

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)



Expenditure Plan October 2023

TANF 2023 Expenditure Plan

The Division of Children and Family Services (CFS) has developed a TANF expenditure plan for Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2024-2027. Current TANF-funded services and the future service proposal focus on helping families achieve economic mobility and self-sufficiency. The plan includes information about pending and future TANF-funded services.

Introduction

Congress created the federal TANF block grant in 1996, the successor to the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, as part of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA). States have broad flexibility to spend federal TANF funds on services and activities that meet at least one of the four purposes of the program (45 CFR § 260.20):

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

Nebraska receives approximately \$56 million in TANF block grant funds annually. The amount of the block grant does not change over time. To receive the block grant, there is also a state spending requirement called Maintenance of Effort (MOE). Nebraska must spend 80% of its 1994 contribution to Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)-related services. States are required to use TANF grant funds to operate a cash assistance program, a mandatory work program, and for administrative costs.

The TANF carryover balance increased in previous years due in part to fewer families applying for and receiving ADC cash assistance. The monthly average of families receiving ADC fell from 4,038 in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2020 to 2,824 in SFY 2023. Additionally, with the influx of federal pandemic relief funds for child care, the Child Care Subsidy and Development Fund (CCDF) Program temporarily did not utilize the full TANF transfer. CCDF transferred funds back to the TANF grant because of other child care funding from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSAA), and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA).

Current TANF-Funded Services

DHHS plans to continue funding current TANF programs and services. Current spending includes services that meet one or more purposes of TANF, services permitted under prior law before PRWORA, and allowed TANF transfers to block grant services. States can spend TANF funds on a broad range of allowable services, but they are required at a minimum to use TANF funds for cash assistance, a mandatory work service program, and administrative costs.

A summary of prior TANF expenditures is listed below, followed by future budgeted expenditures for current services.

TANF Expenditures FFY2019-2023					
Current Services	FFY 2019 Expenses	FFY 2020 Expenses	FFY 2021 Expenses	FFY 2022 Expenses	FFY 2023 Expenses
Administration	\$3,350,597	\$3,157,339	\$2,185,082	\$2,314,392	\$3,650,129
Child Care	\$14,044,384	\$2,315,760	\$3,739,478	\$-	\$17,494,128
Information Systems	\$242,540	\$244,760	\$217,788	\$199,033	\$273,209
Cash Assistance [ADC]	\$17,820,799	\$18,215,229	\$15,564,210	\$11,313,076	\$13,332,713
Child Welfare Services	\$4,901,257	\$6,087,158	\$6,338,066	\$3,982,966	\$6,882,449
Work Activities [Employment First]	\$8,821,492	\$12,176,694	\$9,523,720	\$7,409,096	\$11,552,838
Home Visiting Program		\$294,858	\$1,506,606	\$1,038,154	\$1,858,937
SSBG Mommy & Me Program	\$471,608	\$428,785	\$630,532	\$835,074	\$807,375
SSBG Comm. Response Program			\$473,920	\$997,338	\$1,704,392
SNAP Employment and Training		\$16,161	\$35,365	\$687	\$-
Emergency Assistance		\$58,859	\$42,284	\$40,176	\$118,362
Supportive Services/AR		\$13,029	\$12,863	\$44,109	\$72,809
Fatherhood Initiative			\$361,289	\$1,490,707	\$1,343,853
Crisis Pregnancy Program			\$-	\$1,093,993	\$1,737,772
JAG Program		\$100,557	\$374,975	\$443,494	\$1,466,822
Total	\$49,652,677	\$43,109,189	\$41,006,178	\$31,202,296	\$62,295,789

