

# Maryland and the ACF-812: Lessons Learned

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# MD's TANF Work Program

- Significant elements of the program include:
  - Universal Engagement
  - Full Family Sanction
  - Hardship exemptions from 60 month time limit
    - 20% cap on TANF-funded hardships has not been exceeded
  - Federal work participation requirements exceeded since implementation of DRA
  - Total job placements a key internal measure

# MD TANF Reports

- TANF Data Report
  - Sample used for TANF, 3000+ cases annually
  - Provides Statewide Work Participation Rate, but not statistically valid at county level
- Performance Measures (county level)
  - Universal Engagement, Job Placements, all families work participation rate, time limits, “core caseload,” job retention and earnings gain reports
- “Life After Welfare” and other research
  - Produced under contract by the University of MD, Baltimore, Family Welfare Research & Training Group

# MD ACF-812 Results, Apr-Jun '11

<b>Work Eligible Individuals (WEI)</b>	<b>551</b>
WEI "countables"	183
WEI, In "federal" activity but not counted: insufficient hours, insufficient verification or exceeded statutory limit	87
WEI in activity not countable, but promotes self-sufficiency	14
WEI disregarded, caring for child <1 yr old	87
WEI subject to sanction	61
WEI exempt, illness or disability for self or family member	84
WEI exempt, DV, ch. <6 no ch. care or St. exemptions	13
WEI, unengaged, relocating or "other"	22

- State calculated Work Participation Rate for quarter: 45.6%

# ACF-812 Revelations for MD?

- The large number of households with either temporary disabilities or caring for the disabled-15% of WEI
  - Temp, “caring for,” long term & SSI headed disabled households are 21% of total caseload
- MD ranks high nationally in March rpt for “0 hour” recipients and good cause assignments
- Variance between State engagement report and ACF-812
  - Job Search and sanctions have higher levels of engagement on ACF-812
  - All periods subject to sanctions in month appear on ACF-812
  - MD engagement report only lists “primary” activity, so job search as a supplemental activity or sanctions either cured early in month or imposed late in month are not listed

# ACF-812 Confirmations of Existing Reports for MD?

- Significant number of WEI in “federal” activities but not meeting 30/20 hr reqs.
- A large number of “child under one” disregards
  - MD ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in disregards in ACF’s March report. OFA rules preclude MD from disregarding subject to sanction, so all disregards are ch <1
- Substance abuse treatment the most common “non-qualified activity”

# Any Missed Opportunities?

- The ACF-812 provided details on work activities that will inform the TANF reauthorization debate on work participation, but....
  - TANF needs outcome oriented performance measures, such as job placement and job retention rates
  - The four monthly cohorts could have been tracked in a longitudinal report through 4<sup>th</sup> QTR FY 2011 to show activities over time of the engaged but not countable recipients