

Department of Social and Health Services
Olympia, Washington
EAZ Manual

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Category Transitional Food Assistance
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Summary

Updating worker responsibilities under [WAC 388-489-0022](#) to clarify when a TFA recipient returns to regular Basic Food, advanced notice is not required even if the benefit level is a lower amount of than the TFA amount.

Updated October 3, 2024
See below for edited text:

Transitional Food Assistance

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Purpose:

Transitional Food Assistance (TFA) is a program to provide stable food benefits to families leaving the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Tribal TANF programs while receiving

Basic Food. TFA is meant to help meet a family's nutritional needs for five months as they transition into self-sufficiency.

WAC 388-489-0005 Who is eligible for transitional food assistance?

- [Clarifying Information and Worker Responsibilities](#)

WAC 388-489-0010 How is my transitional food assistance benefit calculated?

- [Clarifying Information and Worker Responsibilities](#)

WAC 388-489-0015 How long will my household receive transitional food assistance?

- [Clarifying Information](#)

WAC 388-489-0020 Am I required to report changes in my household's circumstances while on transitional food assistance?

- [Clarifying Information and Worker Responsibilities](#)

WAC 388-489-0022 What happens if I reapply for Basic Food while receiving transitional food assistance?

- [Clarifying Information and Worker Responsibilities](#)

WAC 388-489-0025 Can my transitional food assistance benefits end before the end of my five-month transition period?

- [Clarifying Information and Worker Responsibilities](#)

Clarifying Information - WAC 388-489-0005

1. Eligibility for Transitional Food Assistance (TFA):
 - a. If a household stops receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Tribal TANF benefits, they may qualify for TFA when:
 - i. They were already receiving Basic Food when TANF terminated;

- ii. No other member of the Basic Food assistance unit (AU) receives TANF;
- iii. They reside in Washington;
- iv. They weren't in full family sanction at the time TANF terminated; and
- v. They aren't disqualified from receiving Basic Food for not cooperating with the application or recertification process, or if all members are ineligible due to reasons described in [WAC 388-489-0025](#).

b. If a household receives Transitional Cash Assistance (WAC 388-394-0010) they will qualify for TFA.

2. Authorizing TFA:

When a household is eligible for TFA, the system opens TFA using the existing Basic Food AU, calculates transitional benefits as described under [WAC 388-489-0010](#), and sends the AU letter 008-01 to tell them about their transitional benefits. TFA cases are automatically taken out of the mid-certification review cycle and won't receive a MCR for Basic Food.

EXAMPLE:

Cindy receives SSI and receives Basic Food with her 20-year old daughter Brittany and her two grandchildren. Brittany gets TANF for herself and the two children.

Brittany leaves TANF and isn't in sanction. The four-person Basic Food AU will get TFA.

EXAMPLE:

Simon lives with his two brothers, his sister Dana, and Dana's two children. All six people are in Simon's Basic Food AU.

Dana receives TANF, but recently started a job. Dana will get her last TANF check July 1st. Because Dana's AU wasn't in sanction when TANF terminated, Simon's entire Basic Food AU gets TFA from August through December.

3. When a family leaving TANF/Tribal TANF isn't eligible for TFA:

- The system won't trickle to TFA.
- Use the existing Basic Food AU's current circumstances to determine the impacts on eligibility.
- If not eligible for TFA, the AU may be eligible for continued non-TFA Basic Food.

EXAMPLE:

Ms. Robinson's TANF grant is in sanction for DCS non-cooperation. On March 1, she reports that she started a new job and asks to terminate TANF benefits.

Since the TANF AU was in DCS sanction at the time of ACES monthly issuance in February, Ms. Robinson isn't eligible for TFA. We process the TANF termination and update the case for the income from the new job as well as other known changes. We consider both the loss of TANF and the income from the new job to determine ongoing eligibility and benefits for Basic Food.

EXAMPLE:

Mark receives Basic Food and Tribal TANF for himself, his wife, and their two children. Mark didn't meet Tribal TANF work requirements, and has been notified that the family will be terminated from Tribal TANF as a result.

Because Mark left Tribal TANF due to a sanction, the family isn't eligible for TFA. We consider all the AU's current income, expenses, and other circumstances to determine ongoing eligibility and benefits for Basic Food.

EXAMPLE:

Steve, Mary, and their two children receive TANF and Basic Food.

