE money. When appropriate, a TANF eligible adult may be referred to the SAI by the Department of Children and Families even if the family is not receiving WFNJ/TANF cash assistance. Services for non-cash assistance recipients are funded as separate State program expenditures and counted as MOE.

Burial/Funeral Expenses for Cash Assistance Recipients and Post-TANF Recipients

Both TANF recipients and post-TANF recipients in receipt of NJ FamilyCare are eligible for funeral and burial services. In addition to active TANF recipients, those eligible for burial and funeral expenses include Early Employment Initiative (EEI) working families with income from employment equal to or less than 250 percent of the FPL. These services are provided with Federal TANF and/or State MOE funding.

Supportive Assistance for Individuals and Families (SAIF)

The SAIF program provides up to 24 months of cash assistance and intensive case management to WFNJ recipients who have received at least 48 months of assistance and who do not appear to be eligible for an exemption from the 60-month time limit. Intensive case management provides additional supports to families that have been unable to become self-sufficient because of serious barriers. The SAIF program is funded with Federal TANF and/or State MOE money.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Initiative for Parents (TIP) Program

The TIP Program is a performance-based child abuse and neglect prevention initiative that offers comprehensive voluntary in-home visitation and/or in-community parenting and nutritional services to promote healthy child development and family functioning for: TANF parents and parent persons, needy single adults receiving State funded cash assistance, and Non-Public Assistance (NPA) New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (NJ SNAP) recipients in their third trimester of pregnancy, as well as all new NPA NJ SNAP parents and TANF parents or parent persons with infants from birth through 12 months of age. This includes SSI recipients with open TANF child only cash assistance cases, sanctioned TANF parents, and TANF parents subject to Family Cap provisions. The TIP Program provides additional supports to TANF recipients who are deferred as well as those who are required to participate in a work activity. TIP Program services may count towards all or part of an employment-directed activity (EDA) for WFNJ recipients who are required to participate in a work activity, until the infant reaches 12 months of age. TIP Program services are made available initially based on the local vendor's assessed needs of the family. Participants are re-evaluated by the vendor, for continued program services, at three-month intervals. Federal TANF funding supports this program.

F. Emergency Assistance for Cash Assistance Recipients

In addition to cash assistance, Emergency Assistance (EA) is also provided to TANF-eligible recipients, on an as-needed basis. Such assistance includes emergency food, clothing, and shelter and, when necessary to establish the family in permanent shelter, rent, security deposit, moving expenses, utility deposits, and an allowance for replacement furniture. Payment of retroactive rent or mortgage and/or utility payments may also be provided. Temporary rental assistance may also be authorized in order to resolve imminent or actual homelessness. Services are provided with Federal TANF and/or State MOE funding.

G. Special Initiatives for Cash Assistance Recipients

Housing Hardship Extension

The Housing Hardship Extension (HHE) initiative provides extended emergency assistance benefits for up to an additional 12 months to employable WFNJ/TANF recipients to stabilize and maintain housing. Services to this population include case management and case coordination with public housing authorities, mental health, and other pertinent agencies to move this population toward partial or full independence and away from the emergency assistance program. These services are provided with separate State funding and the expenditures are claimed as MOE.

Housing Assistance Program

The Housing Assistance Program (HAP) component of WFNJ provides extended emergency assistance benefits for up to an additional 24 months to WFNJ/TANF/General Assistance recipients who are determined permanently disabled and SSI recipients who are in imminent danger of homelessness. Services to this population include case management and case coordination with public housing authorities, mental health, and other pertinent agencies to move this population toward housing stability and away from the emergency assistance program. These services are provided with separate State funding and the expenditures are claimed as MOE.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Application Assistance Initiative for Cash Assistance Recipients

Entities under contract with DFD assist WFNJ/TANF recipients in all 21 counties in New Jersey in obtaining SSI benefits to which they may be entitled. These entities will make available, either directly or through sub-contractors, professional services to eligible recipients who appear to have potentially valid SSI claims, in order to assist those individuals in pursuing their legal rights to SSI benefits. These services will include, but are not limited to, training CWA staff who will screen and refer clients eligible for participation in the project, assisting the client in preparing an initial SSI application, referring the client to a medical specialist who will prepare expert medical documentation on the client's behalf, providing legal assistance and representation in the event the client's application is denied, and securing social services and transportation assistance to get the client to and from medical visits and hearings. These services are funded with Federal TANF and/or State MOE money.

Kinship Care Subsidy Program

Both TANF recipients acting as parent-persons and non-needy parent-persons who are caring for a related child who is not their biological or adopted child, may become "kinship legal guardians" for these children pursuant to the Kinship Legal Guardianship Act, P.L. 2001, c. 250, codified at N.J.S.A. 3B:12A-1 to-6 and N.J.S.A. 30:4C-84 to –88, and if otherwise eligible, participate in the Kinship Care Subsidy Program. In addition to relatives, "family friends" can be caretakers provided that Legal Guardianship pursuant to State Law that allows a non-relative guardian to act "in loco parentis" has been established. This form of legal guardianship transfers rights to the kinship caregiver that allow for the care and protection of the child. Non-needy kinship guardians with family incomes of less than 150 percent of the federal poverty level may receive child only Kinship Subsidy Payments of up to $250 per child per month. Needy kinship legal guardians who are also TANF recipients serve as a "payee" for the kinship child and receive Kinship Subsidy Payments of up to $250 per child per month. Payments and services are funded with Federal TANF and/or State MOE money.

