

Department of Social and Health Services

Olympia, Washington

EAZ Manual

Revision	#1280
Category	Assistance Units – Cash Assistance Programs
Issued	05/03/2024
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Summary

The revisions added clarity by adding to examples of optional household members outlined in WAC 388-408-0025, while humanizing the examples to be more diverse and inclusive. See below for edited text

Worker Responsibilities - [WAC 388-408-0025](#)

1. Parent or caretaker relative of a child that gets SSI:

In order to decide if an AU member is eligible for TANF, count a child who gets SSI as an "eligible child" even though the child isn't eligible for TANF. Don't include the SSI child's income, resources, or needs when you determine the AU's eligibility and grant amount. If the parent of an SSI child asks for assistance as a needy caretaker relative, don't include the parent's spouse or other children in the AU unless the parent wants assistance for them.

2. Relatives who are not the child's parent:

- a. If a non-parent relative chooses to get TANF instead of foster care payments, they can choose whether or not to be in the AU based on their needs.
- b. If a non-parent relative chooses to get foster care payments for a child in their care and the relative needs financial assistance, count the child a "dependent child" to make the

relative eligible for TANF or SFA. Don't include the foster child's income, resources, or needs when you determine the AU's eligibility and grant amounts.

- c. If a couple is married and applying as a needy relative for a child who is not their child, only one of the relatives can be a recipient on the grant. The non-parental caregiver and their spouse cannot both be on the grant.
- d. If a non-parent relative chooses to get TANF for multiple siblings in their care, they can choose to exclude one or more siblings as a "recipient" if they have income or including that sibling would cause TANF ineligibility.

EXAMPLE ~~Heka, Aa grandmother-grandparent~~ is the caretaker for ~~thei~~r two grandchildren, ~~Jorga and Malcolm~~, who ~~have different mothers, making them are~~ half-siblings. ~~One of the Jorga children is~~ receiving Social Security Survivors Benefits ~~from their mothers Social Security claim~~. The ~~grandmother~~ Heka can choose not to include ~~that sibling~~ Jorga in the ~~assistance unit AU~~ and not count them in the needs.

EXAMPLE A child, ~~Mohammad~~ is living with their half-sibling, ~~Liam~~ and ~~Liam the half-sibling's~~ mother, ~~Astrid~~. ~~The mother Astrid~~ is not the parent of ~~this child~~ Mohammad and has no financial responsibility for this child. ~~She Astrid~~ is working and has income. ~~She Astrid~~ can choose to apply for non-needy TANF for ~~the child~~ Mohammad ~~that is not hers~~, and not include ~~her child~~ Liam in the needs, since including her ~~self and Liam child would require her to be part of the TANF AU and her income~~ would cause the ~~AU assistance unit~~ to be over income for TANF.

3. Child in common of unmarried parents:

Unmarried parents ~~who that~~ live together may choose to exclude their common child if ~~either or both parents one of the parents is are a~~ TANF or SFA recipient.

EXAMPLE ~~Olivia A mother~~ and her two children, ~~Sofia and Luka~~, get TANF and live with the mothers' boyfriend, ~~Artem~~, who is not the father of the children. ~~Olivia The mother~~ gives birth to her ~~and Artem's child, Ana boyfriend's child~~. ~~Since Olivia is a~~ TANF recipient, ~~not married to Artem she The mother~~ can choose whether or not to include ~~the baby~~ Ana in the AU. If we include ~~Ana the baby~~, we must include ~~Artem the boyfriend~~. If ~~the boyfriend~~ Artem has income or resources, it may be the best for the ~~client household~~ to not include their common child, ~~Ana~~.

Note: ~~In this example, if Artem and common child, Ana are added to the TANF AU, they are now recipients. If Artem gains employment, the household may choose to exclude Artem and Ana from the TANF assistance unit, while Olivia and her other two children, Sofia and Luka -continue receiving a TANF grant.~~

EXAMPLE Two unrelated ~~TANF families TANF AUs~~ get assistance and live together. ~~Household (AU#1 is a woman Kelly and -and her two children, Jacob and Althea. Household AU#2 is a man Adriel and and his two children, Abigail and Isabella-).~~ Kelly and Adriel welcome their newborn, Samuel, and now have a child in common, who they ~~The woman and man have a child in common and~~ want to exclude ~~the child in common~~ from being on assistance. Because both parents are recipients of assistance, ~~-then neither parent is able to financially support the child in common. Therefore,~~ they do not have the option to exclude their ~~newborn~~ child, Samuel and remain separate assistance units ~~AUs from the AU~~. They ~~will~~ need to become one TANF household (one ~~assistance unit AU~~) as required under [WAC 388-408-0030](#).

EXAMPLE ~~AU Alex and their significant other, Cam, their child, Kimani and Cam's child, Camilla apply for TANF. contains a woman, her boyfriend, his child, and their common child.~~ Nobody ~~gets~~ is active on TANF or SFA. ~~The boyfriend Cam~~ applies for TANF for himself and his child, Camilla only. He doesn't want to include the common child, Kimani, because ~~the Alex mom~~ gets UC and can provide for their child. As an applicant, ~~the boyfriend Cam~~ doesn't have the choice to exclude ~~the their child Kimani. common child.~~ All four people are in required to be in the assistance unit the AU since, we can't exclude the common child for a reason other than need.

NOTE: In this ~~example above~~, if the AU entire household is eligible when we include the woman's Alex's income, the AU household can ~~then choose to~~ exclude Alex and Kimani, as the common child because we can consider this a it is now a recipient assistance unit AU. If the family is eligible in the month of application, you can consider them as recipients and exclude the child, Kimani and co-parent, Alex before you issue benefits. ~~for the AU.~~

EXAMPLE Susan applies for assistance for herself and her two children from a previous marriage. She lives with her husband, Doug and his child from a previous marriage - Timmy. The couple doesn't have a child in common. She doesn't want assistance for Doug or Timmy because he works and gets child support. Even though we can exclude Timmy from the AU because he is the other children's stepbrother, we must include Doug because he is the stepfather of Susan's two children. If we exclude Timmy, we would allocate some of Doug's earned income to Timmy. See [INCOME - Allocation and Deeming](#).

