

A REPORT
ON
TEMPORARY
ASSISTANCE
FOR
NEEDY
FAMILIES

TANF at 20 in Mississippi:

A Path Out of
Poverty or a
Shrinking
Safety Net?

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The recent 20-year anniversary of the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or TANF program not only provides a key milestone to focus needed attention on one of the country's primary safety nets, it also provides a timely benchmark for reflection and analysis.

Mississippi Low-Income Child Care Initiative's study offers a systematic evaluation and critique of the state of Mississippi's TANF program, specifically through the prism of its purported beneficiaries, the working poor. In addition to analyzing statistical trends and data, the report also takes into consideration crucial insights relative to the roles that race, gender and class play in TANF policy creation and implementation. The report also provides well-researched and doable recommendations that would shift the trajectory of TANF in a more positive direction for the most vulnerable segments of our population. While the report will inevitably give rise to reflection and possible debate, it is our goal that it also provides needed lessons regarding our past failures in welfare reform policies and guidance on where we should go from here.

What's most clear is that Mississippi must address the overwhelming disparities that exist among the working poor by focusing additional resources on those citizens that are most vulnerable – low-income single mothers, especially those of color.

Delivery of critical services like affordable child care, adequate basic cash assistance, and job training leading to higher paying jobs must be improved in order for low-income Mississippians to move out of persistent poverty. Studies have found that single moms were 82% more likely to be employed two years after leaving assistance programs if they also received a sustained child care subsidy.

If Mississippi makes a commitment to meaningful support and refocuses its TANF program on eliminating barriers to work and securing long-term employment, then TANF as a safety net in Mississippi should become a reality within the next decade.

Sincerely,

Carol Burnett
MLICCI Executive Director

OVERVIEW

Twenty years ago, a new federal program was ushered into existence on the premise of moving poor families off the welfare rolls and into jobs. The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, marking a significant change in our system of basic welfare.

As TANF reaches its 20-year benchmark this year, the Mississippi Low-Income Child Care Initiative (MLICCI) has examined the program, and found that it is serving a diminishing number of families below poverty. While its goal of moving people out of poverty and into jobs faced many setbacks in its first two decades, key insights from this report can help to better align Mississippi's TANF program with the realities facing low-income families so more Mississippians can get the support they need to work.

MLICCI shows that a growing number of Mississippi families are eligible for TANF, yet fewer and fewer are being approved to receive help and most who lose TANF are still left without the means to pull themselves out of poverty.

Some of the key report findings include:

- Mississippi's maximum monthly TANF cash assistance amount (\$170 for a family of 3) is consistently the lowest in the nation
- Low-income, single black moms and caretakers are disproportionately impacted by punitive eligibility and sanction policies
- Mississippi's approval of TANF applications in fiscal year 2010 – 2011 dropped from 35% of applications or 11,000 applications to 2.8%, or just over 500. Four years later in 2015, Mississippi approved only 190 of the more than 13,000 applications, or just 1.4%.
- Most families who lost their TANF support didn't do so because they had become self-sufficient through jobs or increased employability due to support services. Instead, most families lose TANF because adults are penalized through strict sanction policies for failing to comply with rigid work requirements and other policies. About two-thirds of the rejected families lost assistance due to some form of sanction or failure to comply with a federal or state policy.

- Before TANF was enacted, about 50% of families below the poverty line from 1994-95 were receiving assistance through the AFDC program. In the past decade, TANF has only reached an average of about 10% of Mississippi's poor families.
- Mississippi left over one-third of unobligated federal TANF funds unspent in 2015.
- Among each of Mississippi's 82 counties, only 11 are serving more than 10% of families with children below poverty

Off the Rolls, Not Out of Poverty

When TANF was launched in 1996 as part of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), or welfare reform, it marked four significant changes in the nation's public assistance safety net program:

- 1) The uncapped entitlement to benefits for all who qualify (AFDC) was replaced by TANF, a finite block grant to states;
- 2) The TANF block grant yielded decision-making to the states;
- 3) A lifetime cap of 64 months was imposed on all recipients; and
- 4) All recipients were required to work, unless meeting a limited number of exemptions.

In the 20 years since federal welfare reform, changes brought about by TANF have been effective at reducing the number of people on welfare, but ineffective at pulling them out of poverty.

Twenty years in, most families who leave TANF do so because they have been

Summary of Research Findings

- Mississippi's maximum monthly TANF cash assistance amount (\$170 for a family of 3) is consistently the lowest in the nation (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, <http://www.cbpp.org/research/family-income-support/tanf-cash-benefits-have-fallen-by-more-than-20-percent-in-most-states>)
- TANF caseloads have fallen by two-thirds since 2003
- Rate of approved applications dropped from 35% in 2010 to an alarming 1.4% in 2015
- Spending on Basic Cash Assistance has fallen significantly since 1997; Spending on child care peaked in the early 2000s and has since remained flat; Spending on work related activities and supports has significantly increased, representing nearly half of TANF expenditures
- Nationally, Mississippi spent the highest amount of its TANF funds on work related supports and activities in 2014
- Since 2003, 7 in 10 family cases were closed on average due to work-related sanctions and non-compliance with other federal and state policies
- Mississippi left over one-third of unobligated federal TANF funds unspent in 2015.
- Only 11 counties are serving more than 10% of families with children below poverty

sanctioned or have failed to comply with another policy, not because they've found a stable source of income.

In Mississippi, black women are 90% of adult TANF recipients.¹ The work requirement in TANF has not lifted these women out of poverty. Women on welfare have a strong work ethic. While they want to work, and often do work, their work most often pays little and is often less than full-time and insecure over time. As illustrated by the stories below, many of these women need education and/or job training leading to higher paying occupations and child care in order to leave welfare for jobs that provide economic security.

While women are half of Mississippi's workforce, they are two-thirds of minimum wage earners. Full-time federal minimum wage still leaves a mom and two children well below the poverty rate. Statewide, well over half of single moms with children under 5 are below poverty.²

Many aspects of PRWORA and of Mississippi's TANF implementation represent a disconnect between policymakers and those impacted by the policy. The gap between policymakers' perceptions of welfare recipients and the reality of what women on welfare experienced was perhaps at its widest when PRWORA was passed and as false images of the "welfare queen" were popularized:

By the 1980s, the rhetoric and discourse around welfare were more virulent and less tolerant than they had been in the early 1960s. This discourse laid the basis for passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act in 1996, which dismantled AFDC, our only guaranteed system of support for poor women.³

Given TANF's drastically limited reach as a safety net, Mississippi should refocus its current use of TANF funds to expand the program's impact on the population of families below poverty through more spending on child care and on basic cash assistance.

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, "Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients FFY 2015," http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ofa/characteristics_and_financial_circumstances_of_tanf_recipients.pdf.

² National Women's Law Center (NWLC), "Women and the Minimum Wage: State by State" (August 2016). Accessible online via, <https://nwlc.org/resources/women-and-minimum-wage-state-state/>. U.S. Census Bureau 2015 American Community Survey.

³ Premilla Nadasen. (2005). *Welfare Warriors: The Welfare Rights Movement in the United States* (New York, NY: Routledge), pg. 239.

To assess how strong TANF as a safety net is for Mississippians, this report examines historical data on TANF expenditures, caseloads, applications, closed cases and the county-level TANF-to-Poverty ratio. The report also offers key recommendations for what Mississippi can do to strengthen the program.

Personal Stories

A collection of personal stories⁴ about Mississippi women's experiences with welfare reform programs illustrates the hollowness of stereotypes about recipients' willingness to work.

“ Before I was sick I used to be a sitter. I worked with old folks, you know, taking care of them.

I worked at the school. I was a janitor.

I have worked at the hotel as a maid, and I worked at a casino as a line server. That's where I got hurt.

Sometimes I didn't make it home until 4 AM with the kids.

I mean it was late, and it was hard on them [children] and that's the situation I'm looking at right now to be placed in [the Work First program] and those kids don't need that. ”

First TANF Experience

⁴ Moore Community House, “In Their Own Words: Mothers in Poverty Talk About the Work First Program” (1997). Copy available from the author upon request.

“ I've done bartending. I've done truck driving. I've done housekeeping.

I've worked in school cafeterias. I've worked in daycares.

I've even worked in the mechanic's shop. I do all my own mechanic work.

My kids had to be with me in the truck all the time but I was glad they were with me. I knew they were safe. ”

Second TANF Experience

“ When I go to work, I go to work. I ain't got the time to play.

I ain't got time to joke. Whatever y'all doing over there, I ain't got time for that stuff.

I do my work...

They were always telling me I was a good worker. ”

Third TANF Experience

Welfare Reform and Mississippi's Implementation

Since its inception, TANF has helped pull families above the poverty level through tangible, core work supports like child care assistance, which are shown to increase a parent's chances of finding work and achieving self-sufficiency.

With the new federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) taking effect in states, the TANF program is increasingly being viewed as a resource that can be coordinated with other programs to support participants in workforce training through supportive services.

Under an experimental framework of “welfare to work,” which included the notion that states may be better able to run their own welfare programs, federal lawmakers made drastic changes to social welfare policy in 1996. TANF imposed a 5-year limit on assistance, it required states to engage recipients in work or work activities and it gave states tremendous flexibility with spending. Recognizing that single parents who were now subject to work requirements would need basic work supports like child care, welfare reform also allowed states to spend TANF funds on a range of work supports.

Welfare reform, however, did not pass without significant controversy. The total restructuring of basic welfare and the discretion granted to states left many questioning how effective the program would be at moving people to work.

Bi-partisan compromises lead to punitive state policy options in the welfare overhaul. For instance, beyond drastic changes to basic welfare, states were given the ability to impose harsher restrictions on childless adults and to ban drug felons from receiving food assistance.

TANF was passed amidst the controversy surrounding its specific details with four broad core purposes for which states can spend TANF funds⁵:

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes
- Reduce the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage

⁵ U.S. Health and Human Services, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/tanf/about>.

- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families

To receive the TANF block grant, states must also designate state funds for a “Maintenance of Effort (MOE).” The amount states spend on the MOE is based on a percentage of spending under TANF’s predecessor, AFDC.

Neither the federal block grant amount nor Mississippi’s MOE spending were indexed to inflation and as a result those dollars get a family much less in 2016.

The TANF program emphasized getting participants to work and decreasing their dependence on public assistance. Matching skills and reducing barriers to the accessible job market, however, was not required to move participants off of TANF.

Employment and getting off of assistance increasingly became the focus of state TANF programs, not necessarily improving the employability of the participant and providing the support they need until they reach self-sufficiency. How recipients were engaged in work activity and the hurdles they had to cross to receive assistance was left entirely to states. More broadly, states were given license to spend funds so long as they met the four core purposes.

In 1997, Mississippi passed state legislation implementing the federal welfare overhaul (House Bill 766), which it dubbed the “TANF Work Program”.⁶

Mississippi’s TANF law was established with more punitive requirements than the federal law mandated. For instance, federal law required states to impose some form of penalty on recipients who failed to establish paternity or obtain child support. Mississippi opted for the maximum penalty to deny parents who are otherwise eligible for benefits if they are unable to establish paternity or obtain child support. Mississippi could have opted for a less punitive policy, such as reducing the benefit level and not denying assistance.⁷ And while good cause exemptions are available, Mississippi’s choice ultimately leads to eligible families denied rather than assisted.