Education and Outreach Efforts of the WFNJ Program

The Division of Family Development's Communications and Training Unit provides a wide variety of informational and educational materials about the WFNJ program and related programs/services for the benefit of current and former WFNJ participants, potential participants, the New Jersey Legislature, employers, State/county/local and private service providers, and the general public. These materials include, for example:

- Brochures, flyers, and posters that address specific programs and supports provided to WFNJ participants, former recipients who become employed and leave cash assistance, and low-income working families.
- Computer slide presentations that provide comprehensive information and up-to-date statistics on WFNJ and related programs.
- Educational videos on WFNJ and specific programs/services.

Published materials and videos are translated into Spanish (and other languages, as necessary). All of the above are updated/revised as needed to reflect major policy and programmatic changes.

The Division periodically conducts training, conferences, workshops, and other forums on WFNJ and related programs/issues for the benefit of staff and human services providers (State agency/county/local and community and faith-based providers).

Collaboration with key stakeholders throughout the state, other State agencies, and various human services advisory bodies is critical to the Division's efforts to provide enhanced outreach services to our many constituents. WFNJ outreach activities are provided with Federal TANF and/or State MOE funding.

Summer Youth Program

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) implemented a TANF summer youth employment program. Through the One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) system, LWD will offer a subsidized employment program for TANF eligible youth age 16-24 living in TANF cash assistance households when funding is available. The program, called Summer YouthWorks (SYW), runs for approximately four (4) months during which time TANF youth are engaged in jobs with private or public/non-profit employers. Employers are reimbursed for up to 100% of the wages paid to the participants.

Research has shown that young people who do not have an interest in, or access to, education, training or fulfilling employment are more likely to engage in offending behavior. Encouraging interest in work can reduce delinquency in the short-term and increase the likelihood of improved long-term outcomes. The SYW program provides eligible TANF cash assistance recipients with an opportunity to develop job skills while earning a summer wage. This program is funded with Federal TANF and/or State MOE funds when available. The State will not claim MOE (e.g., third-party supervision and

training) for any youth living independently who is not the parent of a child, is not a pregnant woman, or is not a noncustodial parent.

3. WFNJ/TANF Non-Cash Assistance Support Programs

Certain recipients are eligible to receive several types of time-limited non-cash assistance TANF supports, which are funded with Federal TANF and/or State MOE money, even though the individuals do not receive TANF cash assistance. These include individuals who may otherwise be eligible for cash assistance or working families whose income does not exceed 250 percent of the FPL, and employed cash assistance recipients who voluntarily close their cases and meet specific eligibility criteria.

Early Employment Initiative (EEI)

Under the EEI Program, adult members of an applicant family that appear to meet all financial and non-financial eligibility requirements for WFNJ shall be referred for participation in the EEI while their application is being processed if they meet the mandatory criteria for participation or if they volunteer to participate. This does not include families in immediate need or those which would qualify for WFNJ work deferrals.

Mandatory applicants are those individuals who have a work history that equals or exceeds four months of full-time employment in the 12-month period prior to application. Applicants who have a high school diploma, a GED, or a work history that equals or exceeds four consecutive weeks within the year immediately prior to applying for assistance may volunteer for participation. However, once an applicant volunteers, participation in EEI is mandatory.

Applicants who are prescreened and determined eligible for participation in EEI are referred to an EEI agency for participation. EEI participants are eligible to receive immediate up-front short-term financial assistance to pay for the necessary supportive services required to allow the individual to participate in EEI. A one-time lump sum payment may be provided, as needed, to cover necessary employment-related expenses until the individual receives his or her first paycheck. If the individual is successful in obtaining unsubsidized employment within the 30-day EEI participation period, he/she must withdraw his/her application for TANF assistance. EEI participants may receive up to 24 months of child care benefits, and may also receive medical benefits through NJ FamilyCare and NJ SNAP benefits if eligible. The agency that is authorized to provide EEI services receives a fee for providing intensified job placement and development that is inclusive of an amount to cover administrative costs. The EEI program is administered by LWD and funded with separate State funds that are counted as MOE.

Child Care

Those families whose WFNJ/TANF cash assistance cases are closed are eligible for up to 24 consecutive months of child care benefits from the date of the case closing, provided that the adults included in the assistance unit are employed. Child care is also provided to successful EEI participants, as well as low-income working families. Funding for extended child care benefits for families with income levels of less than 250 percent of the FPL is provided through State MOE money. Funding for extended child care benefits for EEI or post-TANF families with income levels in excess of 250 percent of the FPL is provided through State-only money for up to 24 months from the date of case closing.

Child care and enhanced early childhood education services for post-TANF and income eligible recipients are provided by a variety of providers, including but not limited to: publicly and privately funded non-profit child care centers and private for-profit child care centers licensed by the DCF Office of Licensing, before and after school child care for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs operated under the auspices of the DOE and local school districts, family child care homes registered through the contracted sponsoring agencies and home based providers approved under the auspices of DFD. EEI and post-TANF families are also provided child care resource and referral services in addition to child care placement services.

Such child care is funded through various sources, including but not limited to: the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF), the Federal TANF and/or State MOE funds, the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), as well as DOE State Aid Funding. For the TANF program, expended child care funds are tied to individual children. Early childhood Education for pre-kindergarten programs is operated under the auspices of the State DOE. The pre-kindergarten program is funded by separate State MOE funds. Expenditure claims for these children are based on the formula contained in Attachment C (education services).

