Alaska State Plan

for the

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program



Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP)

Office of the Governor
and
Department of Health
Juneau, Alaska

Plan Effective December 31, 2025

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF) STATE PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May 1996, the Alaska State Legislature created the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP) to replace the former Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and Jobs, Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) programs. That same year, Congress enacted the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), establishing the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant and the associated state Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements. ATAP is Alaska's state-administered benefit program and welfare-to-work system through which the State delivers services funded by the federal TANF program. Implemented in 1997, ATAP operates using both federal TANF block grant funds and required state MOE funds, and serves as Alaska's mechanism for providing cash assistance, work activities, and supportive services to help families achieve self-sufficiency.

The TANF State Plan (the Plan) is required for Alaska to receive federal block grant funds. The Plan describes major program provisions and outlines eligibility criteria, participation requirements, and program benefits available to participants.

All needy Alaskan families with dependent children may apply to participate in ATAP. To qualify, families establish eligibility based on family composition and financial need. To begin participation in the program, ATAP eligible parents or caretaker relatives included in the assistance unit must engage in work activities the first ATAP eligible month, assuring compliance with Title IV-A, section 407 of the Social Security Act.

ATAP is time-limited, and families may only receive a total of 60 months of cash benefits in their lifetime unless they qualify for an exemption. ATAP uses an individualized Work First approach to promote family self-sufficiency. Families build on their strengths and actively seek employment, which includes being assigned a case manager, completing a Family Self-Sufficiency Plan (FSSP), and employability assessment for each adult in the household. Families must participate in work activities and cooperate with child support enforcement. Minor teen parents must live with a parent or in another approved living arrangement while they continue their education.

ATAP includes cash benefits to help pay for basic living expenses while a family makes progress toward economic independence through employment. Supportive services are available through ATAP case management and may be used to purchase or reimburse the costs of services determined necessary to support work activities such as childcare, transportation and job-related training.

ATAP promotes strong partnerships with local governments, Native organizations, non-profit and profit organizations to promote jobs and identify effective community service programs.

The Division evaluates ATAP using data-based performance measures of success. These measures include the number of adults employed within 90 days, the number of adults that closed the ATAP case with earnings, the number who leave assistance with employment and do not return, and the

number participating in a job development activity.

State of Alaska

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I. INTRODUCTION

Alaska enacted a statute in 1996 that provides for a comprehensive family assistance program known as the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP). ATAP replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program. In the same year, the federal government enacted the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 that provides for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. ATAP is funded through a combination of state funds and the federal TANF block grant.

This State Plan (the Plan) describes how Alaska's Department of Health (the Department) and Division of Public Assistance (the Division) will operate ATAP and other TANF funded services. The Congressional intent of the TANF block grant was to increase the flexibility of states to fund a variety of services for needy families. Alaska has taken advantage of this opportunity to use TANF funds for services that promote parental responsibility, work, reduce out-of-wedlock pregnancies and encourage the formation of two-parent families.

1. GOALS

The overarching goals of ATAP is to move Alaskans from welfare jobs so they can support their families, and also to maintain a safety net for those truly in need.

1.1 CENTRAL PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE ALASKA TOWARD THIS GOAL

Emphasize Work
Alaska places a strong emphasis on work and job readiness by adhering to the Work First philosophy that employment is both the goal and the expectation for ATAP recipients. Alaska is committed to creating job opportunities for recipients in public and private sectors and emphasizing work.

Promote Responsibility
Alaska encourages family self-sufficiency and stability through several initiatives promoting individual responsibility. This includes planning for self-support, actively pursuing child support, and prevention of unplanned and out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

Set Limits
Alaska limits ATAP payments to 60 months for most families and reduces benefits for two-parent families during the summer when work opportunities increase. The state disqualifies the entire assistance unit if a parent refuses or quits a job and penalizes the assistance unit if a parent fails, without good cause, to participate in work and other self-sufficiency activities or fails to cooperate with child support enforcement.

Maintain a Safety Net
Alaska maintains a safety net for needy children and encourages families to care for their children in their own home. The State recognizes that there are ATAP recipients for

whom employment is not a realistic objective. Case managers evaluate and work with these families to assist with family self-sufficiency without employment.

Supports Coordination of Agency Resources
Alaska supports efficient and effective use of state and community resources for families receiving services from multiple agencies. Coordination of social service efforts and providing for wrap-around services focused on family integrity, stability, and self-sufficiency allows families experiencing multiple and profound challenges to make meaningful progress towards employment, self-sufficiency, and exiting the program.

2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Alaska is committed to public involvement in program design and implementation. Since program implementation, continued public involvement has been promoted through information sharing and numerous opportunities for public comment.

- TANF State Plan: Alaskans are offered a 45-day public comment period prior to the submission of the Plan to ACF for recertification.
- Alaska Statute and Administrate Code: Alaskans are offered the opportunity to share public comment prior to revisions.
- Community Outreach: Alaska takes advantage of ongoing opportunities to inform and respond to the public through the news media, social media, internet webpages, and participation in various public forums and meetings.

All specified avenues of communication provide the public with information and assist with obtaining public opinion and responses to ATAP.

II. ALASKA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE MAJOR PROVISIONS

3. ELIGIBLE FAMILIES

Families establish program eligibility based on family composition and a determination of financial need that considers the family's available income and assets. For the purpose of participating in ATAP, eligible families are:

- families that include a caretaker relative of one or more related dependent children;
- two-parent families in which both parents live in the same household; or
- families that include a needy dependent child and a non-needy caretaker relative.

3.1 DEPENDENT CHILD

For purposes of eligibility, a dependent child is under 18 years of age. If a child is 18 years of age, he or she may continue to be considered a dependent child if they are a full-time student in a secondary school or in vocational or technical training. Eligibility ends the month of course completion, withdrawal from enrollment, or their 19th birthday, whichever occurs first.

3.2 RESIDENCY

To meet the residency requirement, a family must be living in Alaska with the intent of remaining an Alaska resident. The Division does not treat new residents of the state differently than other families with established Alaska residency.

3.3 EQUITABLE ACCESS

All families in the state will have equitable access to ATAP benefits; this includes Alaska Native families who are not served by a Native Family Assistance Program (NFAP).

There are Division field offices in the majority of Alaska's urbanized areas and urban clusters as defined by the most recent U.S. Census. Divisions offices are open to the public in the following cities: Anchorage, Bethel, Fairbanks, Homer, Juneau, Kenai, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Nome, Sitka, and Wasilla. All offices have a drop box for recipients to submit applications, review forms, supporting documentation, reports of change, etc. during non-business hours.