Expenditures for Current TANF Services FFY2024-2027				
Current Services	FFY2024	FFY2025	FFY2026	FFY2027
Administration	\$4,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Child Care	\$12,788,170	\$12,788,170	\$12,788,170	\$12,788,170
Information Systems	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Cash Assistance [ADC]	\$16,406,300	\$16,406,300	\$17,203,580	\$17,203,580
Child Welfare Services	\$7,000,000	\$7,000,000	\$7,000,000	\$7,000,000
Work Activities [Employment First]	\$9,300,000	\$9,300,000	\$9,300,000	\$9,300,000
Home Visiting Program	\$4,500,000	\$4,500,000	\$4,500,000	\$4,500,000
SSBG Mommy & Me Program	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
SSBG Community Response	\$1,700,000	\$1,700,000	\$1,700,000	\$1,700,000
SNAP Employment and Training	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Emergency Assistance	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Supportive Services/AR	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Fatherhood Initiative	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Crisis Pregnancy Program	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
JAG Program	\$2,900,000	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000
Total	\$64,844,470	\$68,944,470	\$69,741,750	\$69,741,750

Administration

Management of the TANF program is a required expense and is subject to a 15% administration cap.

Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)

States can transfer up to 30% of their TANF block grant to CCDF. CCDF is the primary federal funding source devoted to providing families who are working or participating in education and training assistance with child care. Subsidy currently serves children under the age of 13 or, for children with special needs, through age 18.

Information Systems

This includes costs related to monitoring and tracking under the service, including computing devices, ancillary equipment, software, hardware, similar procedures, services (including support services), and related resources.

Cash Assistance – Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)

Nebraska's federally required TANF cash assistance program, ADC, provides support to low-income families with minor children.

Mandatory Work Activities - Employment First (EF)

Parents receiving ADC who are able to work must participate in Employment First (EF), Nebraska's federally required mandatory work program. EF provides individuals with employment-related skills and knowledge through training, education, and employment preparation.

Child Welfare Services

Community-based services are provided to families involved in or at risk of entering the child welfare system. Services are designed to increase the strength and stability of families so children may remain in or return to their homes. These services may include respite care for parents and relative caregivers; individual, group, and family counseling; parenting skills classes; case management; independent living services; service coordination costs; legal action; developing case plans; assessment/evaluation of family circumstances; and transportation.

Home Visiting Service

The Nebraska-Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (N-MIECHV) Network Program, through the Division of Public Health, utilizes the Healthy Families America home visiting model which is evidence-based and family-centered. N-MIECHV programs offer support for pregnant or parenting families of children birth to age five who may struggle with significant life stressors such as poverty, exposure to violence or substance abuse, teen parenting, or military families with one or both parents in service.

SSBG Mommy and Me Programs

States can transfer up to 10% of their annual TANF block grant to the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG). Two Mommy and Me programs are funded by this SSBG transfer providing services for expectant mothers and their children in a residential drug treatment facility.

SSBG Community Response Program

The Community Response Program is also funded by the SSBG transfer and is designed to reduce unnecessary involvement in higher-end systems through a community-based Central Navigator. Flexible funds for supportive services and work support are utilized for low-income families at risk of becoming involved in the child welfare system when no other public or private money is available.

SNAP Employment and Training

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Next Step Employment and Training (E&T) Program helps SNAP participants gain skills, training, or work experience to increase their ability to obtain regular employment. The program uses the additional TANF funds to expand and provide additional supportive services to participants.

Emergency Assistance

Emergency Assistance is a one-time-per-year cash payment for crisis assistance. This service is used to overcome barriers not covered in other DHHS services. Examples include housing costs to avoid eviction, transportation issues, and needed furniture.

Supportive Services and Work Supports for Child Welfare Families (Alternative Response)

Funds for supportive services (e.g., shelter, clothing, and home supplies) and work support (e.g., transportation) are provided for families involved in child welfare when no other public or community service is available.

Fatherhood Initiative

The Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF) Initiative services aim to strengthen positive father-child engagement, promote healthy relationships and marriage (including the couple and co-parenting), and improve family economic stability for noncustodial fathers.

Crisis Pregnancy Services

The Crisis Pregnancy Program provides information and counseling regarding pregnancy, fetal development, childbirth, childcare, parenting, and adoption; mentoring services related to parenting and life skills; and referral to other services available to support pregnant females and delivery, including neonatal health care services.

