

STATE OF ILLINOIS
Plan for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
January 1, 2020

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

The state of Illinois has developed this State Plan (Plan) to provide Temporary Assistance for Needy Families in accordance with Section 402 of the Social Security Act as revised by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-193) and further amended by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-171). The Plan retains and builds upon concepts successfully implemented in recent years that have dramatically altered welfare in Illinois and provided the impetus for thousands of families to become fully or partially self-supporting.

The Plan describes the program to be administered commencing October 1, 2013, through December 31, 2015.

The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) is the administering agency.

SECTION 2 – CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

I. Eligibility

A. Families

Families must contain at least one eligible child under the age of 18, or under the age of 19 if attending secondary school full time and may contain no more than two adult caretakers who are related to the children. All siblings residing in the home, including half siblings of children included in the assistance unit, must be included in the assistance unit. Parents of the children living with them must be included in the assistance family unit, and their income must be considered when determining eligibility and assistance levels.

Other related caretakers may choose to be included in or excluded from the assisted family unit if they have insufficient income to support themselves according to agency standards. They are not required to be included.

Pregnant women and, if living in the home, their husbands, with no children in the home, may be eligible upon application and verification of her pregnancy.

To be eligible a child must live with a caretaker adult related to the child to the fifth degree of consanguinity.

Children and their married minor parent(s) under age 18 living with the minor parent's parents will be considered separate family units from their parents and siblings. If both legal parents are living with the children, one or both are minors, and they are not married, they will be considered a separate family unit even if living with the children's grandparents.

An unmarried parent under the age of 18 and the minor's children will be included in any existing assistance unit of the minor parent's parents if all three generations are living together.

B. Minor Parents

Unmarried parents under the age of 18 and their children living with them will be assisted only if residing with their parent, legal guardian or other adult relative, or in an adult supervised arrangement as identified in Section 408(a)(5) of the Social Security Act. The unmarried parent may receive assistance for up to six months while an adult-supervised living arrangement is located.

Families headed by unmarried parents under age 18 are exempted from this requirement if the adult parents or guardians are deceased or their whereabouts are unknown, the minor or a child's physical or emotional health or safety would be in danger living with the adult parent or guardian, or the adult parents or guardians will not allow the minor parent and child to live with them. The State of Illinois also finds it is in the best interest of the minor parent and child(ren) to waive this requirement when the minor parent has lived apart from the parent or guardian for at

least one year before the child's birth or applying for the Illinois TANF Program, or the minor has one of the following good causes to live apart from the parent or guardian:

- the parent or guardian lives out of State, is living in an institution, or is addicted to drugs or alcohol;
- the minor's return to the parent's or guardian's home would violate their lease or local health or safety standards;
- the minor has been placed in an independent living program by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services; or
- the minor is participating in a licensed substance abuse treatment program which would not be available if living in the parent's or guardian's home.

The five-year time limit on receipt of assistance does not apply to minor parents under age 18.

Minor parents under age 20, married or unmarried, with no child under the age of 12 weeks must attend school unless they have successfully completed high school or have a GED certificate.

C. Disabled Persons

Individuals who receive disability benefits from Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security, Railroad Retirement, or Black Lung, based on their disability are not eligible for TANF cash assistance if the benefit level equals or exceeds the difference in the payment level between the individual being included or excluded in the assistance payment. For example, a family of four including one adult in Group I has a payment level of \$474 and a family of three children has a payment level of \$284. If the disability payment exceeds the difference of \$190, the individual is not eligible to be included in the TANF payment.

However, the disability income up to the SSI level for an individual with no other income is disregarded when determining the TANF eligibility and payment amount for the other family members.

The preceding paragraphs also apply to individuals receiving benefits from the Veterans Administration based on a 100% disability.

D. Temporary Absence from the Home

Assistance for a child may be continued if the child is temporarily absent from the home for a period not to exceed three months.

The absence of the child may exceed three months and not affect eligibility if the child is hospitalized or attending school and all the following criteria are met:

- the caretaker relative retains primary responsibility for the child's welfare,
- the child considers the relative's home to be the child's permanent residence,
- the child was not removed from the home by court order, and
- the child has not been placed in an IDHS Individual Care Program.

The child's absence does not affect eligibility if the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services certifies the child will shortly be returned to the home.

In no instance are children eligible to receive assistance concurrently in more than one case.

TANF eligibility is not affected whenever the caretaker relative is temporarily absent from the home for a period that does not exceed three months.

E. Residence

Families assisted by the Illinois TANF Program must be residents of Illinois. Illinois residence is established by living in the State and having no current intent to leave. Illinois does not treat families moving into the State from other states differently than other families. The rental or ownership of a home is not required for the establishment of residence. Those without a fixed permanent home are Illinois residents if staying within the State with no intent to leave.

If a family is homeless the Responsibility and Services Plan (RSP) will focus on helping to stabilize the housing situation.

F. Citizenship Status

TANF cash assistance in Illinois will be available to citizens of the United States and to the noncitizens specified below with any applicable limitations.

- People who entered the United States before August 22, 1996 and currently are legally admitted for permanent residence.
- People lawfully admitted for permanent residence who entered the U.S. on or after August 22, 1996, who have resided in the United States for a period of five years beginning on the date the person obtained qualified alien status. There are limited exceptions to this as detailed in some of the categories described below.

- Refugees under Section 207 of the Immigration and Naturalization Act (INA).
- Asylees under Section 208 of the INA.
- A Cuban or Haitian entrant as defined in Section 501(e) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980.
- Amerasians from Vietnam and their close family members who are issued an immigrant visa and departed from Vietnam on or after March 22, 1988.
- Hmong or Highland Laotians
- Those whose deportation is being withheld under Section 243(h) of INA, (as in effect before April 1, 1997) or section 241(b)(3) of the INA.
- Those paroled under Section 212(d)(5) of the INA for at least one year and who entered the United States before August 22, 1996.
- Those paroled under Section 212(d)(5) of the INA for at least one year who entered the United States on or after August 22, 1996, and have resided in the United States for five years beginning on the date the person obtained qualified alien status.
- Those granted conditional entry under Section 203(a)(7) of the INA as it existed prior to April 1, 1980.
- Those meeting the veteran and active duty exceptions specified in Sec. 403(b)(2) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA).
- Abused noncitizens who meet the definition in Section 431 of Public Law 104-193.
- Noncitizens certified by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) as trafficking victims.
- Iraqi or Afghan immigrants with special immigrant status under Section 101(a)(27) of the INA.

Noncitizens who receive TANF will participate fully in the program. The same benefits and services available to others will be provided to eligible noncitizens.

G. Felons

Probation and parole violators and fugitive felons will not be assisted.

Persons who have been convicted of a Class X or Class 1 felony for an act occurring after August 21, 1996, involving the possession, use, or distribution of a controlled substance under Illinois, or comparable Federal, law are ineligible to receive TANF. Other persons who have been convicted of any other drug-related felony under Illinois or Federal law and are not in or have not successfully completed treatment or aftercare will be ineligible for two years. Aftercare includes programs such as Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous, which can be used while the individual waits for an open treatment slot or that meets the continuing requirements of a successfully completed program. The remainder of the family may be eligible if the convicted individual is not the only child in the family. However, the income and resources of the excluded parent or child will be considered available to the family.