Office locations, mailing addresses, phone, fax, and email address are listed on DPA's "Application for Services" form and on DPA's website at https://health.alaska.gov/dpa. Office hours, email, fax number, and cases statuses via automated message are also available through DPA's Virtual Contact Center (VCC) at 1-800-478-7778.

Email and secure messaging are available for recipients to send questions, submit applications, review forms, supporting documentation, reports of change, etc.

electronically. The email address is listed on the Division's "Application for Services" form and via automated message through DPA's VCC at 1-800-478-7778, and both email and secure messaging addresses are listed on the Division's website at https://health.alaska.gov/dpa.

A fee agent network is active in over two hundred of Alaska's rural and certain urban communities. Fee agents accept applications for all Alaska public assistance programs.

The Division also has an active contract for services with the interpreter service, Language Link Solutions. This 240-language interpreter service empowers Alaska residents to cross the language barrier and seek public assistance.

In April 2021, the Division launched a virtual contact center. The Virtual Contact Center (VCC) enables recipients to interact with a live person over the phone from 8 AM – 5 PM, Monday through Friday, excluding State of Alaska observed holidays. Recipients can check the status of an application, ask general questions, and apply and participate in an interview for all public assistance programs from the comfort and convenience of their home.

3.4 NON-CITIZENS

Alaska will provide ATAP coverage to otherwise eligible non- citizens classified as "qualified" aliens as defined in 8 U.S.C. 1641. Qualified aliens who arrived in the country prior to the August 22, 1996, enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) may receive assistance immediately upon application for assistance. Qualified aliens who entered the country on or after August 22, 1996, are ineligible for Temporary Assistance for the first five years they reside in the country, unless they are determined to be exempt from the five-year waiting period because of their immigration status (such as a refugee or asylee). In determining eligibility for qualified aliens, a portion of the income and assets of the immigrant's sponsor are counted. Non-qualified aliens are not eligible for Alaska Temporary Assistance.

3.5 60-MONTH TIME LIMIT

Families are not eligible if the family includes an adult who has received 60 months of assistance from ATAP, a TANF-funded program in another state, or a Native TANF-funded program. After 60 months, a family may receive a benefits extension based on hardship if the Division determines the family is unable to become self- supporting because of:

- domestic violence;
- physical or mental inability to perform gainful activity;
- caring for a child or relative who is experiencing a disability; or
- other hardship defined by the Division in regulation.

Time-limit exemptions may not exceed 20 percent of the ATAP caseload. Segregated state TANF funds will be used to provide assistance for families receiving time-limit exemptions beyond the 20 percent maximum allowed under federal law.

3.6 PROGRAM PARTICIPANT RIGHTS

The Division's employee training plans include the topic of ethical conduct and has the Division's processes on the topic readily accessible via the DPA Administrative Procedures Manual, section 100-10 Ethical Conduct. This manual is available on the Division's intranet and public website.

All ATAP applicants and program participants are provided fair and equitable treatment and have a legal right to a fair hearing. An opportunity for a hearing is granted to any recipient whose application for assistance is denied or whose benefits are altered or terminated. A hearing request can be made in writing either by the recipient or by an authorized representative acting on the recipient's behalf to any Division employee. If requested, the Division will assist the recipient in making a hearing request.

A hearing request must be made within 30 days from the date of the notice. The state regulation at 7 AAC 49.010 – 900 further defines the written notice requirements, selection of hearing location, and timelines for these actions.

When applicants and program participants request a fair hearing they are provided with the "All About Fair Hearings" (GEN 84) form and the "Preparing for your Fair Hearing" (DPA5) form in order to prepare them for the fair hearing process. These forms are available in hardcopy and ADA compliant electronic copy and can be physically handed, mailed, faxed, or emailed to the applicant or program recipient.

A recipient has 10 days to submit written opposition if they disagree with the proposed decision. The Department Commissioner or designee will review the proposed decision. Once the Commissioner renders the final decision, it is binding upon the agency. The recipient can still appeal to the Superior Court.

Applicants and program participants of ATAP are informed of their rights multiple times throughout the program eligibility determination process and review period. Their program rights and responsibilities along with their civil rights are provided as follows:

- Printed on pages 3 – 5 of the Division's Public Assistance Application (GEN 50C) and on pages 9 – 11 of the Public Assistance Review Application (GEN 72). These forms are available in hardcopy via lobby or upon fax or mail out request and ADA compliant electronic copy via the Division's public website or upon email request.
- Verbally or visually (American Sign Language) reviewed in a language familiar to the applicant or the participant at time of initial application interview, fee agent interview, and at review interview.
- Printed on every notice sent by the Division.

4. ALASKA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ATAP) REQUIREMENTS

Eligible families may participate in ATAP provided they fulfill specific obligations. These obligations include providing necessary information about themselves and their family through the program application process, planning for self-sufficiency, and participating in work activities. If they fulfill program requirements, they receive benefits to provide for their basic needs and to assist them in achieving self- sufficiency and exiting the program.

4.1 APPLICATION

Application must be made on a form approved by the Division. To be considered complete, the application must provide all requested information and be supported by documentation the Division determines necessary to establish eligibility. The Division will offer assistance to those applicants expressing difficulty with completing the application or obtaining required verification. Completed applications received by the Division will be processed within 30 days of receipt.

4.2 FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PLAN (FSSP) AND ASSESSMENT

Every adult included in a needy family must complete an FSSP. The plan outlines the steps the family will take to increase their independence, identifies specific milestones to indicate progress, and indicates the services the Division will provide to assist the family toward their goals. The family works with a DPA employee or contractor (case manager) to develop their own FSSP.

As the first step in developing the FSSP, an assessment of the skills, work experience, and employability (employability assessment) of each parent or caretaker relative who is age 18 or older, or who is not attending secondary school and is without a high school diploma or GED. It is completed within 30 days after a family's referral to Work Services Case Management by the household's assigned case manager.

4.3 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Participants must report to the Division specific changes in their household circumstances that may affect their program eligibility or payment amount. These reports must be made within 10 days of when the parent or caretaker relative knows of the change. There is a five-day reporting requirement if a dependent child is expected to be absent from the home for more than a full calendar month.

If failure to report results in overpayment, participants are responsible for repayment to the state. An intentional failure to report a change or a misrepresentation of household circumstances may result in fraud prosecution or an intentional program violation penalty.