JAG Services

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) is a state-based national non-profit organization providing in-school support to prevent dropouts. The services assist youth with developing skillsets and overcoming hurdles to set them up for success in the classroom and the workplace.

2023 Pending TANF Services

In addition to current TANF services, there are five pending services awaiting a response from the Administration of Children and Families (ACF). Three of the five services were newly appropriated in this year's budget bill (LB814, 2023), totaling \$21 million dollars for SFY 2024. ACF response time varies and changes may be made to the amendments based on the response.

Expenditures for Pending TANF Services FFY2024-2027				
Pending Federal Approval	FFY2024	FFY2025	FFY2026	FFY2027
Food Programs	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$-	\$-
Child Advocacy Centers	\$4,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000
CASA	\$125,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Home for Pregnant & Parenting Teens	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Domestic Violence	\$1,500,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
Total	\$11,125,000	\$17,250,000	\$12,250,000	\$12,250,000

Food Bank Services

TANF-funded grants will be provided to food banks holding a certification of exemption under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code that distributes food in ten or more counties in Nebraska and qualifies for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Nebraska's food banks coordinate with food pantries, schools, churches, emergency shelters, and other non-profit organizations to supply emergency and supplemental food to needy children and families throughout Nebraska.

Child Advocacy Centers (CACs)

TANF funds are appropriated for services provided through the CACs to families and for coordination activities of the state chapter of CAC as defined in 34 U.S.C. 20302. CACs provide technical assistance and coordination supports for child abuse investigation and treatment teams as provided in Nebraska Revised Statutes §§ 28-728 to 28-729.

The Nebraska Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers is dedicated to the multidisciplinary child advocacy approach and a coordinated, comprehensive response to child abuse throughout the state's 93 counties. The Nebraska Alliance membership is comprised of seven fully accredited CACs.

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

CASA services are provided by screened, trained, and highly qualified community volunteers who advocate in court for the best interests of children who have experienced abuse or neglect. Volunteers stay with each case until it is closed, and the child is in a safe, permanent home. They get to know the child and work with legal and child welfare professionals, educators, and service providers to ensure

judges have all the information they need to make well-informed decisions. Volunteers provide information to the court through a report with recommendations about the child's placement, visitation, education, and service needs.

Cedars Home for Pregnant and Parenting Teens

The Cedars Home for Pregnant and Parenting Teens is a supportive living arrangement for pregnant or parenting teens under 20-years-old. To be a resident, a pregnant or parenting teen must be unable to live in their home because of abuse, neglect, or other extenuating circumstances.

Domestic Violence Services

TANF funds are appropriated to provide services to families in accordance with the Family Violence Prevention Act and the Nebraska Protection from Domestic Abuse Act. Services offer prevention programs to aid victims of domestic abuse, their families, and abusers.

Future TANF Services

Reimagine Wellbeing Prevention Services

Legislative Bill 1173 (2022) tasks the three branches of state government to work together to transform child and family well-being in Nebraska. The Workgroup is required to submit a written framework to the Health and Human Services Committee by December 1, 2023, and is expected to outline prevention activities that could be funded by TANF. After the report is received, DHHS will work to create an implementation plan for potential TANF-funded prevention services.

Future TANF Service Expenditures FFY2024-2027				
	FFY2024	FFY2025	FFY2026	FFY2027
Prevention Services	\$-	\$3,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000

TANF Block Grant

2024-2027 TANF Expenditure Plan

Current Services	FFY2024	FFY2025	FFY2026	FFY2027
Administration	\$4,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Child Care	\$12,788,170	\$12,788,170	\$12,788,170	\$12,788,170
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SSBG Mommy & Me Program	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
SSBG Community Response Program	\$1,700,000	\$1,700,000	\$1,700,000	\$1,700,000
SNAP Employment and Training	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Emergency Assistance	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Supportive Services/AR	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
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Total	\$64,844,470	\$68,944,470	\$69,741,750	\$69,741,750

