

Case Managers hold cases up to 6 months - April 2016

Holding TANF Cases for at least 6 months	
What cases are held?	Any TANF case that closes but is <u>still receiving SSP services</u> (ERDC, SNAP, DV), would be held by the case managers.
Why are we holding these cases longer?	<p>Our goal and vision is to reduce poverty for our families. Families leave TANF for a variety of reasons. We want to work with all families to help them obtain and maintain independence and stability.</p> <p>One of the many reasons a family leaves TANF is due to employment. In the transition from TANF, families have a step down approach of services (Benefits Cliff). The first three months they may receive employment payments and a reduced childcare copay. At the fifth month, TBA ends and SNAP may decrease (now coding full income). At the sixth month, a family may feel the full impact of losing some element of support from DHS.</p> <p>Within the work of the Benefits Cliff, it was noted that when someone works about 6 months, this is the time that they may be more 'online visible' and they may begin to see creditors looking at them for repayment or wage garnishment. Families may still be vulnerable at 6 months or even longer.</p> <p>The intent of holding cases past TANF closure is to continue the supportive relationship the case manager has built with the family. We know that someone is more likely to reach out for help if they have a pre-existing relationship with a person. As an agency we want to continue facilitating problem solving strategies with families regardless of if they are currently on TANF or not.</p> <p>The supportive relationship is beyond just a monetary one. It may be a call to vent about the time they spend on the bus. It might be a call to ask about a clothing resource or a question about a letter they received. They may be asking about a community resource they heard about but can't find or they need some assistance and you are able to provide the information they need.</p> <p>Whatever that interaction may be, because they have established a relationship with you, there is a comfort level in knowing that they can reach out to their case manager they once had. Getting some support beyond just the TANF grant.</p>

<p>What are the expectations for holding these cases?</p>	<p>For now, the expectation is that cases are held for a 6 month period. You will need to communicate with your families that you are still there if they need anything. Encourage them to call you when an issue pops up. This is a change for us and will be a change for them as well. They may not know that they have the option to contact you for additional support.</p> <p>Not all families will want to engage with DHS once they leave. Some families may not want to engage until the 6th month. Some families may never call. Others may call all the time.</p> <p>Our families are taking steps towards moving out of poverty. This can be a difficult road for many. Not one agency or organization can do this work alone. Through collaboration and engagement with the family and community, families can be successful.</p> <p>The additional support should not be an OPT IN kind of service. Every family should be able to call their prior case manager if they feel they need the assistance or support. You may find that a family is very vocal about not wanting DHS to contact them again now that they have a job. That is okay, but you will still need to hang on to that case because the family may have a need and you are the person they call on the 5th month.</p>
<p>How are cases counted, and what does that workload look like?</p>	<p>Once the TANF case is closed, they are considered a Non-TANF case. If a person is considered closed, the appropriate actions would be taken – close TRACS plan after attendance is captured and coded. There has been no change in the process.</p> <p>As we continue to work through this transition of how we provided services, we will have additional guidance for staff. This will be a fluid process that may never have a hard yes or no answer. It is about what is best for our families and since each family is different, the services will also be different.</p>
<p>How will I be supported in this work?</p>	<p>Again, as we work through this process, case managers will be supported by the leadership within their branch office.</p> <p>They will be supported by the ICC's (Engagement Specialists) on how to work with the families now and when they leave TANF.</p> <p>There is also support at the Central Office level.</p> <p>Case Managers will be given tools on taking opportunities to coach and guide families as they make decisions about their own future, whether they are on TANF or not.</p>
<p>What is next?</p>	<p>Currently we are seeking information from two different groups to develop talking points, to provide some guidance and direction for staff on how to engage differently with our families who are no longer on TANF.</p>

	We will continue to share and keep the field updated as more progress is made.
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