Steve is sanctioned for failing to meet WorkFirst requirements. Mary starts working and her income is over the TANF standard. This results in the TANF closing.

Steve isn't TFA eligible for TFA due to WorkFirst sanction, but the rest of the family is eligible.

4. Basic Food applications during the last month of TANF:

If a household doesn't already receive Basic Food at the time we take action to close TANF or remove Tribal TANF income, they aren't eligible for TFA. This includes Basic Food applications:

- Pending at the time we take action to close TANF or remove Tribal TANF income; or
- Approved after we took action to terminate TANF benefits or remove Tribal TANF income.

EXAMPLE:

A family receives TANF benefits in January. On January 4th, the family turns in an application for Basic Food. The worker has pended the application for necessary verification. On January 7th, the client requests termination of their TANF benefits. They have indicated that they still want food benefits. The worker immediately updates the case to terminate TANF effective January 31st.

On January 9th, the client provides the necessary verification to open Basic Food benefits. The family is eligible for food benefits back to their date of application of January 4th.

Even though the AU was **eligible for** Basic Food when we terminated TANF benefits, the TANF AU **didn't receive** Basic Food on January 7th, the date we terminated TANF. The family isn't eligible to receive TFA. Process the application for Basic Food.

EXAMPLE:

The Parker family receives Basic Food and Tribal TANF in March. They failed to recertify their Basic Food benefits in March; Basic Food terminates on March 31st.

On April 10th, we hear from the Tribal TANF worker that Mr. Parker started working, terminating Tribal TANF benefits. On April 14th, Mr. Parker turns in an application requesting Basic Food benefits.

The Parker family didn't receive Basic Food at the time we removed the Tribal TANF income. They aren't eligible to receive TFA. We would process the application for Basic Food.

5. Pending clients in an active Basic Food AU:

- If a person is pending on an active Basic Food AU when the TANF or Tribal TANF closure moves the AU into TFA, the pending AU member stays in pending status.
- When we complete the add-a-person actions for the person in pending status, the system will automatically designate them as a non-member with ACES Reason Code 130.

6. TANF or Tribal TANF suspension and TFA:

People on an active TANF or Tribal TANF case who are in suspense aren't eligible for TFA, even though they don't receive a cash benefit. These families may receive TFA when TANF/Tribal TANF benefits end.

7. Moving between TANF and Tribal TANF:

If someone leaves TANF or Tribal TANF to apply for the other program, the family may be eligible for TFA while the other benefits are pending. When we approve TANF or we learn Tribal TANF is approved, the system automatically terminates TFA with advance notice.

8. Two or more TANF Assistance Units in a single AU for Basic Food:

- No person in a TFA AU can receive TANF or Tribal TANF.
- The system won't allow someone to receive TFA if someone living in the home and in the Basic Food AU receives TANF or Tribal TANF.

EXAMPLE:

Sally receives Basic Food in a five-person AU with her 20-year old daughter Allie, Allie's child, and her 19-year old daughter Kate and Kate's child. Both Allie and Kate receive TANF with their children.

In January, Allie reports new employment and requests to have her TANF case closed. The Basic Food won't switch to TFA because Kate and her child still receive TANF on an associated AU.

In April, Kate requests termination of her TANF benefits. TANF ends April 30th, and TFA starts for everyone in the Basic Food AU on May 1st.

9. Two Basic Food AUs associated with a single TANF/ Tribal TANF AU:

If TANF / Tribal TANF ends, and more than one Basic Food AU is associated with the TANF AU, only the Basic Food AU with the TANF Head of Household changes to TFA.

EXAMPLE:

Pauline and her child Mario receive TANF and Basic Food.

In the summer, Mario lives with his dad Luigi. While there, Mario gets Basic Food on Luigi's Basic Food AU. We keep Mario on the TANF AU as "Temporarily Absent" but remove him from Pauline's Basic Food.

If Pauline requests closure of her TANF during this temporary absence, she will get TFA based on a one-person assistance unit. If Mario returns to Pauline's home before TFA is over, she can reapply for Basic Food to see if leaving TFA would give them more benefits.

10. Ineligible person in a Basic Food AU when TANF ends:

A person's status as an ineligible member of a Basic Food AU doesn't prevent the eligible members of the AU from getting TFA.

