

Department of Social and Health Services
Olympia, Washington
EAZ Manual

Revision
Category Living with a Relative or Guardian
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Summary

See below for edited text:

This section has been updated to reflect suggested revisions as part of an agency workgroup to refresh policy and procedures specific to Coordinated and Concurrent TANF benefits.

Living with a Relative or Guardian

Revised - ~~February 10~~ January 1, 2023

Purpose:

This category explains the requirements for a child to live with a relative, guardian, or custodian to be eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or State Funded Assistance (SFA).

Clarifying Information - [WAC 388-454-0015](#)

1. **Length of Temporary Absence:** For the department to treat an absence as temporary, there must be a clear expectation that the AU member will return to the family home within 180 days *unless* it meets one of the exceptions in [WAC 388-454-0015](#) (1)(a).

2. **Care and Control:** In temporary absence situations, other than those due to involvement with the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), Child Welfare , the primary caregiver maintains overall responsibility ~~of~~for the child. Someone else, however, provides day-to-day care of the child.

EXAMPLE

Bill, Jane and their two children receive TANF assistance. Their house gets flooded and the landlord asks them to vacate for 4 months. The family is homeless. The children go and stay at the neighbors until their family home can be fixed. The family provides a written statement that they expect the children to be out of their home and daily care for 4 months. This situation meets the criteria of a temporary absence. The family continues to receive TANF assistance. Because DCYF is not involved with this case, concurrent TANF benefits are not issued to the children.

NOTE:

~~Since we no longer have a deprivation requirement for TANF, do not close or deny TANF just because an AU member is serving in the military. Verify the absence is temporary under WAC 388-454-0020.~~

~~**NOTE: Please also see TANF/SFA Temporary Absence**~~

~~**NOTE: Please also see TANF/SFA Temporary Absence**~~

3. **Temporary Absence Period Recipients and Applicants:** For both recipients and applicants, The 180 day absence period starts on the day the child actually left the home. Assistance can be opened, or remain open, for up to 180 days, if DCYF verifies that the child is expected to return home within 180 days.

- a. ~~For~~ Recipients:

A temporary absence cannot exceed 180 days unless it meets the exception specified in WAC. Examples of temporary absence include, but are not limited to:

1. A parent receiving care in a treatment facility,

2. ~~The a~~ child/~~ren~~ ~~being~~ placed in out-of-home care by [DCYF](#),
3. ~~s~~ Separation due to fire or flood,
4. ~~a e~~ Court-ordered visit, or
5. ~~an o~~ Out of home visit to a temporary caregiver's home.

b. ~~For~~ Applicants:

~~For households that are newly applying for TANF during the time the child is absent, the 180-day period starts on the day the child actually left the home. Assistance can be opened, for up to 180 days, if DCFS verifies that the child will return home within 180 days.~~

If the child has already been out of the home for *more than 180 days at the time of application* for benefits and DCYF ~~verifies~~ that the child will return home **within 30 days**, then assistance can be approved up to 30 days in advance of the child's return.

EXAMPLE:

Pamela applies for TANF assistance for herself and one child on September 1. The child has been in unlicensed foster care since June 1. DCYF is working with Pamela on reunifying her family, ~~and~~ verifies ~~that~~ the child will return to Pamela's home in approximately 45 days and provides a 15-362 form. The child has been out of the home less than 180 days. If all other eligibility criteria ~~has been~~ are met, then Pamela and her child are eligible for TANF assistance, even though the child is not currently in her home. ~~The child has been out of the home less than 180 days.~~

Note: You ~~should~~ **must** set ~~an alert or tickler~~ the form to for the 150th day from placement date to confirm that the child has returned home **or** that an updated 15-362 form has been received. If not already in the file, contact DCYF to request an send updated 15-362 form.e.

EXAMPLE:

~~A father~~ Julian applies for TANF assistance. His two children have not lived with him for 8 months. DCYF verifies that the children will return to his home in 3 weeks ~~that the children will return to his home in 3 weeks~~. TANF can be approved (3-person AU) once all other eligibility criteria has been met. The benefits can be authorized *before* the children return home, since there is verification from DCYF that the children will return home within 30 days.