An individual convicted in State or Federal court of misrepresenting an address to receive assistance from programs funded by the TANF grant, Title XIX, the Food Stamp Act of 1977, or the Supplemental Security Income Program in two or more states is ineligible to participate in the Illinois TANF Program for a ten-year period beginning with the date of conviction.

H. Assets

A family's assets are not considered in the determination of TANF eligibility.

I. Income Eligibility

In order to receive cash payments under the Illinois TANF Program, a family's countable income must be below the applicable Assistance Payment Level.

An earnings disregard will be applied at application in the amount of the difference between the Assistance Payment Level and 50% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for the applicable family size. Applicants will not be eligible if the monthly income, less the earnings disregard (if applicable), exceeds the Assistance Payment Level. Except as specified in the following sentence, applicants for TANF will not have three of every four dollars earned exempted when determining eligibility. However, employed families who received TANF during the six months prior to application, who lost eligibility because of their earnings and child support, and for whom child support payments have ceased, will receive the earned income exemption when TANF eligibility is determined.

Families already found eligible for assistance who are working will remain eligible until their earned income, minus the earned income disregard, plus their unearned income is greater than the appropriate Assistance Payment Level. The earned income disregard is three of every four dollars earned, i.e., only one-fourth of the gross earnings are considered when determining eligibility and assistance payment amounts

The TANF Program also disregards three of every four dollars a family with earnings receives from excess child support payments distributed by the State Child Support agency to the family.

All earnings of children receiving assistance are disregarded.

Payments based on the disability status of a parent in the home are disregarded in amounts up to the Supplemental Security Income payment level for one person with no income. This disregard is applied to disability benefits from Social Security, Railroad Retirement, Veterans' Administration (if the disability is 100%), and Black Lung.

Unearned income from sources specified as exempt from consideration by law is disregarded when determining eligibility and payment amounts. These sources include the following:

- The value of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.
- The value of the U.S. Department of Agriculture donated foods (surplus commodities).
- The value of home produce of an applicant or recipient intended for personal consumption.
- The value of supplemental food assistance provided under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 as amended, and the special food service program for children under the National School Lunch Act as amended.
- Any benefits received under Title VII, Nutrition Program for the Elderly, of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended
- Any payment received under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.
- Any payments distributed per capita or held in trust for members of any Indian Tribe under Public Law 92-254, Public Law 93-134, Public Law 94-114 or Public Law 94-540.
- Tax-exempt portions of payments issued pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.
- Any compensation provided individual volunteers under the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) Program.
- Payments for supporting services or reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses made to volunteers serving as senior health aides, senior companions, foster

grandparents, and persons serving in the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) and Active Corps of Executives (ACE) and any other programs under Titles II and III, pursuant to section 418 of Public Law 93-113.

- Income received under the provisions of the Illinois Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief and Pharmaceutical Assistance Act. This includes both the benefits commonly known as the circuit breaker and "additional grants."
- Cash which is exchanged for purposes of satisfying payment of shelter-related obligations in situations where the assistance unit shares a dwelling unit with another family or individual(s).
- Social Security death benefit expended on a funeral and/or burial.
- Federally subsidized housing payments under Section 8 of the Housing and Community Development Act.
- Payments from the principal or interest of a trust fund made to or on behalf of a child in the assistance unit when the court orders the money released for a specific purpose other than the income maintenance needs of the child.
- Any adoption subsidy payment or foster care payment received from the Department of Children and Family Services or from a state welfare agency of another state.
- Supportive service payments.
- Unearned income, i.e., needs-based payments, cash assistance, compensation in lieu of wages and allowances received under the Workforce Investment Act.
- The amount of the child support Pass Through paid to the client.
- Three dollars of every four of excess child support payments distributed by the State Child Support agency to a family with earnings. Families with earnings include those engaged in wage supplementation programs, On the Job Training, Job Corps, VISTA, Work Study, or any other program that pays wages in exchange for services.
- Up to \$50.00 of inconsequential income per recipient per calendar quarter.
- Any payment received under Title I of Public Law 100-383 of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.
- Any payment received under Title II of Public Law 100-383 of the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Restitution Act.

- Payments made to veterans who receive an annual disability payment or to the survivors of deceased veterans who receive a one-time lump sum payment from the Agent Orange Settlement Fund or any other fund referencing Agent Orange product liability under Public Law 101-201.
- Payment received under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (Public Law 101-426).
- Any payment provided under the Family Assistance Program for Mentally Disabled Children.
- Emergency Financial Assistance vendor payments provided by a local government public assistance program.
- Any disaster relief payment made by Federal, State or local government or by a disaster assistance group.
- A non-recurring lump sum SSI payment (e.g., Zebley payment).
- Benefits paid under the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 pursuant to Section 2605(f) of Public Law 97-35.
- Earmarked child support payments received by the client for the support of a child not included in the assistance unit.
- Payments to a member of the Passamaquoddy Indian Tribe, the Penobscot Nation or the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians pursuant to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980.
- Up to \$2,000 per year of income received by individual Indians, which is derived from leases or other uses of individually-owned trust or restricted lands pursuant to Section 13736 of PL. 103-66.
- German Reparations Payments to certain survivors of the Holocaust under the German Restitution Act.
- Loans, except loans from individuals who are legally responsible relatives.
- Reimbursements for employment expenses.
- Rickey Ray payments.
- Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) accounts.

Unearned income from other sources is considered dollar for dollar when determining eligibility and assistance payment levels.

A spouse of a caretaker relative, who has no children of his/her own in the TANF unit, is not required to be included in the TANF unit. If he/she chooses to be included, his/her income must be budgeted against the entire TANF unit. His/her income is considered the same as the income of any other assistance unit member. If he/she chooses to be excluded, his/her income must still be budgeted against the needs of his/her spouse only. If the stepparent is not included in the assistance payment the total income for the month is determined and the following deductions are made:

- self-employment business expenses, and
- a "per-person" share for the excluded spouse and for any dependents of either spouse living in the home who are not included in the TANF unit.

The “per person” share is based on the payment level size for the following persons: TANF clients included in the case, the excluded spouse, and any dependents of either spouse who are not included in the TANF unit.

The remaining amount is deemed available to the assistance unit and deducted from the Assistance Payment Level.

Lump sum payments are considered as income in the month received.

J. Payment levels

The Payment Levels are flat, monthly standard amounts and are established for all counties. The amount for an assistance unit is based on the number in the assistance unit and the presence of an adult in the assistance unit. The TANF payment amounts shall be apportioned so that 75% of the grant will be designated for the child or children of the assistance unit and 25% shall be designated for the adult member or members of the assistance unit.