Participants must also take part in periodic reviews of their family's situation. The Division re-determines eligibility and benefit amount based on the information provided during the reviews and any other changes that are reported between reviews. Benefits are calculated prospectively to better coordinate the benefits with the household's current circumstances, which allows the family to budget more effectively, and helps in their efforts toward self-sufficiency.

4.4 ALLOWABLE ABSENCES EXCEEDING 30 DAYS

The absence of a member of the ATAP home exceeding 30 days may be allowable if all the following conditions of the absence are met and the absence is due to one of circumstances listed below.

CONDITIONS

- The location of the absent individual is known;
- There is a definite plan for the return of the absent individual to the ATAP home; and
- The absent individual shared the home with the ATAP household prior to the onset of the extended absence.

CIRCUMSTANCES

A. Hospitalization or Admission to a Drug and Alcohol Treatment Center
   1. The illness is such that a return to the family can be expected; and
   2. the parent or caretaker relative responsibility for the child continues.

B. Court Ordered Visitation
   1. The caretaker relative maintains a home for the child to return to;
   2. The intent is for the child to return to the ATAP home at the end of the visit;
   3. The child does not receive ATAP benefit payments while in the care of the parent they are visiting; and
   4. The absence does not last longer than 3 calendar months.

C. Education or Training Not Available in the Home Community
   1. Either the child or the caretaker relative is absent because of a need for education or training which is not available in the home community; and
   2. the absent student returns to the home at least once each year; and
   3. the absent student is not receiving ATAP in another household; and
   4. the absent student intends to return to the home at the completion of their education or training; and
   5. the parent or caretaker relative is maintaining a home to which either they or the child intends to return.

D. Planned Temporary Absence
   A parent or caretaker relative is temporarily absent from the home for a planned temporary absence, including employment, seeking employment, and military

assignment. The parent remains a mandatory filing unit member while absent.

4.5 CHILD SUPPORT

Regular child support payments are essential to help most single-parent ATAP families attain and sustain self-sufficiency. Participants are required to cooperate with the Child Support Enforcement Division (CSED) in establishing paternity and establishing, modifying, or enforcing a child support order for a dependent child within the family. This requirement is waived if an applicant or recipient can establish good cause for not cooperating with CSED. Good cause reasons must be approved by the Division. An applicant must assign to the state all rights to child support for months they receive ATAP benefits once the family is eligible for benefits.

4.6 MINOR PARENTS

Minor parents are individuals under the age of 18 who are not married or emancipated, and who have applied for ATAP on behalf of themselves and their dependent children. The program requires minor teen parents to follow specific requirements designed to help them be responsible parents and independent adults.

Minor parents must live in an adult-supervised setting. They may live with a parent or guardian, another adult relative, or in a setting such as a group home that has been approved by the Department. If a minor parent does not comply with this requirement, the entire family is ineligible.

Minor parents who do not have a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) must maintain an adequate level of school attendance in a secondary school or other appropriate training program. An adequate level of school attendance is one that meets the program's graduation or certification requirements. If a minor parent does not comply with this requirement, the family's benefit is reduced.

4.7 PENALTIES AND SANCTIONS

An otherwise needy family may not participate in the ATAP if it is specifically excluded by law. A participating family may have benefits reduced for failure to fulfill program requirements.

Families are ineligible for TANF funded ATAP benefits when:

- The family includes an adult who fraudulently misrepresented their residence in order to receive TANF-funded benefits in more than one state. The family is ineligible for 10 years beginning at the date of conviction.
- The family includes an individual who is determined to be fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody, or confinement after conviction for a crime that is classified as a felony or a class A misdemeanor.

- A caretaker relative refuses or voluntarily separates from suitable employment without good cause. The family is ineligible for ATAP benefits for one month for the first offense, six months for the second offense and 12 months for any subsequent offenses.
- The family caretaker is an unmarried minor parent not living with a parent or in another approved, adult-supervised setting.
- The family includes an adult who intentionally transfers a resource to become eligible. The family may lose eligibility for up to 12 months, depending on the value of the transferred resource.

The Division applies sanctions and penalties regarding ATAP benefits to an adult member of the family when:

- An adult member of the family incurs an administrative fraud penalty. These penalties result in a six-month disqualification of the offender for the first offense, 12 months for the second, and permanent disqualification for any subsequent violation.
- The family caretaker is an unmarried minor parent not attending high school or other equivalent training program. The penalty removes the minor parent from the payment calculation which reduces the family's payment until they comply with educational attendance requirements.
- The family includes an adult who is not a US citizen or qualified alien under 8 U.S.C. 1612-1614.
- An adult member of the family refuses without good cause to comply with the FSSP, work activity, or child support enforcement cooperation requirements. The maximum payment amount for that family's size is reduced by 40% for the first four months. After a home visit is attempted and a determination is made that the health, safety and well-being of the children in the family will not be significantly jeopardized by further reduction, the penalty amount may increase to 75% for the next four months. Thereafter the penalty may result in a full family sanction and the family will be ineligible for assistance. The penalty ends whenever the family demonstrates good cause or comes into compliance with requirements.
- Effective July 1st, 2016, the Division exercised its option established in Section 115(d)(1)(A) of PL 104-193. If the family includes an adult who committed a crime on or after August 22, 1996, which results in a federal or state felony conviction for possession, use, or distribution of a controlled substance (not including alcohol or tobacco) they are ineligible for ATAP unless they are meeting one or more of the conditions listed below:
  1. Is satisfactorily serving, or has successfully completed, a period of probation or parole.
  2. Is in the process of serving, or has successfully completed mandatory participation in a drug or alcohol treatment program.
  3. Has taken action toward rehabilitation, including participation in a drug or

alcohol treatment program.

4. Is successfully complying with requirements of the person's reentry plan.

III. WORK AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The Division has implemented work and self-sufficiency programs that promote job creation, provide the recipient with job preparation and provide job support services designed to help recipients gain and retain paid employment. Alaska regularly evaluates the effectiveness of these programs through data-based performance measures of program results.

The Division conforms to the work participation rates required by TANF rules. Child-only cases are not considered in the participation rate calculation. Federal statute establishes work participation rates of 50 percent for all families and 90 percent for two-parent families. Actual required participation rates may be reduced through applicable federal caseload reduction credits authorized under federal law.

5. WORK SERVICES DELIVERY

The Division uses an employment focused approach to providing services to connect ATAP families to work and the goal of self-sufficiency. The Division encourages all interested and eligible ATAP recipients to pursue work in high demand occupations by working closely with their work services case managers and providing supportive services to assist recipients train for, seek, and maintain these opportunities on an individualized basis.