EXAMPLE:

~~A mom~~ Tanisha applies for TANF assistance for herself and her child. The child does not live with her and has not lived with her for the past 4 months. The child lives with Grandma while the mom decides where she wants to live. There is no plan for when the child will leave Grandma's house to go and live with mom. ~~The mom~~ Tanisha is **not** eligible for TANF at this time because she has no eligible child in her home.

EXAMPLE:

Jolene applies for TANF assistance. Her children have been in unlicensed foster care for 11 months. DCYF verifies the children will return home in 60 days. TANF can't be authorized as the children have been out of the home longer than 180 days and they are not returning home within 30 days of application. Jolene can reapply when the children will return home within 30 days.

NOTE:

This policy also applies to a TANF household that is receiving assistance because there is another child residing with them. In this situation, the child being returned to the home would be considered the "applicant" and the 30-day rule would apply.

EXAMPLE:

Tammy and her minor child, Bob, are receiving TANF assistance. She has an older minor child, Peter, who has not lived with her for 1 year. DCYF verifies that Peter will return to Tammy's home in 30 days. Peter can be added to Tammy and Bob's TANF grant once all other eligibility criteria have been met. The benefits can be authorized before Peter returns home, since there is verification from DCYF that he will return home within 30 days.

c) Adding a Child to an Existing TANF / SFA AU

A child can be added to an existing AU if the child is out of the home temporarily due to hospitalization and all other eligibility criteria has been met.

EXAMPLE:

Susie is pregnant and is receiving a one person TANF grant. She delivers her baby early. The hospital verifies that the baby will remain hospitalized for up to 3 months. If the mother provides the needed verification, the baby can be added to the AU.

3.4. Concurrent Benefits:

When DCYF places a child in temporary care and expects the child to be returned home within 180 days, concurrent benefits are allowed. If the child was placed in unlicensed foster care (i.e. a relative placement or ~~an “in loco parentis” suitable other situation~~), ~~then~~ the primary caregiver can continue to receive TANF/-SFA assistance, even if the temporary caregiver applies and receives TANF/-SFA for the child. If the child was placed in a licensed foster care placement, then the primary caregiver can continue to receive TANF/-SFA assistance while the temporary caregiver receives foster care payments. Please also see Temporary Absence.

Note: DCYF sends a Coordinated Benefits Referral Form (15-362) whenever a parent/caregiver is active on TANF at the time of placement to the CSD Coordinated Benefits mailbox to:

- Confirm temporary placement of up to 180 days
- Update placement location, including return home
- Request DSHS to:
 - requestSend ETR to HQ to extend benefits
 - Request termination of Terminate TANF/SFA as-:
 - Reunification will be beyond the 180 days of approved ETR extensions
 - Permanency plan has changed or is an the case is aggravated and there is no plan for reunification ease
- Request termination of TANF/SFA as permanency plan has changed or is an aggravated case

An Exception to Rule (ETR) for concurrent benefits **may** be requested if a child is temporarily absent from the home for reasons other than DCYF removal and is expected to return to the home within 180 days. The request for concurrent benefits will be based on whether the individual case situation promotes family reunification and meets all other ETR requirements.

EXAMPLE:

A mother and one child get TANF. DCYF removes the child from the mother’s home on August 15. DCYF verifies that the child is expected to return home within 180 days. ~~The~~ mother continues to receive a 2 person TANF grant.

DCYF places the child with the grandmother who applies for a non-needy, child only grant. Because DCYF verified that the child will be returning home in 180 days, the child can receive concurrent TANF benefits. The grandmother is eligible for TANF for the child and the mother is eligible for TANF for herself and the child. (Note: If eligible, the grandmother could receive TANF assistance for herself and the child.)

UPDATE:

The mother is engaged with services with DCYF, however, reunification will **not** occur within 180 days. DCYF sends an updated completed Coordinated Benefits Referral Form (15-362) to the Coordinated Benefits mailbox indicating a request to continue benefits for 90 additional days. An ETR is requested by CSD staff and approved by CSD HQ. Mom is eligible to continue to receive TANF benefits.