By 2004, Mississippi’s response to welfare reform was summarized by the Department of Health and Human Services:

⁶ Mississippi House of Representatives Bill 766, 1997 Regular Session, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/1997/HB/0700-0799/HB0766SG.htm>.

⁷ “A Review of Mississippi’s 1997 Welfare Reform Legislation,” *Mississippi Joint Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review* (1997), pg. 7. Available online via, <http://www.peer.state.ms.us/reports/rpt357.pdf>.

Mississippi's TANF program features immediate work requirements, time limits, full family sanctions, a family cap, and transitional child care and transportation services. Maximum cash benefits for a three-person family are \$170 per month, which was increased from \$120 in 2000, the only increase in the stipend in the last 26 years. In determining benefits, Mississippi disregards all income for some families for up to six months; otherwise, it disregards \$90 of earnings. Its asset rules are somewhat more liberal than average: it disregards the entire value of one vehicle and \$2,000 in assets beyond that. The state's sanctions are strict, however. Its first sanction for non-compliance with work requirements is imposed for two months, a longer than average duration for full family sanctions. The state does not have a diversion program. Its lifetime time limits (60 months) follow the federal law.⁸

In 2006, Mississippi passed legislation that required up-front job search within 30 days and failure to complete this requirement resulted in an application denial.⁹ Under the state's original TANF law, the period to engage recipients in work was 24-months or what the state deemed appropriate, whichever was sooner. Mississippi's policy choice focused less on increasing the employability of participants to gain a job paying a living wage, and more on immediate interaction with the workforce, often thrusting them into low-wage work and off of TANF, for better or worse.

The impact of Mississippi's mandatory up-front work requirements in TANF had been well documented in Mississippi prior to 2006 with the 2001 study, "Not a Way of Life." The study found that while "TANF was clearly designed as a work program...to get people off of welfare and into a job" and that Mississippi's implementation of TANF had been successful to this end, it noted that "The problem seen now is that people are not moving out of entry-level, low wage jobs," and that "Jobs with higher salaries and benefits are correlated with more education and job training."¹⁰

Currently, TANF applicants undergo up-front job search in counties where job seekers outnumber available jobs and must attend one-day orientations without the guarantee of essential supports like child care and transportation, making it difficult for many to make even initial contacts with caseworkers.¹¹

⁸ "Mississippi's Response to Federal Welfare Reform," *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services* (2004). Available online via, <https://aspe.hhs.gov/report/spending-social-welfare-programs-rich-and-poor-states-final-report/mississippi-response-federal-welfare-reform>.

⁹ Mississippi Senate Bill 3121, 2006 Regular Session, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2006/pdf/SB/3100-3199/SB3121SG.pdf>.

¹⁰ A report by The Scholar Practitioner Program, Department of Public Policy and Administration, Jackson State University and the Stennis Institute, Mississippi State University, "Not a Way of Life: The Impact of the Implementation of TANF on Mississippi Families" (2001). Copy available from the author upon request.

¹¹ Mississippi Department of Human Services website currently instructs parents to make child care arrangements for initial TANF Work Program orientations. See, [http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/temporary-assistance-for-needy-families-\(tanf\)/applicant-and-recipient-information/up-front-job-search-vocational-rehabilitation/](http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/temporary-assistance-for-needy-families-(tanf)/applicant-and-recipient-information/up-front-job-search-vocational-rehabilitation/).

In recent years, Mississippi has also been one of a number of states to regularly introduce legislation drafted by national conservative think tanks like the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) or the Foundation for Government Accountability (FGA) that are hostile toward the social safety net and those who depend on it. For instance, in 2014 Mississippi began requiring all new applicants to be screened for drug use. This policy has demonstrated to be unnecessary by all measures in all states it has passed and has shown to result in more avoidable sanctions due to its rigorous and invasive requirements than drug abuse interventions. Less than one-tenth of one percent of Mississippi TANF applicants have tested positive for drugs since the law went into effect.¹²

There was no evidence to suggest that TANF participants were more likely to use drugs than any other group. This policy masquerades as a way to help people in need, but serves better as an example of unfounded hostility toward the social safety net and those it helps. At the center of this issue like many others in Mississippi are perceptions of race, gender and the influence of implicit and explicit bias on welfare policy. It is unclear whether lawmakers considered whom this policy would impact. Policies the state implements in its TANF program specifically impacts low-income single black moms and caretakers.

Caseload Declines: 2003-2015

Caseload ¹³

Mississippi's TANF caseload has fallen dramatically since State Fiscal Year 2003 across all sub-groups:

- Number of families served declined 62% between 2003 – 2015
- Number of children served declined 66% between 2003 – 2015
- Number of adults served declined 69% between 2003 – 2015
- Number of recipients declined 67% between 2003 – 2015

TANF reached fewer than 20,000 people in 2014 and 2015. Since 2012, year-to-year caseload drops have been sharp.

¹² See Matt Williams, <http://www.rethinkms.org/2015/05/12/last-year-mississippi-started-testing-welfare-applicants-for-drugs-99-9-percent-have-passed/>.

¹³ This period was selected based on availability of data from state agency annual reports.

State Fiscal Year Average	Families	Children	Adults	Recipients
2003	19,547	33,224	11,819	45,043
2004	19,311	32,282	11,640	43,922
2005	16,739	27,291	9,256	36,547
2006	14,076	22,433	7,063	29,496
2007	11,876	18,834	5,361	24,195
2008	11,322	17,911	5,256	23,116
2009	11,195	17,612	5,539	23,151
2010	12,043	17,049	5,120	25,420
2011	11,765	17,994	6,367	24,853
2012	11,640	17,951	6,877	24,829
2013	10,464	15,976	5,944	21,907
2014	9,021	12,757	4,237	18,787
2015	7,400	11,385	3,623	15,009

Source: MLICCI analysis of Mississippi Department of Human Services Annual Reports, <http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/publications/agency-annual-reports/>.

Application Approval and Denial Rates

Following sharp declines in the TANF caseload, the approval rate for TANF applications has also significantly dropped.

As the number of TANF applications received has fallen since the Recession, the rate of approvals also plunged from 2010 – 2011. In one year alone, between the 2010-2011 fiscal years, approved applications dropped from 11,000 to just over 500, reflecting an approval rate dive of 35% of applications to 2.8%. This represented an uncharacteristic year-to-year difference up to that point. However, since 2011, this trend has continued with year over year decreases in the number of approved applications representing less than 3% of total applications received. In state fiscal year 2015, Mississippi approved only 190 of more than 13,000 applications, or 1.4%.

State Fiscal Year	Received	Approved	Approval Rate	Denied	Denial Rate
2003	41321	18251	44.17%	20646	49.96%
2004	38,962	16,859	43.27%	19,882	51.03%
2005	35,848	14,473	40.37%	19,734	55.05%
2006	30,813	11,500	37.32%	18,057	58.60%
2007	27,655	9,741	35.22%	16,023	57.94%
2008	28,718	10,269	35.76%	15,297	53.27%
2009	31,942	10,854	33.98%	17,222	53.92%
2010	31,555	11,061	35.05%	17,470	55.36%
2011	18,353	520	2.83%	16,383	89.27%
2012	18,227	485	2.66%	16,307	89.47%
2013	16377	369	2.25%	14683	89.66%
2014	15,459	294	1.90%	13,874	89.75%
2015	13,452	190	1.41%	12,672	94.20%

Source: MLICCI analysis Mississippi Department of Human Services Annual Reports,
<http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/publications/agency-annual-reports/>.

It is theoretically possible that a portion of new TANF applicants may find employment while their application is pending that places their earnings above the eligibility threshold and their application may thus be denied. But this scenario is not likely applicable to the vast majority of denials since 2011. Considering the number of applications received since 2011, it is highly implausible that 10,000 to 15,000 TANF applicants found work that would price them out of TANF during the period their application was pending each year since 2011.

Closed Cases¹⁴

Each year, the federal Department of Health and Human Services collects a representative sample of states' TANF recipients to assess financial and other characteristics. Data on families who have lost TANF, or TANF Closed Cases, provides broad categories of reasons why the cases were closed. The data collection is specific to TANF participants receiving traditional assistance. It may not reflect participants of other TANF-funded programs who are not also receiving traditional assistance. This data provides insight into many aspects of program participation and particularly the degree to which federal and state-level policies affect the stability of TANF as a safety net.

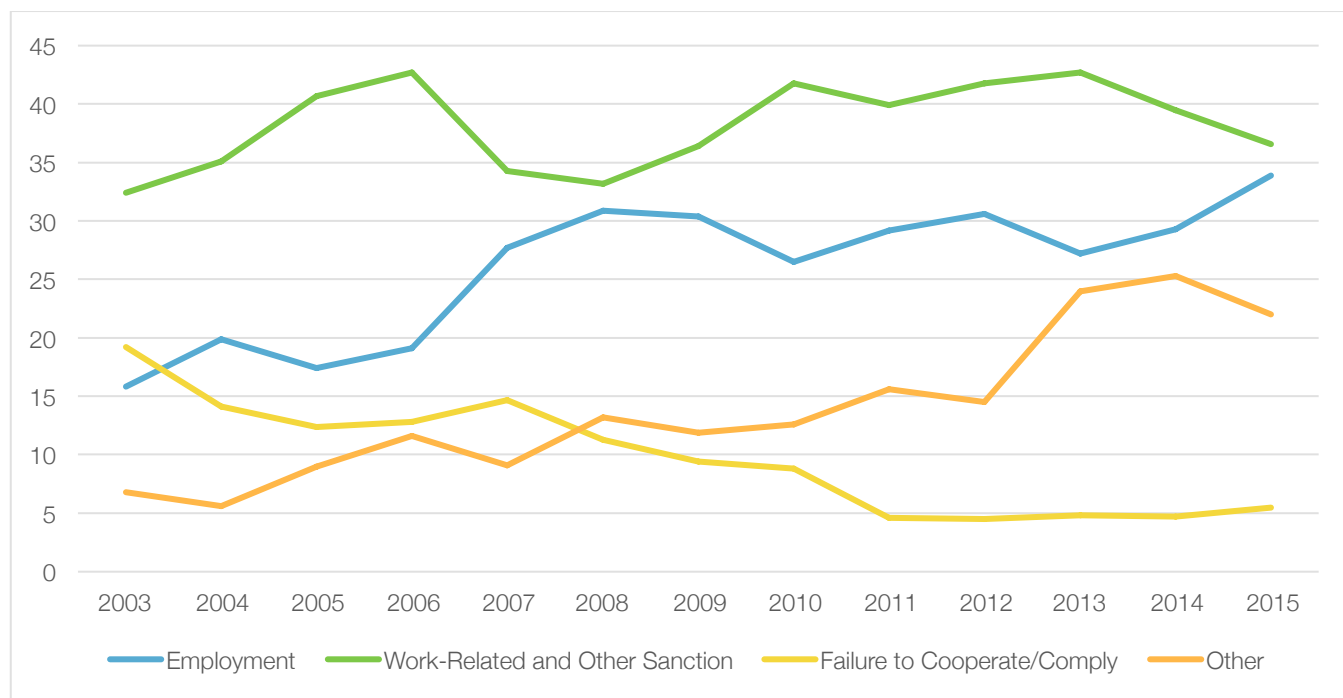
¹⁴ Data is from the HHS multi-year series "Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients".
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/characteristics-and-financial-circumstances-of-tanf-recipients-fiscal-year-2015>.