Monthly Assistance Payment Levels (Effective 10/01/2019)

Size of Unit	Adult and Child(ren)	Child(ren) Only
1	312	234
2	423	317
3	533	400
4	644	483
5	754	566
6	865	649

7	975	731
8	1086	815
9	1196	897
10	1307	980
11	1417	1063
12	1528	1146
13	1638	1229
14	1749	1312
15	1859	1394
16	1970	1478
17	2080	1560
18	2191	1643

Earned income is reported semi-annually. Working families receiving TANF will file a report of earned income following the end of the fifth month of each six-month period. Paystubs for amounts received during the fifth month are submitted with the report. The report and paystubs will be used as a basis to forecast earnings and hours for the following six months and to determine the amount of earnings to be considered for reducing the assistance payment. The monthly countable earnings projected will not be changed unless the family reports a change. If the client reports that the job has ended, earnings will stop being deducted for the month after the last paycheck is received. This system brings stability to the family's assistance payment and aligns reporting requirements with SNAP.

K. Employment and Child Support Requirement

TANF will not be provided to families if an adult refuses, without good cause, to be available for work or refuses, without good cause, to pursue child support enforcement.

In the first 30 days after application, individuals are expected to work toward stabilizing their family situation and are not required to engage in work activities. Once approved, if they fail to cooperate with an aspect of the Responsibility and Services Plan (RSP), or fail to cooperate with a child support enforcement activity without good cause, the progressive sanction policy contained in Article VII of this Plan will apply.

Individuals who have been cooperative in employment and child support activities and subsequently state they are not available for work or will not cooperate with child support enforcement and good cause is not present are subject to the provisions of this Topic.

If good cause exists for failing to cooperate with the RSP or with a child support enforcement activity, a cash penalty or sanction will not be imposed.

A statement refusing to participate in child support activities without good cause during the application process results in family ineligibility. For an active client, failure to follow an RSP with no verbal refusal to participate in either the employment or child support programs is a circumstance subject to the sanction provisions contained in Article VII of this Plan.

When an individual maintains, without good cause, an inability or refusal to be available for work activities or child support enforcement, an explanation of the consequences is provided. If, after receiving the explanation, the client continues non-participation, existing benefits will be terminated.

All denial or termination actions based on this policy will be reviewed by a higher administrative level to assure proper application of the policy.

L. Personal Responsibility

Responsibility and Services Plan

All adults and minor parents applying for or receiving assistance will be required to sign a Responsibility and Services Plan (RSP) and follow through with its provisions. The RSP will be periodically updated and staff will monitor the family's progress and compliance. The goal of each person's RSP is to obtain the skills needed to become employed. Based on the Family Assessment, the RSP may include assignment to core and non-core work and training activities, as well as address child immunization, appropriate school attendance, family well-being, and economic self-support goals.

Sanctions, i.e., the reduction of assistance, are included in the program as a tool to enforce the importance of adhering to the activities and goals in the RSP. However, a sanction will not be imposed if good cause exists for the failure to adhere to the RSP. The failure of the Department to make available a supportive service agreed upon in the RSP as necessary for complying with the RSP is always considered good cause.

School Attendance

TANF families shall be subject to the School Attendance Initiative. The Initiative is a partnership among IDHS, Community-Based Organizations (CBO), and local elementary and middle schools that choose to participate. The schools define initial indicators of truancy and refer the family to a CBO for services designed to improve the child's attendance. If the family fails to participate in the CBO program or attendance fails to improve, the assistance payment is directed to an alternate payee for its management. If the truant behavior is not corrected within three months, the family is subject to the sanction provisions in Topic VII of this Plan.

Child Support

Parents will be required to cooperate in establishing paternity for children born out-of-wedlock and in securing child support enforcement.

M. 60- Month Time Limit

Families containing an adult head of household or a spouse of the head of household who has received TANF for 60 months may no longer receive benefits unless eligible for an exception in Section II.M below. This is both a Federal and State limit. TANF benefits, which include Federal block grant funds, received in other states and/or in non-continuous months are applied to the 60-month limitation.

The following families are in a Solely State-Funded program that is not reported as Maintenance of Effort (MOE):

- two-parent families;
- refugees;
- pregnant women with no other children living with them; and
- a parent with a child under age one.
- a work-eligible individual who is not employed and is not assigned to Work Experience, Work First, Community Service, Vocational Education, or a Bachelor Degree Program; and
- a work-eligible individual in their first month of TANF eligibility.

The 60-month time limit applies to all families including those funded in a Separate State Program, unless they meet one of the following exceptions:

- Assistance provided to families with one adult able to work with 30 hours of earnings per week will be provided from State funds (reported as MOE) only and will not be counted against the 60-month limit. Assistance provided to families with both parents present and able to work with 35 hours of earnings per week will be provided from State funds (not reported as MOE) only and will not be counted against the 60-month limit. Assistance provided to families headed by minor parents will also be provided by State funds (reported as MOE) only and not counted against the 60-month limit.
- Assistance provided to single parent families where the parent is in an approved full-time post-secondary degree program and is maintaining a 2.5 cumulative grade point (on a 4.0 scale) will be paid from State funds (reported as MOE) only and will not be counted against the 60-month limit.
- Assistance provided to families who care for a child approved under the Home and Community-Based Care Program waiver will be paid from State funds (reported as MOE) only and will not be counted against the 60-month limit.
- Assistance provided to families where the single parent provides care to a child under age 18 with medical problems, or where one adult provides care to his or her spouse with medical problems and where the demands of care giving do not allow the caregiver to obtain or retain employment of 30 hours per week, will be paid from State funds (reported as MOE) and will not count against the 60-month limit.
- Assistance provided to families where the parent is approved for a Domestic Violence Exclusion will not be counted against the 60-month limit.

Applicants for the Illinois TANF Program will be orally informed of the time limits and will be provided with a clearly written explanation of them.

N. Exceptions to the Time Limit

Families containing an adult head of household or a spouse of the head of household who

has received TANF for 60 months may receive additional months of TANF cash assistance only if they meet one of the exceptions listed below:

- The client has an application for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) pending at the Social Security Administration and IDHS determines the client is probably eligible for SSI. If the client is in the appeal stage of the SSI application, there must be legal or advocacy representation, unless the client can show legal representation is unavailable.
- IDHS determines that the client has a medical condition which prevents the client from obtaining or retaining employment of at least 30 hours per week.
- The client is in an approved education and training program, which will be completed in six months or less after the client's 60th month.
- The client is in an intensive service program to help overcome a barrier to work, including but not limited to programs under mental health, substance abuse, vocational rehabilitation, domestic violence, homeless services and involvement with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. An exception to the 60-month limit will be granted for this reason only if the client's involvement in the program precludes the ability to obtain or retain employment of at least 30 hours per week.
- The client has a severely disabled child approved for a waiver under the Home and Community-Based Care Program.
- The client is the only adult in the assistance unit and is the primary caregiver for a child under age 18 with a physical or mental health problem(s), or is the primary caregiver for his or her spouse who has a physical or mental health problem(s) and the demands of caregiving do not allow the caregiver to obtain or retain employment that would satisfy the criteria in Section II.L which allows a month to not be counted towards the 60-month limit.

The client must request an exception in writing. A written request for an exception may be filed at any time and will be required if the client makes a new application for TANF after the 60 month limit has been exhausted. The client will be informed of the decision on the request in writing. IDHS will periodically review each case to determine if it still meets the criteria for an exception. When IDHS determines the client is no longer eligible for an exception, the client will be notified in writing and will be provided an additional three (3) months of TANF eligibility.