ATAP program participants are trained for high demand occupations when they show interest and capacity for a field during the employability assessment process. Appropriate referrals are made to training organizations to assist the participants in acquiring the training needed to enter the emergent employment opportunities.

The need for skilled direct care, elder care, and long-term care facility staff continues in Alaska. Recipients are screened for interest and capacity for the work during their intake and self-sufficiency planning process. Those without barrier crimes who show interest and capacity for the work are referred to resources for training and job placement in the field.

Policy and procedure guidance is outlined in the Division Work Services Procedure Manual (WSPM), specifically, sections WSPM 1001-2 Employability Assessment, 1001-5 Additional or Specialized Assessment, 1002 Family Self-Sufficiency Plan, 1004 Supportive Services, and 1005 Job Development.

5.1 CONTINUUM OF WORK SERVICES

ATAP uses the Work First approach for all work services recipients to meet program goals of self-sufficiency for most families. Recipients immediately engage in a job or work activity. The philosophy holds that the best way to succeed in the job market is to join it and develop work habits and skills on the job. Work Services begins with applicant job search. It provides for a supported job search that includes an assessment and screening designed to connect people with the right job. For those unable to find a job, Work

Services provides additional activities geared toward overcoming barriers to employment.

The Work Services approach is centered on the Employability Assessment (EA) and an FSSP. All families with a needy adult must participate in self-sufficiency planning. The FSSP sets out the steps necessary for the family to follow to achieve financial independence and identifies milestones and goals along the way.

The Division has recognized that some adults are not successful at going to work and increasing their self-sufficiency through labor market work search. To help these families, the Division has adopted a holistic approach to supporting the whole family to help those with multiple life complexities be successful in employment and increasing their self-sufficiency.

These ATAP families who experience a variety of circumstances and challenges may engage in a continuum of services for households. These circumstances and challenges include the following examples:

- Co-enrollment with multiple State of Alaka Department and/or community agencies, including but not limited to the Alaska Office of Children's Services, or the Alaska Divisions of Juvenile Justice and Behavioral Health;
- Multiple attempts to find employment through traditional work search activities without success in getting a job;
- Inability to maintain or advance in employment;
- long term medical issues that have limited their participation in work and self-sufficiency activities;
- Disabled family members who rely on an adult in the home for their daily care; and
- Efforts being made to rejoin the workforce after a prolonged medical or mental health challenge.

Because of Alaska's geographic size and economic diversity, the Division supports the use of a variety of activities including Work Experience (WEX) and Community Service Programs (CSP), as acceptable primary work activities for individuals who need to improve their skills and employability. To ensure compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Division ensures the number of monthly hours a client is assigned to work experience or a community service program does not exceed the recipient's benefit amount divided by the state minimum wage.

The Division maintains strong partnerships and contracts with local governments, Native organizations, non-profit and for-profit organizations. These community-based organizations and businesses are in the best position to deliver training, job preparation, job readiness, and education services, as well as to develop job opportunities tailored to each region's economic characteristics. Local partnerships are especially important for effective community service programs and work experience activities that must be

locally established and monitored.

6. WORK ACTIVITIES

ATAP refers mandatory caretaker relatives to a Work Services provider promptly to develop an FSSP and rapidly engage in assigned work activities. Work activities include:

- **Unsubsidized Employment:** Full or part-time employment in the public or private sector, including self-employment and seasonal employment, for which the employer does not receive a public subsidy.
- **Subsidized Private Employment:** Employment in the private sector for which the employer receives a public subsidy to offset some or all the participant's wages and costs of employment.
- **Subsidized Public Employment:** Employment in the public sector for which the employer receives a public subsidy to offset some or all the participant's wages and costs of employment.
- **Work Experience:** A supervised work activity that provides participants with an opportunity to develop work skills and improve employability.
- **On the Job Training:** Training provided by an employer to a paid participant while engaged in productive work that develops the knowledge and skills necessary to perform the job.
- **Job Search:** Activities designed to assist participants in obtaining employment, consistent with federal requirements.
- **Job Readiness Assistance:** Activities that improve employability and prepare participants for employment, including instruction in workplace expectations and other employment related skills.
- **Community Service Programs:** Structured community service activities that provide work experience while benefiting public or nonprofit organizations.
- **Vocational Educational Training:** Organized educational programs that prepare participants for employment in recognized occupations through the development of occupational skills.
- **Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment:** Training that provides participants with specific skills needed to obtain or advance in employment.
- **Education Directly Related to Employment:** Educational activities for participants without a high school diploma or equivalent that are directly related to obtaining employment.
- **Satisfactory Attendance at Secondary School or in a Course of Study Leading to a Certificate of General Equivalence:** Regular attendance in secondary school or a program leading to a high school diploma or recognized equivalent.
- **Providing Child Care Services to an Individual Participating in a Community Service Program:** Providing child care to enable another participant to engage in a community service program.

Alaska meets the requirements of Section 402(a)(1)(B)(iv) by engaging all non-exempt ATAP participants in work activities immediately upon establishing ATAP eligibility, rather than waiting two months. Because Alaska assigns participants to work activities at intake, any individual not yet employed or otherwise meeting work participation requirements may be placed into community service employment as soon as they are determined eligible. For participants assigned to community service or work experience, Alaska uses the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) deeming calculation—dividing the household's ATAP amount by the state minimum wage—to determine the maximum lawful number of monthly hours.

Community Service Program assignments consist of structured, supervised tasks with public agencies, nonprofits, tribal organizations, and community partners that build job readiness. Assignments benefit local communities, help the recipient gain experience in support roles that help agencies deliver services, directly support Tribal community programs, and build job-readiness skills while supporting community benefit. Alaska has not opted out of this provision and fulfills the statutory requirement through its immediate-engagement policy and FLSA-compliant community service placements.

7. WORK ACTIVITY EXEMPTIONS

A parent or caretaker relative may be exempt from the requirement to participate in work activities because they are:

- Needed in the home to care for a disabled relative;
- Determined to have a medical condition that limits their ability to participate in work activities;
- A caretaker of a child aged 12 months or younger, however this exemption has a cumulative 12-month lifetime limit;
- A victim of domestic violence; or
- Living in a community without available childcare for a child under age 6.

Individuals may be referred to other programs or agencies for special services such as vocational rehabilitation, counseling, substance abuse treatment, or other medical services as needs are identified.

The Division is not implementing the federal option that requires an exempt parent or caretaker to participate in community work experience activities after two years of benefit receipt. The state chose to opt out of this provision because mandatory participation after two years of assistance may interfere with time spent on activities that will assist the participant to gain early paid employment.