The State expanded this program to provide before and after school and full time summer child care (known as Wraparound child care). This program uses licensed, existing early childhood and child care programs in the community, that contract with a district receiving Preschool Education Aid (PEA) funds to provide pre-Kindergarten educational services. To be eligible to apply for DOE Wraparound child care services, families must have income up to 200 percent of the FPL, and must be employed full time, at school full time, or have combined employment/school attendance full time. Eligible families also must reside in a former Abbot district. DOE Wraparound child care services are funded with State MOE dollars.

Medical Support

Transitional Medical Assistance may be available through DMAHS to individuals who lose eligibility for NJ FamilyCare due to an increase in income. The income would have to increase above the thresholds of 142% of the FPL for a child under age 19 or 133% of the FPL for a parent. Individuals must have been receiving NJ FamilyCare benefits in the applicable program at the time of the increase in order to qualify for the extension in benefits.

Post WFNJ Referral Services

Households with earned income whose TANF cases closed in the past 24 months are eligible to receive post-WFNJ Referral Services, provided that their income is less than 250 percent of the FPL. Post-WFNJ Referral Services directs eligible post-TANF households to those supportive services that may be beneficial to the household's maintenance of active employment. These services are provided with Federal TANF and/or State MOE funding.

Transportation Assistance for employed non-cash assistance recipients

Employed post-TANF recipients are eligible for a subsidized bus or train pass program. These services are funded as separate State program expenditures and counted as MOE.

Social Services for the Homeless

Post-TANF recipients and other income-eligible families with income levels of no more than 250 percent of the FPL are eligible for services to avert homelessness and to help secure housing. These services include emergency shelter, prevention services (e.g., security deposits, utility deposits, etc.), 24-hour emergency services, and limited case management services. This is a non-recurrent, short-term benefit designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need and will not extend beyond four months. This program is funded with Federal TANF and/or State MOE funds.

Division of Child Protection & Permanency (DCP&P) Emergency Assistance (EA)

Emergency Assistance services may be provided to families in instances where a lack of adequate housing is impeding the placement of a child. EA may also be provided in order to facilitate the return of a child from foster care placement when a lack of adequate housing exists. These services are funded with Federal TANF and/or State MOE money.

Supplemental Work Support Program

The Supplemental Work Support Program is a voluntary program for TANF recipients who have been in receipt of benefits for at least the last six months and who during that time have been employed a minimum of 20 hours per week for at least four months. Although still eligible for a partial grant, these individuals may voluntarily close their TANF cases and receive a monthly supplemental work support payment to help offset the cost of working. By closing their case, these individuals will be able to maintain employment and not draw from their 60-month lifetime limit on receipt of TANF cash assistance benefits. This support can be provided for up to 24 months so long as the assistance unit would have remained eligible to receive a partial assistance benefit but chooses to keep their TANF case closed or provided the assistance unit's income is less than 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. Supplemental work support payments are intended to cover transportation costs including car maintenance, auto

insurance, parking costs, etc. for a vehicle used for work, child care costs over and above the amount paid through the post-TANF transitional child care program, clothing and uniforms necessary for employment, meals at work, tools, equipment and materials incidental to the job, training costs above the amount provided through the Career Advancement Voucher Program, etc. This program is funded with Federal TANF and/or State MOE funds.

Career Advancement Voucher Program

The Career Advancement Voucher Program (CAVP) is available to eligible post TANF recipients who are employed and have expressed an interest in career advancement. The CAVP provides funds for educational or occupational training opportunities. The program is intended to foster career advancement for individuals who demonstrate that participation will result in a potential for growth in their current job or increased potential growth in a new job. Eligibility for this program is limited to post TANF recipients whose cases have closed within the past 24 months and whose income is less than 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. This program is administered by LWD. Services are funded as separate State program expenditures and counted as MOE.

New Jersey Earned Income Tax Credit Program

Similar to the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), the New Jersey EITC is made available to qualifying low-income individuals and families in order to supplement their yearly incomes and promote independence and self-sufficiency. For purposes of claiming State MOE funds, the definition of a "qualifying child" parallels that found in the Internal Revenue Code used for Federal Income Tax reporting purposes but does not include foster care children, disabled children over age 21 and foster-care pre-adoptive children.

NJ Individual Development Accounts

The NJ Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) Program is being operated in conjunction with the Department of Community Affairs and its designated entities. NJ IDAs are being made available to both TANF and post-TANF recipients, living with a dependent child, whose incomes are below 200 percent of the FPL. Client contributions are matched dollar for dollar up to specific amounts yearly for the purpose of saving for a primary residence, post-secondary education, and qualified business capitalization. Parallel to the savings process, participants are required to attend a basic financial education course and an asset specific training program. The NJ IDA program is funded with Federal TANF funds.

Technology

Federal TANF and/or State MOE funds are utilized to support the automated systems development and operations of the TANF program. Operationally, systems support for TANF is provided through the Family Management Information System (FAMIS) and On-line Management Economic Goal Achievement (OMEGA).

America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS) is used to facilitate inter-agency communication between WFNJ and OSCC agencies. AOSOS is the formal electronic communication system for case management. Basic client information from FAMIS is electronically transferred to AOSOS nightly. The WFNJ agency uses AOSOS to create inter-agency referrals to the OSCC and avoid conflicts in appointments. The work registration is fielded through the electronic transfer of information from FAMIS to AOSOS or by entering the information directly into AOSOS. When the client reports to the OSCC staff for his/her appointment, initial information has already been entered into AOSOS. The OSCC can activate the file and complete additional sections.

Under the sponsorship of DFD, a web-based screening tool, NJ Helps, was developed to provide New Jersey citizens with a private mechanism for learning about State benefit programs. Using basic demographic and income information, the tool screens for several programs, including TANF, and provides contact information for proceeding with an application.