EXAMPLE:

Ms. Jones and her two children receive TANF and Basic Food based on no income. Last year, Ms. Jones had committed an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) before applying for TANF. Because of the IPV, she is disqualified from receiving Basic Food for one year beginning in October.

On January 3rd, Ms. Jones reports a new job. Her TANF case closes at the end of January based on her new income. The Basic Food AU changes to TFA for February through June, calculated based on zero income. Ms. Jones remains an ineligible member for TFA.

11. Refusing to cooperate with the application process:

- Refusing to cooperate with the application process for Basic Food isn't the same as failing to provide information necessary to determine eligibility for Basic Food.
- Clients aren't refusing to cooperate with the application process if they simply fail to provide the requested information or verification.
- We consider someone to be refusing to cooperate with the application process, **only** if the following conditions have been met:
 - a. The AU is **able to cooperate** in taking the required action necessary to determine eligibility; and
 - b. They clearly demonstrate that they **won't** take the required action to complete the application process.

EXAMPLE:

Pam failed to show up for her scheduled interview. Her worker unsuccessfully attempts to contact her for a phone interview to complete her recertification.

Because Pam simply failed to appear for the interview, we can't determine that she is refusing to cooperate with the application process. Pam could receive TFA.

EXAMPLE:

Brent is in the office to complete his recertification interview for Basic Food and TANF. In the course of the interview, Brent reports a new job requests termination of his TANF benefits.

His worker asks Brent to provide information about his income to determine eligibility for Basic Food, or a contact person at work to provide the needed verification. Brent states that he has pay stubs at home, but he doesn't want to bring in the documents or send us a copy. Additionally, Brent said that he doesn't want us contacting his work.

Brent is able to cooperate with the application process but has made it clear that he doesn't intend to do so. Because Brent refused to cooperate with the application process for Basic Food, he isn't eligible for TFA when TANF closes.

12. Non-recipient members of a TANF/SFA AU and TFA:

People who are non-recipients of a TANF/SFA Assistance Unit don't impact the household's eligibility for TFA.

EXAMPLE:

Stephanie is the head of household for TANF and Basic Food. Stephanie is an undocumented immigrant and has failed to cooperate with the Division of Child Support (DCS) for TANF. As an undocumented immigrant, she doesn't receive TANF for herself.

Because Stephanie isn't a TANF recipient, the failure to cooperate with DCS doesn't impact TFA. When the household leaves TANF, they may receive TFA.

Worker Responsibilities - WAC 388-489-0005

1. When Basic Food is terminated before TANF:

- If you try to terminate a TANF AU, or remove Tribal TANF income from an AU that has a Basic Food case that is closed effective the end of the month, ACES provides a hard edit to reinstate Basic Food before terminating TANF.
- If the system terminates TANF in batch, and Basic Food is already closed effective the end of the month, Barcode tickle TFA1 – “TANF closed in batch, review HH for correct TFA elig” is generated.

Reinstate Basic Food and take action to terminate TANF or remove the Tribal TANF income. The system will automatically open TFA benefits.

2. People moving between TANF and Tribal TANF:

When people aren't eligible for TFA because they are transferring between TANF and Tribal TANF, enter the appropriate code to prevent TFA:

- a. If the family is leaving Tribal TANF to get TANF, approve the TANF benefits before removing the Tribal TANF income.
- b. If the family is leaving TANF to get Tribal TANF, enter the Tribal TANF income before closing the TANF grant.

3. Basic Food issued with postponed verification:

To improve the process for expedited service and support TFA, the system now accepts future application dates when we have approved expedited service with postponed verification.

If you issued Basic Food benefits with postponed verification under WAC 388-406-0015 and now have the needed verification, take the following actions:

Re-screen the Basic Food AU with a future application date for the ongoing month. **Do not screen in a new AU for Basic Food**; and finalize the application with the new information.

4. When a Basic Food household is eligibility for TCA but didn't convert to TFA due to a household composition change:

These circumstances will generate a TFA2 tickle:

- a. ACES attempts to close a Basic Food AU with a Reason Code 320 in overnight batch;
- b. The household meets the TCA eligibility requirements, and;
- c. A recipient in the TFA calculation month was removed prior to the change and they aren't open on another food AU.

Clarifying Information - WAC 388-489-0010

1. Calculating TFA at TANF closure:

To calculate TFA benefits, we use the Basic Food budget from the AU's last month on TANF/Tribal TANF, minus the TANF/Tribal TANF income. We do not consider **any other** changes in income, expenses, or household composition to calculate TFA benefits.