The Division needs flexibility in assigning program participants to work activities to ensure activities are appropriate to the work season, labor market, and available opportunities, especially in remote areas of Alaska.

7.1 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Division has implemented special provisions for victims of family violence in coordination with the State Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Further guidance regarding the application of this exemption is in the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program manual. The Division will:

- Screen individuals applying for and receiving ATAP for past or current domestic violence victimization;
- Refer domestic violence victims to specialized, community-based services including counseling and shelters;
- Prepare individual service strategies consistent with safety needs;
- Waive program requirements including work participation and child support cooperation;
- Waive program ineligibility due to exceeding benefit time limits when compliance with these requirements would risk the physical, mental or emotional well-being of the family; and
- Reassess the program waiver, at a minimum, every six months.

7.2 LACK OF CHILDCARE

A parent or caretaker relative of a child under age six is exempt from the requirement to participate in work activities if he or she demonstrates an inability to find needed childcare because:

- Appropriate childcare within a reasonable distance from the home or activity site is unavailable,
- Affordable childcare is unavailable, or
- Suitable informal childcare is unavailable.

Childcare is available when a childcare provider is in the community where the parent lives or participates in their work activities and the provider's hours of operation meet the parent's needs.

Childcare is appropriate when the childcare provider:

- Has the ability to provide safe and competent care for children of the same age and development level as the participant's children,
- Is willing to care for the child(ren), and
- Is located within 30 minutes travel time by public or private transportation from the parent's home or activity site.

Childcare is affordable when the family has access to a childcare program to help pay the cost.

Informal childcare is care provided by a relative or friend who is not a licensed childcare

provider.

8. SERVICES PROVIDED

Services provided to ATAP participants may include:

- On-the-job training and subsidized employment,
- Short-term job training,
- Employment counseling and skill building,
- Help with childcare expenses,
- Referrals for paid employment,
- Referrals for community and business work experience,
- Structured job search with Job Clubs and workshops, and
- Transitional services, including childcare assistance, and post-employment support.

9. PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

The Division uses a variety of methods to assess and evaluate how well the Division meets the goal of moving Alaskans into jobs so they can support their families.

9.1 ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Work Services: The Division uses specific data-based performance measures to determine program effectiveness. These measures include an ongoing assessment of program success using the federally mandated work participation rates.

Other measures include:

- Percent of adults employed within 90 days;
- Percent of cases that close with earnings;
- Percent of cases that close and do not reopen; and
- Percent of cases participating in a job development activity.

ATAP data is gathered through the Division's eligibility information system. Ongoing system enhancements are made to evaluate the effectiveness of program policies and to monitor the attainment of regional goals. The Department uses longitudinal data based on evaluation of individual family progress towards safety, stability, and self- sufficiency to measure program efficiency.

Over time the total number of families making progress towards family health, stability, and ability to work is used to determine if program strategies and services are successful in moving parents towards self-sufficiency and employment.

10. INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT WELFARE TO WORK

10.1 ALASKA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) is focused on developing a workforce system that is useful, accessible, and understandable to businesses looking for qualified workers, unemployed Alaskans looking for jobs, and incumbent workers wanting to upgrade their skills in a changing work environment. The board provides policy oversight of state and federally funded job training and vocational education programs. Board members, a majority of whom are business and industry leaders, look at employment trends and emerging occupations to ensure training is customized and Alaskans are prepared for high demand, good wage jobs. The AWIB helps meet the workforce development needs of economically disadvantaged citizens and Alaskans with disabilities by ensuring access to quality job training and employment services statewide.

10.2 ALASKA JOB CENTER NETWORK

Alaska has developed one-stop job centers in various communities. These offices provide job seekers, including ATAP recipients, with professional and convenient resources to help them find work. Key agencies include the Divisions of Public Assistance, Employment Security and Vocational Rehabilitation, other Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) agencies and local non-profit organizations.

11. GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF PROGRAM

Diverse economic conditions within Alaska dictate that programs are locally administered to the greatest extent possible. The Division recognizes that local knowledge and resources must be used to place recipients into jobs or other meaningful work activities. The Division collaborates and contracts with community agencies for delivery of some services and purchases others through service agreements. Partnerships between the Division field staff and community agencies are forged at the local level.

IV. ALASKA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ATAP) BENEFITS

Financial eligibility for ATAP is based primarily on family resources and income. Other family economic considerations include childcare, shelter costs, and the number of dependent children living in the home. ATAP payments are intended to help with basic living expenses and are calculated on a monthly basis. Eligibility is reviewed periodically and redeterminations are made whenever a change in family circumstances is reported.

12. FAMILY NEED

The Division determines which individuals in the household are members of the ATAP economic unit. The Division establishes:

- With whom the dependent child lives;
- Who, of the individuals living with the dependent child, is responsible for the child and if their income and resources are available to the child;
- If the child is financially needy; and
- If any of the individuals in the household are legally or financially responsible for the dependent child's caretaker relative.

Financial need is determined to exist if the family resources and income are below the need standards set by the Department in regulation. There are four sets of need standards used to determine if a family is eligible to receive ATAP based on the composition of the family unit.

The tables used to apply these standards are attached to this plan as Appendix A. These standards are adjusted each year by a percentage increase equal to the cost-of-living percentage increase in Social Security Insurance benefits.

12.1 RESOURCES

ATAP rules allow families to keep up to $2,000 in assets, or $3,000 if the assistance unit includes an individual who is 60 years of age or older. Program rules will exclude the value of a vehicle that is necessary for family transportation, to participate in work or an approved work activity, as a family's home, or to transport a disabled family member. The equity value of any non-exempt vehicles will be counted as part of the resource limit.

12.2 EARNED INCOME DEDUCTIONS

As an incentive to employment, ATAP allows an earned income deduction when determining a participant's payment amount. The earned income deductions are designed to encourage work and to ease the transition from assistance to paid employment. The following deductions are allowed when determining net income eligibility for individuals who have received ATAP in at least one of the previous four months:

Month of Earnings	Amount of Deductions
1 through 12 months of earned income receipt	$150 + 33% of remaining earned income
13 through 24 months of earnings	$150 + 25% of remaining earned income
25 through 36 months of earnings	$150 + 20% of remaining earned income
37 through 48 months of earnings	$150 + 15% of remaining earned income
49 through 60 months of earnings	$150 + 10% of remaining earned income
Over 60 months of earnings	$150 + 0%

12.3 CENSUS INCOME DISREGARD

In an effort to assist the federal government with obtaining the most accurate data for Alaska, the state has elected to disregard an ATAP recipient's income earned through temporary employment from the census. Not only will Alaska as a whole benefit from the income disregard, so too will ATAP recipients.

