

Department of Social and Health Services

Olympia, Washington

**EAZ Manual**

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Category	Cash Assistance Programs
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**Summary**

Updated the EAZ chapter Cash Assistance Programs to describe who must be included in the TANF AU for temporary and permanent guardianship.

## Cash Assistance Programs

Revised ~~March 1, 2019~~[December 8, 2020](#)

### Purpose:

This section contains rules and procedures on how to decide who is in an assistance unit for TANF, SFA, PWA and ABD cash.

### **WAC 388-408-0005** What is a cash assistance unit?

- [Clarifying Information](#)

## WAC 388-408-0015 Who must be in my assistance unit?

- [Clarifying Information](#)

## WAC 388-408-0020 When am I not allowed to be in a TANF or SFA assistance unit?

- [Clarifying Information](#)

## WAC 388-408-0025 When can I choose who is in my TANF or SFA assistance unit?

- [Worker Responsibilities](#)

## WAC 388-408-0030 What children must be in the same TANF or SFA assistance unit?

- [Worker Responsibilities](#)

## WAC 388-408-0060 Who is in my assistance unit for Aged, Blind, or Disabled (ABD) cash assistance?

- [Clarifying Information](#)

For more complete details see these EA-Z Manual chapters: [APPLICATION](#) and [INTERVIEW REQUIREMENTS OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION](#)

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## Clarifying Information - [WAC 388-408-0005](#)

For cash programs, we decide who is in the AU at application and when someone moves in or out of the home. We make this decision before we look at financial eligibility requirements.

In general, we decide who to include in the AU based on the relationship of people living in the home and whether they meet eligibility requirements other than income or resources. We may allocate the income of someone in the home excluded from the AU to people in the AU if the excluded person is financially responsible for someone in the AU.

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## Clarifying Information - [WAC 388-408-0015](#)

1. **Home-monitored clients for TANF/SFA:**

A client that lives in the home but is under home monitoring or home detention ordered by the courts or the Department of Corrections is living in the home. We do not consider them as inmates of a public institution. Clients that live in a public institution aren't eligible for TANF under [WAC 388-400-0005](#).

2. **How a child's adoption affects the relationship between a child and their siblings:**

Adoption ends the legal relationship between biological siblings.

**EXAMPLE** Doug and Wendy have legally adopted their 12-year-old grandchild Tom. They have taken in Tom's little sister Lisa, but haven't adopted her. Doug and Wendy want TANF for Lisa as non-needy caretaker relatives. Because his grandparents legally adopted Tom, we do not recognize Tom and Lisa as having a legal relationship as siblings.

**NOTE:** If Doug and Wendy wanted assistance for both Tom and Lisa, the four of them would all be in the same AU as required under [WAC 388-408-0030](#).

3. **How a child's adoption affects the relationship between a child and their biological parent(s):**

- a. Adoption ends the legal relationship between a child and the biological parents.

**EXAMPLE** Grandparents have legally adopted their grandchild. The biological mother has since moved into the household. The biological mother would like to apply for TANF for herself and the child excluding the adoptive parents in the AU. Because the child's grandparents have legally adopted him or her, we do not recognize the biological mother and child as having a legal relationship.

~~4. **When a child is placed in a permanent guardianship:**~~

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- a. [WAC 388-450-0100](#) explains the financially responsible person is legally obligated to support the dependent and defines the financially responsible person as a parent, stepparent, adoptive parent, spouse or caretaker relative. [WAC 388-450-0105](#) says the income of a financially responsible person is countable to meet the needs of the assistance unit. [If a child is permanently placed with a guardian and the guardian now has legal and financial responsibility for the child, they must both be included in the AU.](#)

EXAMPLE Karen is applying for TANF for her granddaughter Sadie. Karen provides documentation that she has temporary custody of Sadie while her dad is incarcerated. Since Karen is not Sadie's parent and she is not legally or financial responsible for Sadie, she can apply for a non-needy TANF grant for Sadie.

EXAMPLE Six months later SallyKaren reports that Sadie will not be going back to her parents' home and provides a document verifying that she is now Sadie's permanent guardian and she has accepted legal and financial responsibility for Sadie. Since SallyKaren is now financially responsible for Sadie, we can't exclude her from the TANF AU.

NOTE: If SallyKaren wanted assistance for Sadie, she would need to apply for benefits for both of them.

**5. When a pregnant minor or minor parent lives with their parents:**

It doesn't change who we include in the AU if a pregnant or minor parent who lives with their parent gets married, starts military service, or gets emancipated by court order.

**6. How we apply the AU rules in some common situations:**

- a. A married woman applies for assistance for herself and her two children from a previous marriage. She lives with her husband. She has a child in common with her husband and he has a child by a previous marriage. She doesn't want assistance for her husband, his child, or the common child. We must include all of the children in the AU because the husband must be included as he is the natural father of two of the kids and the stepfather of the other two.
- b. A grandmother applies for cash assistance for her grandchild as a non-needy relative. The minor parent of the grandchild lives in the home as well. Since you can't separate a child from their parent that lives in the home, we must include the minor parent in the AU. In this case, we would include the minor parent and allocate the income of their parent to the AU.

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## Clarifying Information - [WAC 388-408-0020](#)

If a financially responsible person cannot be in the AU under [WAC 388-408-0020](#), we allocate the income of this person to the AU. How we allocate this income varies based on why the person is ineligible. See [INCOME - Allocation and Deeming](#).

If a minor parent gets Title IV-E foster care, the minor parent's child is not eligible for TANF or SFA. The foster care payment includes the child's needs.

## **Adoption support**

Adoption support is money given to families that adopt children with special needs. This money is intended to help the family with the special expenses that these children have.

**For cash and medical assistance**, this money is excluded because it is assistance from another agency that does not cover ongoing living expenses. See [WAC 388-450-0055](#) for more information.

**For Basic Food**, this money is countable, and is budgeted as unearned income.

## **Relative Guardianship Assistance Program (R-GAP)**

Relative Guardianship Assistance (R-GAP) also known as guardianship income is money given to families that accept permanent guardianship of relative children. These families have accepted permanent legal and financial responsibility for the child in their care. The Division of Child, Youth and Families determined that these children have special needs. This money is intended to help the family with the special expenses ~~that these children have~~ for the children. The income is considered the children's income.

**For cash and medical assistance**, this money is excluded because it is assistance from another agency that does not cover ongoing living expenses. See [WAC 388-450-0055](#) for more information.

**For Basic Food**, this money is countable, and is budgeted as unearned income.