O. Other Eligibility Factors

The following requirements must be met to participate in the Illinois TANF Cash Assistance Program:

- Each member of the assistance unit must provide IDHS with the individual's

Social Security number or provide proof of application for a Social Security number.

- The family must cooperate in securing support for a child whose parent is absent from the home.
- The family must take all reasonable steps to produce documentation and information needed to establish eligibility and the payment amount.
- The family's potential TANF eligibility may not result from a strike. A family's TANF payment will not increase as a result of a strike. Families with strikers may receive TANF if they would have been eligible immediately before the strike began. Workers locked out of a worksite are not considered strikers even if the lockout is a response to a strike.
- The family must report the departure of any family member from the home.

P. Application Disposition and Initial Date of Eligibility

All applications for TANF are to have a disposition made within 45 days.

If the family is eligible the assistance begins on the 30th day after the date of application.

Q. Redetermination of Eligibility

Every effort will be made to complete a redetermination of eligibility timely and accurately in accordance with Federal guidelines.

II. Program Model

Illinois will provide self-sufficiency activities for adults and minor parents in accordance with the following model subject to the availability of limited resources.

- A. All adult clients and teen parents are assessed. The family assessment serves as a basis for creation of the RSP, and the monitoring of the progress of the individual in fulfilling the activities of the RSP is used to identify when an individual is ready to engage in work. Based on this assessment of the client's self-sufficiency strengths and barriers the client will be referred for participation and/or treatment.
- B. Clients for whom barriers to employment are identified through the assessment process will be referred for services or treatment and will be required to follow up as a condition of eligibility. Clients who are identified as having substance abuse problems which prevent them from maintaining successful employment will be referred for treatment.

Clients who do not participate in treatment will be subject to sanction.

- C. Clients with a high school education or recent work experience will be referred to local services for job ready clients and will be assigned to job search.
- D. Clients who are determined not job ready will be assisted in the identification of barriers to employment and provision of services to eliminate those barriers.
- E. Clients in need of additional services will be referred to the appropriate provider.
- F. Supportive services will be provided for any client whose approved RSP requires such services.

Supportive services include child care, transportation, books, fees (e.g., lab or registration), supplies, employment or participation expenses, \$20 per month for job search participants, and a \$20 per month payment to individuals in Work First, work experience, or community service to help cover additional expenses. Supportive services of transportation, employment expenses, costs of books and fees will be provided to clients in accordance with their RSP. Child care will be provided via the State's Child Care Program which is funded, in part, by the Federal Child Care and Development Fund.

Services in general will be available Statewide. However, each area of the State within IDHS and the community will be asked to develop, coordinate, and target resources needed to serve the population in the area. Partnerships will be developed with the Workforce Investment Area (WIA) program, adult education providers, community colleges, employment and training centers, community-based organizations, and substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence providers to develop a comprehensive service delivery system for the TANF population.

III. Work and Training Participation Requirements

A. Work Eligible Individuals - Exclusions

A work eligible individual is an adult receiving cash assistance under the TANF Program or under a Separate State Program for whom Maintenance of Effort (MOE) expenses are claimed or a non-recipient parent living with a child receiving assistance, unless the individual is excluded. Work eligible individuals are included in the Federal work participation rate. The following individuals are excluded as work eligible individuals and are not included in the Federal work participation rate:

- A minor parent who is receiving TANF as a child and is not the head of the household and not the spouse of the head of the household.

- A parent in a family when only children are receiving TANF benefits and the parent is an alien who is ineligible to receive assistance due to his or her immigration status (as outlined in Section II.F of this Plan).
- A parent providing care for a disabled family member living in the home who does not attend school on a full-time basis.
- A non-recipient parent who receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

B. Individuals Excluded from the Federal Participation Rate (Receiving assistance under a Solely State Funded Program for whom MOE expenses are not claimed)

The following individuals who receive assistance under a Solely State Funded Program for whom MOE expenses are **not** claimed are excluded from the Federal work participation rate:

- A parent with a child under age one;
- A refugee;
- Two-parent families where both parents are medically able to work;
- A pregnant woman who has no other dependent children living with her;
- A work-eligible individual who is not employed and is not assigned to Work Experience, Work First, Community Service, Vocational Education, or a Bachelor Degree Program; and
- A work-eligible individual in their first month of TANF eligibility.

A parent with a child under age one is exempt from participating in work and training activities per Illinois State law (305 ILCS 5/9A-4). The other individuals receiving assistance under a Solely State Funded Program for whom MOE expenses are not claimed may be required to participate in work and training activities.

C. Individuals Included in the Federal Participation Rate but Exempt from Work Participation Requirement

Individuals age sixty or older who receive assistance under TANF or under a Separate State Program for whom Maintenance of Effort (MOE) expenses are claimed are included in the Federal work participation rate but are excluded from the work participation requirement per State policy.

IV. Work and Training Activities

A. Unsubsidized Employment

Unsubsidized employment is full or part-time employment in the public or private sector where the employer is not subsidized by the TANF Program or any other public program. Self-employment is included as unsubsidized employment and includes farming, sales, small business, domestic work, and providing child care.

B. Subsidized Employment

Subsidized employment is paid employment in the private or public sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from public funds to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employment. The purpose of subsidized employment is to increase the employability of the client by providing needed work experience that will help transition the client to unsubsidized employment.

C. Work Experience

Work experience is a work activity that is performed in return for TANF and SNAP benefits. Partnerships with individual employers are created to provide individuals with experience in a work setting to develop work skills while receiving their TANF assistance.

D. Work First

Illinois' pay after performance work experience program under the TANF Program is Work First. Work First enables individuals to develop work skills and work habits while earning their assistance as if it were a paycheck. This program seeks to open doors of potential employers for TANF participants.

E. Community Service

Community Service is a structured program of activities in which the client performs work for the direct benefit of the community. Community Service programs serve a useful community purpose in fields of health, social service, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, welfare, recreation, public facilities, public safety, and child care. The goal of Community Services is to improve the employability of a client.

F. Vocational Education

Vocational education training is an organized educational program that is directly related to the preparation of an individual for a specific occupation that requires training other than a bachelor's or advanced degree. Vocational education programs are provided by vocational-technical schools and may also include degree or certificate programs based in secondary schools but may not consist of secondary school training. Vocational education programs may also be provided by postsecondary educational institutions. Clients may participate in vocational education for up to 12 months without a work requirement.

G. Job Search and Job Readiness Activities

Job Search is the act of seeking or obtaining employment. Job Readiness is the preparation necessary for a person to seek or obtain employment. Job Readiness includes barrier reduction services such as substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, and rehabilitation activities.

H. Job Skills Training

Job Skills training is training or education for job skills required by an employer to provide an individual with the ability to obtain employment or to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace. Job Skills training may be customized training for a specific employer or specific employment. It may also include participation in training or retraining that develops or enhances skills in the areas of writing, reading, math, oral and written business communication, or new industry technology.