Pending Federal Approval	FFY2024	FFY2025	FFY2026	FFY2027
Food Programs	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$-	\$-
Child Advocacy Centers	\$4,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000
CASA	\$125,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Pregnant & Parenting Teens Home	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Domestic Violence	\$1,500,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
Total	\$11,125,000	\$17,250,000	\$12,250,000	\$12,250,000

Future New Services	FFY2024	FFY2025	FFY2026	FFY2027
Re-Imagine Child Welfare Programs		\$3,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000
Total	\$-	\$3,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000

	FFY2024	FFY2025	FFY2026	FFY2027
Grand Total	\$76,469,470	\$89,194,470	\$87,991,750	\$87,991,750

TANF Block Grant

FFY 2024-2027 Projected TANF Balance

Total Available TANF Grant as of Sept 30, 2023	\$125,896,578
FFY 24 TANF Grant Award	\$56,627,234
Estimated Expenditures	(\$76,469,470)
Unobligated Reserves	\$125,896,578
FFY25 TANF Balance - Sept 30, 2024	\$106,054,342

FFY 25 TANF Grant Award	\$56,627,234
Estimated Expenditures	(\$89,194,470)
Unobligated Reserves	\$106,054,342
FFY26 TANF Balance - Sept 30, 2025	\$73,487,106

FFY 26 TANF Grant Award	\$56,627,234
Estimated Expenditures	(\$87,991,750)
Unobligated Reserves	\$73,487,106
FFY27 TANF Balance - Sept 30, 2026	\$42,122,590

FFY 27 TANF Grant Award	\$56,627,234
Estimated Expenditures	(\$87,991,750)
Unobligated Reserves	\$42,122,590
FFY28 TANF Balance - Sept 30, 2027	\$10,758,074

The plan illustrates the reduction in the TANF surplus and the increased spending year-over-year. If spending continues as projected, the surplus will be successfully reduced by 2027 requiring a reevaluation of services to match the annual TANF award. It should be noted that the plan may have to be adjusted due to future federal regulation changes, actual program expenditures, and evaluation of program effectiveness. Because TANF funds have some flexibility, the department will be responsive to all of these factors and revise allocations accordingly.

Submitted State Plan Amendments

Appendix A Child Advocacy Centers

Appendix B Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

Appendix C Cedars Home for Pregnant and Parenting Teens

Appendix D The Nebraska Crisis Pregnancy Program,

Food Bank Services, and Domestic Violence Services

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Plan Amendment Child Advocacy Centers

Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) provide a safe, child-friendly environment for forensic interviews, and medical evaluations and provide advocacy, training, and other relevant services to help alleviate crisis situations for children and families. CACs also provide coordination support for child abuse investigation and treatment teams as provided in Nebraska Revised Statutes §28-728 to 28-729.

The Nebraska Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers serves as Nebraska's State Chapter for the seven nationally accredited child advocacy centers. "State chapter" is referred to in the Child Protection and Family Safety Act, Nebraska Revised Statute 28-710, and is defined in federal statute. 34 USC 20302 states that a "state chapter" means a membership organization that provides technical assistance, Training, coordination, grant administration, oversight, and organizational capacity support to local children's advocacy centers, multidisciplinary teams, and communities working to implement a multidisciplinary response to child abuse in the provision of evidence-informed initiatives, including mental health counseling, forensic interviewing, multidisciplinary team coordination, and victim advocacy.

The Nebraska Alliance will fulfill the roles and responsibilities within the definition of a "State chapter" and help ensure the multidisciplinary teams and child advocacy center staff deliver covered CAC services and case coordination with fidelity.

The work of Nebraska Alliance (state chapter services) and child advocacy centers fall into the following areas.

- A. Forensic Interview,
- B. Victim Advocacy,
- C. Mental Health,
- D. Coordination,
- E. Other Relevant CAC Staff Activities
- F. Training, and
- G. State Chapter Services

Child Advocacy Center Services

A. Forensic Interview

A forensic interview provides children with a safe place to disclose what happened to them or what they witnessed. Nationally trained experts interview children using developmentally appropriate techniques. Forensic interviews capture evidence for investigating agencies in a way that minimizes trauma and ensures accuracy.

