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INFORMATION AND FACTS ABOUT THE

EFFORTS PROGRAM

HELP FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

What is the EFFORTS Program?

The EFFORTS Program is a non-profit organization supported by the District of Columbia Department of Human Services to provide domestic violence support services to families who are receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Who is Eligible for EFFORTS Services?

Customers who are suffering as a result of a pattern of abusive behaviors in a relationship from one partner in an attempt to gain and or maintain power over the other. The domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or verbal acts or threats. EFFORTS assists victims with obtaining employment, training, housing, counseling and skills building.

How Do I Know If I Am a Victim?

If you are not sure if you are a victim of domestic violence, there are certain warning signs that should be considered. If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, EFFORTS may be able to help you:

- Does your partner threaten to hurt you or call you names?
- Does your partner constantly insult you? In front of your children?
- Do you feel isolated from friends and family?
- Does your partner control when and where you go, or what you do?
- Does your partner insist that you spend all of your time with him or her?
- Do you or have you ever had to deal with slapping, choking, pushing, pinching burning, or any other physical violence?

What Services Does EFFORTS Provide?

EFFORTS provides the following services for victims of domestic violence:

- Telephone Intake Interviews
- Crisis Intervention Counseling
- Information and Referrals
- Psychosocial Assessments
- Individualized Case Management
- Individual Counseling
- Domestic Violence Intervention Education and Support Groups
- Therapeutic Support Groups
- Job Search Assistance Services

How Do I Reach EFFORTS?

EFFORTS is located at 1416 North Capitol Street, NW, Washington, DC. You may call them at 202.232.7320.

For more information about the EFFORTS Program, please call 202.232.7322 or 202.629.2720 (hotline)

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INFORMATION AND FACTS ABOUT

HOMELESS SERVICES

What is Homeless Services Integration?

HSI, The Homeless Services Integration Initiative, is a streamlined approach to service provision for families facing housing instability. Families experiencing housing instability may now go to the Virginia Williams Family Resource Center (VWFRC) to apply for public benefits (TANF, Food Stamps, and Medicaid), complete the required TANF Orientation, Assessment and Individual Responsibility Plan process, receive preventative and emergency services, and work collaboratively with an Integrated Service Team to coordinate their needs to move towards self-sufficiency.

What Services are Offered at VWFRC?

Families seeking emergency assistance around their housing instability are screened to determine the severity of their needs.

VWFRC is not a shelter. Families participate in a Unified Screening process for all services and benefits. Eligible families may receive services such as prevention resources, including emergency rental and utility assistance, or temporary emergency shelter. Other services include referrals for employment training, work readiness, and job placement assistance.

Who is Considered Homeless ?

Families currently facing housing instability must complete the DHS Housing Instability Assessment to determine their needs and appropriate resources. The Integrated Service Teams at VWFRC have been trained to respond to families' needs based on the results of this assessment. The VWFRC Integrated Service Team will work with the family to support them in moving to safe, stable, and appropriate housing as quickly as possible.

Where Do I Go If I'm In Need of Homeless Services?

The Virginia Williams Family Resource Center (VWFRC) serves as the central point of intake for families experiencing housing instability in the District of Columbia. VWFRC is located at 920 Rhode Island Avenue, NE , Washington, DC.

When Can I Go to VWFRC?

The VWFRC is open Monday-Thursday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. The telephone number is 202-526-0017.

After business hours, families can call the Shelter Hotline for information about services and resources at **1-800-535-7252.**

For more information about homeless services, please call the Virginia Williams Family Resource Center at 202.526.0017

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INFORMATION AND FACTS ABOUT

IDA

INTERIM DISABILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

What is IDA?

IDA, the Interim Disability Assistance Program, is designed to provide temporary financial assistance to adults with disabilities who are ineligible for TANF and who have applied for and are awaiting approval of Supplemental Security Income (SSI). IDA funds are contingent upon availability.

Who is Eligible for IDA?

A person eligible for Interim Disability Assistance must be:

- Between ages 18 and 64
- Ineligible for TANF because no eligible child lives in the home
- Permanently and totally disabled
- Awaiting a decision on eligibility for SSI
- Ineligible for a category of cash assistance in which there is federal financial participation, except that an individual who has applied for SSI or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) may be eligible during the period that the SSI or SSDI application is being processed.

What Do I Need to do to Apply for IDA?