I. Education Directly Related to Employment

Education directly related to employment, in the case of a client who has not received a high school diploma or GED, means education related to a specific occupation, job, or job offer. This includes adult basic education, English as a Second Language, and GED classes where required as a prerequisite for employment.

J. Satisfactory Attendance at Secondary School

Secondary school attendance is an education program for teen parents age 19 or younger who have not completed secondary school or received their GED. It includes enrollment in a secondary school, a course of study leading to a GED or a basic remedial education.

K. Bachelor's Degree Program

An individual with his/her high school diploma or GED may be approved for participation in a Bachelor's Degree program. The degree program must be administered by an educational institution accredited under requirements of State law. Factors to consider when determining whether a Bachelor's Degree program is appropriate include, but are not limited to, the client's educational and work history, his/her aptitude for further education, his/her career goal, his/her ability to finance tuition and other expenses not provided by IDHS, and his/her ability to arrange transportation, child care, and other family obligations.

V. Other Self Sufficiency Activities

A. Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment

Adults identified as having an alcohol or substance problem must participate in treatment unless employed 30 hours or more per week.

B. Family Violence Program

Persons participating in a Family Violence program may also participate in other activities, if recommended by the provider.

C. Mental Health Treatment

A work-eligible adult who is identified as having a mental health issue that presents a barrier to becoming employed must participate in treatment.

D. Parents with Children Under Age One

Persons with a child under age one may be required to participate in:

- counseling or group sessions that explain the benefits to their child's emotional and financial future of establishing paternity and obtaining child support;
- health-related education and prevention services;
- group activities that promote understanding of the 60-month lifetime limit, the benefits of working, networking and mutual support opportunities;
- a forum with information about child care, education and transportation resources;
or
- activities that address access to medical services and housing.

VI. Work Verification Plan

In accordance with 45 CFR§261.63, the State's TANF Work Verification Plan was approved by the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance, on September 19, 2007.

VII. Sanctions

Unfortunately, some clients fail to fulfill the obligations they agreed to and only reconsider when their benefits are affected. TANF sanctions, i.e., the reduction of benefits, will be consistent regardless of the reason, and the policy will guarantee fairness with a right to correct the problem. Exempt clients who volunteer to participate in work, education and training activities are not subject to sanctions for not complying with those outlined activities.

A sanction is the tool of last resort and represents a failure of the family to be properly engaged in the self-support process. It is an undesirable outcome, and is to be applied only when the following conditions are met:

1. The client has failed to perform a work, education or training activity in the number of hours required under the Responsibility and Services Plan; or
2. The client has failed to perform a self-sufficiency activity required under the RSP; or
3. The client has failed to cooperate with the Child Support Enforcement Program; or
4. The client has failed to cooperate with the School Attendance Initiative.

AND

1. There is not a valid good cause for failing to perform the activity or cooperating with the Child Support Enforcement Program; and
2. The client has been given the opportunity by a pre-sanction meeting to correct the issue before the sanction is applied; and
3. Any supportive services agreed to and identified in the RSP as necessary to perform the activity have been made available; and
4. For failure to take action in accordance with a work, education, training or self-sufficiency activity, a clear distinction has been made that the action leading to sanction is a failure to take a step and not a failure to achieve a goal of the RSP. E.g., failure to attend a GED program is a sanctionable issue if the client has not used the opportunity to correct the failure. However, failure to pass the GED test as specified in the RSP is not sanctionable.

Good cause for failing to take indicated actions will be defined in the Illinois Administrative Code.

Sanctions for failing to comply with work, education, training or self-sufficiency activities will not be applied to a single custodial parent of a child if:

- appropriate child care is not available because none is located within reasonable distance of the family's home; or
- informal child care from a relative or elsewhere is not available or suitable; or
- appropriate and affordable formal child care arrangements are not available.

“Appropriate child care” meets the child’s needs and complies with all applicable State and local laws and regulations. “Reasonable distance” means the client’s total travel time (from home to child care provider to job/activity, plus return trip) is not more than 25% of the client’s total time on the job/activity, e.g., no more than two hours commuting for an 8-hour work day. “Unsuitability of informal child care” means arrangements with family or friends to provide child care do not meet the child’s needs, are unreliable and/or violate applicable State or local laws and regulations. “Affordable child care arrangements” are free or eligible for payment by IDHS and do not exceed IDHS’ maximum rate for the type of care.

Sanctions for failure to cooperate will be applied to families participating in the Illinois TANF Program. When a sanction is imposed, the TANF grant will be reduced by 30% of the 25% TANF grant designated for the adult member(s) for a TANF adult(s)/child(ren) case. This will result in a 7.5% reduction of the grant amount. When a TANF case is an adult(s) only case, the TANF grant will be reduced by 30%.

When a TANF case is sanctioned Illinois will seek to engage the individual in the required activity. A pre-sanction meeting will be offered to the client prior to the imposition of any sanction. This meeting will provide the client the opportunity to show good cause or to remedy the situation by immediately complying with the requirement. The full TANF grant will be restored from the date the customer complies or cooperates.

A client who participates in Work First, Work Experience, or Community Service will be sanctioned if he/she fail to participate in the activity for the maximum hours assigned based on the calculation of his/her TANF grant plus his/her SNAP allotment divided by the higher of the State or Federal minimum wage. When the hours assigned based on this calculation are fewer than 20, the client is deemed to have participated in the 20 core hours needed to meet the Federal participation rate as long as the client completes the maximum number of hours assigned. In order to count a family as having satisfied the 20-hour core activity requirement when it participates, the maximum number hours allowed by dividing TANF and SNAP benefits by the minimum wage, Illinois adopted a mini-simplified SNAP program. Under the mini-simplified SNAP program, when a family fails to cooperate with the TANF work activity requirement, both TANF and SNAP benefits are sanctioned with one exception. If the TANF adult has a child

under age 6, the SNAP benefits are not sanctioned.

VIII. Client Rights

A. Client Notifications

Applicants for cash assistance will be sent written notification of the disposition of the application. If the application is denied for all or any family members, the written disposition notification will identify who was denied and who was approved, a statement of the reason for the denial, and a citation of the policy that resulted in the denial.

Families receiving TANF cash assistance will be sent advance notice when an assistance payment is to be reduced or discontinued. The notice will identify the amount of reduction, the reason for the reduction, and provide a citation of the policy that resulted in the reduction or discontinuance. The notice will be sent at least ten days prior to the effective date of the action.

If the reduction is caused by a client cooperation factor, such as failing to provide available information to determine eligibility, and the client cooperates within ten days of the date the benefit became or would have become available, assistance will be restored retroactive to the date of reduction or discontinuance.

The preceding paragraph does not apply to notices of anticipated sanctions.

B. Right to Appeal

The application disposition notice, the notices of adverse action, and the written material provided to applicants all contain an explanation of the client's right to appeal. The client has the right to appeal the failure of IDHS to act upon requests, the failure to accept or process an application for benefits, the failure to provide proper notice of adverse actions, issues of program policy, the amount of assistance determined by IDHS, the denial of an application, and the reduction or discontinuation of assistance. If proper notice of the action has been issued by IDHS the client or representative must file the appeal within 60 days after the date of notification. The 60-day limit is not applied if proper notice was not provided. If the appeal is filed by the date of the change, or within 10 days of the date of the notice, the action under appeal is not taken until the issue has been resolved.