For the Forensic Interview, the relevant provisions of the pre-TANF state plan are contained in the following sections in Attachment 3-A.:

Section B: Kinds of assistance to meet the emergency situation:

B 2. safe living environment and crisis counseling in circumstances of family violence or need for child welfare services.

Example: The CACs offer a temporary safe environment for children during the forensic interview process and until a longer-term living arrangement is available.

Section C: Kinds of services to meet the emergency situation:

C.1. Case management, counseling, therapy, and any other social services provided to alleviate the emergency situation.

C.2. Parenting education and training, family support and development of services provided to alleviate the emergency situation.

C.4. Explore and assist the applicant in obtaining any other sources of aid available to alleviate the crisis situation.

C.5. Assist in developing a plan to alleviate and avoid a recurrence of the crisis.

Example: The CAC forensic interview provides the necessary information for the formation of the plan to alleviate and avoid the recurrence of the crisis. After the information is gathered, CAC staff work with the families to ensure the children are safe from further harm and the families are connected to resources to move on from the crisis.

C.7. Community-based program intended to prevent, deter, or other correct behavior and avoid an emergency condition that would result in court-ordered placement in a juvenile diagnostic and evaluation center or youth rehabilitation and treatment center.

Example: The forensic interviews conducted by the CACs provide information that can establish that children who have run away are victims and not status offenders.

B. Victim Advocacy

Child Advocacy Center Advocates acknowledge that parent/caregiver support is essential to reducing trauma and improving outcomes for children and family members. Client access to up-to-date information and ongoing access to comprehensive services are critical to a child and family's well-being and ability to participate in an ongoing investigation, possible prosecution, intervention, and treatment. CAC Advocates provide services and resources to ensure a consistent and coordinated comprehensive network of support for each child and family.

Relevant TANF provisions of the pre-TANF state plan to Victim Advocacy includes:

Section B: Kinds of assistance to meet the emergency situation:

B 2. safe living environment and crisis counseling in circumstances of family violence or need for child welfare services.

Examples of the types of activities conducted by the CACs include, but are not limited to:

- Provision of ongoing support
- Provide information about Victim Rights - How to Obtain Notifications
- Crisis Assessment and Intervention
- Resource sharing to include knowledge of available community and legal resources, referral methods and assistance with access to treatment and other services, including protective orders, housing, public assistance, domestic violence intervention, transportation, financial assistance, and interpreters, among others as determined for individual clients

Kinds of services to meet the emergency situation:

C.1. Case management, counseling, therapy, and any other social services provided to alleviate the emergency situation.

Examples of the types of activities conducted by the CACs include, but are not limited to:

- Referral internally within the CAC or outside of CAC to trauma focused therapy provider for child
- Referral internally within the CAC or outside of CAC to trauma focused therapy provider for the caregiver
- Provision of information and case updates
- Notification of Criminal Justice Events (e.g., case status, arrest, court proceedings, case disposition, release, etc.)
- Civil legal assistance in obtaining protection or restraining orders

C.2. Parenting education and training, family support and development of services provided to alleviate the emergency situation.

Examples of the types of activities conducted by the CACs include, but are not limited to:

- Provision of Interpreter Services
- Child or Dependent Care Assistance
- Victim Advocacy Accompaniment– to court, Medical Forensic Exam, Emergency Medical Care, Prosecution Interview/Deposition, Law enforcement Interview
- Providing or referral to support groups

C. Mental Health

Child Advocacy Centers know that without effective therapeutic intervention, many children who have experienced trauma may suffer ongoing or long-term adverse social, emotional, developmental and health outcomes. Evidence-based treatments and other practices with strong empirical support help reduce the impact of trauma and the risk of future abuse and other negative consequences. For these reasons, CACs ensure screening for trauma exposure and/or symptoms then use that information to link to mental health services for assessment and trauma-focused mental health treatment for child victims and caregivers. CACs provide on-site or via referral to providers with specialized, evidenced-based, trauma-focused mental health services to assist the child and family with the healing process.