Applications for IDA must be submitted in person at designated Economic Security Administration (ESA) Service Centers, using the Combined Application that is used to apply for multiple programs. Currently the designated Center is H Street. Every applicant has the right to file an application on the same day that he/she contacts the ESA. An application is considered to be filed when it is received at the designated ESA Service Center and a face-to-face interview is complete.

Where Do I Go to Apply for IDA?

Persons applying for IDA should report to: 645 H Street, NE Washington, DC 20002.

What Will I Need to Apply for IDA?

The following eligibility items are needed to apply:

- Proof of DC Residency
- Proof of Social Security Number
- Proof of Citizenship/Alienage
- Proof of Disability
- Application for Supplemental Security Income

When Do I Find Out If I've Been Approved?

Applications for IDA must be processed within 60 days, counting from the day after the application was filed.

For more information about the IDA Program, please call the Interim Disability Assistance Office at 202.698.6661

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POWER PROGRAM

PROGRAM ON WORK EMPLOYMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY

What is the POWER Program?

The POWER Program, or Program on Work Employment and Responsibility, offers specialized services and resources to D.C. residents with disabilities who are receiving TANF benefits. The University of the District of Columbia (UDC) helps offer these services.

Who is Eligible for the POWER Program?

Customers who suffer from temporary or permanent incapacities that are expected to last longer than 30 days should apply for the POWER Program. Incapacities can include drug and alcohol abuse or mental health problems, as well as medical issues that require on-going treatment. Medical treatment must be provided by a qualified medical professional.

Where Do I Go to Sign Up for POWER?

TANF customers who believe that they are eligible for the POWER Program must report this information to a Social Services Representative (SSR) at your designated Service Center or to a Vocational Development Specialist (VDS) at the Family Resource Center at 2100 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, SE. This information can also be shared with an employment vendor.

What Does the POWER Program do?

- Exempts the customer from work participation requirements (but you must still comply with a self-sufficiency plan).
- Lifts sanctions in some cases.
- Restores the amount of cash assistance to the benefit amount received before any reductions(for customers who have exceeded the 60-month TANF time limit).
- Stops the TANF clock.
- Allows the customer to focus on their health.
- Assists customers with obtaining Social Security Income.

What Happens After Participation in POWER?

Once a temporary incapacity has been resolved, and after participation in the POWER Program ends, TANF benefits may continue for eligible customers. The TANF 60-month time limit and work participation requirements apply when the customer returns to TANF.

For more information about the POWER Program, please call the Family Resource Center at 202.698.1860

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INFORMATION AND FACTS ABOUT TANF

REDUCTIONS & TERMINATIONS

Who Experiences Reductions?

According to Federal and District law, there is a 60-month time limit to receive TANF benefits. Those who have exceeded the 60-month time limit experienced a 20 percent reduction in benefits in April, 2011.

What Can I Do to Stop the Reductions?

Unlike sanctions, reductions cannot be avoided. Customers who have currently exceeded the 60-month time limit to receive TANF benefits should anticipate a gradual reduction in benefits until the case is terminated in 2015, or the customer is no longer eligible to receive TANF. Reductions in benefits for customers who have exceeded the time limit will occur even if they comply with work participation activities.

When Should I Anticipate Another Reduction?

On October 1, 2013, TANF customers who have exceeded the 60-month time limit to receive TANF benefits are scheduled to receive a 25 percent reduction in addition to the reduction that occurred in 2011. The Council of the District of Columbia, however, makes the final determination.

What Is the New Termination Policy?

Effective February 1, 2013, it is a requirement of eligibility that a customer complete an Orientation, Work-Readiness Assessment and Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) at TANF recertification, unless the process has been completed.

If the head of household does not complete the Orientation, Assessment and IRP process, by the effective date of termination, TANF benefits for the family will be terminated. **If benefits are terminated, the customer will have to reapply for TANF.**

Who is Exempt From Completing the Assessment?

- Adults who receive Supplemental Social Security Income.
- Caregiver relatives other than a parent whose needs are not included in the TANF grant.
- Recipients who are currently in the POWER program.
- Dependent children

For more information about Reductions and Terminations, please call the Family Resource Center at 202.698.1860

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INFORMATION AND FACTS ABOUT

SANCTIONS

What is a Sanction?

A sanction is a temporary reduction in cash benefits that is applied to a TANF case when a customer does not meet work participation requirements. Imposing sanctions will be a graduated process. Under the current sanction policy, a ***level one*** sanction is the removal of the adult head of the household's portion of the grant. A ***level two*** sanction is a fifty percent reduction of the original grant amount. If the adult does not come into compliance—a ***level three***, or full family sanction, wherein the entire cash benefit is cut off, will be imposed for one month.