This opportunity allows for ATAP recipients to learn and practice important job skills, meet their weekly work hour requirement, and earn additional income to assist with attaining the goal of becoming self-sufficient.

12.4 PAYMENTS

The maximum levels of ATAP payments for basic living expenses are set in law:

- $514 a month for a family consisting of a pregnant woman in her third trimester of pregnancy and no other dependent children.
- $452 a month for a dependent child living with a non-needy caretaker relative, plus $102 for each additional child.
- $821 for a dependent child living with one needy parent or caretaker relative, plus $102 for each additional child.
- $821 per month, for a dependent child living with two parents both of whom are able to perform gainful activity, plus $102 for each additional child. During the months of July, August and September, this amount is reduced by 50 percent.
- $923 per month for a dependent child living with two parents, one of whom is physically or mentally unable to perform gainful activity, plus $102 for each additional child.

13. CHILDCARE

Alaska developed a childcare program entitled Parents Achieving Self- sufficiency (PASS) to

ensure seamless childcare services for families as they work to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Childcare costs associated with work, approved education and training, community service or other paid and non-paid work activities are paid for through the PASS program.

PASS is a three-tiered program that provides seamless childcare subsidies as recipients move from ATAP toward self-sufficiency. To participate in any PASS program, a parent must be working, attending school or training program, or participating in activities assigned on their FSSP.

PASS I is funded through TANF and is available for ATAP families engaged in work, job readiness or activities necessary to achieve self-sufficiency. PASS II is funded by TANF and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) and is available for up to twelve months for transitional purposes for those employed ATAP families whose case closes.

The PASS III program is funded by CCDF and provides subsidized childcare for qualifying low-income families. PASS II and PASS III families must be engaged in work, education, or training activities and require a family contribution toward the cost of childcare based on a sliding fee scale depending on a family's gross income and family size.

Provider recruitment and referrals for childcare are accomplished primarily through Alaska's statewide Resource and Referral Network. Alaska requires that all childcare providers who participate in the PASS program be state or Municipality of Anchorage licensed, state approved, or certified by the United States Department of Defense or United States Coast Guard. Tribally Approved or Tribally Certified providers with standards that meet or exceed the State of Alaska's standards are also eligible to participate in the PASS program.

14. SUPPORT SERVICES BENEFITS

The Division contracts services necessary to support work activities and to promote self-sufficiency for ATAP participants and recipients transitioning into the workforce. Only families who are receiving ATAP benefits are eligible for supportive services.

These services include, but are not limited to:

- Transportation,
- Job related training,
- Tools and equipment,
- Employment related clothing,
- Minor auto repair/car insurance,
- Pre-employment interview expenses,
- Start-up expenses, and
- Social Security application assistance.

15. ENERGY ASSISTANCE NON-RECURRENT SHORT-TERM BENEFIT

Federal TANF and TANF MOE is used to fund an Energy Assistance Non-Recurrent Short-Term Benefit. The purpose of this program is to help ease the stress of Alaska's high home energy costs. Energy costs are a significant financial challenge for many Alaska households, particularly those who are low-income. Heating costs are especially challenging in rural communities where they represent a substantial portion of annual household expenses.

These payments meet TANF Purpose 1 because they allow a family to pay for their energy costs. This allows the child to stay in their own home or the home of a relative.

This benefit is only available to families with children who applied for LIHEAP in the FFY 2026 season. All families who received a LIHEAP payment in the FFY 2026 heating season are eligible for the Energy Assistance Non-Recurrent Short-Term Benefit. This payment is funded using Federal TANF. As LIHEAP recipients, these families meet the income and citizenship requirements. These eligibility factors are verified during the LIHEAP application process. Only those households with a child under the age of 18 are eligible for the payment.

TANF MOE is used for the payments to tribal administered households. Only those payments funded with State General Fund that are made to MOE eligible families are reported as TANF MOE. In Alaska, TANF MOE eligible families must have an income at or below 300% FPL, have a child under the age of 18, and be a US citizen or an eligible non-citizen.

16. SHELTER

A portion of the ATAP payment is intended to cover shelter costs. Families with shelter costs below the shelter allowance will receive a smaller benefit payment than a family with shelter costs equal to or higher than the shelter allowance. Payments for families with low or no shelter costs will be reduced by up to 30 percent.

17. BENEFIT DELIVERY

The Division issues ATAP and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) through an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system, using the Alaska Quest Card. ATAP benefit payments may be made to a Quest card or by direct deposit.

ATAP recipients have surcharge-free access to their cash benefits via point of sale (POS) devices at Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) approved retailers throughout Alaska. Additionally, recipients are able to make ATM cash withdrawals with a minimal fee of $0.85 for each withdrawal. Quest cardholders with cash benefits can locate "AllPoint" Surcharge-free ATMs from the DPA Quest Card page at https://health.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ebt/default.aspx.

- ATAP recipients receive a letter in the mail with their Quest card that explains how to use

the card fee free and when fees will be applied if used outside of the fee free parameters. The Division also provides fee and usage information through the "Your Quest Card" brochure and the DPA Administrative Procedures Manual, section 122-15 Quest Cardholder Support. The brochure is available in hardcopy in office lobbies or by fax or mail upon request and in an ADA-compliant electronic format on the Division's public website. The manual section is also accessible online.

The Division has restricted the use of ATAP benefits from Quest cards (via ATMs or POS devices) at liquor stores, bars, gambling establishments, and adult entertainment establishments. The Division partners with the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development to identify businesses where ATAP funds cannot be spent.

The Division collaborates with Fidelity National Information Services, Inc. (FIS) to notify ATAP recipients and relevant businesses throughout Alaska, of federal statute P.L. 112-96, and the associated compliance requirements.

The Division monitors Quest card ATM transactions monthly at applicable businesses statewide.

Additionally, applicants and recipients are informed of these restrictions through language included on applications for services, eligibility review forms, and notices of action, as well as signage for district offices, and posting information on the Division's website. The Division's ATAP and Administrative Procedures Manuals include current guidance on PL 112-96 to ensure consistent staff compliance.

18. PRIVACY

The Division adopts and enforces regulations governing the custody, use, and preservation of records, including the names and addresses of individuals receiving public assistance. Information about recipients is used or disclosed only for purposes directly related to the administration of public assistance programs, or in connection with a Legislator's official business.