4. **What happens when a TANF AU with an optional household member has a change in circumstances?**

Families can always change the status of optional TANF AU members. In some cases, removing the optional AU member from the TANF AU may increase the benefits to the family.

EXAMPLE Anita has no income and is unable to work. She is getting a 3-person, needy TANF grant for herself and her two nephews. Anita is later approved for SSA disability benefits of \$1,080 a month.

- If Anita remains on the AU as needy, the TANF closes for the entire household due to excess countable income.
- However, Aunt Anita is an optional AU member so we can opt her off the TANF grant. Her income would not be counted and she can continue to get a non-needy TANF grant for her two nephews.

EXAMPLE 20-year old, Sally is getting a non-needy TANF grant for her minor sibling Kelly after their parents pass away. After a few months, Kelly starts receiving \$1,200 in SSA survivor benefits.

- Kelly is not an optional AU member so we budget the SSA benefits when determining TANF eligibility, this family would be over the income limit for TANF.

EXAMPLE Alonso is receiving a non-needy TANF for his 17-year-old niece Grace. Grace turns 18 years old in May. Her demographics screen indicates she is scheduled to graduate high school in June of the same year. We must determine if Grace will complete high school in June:

- Grace is not an optional AU member. Send a request for information letter requesting verification that Grace is still attending full time high school and making satisfactory progress.
- If Grace is no longer in school, she is no longer eligible for TANF, with no eligible minors in the AU, the TANF would terminate.

Worker Responsibilities - [WAC 388-408-0030](#)

1. If we don't have to include a child in the AU under [WAC 388-408-0015](#), give the caretaker relative, guardian, or custodian the choice whether or not they'd like to include the child in the TANF/SFA AU.
2. Explain to the ~~client~~ household that the child cannot receive TANF/SFA in a separate ~~AU~~ assistance unit.

EXAMPLE Aunt Buella applies for TANF for her niece, Dorothy and nephew, Sammi who are cousins. Aunt Buella doesn't want assistance. Set up a two-person AU assistance unit for ~~the niece and nephew~~ Dorothy and Samuel.

EXAMPLE Married couple, Kennedy & Adhel apply as needy relatives for their two grandsons, Andrey and Markese, who. ~~The grandsons~~ are cousins to each other. Even though ~~the grandfather~~ Kennedy claims to be the caretaker of one child and ~~the grandmother~~ Adhel claims to be the caretaker of the other, we must include the two children, Andrey & Markese in the same AU assistance unit.

EXAMPLE ~~Woman~~ Ashlyn applies for TANF for ~~their~~ daughterchild, Jana and nephew, Gavin. Since ~~the woman~~ Ashlyn is the caretaker relative for both children and is the parent of one, include all three people in the same assistance unit ~~AU~~.

EXAMPLE Grand~~parent~~ ~~Terri~~ mother and two grandchildren, Tristen and Chloe receive a three-person TANF grant. Her husband, Charles starts to get retirement benefits. We allocate \$~~700-950~~ of the retirement benefits to the AU assistance unit because ~~Charles the husband~~ is financially responsible for ~~his wife~~ Terri. Because the ~~grandmother-grandparents aren't~~ isn't financially responsible for ~~their~~ grandchildren, don't terminate assistance due to the excess income. Remove ~~the grandmother~~ Terri from the grant and continue assistance for the grandchildren Tristen and Chloe.

EXAMPLE ~~A client~~ Te-Hina receives a three-person grant ~~of \$706~~ for herself, her daughter, Nika and nephew, Aman. ~~She~~ Te-Hina starts working and has monthly gross earnings of \$~~21,1400~~. This makes the household is over income. Review option to remove Te-Hina and Nika from the ~~Terminate assistance for the woman and daughter. grant to~~ Ccontinue cash assistance (one-person grant) for her nephew, Aman. When the income of an optional AU assistance unit member reduces the grant payment to a level which is less than what the other AU assistance unit members would get if the individual with income were not included, ~~inform the~~ client household of the option to request termination from the AU assistance unit for the member with income. By making this choice, the family household would get more cash. ~~and, if~~ the person with income is an adult, this also preserves their time-limited TANF eligibility. Add the following free form text to the ACES ~~client notice~~ letter: "**Your family may be better off financially if you**

stop getting a cash grant for (Name of person receiving the income). To find out, call the number listed above."

EXAMPLE ~~A client~~ Samson gets a three-person grant ~~for with herself, her~~ daughter, Nikkiesha and her nephew, Youssouf. ~~Samson~~ he starts working and has gross earnings of \$1,000 per month. When we budget the income, the AU assistance unit is eligible for a grant of ~~\$~~\$206. However, if ~~the client~~ Samson ~~chose chooses~~ to end TANF for ~~her~~self and ~~child~~ Nikkiesha ~~her child, she they~~ could get a one-person grant of \$450 for ~~her~~ nephew, Youssouf and preserve ~~her~~ TANF eligibility under the 60-month lifetime limit.

NOTE: There are some valid values you can't enter in the Financial Responsibility field. ACES ~~will~~ enters these values after ~~it determines eligibility and~~ you finalize the action. Make sure that all the following conditions are true before you use the non-member valid value [NM]: - The person isn't part of the AU; - The person isn't financially responsible for anyone in the AU; and - We don't have to count the person's income or resources when we determine the AU's eligibility or benefits.