Who Gets Sanctioned?

Families wherein the non-exempt, adult head(s) of the household do not meet work requirements.

When Can I Be Sanctioned?

A sanction is applied when the adult head of household fails to meet work participation requirements for four consecutive weeks without documented good cause.

The sanction continues until the adult head of household is in compliance with his/her Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) for four consecutive weeks.

Where Do I Go to Get a Sanction Lifted?

You must report to your employment vendor or your service provider and begin to register hours of work participation for four consecutive weeks. If you have been removed from the employment vendor, you will need to call and make an appointment with the Family Resource Center at 202. 698. 1860,. located at 2100 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, S.E., Washington, DC, #400

Why are Customers Sanctioned?

By October, 2015, TANF customers who have exceeded the sixty-month time limit to receive benefits will lose their TANF cash assistance. Currently in the District of Columbia, there are over 4,000 customers who have been referred to an employment vendor who do not have any registered hours of work participation activity. The sanction policy is enforced to encourage TANF customers to maintain participation with an employment vendor and comply with their IRP to increase their opportunities to become self-sufficient.

For more information about sanctions, please call the Family Resource Center at 202.698.1860

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INFORMATION AND FACTS ABOUT

SSI

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

What is SSI?

SSI, or Supplemental Security Income, is a Federal income supplement program designed to help persons who are aged, blind, or have other disabilities, who have little or no income. It provides cash to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter.

Who is Eligible to Get SSI?

SSI is approved by the Social Security Administration (SSA) to those individuals that are:

- **65 or older**
- **Disabled, or**
- **Blind**

What Do I Need to Do to Apply for SSI?

You can begin the process to apply for SSI benefits by calling the SSA at 1-800-772-1213 (or TTY 1-800-325-0778 if you are deaf or hard of hearing) to make an appointment.

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, SSA will take your telecommunications relay services (TRS) assisted calls at 1-800-772-1213. During your appointment, an SSA representative will help you apply for benefits. Appointments to apply for benefits can be done via telephone or in person at your local Social Security office.

When Should I Apply for SSI?

If you believe you are eligible for SSI, you should apply as soon as possible so that you do not lose benefits. The SSA cannot pay benefits for time periods earlier than your application effective date. If you call them to make an appointment to apply and you file an application within 60 days of the call, SSA will use the date of your call as your application filing date. If you do not keep this appointment and you do not contact SSA to reschedule the appointment, they will try to contact you. If they do not get in touch with you to reschedule the appointment, they will send you a letter.

The letter will state that if you file an application within 60 days from the date of the letter, SSA will use the date of your original contact with SSA as your SSI application date.

What Kind of Assistance Does SSI Provide?

The amount of your SSI payment depends on your income, resources and where you live. Most people who are eligible for SSI are eligible to receive Food Stamps and Medicaid. You can receive Interim Disability Assistance (IDA) during the SSI application process. For more Information about IDA, call 202.698.6661.

For more information about SSI, please call the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or visit www.socialsecurity. gov

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INFORMATION AND FACTS ABOUT

TANF REQUIREMENTS

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES

What are the New TANF Requirements?

TANF customers must now attend an Orientation and complete an Assessment and Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) when applying for or recertifying for benefits.

What is an Orientation and Assessment?

The Orientation explains the new requirements for receiving TANF. The Assessment is a private interview with a DHS specialist that will identify a customer's strengths as well as challenges to determine the best vendor/provider to help the customer move toward self-sufficiency.

What if I do not complete the Orientation and Assessment?

As of February 1, 2013, if you do not attend the Orientation and complete the Assessment and IRP when required, you will not be eligible to receive TANF benefits.

What is an IRP?

The **IRP,** or Individual Responsibility Plan, is developed by you along with a Vocational Development Specialist (VDS) from the Department of Human Services. It lists your goals, and career interests, and the steps needed to achieve self sufficiency. You are required to complete the activities in your IRP, which may include going to work or attending school. You can modify your IRP, but you will need to work with your case manager to make changes.

What if I Do Not Follow My IRP?

If you do not follow your IRP, and you do not have a documented good cause, you will be sanctioned. A sanction is a temporary reduction in benefits applied to your case until you are in compliance with your IRP for four weeks.

How do I complete the Orientation and Assessment ?

Call the Family Resource Center at 202.698.1860 to schedule an appointment.

Note: Effective February 1, 2013 , if you do not attend the Orientation and complete the Assessment and Individual Responsibility Plan when required, you will not be eligible to receive TANF benefits.