EXAMPLE:

Rebecca and her two children receive TANF and Basic Food. In the middle of September, Rebecca starts work and also starts to get child support from the non-custodial parent. She requests termination of TANF benefits.

To calculate TFA benefits, the system uses the Basic Food calculation for September, subtracts the TANF income, and determines the AU's TFA benefits for October through February.

We don't use the child support or Rebecca's earnings in the TFA calculation because we didn't use them to calculate Basic Food benefits for September.

EXAMPLE:

Lance and his two children receive a TANF grant in the amount of \$354. He also receives \$300 in social security benefits for the two children.

On January 27th Lance reported that he got a job and requested closure of his TANF case. TANF closes effective the end of February.

The system calculates TFA using the social security income of \$300 Lance received during the last month of TANF. His new earnings weren't used to calculate Basic Food in February and won't count for TFA.

EXAMPLE:

Sandra lives with her 20-year old daughter and her two grandchildren. The daughter receives TANF for herself and her two children in the amount of \$569. Sandra receives SSI income of \$654 monthly. They are all included in the same Basic Food AU.

In August, Sandra's daughter got a job. She reported the information to her case manager on September 5th, after receiving her first pay. The daughter is now over income for TANF. TANF case closes effective September 30th.

The Basic Food AU switches to TFA effective October 1st. Sandra's SSI is the only income we use to calculate the TFA benefits. Neither the TANF income nor the income from the new job is used to calculate TFA benefits.

2. Calculating TFA generated by Transitional Cash Assistance:

TFA benefit amount is calculated by using the household's last Basic Food allotment at the time of original issuance.

EXAMPLE:

Jane and her two children receive Basic Food. On September 10th, Jane receives her first paycheck and also begins to collect child support from the non-custodial parent. The same day Jane calls to request closure of her Basic Food benefits and receives Transitional Cash Assistance the next day September 11th.

To calculate TFA benefits, the system uses the Basic Food calculation for September to determine the AU's TFA benefits for October through February.

We don't use the child support or Jane's earnings in the TFA calculation because we didn't use them to calculate Basic Food benefits for September.

EXAMPLE:

Lance, Mary, and their two children receive Basic Food of \$201. Lance has unemployment income of \$860 per month.

On January 31st, Lance calls to report that he received his first paycheck from a new job and the combined income from unemployment and Lance's new job is over the gross income limit for March. The AU receives Transitional Cash Assistance on February 1st.

The system calculates TFA using the unemployment income of \$860 that was budgeted for the last month of Basic Food (February). His new earnings weren't used to calculate Basic Food in February and won't count for TFA starting in March.

EXAMPLE:

Miguel, his 20 year old son and his 15 year old daughter apply for food benefits on March 16th, and there is no income in the household. Miguel receives a combined issuance of March and April food benefits.

On March 25th (prior to monthly issuance for April) Miguel calls to report that he received his first unemployment payment. Miguel's countable income is over the **net** monthly limit, but his food benefits stay open with a \$0 issuance for May and ongoing as his income is under the gross income limit. Miguel requests closure of his food benefits effective April 30th. Miguel receives TCA April 1st.

The system calculates TFA using Miguel's Basic Food calculation in the last month he received food benefits (April). TFA begins May 1st, issuing full benefits from May to September.

3. How mass changes affect TFA benefits:

The **only** change to Basic Food standards we use to adjust TFA benefits is the change to the Maximum Allotment under WAC 388-478-0060.

EXAMPLE:

The department increases the maximum allotment, standard deduction, maximum shelter cost, and standard utility allowance for October benefits.

- If we ended TANF or removed Tribal TANF income **before October monthly issuance**, the system recalculates benefits with the new maximum allotment, and uses the original standard deduction, max shelter cost, and utility standards.
- If we ended TANF or removed Tribal TANF income **after October monthly issuance**, the system calculates benefits with the new maximum allotment, and also uses the updated standard deduction, max shelter cost, and utility standards.

4. When a person on TFA is approved for Basic Food in a different AU:
If someone in a TFA assistance unit is approved for Basic Food in another AU, the person can no longer be an active member on TFA.

