

## **Guidelines for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families/Domestic Violence (TANF/DV) Funds**

### **I. PURPOSE OF THIS FUNDING**

The purpose of the TANF/DV fund is to provide direct services to eligible clients and their children in order to promote their safety and economic stability. These funds shall be used to provide domestic violence counseling, support, and other direct services to clients. Each county department of social services and the local domestic violence shelter program serving the county shall jointly develop a plan for utilizing these funds.

#### **A. Referral**

The local domestic violence (DV) agency can refer potentially eligible clients to the local DSS for further assistance. The domestic violence agency may have assessed for indicators of domestic violence and services needed. If such assessment has occurred, then it is recommended that the DV agency provide the client with documentation indicating that a domestic violence assessment has been completed and indicating services needed. The local DSS will complete the further eligibility screening for TANF/DV eligibility.

The DSS should refer any Work First eligible applicant who indicates domestic violence during screening to the local DV agency for a domestic violence assessment. A thorough domestic violence assessment will provide a comprehensive foundation for any TANF/DV services to be provided. Recommendations will be made after the assessment as to appropriate services.

#### **B. Eligibility**

DSS Work First staff will screen clients and will determine eligibility for TANF/DV funds based on either of these criteria:

1. Families eligible for receiving Work First Family Assistance
2. Families with incomes under 200% of the federal poverty guidelines provided there is a child in the household who is under age 18 and meets the kinship, living with and citizenship requirements. Children at the age of 18, if in high school and expected to graduate from high school by the month of their 19th birthday, can receive assistance as children through the month they graduate from high school.

The DV agency staff will assess if a family is experiencing domestic violence.

#### **C. Reallocation of Funds**

The Division of Social Services may reallocate unspent funds to counties that submit a written request for additional funds.

#### **D. TANF/DV Approved Expenditures**

The following list is not exclusive. Any appropriate expenditure that the DSS and the DV agency agree on that will promote safety and economic stability for clients and their children can be allowed as long as it falls within TANF Guidelines. Billing must be done monthly by the DV agency to ensure accuracy in the TANF/DV remaining balances.

1. **Transportation:** The approved state rate per mile is allowed for use of a personal vehicle. Reasonable actual transportation costs can include but are not limited to bus passes, cabs, auto repairs, and car insurance as approved by the local department of social services and the domestic violence agency are allowed.
2. **Individual and Family Adjustment Services:** The established rate of up to \$75.00 per hour is approved for Individual and Family Adjustment Services for professional counseling. The approved rate of up to \$45.00 per hour is for paraprofessional counseling. Counseling whether professional or paraprofessional includes but is not limited to therapeutic counseling, crisis counseling, court advocacy, individual assessments, support group, Abuser Treatment Programs (ATP)/Batterers Intervention Programs (BIP), and parenting class. If meeting eligibility requirements for a two-parent family, costs for individual counseling or ATP/BIP for offending parents can be paid with TANF/DV funds if . Payments for group sessions will be the amount that is typically charged per client.
3. **Housing:** Housing assistance includes rent, utilities, deposits, moving truck rental, and other relocation costs. Reasonable actual cost for these services as approved by the local department of social services and the domestic violence agency is allowed.
4. **Educational or Job Training Activities:** Reasonable actual costs are allowed for these services as approved by the local department of social services and the domestic violence agency and can include but are not limited to tuition, books, transportation, and child care.
5. **Attorney Fees:** \$125.00 per hour is the established rate for attorney fees. The fees can be used for any civil action that will enable a victim to be safe and/or economically independent.
6. **Shelter Costs for Domestic Violence Victims and their Dependents:** The established rate of up to \$50.00 per person per night is approved for shelter costs. This can only be charged if the shelter stay is not already funded from

another source. The local shelter will be asked to provide a per night cost for reimbursement.

7. **Other possible expenditures include but are not limited to:** Past due bills that interfere with the client getting safe housing, child care expense, uniforms, and other work related expenditures.

**NOTE:** Medical expenses and prescriptions are not allowable costs for TANF funds. State or local funds may be used for medical expenses or prescriptions.

No services will be provided utilizing TANF/DV funding that meets the federal definition of “assistance” defined as **services that have cash value (cash like) and are intended to meet basic ongoing needs.** Appropriate uses of TANF/DV Funds are:

- Nonrecurring, short term benefits designed to deal with a specific episode of need
- Not intended to meet recurring or ongoing needs
- Not extending beyond 4 months

#### **E. CPS Cases**

Assistance for the non-offending parent and children can be provided for safety and economic stability. It is important to note that assistance cannot be provided if the children are in the legal custody of the county and placed with a licensed provider of foster care. Also, assistance cannot be provided to the non-offending parent if a kinship provider is currently receiving child only TANF benefits by maintaining physical and or legal custody of the non-offending parent’s children. One example of this would be if a grandparent (safety resource) was caring for the non-offending parent’s children while the parent had an open CPS In-Home Services Case. The grandparent seeks and receives TANF assistance to help with the cost of caring for the children. The CPS worker, TANF worker, family members, and DV agency could all collaborate together within a child and family team to eventually work toward a plan of discontinuing TANF to the grandparent and toward supporting a safe and economic stable reunified family.

#### **F. Other Collaboration Efforts**

The DSS and DV agency must collaborate at least once quarterly, as evidenced by the DV agency attending staff meetings at the local DSS, cultural diversity training or other cross training occurring between agencies. Progress reports should be shared as to what services the fund is being spent on whether the expenditure is originating from the DV agency or directly from the DSS. Also, any identified areas of need that are not addressed within the Plan should be shared. Both can inform amendments to a current Plan and or be incorporated into future TANF/DV Plans.