What happens after I complete the Orientation and Assessment?

You will be assigned to a vendor/service provider based on the results of your assessment. You will also be eligible to apply for assistance with child care.

For more information about TANF Requirements, please call the Family Resource Center at 202.698.1860

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TANF SERVICE PROVIDERS, WORK ACTIVITY/PARTICIPATION

What is a Service Provider?

A service provider is an employment agency that provides services with the goal to effectively move TANF customers towards greater levels of self-sufficiency through work, work experience, community service, training and educational attainment.

What are Work Requirements?

According to Federal and District law, TANF customers are required to participate in work-related activities to receive benefits.

What is Work Activity/ Work Participation?

Work activities can include core or non-core activities:

Core work activities include:

- Paid Employment
- Work Experience
- Unsubsidized employment (public and private sector)
- On-the-job-training
- Vocational Education Training
- Job Preparation
- Job Search
- Child Care Services for another TANF recipient
- Volunteering with Community Service Programs

Non-core activities include:

- Education: GED Classes, Adult Basic Education, College
- Job Skills Training
- Education Directly Related to Employment

Who is Required to Do a Work Activity/Work Participation ?

Single Parent Families: A single-parent family head of household with a child under the age of six, must participate for at least 20 hours per week in a **core** activity. A single-parent family head of household with a child age six or older must participate for at least 30 hours per week in a **core** activity.

For those single-parent customers required to participate a total of 30 hours per week, the customer must register at least 20 hours in one or more of the core activities and can fulfill the remaining 10 hours in a non-core activity.

Two Parent Families: A two-parent family head of household must participate or a total of 35 hours per week, with at least 30 of those hours attributed to one of the **core** activities. The remaining five hours may be supplemented with a non-core activity.

If a child in a two-parent family receives subsidized child care, both parents are required to participate in activities.

Are There any Exceptions?

Yes. Customers who need to increase their educational or vocational skills levels are encouraged to do so (on an individual basis) as a core activity.

Customers who need barrier removal services follow the steps included in their case plans or Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) to satisfy work requirements.

For more information about Work Requirements, please call the Family Resource Center at 202.698.1860

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Important Information for TANF Recipients

In October 2011, changes began taking place in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program. New laws have been passed that limit the time you can receive TANF. Most TANF recipients will only be able to get TANF money for 60 months (5 years).

1. What if I am past 60 months in receiving TANF benefits?

If you have been receiving TANF benefits for 60 months or longer, your benefits have been reduced by 20%. By October 2015, if you have received TANF for 60 months or longer, all of your TANF cash assistance payments may completely end.

2. What are the new TANF requirements?

You must attend an orientation and complete an assessment/interview when applying for or recertifying for TANF. You must also complete an Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) and work towards fulfillment of your IRP.

3. What if I do not attend orientation or complete an assessment/interview?

If you do not attend an orientation and complete the assessment/interview when required, you will not be eligible to receive TANF benefits.

4. What is an Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP)?

The Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) will list goals and focus on those interests, needs, strengths and challenges that were identified during the assessment/interview. You will work with a case manager to help create your own IRP. You are **REQUIRED** to complete the activities in your IRP (which may include work requirements). The IRP can change, but you need to work with your case manager to do this.

5. What if I do not participate in or complete the TANF program requirements?

If you fail to follow your IRP, you will be subject to a sanction, which is a decrease in your TANF check. Presently, a sanction is about $70 per case. Failure to comply with your IRP will ultimately result in a complete termination of your cash assistance. A sanction is the action of last resort. If you are having difficulty following your IRP, contact your case manager.

6. Can attending school be a part of the work requirements?

Yes! Attending school for GED classes, Adult Basic Education, Vocational Education, College and Job Skills Training can all be counted towards meeting the goals of your plan.

7. Will my TANF benefits decrease when I get a job?

If you work, it means more money in your pocket. Your TANF cash assistance may decrease, but the combination of TANF bonuses*, your TANF cash assistance and your pay check will always amount to more than your TANF check. Please see the example below:

Example for Family of 3	TANF Check (without job)	Job Paycheck	TANF Check with Job	Paycheck and TANF Check
	$428	$600	$267	$867

**You can earn up to $1,250 a year in bonus funds if you get and keep the job.*

8. What can I expect from the vendors?

Vendors will provide specialized services. "Work Readiness" vendors will help you to improve your education, job skills and other abilities to get you ready for employment. "Job Placement" vendors will provide services to help you find and keep your job.