Worker Responsibilities - WAC 388-454-0015

- 1) **Length of Temporary Absence:** Treat an absence as temporary when there is a clear expectation that the AU member will return to the family home within 180 days. Verify that the AU member's absence is temporary and document this information in the case record.
- 2) **Foster Care (Licensed and Unlicensed):** Treat a child in foster care as temporarily absent if DCYF states the child will return to the home within 180 days.
 - a) When a child is removed from a ~~Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/ State Family Assistance (SFA)~~ household, you ~~will~~ may receive information from the Health Care Authority (HCA) Foster Care Medical Unit and Adoption Support (FCAS) team via a DMS Barcode tickler. ~~The Foster Care Medical Unit will update the child's Relative Placement Code.~~
 - a)b) You ~~will need to~~ must update the Living Arrangement code to FEC on the child's DEMI client pagescreen in ACES 3G. ~~DCFS will provide you with information about the absence and placement. DCFS may send you this information via the Coordinated Benefits Referral Form (form 15-362).~~ If you ~~have questions~~ are unable to take these actions, please contact the Foster Care ~~Medical Unit and Adoption Support (FCAS)~~, ~~and /or the DCFSCWPD~~. ~~The Foster Care Medical Unit can provide you with general information about the absence and the child's health care benefits.~~
 - c) DCYF must provide information about the absence and placement for all parents/caregivers who are active on TANF / SFA at the time of placement by sending a completed 15-362 form to the Coordinated Benefits Mailbox within 7 business days of the child's removal from the household. DCYF ~~can~~ confirms ~~whether~~ if the family is working towards family reunification and if the child is expected to be returned home in 180 days.

NOTE: CSD staff should request Form 15-362 from DCYF if the form has not been received. If CSD has made multiple request and DCYF has not sent the requested form, please email coordinatedbenefits@dshs.wa.gov to request assistance from HQ staff to get the required form. **CSD Staff must not take adverse action without the actual receipt of the form.**

- d) ~~Continue~~ Continue benefits for a child that gets TANF-/SFA if DCYF expects the child to return home within **180 days**.
- b) ~~Set an alert or tickler for the 150th day from removal to review the status of the case. Authorize assistance to an applicant if DCFSCWPD verifies that the child will return home within 180 days from the original date of removal.~~
- e) ~~Even if the child has already been out of the home for 180 days or more, benefits can be authorized if DCFSCWPD verifies that the child will be home within 30 days from the date the assistance is authorized.~~
- ~~Terminate assistance for a TANF / SFA child when DCFSCWPD states that the child **will not** return home within 180 days (unless an exception to rule has been requested and approved. (Do NOT terminate TANF based on temporary placement end date, as FCAS extends it to the child's 18th birthdate.))~~
- i) ~~Set an alert or tickler the 15-362 form for the 150th day from removal to review the status of the case.~~
- ii) ~~Only continue to authorize assistance beyond the 180 days of the temporary absence if DCYF has requested an extension of benefits and an ETR has been submitted and approved through CSD HQ.~~
- e) ~~Terminate assistance for a TANF/SFA child when DCYF states that the child **will not** return home within 180 days unless an exception to rule has been requested and approved.~~
- f) ~~Authorize assistance to an applicant if DCYF verifies that the child will return home within 180 days from the original date of removal. -If the child has already been out of the home for 180 days or more, benefits can be authorized if DCYF verifies that the child will be home within 30 days from the date the assistance is authorized.~~

EXAMPLE

Molly is on TANF with her 3 children. DCYF removes the children from Molly's home and places them with an unlicensed caregiver. DCYF sends you a Coordinated Benefits Referral Form (15-362) via the Coordinated Benefits mailbox indicating that the children have been temporarily placed and are expected to return home to Molly within 180 days. Continue TANF assistance for Molly and her three children. Three weeks later, DCYF sends another Referral Form (15-362) indicating that there has been a change in the family reunification plan and the children will not return home in 180 days. Terminate the TANF assistance with advance and adequate notice.