The Consolidated Assistance and Support Services (CASS) system will incorporate new technology solutions as the basis for future application development to meet program goals and objectives. The goal of the CASS project is the development of a new and fully integrated automated system that will support all benefit and service delivery programs supervised by DFD. It will include the development of a common user interface and an online, web-based, and open system architecture that will enable DFD to more easily implement functionality in support of business requirements, including interoperability with other federal, state, and local systems.

New Jersey's Programs and Activities Directed at Preventing and Reducing the Incidence of Out-of-Wedlock Pregnancies

For details regarding programmatic action that the State is taking to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, with special emphasis on teenage pregnancies, please refer to the program descriptions below which reflect New Jersey's pregnancy prevention activities.

New Jersey Advisory Council on Adolescent Pregnancy

New Jersey has established an Advisory Council on Adolescent Pregnancy to develop a prevention and education outreach strategy for adolescents. The Council is charged with reviewing and developing policies that will prevent adolescent pregnancy and out-of-wedlock births and improve services to at-risk, pregnant, and parenting adolescents. Services recommended by this Advisory Council are funded with segregated Federal TANF money.

The Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Initiative

The Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Initiative (APPI) seeks to reduce New Jersey's teen pregnancy rate by providing counseling, sex education, and referrals to family planning services for teens. The APPI supports adolescent pregnancy prevention efforts through a variety of programs such as the Parent Linking Program (PLP), NJ

School Based Youth Services Programs (SBYSP), and the Office of School Linked Services in the DCF. The APPI also consists of the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention County Opportunities Initiative and a Hotline that operates through Parents Anonymous NJ (1-800-THE KIDS) for teens and their parents concerned about pregnancy. All of the programs serve both males and females.

The APPI and the PLP coordinate with the already existing TANF funded School Based Youth Services Programs (SBYSP). The SBYSP provides a comprehensive set of services on a "one stop shopping" basis at urban, rural, and suburban high school sites, with at least one site in each of the 21 counties. The SBYSP is also established in some middle school and elementary school sites. Each site provides connections to health care (including family life education), mental health and family counseling, job and employment training, substance abuse counseling, recreation, and referral services. Programs operate before, during, and after school, and during the summer.

In conjunction with SBYSP sites, the APPI also provides sites in or near high schools. The APPIs target teens at risk of pregnancy, and include mentoring, family life education, and other support services through the services of a skilled social worker, with coordinated, collaborative partnerships in the school and community.

Although all of the APPI programs focus on prevention of first pregnancies, the PLPs focus on the prevention of subsequent pregnancies. The PLP provides child care at the school site and addresses reduction of repeat pregnancies by providing intensive case management and social services, access to health services, parenting education, and relationship education to increase the teen parents' ability to relate effectively.

Outcome measurements show the PLP programs have almost a 100 percent success rate for participating parents in areas such as graduation from high school, obtaining employment, or attending college, and very few second pregnancies.

A hotline, 1-800-THE-KIDS, has been established to take calls 24 hours per day on teen issues, specifically teen pregnancy prevention. Other efforts include public relations (i.e. cards, posters and Public Service Announcements (PSA) promoting the hotline, Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Month activities at the State and local level, and the staffing of an interactive web-site (www.sexetc.org) through the Rutgers University Network for Family Life Education, which has a nationally acclaimed newsletter by teens for teens, known as Sex Etc.).

The APPI County Opportunities Initiative provides funds to each of the 21 counties to create programs specifically designed to reduce teen pregnancy. It provides referrals to appropriate community based agencies and family planning organizations.

In addition to these efforts, the New Jersey Department of Health maintains administrative oversight for the Abstinence Education Projects, which were designed to teach pre-teen and teenage populations the benefits of abstinence. An additional collaboration is the NJ Teen Prevention Education Program (PEP). Teen PEP is collaboration between the New Jersey Department of Health and the Princeton Center for Leadership Training and HiTOPS, Inc. (Health Interested Teens' Own

Program on Sexuality). Teen PEP is based on the peer-to-peer education model developed by the Princeton Center and the nationally recognized sexual health curriculum developed by HiTOPS, Inc. The collaborating partners work with interested high schools across New Jersey to institute the Teen PEP sexual health course that is consistent with the curriculum standards developed by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Independent Living Skills Training/Supports

Independent Living Skills Training/Supports are provided to youth who are aging out of the DCF's care. The skills training and supports will enable these youth to become self-sufficient. The primary focus of the training program is pregnancy prevention. To support pregnancy prevention the youth are provided with skills to enhance their independence, including money management, employment directed skills, and good decision making. One-time services or goods that will help the youth become employed or go back to school are also provided. For example, the youth may be provided with services to assist in finding a place to live, transportation to secure housing or employment, or an initial basic furniture purchase. Other items that facilitate independence such as tuition reimbursement and payment for driving lessons or car insurance can also be provided. However, to receive these funds, the youth must first participate in life skills education that teaches pregnancy prevention. Federal TANF funds are used for this purpose.

New Jersey Youth Corps Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program

The five essential components of New Jersey Youth Corps are community service projects, personal and career counseling, employability and life skills, education development and continuing support services. Through these comprehensive services offered by New Jersey Youth Corps, pregnancy prevention services are provided to youth who are either at risk of pregnancy or are teen parents at risk of subsequent pregnancies. To support pregnancy prevention the Youth Corps assists youth by promoting education and self-esteem, employability and self-sufficiency. New Jersey Youth Corps and Pregnancy Prevention Program is funded with segregated Federal TANF money.