We reduce the TFA AU size for the person who will get Basic Food in the other AU, but we don't change the income or expenses used to calculate the TFA benefits. We adjust the TFA benefits based on the new AU size and the removal of income and expenses clearly belonging to the person who left (such as any allowable medical expenses).

NOTE:

A shelter expense is considered to be the expense of the household, not the individual. Any adjustment to TFA benefits won't include changes in the shelter deduction.

EXAMPLE:

Amber, Brent, and Larry receive TFA with a certification period of March through July. Because Larry was working part time before their TANF grant ended, his income was used to calculate the TFA benefits.

On April 3rd, Larry moves out and is approved for Basic Food with his girlfriend Veronica. Larry is removed from Amber's TFA effective April 30th. Larry is then added to Veronica's Basic Food AU beginning May 1st using both of their current income and expenses.

Amber and Brent continue to receive TFA through July. Their TFA benefit amount is recalculated based on a two-person household and the removal of Larry's income.

Worker Responsibilities - WAC 388-489-0010

If someone in a TFA AU moves out and becomes eligible for Basic Food in another AU, take the following actions:

1. Remove the person leaving TFA from the TFA AU using reason code 549. The system removes the person from the AU and displays Reason Code 233 - *Change in household size*. ACES will issue benefits based on the change in the household size.
2. Add the mandatory freeform text to inform the TFA assistance unit:
 - o The name of the person we removed from the AU; and
 - o That we removed this person from Transitional Food Assistance to get Basic Food in another AU under [WAC 388-489-0010](#).

Clarifying Information - WAC 388-489-0015

1. TFA Certification Periods:

- a. TFA is certified for up to five months from when your household leaves the TANF or Tribal TANF program or receives Transitional Cash Assistance (TCA), beginning the month after the TCA is available.
- b. Prior to the end of the five month certification, we will send you a notice to reapply for Basic Food. The notice will contain an Eligibility Review (ER) Form and we will treat it as follows:
 - i. If the ER form is received prior to the last month of the TFA certification period, we will treat it as an application for Basic Food per [WAC 388-489-0022](#).
 - A. Worker should see if the client would like to treat the form as an ER or as an application using the Worker Responsibilities under [WAC 388-489-0022](#).
 - ii. If the ER form is received in the last month of your TFA certification period, we will follow the processing procedures for recertifications. See [WAC 388-434-0010](#).

EXAMPLE:

Christina is certified for TFA from February to June. After receiving her ER form in May, she goes to her local office in June to complete the interview. The review is completed and TFA reverts back to Basic Food with a new certification period of July 1st to June 30th.

EXAMPLE:

Thomas is certified for TFA from December to April. He turns in an ER form in at the end of March. As the ER was received in the second to last month of the TFA certification period, ask him if he is applying for Basic Food or if he would like to maintain the final month of TFA and use the form as a ER to recertify Basic Food after the TFA certification period.

2. When TFA starts based on the end of Tribal TANF:

Because we don't issue Tribal TANF benefits, the date we start TFA based on the end of Tribal TANF varies:

- If the Tribal TANF end date is the end of the current month or the end of a prior month, TFA begins with the next monthly issuance after the date we delete Tribal TANF from the system.
- If the Tribal TANF end date is the end of a future month, TFA begins on the first of the month following the Tribal TANF end date.

People leaving Tribal TANF are still eligible for up to 5 months of TFA benefits even if we remove the Tribal TANF benefits one or more months after they stopped getting Tribal TANF.

Example TFA start dates based on end of Tribal TANF and date income is deleted:

Tribal TANF End Date	Date Tribal TANF Income Deleted	Date of Next Monthly Issuance	TFA Start Date
06/30/22	07/21/22	07/22/22	08/01/22
06/30/22	07/25/22	08/26/22	09/01/22 ¹
07/31/22	07/21/22	07/22/22	08/01/22
07/31/22	07/25/22	08/26/22	09/01/22 ²
08/31/22	07/21/22	N/A	09/01/22
08/31/22	07/25/22	N/A	09/01/22

1. The worker will most likely need to issue a supplement for the Basic Food for the benefit month of August. Depending on when we learn about the end of Tribal TANF, the worker may need to supplement the Basic Food benefits for July.
2. The worker will most likely need to issue a supplement for Basic Food for the benefit month of August.

EXAMPLE:

Bill and Susan receive Tribal TANF and Basic Food with their daughter. Their Tribal TANF ends on November 30th. On January 16th, their Tribal TANF worker reports that Tribal TANF benefits have ended.