Relevant TANF provisions of the pre-TANF state plan to mental health includes:

Section C: Kinds of services to meet the emergency situation:

C.1. Case management, counseling, therapy, and any other social services provided to alleviate the emergency situation.

C.2. Parenting education and training, family support and development of services provided to alleviate the emergency situation.

Examples of the types of therapeutic activities conducted by the CACs or by connecting a child/family to include, but are not limited to:

- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)
- Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)
- Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP)
- Eye-Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)
- Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention (CFTSI)
- Alternative for Families: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (AF-CBT)
- Other Therapy (traditional, cultural or alternative healing; art, writing or play therapy, etc.)
- Caregiver or Youth Support Groups

D. Coordination

Child Advocacy Centers coordinate multidisciplinary teams (MDT) consisting of law enforcement, child protective services, medical professionals, prosecution, school personnel, CAC staff and other key partners. The MDT meets regularly to review cases, discuss general issues and share information to ensure coordination and help connect families and children to direct services that are needed to alleviate the emergency situation.

Relevant TANF provisions of the pre-TANF state plan that coordination includes:

Section C: Kinds of services to meet the emergency situation:

C.1. Case management, counseling, therapy, and any other social services provided to alleviate the emergency situation.

Examples of the types of activities conducted by the CACs include, but are not limited to:

- development, implementation, and adherence to protocols
- facilitation of meetings
- Information sharing (e.g., taking meeting minutes, agenda building, recommendation follow-up, etc.)
- professional development for the MDT members and orientation to the teams and processes.

C.7. Community-based program intended to prevent, deter, or other correct behavior and avoid an emergency condition that would result in court-ordered placement in a juvenile diagnostic and evaluation center or youth rehabilitation and treatment center.

Example: The CACs provide coordination of treatment teams with a specialty focus on treatment services in addition to developing processes for monitoring any developed treatment plans. Several types of specialty focus may include cases involving truancy, anti-trafficking, or youth missing from care.

E. Other Relevant CAC Staff Activities

Relevant staff activities in order to deliver covered CAC services with fidelity, the following are several examples that are required to maintain professional and accreditation standards within various positions at the CAC:

- Attendance to Peer Review (Forensic Interviewers, Advocates)
- Attendance to Mental Health Consultation
- Supervision
- Foundational Training- Per discipline (e.g., New Coordinator Orientation, Forensic Interview Training, Advocacy Training, etc.)
- Advanced Training- Per discipline (e.g., Chapter Learning Communities, Advanced Forensic Interview Training, Conferences, etc.)
- Chapter-related Orientation
- Paperwork/Report Writing
- Team Meetings (internal)
- Partner Meetings to cover system response meetings with community providers, courts, local governmental agencies
- Chapter Meetings around CAC work within the CAC network and with Partners

F. Training

Child Advocacy Centers and the Nebraska Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers work to create an informed and skilled community to protect and support children and families. Training content is designed to increase awareness of and to address issues related to child abuse and neglect, to foster child and family engagement, to recognize trauma, to promote collaboration through a multidisciplinary approach, and to inform on latest child abuse trends in the field. Learning opportunities are facilitated in-person or in a virtual format and are designed to expand the use of evidence-based practices to achieve optimum results for families.

Relevant TANF provisions of the pre-TANF state plan where the training would be included:

Section C: Kinds of services to meet the emergency situation:

C.1. Case management, counseling, therapy, and any other social services provided to alleviate the emergency situation.

C.7. Community-based program intended to prevent, deter, or other correct behavior and avoid an emergency condition which would result in court-ordered placement in a juvenile diagnostic and evaluation center or youth rehabilitation and treatment center.

Example: The CACs and the Nebraska Alliance provide training consistent with requirements set out by Nebraska Revised Statute 28-729 for the Child Abuse and Neglect Investigative and Treatment Teams. This includes training specifically around working with children and families to understand items such as characteristics of child development and family dynamics, the roles and responsibilities of team members involved in multidisciplinary approaches to providing services to children, etc.