Reasons other than employment accounted for approximately 69% of closed cases from 2003 to 2015, on average. The rate of non-compliance as a reason for closures has substantially decreased, but the rate of closures due to “Other Sanction” and the even broader category of “Other” have substantially increased. These categories include closures due to non-compliance with federal policies like paternity and child support initiation, but also state-level sanctions for non-compliance with state-specific eligibility and work-requirement policies and procedures. While good cause exemptions are available to recipients in some cases, the clarity and method of communicating those exemptions can differ in between counties and on an individual basis.

Closed cases due to the broad reason “Other” increased from 6.8% in 2003 to 22% in 2015. Cases closed due to “Other Sanction” increased from 5.9% in 2003 to 10.4% in 2015.

Work-related sanctions alone, and coupled with “Other Sanctions,” account for the highest rate of family case closures most years in Mississippi. The rate of closed cases due to work-related sanctions increased following the Great Recession, a period of scarce job availability.

Percent of Closed Family Cases by Reasons for Closure, 2003-2015

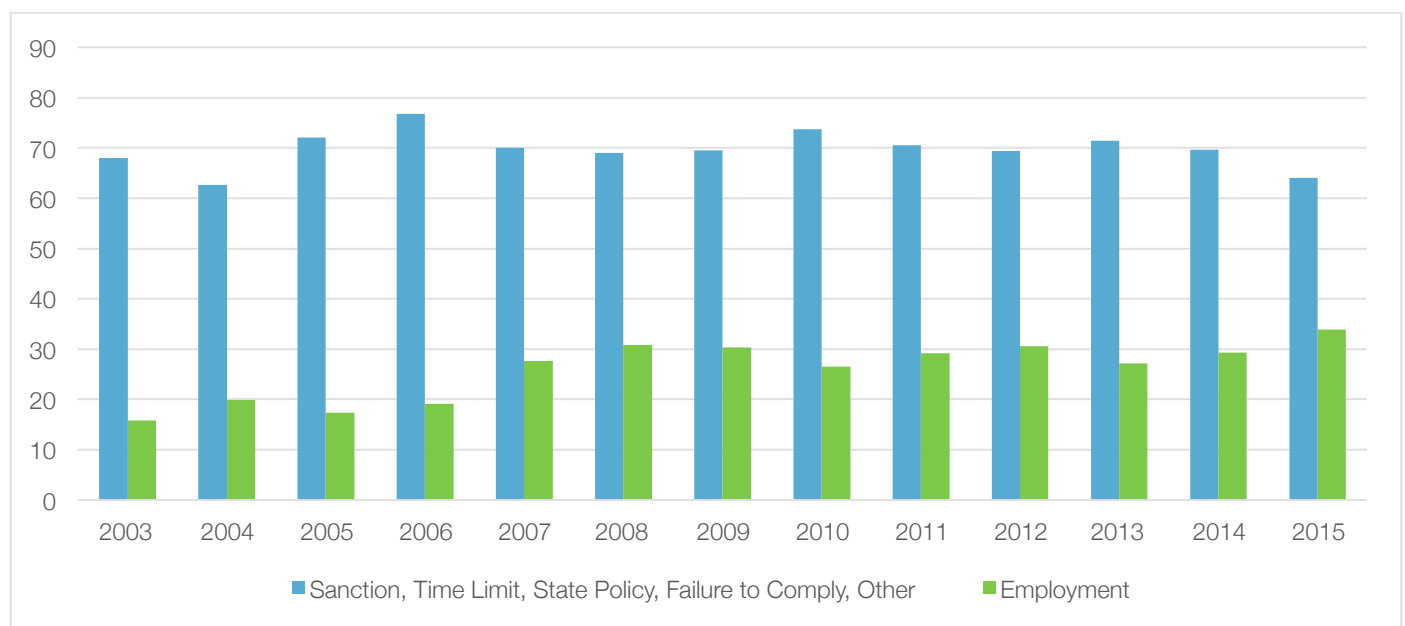


Employment as a reason for case closures nearly doubled from 2003 to 2015, but still only accounted for 1 in 3 closed family cases in 2015.

Virtually none--less than a fraction of 1%--of family cases are closed due to marriage or the federal time limit. In the past decade, voluntary family case closures have also decreased to less than 1%. In 2015, only 1.8% of family cases were closed due to excess income or resources.

Taken together, most reasons families lose TANF in Mississippi have less to do with moving a family to self-sufficiency by connecting them to employment or by increasing their employability and more to do with arbitrary eligibility policies and unrealistic work requirements. Consistently overtime, about two-thirds of families receiving TANF assistance lose it due to some form of sanction or failure to comply with a federal or state policy.

Percent of Closed Family Cases by Employment vs. Other Reasons



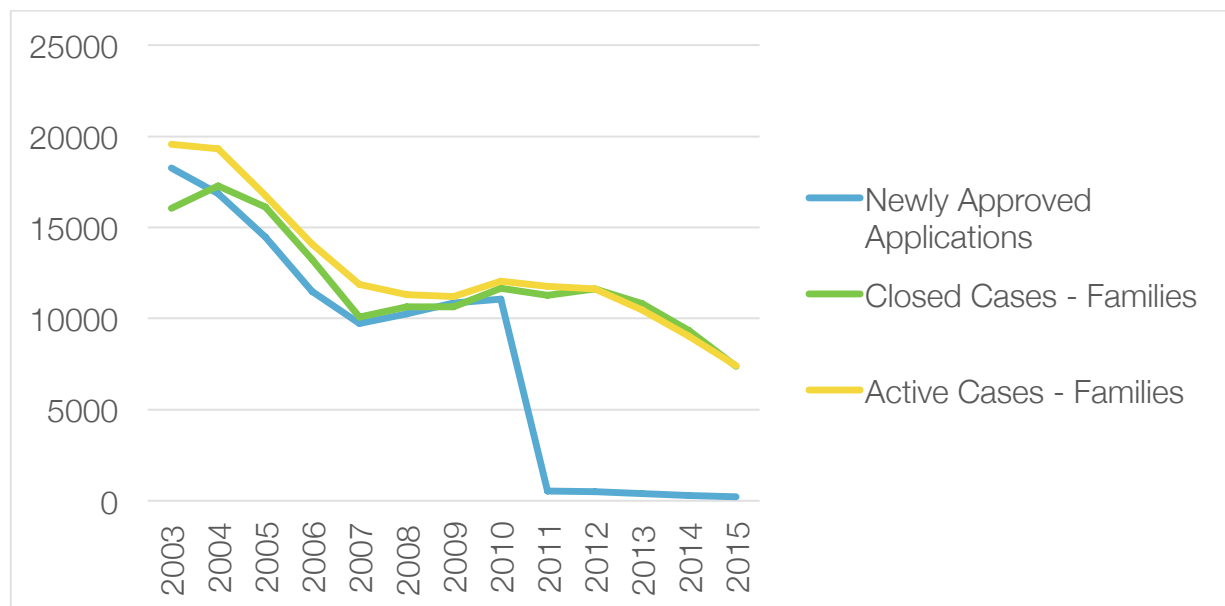
While spending TANF funds on work supports and activities can advance TANF's goal of moving families to self-sufficiency, it is unlikely the drastic caseload reductions and the lack of new TANF cases were the result of participants finding stable employment. A review of historical data shows that while TANF families' cases were increasingly closed due to employment since 2003, on average 7 in 10 family cases were closed due to work-related sanctions and non-compliance with other state policies. When a family leaves the TANF program for a reason other than employment or ineligibility based on income, it is not likely that the family has moved any closer to self-sufficiency.

Some independent studies find higher rates of TANF recipients leaving TANF due to employment. It is theoretically possible that some cases may be coded as closed due to sanctions when a recipient has found employment but did not alert the agency. It is unclear, however, the extent to which this hypothetical scenario and other sampling or non-sampling

errors influence the data on closed cases. But a recent long-term study of 5,000 TANF recipients in Maryland found that five years after leaving TANF, more than half were consistently unemployed or in unstable work environments and only 21.6% worked for most of or all of the year.¹⁵

Imbalance of Mississippi's Safety Net?

The number of active TANF families, the number of newly approved applications and the number of closed family TANF cases tracked closely from 2003 to 2010. But from 2011 to 2015, this close balance of current cases, new cases and closed cases was drastically altered when the rate of approved TANF applications plummeted and continued to decrease. In 2015, closed TANF cases greatly outnumbered newly approved applications.



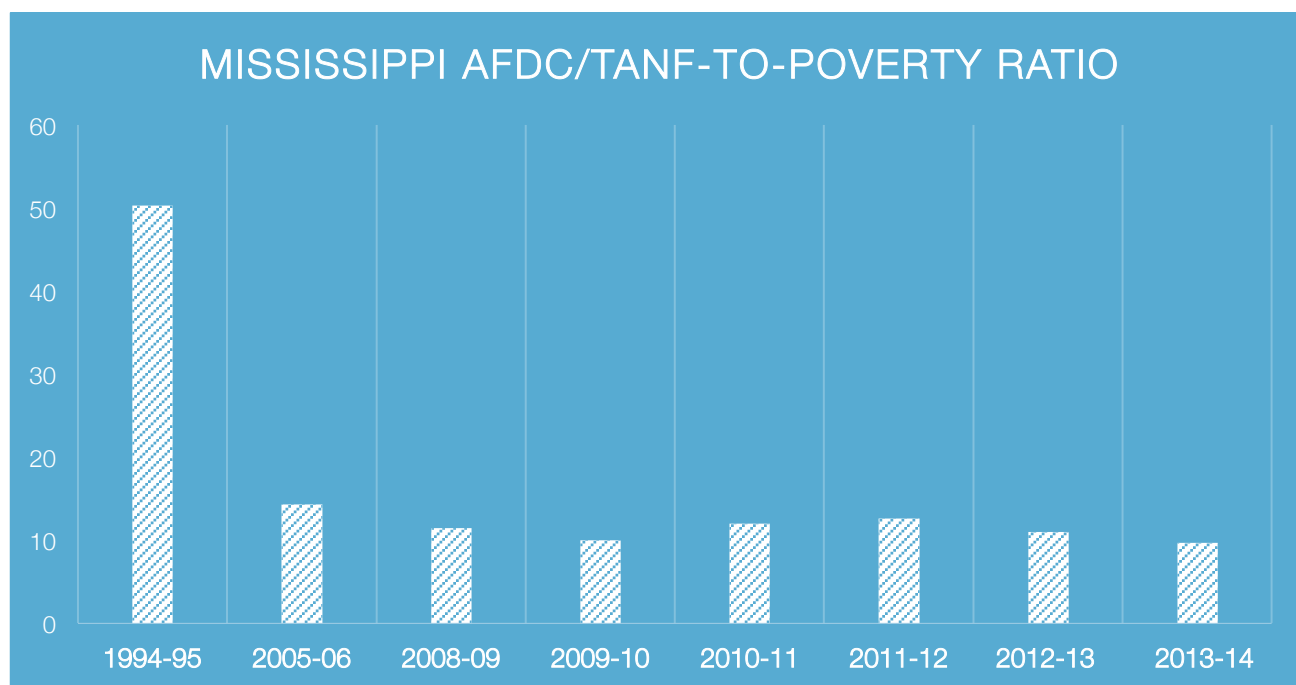
¹⁵ LaDonna Pavetti, "TANF Work Requirements Don't Bring Stable Jobs, Higher Earnings," *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities* (2015). Available online via, <http://www.cbpp.org/blog/tanf-work-requirements-dont-bring-stable-jobs-higher-earnings>.