Kinship Wraparound Services

Kinship Wraparound services' goal is to prevent teen pregnancy in children who are unable to live with their parents by providing related adults with the supports necessary to take these children into their homes. These supports make it possible for the children to live with family members instead of ending up in the foster care system. Children who are raised within a family structure are less likely to become pregnant and produce babies out of wedlock than children who do not have any family involvement. The program provides up to $500 annually for services and supports such as furniture, clothes, computers, opportunities to participate in sports, and non-sporting activities such as tutoring, summer camps, or other extracurricular activities which cultivate life-long habits that will eventually reduce the young persons' risk for teen pregnancy. On July 1, 2011, this program moved under DCF through a memorandum of understanding.

Services remain the same. These services are available to families at or under 250% of the FPL. The program is funded with Federal TANF and/or State MOE funds.

Early Start

Early Start is an initiative designed to reduce repeated teen pregnancies, promote child/family literacy and increase parent-child interaction in an effort to prevent child abuse and neglect in New Jersey's most at-risk families.

Early Start vendors will provide a host of in-home services including counseling services that focus on teen pregnancy prevention, parenting/child development skills, client assessment and screening, enrollment in Family Care, promoting the Early Start Initiative and establishing referral packages.

Early Start will prepare at-risk children between 0-3 years old for preschool through the delivery of intensive, in-home services by local community providers using a home visitation model. In addition, distribution of Healthy Baby Kits to at-risk families, Early Childhood Development tools, and in-home child care training are also funded as part of this initiative. The Early Start initiative is funded with Federal TANF money.

Efforts Re: Statutory Rape

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families' (DCF's) Family and Community Partnerships (FCP) Office of School-Linked Services contracts with a number of private non-profit organizations and/or school districts to provide a variety of prevention and support services for youth in New Jersey's public elementary, middle and high schools. The School Based Youth Services Program (SBYSP) provides an array of employment, health and social services for public school students, which will include statutory rape programming.

Also, the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety, Office of the Attorney General, through its Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Liaison to the County Prosecutors Offices, coordinates an annual two-day Division of Criminal Justice Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Symposium offered to law enforcement and prosecutors state-wide. The curriculum will include statutory rape as a topic.

Furthermore, the New Jersey State Police conducts a sexual assault presentation for law enforcement that covers statutory rape. The NJ State Police have future plans to develop presentations for law enforcement and the public on Teen Dating, which would include statutory rape.

Programs and Activities Directed at Encouraging the Formation and Maintenance of Two-Parent Families

Responsible Parenting and Operation Fatherhood for Cash Assistance Recipients

New Jersey's efforts with noncustodial parents to strengthen family relationships, promote the formation of two-parent families, and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock births include but are not limited to: peer counseling and support services, one-on-one work with participants, pregnancy prevention, parenting skills training, employment counseling, and family revitalization efforts such as substance abuse counseling or treatment, and "abusive relationship" counseling. Work is done with the prisons and county jails as well as inner city community groups to reach the noncustodial parents.

The goal of this effort is to not only assist noncustodial parents to meet their child support obligations but to enable them to become meaningful, active and positive participants in their children's lives. This will be achieved by engaging these individuals in improvement activities on both the employment and personal levels. These initiatives are funded with Federal TANF money.

WFNJ Faith-Based Initiative

The goal of the NJ Department of Human Services and Department of State (DHS/DOS) Faith and Community-Based Collaborative is to expand DHS's ability to provide services to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families recipients that are in sanction status or whose cases have closed for any reason within the last twelve months. Under this initiative faith-based and community providers conduct outreach via mailings, phone calls, and home visits in order to link clients/former clients with necessary services. Services may include child care, transportation assistance, career counseling/job retention assistance, NJ FamilyCare, NJ SNAP, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, and the Earned Income Tax Credit. Faith-based services for families with an income of less than 250 percent of the FPL are funded with segregated Federal TANF money.

4. Miscellaneous Administrative Policies

Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information

New Jersey will take reasonable and necessary steps to restrict the use and disclosure of information about individuals and families receiving assistance under the program attributable to funds provided by the Federal government. Information about applicants or recipients will be used or disclosed only for purposes directly connected with the administration of public assistance and related services, which cannot be offered without such information. The safeguards shall not prevent the State agency from furnishing a Federal, State or local law enforcement officer with the current address of any recipient provided the information is necessary for the officer to conduct official duties pursuant to the PRWORA.

State of New Jersey Address Confidentiality Program

The New Jersey Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) is authorized under the Address Confidentiality Program Act (P.L. 1997 c. 369), *N.J.S.A.* 47:4-1, et seq., which became effective in January 1998. The goal of the ACP is to assist survivors of family violence who have relocated in their efforts to keep batterers from finding them. The ACP Program offers two service components: a substitute address service and a protected record service. These services will severely limit a batterer's ability to access information that could identify the new location of a survivor of family violence. The ACP is funded and administered by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, Division on Women, and is not TANF funded.

Nondiscrimination

New Jersey has established nondiscrimination regulations, policies, and procedures for ensuring fair and equitable treatment of applicants or recipients of public assistance. There shall be no discrimination (based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital, parental or birth status, sexual orientation, or disability, etc.) by State or local agencies in the administration of any public assistance program. Further, New Jersey has established provisions for applicants and recipients who have been adversely affected by WFNJ regulations to be heard in a State administrative hearing process. Recipients have the right to appeal any action or inaction affecting eligibility, benefit determination, or condition of payment, and are advised of this right with each adverse action notice.

The following provisions of law apply to any program or activity administered by New Jersey from Federal funds received for this program:

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794)
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101, et seq.)

- Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq.)
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. Section 6101, et seq.)
- Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1681, et seq.)
- Equal Pay Act of 1963 (29 U.S.C. Section 206(d))
- NJ Law Against Discrimination (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1, et seq.)

Restricted Electronic Benefit Transfer Settings

In order to comply with the amendments made to sections 402(a)(1)(A)(vii) and (viii) of the Social Security Act by Section 4004 of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-96), the New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJDHS) has collaborated with the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety, Divisions of Alcoholic Beverage Control and Gaming Enforcement, to send a letter to all owners/operators of the prohibited Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) settings informing them of the new restrictions.

NJDHS has posted on its website the EBT restrictions outlined in P.L. 112-96. NJDHS will also provide all new Families First card recipients with a brochure detailing the EBT restrictions. The brochure will remind benefit recipients that they are free to access their benefits, with no fee or charges, at any ATM in New Jersey bearing the Quest logo or at any United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved vendor. Should a situation arise where recipient does not have the access to one of these location, DFD would have to confer with our EBT vendor to fill the void. Until an access point is brought online, DFD would take interim measures to refer the recipient to the nearest location and provide transportation if needed. NJDHS has also instructed all County Welfare Agencies to display posters in highly visible areas of their facilities that detail the EBT restrictions.

The New Jersey EBT provider has developed a portal webpage where benefit recipients can log in and check their benefit balances, transaction histories, etc. The portal webpage contains information on settings restricted for EBT use. Lastly, NJDHS has proposed changes to the New Jersey Administrative Code that will adopt the EBT restrictions outlined in P.L. 112-96 into state regulations.

DFD will accept reports regarding the misuse of an EBT card, along with all other reports received from the public, using the DFD hotline at 1-800-792-9773. Any reports submitted to DFD will be referred to the local county welfare agency for further investigation. At this time there are no plans in place to impose penalties on a recipient who is found to have used an EBT card at one of the restricted locations. Should future data demonstrate a pervasive problem of TANF recipients accessing benefits at restricted locations, DFD will consider an appropriate penalty period for those found to be in violation of the use restrictions.

ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Administration of TANF Program

The DHS/DFD is the agency responsible for supervising the WFNJ/TANF program at the State level. WFNJ/TANF will be administered at the local level by the 21 county agencies, under DFD supervision and through contracts for services.

2. Assurances

New Jersey will use Federal TANF funds in accordance with the provisions of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (P.L. 104-193), the final TANF Federal regulations at 45 CFR Part 260, et seq., and State legislation.

New Jersey will conduct a program designed to reach state and local law enforcement officials, the education system, and relevant counseling services that provide education and training on the problem of statutory rape so that teenage pregnancy prevention programs may be expanded in scope to include men.

New Jersey has in place a grievance procedure for resolving complaints involving alleged work displacement of regular employees through the LWD Division of Worker's Compensation and Workplace Standards.

New Jersey will deny assistance for 10 years to an individual convicted after August 22, 1996 in Federal or state court of having made a fraudulent statement or representation with respect to the individual's place of residence in order to receive TANF, NJ SNAP, SSI under Title XVI, or Title XX assistance simultaneously from two or more states.

New Jersey will deny assistance to an individual who is violating a condition of probation or parole imposed by a Federal or state court.

New Jersey will not use TANF funds to provide medical treatment, with the exception of pre-pregnancy planning services.

New Jersey will not use TANF funds to provide cash assistance for a child who is out of the home for more than 180 days.

New Jersey will submit required reports, participate in the Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS), and maintain the required State maintenance of effort as provided in accordance with the PRWORA.

Effective with the submission of the original TANF State Plan, New Jersey adhered to the 15 percent administrative cap.

3. Quality Control and Program Evaluation Reviews

New Jersey maintains a quality control/assurance function under WFNJ/TANF, which preserves some features of the pre-block grant quality control system, including reviews of individual case records to determine payment accuracy rates, as well as other statistical measures of policy implementation and application.

Program Evaluation reviews are also performed by State personnel within individual counties. These Program Evaluation reviews focus on specific aspects of the WFNJ program, such as program access, policy dissemination and implementation, reporting, training provisions, and fraud prevention and investigation. The Program Evaluation review process ensures the accountability of the program.

FUNDING

Section 403(a)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act provides that each eligible State shall be entitled to receive a grant in an amount equal to the State family assistance grant as defined in Section 403(a)(1)(B).

1. Payments to Agency Administering the TANF Program

Payments shall be made to the Department of Human Services.

2. State Payments for TANF Program

Section 405 requires that grants be paid to States in quarterly installments, based on State estimates. The State's estimate for each quarter of the fiscal year by percentage is:

1st Quarter: 25%
2nd Quarter: 25%
3rd Quarter: 25%
4th Quarter: 25%

CERTIFICATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, I, Jennifer Velez, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Human Services, who has been delegated the authority for submission of the State Plan for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, as well as any amendments to such Plan, by Chris Christie, Governor of the State of New Jersey, certify that the State of New Jersey will operate a program to provide Temporary Assistance for Needy Families so that the children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives or guardians standing "in loco parentis," to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage, to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies, and to encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Additionally, the Governor has delegated to the Director of the Department of Human Services' Division of Family Development, or his or her designee, the authority to negotiate any Plan revisions necessary in order to have the Plan, or amendments made thereto, certified complete by the United States Department of Health and Human

Services, Administration for Children and Families. All final submissions will be submitted by the Director of the Division of Family Development.

New Jersey's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program is known as Work First New Jersey (WFNJ).