An administrative hearing is held on appeal issues. The appellant has the right to be represented, present evidence, and question IDHS' representative. If the final administrative decision does not resolve the issue to the appellant's satisfaction, the client may opt for a judicial review.

C. Client Grievance Procedure

Applicants and recipients have a client grievance procedure available to use if they

believe they have not been treated with courtesy, consideration, and respect by a staff member. A management staff member not associated with the grieved action is appointed to investigate the matter. An informal meeting is held among the parties within 10 days. The grievant may bring a representative. Within 15 days of the conference the grievant is informed of any action taken in response to the grievance. Specific employee discipline actions are not included in the disposition notification.

D. Non-Discrimination

IDHS does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, protected age group, disabling condition, national origin/ancestry, political beliefs, or marital status. Vendors contracting with IDHS are required to maintain the same nondiscrimination policy. Complaints of discriminatory acts or treatment may be filed with the IDHS. These are investigated and resolved by the IDHS' Equal Employment Officer.

E. Interpretive Services

Interpretive services are made available to assist Limited English Proficiency applicants and recipients. Interpretive services and TTY devices are available to communicate with individuals who are communication impaired.

F. Confidentiality

Client information may only be used for the administration of the program. This include establishing the family's initial or continuing eligibility, establishing financial need, establishing services need (includes self-support services), finding and making needed services and resources available to families, assuring the health and safety of the family members, and assisting the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services in investigating allegations of child abuse or neglect. Use of information for commercial, personal, or political purposes is prohibited.

Law enforcement agencies are provided the current address of a client for whom they have an outstanding arrest warrant without the family's consent when the law enforcement officer provides the name and Social Security number of the client, evidence that the individual has an outstanding arrest warrant, proof that apprehension of the client is within the officer's official duties, and evidence that the request is made as a proper exercise of the officer's duties.

Families who apply for benefits and contain immigrants will be advised that IDHS will verify their status with the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services if the immigrants are applying to be included in the assistance unit, claim to have assistance qualifying immigration status, and provide some documentation of their status. Applicants will also be advised that IDHS will not verify the status of immigrants unable or unwilling to provide information concerning their status, or not requesting assistance for themselves.

The release or use of information concerning families participating or applying for the Illinois TANF Program is restricted to persons or agency representatives who are subject to standards of confidentiality comparable to those of IDHS.

G. Anti-Displacement and Grievance Procedure

1. An employer may not utilize a work activity participant if such utilization would result in:
 - a. the displacement or partial displacement of current employees, including but not limited to a reduction in hours or non-overtime or overtime work, wages, or employment benefits; or
 - b. the filling of a position that would otherwise be a promotional opportunity for current employees; or
 - c. the filling of a position created by or causing termination, layoff, a hiring freeze, or a reduction in the workforce; or
 - d. the placement of a participant in any established unfilled vacancy; or
 - e. the performance of work by a participant if there is a strike, lockout, or other labor dispute in which the employer is engaged.
2. An employer who wishes to utilize work activity participants shall notify the appropriate labor organization in accordance with the applicable State statute (305 ILCS 5/9A-13).
3. Participants, other employees at the work site, or their representatives, may file a grievance with IDHS if they believe the participant's work assignments are causing displacement. In order for IDHS to consider a grievance, it must be in writing and contain the following information:
 - a. the name and address of the participant or other employee at the work site (the grievant);
 - b. the participant's case number (if grievant is participant);
 - c. the grievant's Social Security number;
 - d. Work Experience (work site); and
 - e. a statement as to why the grievant believes the participant is causing displacement.
4. Within ten days after receipt of a written grievance, IDHS shall arrange an in-person conference with:
 - a. the grievant;
 - b. the grievant's representative, if any;
 - c. the Work Experience Sponsor;
 - d. the Work Experience Sponsor's representative, if any; and
 - e. IDHS' representative.

5. At the in-person conference, IDHS shall solicit and receive from the grievant and the Work Experience Sponsor any documents and statements relevant to the matters alleged in the grievance. The Work Experience Sponsor shall provide whatever documents or other information is requested by the grievant and/or IDHS.
6. Within 15 days after the in-person conference, IDHS shall advise the participant or other employee at the work site and the Work Experience Sponsor in writing of the information obtained in the investigation and of the findings and conclusions as to the matters alleged in the grievance.
7. If IDHS concludes that displacement occurred (as described in subsection (q)(1) of this Section), IDHS shall terminate the participant's assignment to that Work Experience Sponsor. If IDHS concludes, as a result of the evidence presented at the conference, that the Work Experience Sponsor has caused displacement by use of TANF participants in addition to the participants involved in the grievance, IDHS shall terminate those TANF participants' assignment to that Work Experience.
8. IDHS, its employees, or the Work Experience Sponsor shall not retaliate for filing a grievance or otherwise proceeding under this policy. Retaliation will result in the termination of the Work Sponsor contract.

IX. Additional Program Provisions

A. Benefits Delivery

TANF Program benefits are delivered by means of an electronic benefit transfer system, Illinois Link.

Clients may also choose to have their cash benefits directly deposited into their financial institution accounts.

Under Illinois law, it is illegal for any ATM owner to attach surcharges to any cash transaction completed with an Illinois Link card. The Illinois Link brochure informs recipients they may withdraw cash or request a balance inquiry at an ATM two times per month before being charged a fee, and that they may avoid a fee by withdrawing cash at stores which accept the Illinois Link card and provide cash back.

B. Statewide Program Uniformity

Illinois will assist needy families statewide in an objective and uniform manner. The monthly income maintenance support level will be determined by the county in which the family resides. There are three groups of counties and all counties within a group use the same monthly income maintenance levels for each family size. Individual self-sufficiency planning and support services will also be universally included in the program, although local circumstances

may determine the availability of some services.

C. Child Support Enforcement Link

Families who apply for the Illinois TANF Program will in the same action apply for child support enforcement services. The application process will secure information pertaining to the need for paternity establishment and child support enforcement and electronically transmit this data to the child support enforcement component of the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services.

The child support link is vital to self-sufficiency efforts for families with children having an absent parent. A combination of child support, earnings, and the earned income tax credit are a solid foundation for a family to become independent of assistance. With the continued aggressive establishment of paternity already initiated by the Illinois Child Support program, and the establishment of new hire reporting, IDHS anticipates even more families will benefit from the receipt of child and spousal support.

In recognition of the importance of the combination of child support and employment, the TANF Program will employ a special disregard of three dollars of every four of excess child support distributed by the child support agency to a family with earnings. In addition up to \$50 of child support is passed through to the client.

Under Illinois law, an applicant or recipient of assistance automatically assigns support rights to the State.

D. Recoupment of Overpayments

Families participating in the Illinois TANF Program who have received an overpayment of AFDC (prior to July 1, 1997) or TANF, and have not repaid the money, will have the overpayment recouped from the TANF payment. The recoupment amount will be limited to assure that each family has monthly income of at least 90% of the applicable assistance payment level with a \$75 monthly maximum deduction.