- 3) **Concurrent Benefits:** If a child in foster care is expected to return home within 180 days, concurrent benefits for the child can be approved. [Please see Temporary Absence.](#)
- a) When a child has been removed, [whether voluntary or involuntarily](#), from a TANF/SFA household and DCYF verifies that the absence is temporary, [and sends a completed 15-362-form](#), continue benefits for the primary caregiver and child.
 - b) ~~The DCYF [staff social service specialist](#)~~ may request to be added to the case as an Advocate Representative (AREP screen) so they are aware of updates made to the household's benefits during the family reunification period. See ACES User Manual or E A-Z manual if questions regarding representatives.
 - c) ~~The DCYF [staff social service specialist](#)~~ may recommend that the CSO review the need for a protective payee. See [WAC 388-460-0035](#) for details on when to use a protective payee.
 - d) If the temporary caregiver applies for TANF/SFA, you can authorize assistance to the temporary caregiver (relative or other unlicensed adult caregiver) and the child. The child will simultaneously be on two TANF / SFA AU's in these situations. Medical assistance will be available to the child only in the household where the child is physically residing. This will be provided as a D-series medical. ~~If a D-series medical is not already opened, then you should open an F-series medical until the Foster Care Medical Unit reviews the case.~~
 - e) ~~If the applicant states they are related to the child, then~~ [Aa](#) statement from DCYF regarding the relative's relationship to the child is acceptable verification [of relationship](#). See [WAC 388-454-0010 #3](#) regarding the relative's relationship to the child.
 - f) If DCYF notifies ~~the CSO~~ that the child will no longer be returning home within 180 days [and sends a completed 15-362 form](#), ~~then~~ terminate the child's assistance from the primary caregiver's TANF / SFA assistance.

EXAMPLE

A grandmother applies for TANF assistance for herself and her grandchild. She is already receiving D02 medical for the child, which was opened by [FCAS team](#). The grandchild is already receiving TANF assistance with her mother. However, it was documented that DCYF removed the child from the mother's home and placed the child temporarily with the grandmother. It was also verified that the child is expected to return to the mother's home in 180 days. If the grandmother and child meet all other eligibility criteria, then authorize TANF assistance. The child will be receiving TANF in two AUs, but the child is not eligible to receive Basic Food or medical assistance in both AU's.

4. **"Runaway" Children:** A child who runs away does not meet the criteria for a temporary absence unless there is a clear expectation of when the child is returning.

NOTE: Families of runaways may contact [DCYF's Family Reconciliation Services \(FRS\)](#) for support.

- 5. Reporting Temporary Absences:** If a TANF AU knows that a child will be out of the home for more than 180 days, and they fail to tell the department within 5 days of the date they know of this, disqualify the client for TANF as required under [WAC 388-418-0005](#) and [WAC 388-418-0007](#). If the family is working with DCYF, do not penalize the adult if there was a change in the family reunification plan and DCYF did not notify the CSO that the child is not returning home within 180 days.

EXAMPLE: A mother and two children get TANF. The client reported on 6/10 that one child was going to visit her father for the summer and return on 8/28. The worker set an alert for 9/1 to confirm that the child has returned. On 9/4 the worker sent a letter requesting information about whether or not the child has returned. On 9/13 the client called the CSO and told the worker that the child will stay with her father. The client stated she knew this on 8/26. In this instance, the worker would not do anything to the client's September benefits. If the client reported timely, there wouldn't be time to give the client notice and make the change. The worker would remove the mother's needs for October. Since there is still a child in the home, the AU would get a one-person grant for October. The worker would reinstate the mother for November.

EXAMPLE: A father applies for TANF assistance. His 2 children have not lived with him for 8 months. DCYF verifies that the children will return to his home in 3 weeks. TANF is approved (3 person AU), since there is verification from DCYF that the children will return home within 30 days. After 1 1/2 weeks, we learn that there has been a change in the reunification plan and the children will no longer be returning home. The worker should terminate the TANF assistance with advance and adequate notice, because there are no eligible children in the home. An overpayment is not established.

- 6. CPI Amounts:** If someone is receiving care in a hospital or treatment facility, and the stay is over 180 days, the assistance payment is reduced to the CPI amount.

EXAMPLE: A father and one child get TANF. The father enters a drug and alcohol facility and is expected to stay 8 months. The facility accommodates children to reside with their parent(s) at the facility. The facility confirms that the parent continues to have primary care and control of their child and is obligated to cover their child's needs. When the care is verified to exceed 180 days, the father's grant will be reduced to the CPI amount (\$38.84). The child is eligible to receive the one person grant standard with obligations to pay shelter costs since the child is not receiving care from the facility and the father is still obligated to cover the child's needs.

NOTE: ~~The HCA Foster Care Medical Team can be reached at 1-800-562-3022 (ext. 15480) or by email at femt@hea.wa.gov.~~