On January 26th, their worker Stephanie updates the case record to remove Tribal TANF income. Monthly issuance is January 27th.

Because Stephanie removed the Tribal TANF income by February monthly issuance, the family enters TFA beginning February 1st. The TFA certification period ends June 30th.

EXAMPLE:

Pat and Alice receive Tribal TANF and Basic Food benefits with two children. At their request, their Tribal TANF ends effective October 31st. On November 23rd, Laura's Tribal TANF worker reports that Tribal TANF has ended.

On November 28th her worker Jack updates the case record to remove Tribal TANF. Monthly issuance is November 23rd.

Because December monthly issuance already happened by the time Jack took action to remove the Tribal TANF income in November, Pat and Alice's AU starts to get TFA on January 1st. The TFA certification period ends May 31st.

EXAMPLE:

Rose and James receive Tribal TANF and Basic Food benefits with their daughter Tiffany. The family stops receiving Tribal TANF on September 30th, but we don't learn of this change until November 25th. December monthly issuance happened on November 23rd.

Their worker Jason removes the Tribal TANF income on November 25th. Because December monthly issuance has occurred, the family gets TFA beginning January 1st with the TFA certification period ending on May 31st.

Because Rose reported the end of Tribal TANF before December, Jason makes a historical change to supplement the December Basic Food benefits based on the loss of Tribal TANF.

3. If necessary, we will extend or shorten your Basic Food AU's current certification period to match the five-month TFA period.

EXAMPLE:

Family receives TANF and Basic Food benefits with their next ER / Recertification is due in August. In early January, the head of household gets a job and requests termination of TANF.

TANF closes effective January 31st and the Basic Food converts to TFA in February. The system automatically adjusts the certification end date to June 30th, for when the five months of TFA benefits end.

EXAMPLE:

Tom and his child receive Basic Food and TANF based on no income. They are certified for Basic Food from January through June.

On May 10th, Tom reports a job that puts him over the income limit for TANF. TANF ends on May 31st; and the AU gets TFA from June 1st through October 31st based on zero income. The system extends the certification period beyond the original certification end date to provide 5 months of TFA.

EXAMPLE:

Lenny receives Basic Food for himself, his daughter, his girlfriend Linda, and Linda's two sons. Basic Food is certified from November through October. Linda receives TANF for herself and her sons.

On December 4th, Linda requests closure of her TANF because she now receives social security survivor's benefits. TANF benefits close effective December 31st. The Basic Food AU switches to TFA effective January 1st with a certification period ending May 31st. To receive food benefits after May, the AU must recertify for Basic Food.

Clarifying Information - WAC 388-489-0020

1. Reporting requirements - TFA and other benefits combined

If a household receives TFA and has an associated case for other benefits, they receive information about the reporting requirements for the other program.

EXAMPLE:

A family receives TANF, Basic Food, and SSI-related medical.

The family leaves TANF and begins to receive five months of TFA benefits. The letters they receive will tell them to report based on the requirements for SSI-related medical.

2. Changes reported when not recertifying to end TFA:

If someone reports a change in circumstances and they don't reapply for Basic Food benefits, TFA benefits remain the same even if we update the case information. However, the changes may impact other benefits.

EXAMPLE:

Ritchie's family gets TFA and SSI-related medical benefits. TFA certification ends on August 31st. On May 10th, the family reports increased income for SSI-related medical.

The worker updates the case for the change in income. The system re-determines eligibility for SSI-related medical, and leaves Ritchie's TFA benefits unchanged.

3. Opting out of TFA based on new circumstances:

Basic Food AUs who meet TFA eligibility requirements are automatically converted to TFA the month after their last month of TANF / Tribal TANF or receipt of Transitional Cash Assistance.

This includes when we have made changes to the household composition in the ongoing month for Basic Food. – The start of TFA has priority over the change for Basic Food.

If someone wants to opt out of TFA and get Basic Food, the household must reapply for Basic Food to end TFA.

EXAMPLE:

Denise and her son Timmy receive TANF and Basic Food benefits. Denise receives a partial TANF grant due to her \$800 monthly earnings. On June 2nd, Denise requests to add her sister Sally to her Basic Food AU. Sally has no income, so the change results in Denise's Basic Food increasing effective July 1st.