TANF's Impact on Families Below Poverty

Mississippi has the nation's highest poverty rate. The number of families below poverty is typically far greater than the number of families receiving TANF assistance.

The “TANF-to-poverty ratio”—as it is referred to by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities—measures the extent to which TANF is serving families with children living below poverty, or the TANF family caseload as a percentage of families with related children under 18 years old below poverty.

In 1994-95, under TANF's predecessor AFDC, assistance reached a number equivalent to about 50% of families below poverty. In the past decade, TANF has only reached an average of about 10% of Mississippi's poor families.



Source of Chart Data: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, <http://www.cbpp.org/research/family-income-support/tanf-continues-to-weaken-as-a-safety-net>.

In 2015, TANF's strength as a safety net further diminished. The number of families with children below poverty increased from 2014 to 2015, yet TANF reached 1,600 fewer families.¹⁶

¹⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimates, Table B17010. Families refer to married and single with related children below 18 years of age. Data on TANF families served is from the Mississippi Department

In reviewing the TANF-to-Poverty ratio in each of Mississippi's 82 counties during 2015, only 11 served at least 10 out of every 100 families with children below poverty, while TANF reached an average of fewer than 6 out of every 100 families with children below poverty statewide.¹⁷ (See Appendix for county-level data).

Spending Trends: 1997-2014

Mississippi has a fixed TANF Basic Block Grant amount of \$86.8 million. States are able to carry over unobligated balances from previous fiscal year grants.

While the state's Basic Block Grant amount is fixed, it typically begins a fiscal year with total federal funds that include the current year's grant in addition to funds it carried over from the previous year's grant. A portion of these funds is typically obligated and a portion is unobligated.

Mississippi's MOE spending totals about \$21 million. Therefore, all expenditures for the TANF program come from current year federal TANF funds, combined federal TANF funds (including carryover from previous years) and from the state's MOE.

States are allowed to transfer a total of 30% of the TANF Block Grant: up to 30% to the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) and up to 10% to the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG). The CCDF provides child care certificates to working low-income parents, both served by TANF and those who are not served by TANF but who are working 25 hours per week and earning less than 85% of state median income. Mississippi currently transfers approximately 20% of its TANF Block Grant to CCDF for child care and about 10% to SSBG for case management and protective services.¹⁸

Because Mississippi typically has more federal funds than its current fiscal year TANF block grant, some fiscal years the state will spend an amount of federal funds that exceeds its Basic Block Grant Amount. But on average, Mississippi uses approximately 72% of total federal money it starts out with at the beginning of a fiscal year, which includes current and previous fiscal year funds. Significant year-to-year fluctuations, however, will be noted in a forthcoming section.

of Human Services 2015 Annual report, accessible here, <http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/publications/agency-annual-reports/>.

¹⁷ MLICCI calculations of state reported data on the number of families served in 2015 by county as a percent of total families with related children under 18 years old living below poverty by county. Data on TANF families served by county is from the MDHS 2015 annual report and data on the number of families below poverty by county is from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, Table B17010.

¹⁸ See, <http://www.sos.ms.gov/ACCode/00000610c.pdf>.

The below chart shows overall spending, including: spending of combined federal TANF funds (current year + carryover), current year transfers to SSBG and CCDF and the state's MOE spending. It demonstrates that the amount of federal funds the state uses each year can fluctuate widely. For instance, the state used \$115.9 million dollars of its federal TANF funds in FFY 2011, compared to \$77.5 million in FFY 2014.

Overall Spending Trends in Mississippi, by Federal Fiscal Year

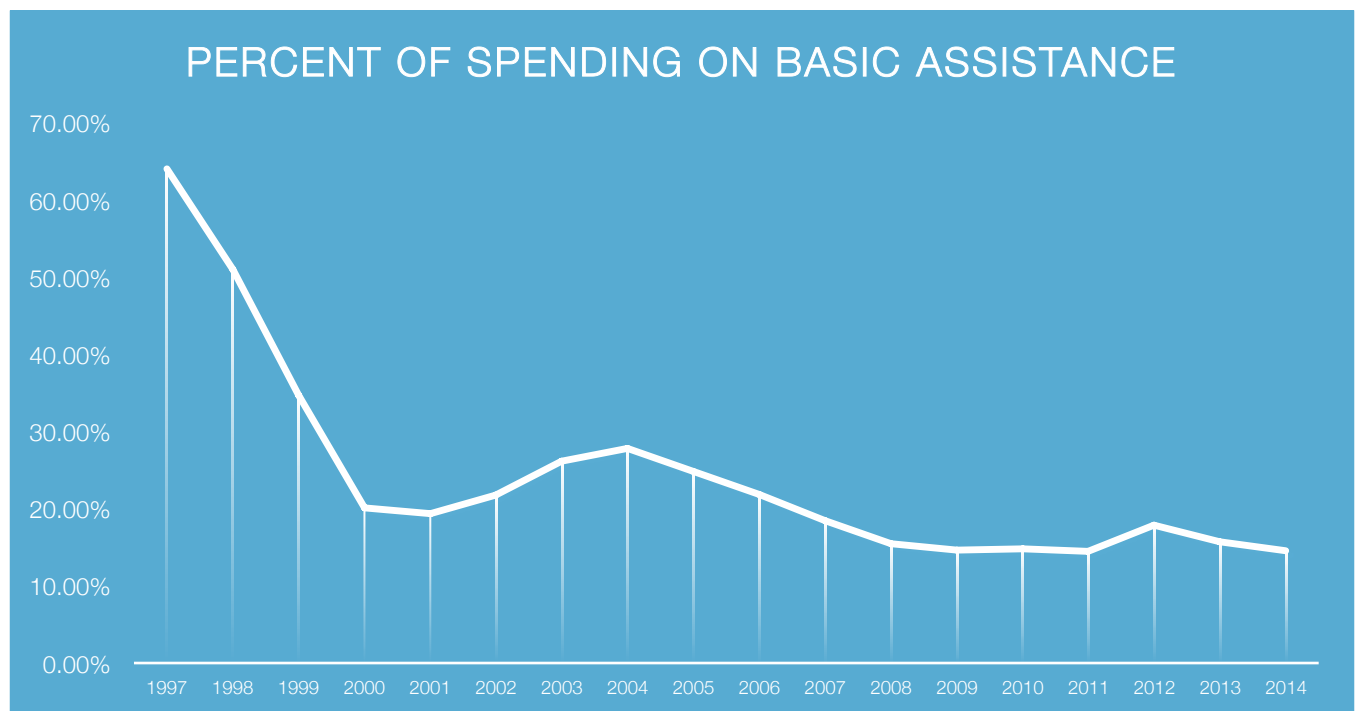
FFY	Federal TANF Spending (Excluding transfer to CCDF/SSBG)	Federal TANF Funds Transferred to SSBG/CCDF	Transfer to SSBG	Transfer to CCDF	Total Federal TANF Funds Used (Including transfer to SSBG/CCDF)	State MOE Spending	Total Spending
1997	\$64,350,692	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$64,350,692	\$29,735,735	\$94,086,427
1998	\$39,354,462	\$8,676,578	\$8,676,578	\$0	\$48,031,040	\$16,520,111	\$64,551,151
1999	\$19,010,648	\$41,307,212	\$17,353,696	\$23,953,516	\$60,317,860	\$22,991,689	\$83,309,549
2000	\$38,301,828	\$28,037,997	\$9,345,999	\$18,691,998	\$66,339,825	\$23,442,845	\$89,782,670
2001	\$110,744,517	\$29,181,393	\$9,818,163	\$19,363,230	\$139,925,910	\$20,276,021	\$160,201,931
2002	\$122,044,580	\$28,740,976	\$9,580,266	\$19,160,710	\$150,785,556	\$21,724,308	\$172,509,864
2003	\$98,287,094	\$19,323,897	\$59	\$19,323,838	\$117,610,991	\$21,724,309	\$139,335,300
2004	\$81,004,597	\$12,666,260	\$9,838,241	\$2,828,019	\$93,670,857	\$21,728,428	\$115,399,285
2005	\$57,143,998	\$29,286,041	\$9,762,014	\$19,524,027	\$86,430,039	\$21,726,659	\$108,156,698
2006	\$51,700,545	\$28,161,854	\$9,001,204	\$19,160,650	\$79,862,399	\$22,304,573	\$102,166,972
2007	\$61,007,521	\$28,083,734	\$9,580,325	\$18,503,409	\$89,091,255	\$21,724,308	\$110,815,563
2008	\$69,379,735	\$28,482,510	\$9,321,860	\$19,160,650	\$97,862,245	\$21,724,308	\$119,586,553
2009	\$78,994,750	\$28,352,431	\$9,235,912	\$19,116,519	\$107,347,181	\$21,724,308	\$129,071,489
2010	\$83,941,666	\$28,740,975	\$9,580,325	\$19,160,650	\$112,682,641	\$21,724,308	\$134,406,949
2011	\$88,117,247	\$27,823,448	\$9,274,483	\$18,548,965	\$115,940,695	\$21,724,308	\$137,665,003
2012	\$58,810,359	\$26,030,274	\$8,676,758	\$17,353,516	\$84,840,633	\$21,724,308	\$106,564,941
2013	\$58,623,597	\$26,030,274	\$8,676,758	\$17,353,516	\$84,653,871	\$21,724,308	\$106,378,179
2014	\$51,462,669	\$26,030,274	\$8,676,758	\$17,353,516	\$77,492,943	\$21,724,308	\$99,217,251

All TANF financial data used in this report, including a comprehensive breakdown of financial data dating back to 1997, is available here: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/tanf/data-reports>. Data in the above table was tabulated by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities using ACF data. Data is reported by states to HHS ACF on a quarterly basis on Form ACF-196

Selected Expenditure Categories¹⁹:

Basic Cash Assistance

Spending on Basic Cash Assistance significantly dropped after the first few years of Mississippi's program. After a slight rebound in the early 2000s, Basic Assistance spending flattened.