9. How am I assigned to a vendor?

The results of your assessment/interview will determine which vendor is best to assign you to; the assignment will be made by DHS.

10. What if I am already working with a program, can I stay with that program?

Yes, you can stay with the program you are working with, if you choose. You should share this information with the DHS staff member during your assessment/interview, and it will be included in your IRP.

11. What if I need a child care voucher?

You will be able to apply for a child care voucher after completing your orientation and assessment/interview. You will be given specific information on where to go at that time. You are only eligible to receive a child care voucher if you participate and meet the goals of your IRP.

12. What do I have to do to attend the orientation and complete the assessment/interview?

Please call the Office of Work Opportunity (OWO) at 202-698-1860 to schedule an appointment. You may also visit our website at http://dhs.dc.gov for more information.

13. Can I just walk in without scheduling an appointment for an assessment?

Yes. However, if you have a scheduled appointment, you will be seen first. Preferred walk-in days are Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays between 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm, or Wednesdays between 3:30 pm – 6:30 pm. OWO is located at 2100 Martin Luther King, Jr., Ave., SE, 4th Floor.

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TAPIT

TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INITIATIVE FOR TANF

What is TAPIT?

TAPIT, the Tuition Assistance Program Initiative for TANF, provides financial assistance for TANF customers to pursue post secondary degrees or college certificate programs. TAPIT is a scholarship program not a loan.

Who is Eligible for TAPIT?

To be eligible for TAPIT, you must be:

- TANF eligible or a TANF recipient who does not currently have a post secondary degree.
- First time applicants accepted to a two year post secondary community college or college certificate program. Continuing applicants accepted to a two or four year post secondary degree program.
- Fulfilling work participation requirements and meeting the goals of your Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP).
- Maintaining a 2.0 grade point average.

Additionally, if you are close to exceeding the 60-month time limit to receive TANF benefits, or have surpassed thirty months, you will not be eligible for the TAPIT Program.

What Do I Need to Do to Apply for TAPIT?

To be eligible for TAPIT, you must complete the TANF orientation, assessment and IRP process. Contact the: **Family Resource Center at (202) 698-1860** to schedule an appointment for an orientation, assessment and IRP, if you have not already completed the assessment and IRP process.

Applications for TAPIT must be submitted along with required documentation, such as official verification of acceptance into an approved post-secondary program.

Where Do I Go to Apply for TAPIT?

Customers interested in applying for TAPIT should visit The Family Resource Center at 2100 Martin Luther King Jr., Avenue, SE, 4th floor Washington, DC 20020, and request a TAPIT application.

How Much is the TAPIT Scholarship?

Each TANF eligible TAPIT recipient can receive up to $4,000.00 per academic year.

What Will TAPIT Funds Cover?

TAPIT will cover up to $4,000.00 of the following:

- Tuition
- Books
- Mandatory Fees

For more information about the TAPIT Program, please call the Family Resource Center at 202.698.1860

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TPAP

TEEN PARENT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

What is TPAP?

TPAP is the Teen Parent Assessment Program. It is a volunteer program that provides case management services for teen parents ages 14-17 years old. Teen parents under the age of 18 participate in a living arrangement assessment.*

Who is Eligible for TPAP?

To be eligible for TPAP, you must be:

- TANF eligible or a TANF recipient.
- A teen parent under the age of 18.

What Do I Need to Do to Apply for TPAP?

Teen parents who are receiving TANF or who are TANF eligible should call the Family Assessment and Resource Center to schedule an appointment to attend a TANF Orientation and complete the Work Readiness Assessment and Individual Responsibility Plan process.

You can reach the: **Family Resource Center at (202) 698-1860.** Upon completion of this process, TANF customers between the ages of 14-17 will be assigned to TPAP.

What Services are Provided by TPAP?

TPAP provides referrals for case management services to assist teens in the following areas:

- Educational Programs
- Counseling Services
- Parenting Classes
- Teen Pregnancy and Prevention Programs
- Other Community based Services
- Assistance with obtaining daycare vouchers

What are the Requirements for TPAP?

A pregnant teen minor or parenting teen who is younger than 18 must:

- Attend high school or an equivalent educational, training or other similarly approved program
- Complete an Orientation and Work Readiness Assessment and IRP
- Provide proof of pregnancy where applicable
- Provide proof of DC residency

*A pregnant minor under the age of 18 who is expected to deliver within the next four months, or a teen parent under the age of 18 must reside in his or her parents home or the home of another adult relative or responsible adult.

For more information about the TPAP Program, please call 202.698.6671