In administering and operating a program, which provides Temporary Assistance for Needy Families with minor children under Title IV-A of the Social Security Act, the State:

(1) Certifies that the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Family Development, is the State agency that will supervise the administration of the program during the fiscal year and that, as determined by the Commissioner of the Department of Human Services and/or the Director of the Division of Family Development, the CWA within each respective county of the State will serve as the primary "administrative entity" that will administer the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program during the fiscal years via direct or contracted services.

(2) Assures that local governments and private sector organizations:

(A) have been consulted regarding the Plan and design of welfare services in the State so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations, and

(B) have had at least 45 days to submit comments on the Plan and the design of such services.

(3) Will operate a child support enforcement program under the State Plan approved under Part D.

(4) Will operate a foster care and adoption assistance program under the State Plan approved under Part E, and will take all necessary actions to ensure that children receiving assistance are eligible for medical assistance.

(5) Will provide each member of an Indian tribe, who is domiciled in the State and is not eligible for assistance under a Tribal Family Assistance Plan approved under Section 412, with equitable access to assistance under the State program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the Federal government.

(6) Has established and is enforcing standards and procedures to ensure against program fraud and abuse, including standards and procedures concerning nepotism, conflicts of interest among individuals responsible for the administration and supervision of the State program, kickbacks, and the use of political patronage.

(7) Shall make available to the public a copy of the State Plan, upon request.

OPTIONAL CERTIFICATION – FAMILY VIOLENCE OPTION

[x] The State of New Jersey has established and is enforcing standards and procedures to:

(1) Screen and identify individuals receiving assistance under this part with a history of family violence while maintaining the confidentiality of such individuals,

(2) Refer such individuals to counseling and supportive services, and

(3) Waive, pursuant to a determination of good cause, other program requirements such as time limits (for as long as necessary) for individuals receiving assistance, residency requirements, child support cooperation requirements, and family cap provisions, in cases where compliance with such requirements would make it more difficult for individuals receiving assistance under this part to escape family violence or unfairly penalize such individuals who are or have been victimized by such violence, or individuals who are at risk of further family violence.

12/11/14

Jennifer Velez, Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Human Services

Date

ATTACHMENT A

Examples of Exempt Resources:

1. WFNJ supportive service benefits,
2. Supplementary aid/assistance from public/private agencies as exempt from Federal/State law, which do not supplant WFNJ/TANF benefits,
3. Up to a total of $2,000 in resources, including savings and special teen parents' savings accounts,
4. All motor vehicles, except recreational vehicles,
5. Real property used by the assistance unit as a home,
6. Personal property such as house furnishings and clothing in regular use, including personal effects, if regularly used or of small intrinsic value,
7. Livestock, machinery, tools, equipment, stock-in-trade, and farm and garden products raised for home use that serve to produce some net income,
8. Any asset, real or personal, the liquidation of which would produce no net revenue to the assistance unit,
9. Occasional nonrecurring gifts,
10. Loans for a specific purpose,
11. Fees paid in conjunction with the collection of a pending claim when the costs were incurred during a period of receipt of WFNJ/TANF benefits,
12. Prepaid burial plots and funeral arrangements,
13. Life insurance policies,
14. Resources excluded by Federal or State law and/or regulation for a special purpose, e.g., allowances and benefits received under national services programs such as Americorps, VISTA, etc.

Examples of Exempt Income:

1. Income tax refunds,
2. Homestead property tax rebates,
3. Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) payments,
4. Unearned income (including monies to offset training expenses) received by a WFNJ/TANF dependent child through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA),
5. Earned income received through the WIA by a WFNJ/TANF dependent child,
6. Allowance payments to offset expenses related to training received by any WFNJ/TANF recipient who is participating in the WIA program,
7. The earned income of any middle or secondary school student in the eligible assistance unit within the ages specified under Needy Families,
8. Any financial aid received by an eligible child/adult who is a student who continues to attend school and meets the conditions under which the monies were granted and complies with WFNJ/TANF work requirements,
9. SSI benefits,
10. Income in-kind or benefits received in the form of goods, services or via third party payments, rather than cash,
11. Kinship Subsidy Program payments,
12. Individual Development Accounts including matching contributions and interest,
13. Income excluded by Federal or State law and/or regulation for a special purpose; e.g., allowances and benefits received under national service programs such as Americorps, VISTA, etc.,
14. Benefits received pursuant to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act of 1971,
15. Disaster assistance benefits,
16. Income earned as a result of temporary census employment.

ATTACHMENT B

WFNJ/TANF Schedules I and II

Initial Maximum Allowable Income Levels and Maximum Benefit Payment Levels

Schedule I Initial Maximum Allowable Income Levels	Number In Assistance Unit	Schedule II Maximum Benefit Payment Levels
$ 243	1	$162
483	2	322
636	3	424
732	4	488
828	5	552
924	6	616
1,015	7	677
1,092	8	728
Add $75.00 each additional person	More Than 8	Add $50.00 each additional person

ATTACHMENT C

New Jersey Division of Family Development Estimating Methodology to Claim Pre-School/Pre-Kindergarten Early Childhood Program Aid for Separate State Program/State MOE Funding

The Formula for Claiming:

A. Early Childhood Program Instructional and Support Services Aid

B. *plus* employee benefits

C. *multiplied* by pre-school/pre-kindergarten ratio

D. *multiplied by* National School Lunch Program eligibility rate for each ECPA school district

E. *multiplied by* the employment rate for each ECPA school district using annual local unemployment data

F. *multiplied by* the increasing factor for families between 186 percent and 250 percent of FPL

G. *multiplied by* one minus the ratio of the number of 3, 4, & 5 year olds in ECPA school districts in out-of home foster care placement, to the number of 3, 4, & 5 year olds enrolled in the ECPA school districts