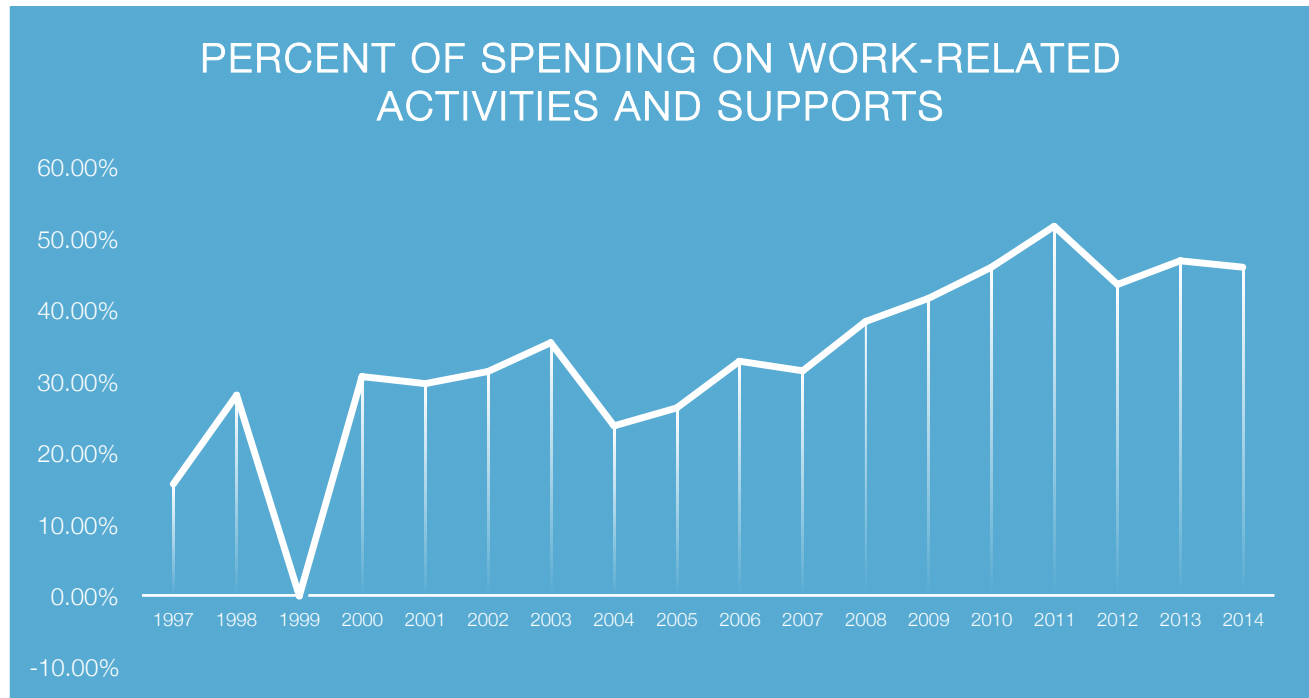


Basic Assistance dropped from 64% of TANF spending in 1997 to 28% in 2004 and 14% in 2014. Mississippi ranked 35th in the nation for Basic Assistance spending in FFY 2014.

¹⁹ Raw data used for analysis in this section was tabulated and some percentages calculated by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and is available here: <http://www.cbpp.org/research/family-income-support/how-states-use-federal-and-state-funds-under-the-tanf-block-grant>. Chart design and analysis by MLICCI.

Work Related Activities & Supports

Spending on work-related activities and supports significantly increased as spending on Basic Assistance decreased.

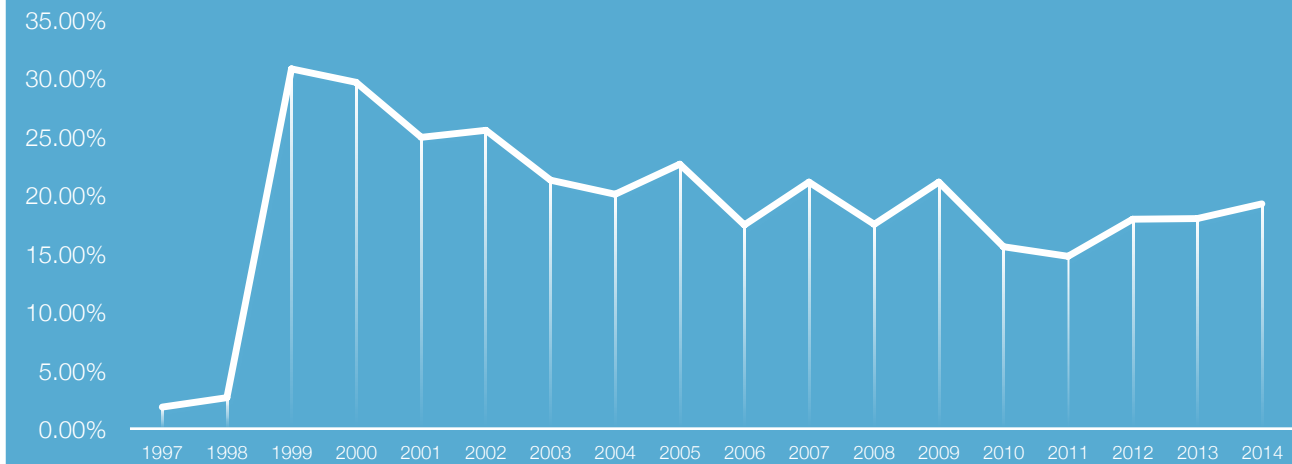


Spending on work-related activities increased from 15% in 1997 to 24% in 2004 and 46% in 2014. Mississippi ranked first in the nation for spending in this category in FFY 2014.

Child Care

Spending on Child Care significantly increased when the state started transferring TANF funds to CCDF. Spending has struggled getting back to levels in the late nineties and early 2000s when it represented 31% of TANF spending in 1999 vs. 19% in 2014.

PERCENT OF SPENDING ON CHILD CARE (FEDERAL TANF FUNDS + TANF TRANSFER TO CCDF + STATE MOE)



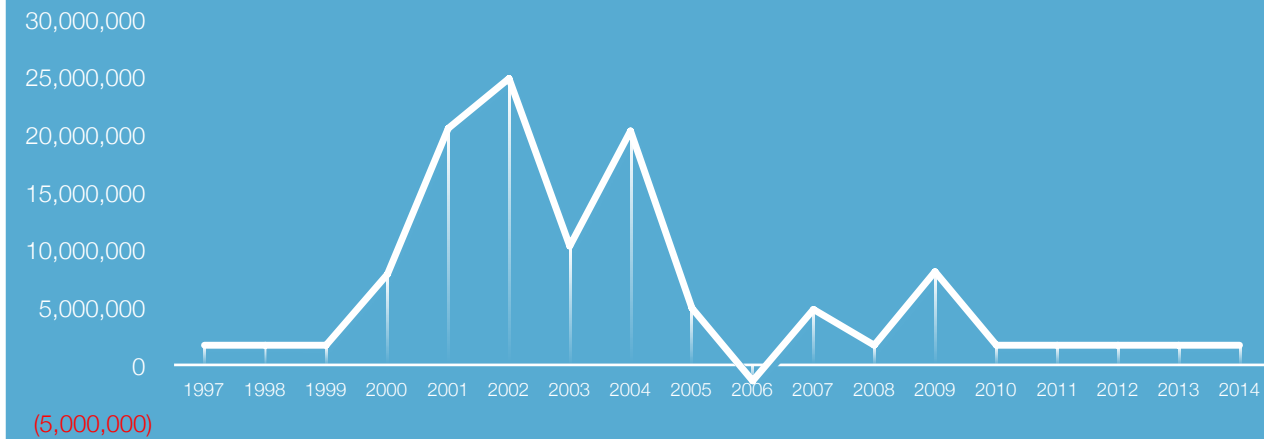
The state can spend federal TANF funds directly on child care in addition to transferring funds to CCDF, which is a separate program that serves families who are referred through TANF and those who are not or who have transitioned from TANF.

Based on a MLICCI records request in December 2015, 19,700 children were receiving assistance through CCDF. Of this total, 2,900 were receiving certificates through TANF and 3,150 through Transitional Child Care.

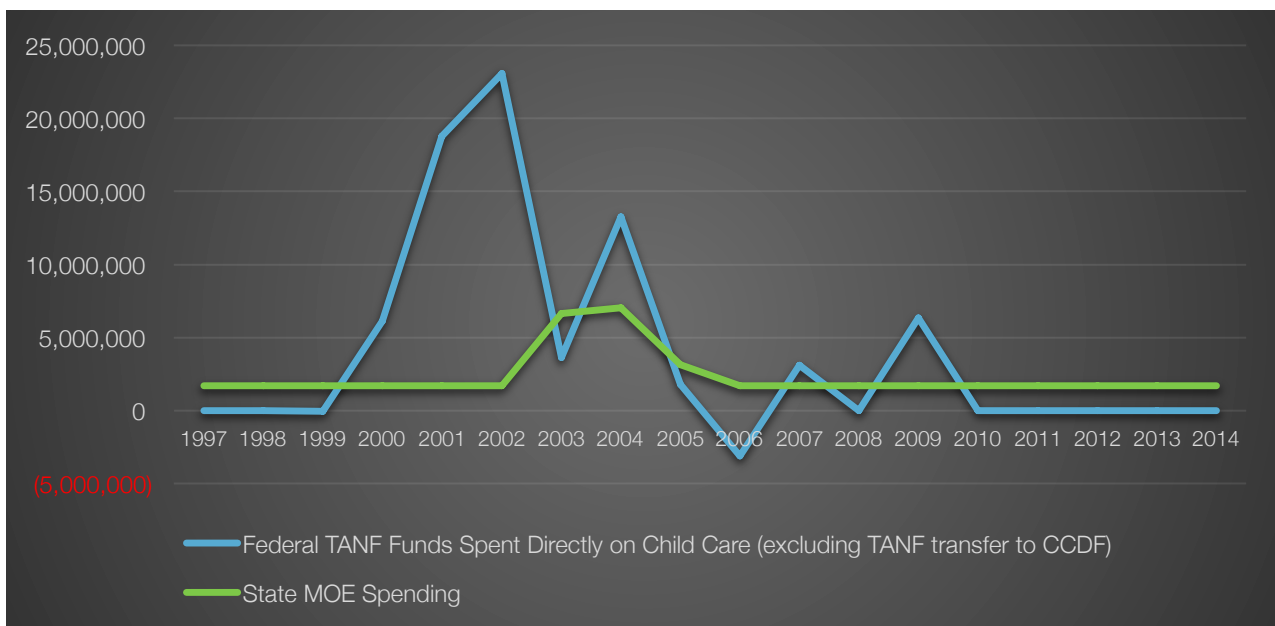
Some years, the state has spent more on child care directly from federal TANF funds in addition to transferring federal TANF money to CCDF, while in other years, the state has funded child care primarily through a transfer of federal TANF funds to CCDF without also funding more child care assistance directly from federal TANF money.

With exception of several years in the early to mid-2000s, Mississippi's state MOE spending on child care has remained flat.

FEDERAL TANF AND STATE MOE SPENDING ON CHILD CARE (EXCLUDING TANF TRANSFER TO CCDF)



The below chart shows the few years in which the state spent a higher level of its federal TANF funds directly on child care in addition to transferring TANF funds to CCDF. These years represented peak child care spending in Mississippi. Since 2010, the state has not spent federal TANF funds directly on child care and has opted to fund child care with a transfer of TANF funds to CCDF and through about 8% of the state's MOE spending, which serves as the state's required match for CCDF.



Unobligated Balance: 1997-2015

Each federal fiscal year, Mississippi carries over funds that are reported to the HHS ACF as “unliquidated obligations,” or federal TANF funds that have yet to be expended but are obligated for unpaid debts, and an “unobligated balance,” which are federal TANF funds that were not obligated during the federal fiscal year.

Because the percentage of total federal TANF funds used during federal fiscal years has fluctuated, the total amount of unobligated funds has also varied.

Between FFY 1998 – 2000, the state spent down less than half of its federal TANF funds and carried over significant portions into following fiscal years. In the early 2000s, however, after a period of build-up, the state spent down significantly higher levels of its federal TANF funds. In 2005, the state again started to spend fewer federal TANF dollars and carried over higher amounts of unobligated balances. This trend continued until 2011, when the state spent more than 80% of its federal TANF funds, a level that it maintained until 2013. Since then, the state has spent fewer federal dollars. The state spent 88% of its federal dollars in FFY 2013 versus 67% in FFY 2015, while carrying over 8% of federal TANF funds as unobligated balance in FFY 2013 versus 33% in FFY 2015.