On June 23rd, Denise asks us to terminate her TANF benefits and waives adverse action. Her TANF benefits close effective June 30th.

The system will open TFA effective July 1st based on the budget and household composition for Basic Food in June. Because Sally wasn't in the Basic Food AU in June, she isn't included in the TFA benefits. The benefits for the two-person TFA assistance unit are lower than benefits the AU would have received by adding Sally effective July 1st. The AU doesn't receive advance notice of the change in this circumstance.

If Denise wants to end TFA and add Sally to Basic Food again, she can reapply for Basic Food.

1. Updating the case record:

Update the case record to reflect changes in circumstances even if these changes don't result in a change to TFA benefits. This information is necessary to maintain the integrity of the case record.

2. Requests to add a someone to a TFA AU:

If someone receiving TFA reports that a person has moved into the household and asks to add them to their food benefits, we can't add the person to TFA. Take the following actions:

- Send the client letter 10-01 to inform them that the reported change had no impact on their TFA benefits.
- Inform them that to add the person(s) to their food benefits, they must reapply for Basic Food.

Clarifying Information - WAC 388-489-0022

Basic Food certification period after people opt-out of TFA:

If a TFA AU applies for Basic Food and is eligible for benefits, Basic Food **must** start the first of the month after the date they applied for Basic Food. If TFA benefits have already been issued for this month, we must determine the amount of Basic Food benefits the AU was eligible to receive and create a BEG for the difference.

EXAMPLE:

Jerry and his family receive TFA with a certification period of January through May. On February 22nd his adult daughter and her three children move into the home. Jerry's daughter has no income, and he would like to add the four of them to his food benefits.

On February 23rd, Jerry reapplies for Basic Food for everyone in the household. His worker Lora approves the application for Basic Food on March 3rd.

Jerry's family is eligible for Basic Food beginning March 1st, but TFA benefits have already been issued for March. Lora must determine the correct overall benefits and manually create a BEG for the difference between the TFA benefits received, and the amount of Basic Food benefits the AU is eligible to receive for March.

Worker Responsibilities - WAC 388-489-0022

When someone chooses to end TFA early:

People receiving TFA may opt out at any point by reapplying for Basic Food. If someone would lose benefits by leaving TFA, we **must** tell them of the difference in benefits and encourage them to withdraw the application for Basic Food and continue to get TFA.

If someone applies for Basic Food benefits while getting TFA, take the following actions:

1. Inform the client how many months they have left on TFA.
2. Provide them with the following information about ending TFA:
 - a. To reapply for Basic Food, we must verify their income and expenses as we would for any Basic Food recertification.
 - b. We use all of the AU's current circumstances to determine their eligibility for Basic Food and their monthly benefits.
 - c. They may have to report more changes. The changes they do report are likely to impact their food benefits.
3. Screen the Basic Food AU:
 - a. **Do not** close the TFA.
 - b. If the client fails to follow through with the application process or is denied Basic Food for any other reason, TFA benefits continue.
4. Determine the Basic Food amount:
 - a. Start the Interview, navigate to the Eligibility page, and click the Trial Eligibility link.
 - b. The Eligibility details will display a dual participation message and the benefit amounts for both TFA and the pending Basic Food.
 - c. Tell the client the amount of Basic Food the household is eligible to receive.
 - d. Click End Test Eligibility to reset the page.
5. If the amount is **less** than the TFA amount, encourage the client to withdraw the Basic Food application and continue with TFA.
 - a. If the client wants to withdraw, deny Basic Food as a voluntary withdrawal.
 - b. If the client still wants Basic Food, close TFA and approve Basic Food.
 - c. If the client already received TFA for the first month of the Basic Food certification period, process an **overpayment** for any over-issuance.
 - d. When a client chooses to return to regular Basic Food with a lower benefit amount, they are not entitled to **advanced** notice rules. The next month of benefits is required to be the lower amount. If processing after ten-day notice, establish an overpayment if necessary.
6. If the amount is **more** than the TFA, close the TFA and approve Basic Food. If the client already received TFA for the first month of the Basic Food certification period, process a **supplement** for any under-issuance.

NOTE:

If an ER or Application form is received outside of the last month of the TFA certification period, treat the form as an application for Basic Food. As indicated above, attempt to contact the household regarding time remaining on TFA benefits, encouraging the recipient to withdraw their application and continue to receive TFA. And ER or Application received in the last month of the TFA certification period is treated an ER to recertify benefits.