H. *less* pre-school/pre-kindergarten expenditures in ECPA schools for the 1994–1995 school year

A. Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA) - Included in ECPA is funding for instruction, support services, and facilities. Instructional aid includes all expenditures associated with direct classroom instruction. Support services aid includes expenditures for activities that support instructional staff, such as, health and social services, parental educational involvement activities, curriculum development and implementation, professional development and training, and community collaboration and planning. Facilities aid will not be claimed for TANF MOE as it is not permitted by the PRWORA. ECPA establishes full-day kindergarten programs, preschool programs, and other childhood programs and services in areas with high concentration of low-income pupils. These services are provided with separate State program funding and the expenditures are claimed as MOE.

NJ DOE calculates each school's low-income concentration rate by dividing the number of free lunch students by total student enrollment as of October 15. Schools must have at least a 20 percent rate to qualify for ECPA, which is distributed and budgeted by

ECPA category during the current school year. However, actual/expended data is not available from schools until the following year. Since only claims based on expenditure data will be accepted, claims will be submitted in the following Federal Fiscal Year.

The financial information provided by NJ DOE from their Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the ECPA school districts is a combination of pre-school/pre-kindergarten and kindergarten expenditures. This cost pool cannot be directly broken down due to the fact that the funding provided to the ECPA school districts is combined. Since actual enrollment figures are available from NJ DOE, they will be used to arrive at a ratio to allow us to isolate the costs applicable to only the pre-school/pre-kindergarten population.

B. Employee Benefit Rate – Benefits are funded by State and local contributions. The NJ Office of Management and Budget negotiates with the USHHS for a composite fringe benefit rate of base salaries each year. That rate is 45.45 for Fiscal Year 2013 (adjusted annually).

C. Pre-School/Pre-Kindergarten Ratio – Only costs relating to ECPA programs that are not generally available are TANF MOE eligible. The ECPA cost pool includes a combination of both pre-school/pre-kindergarten and kindergarten costs. Since only the portion of costs related to pre-school/pre-kindergarten are eligible, a ratio of pre-school/pre-kindergarten children enrolled in the ECPA districts to the total of pre-school/pre-kindergarten plus kindergarten children enrolled in ECPA districts will be applied. This ratio will be arrived at by using actual enrollment data provided by NJ DOE.

D. National School Lunch Program (NSLP) – Families at or below 250 percent of the FPL are TANF eligible in NJ. Since schools do not maintain data on family income, eligibility for TANF will be determined through NSLP counts, even though its FPL ceiling of 185 percent under represents TANF eligibility. The NSLP eligibility rate for each ECPA school district for free and reduced lunch will be calculated by comparing October NSLP eligible free and reduced students to the October 15 school enrollment.

E. Employment Factor – To avoid the classification of ECPA expenses as TANF assistance, and its disaggregate data reporting requirements, an employment rate factor is included in order to reduce ECPA payments made on behalf of unemployed participant families. Information will be obtained from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development for the most recent period available and the factor will be based upon the employment rate for each ECPA school district using annual local unemployment data.

F. Increasing Factor for Families between 186 % and 250 % of the FPL - The NSLP was used in Item D above to limit the costs to those families in the respective school district who are below 186 percent of the FPL. TANF allows eligibility to those families with income up to 250 percent of the FPL. In order to recognize the families that are between 186 percent and 250 percent of FPL, the State's New Jersey Cares for Kids (NJCK, child care subsidy program for low income families) database is analyzed. Specifically, a report is produced from the Child Care Automated Resource and Eligibility System (CARES) that tallies the number of children who were active on the CARES database as of October 31. The report shows the number of children whose family income falls between 186 percent and 250 percent of the FPL. The number of children whose family income is between 186 percent and 250 percent of the FPL will be divided by the total number of children who were active on the CARES database. The product of this division is the increasing factor.

Example:	Total NJCK Children	10,000
	186%-250% of the FPL	2,500
	Below 186% of the FPL	7,500
	2,500 divided by 10,000=	25%
	Plus one (increasing factor)	1.25

G. Out-Of-Home Placements – PRWORA stipulates that State expenditures countable towards the MOE requirement must be for families in which a child is living with a custodial parent or other caretaker or includes a pregnant individual. As this information is not collected by schools, claims will be calculated by using one minus the ratio of the number of 3, 4, & 5 year olds in ECPA school districts in out-of-home foster care placement, to the total number of 3, 4, & 5 year olds enrolled in ECPA school districts.

H. Early Childhood School Program Prior To TANF – PRWORA requires that State spending in early childhood programs for Federal Fiscal Year 1995 (10/1/94–9/30/95) be deducted from TANF MOE claims. The 1994-1995 school year will be used to approximate Federal Fiscal Year 1995 since school data is based on October 15th enrollments, which determines ECPA school budgets. In the schools now designated as ECPA districts, the State funded early childhood programs that existed in the 1994–1995 school year were Pre-K, Expanded K, and Good Starts. State expenditures of $5,198,200 will be deducted each year from TANF MOE Pre-K claims.

Eligibility Criteria

- ***Families must be TANF eligible (not necessarily receiving cash assistance)***
- ***Families must be at or below 250 percent of the FPL***
  (In order to correspond to New Jersey's Seamless Child Care System's Universal Maximum Income Eligibility Level)
- ***Families must be working or in employment directed activities***
- ***Services must not be generally available in the non-ECPA school districts***