Section C: Kinds of services to meet the emergency situation:

C.2. Parenting education and training, family support and development of services provided to alleviate the emergency situation.

Examples: The CAC provides training or programming directly to children and families that have had a core CAC service and/or there was coordination on their case. The CAC provides parenting education and training to youth within the community.

Title IV-A. Section 404(a)(2) of the Social Security Act allows States to use segregated Federal TANF funds only for the specific activities that had been previously authorized based on the State's approved title IV-A or IV-F plan in effect as of either September 30, 1995 or August 21, 1996.

The services provided by the Nebraska CACs State Chapter meet the scope of emergency services in Nebraska's IV-A Plan (Emergency Assistance), effective July 1, 1995.

Services will be provided to the same population authorized under prior law. The prior Nebraska law governing eligibility was found in regulations at 479 NAC 9-010.03, which stated: "At the time an applicant is considered to be without sufficient income immediately accessible to meet his/her needs if his/her gross monthly income does not exceed 800 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for the family size." These Regulations allowed the client's statement of available income to be accepted without further verification unless a prudent person would question the information.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Plan Amendment

Nebraska Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

CASA services are provided by screened, trained, and highly qualified community volunteers who advocate in court for the best interests of children who have experienced abuse or neglect. Volunteers stay with each case until it is closed and the child is in a safe, permanent home. They get to know the child and work with legal and child welfare professionals, educators, and service providers to ensure judges have all the information they need to make well-informed decisions. Volunteers provide information to the court through a report with recommendations about the child's placement, visitation, education and service needs. Volunteers must attend 30 hours of pre-service training and 12 hours annually to be qualified to serve children and families through CASA services. Volunteers are supported by skilled and highly trained staff who regional and statewide CASA agencies employ to provide training, coordination and oversight during their case assignments.

CASA services provided include:

- Referrals for the child and family to community resources to foster family stability;
- Coaching, advocacy, and support to families;
- Assistance with completing necessary school forms for children;
- Assistance to parents with medical appointments or educational plans for children, especially in homes where there are language or literacy barriers;
- Funding for activities for children such as attending prom, club fees, school sports expenses, etc., to promote positive experiences and interaction with peers;
- Training and supervision for volunteers to be effective advocates;
- Guidance, encouragement, and empowerment for the child to be successful in becoming responsible decision-makers which helps deter the child from engaging in risky behaviors such as teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and school dropout and,
- Monitoring the safety and welfare of the children until the case is closed;
- Research and recommendations to the court regarding appropriate services for the child.

CASA services focus on responsible decision-making, pregnancy prevention, goal setting, and career development, which help achieve TANF Purpose Three: to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

TANF-funded CASA services are provided to families with children aged 19 or younger who meet citizenship and qualified alien requirements. The funding method is federal dollars only.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Plan Amendment

Cedars Home for Pregnant and Parenting Teens

The Cedars Home for Pregnant and Parenting Teens is an adult-supervised, supportive living arrangement for pregnant and/or parenting teens under 20 years old. To be a resident of the Cedars Home for Pregnant and Parenting Teens, pregnant and/or parenting teens must be unable to live in their home because of abuse, neglect, or other extenuating circumstances.

Teens who are pregnant and/or parenting will receive trauma-informed services from a Cedar's family partner. The services provided will engage and support the development of skills necessary for self-sufficiency. In addition, the services will help teens establish the knowledge and abilities to access resources throughout their community while strengthening parenting skills and building a strong foundation for their families. Pregnant and parenting teens' competencies and skills will be assessed at intake, and goals will be established based on the identified needs.

The Cedars Home for Pregnant and Parenting Teens will support pregnant and parenting teens by identifying and connecting them with other positive supports to enhance social and emotional stability for successful independent living.

