

Testimony
House Bill No. 1036
Senate Human Services Committee
Senator Judy Lee, Chairman
March 20, 2023

Chairman Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I am Michele Gee, Director of the Economic Assistance Section with the Department of Health and Human Services (Department). I appear before you to provide testimony on House Bill 1036.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program was originally established as part of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), replacing the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) Program.

House Bill 1036 proposes changes to North Dakota Century Code section 50-09-29, setting the maximum benefit level for the TANF Program at "fifty percent or more of the federal poverty level based on household size".

The TANF benefit level is currently defined in section 75-02-01.2-35 of the North Dakota Administrative Code and represents the amount of household income, adjusted by household size and living arrangement, that is necessary to maintain a standard of living compatible with decency and health. The six basic items of need considered are shelter, food, clothing, personal need items, household supplies, fuel and utilities.

The current standard of need as outlined in North Dakota Administrative Code means that families whose household income is approximately 22-25% of the Federal Poverty Limit may be eligible to receive assistance from the TANF program. Translated into dollars and cents, this means that a single parent household with two children may be eligible to receive a financial benefit from TANF if their household income is equal to or less than \$5,069 a year, or approximately \$422 of earnings per month.

The change proposed in House Bill 1036 would allow families with household income that is equal to approximately 50% of the Federal Poverty Limit to become eligible for TANF financial assistance in North Dakota. This would mean that a single parent household with two children may be eligible for the TANF program if their income is equal to or less than \$11,520 a year, or approximately \$960 a month.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to try to answer any questions the committee may have. Thank you.

Appendix: Comparison of the 2023 state median income (SMI) and federal poverty level

Families potentially eligible for CCAP

Families potentially eligible for LIHEAP and SNAP

Families potentially eligible for TANF

Household Size	25% Federal Poverty Level		100% Federal Poverty Level		10% SMI		60% SMI		85% SMI		100% SMI	
	Annual Income	Hourly Wage	Annual Income	Hourly Wage	Annual Income	Hourly Wage	Annual Income	Hourly Wage	Annual Income	Hourly Wage	Annual Income	Hourly Wage
1	\$ 3,645	\$ 1.75	\$ 14,580	\$ 7.01	\$ 5,568	\$ 2.68	\$ 33,407	\$ 16.06	\$ 47,328	\$ 22.75	\$ 55,680	\$ 26.77
2	\$ 4,930	\$ 2.37	\$ 19,720	\$ 9.48	\$ 7,284	\$ 3.50	\$ 43,686	\$ 21.00	\$ 61,896	\$ 29.76	\$ 72,819	\$ 35.01
3	\$ 6,215	\$ 2.99	\$ 24,860	\$ 11.95	\$ 9,000	\$ 4.33	\$ 53,965	\$ 25.94	\$ 76,452	\$ 36.76	\$ 89,944	\$ 43.24
4	\$ 7,500	\$ 3.61	\$ 30,000	\$ 14.42	\$ 10,704	\$ 5.15	\$ 64,245	\$ 30.89	\$ 91,020	\$ 43.76	\$ 107,082	\$ 51.48
5	\$ 8,785	\$ 4.22	\$ 35,140	\$ 16.89	\$ 12,420	\$ 5.97	\$ 74,524	\$ 35.83	\$ 105,576	\$ 50.76	\$ 124,207	\$ 59.71
6	\$ 10,070	\$ 4.84	\$ 40,280	\$ 19.37	\$ 14,136	\$ 6.80	\$ 84,803	\$ 40.77	\$ 120,132	\$ 57.76	\$ 141,332	\$ 67.95
7	\$ 11,355	\$ 5.46	\$ 45,420	\$ 21.84	\$ 14,460	\$ 6.95	\$ 86,730	\$ 41.70	\$ 122,868	\$ 59.07	\$ 144,551	\$ 69.50
8	\$ 12,640	\$ 6.08	\$ 50,560	\$ 24.31	\$ 14,772	\$ 7.10	\$ 88,658	\$ 42.62	\$ 125,604	\$ 60.39	\$ 147,769	\$ 71.04

"Hourly wage" is calculated by assuming 2080 hours worked per year, per annual income noted.

Multiple wage earners could combine earnings to attain the noted household Income/hourly wage.

88% of Jobs in the ND labor market pay an average wage of \$35/hour or less



Less than \$15 / hr	\$15 - \$20 / hour	\$20 - \$28 / hour	\$28 - \$35 / hour	>\$35 / hour
Child care worker Waiter/Waitress Dishwasher Bartender Fast food Short order cook Cashiers Hotel clerk Laundry/Dry cleaning Maid/Housecleaner	Home health/PT aide Personal care aide Hair stylist Retail Receptionist/secretary Restaurant cook Preschool teacher EMTs & paramedics Assemblers Maintenance workers Nursing assistant Laborer Substitute teacher Stocker/order filler Landscaping/grounds Janitor	Carpenter Loan processor Legal secretary Correctional officers Auto service tech Surgical tech Roofer Lic Practical Nurse Dental assistant Firefighter Surgical assistant Clergy Social worker Police Hotel manager Truck driver	School counselor Rotary drill operator HR specialist Accountant Real Estate Sales PR specialist Counselor Registered Nurse Comp network specialist Construction supervisor Dental hygienist Architectural drafter Speech pathologist	Engineer Constr mgr Electrician Lineman Gen/Op mgr Loan officer Lawyer Sales Software dev Veterinarian Pharmacist Physician Dentist Psychologist
<p>48,790</p> <p># of people employed in a job with average wage of <\$15/hour</p> <p>represents 13% of total jobs</p>	<p>90,050</p> <p>25%</p>	<p>109,930</p> <p>30%</p>	<p>73,420</p> <p>20%</p>	<p>45,000</p> <p>12%</p>

Source: Job Service ND 2021 Employment and Wages by Occupation dataset | mean wage by occupation; 741,920 jobs included in statewide wage summary

TANF Standard of Need

(Monthly Benefit Level)

Caretakers	Children										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	\$0	\$166	\$243	\$316	\$393	\$466	\$543	\$617	\$693	\$767	\$843
1	\$237	\$335	\$436	\$533	\$632	\$731	\$830	\$929	\$1028	\$1127	\$1225
2	\$335	\$436	\$533	\$632	\$731	\$830	\$929	\$1028	\$1127	\$1225	\$1325