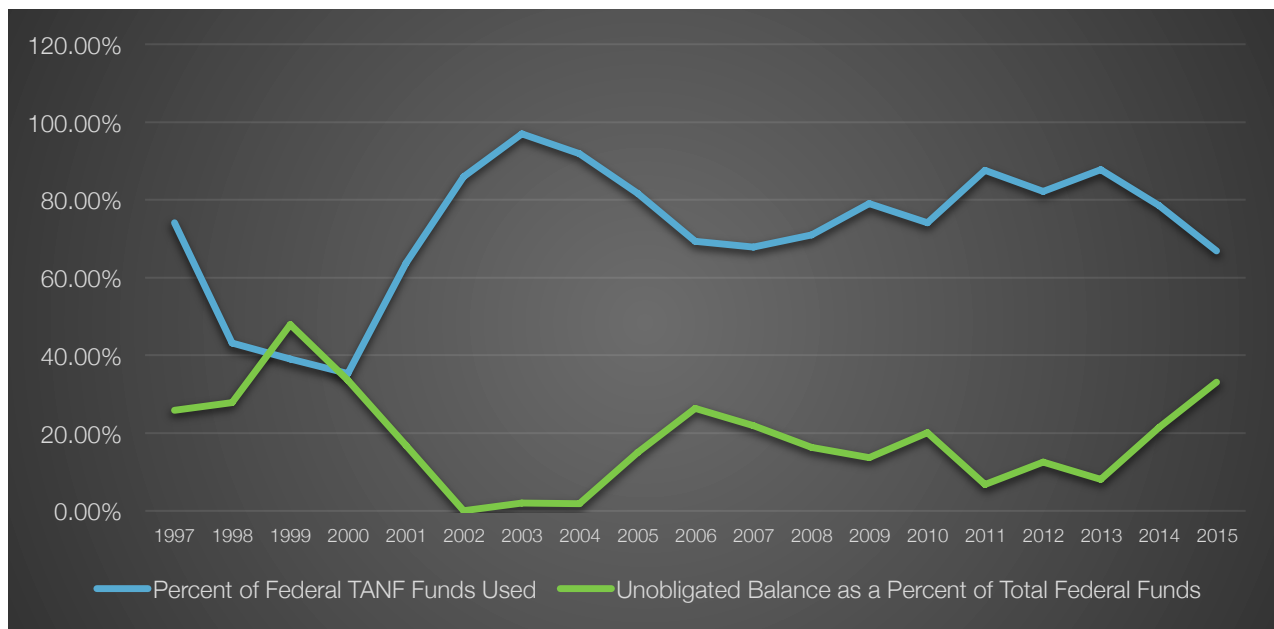
States vary in the extent that federal TANF funds are spent down during a federal fiscal year. Mississippi spends on average 72% of federal TANF funds during a fiscal year. The state has spent 90% or more of its federal funds only twice in the past 19 fiscal years.

Not all states carry over unobligated balances of federal TANF funds. Mississippi carried over the 4th highest unobligated balance as a percent of total federal funds in FFY 1999, the 8th highest in 2000 and the 16th highest in FFY 2015. Twenty states carried over more than 20% of their federal TANF funds as unobligated balance in FFY 2015, while twenty-four states carried over less than 10% of their federal TANF funds as unobligated balance. Mississippi carried over 33%.

FFY	Combined Federal Funds (Current FFY TANF Grant + Unliquidated Obligations + Unobligated Balance)	Total Federal TANF Funds Used	Percent Federal TANF Funds Used	Unobligated Balance (combined previous FFY unobligated carryover)	Unobligated Balance as Percent of Total Federal TANF Funds
1997	\$86,767,578	\$64,350,692	74%	\$22,416,886	26%
1998	\$111,360,416	\$48,031,040	43%	\$31,010,274	28%
1999	\$154,503,258	\$60,317,860	39%	\$74,003,226	48%
2000	\$187,974,283	\$66,339,825	35%	\$63,144,898	34%

2001	\$219,487,197	\$139,925,910	64%	\$36,963,693	17%
2002	\$175,364,539	\$150,785,556	86%	\$60	0%
2003	\$121,198,175	\$117,610,991	97%	\$2,382,850	2%
2004	\$101,969,594	\$93,670,857	92%	\$1,804,096	2%
2005	\$105,922,993	\$86,430,039	82%	\$15,792,989	15%
2006	\$115,296,206	\$79,862,399	69%	\$30,429,836	26%
2007	\$131,237,058	\$89,091,255	68%	\$28,736,574	22%
2008	\$137,949,056	\$97,862,245	71%	\$22,535,731	16%
2009	\$135,890,063	\$107,347,181	79%	\$18,642,653	14%
2010	\$152,192,499	\$112,682,641	74%	\$30,545,051	20%
2011	\$132,254,685	\$115,940,695	88%	\$8,889,324	7%
2012	\$103,325,624	\$84,840,633	82%	\$12,867,051	12%
2013	\$96,546,901	\$84,653,871	88%	\$7,865,405	8%
2014	\$98,660,607	\$77,492,943	79%	\$21,167,665	21%
2015	\$107,935,242	\$72,155,157	67%	\$35,780,085	33%

Note: The above chart reflects MLICCI calculations of Form ACF-196 data. The percent of federal TANF funds used and the percent carried over as an unobligated balance will NOT necessarily equal 100% due to the fact that the state also carries over funds for unliquidated obligations. The above chart focuses on the unobligated, unspent balance of TANF federal carryover funds.



Mississippi rarely spends down its entire federal TANF fund and tends to prioritize the largest expenditures from its state MOE spending on programs outside of TANF core purposes. Mississippi left well over one-third of unobligated federal TANF funds unspent in 2015. These are funds that could be used more aggressively to expand child care assistance programs for working families, to help lift more families out of poverty with basic cash assistance and to meaningfully reduce barriers to work with the acknowledgement that much of the available work for Mississippi's TANF participants will not immediately get them to self-sufficiency.

State Maintenance of Effort Spending: 2015

During fiscal year 2015, Mississippi's highest single expenditure category of its MOE was on state-funded college scholarship programs. Other major expenditures of state money were on work activities & supports and on basic cash assistance, according to data reported to the federal government.²⁰

State TANF MOE funds are spent on a range of state-funded scholarship programs that set income eligibility criteria for families far beyond the TANF criteria for income, resources and deprivation.²¹ To be aligned with the eligibility rules for these programs, the state sets similar income eligibility criteria for families eligible to receive support through TANF funds spent on state scholarships. State eligibility criteria for receiving TANF-funded scholarships allows families with an average income at or below 350% of the Federal Poverty Level to qualify, while TANF families are typically well below 100% of the poverty level. State TANF MOE funds spent on state scholarships reportedly served 5,277 families with \$7.6 million in state funds during 2015, or about 36% of the state's MOE spending.

Other Work Activities and Expenses was the second highest spending category for state funds, including expenses related to finding and keeping a job, such as fees for licenses and purchases of equipment, permits, uniforms, GED tests and relocation expenses.

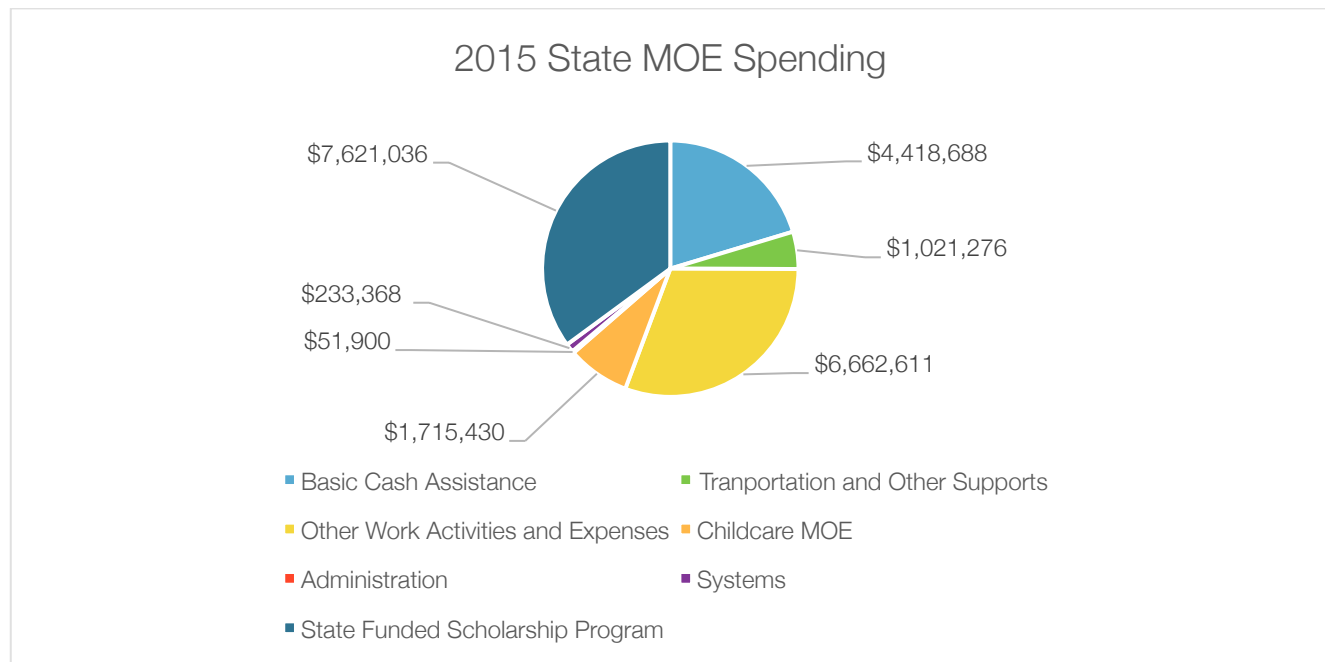
Spending on basic cash assistance was the 3rd highest expenditure of TANF state funds in 2015, reportedly serving 3,060 families, which works out to a mere \$120.00 per month per family served, or about \$1,444 per family served for the year.²²

²⁰ All MOE expenditure data is from federal form ACF-204. A copy of the form is available from the author upon request.

²¹ State-funded scholarships created by Mississippi Code of 1972 Sections 37-106-29, 37-106-31, and 37-157-1, and amended by Senate Bill 2231 (1997) and House Bill 1273 (1998).

²² The number of families Mississippi reports it serves with state MOE funds, however, may not be reliable. Each expenditure under the state's MOE works out to approximately \$1,444 per family served. This may be a reporting error rather than a reliable accounting of families served by state MOE funds.

In 2015, Mississippi prioritized a high concentration of its MOE funds on state scholarships that are not targeted to TANF families or TANF-eligible families, while it spent far fewer dollars on other supports like child care, which is proven to help low-income working parents keep working and/or more successfully participate in education and training.



Policy Recommendations

- ❖ More low-income working parents could receive child care assistance if the state prioritizes this critical work support when spending its TANF block grant. During the average fiscal year, the state leaves more than a quarter of this federal block grant unspent. Mississippi could serve thousands of additional children of low-income working parents by:
 - Transferring 30% of TANF funds to the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) to pay for more certificates, which fund all or part of child care costs for TANF and non-TANF low-income working families (currently, Mississippi transfers 20%).
 - Spending \$20 million federal and state TANF dollars in addition to the maximum transfer to CCDF on additional child care assistance programs, whether created by the agency or by an outside provider, for TANF parents or parents who are at risk of going on TANF (Mississippi reported an unobligated, unspent balance of \$35 million for federal fiscal year 2015 to the federal government; Mississippi spent more TANF

directly on child care in addition to transferring TANF funds to CCDF in the early 2000s).