Services provided by Cedars will focus on the following:

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

The Cedars Home for Pregnant and Parenting Teens will provide services to support pregnant and parenting teens with income below two hundred percent (200%) of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). These services will meet TANF Purpose One, to provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes or the homes of relatives. The funding method is federal dollars only.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Plan Amendments

The Nebraska Crisis Pregnancy Program

The Nebraska Crisis Pregnancy program will initiate new and expanded services to support pregnant women, parents, and other relatives caring for children twelve (12) months old or younger. The program will be offered statewide by utilizing a statewide network of local service providers.

Crisis pregnancy support services will include the following:

1. Activities that promote healthy relationships for two parents and co-parenting families; and,
2. Services related to parenting and life skills.

The Nebraska Crisis Pregnancy program will provide services to support pregnant women and two-parent families under TANF purpose four, encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families that will support needy and non-needy pregnant women and families.

Core Services Provided that Meet TANF Purpose Four:

1. Activities that strengthen families and promote healthy relationships and education for two and co-parenting families:
 - a. “Boot camps for New Dads”: This is a course offered by the program that equips men of different economic levels and ages to engage with their infants and support the mother confidently; and,
 - b. “Mothers and Babies” is an evidence-based prevention course for pregnant mothers and new parents to help manage stress and prevent postpartum depression. Lessons covered include fostering relationships with the father or partner and promoting healthy communication and social support.
2. Parenting education classes for parents to enhance their parenting skills. “Nurturing Parent” is an evidence-based parent class for pregnant women, mothers, and fathers. The course covers nurturing skills, pro-social behavior, how to create a safe home environment, and prenatal care.
3. Mentoring with parents includes education and counseling to support and maintain families. Topics covered include prenatal care and development, co-parenting, healthy relationships, budgeting for a family, maternity leave, childbirth, newborn care, postpartum depression, sleep strategy, car seat training, home babyproofing, child vaccinations, and daycare.

TANF Allowable Costs:

1. Case management; and,
2. Curriculum materials and other training materials.

Food Bank Services

TANF funds are provided to food banks holding a certificate of exemption under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code that distributes food in ten or more counties in Nebraska and qualifies for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Food banks coordinate with pantries, schools, churches, emergency shelters, and other non-profit organizations to supply emergency and supplemental food to needy children and families.

Expenditures will be only claimed for low-income families at or below 200% of the federal poverty level with children under 19 in their homes. The food banks will not conduct individual family income determinations. Instead, the food banks will use a reasonable estimation methodology to determine the portion of recipients who meet the income eligibility requirement by providing funds to food banks that qualify for TEFAP. Therefore, the IEVS requirement will not apply.

Services will meet TANF Purpose One to provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or the homes of relatives. The funding method is federal dollars only.

Domestic Violence Services

Domestic Violence (DV) services are provided to families in accordance with the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (42 U.S.C. 10401 et. seq.) and the Nebraska Protection from Domestic Abuse Act (Nebraska Revised Statute §42-901 - 42-931). DV services aim to provide prevention programs to aid victims of domestic abuse, their families, and abusers. In addition, DV services provided to victims help stabilize the family and maintain the family structure. The services provided are based on the assessed needs of the families.

DV services may include:

- emergency shelter and related services;
- victim advocacy, information, and referral services;
- assistance in developing safety plans;
- supporting efforts for victims to make decisions related to their ongoing safety and well-being;
- supportive services that meet the specific needs of victims; concrete supports provided to families for housing, utilities, clothing, food, furniture, and household goods is limited to four months. To be eligible for concrete supports, families must have income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL);
- provide resource information on legal, medical, financial, vocational, welfare, childcare, housing, and other services;
- services for children who are dependents of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault or who witness family violence, including age-appropriate counseling, supportive services, and services for the non-abusing parent that support that parent's role as a caregiver, which may, as appropriate, include services that work with the non-abusing parent and child together;
- services for underserved populations and victims who are members of racial and ethnic minority populations; and,

- refer and provide Battered Intervention Programs and services deemed appropriate for the person who commits domestic violence.

Services provided meet TANF Purpose One to provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or the homes of relatives and TANF Purpose Four to encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. The funding method is federal dollars only.

SUBMITTED