E. Native American Tribes

There are no Native American tribal organizations receiving TANF Block Grant funds in Illinois. All Native Americans have access to the Illinois TANF Program equal to that of any other Illinois resident.

F. EBT Use Restrictions

Cash benefits may not be used in any Illinois Link transaction in any liquor store; any casino, gambling casino, or gaming establishment; or any retail establishment which provides

adult-oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state for entertainment.

Clients are informed of this prohibition by means of (a) approval notices; (b) the Illinois Link brochure; and (c) posters displayed in each of the Illinois Department of Human Services Family Community Resource Centers. In addition posters are hung in liquor stores which are not SNAP approved retailers. The Illinois Casino Gaming Association voluntarily blocks ATMs at all casinos.

Clients may be subject to sanction if they violate this provision.

SECTION 3 - ADDITIONAL USES OF TANF BLOCK GRANT FUNDS AND STATE MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT FUNDS

In addition to the program described in this Plan which provides cash assistance and supportive services to needy families meeting the financial criteria contained in Sections III.H & I of this Plan, the State of Illinois also intends to use TANF Block Grant funds and State Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds to provide other services which are reasonably calculated to accomplish the purposes outlined in Section 401 of the Social Security Act (42 USC 601 *et seq.*) or which were in Illinois' approved Title IV-A State Plan on August 21, 1996. For some programs, Illinois will claim qualified third party expenditures toward its MOE requirement via a Memorandum of Understanding with the third party.

I. Programs Funded by TANF Block Grant Funds

The following programs were in Illinois' approved State Plan under Title IV-A on August 21, 1996. The use of TANF Block Grant funds is authorized under Section 604(a)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 USC 604(a)(2)).

- Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Child Welfare Services: Training, emergency assistance, case management, pre-placement, counseling and other services provided to families and children in the child welfare network.
- Emergency Repatriation Planning: Developing and planning activities for emergency repatriation, as needed.

II. Programs Funded by TANF Block Grant Funds or MOE Funds to Families with Income Below 200%

The following programs are provided to eligible families whose income is below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level using TANF Block Grant funds or MOE funds (or TANF Emergency Contingency funds).

- Child Care: Child care provided to families to enable the caretaker relative to work.
- Transportation: Payments for transportation for job search and other activities designed to promote self-sufficiency.
- Employment and Training Contracts: Payments to contractors who provide employment and training services, case management, job placement and other job-related services.
- Illinois Student Assistance Commission (including the Monetary Award Program): Payment of tuition and other fees for low income college students.

- Other Supportive Services: Other supportive services (*e.g.* work and training expenses, uniforms, car repairs) designed to help clients or applicants obtain or retain employment and for training.
- Child Support Pass-Through Payments: Payments made to TANF cash recipients representing the first \$50 of child support collected each month, which payments do not affect eligibility for or the level of TANF cash payments.
- Teen Parent Services: Services which help parents under age 19 stay in school, develop parenting skills, become more self-sufficient and increase self-esteem.
- Crisis Assistance: Payments to families that have emergent needs due to fire, flood, eviction, loss of cash, covering such items as food, clothing and furniture.
- DCFS Teen Parent and Family Preservation Services: Services provided by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to help keep intact families together and help teen parents learn to properly care for their children.
- Youth Programs through the Public Schools: Before and after school, weekend and summer programs designed to help keep children in school, stay away from drug and gang activity, reduce teenage pregnancies and other related activities. May include transporting homeless students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 6 to their school of origin and picking up homeless youth at their temporary residence. Outreach programs designed to ensure that all homeless youth and their families are served are included.
- Substitute Parental Care: Care provided to a family when the caretaker must be out of the home on an emergency basis, *e.g.*, the caretaker is hospitalized.
- Medical Services: Medical services for families that are not covered by Title XIX or Title XXI, *e.g.*, medical services for ineligible immigrant children.
- The Children's Place Contract: A program that allows children infected with HIV to remain in the home by the provision of necessary services to the family.
- Early Childhood Programs: Services to young children and their parents that help learning with long-range outcome of better jobs and reduced teen pregnancies.
- Illinois Community College Board Adult Education Program Funds for educational expenses and supportive services.
- Illinois Free and Reduced Lunch Program: Illinois State Board of Education expenditures for the free and reduced lunch program which are in excess of the Federal program and match requirement.
- Food Banks: Payments to food banks to purchase food for distribution to TANF-eligible

clients receiving food at food pantries that participate in the Emergency Food Program.

- Community Based Tax Counseling and Preparation: Payments to providers to provide tax counseling and tax form preparation and filing.

The following is provided to families with a dependent child under age 18 who qualify for the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit:

State Earned Income Tax Credit: This refundable credit supplements the earned income of lower income workers who have children living with them. Persons are eligible if they have at least one qualifying child living with them and are qualified for the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit.

III. Programs Funded by TANF Block Grant Funds that Meet Purpose 3 or Purpose 4

The following services meet either Purpose 3 or Purpose 4 under Section 601 (a) of the Social Security Act (42 USC 601(a)). Purpose 3 is to "prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies." Purpose 4 is to "encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families." TANF Block Grant funds are used and the services are provided to eligible families without regard to the family's income.

- Teen Responsibility, Education, Achievement, Caring and Hope (Teen REACH): Structured Activities during non-school hours to help prevent involvement in gang activity, alcohol and substance abuse, sexual activity, teen pregnancy and other problems facing teenagers.
- Healthy Families: Intensive home visiting to families at risk of child abuse or neglect, targeting new parents, providing services designed to promote healthy child development, strengthen parent-child relationships, prevent further teen pregnancies, coping with stress and supporting parents as the child's first teacher.
- Parents Too Soon: Counseling and other services for young parents including counseling to help prevent further teen pregnancies.
- Guide to Programs Brochure: a brochure provided to aid recipients detailing the services available through IDHS.

IV. Programs Funded by Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds:

The following services, by their nature, are provided to persons whose income at the time falls below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. When a client is requesting assistance during their time of crisis we accept their statement that their income is below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

- Homeless Services: Funding for meals, shelter and supportive and prevention services to non-profit organizations that serve homeless families and families at risk of becoming homeless, including overnight shelters, transitional shelters and emergency shelters.
- Domestic Violence Services: Services to victims of domestic violence and their children including shelter, hotlines, individual and group counseling, advocacy, information, referral, transportation, school prevention programs, public education and professional training.
- Crisis Nursery: Shelter services to families experiencing a crisis, e.g., domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health issues.

V. Subsidized Employment Programs

TANF Block Grant funds and MOE funds will also be used to fund subsidized employment programs, including transitional jobs programs.