- Spending more on child care could also be achieved by better aligning TANF with both private and WIOA workforce training providers. Federal TANF funds and state MOE funds can be spent directly on child care reimbursements to training providers to cover child care costs of trainees.
- ❖ Spend more TANF on basic cash assistance:
 - Mississippi must increase its spending on basic cash assistance to expand the number of families below poverty receiving assistance they need.
- ❖ Eliminate TANF drug testing requirement:
 - The state legislature should eliminate the mandatory up-front drug-testing requirement given that it has a disparate impact on African American women and falsely suspects TANF applicants of drug use. The requirement also costs the state money that could be used to support low-income working families and has revealed only that TANF applicants are far less likely to use drugs than the general population.
- ❖ Eliminate Up-Front Job Search
 - The state legislature should eliminate the mandatory up-front job search requirement and instead focus on providing stabilizing assistance, giving recipients time to overcome barriers to employment as they work toward self-sufficiency. Short of eliminating Up-Front Job Search, the state should offer child care and other supports for initial orientation meetings so applications are not denied simply for missing appointments due to a lack of these supports.
- ❖ Reduce the severity of sanction policies, focus on employability:
 - Mississippi must reconfigure sanction policies to reduce the number of closed cases due to non-compliance with work or other requirements, particularly when a family that is no closer to self-sufficiency or employability leaves the program. Mississippi should focus on employability and reserve harsh and often-arbitrary procedural sanctions as last resorts.
- ❖ Reduce severity of sanctions due to child support initiation:
 - The state should reduce the penalty for failing to establish paternity or obtain child support from the denial of benefits to a reduction in the benefit amount. The state

should include good cause exemptions and examples in termination notices due to failure to initiate paternity and child support procedures. Mississippi must ensure communication about good cause exemptions to the child support requirement is clear and ubiquitous.

- ❖ Increase the number of families below poverty served, particularly in counties with a low TANF-to-family poverty ratio
 - Mississippi should target assistance to families in areas where TANF has all but disappeared as a safety net for families with children below poverty.
- ❖ Refocus state MOE spending
 - Mississippi should spend more MOE funds on child care and basic assistance
- ❖ Create an MOE-funded program for transitioning closed case families
 - Mississippi should use MOE funds to provide transition services to families whose cases are closed for reasons other than employment and earned income.
- ❖ Reprioritize target recipient group for state MOE funded scholarship
 - Mississippi's current target group for the state MOE-funded scholarship is too far out of sync with the population eligible for TANF or at risk of going on TANF. Mississippi should reduce the income eligibility for the state scholarship program from 350% of the Federal Poverty Level to the TANF income eligibility guidelines to ensure such scholarships are going to families in need and families for which TANF funds are intended to support.
- ❖ Spend federal TANF funds more aggressively on programs demonstrated to move families out of poverty:
 - Mississippi should not leave federal TANF dollars unspent, particularly when child care waiting lists remain high and when TANF-to-Poverty ratios reveal how limited TANF's reach is relative to the number of families below poverty

Conclusion

When Mississippi uses a higher portion of its federal funds and when it spends more on child care and on basic assistance, it serves more families below poverty.

Mississippi imposed mandatory up-front job search requirements in 2006. The state significantly increased spending on work related activities and supports following this policy change, while its spending on child care and on basic assistance flattened. While these shifts coincided with an increase in the reported number of TANF recipients participating in work²³, fewer families below poverty received support through TANF. Concurrent with an increased focus on immediate interaction with the job market, for better or worse, was the state's deepest period of caseload retrenchment since TANF was enacted. Despite that about two-thirds of active TANF recipients are reported on as participating in work, well over two-thirds of families receiving TANF assistance end up leaving the program for reasons other than employment, having more to do with punitive eligibility and sanction policies.

With child care waiting lists in constant back log and unmoving family poverty rates in most areas of the state, Mississippi must serve more families below poverty by re-prioritizing TANF spending on child care and basic cash assistance.

Continuous, reliable child care assistance is proven to help single moms work. Studies have found that single moms were 82% more likely to be employed two years after leaving assistance programs if they also received a child care subsidy.²⁴

If Mississippi refocuses its TANF program on eliminating individual barriers to work and securing long-term employment outcomes while adjusting to the realities Mississippians face every day, then TANF as a safety net in Mississippi may strengthen in the next decade.

²³ See, Gene Falk, "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families: Welfare Waivers," (2013), via <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42627.pdf>.

²⁴ Center for Law and Social Policy (2006), <http://www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/files/0287.pdf>.

Appendix

	Basic Assistance		
FFY	Federal TANF Spending	State MOE Spending	Total Spending
1997	\$45,209,008.00	\$15,069,669.00	\$60,278,677.00
1998	\$24,708,310.00	\$8,198,177.00	\$32,906,487.00
1999	\$11,063,460.00	\$17,833,520.00	\$28,896,980.00
2000	\$8,776,773.00	\$9,251,719.00	\$18,028,492.00
2001	\$32,429,466.00	-\$1,448,287.00	\$30,981,179.00
2002	\$37,453,835.00	\$15,065.00	\$37,468,900.00
2003	\$34,419,238.00	\$2,014,290.00	\$36,433,528.00
2004	\$32,093,604.00	\$8,001.00	\$32,101,605.00
2005	\$26,860,863.00	\$1,160.00	\$26,862,023.00
2006	\$19,235,179.00	\$3,090,473.00	\$22,325,652.00
2007	\$18,972,248.00	\$1,468,776.00	\$20,441,024.00
2008	\$16,307,381.00	\$2,174,319.00	\$18,481,700.00
2009	\$16,305,142.00	\$2,565,034.00	\$18,870,176.00
2010	\$16,988,305.00	\$2,871,193.00	\$19,859,498.00
2011	\$12,444,223.00	\$7,438,068.00	\$19,882,291.00
2012	\$12,022,394.00	\$7,022,625.00	\$19,045,019.00
2013	\$11,301,884.00	\$5,425,271.00	\$16,727,155.00
2014	\$10,225,335.00	\$4,164,884.00	\$14,390,219.00

Data in the above table was tabulated by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities using ACF data. Data is reported by states to HHS ACF on a quarterly basis on Form ACF-196.

	Work-related Activities		
FFY	Federal TANF Spending	State MOE Spending	Total Spending
1997	\$9,532,661.00	\$5,080,550.00	\$14,613,211.00
1998	\$11,383,152.00	\$6,726,019.00	\$18,109,171.00
1999	\$1,175,457.00	-\$1,286,907.00	-\$111,450.00
2000	\$16,411,950.00	\$11,069,764.00	\$27,481,714.00
2001	\$29,212,298.00	\$18,312,789.00	\$47,525,087.00
2002	\$34,690,645.00	\$19,398,715.00	\$54,089,360.00
2003	\$36,862,081.00	\$12,442,933.00	\$49,305,014.00
2004	\$13,225,784.00	\$14,105,331.00	\$27,331,115.00
2005	\$11,764,763.00	\$16,585,602.00	\$28,350,365.00
2006	\$16,683,336.00	\$16,804,331.00	\$33,487,667.00
2007	\$16,976,692.00	\$17,865,410.00	\$34,842,102.00
2008	\$28,687,640.00	\$17,088,410.00	\$45,776,050.00
2009	\$36,710,911.00	\$16,959,364.00	\$53,670,275.00
2010	\$46,419,225.00	\$15,356,293.00	\$61,775,518.00
2011	\$59,989,528.00	\$11,176,125.00	\$71,165,653.00
2012	\$34,474,805.00	\$11,946,838.00	\$46,421,643.00
2013	\$35,532,917.00	\$14,294,941.00	\$49,827,858.00
2014	\$30,045,883.00	\$15,487,614.00	\$45,533,497.00

Data in the above table was tabulated by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities using ACF data. Data is reported by states to HHS ACF on a quarterly basis on Form ACF-196.

	Child Care		
FFY	Total Federal TANF Spending (Direct federal TANF funds + TANF transfer to CCDF)	State MOE Spending	Total Spending
1997	\$6,478.00	\$1,715,431.00	\$1,721,909.00
1998	\$0.00	\$1,715,431.00	\$1,715,431.00
1999	\$23,919,530.00	\$1,703,207.00	\$25,622,737.00
2000	\$24,822,334.00	\$1,717,760.00	\$26,540,094.00
2001	\$38,164,537.00	\$1,715,430.00	\$39,879,967.00
2002	\$42,260,639.00	\$1,715,430.00	\$43,976,069.00
2003	\$22,955,673.00	\$6,643,409.00	\$29,599,082.00
2004	\$16,093,246.00	\$7,035,115.00	\$23,128,361.00
2005	\$21,315,668.00	\$3,135,430.00	\$24,451,098.00
2006	\$16,046,762.00	\$1,715,430.00	\$17,762,192.00
2007	\$21,599,949.00	\$1,715,430.00	\$23,315,379.00
2008	\$19,154,500.00	\$1,715,430.00	\$20,869,930.00
2009	\$25,451,319.00	\$1,715,430.00	\$27,166,749.00
2010	\$19,156,401.00	\$1,715,430.00	\$20,871,831.00
2011	\$18,553,214.00	\$1,715,430.00	\$20,268,644.00
2012	\$17,353,516.00	\$1,715,430.00	\$19,068,946.00
2013	\$17,353,516.00	\$1,715,430.00	\$19,068,946.00
2014	\$17,353,516.00	\$1,715,430.00	\$19,068,946.00

Data in the above table was tabulated by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities using ACF data. Data is reported by states to HHS ACF on a quarterly basis on Form ACF-196.

Total Spending

	Basic Assistance Spending	Work-related Activities and Supports	Child Care
1997	\$60,278,677.00	\$14,613,211.00	\$1,721,909.00
1998	\$32,906,487.00	\$18,109,171.00	\$1,715,431.00
1999	\$28,896,980.00	\$0.00	\$25,622,737.00
2000	\$18,028,492.00	\$27,481,714.00	\$26,540,094.00
2001	\$30,981,179.00	\$47,525,087.00	\$39,879,967.00
2002	\$37,468,900.00	\$54,089,360.00	\$43,976,069.00
2003	\$36,433,528.00	\$49,305,014.00	\$29,599,082.00
2004	\$32,101,605.00	\$27,331,115.00	\$23,128,361.00
2005	\$26,862,023.00	\$28,350,365.00	\$24,451,098.00
2006	\$22,325,652.00	\$33,487,667.00	\$17,762,192.00
2007	\$20,441,024.00	\$34,842,102.00	\$23,315,379.00
2008	\$18,481,700.00	\$45,776,050.00	\$20,869,930.00
2009	\$18,870,176.00	\$53,670,275.00	\$27,166,749.00
2010	\$19,859,498.00	\$61,775,518.00	\$20,871,831.00
2011	\$19,882,291.00	\$71,165,653.00	\$20,268,644.00
2012	\$19,045,019.00	\$46,421,643.00	\$19,068,946.00
2013	\$16,727,155.00	\$49,827,858.00	\$19,068,946.00
2014	\$14,390,219.00	\$45,533,497.00	\$19,068,946.00

Data in the above table was tabulated by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities using ACF data. Data is reported by states to HHS ACF on a quarterly basis on Form ACF-196

Percent of Total Spending

	Basic Assistance Spending	Work-related Activities and Supports	Child Care
1997	64.07%	15.53%	1.83%
1998	50.98%	28.05%	2.66%
1999	34.69%	-0.13%	30.76%
2000	20.08%	30.61%	29.56%
2001	19.34%	29.67%	24.89%
2002	21.72%	31.35%	25.49%
2003	26.15%	35.39%	21.24%
2004	27.82%	23.68%	20.04%
2005	24.84%	26.21%	22.61%
2006	21.85%	32.78%	17.39%
2007	18.45%	31.44%	21.04%
2008	15.45%	38.28%	17.45%
2009	14.62%	41.58%	21.05%
2010	14.78%	45.96%	15.53%
2011	14.44%	51.69%	14.72%
2012	17.87%	43.56%	17.89%
2013	15.72%	46.84%	17.93%
2014	14.50%	45.89%	19.22%

Data in the above table was tabulated by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities using ACF data. Data is reported by states to HHS ACF on a quarterly basis on Form ACF-196.

