

What is TANF and What Changes are Happening in DC?

TANF is the District's only cash-based assistance program. It serves as a vital lifeline for families with little or no income, helping to pay for rent, utilities, diapers, clothes, transportation, and other essentials.

Having available cash provides power, flexibility, and greater stability, especially during uncertain economic times.

Last year, Mayor Bowser proposed significant cuts to TANF. The Council rejected these changes for FY26, but without further intervention, they will go into effect in FY27 and will directly harm **15,000 children** in the District.

The changes included in the Mayor's budget will:

- ▶ End cost-of-living adjustments for TANF benefits;
- ▶ Reinstitute time limits for families receiving TANF for 60 months or more; and
- ▶ Increase sanctions for not meeting work readiness requirements

Under the FY 2027 time limits and sanctions, a family's benefit could be reduced by 50%. **Beginning in FY 2028, as proposed by the Mayor Bowser's FY 2027 Budget Support Act , a families benefits would be zeroed out (\$0) when a parent has received aid for 60 months.**

Not only have such policies never demonstrably worked, but Mayor Bowser also soundly rejected them a decade ago precisely due to the evidence proving they are ineffective and harm children.

The Council must restore TANF funding to reverse these harmful policies beginning in FY27.

To learn more, visit childrenslawcenter.org/TANF. For questions, contact Leah Castelaz at LCastelaz@childrenslawcenter.org and Maria Manansala at mmanansala@dcfpi.org.