



Qualifications & Requirements

To apply for **Temporary Aid to Needy Families, or TANF**, you must be a citizen of the United States and a resident of Pennsylvania. Certain non-citizens lawfully admitted for permanent residence may also be eligible for the program. You and your family members must also have Social Security Numbers or apply for one. After completing an application, you must schedule a face-to-face interview with a worker from the county assistance office in the county in which you live. If you have any problems obtaining verification, you should notify the Assistance Office about the problem.

TANF also has limits on the amount of money that you can have and still qualify for the program. Your home and first vehicle, however, are not counted as part of this limit.

Benefits will not start until all of the needed documents have been provided, and approval has been issued by the PA Department of Human Services.

TANF benefits usually do not last more than five years. In a small number of cases, TANF benefits can be extended for people who are close to completing a college degree or have circumstances that would prevent them from being successful in any of the programs which TANF offers.

Many of the requirements also vary depending on the ages of the children in the home or the family's home life situation. If you are caring for a disabled child or family member, you may be exempt from the work requirements. If there are issues with Domestic Violence, safeguards are also in place to protect the family and provide the assistance.

TANF does require that you file for support, such as child support or spousal support, if you are eligible. The amount of TANF you receive may be affected by this support.

TANF benefits are issued on an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card, so no checks are mailed to you. You access the monies on the card the same way you would a regular debit card. The EBT card can be used at many ATM machines, typically without any additional fees.

To apply for TANF you can complete an application with PA Department of Human Services at a county assistance, or apply online using the COMPASS website at <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/Apply-for-Benefits.aspx> . The COMPASS site is available in many languages.



Disclaimer: We have attempted to ensure the accuracy of the information in this pamphlet at the time it was created or revised. However, the law does change, sometimes quickly and unexpectedly. Therefore, you should consult an attorney before taking or refraining from any action based on the information in this pamphlet.

Date Revised: Nov 2018