



OFA Regions V-VIII State Technical Assistance Meeting

July 9–11, 2024 • Westin Denver Downtown • Denver, CO

Reimagining TANF Programs through the Lens of Program Participants

Overview

The 2024 Regions V-VIII State Technical Assistance Meeting is designed to inspire, support, and engage Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program leaders and staff in evidence-driven change that improves programs and positively impacts the lives of the families they serve. Meeting participants will explore and reflect on the impact including participant voice can have on program decision making, enhancing program design, and improving the TANF participant’s experience. The agenda will provide opportunities for peer-to-peer learning, group discussion and idea generation, and networking among Federal and state colleagues.

Meeting Agenda

Day 1 – Tuesday, July 9, 2024	
Time	Session
8:00–9:00 a.m. EP Ensley A	Registration
9:00–9:15 a.m. EP Ensley A	Welcome and Overview of the Day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen Beckerman, Regional Program Manager (Regions V and VII), Office of Family Assistance (OFA) • Kisha Russell, Regional Program Manager (Regions VI and VIII), OFA • Nikki Hatch, Regional Administrator (Region VIII), Administration for Children and Families (ACF) • Shaun Stevenson, Advisory Services Analyst, Mathematica
9:15–11:30 a.m. EP Ensley A	Testimonial and Facilitated Panel Discussion (Session 1) <i>Participants will have opportunities to ask questions and reflect on the conversation in small groups.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kimberly Thompson, Program Specialist (Regions V and VII), OFA • Ian McMahon, Director of Employment and Benefits Division, Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) • Elizabeth Newton, Family Advisor, CDHS • Susan Moritz, Alumna, Colorado Family Voice Council • Joanna Rosa-Saenz, Member, Colorado Family Voice Council • Brenna Spang, Benefits & Services Section Supervisor, CDHS • Rebecca Balu, Employment & Training Manager, CDHS <p><i>*Due to the length of this session, facilitators will provide a 10-minute break halfway through.</i></p>

Day 1 – Tuesday, July 9, 2024

Time	Session
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch on Your Own
1:00–2:15 p.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Preparing to Engage TANF Participants in Program Improvement (Session 2)</p> <p><i>This session will focus on ways to engage families in program improvement, program readiness to engage families, and the importance of building and maintaining trust with participants. It will include highlights from program practitioners.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian McMahon, Director of Employment and Benefits Division, CDHS • Ndeye Ndao, Community Engagement Specialist, CDHS • Heidi Widmer, Community Collaboration Assistant Director, Kansas Department for Children and Families • Brenna Spang, Benefits & Services Section Supervisor, CDHS • Rebecca Balu, Employment & Training Manager, CDHS
2:15–2:30 p.m. EP Ensley A	Break
2:30–3:45 p.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Preparing to Engage TANF Participants in Program Improvement (Continued) (Session 3)</p> <p><i>This portion of the session will focus on the logistical considerations for engaging families, such as recruiting and compensating families for their input and preparation for deeper family engagement in making program decisions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elizabeth Newton, Family Advisor, CDHS • Ndeye Ndao, Community Engagement Specialist, CDHS
3:45–4:00 p.m. EP Ensley A	Break
4:00–5:00 p.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Innovating for Better Outcomes (Session 4)</p> <p><i>This session is an opportunity for OFA leadership to share priorities and engage in a dialogue with meeting participants. Participants can ask questions during the session.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Sherra Ayala, Deputy Director, OFA
5:00–5:10 p.m. EP Ensley A	Closing

Day 2 – Wednesday, July 10, 2024

Time	Session
9:00–9:15 a.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Welcome and Overview of Day’s Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen Beckerman, Regional Program Manager (Regions V and VII), OFA
9:15–10:30 a.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Connecting TANF Program Culture with Participant Experiences and Outcomes (Session 5)</p> <p><i>This session will highlight the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation’s TANF Office Culture Study, discuss dimensions of organizational culture, and highlight how program culture impacts participant and staff experiences.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asaph Glosser, Vice President of Strategy and Administration, MEF Associates • Nycole Tylka, Assistant Director, Utah Department of Workforce Services • Lorrie Briggs, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Workforce Development, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services
10:30–10:40 a.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Break</p>
10:40 a.m.–12:30 p.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Connecting TANF Program Policy and Practice with Participant Experiences and Outcomes (Session 6)</p> <p><i>This session will focus on describing how TANF policies and practices might shape participants’ experiences and outcomes. It will feature a panel discussion with practitioners who have made recent changes to TANF policy or practice.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tara LaMont, Program Specialist, Jefferson County Human Service Department in Colorado • Jeremy Ritchie, Workforce Advisor, Iowa Workforce Development • Bern Beck, Program Manager, Iowa Health and Human Services • Nycole Tylka, Assistant Director, Utah Department of Workforce Services
12:30–2:00 p.m.	<p>Lunch on Your Own</p>
2:00–3:00 p.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Effectively Implementing TANF Program Policies and Practices to Improve Participant Experiences and Outcomes (Session 7)</p> <p><i>This session will focus on what effective implementation looks like in practice. Through a panel discussion and activities, the session will help participants develop simple strategies to improve participant-focused policies and practices.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gerrie Cotter, Senior Policy Advisor, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services • Tara LaMont, Program Specialist, Jefferson County Human Service Department in Colorado
3:00–3:15 p.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Break</p>

Day 2 – Wednesday, July 10, 2024

Time	Session
3:15–4:30 p.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Listening to Participants and Acting on Their Input (Session 8)</p> <p><i>This session will focus on approaches to gathering input from families and, importantly, acting on their input to make programmatic changes.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lorrie Briggs, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Workforce Development, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services • Ian McMahon, Director of Employment and Benefits Division, CDHS • Brenna Spang, Benefits & Services Section Supervisor, CDHS • Rebecca Balu, Employment & Training Manager, CDHS
4:30–4:45 p.m. EP Ensley A	Closing

Day 3 – Thursday, July 11, 2024

Time	Session
9:00–9:15 a.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Welcome and Overview of the Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kisha Russell, Regional Program Manager (Regions VI and VIII), OFA
9:15–11:15 a.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Now What? Planning Your Next Steps (Session 9)</p> <p><i>During this session, participants will have the opportunity to reflect on previous session discussions and identify areas of interest to explore further. Attendees will be able to connect with peers and federal partners as they develop detailed plans of action to support progress.</i></p>
11:15–11:30 a.m. EP Ensley A	Break
11:30 a.m. –12:15 p.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Now What? Peer-to-Peer Feedback on Plans (Session 10)</p> <p><i>This session will give participants the opportunity to strengthen their plans through peer-to-peer feedback.</i></p>
12:15–12:30 p.m. EP Ensley A	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen Beckerman, Regional Program Manager (Regions V and VII), OFA • Kisha Russell, Regional Program Manager (Regions VI and VIII), OFA • Shaun Stevenson, Advisory Services Analyst, Mathematica