

OVERVIEW of PARTICIPATING PROGRAMS

STATE TANF:

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program is designed to help needy families achieve self-sufficiency. States receive block grants to design and operate programs that accomplish one of the purposes of the TANF program: 1) provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes; 2) reduce the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage; 3) prevent and reduce unplanned pregnancies among single young adults; and 4) encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

The TANF program continues to serve as one of the nation's primary safety net programs for low-income families with children. TANF helps foster healthy and economically secure households and communities for the well-being and long-term success of children and families. Thus, fostering self-sufficiency through work is a major goal of the program. This work is crucial when the economy is strong and even more vital during hard economic times.

TRIBAL PROGRAMS (under the Office of Family Assistance):

Tribal TANF:

Federally recognized Indian tribes can apply for funding to administer and operate their own TANF programs. This option is described under section 412 of the Social Security Act, as amended by Pub.L.104-193. As of October 1, 2012, there are 68 approved Tribal TANF programs. These programs serve 299 federally recognized Tribes and Alaska Native Villages.

TANF gives federally recognized Indian tribes flexibility in the design of welfare programs that promote work and responsibility and strengthen families. Similar to states, they receive block grants to design and operate programs that accomplish one of the four purposes of the TANF program. Tribes operate under the same four purposes as states. ACF Region IV has one Tribal TANF program operating (the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) in North Carolina).

Native Employment Works Program:

The Native Employment Works (NEW) program provides annual funding to 78 grantees for a variety of work-related activities to support job readiness, job placement, and job retention for Native Americans. NEW funding enables grantees to serve their designated service populations through these work activities and supportive services.

NEW program funding supports education, training, and employment activities. Education activities include GED, remedial education and vocational rehabilitation. Training and job readiness activities includes a variety of activities, even entrepreneurial training. In addition, similar to TANF and Tribal TANF, NEW programs fund supportive and job retention services including transportation, child care and counseling and other related services necessary to enable program participation and to prepare for, obtain and retain employment.

CHILD SUPPORT:

The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) partners with federal, state, tribal, and local governments and others to promote parental responsibility so that children receive support from both parents, even when they live in separate households. Our vision is that children can count on their parents for the support and love that they need to be healthy and successful. OCSE seeks to increase the

reliability of child support paid by parents when they live apart from their children by locating parents, establishing legal fatherhood (paternity), establishing and enforcing fair support orders, increasing health care coverage for children, and removing barriers to payment, such as referring parents to employment services, supporting healthy co-parenting relationships, supporting responsible fatherhood, and helping to prevent and reduce family violence

The national child support program is one of the largest income-support programs for families, contributing money to family budgets to help pay for the basics— shelter, food, child care, transportation, and school clothes. OCSE helps child support agencies in the states and tribes develop, manage and operate their programs effectively and according to federal law.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT (WIA):

America’s Workforce Network (AWN) is the nationwide system of workforce development organizations that provide information and services to help individuals manage their careers and employers find skilled workers. Through America’s Workforce Network, many programs help businesses find qualified workers and help job seekers and workers obtain employment and training services to advance their careers. These services include skills training and placement services for adults, dislocated workers, and youth; finding and certifying qualifying employees; income maintenance services; and employer incentive programs.

Partners in America’s Workforce Network include all levels of government, business, labor, and local communities. By linking many components of the workforce investment system, customers have easy access to a broad range of services. Services of America’s Workforce Network members may be obtained at American Job Centers throughout the country.

American Job Centers are at the heart of the new workforce investment system emerging under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). As part of America’s Workforce Network, these centers provide an integrated array of high-quality services so that workers, job seekers and businesses can find the services they need under one roof in easy-to-reach locations. American Job Centers are designed to help businesses find qualified workers and help job-seekers and workers obtain employment and training services to advance their careers. These services include assessment of skills, abilities, aptitudes, and needs; assistance with Unemployment Insurance; access to Wagner-Peyser Act-funded employment services, such as the States’ public labor exchange and labor market information; career counseling; job-search and job-placement assistance; and information on training, education, and related supportive services such as day care and transportation. Eligible individuals also can obtain more intensive services and training. American Job Centers are convenient to most communities in the United States. The names of these centers may differ— American Job Center, American Job Career Centers’ Workforce Development Center, Employment Services, or Job Service; however, they all are committed to providing prompt, courteous, and customer-focused service.

American Job Centers represent a partnership involving Federal, State, and local public and private service providers. They are overseen by community-based Workforce Investment Boards, which are chaired by local businesspeople. These boards focus on strategic planning, policy development, and oversight of the local workforce investment system and its American Job Centers. Boards ultimately will determine the service priorities for the community.