SECTION 4 - PROGRAMS TO ATTACK DEPENDENCY RELATED ISSUES

I. Teen Pregnancy Prevention Strategies and Programs

The most important factors in preventing teen pregnancies are academic success, involvement with a caring adult and the development of expectations for future success after completing school. Illinois has successfully reduced its teen pregnancy rate from 12.7% (of total births) in 1996 to 9.6% in 2009. While the State has been successful in this area, the out-of-wedlock birth percentage has remained steady at approximately 40% (i.e., 401 per 1000 births for 2007, 406.7 per 1000 births for 2008, and 407.6 per 1000 births for 2009). To maintain the out-of-wedlock pregnancy rate as well as the reduced teenage pregnancy rate, Illinois continues to focus on teen pregnancy prevention strategies. Consequently, the services provided feature parental involvement and work with adult mentors; school completion; health education and access to health care; and development of decision-making skills. The specific programs that use these strategies include:

- **Teen REACH** (Responsibility, Education, Achievement, Caring and Hope) is an initiative to provide out-of-school time programming for children between 10 and 17 years of age who live in high-risk communities. The programs emphasize enrichment, recreation, life skills education and mentoring, with active parental involvement.
- **The Abstinence Education Project** is designed to promote abstinence from sexual activity outside of the context of marriage. Intervention strategies include classroom instruction, supervision and mentoring.
- **Parents Too Soon Primary Prevention programs** offer peer support groups which include mentoring, tutoring, opportunities for community service, cultural education, field trips, promotion of school completion, improved academic achievement, recreation activities and skill building in areas such as effective communication, responsible decision making and goal setting.
- **Adolescent Health Promotion projects** provide health promotion, prevention activities and education services. Projects may be focused toward junior and senior high school students in the areas of self-concept, nutrition, health education and sexuality education (including abstinence), alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse, developmental crisis, peer relationships, violence prevention and improved communication between teens and adults, particularly parents.
- **Male Responsibility projects** provide health and sexuality education (including social development and abstinence) and decision making skills; tutoring; mentoring; and structured activities. Services target 10- to 14-year-old males at risk of school drop-out behavior problems.
- **The Subsequent Pregnancy Prevention program** is designed to help adolescent mothers

delay subsequent pregnancies, consistently and effectively practice birth control and continue their schooling to high school graduation.

- **School-Based or School-Linked Health Centers** have established linkages to local health departments, community health care agencies, not-for-profit agencies, parent organizations, schools and the community-at-large. Services include Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT), screening, immunizations, family planning services (on-site or by referral), counseling, health education, acute treatment, sexually transmitted disease (STD) testing and treatment and school or sports physicals.
- **The Family Planning program** provides comprehensive reproductive health services to help men and women control the number and spacing of their children. Program services include health education, contraceptive services, pregnancy testing and counseling and sexually transmitted disease services.
- **Use of Family Planning Services by TANF Recipients.** The ability to avoid unplanned pregnancy is essential for women striving to leave welfare and become economically self-sufficient. Special training is being provided to local office staff by the Family Planning program to improve staff's knowledge of the Family Planning program and to help them encourage women to use family planning services.
- **The Teen Parent Services (TPS) program** helps young, TANF-eligible parents to stay in school and obtain a high school diploma (or its equivalent) so that they may become self-sufficient and economically independent. TPS is a part of the TANF Employment and Training program. Participation is mandatory. TPS services include: intensive case management, comprehensive family assessment, individualized counseling, referral to social service agencies, and reimbursement for child care and transportation to attend school or TPS activities. Since the younger siblings of a teen parent are at increased risk of becoming teen parents themselves, special prevention programs are being developed to serve this population.
- **Substance Abuse Prevention** - Teen pregnancy, delinquency, school drop-out and substance abuse share common risk factors. Therefore, substance abuse prevention efforts also help reduce teen pregnancy and illegitimacy. Illinois' substance abuse prevention program is one of the most comprehensive in the nation. It includes a mix of local, regional and Statewide programs provided by 100 agencies. Substance abuse prevention programs include comprehensive projects, gang and violence prevention, maternal and child health projects, services in public housing, and the Illinois Network to Organize the Understanding of Community Health (In Touch), which organizes and coordinates local prevention efforts.

II. Programs that Provide Education on the Problem of Rape/Sexual Assault

IDHS' Division of Family and Community Service's Domestic Violence and Sexual

Assault Unit partners with the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ICASA) to fund community-based, sexual assault crisis centers and satellite offices throughout the State.

The purpose of ICASA is two-fold: to end sexual assault violence and to alleviate the suffering of sexual assault victims. To accomplish these goals, ICASA advocates for public policy that prevents sexual violence and guarantees sensitivity to victims. ICASA uses the power of public education to change societal attitudes about the causes and consequences of sexual violence.

ICASA's prevention education programs and training sessions are conducted:

- in schools;
- with civic organizations and other community groups;
- with law enforcement officers; and
- with hospital emergency room staff, educators, prosecutors, and others who respond to survivors.

These sessions address aged-based offenses and stress consent, pursuing the issue federally defined as "statutory rape" (statutorily referenced as "sexual assault" in Illinois). The courses are provided to both males and females, targeting the prevention of teen pregnancy.

ICASA's Training Institute also conducts Statewide conferences focused on education, counseling and advocacy. Employees of IDHS and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services participate in the conferences.

SECTION 5 - PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND MARRIAGES

The promotion of healthy marriages and healthy relationships is one of the goals of the TANF program. Illinois supports the formation and maintenance of healthy marriages. As a component of the Responsibility and Services Plan (RSP), appropriate adult members of the family may be referred to IDHS' and community-based organizations' workshops geared toward the promotion of healthy relationships and co-parenting skills.

SECTION 6 - LIST OF FEDERAL CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

In accordance with the requirements of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act of 1996, I, J.B. Pritzker, Governor of the State of Illinois, certify that the State of Illinois agrees to the following:

- A. **CERTIFICATION THAT THE STATE WILL OPERATE A CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM.** Illinois will operate a child support enforcement program under the State Plan approved under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act.
- B. **CERTIFICATION THAT THE STATE WILL OPERATE A FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.** Illinois will operate a foster care and adoption assistance program under the State Plan approved under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, and the state will take such actions as are necessary to ensure that children receiving assistance under such part are eligible for medical assistance under the State Plan pursuant to Title XIX of the Social Security Act.
- C. **CERTIFICATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM.** The Illinois Department of Human Services is authorized to administer and operate the TANF Program.
- D. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT.** Illinois assures that local governments and private sector organizations have been consulted regarding the plan and design of welfare services in the State so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations.
- E. **PUBLIC COMMENT.** Illinois assures that local governments and private sector organizations have had at least 45 days to submit comments on the State Plan and the design of such services.
- F. **CERTIFICATION THAT ILLINOIS WILL PROVIDE NATIVE AMERICANS WITH EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE.** Illinois will provide each Native American with equitable access to assistance under the State program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the Federal government.
- G. **CERTIFICATION OF STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES TO ENSURE AGAINST PROGRAM FRAUD AND ABUSE.** Illinois has established and is enforcing 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.
- H. **OPTIONAL CERTIFICATION OF STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES TO ENSURE THAT THE STATE WILL SCREEN FOR AND IDENTIFY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.** The State of Illinois adopts the Domestic Violence Option pursuant to 42 USC §602(2)(7).

- I. PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF STATE PLAN SUMMARY. The State shall make available to the public a summary of this State Plan upon request.

JB Pritzker Governor
State of Illinois

Date

Terri Vaniter
Illinois TANF Director

Date