Confidentiality rules permit the release of a recipient's address to a law enforcement officer who requests the information and identifies the recipient as a fugitive felon or parole violator. However, only an office manager or an employee of similar or higher rank is authorized to provide this information to law enforcement.

V. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Alaska's ATAP programs promote parental responsibility. ATAP incorporates child support, minor parent program requirements, and program non-compliance penalties as previously described. Other efforts to promote parental responsibility are described under Other TANF Funded Services. In addition, as a companion to ATAP, Alaska enacted in 1996 and reauthorized in 2001 child support provisions intended to strengthen families and promote parental responsibilities. These provisions include:

- Parents of unmarried minor parents may be ordered by a court to pay child support for their grandchild until the minor parent becomes an adult.
- The interest rate on child support arrearages is reduced from 12% to 6% to encourage delinquent obligors to comply.
- Occupational and driver's licenses of obligors who are three or more months in arrears on their child support payments are withheld unless the obligors make arrangements with the CSSD.
- Alaska's participation in the National Registry of Child Support Cases and a National Directory of new hires to support the interstate enforcement of child support.

VI. NATIVE FAMILY ASSISTANCE

Native American Tribes may administer family assistance programs under their own TANF block grants. Federal law specifically names the twelve regional Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act non-profit organizations and the Metlakatla Indian Community as eligible federal block grant recipients in Alaska. These organizations can receive block grants under the Tribal Family Assistance Program upon approval of a plan submitted to the Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services (U.S. DHSS).

There are currently seven Alaska Native organizations operating TANF- funded Native Family Assistance Programs (NFAPs) in Alaska: Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) in interior Alaska; Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) in the Bristol Bay region; Cook Inlet Tribal Corporation, Inc. (CITCI) in the Municipality of Anchorage and Mat-Su Valley; the Association of Village Council Presidents in western Alaska (AVCP); the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA) in southeast Alaska; Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA) in the Kodiak area; and Maniilaq Inc. in the Northwest Arctic region.

Legislation passed in Alaska in 2000 and reauthorized in 2005 gave the Division the authority to award grants to certain Alaska Native organizations who develop and operate their own NFAPs. Native organizations use the state grant to augment their federal TANF block grant to deliver services and activities that promote self-sufficiency and enhance the lives of families in their services areas.

The Native regional non-profit organizations are community-based with close ties to local economies. These organizations are able to deliver locally based and culturally relevant programs. The state also contracts and grants with Native organizations to provide for the delivery of Native Employment Work (NEW) Services in those areas not served by NFAPs.

The Division provides state funds to certain Alaska Native Tribes that have a plan approved by U.S. DHSS and have signed a grant agreement with the Division.

More information on NFAPs in Alaska may be viewed at:

http://dpaweb.hss.state.ak.us/manuals/NFAP/NFAP_Guide.htm.

VII. OTHER TANF FUNDED SERVICES

The Department uses segregated federal TANF funds outside of the ATAP cash assistance program to support programs that serve needy families and advance one or more of the four purposes of the TANF block grant. These purposes are to:

a) Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;
b) End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
c) Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and
d) Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Under state policy, with the exception of the ATAP cash assistance program, segregated federal TANF funds may be used to assist families whose income is at or below the Alaska PASS Child Care Assistance Program income limits. A child is defined as a youth up through their 25th birthday.

Additionally, a child can be temporarily absent from their own home or the home a relative for up to 180 days.

19. TRANSPORTATION

The Department supports the development and expansion of transportation options for ATAP participants who are making the transition to work and self-sufficiency. This support is provided through collaborative planning, and by using segregated federal TANF funds to strengthen the capacity of public transportation systems serving ATAP participants in communities where Limited transportation options affect their ability to obtain and maintain employment.

Most of the funds are used to match federal grants awarded to community organizations that provide transit and paratransit services. Additional funds are used to arrange transportation for individual ATAP recipients when necessary to support participation in work activities or employment. These arrangements may include the use of taxi services, Uber, Lyft, or other community ride-sharing options when appropriate and available. The Division encourages and supports local transportation initiatives developed by communities to address their unique transportation challenges.

20. PREGNANCY PREVENTION & ADDRESSING STATUTORY RAPE

Alaska's TANF program meets Section 402(a)(1)(A)(vi) by supporting statewide statutory-rape-prevention efforts through education, training, and counseling. Existing Out-of-Wedlock Pregnancy Prevention activities provide child-abuse prevention education, coercion-recognition training, bystander-intervention programs, and sexual-harassment prevention, helping youth and adults identify exploitation, grooming, coercion, and age-of-consent violations. Alaska reaffirms that its programs are designed to include men in all prevention and statutory-rape-related education. The Alaska Safe Children's Act requires all K–

12 schools to deliver annual sexual-abuse and healthy-relationship education and mandates staff training on identifying and reporting sexual abuse, including statutory rape. Alaska will strengthen compliance during FFY27 by establishing MOAs and partnerships with programs that meet all components of Section 402(a)(1)(A)(vi).

The Division currently provides a grant to the Alaska Division of Public Health's Adolescent Health Program to educate teens and young adults (both male and female) on the problems and risks associated with unintended teen pregnancies. The program works with community organizations to provide education about preventing pregnancies, clinical services, building self-esteem and awareness, and positive youth development activities across 30 communities in Alaska. The goal is to reduce the number of these pregnancies as a means to improve the family's opportunities to achieve self-sufficiency.

21. SERVICES FOR REFUGEE FAMILIES

Refugee families new to Alaska often encounter multiple barriers to employment and self-sufficiency including language, culture, health, transportation and basic navigation of Alaska social and health services. In order to support refugee families receiving ATAP benefits, the Division collaborates with Catholic Social Services, federal Office of Refugee Resettlement-funded service provider in Alaska.

Refugee families new to Alaska who receive ATAP are referred to Catholic Social Services for work preparation and placement, English as a second language (ESL) classes and life skills education tailored to their needs. This reduces the number of agencies and programs families must access to receive the support they need to successfully plan for and achieve self-sufficiency through employment and ensures that work services which are relevant and effective are provided to this unique population.

VIII. ADMINISTRATION

22. ALASKA STATUTE

State statute requires the Division to:

- Provide assistance with basic living expenses and self-sufficiency services to needy children and their families;
- Determine program standards that provide recipients with incentives to work, participate in financial planning, and opportunities to develop self-sufficiency;
- Prepare a state plan to submit to the federal government to assure that federal money is available to the state for operation of ATAP;
- Administer the program to assure consistency with federal requirements;
- Report to the federal government and state legislature information required to comply with any provisions the federal government determines necessary to ensure correct and verifiable information on the program;
- Conduct studies and research in order to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of the state program; and
- Adopt regulations and take actions necessary to implement, interpret, and administer ATAP.

23. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION OF TANF

The Department of Health (the Department) administers ATAP through the Division of Public Assistance (the Division). The organizational structure of the Department and the Division with primary responsibility for the administration of ATAP is attached as an appendix.

24. MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT

The State funds a range of activities to meet Alaska's TANF Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements. For the purpose of claiming MOE, Alaska's defines a child as any individual under the age of 19 and families whose income is at or below the Alaska PASS Child Care Assistance Program income limits. Additionally, a child can be temporarily absent from their own home or the home a relative for up to 180 days.

A. The following programs are state funded, providing assistance to households with an eligible child:
   - Monthly cash assistance payments and child support pass through payments.
   - Childcare provided to ATAP families participating in work, education, training, or other activities included in the Family Self-Sufficiency Plan.
   - NFAP grants to eligible Tribal Organizations that administer their own federal TANF or Native Employment Works (NEW) Program, supporting basic assistance payments and other allowable expenditures eligible as MOE.
   - A percentage of the Department's administration costs for activities as described in this plan.

- Alaska's Child Support Enforcement Division partners with Tribal TANF programs and provides countable monthly pass-through payments and other MOE eligible expenditures.
- Parents Achieving Self Sufficiency (PASS) childcare subsidies paid to child care providers and parents determined eligible by the Department or its grantees. All families must meet both the non-financial and financial eligibility criteria, including having an income at or below the applicable PASS income limit. Parent(s) must also be employed.

B. Additional programs and services that are funded by the Department or with local funds to meet the TANF MOE requirements, include:
   - **Programs targeted towards "at risk" youth** – Programs which provide after school programming, mentorship opportunities, summer employment, and other supervised support programs and which provide additional educational opportunities for at-risk youth. In some instances, participants may be given grants or scholarships to attend programming with other organizations.
   - **Food and Nutrition** – Programs which provide or support the distribution of emergency food assistance to families.
   - **Housing Assistance** – Programs that help prevent homelessness and support families in securing permanent housing.
   - **Employability Training –** Education and training programs to build skills and capacity in technology, financial security, and other employment related areas.
   - **Youth and College Scholarships** – Scholarships and other financial aid programs which provide opportunities for young adults to attend college or post-secondary programs.
   - **Various United Way programs** – Provides financial support to programs that provide a variety of services focused on achieving a TANF goals. Programs are focused on supporting "at-risk" youth and families.
   - **Information and Referral Services** – Programs and services which aim to connect people with information and resources about health and human services programs and services available in the community.
   - **Support for Children involved with Child Welfare** – Support to help children in foster care remain in their own homes or the homes of relatives.

25. FUNDING

Section 403(a)(1) (A) of the Social Security Act provides that each eligible state is entitled to receive a federal TANF block grant, subject to federal reauthorization and extension, a grant in an amount equal to the state family assistance grant as defined in section 403(a)(I)(B).

- Payments to Agency Administering the TANF Program
  Payments for the TANF program will be made to the organization managing the

AFDC/JOBS programs as of August 22, 1996. This organization is the Alaska Department of Health, Division of Public Assistance.

- State Payments for TANF Program
  Section 405 requires that grants be paid to states in quarterly installments, based on state estimates. The state's estimate for each quarter of the fiscal year by percentage is:

1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
$9,152,539.87 MOE	$9,152,539.87 MOE	$9,152,539.87 MOE	$9,152,539.87 MOE
$11,151,844.00 TANF	$11, 151,844.00 TANF	$11,151,844.00 TANF	$11,151,844.00 TANF
25%	25%	25%	25%

26. CERTIFICATIONS

The State of Alaska will operate a program to provide Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) so that the children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives; to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage; to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and encourage the formation of two-parent families.

This program is known as the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program or ATAP.

In administering and operating a program which provides TANF with minor children under title IV-A of the Social Security Act, the Governor of Alaska, Governor Mike Dunleavy, hereby certifies that:

- The Department of Health, Division of Public Assistance, is the agency responsible for administering the ATAP program in Alaska.
- Local governments and private sector organizations have been consulted regarding the plan and design of welfare services in Alaska so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations; and these organizations have been provided with a 45-day comment period.
- Alaska will operate a Child Support Enforcement program under the State Plan approved under part D.
- Alaska will operate a Foster Care and Adoption Assistance program in accordance with part E and will take all necessary actions to ensure that children receiving assistance are eligible for medical assistance under title XIX of the Social Security Act.
- Alaska will provide each member of an Indian Tribe who is domiciled in the state and is not eligible for assistance under a Tribal Family Assistance plan approved under Section 412 of the Social Security Act, with equitable access to assistance under the state program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the federal government.
- Alaska has established and enforces standards and procedures to ensure against program fraud and abuse, including standards and procedures concerning nepotism, conflicts of interest among individuals responsible for the administration and supervision of the state

program, kickbacks, and the use of political patronage.

- **The State Plan is available to the public.**
- Alaska ensures, that if a state has elected to establish and enforce standards and procedures regarding the screening for, and identification of, domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking pursuant to the Family Violence Option (found at section 402(a)(7) of the Social Security Act):
    1. The TANF Program provides information about the options available to current and potential beneficiaries; and
    2. Case workers and other agency personnel responsible for administering the TANF program are provided with training regarding standards and procedures related to the Family Violence Option.
- Alaska will screen for and identify individuals receiving assistance under this part with a history of domestic violence while maintaining the confidentiality of such individuals and refer such individuals to counseling and supportive services. Furthermore, the state will waive, pursuant to a determination of good cause, other program requirements such as time limits for individuals receiving assistance, residency requirements, child support cooperation requirements, and family cap provisions, in cases where compliance with such requirements would make it more difficult for individuals receiving assistance under this part to escape domestic violence or unfairly penalize such individuals who are or have been victimized by such violence, or individuals who are at risk of further domestic violence.
- Alaska has established and is enforcing standards and procedures to ensure that applicants and potential applicants for TANF are notified of assistance made available by the state to victims of sexual harassment and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.
- Alaska's case workers and other agency personnel responsible for administering the TANF program are trained in: the nature and dynamics of sexual harassment and domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking; state standards and procedures relating to the prevention of, and assistance for; individuals who are victims of sexual harassment or survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; and methods of ascertaining and ensuring the confidentiality of personal information and documentation related to applicants for assistance and their children who have provided notice about their experiences of sexual harassment, domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

CERTIFIED BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

_____

Mike Dunleavy, Governor **Date**