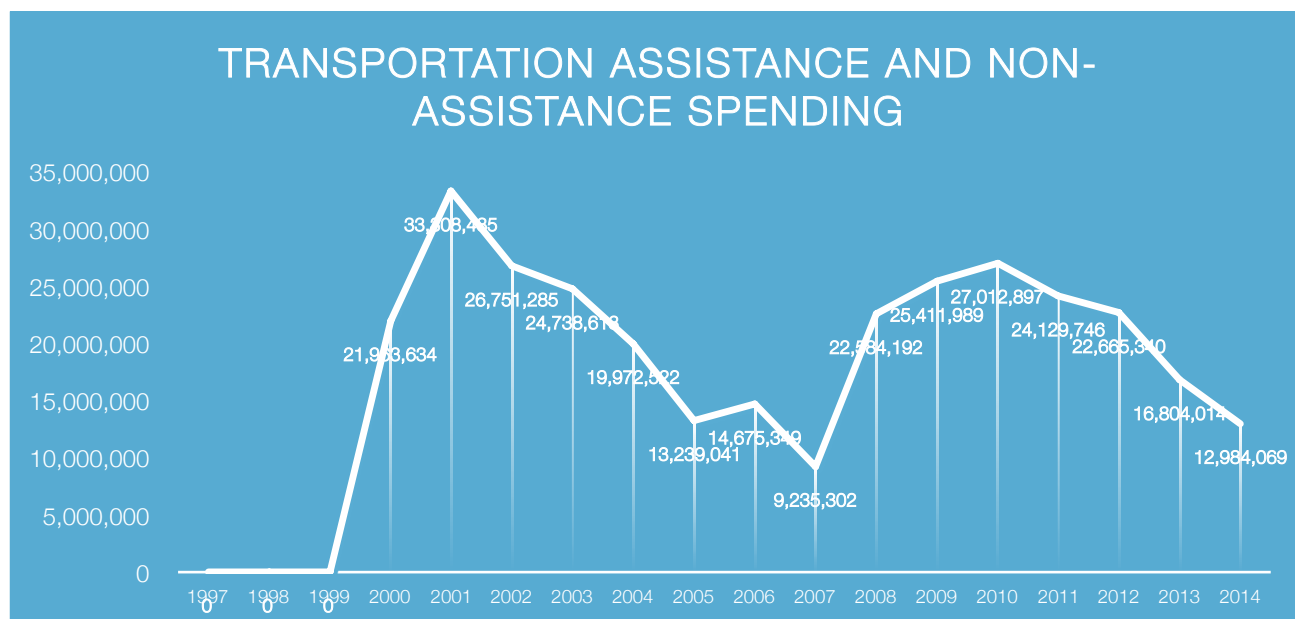
2015 TANF to Poverty Ratio		TANF Family Caseload as a % of Families with Children Under 18 Below Poverty					
Humphreys County	30%	Copiah County	7%	Choctaw County	5%	Pontotoc County	3%
Washington County	18%	Madison County	7%	Clay County	5%	Walthall County	3%
Sharkey County	18%	Harrison County	6%	Amite County	5%	Stone County	3%
Noxubee County	17%	State Total	6%	Oktibbeha County	5%	Lee County	3%
Coahoma County	17%	Grenada County	6%	Wayne County	5%	Montgomery County	3%
Sunflower County	14%	Alcorn County	6%	Monroe County	5%	Prentiss County	3%
Bolivar County	13%	Yalobusha County	6%	Franklin County	5%	Tippah County	3%
Quitman County	11%	Chickasaw County	6%	Newton County	4%	Hancock County	3%
Tunica County	11%	Winston County	6%	Lincoln County	4%	Leake County	3%
Lawrence County	10%	Simpson County	6%	Greene County	4%	Carroll County	3%
Hinds County	10%	Yazoo County	6%	Pearl River County	4%	Covington County	2%
Holmes County	9%	Itawamba County	6%	DeSoto County	4%	Webster County	2%
Panola County	9%	George County	6%	Scott County	4%	Adams County	2%
Jackson County	9%	Benton County	5%	Tate County	4%	Calhoun County	2%
Lowndes County	8%	Rankin County	5%	Marshall County	4%	Kemper County	2%
Issaquena County	8%	Lauderdale County	5%	Tishomingo County	4%	Marion County	2%
Jefferson County	7%	Perry County	5%	Lamar County	4%	Jefferson Davis County	2%
Tallahatchie County	7%	Leflore County	5%	Claiborne County	4%	Union County	2%
Warren County	7%	Wilkinson County	5%	Pike County	4%	Jasper County	2%
Attala County	7%	Neshoba County	5%	Jones County	3%	Lafayette County	2%
				Forrest County	3%	Clarke County	1%
						Smith County	1%

US Census Bureau American Community Survey and MDHS Annual Report.

Transportation

The chart below represents total spending on transportation services. This spending includes both assistance and non-assistance spending and is considered spending on work-related activities and supports.

In the state's current WIOA State Plan, information indicates that during state fiscal year 2014, MDHS provided \$12.8 million to 4,345 TANF participants and those receiving transitional assistance, or about \$2,900.00 per recipient.²⁵

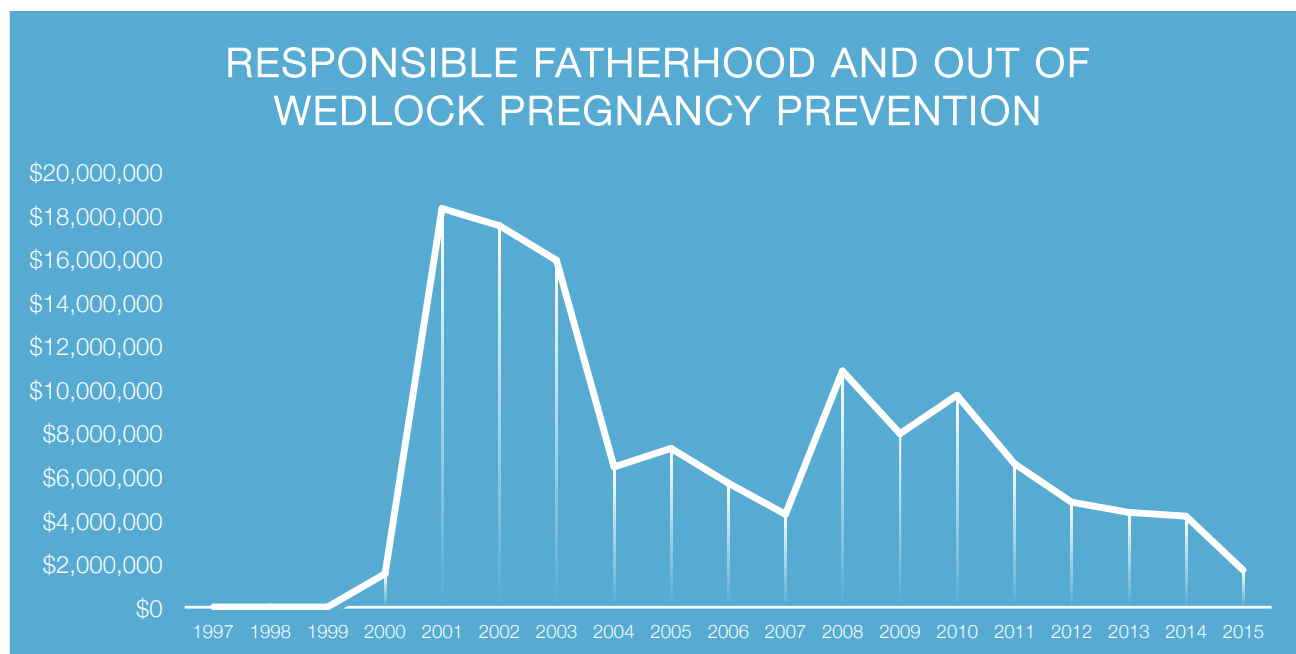


Data MLICCI used to create the above chart was tabulated by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities using ACF data. Data is reported by states to HHS ACF on a quarterly basis on Form ACF-196. Data reflects federal fiscal years.

²⁵ Here is an excerpt from the WIOA state plan regarding TANF transportation spending: Transportation services are provided by MDHS, the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS), and the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT). To participants in the TANF Work Program, MDHS provides transportation in the form of a bus pass or monthly work allowance. For participants who lose TANF eligibility due to earned income, MDHS also administers the Transitional Transportation Program. From October 2013 to September 2014, MDHS provided a total of \$12,840,420 to 4,345 participants in these programs. MDOT's transit programs provide capital assistance, operating assistance, and administration for four Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs: 1) the Rural Area Formal Grants Program; 2) the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program; 3) the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program; and 4) the New Freedom Program. These programs address transportation needs for low-income individuals, those living in rural areas, seniors, those needing transportation for work opportunities, and those with disabilities. (See pg. 36 of WIOA state plan). (Mississippi WIOA State Plan, pg. 36, http://www.mississippiworks.org/downloads/WIOA_MS_03_21_2016.pdf).

Responsible Fatherhood and Out of Wedlock Pregnancy

Mississippi spent a large portion of federal TANF and state MOE funds on social programs that had little to do with work, work support or basic assistance in the early 2000s, followed by a spike in spending during and following the Recession. Programs focused on advancing TANF's goal of promoting two-parent households resulted in an array of community-based programs throughout Mississippi, often focusing on abstinence training. However, Mississippi significantly reduced its spending on these programs since 2010.





THE MISSISSIPPI LOW-INCOME CHILD CARE INITIATIVE

Mississippi Low-Income Child Care Initiative improves the child care assistance program serving low-income working parents and strengthens the financial viability of the child care centers that serve them, so that no mother has to choose between the job she needs and the child she loves.

Since 1998, MLICC has been a champion for affordable child care for Mississippi's low-income working parents.

Child care is expensive – sometimes costing as much or more than college tuition. Mississippi's Child Care Payment Program helps low-income working parents afford the child care they need. These programs have been proven to increase employment, reduce poverty, reduce absenteeism and turnover for employers, contribute more tax revenue into the general fund, and support school readiness in children.

Despite the benefits of early childhood education, the Mississippi Child Care Payment Program only serves a fraction of eligible children. MLICCI tenaciously works to change that.

Because of MLICCI's deep relationships with low-income single mothers and providers, we know that systematic racism and sexism impact the state's current child care assistance climate. Single mothers face an inequitable workforce. Providers struggle to finance services in a punitive policy climate with inadequate revenue. Because of these realities and their intersectionality, in 2015 we launched a campaign to advocate women's economic security. Our movement building is bolstered by our growing gender analysis capacity, as well as our state and national policy partners.