Clarifying information - [WAC 388-489-0025](#)

1. TFA will end early when a TFA member is approved for TANF.

EXAMPLE:

Chris receives TANF and Basic Food for her family. On November 12, Chris requests termination of TANF. The Basic Food AU switches to TFA with a certification period of December 1st through April 30th.

On March 1st, Chris applies for and begins to receive TANF. TFA closes effective March 31st following advance notice requirements. The AU must reapply for Basic Food.

EXAMPLE:

Patti receives Basic Food for herself, her husband, her two minor children, and her 19-year old daughter. Everyone except the 19-year old receives TANF.

In early December, Patti reports that she has a job and requests to end her TANF benefits. TANF closes effective December 31st. The Basic Food AU switches to TFA with a certification period of January through May.

In February, Patti's 19-year old daughter is approved for ABD. The TFA benefits continue unaffected through the end of May. We consider the daughter's ABD benefits, as well as all other current circumstances, when the AU recertifies for Basic Food.

2. Moving into and out of TFA based on short-term TANF/SFA closure:

When TANF/SFA closes on an AU that is TFA-eligible, the case automatically transforms to TFA.

Sometimes TANF/SFA may be closed for a short period. Examples of when this may happen include when someone completes their six-month report late, or they fail to provide needed verification within the requested timeframe.

In the circumstances where we reinstate TANF or SFA, TFA terminates with advance notice when the worker completes the action to reinstate TANF/SFA.

For the AU to receive food benefits, we must re-open Basic Food benefits after reinstating TANF/SFA by re-screening an old AU or screening a new AU. This allows the AU to resume Basic Food and match the certification period end date to the TANF/SFA review date.

Reopening Basic Food benefits in this manner isn't considered a new application for Basic Food benefits, and we don't need clients to complete a new application.

NOTE:

- If we *reinstate the AU*, it reinstates TFA, which will close in overnight batch because someone gets TANF benefits.
- If we *initiate a review*, the TFA will switch to Basic Food, but receive a new certification period. This action would be treated the same as if we had completed an application or recertification for Basic Food.

EXAMPLE:

Julie's worker Bart requests information to determine her continued eligibility for TANF. Julie doesn't provide the information within the given timeframe and Bart closes her TANF, which transforms her Basic Food to TFA.

The following week, Julie submits the requested information and Bart reinstates her TANF, which causes the TFA to close. At this point, Bart must screen in an old Basic Food AU or screen a new AU.

When Bart processes the approval for Basic Food, the certification period will be set to match the TANF review end date.

3. When *some* TFA members become ineligible for Basic Food:

If the TFA AU contains some members who become ineligible under [WAC 388-489-0025](#) (3) (c), and at least one member who remains eligible, they all stay as eligible members of the TFA unit until TFA benefits end.

We terminate TFA benefits early if:

EXAMPLE:

Gayle is certified to get TFA from January 1st through May 31st with her husband Steve, their 19-year old son Tom, and their two-year old daughter Cindy.

In March, Gayle is disqualified for an Intentional Program Violation. Additionally, her son Tom is now fleeing a felony warrant for his arrest.

Since at least one person is still an eligible member in the TFA AU, **everyone remains eligible for benefits.**

When TFA ends in May, Both Gayle and Tom are ineligible for Basic Food.

- Someone in the TFA AU begins to receive TANF or Tribal TANF.
- We discover that **all** people in the TFA AU have left the state.
- **All** TFA members are ineligible for reasons under [WAC 388-489-0025](#) (3).

4. TFA and EBT Out of State Reports:

When someone uses TFA benefits outside of the State of Washington, they will appear on the EBT out of state (OOS) report.

Because we don't consider this notification that all members of the TFA AU have moved out of state, we don't need to work this report for TFA households.

Normally, we **won't** close TFA based on moving out of state unless a member of the AU or another state tells us that **all** AU members have moved out of Washington.

Worker Responsibilities - [WAC 388-489-0025](#)

When TFA member enters TANF / Tribal TANF:

When someone in a TFA AU is approved for TANF or Tribal TANF income is entered on the person's Unearned Income page, the system terminates TFA benefits with ACES Reason Code 131 allowing for advance notice.

Complete a reapplication to determine eligibility for Basic Food based on the AU's current circumstances and re-open food benefits.