

3.6.1 Time Limit Extensions

Revised on: ~~April 21, 2025~~ September 24, 2025

3.6.1.5 What are the time limit extension categories?

The entire assistance unit is ineligible for TANF/SFA when an adult recipient in the assistance unit receives 60 months of TANF/SFA, unless the adult recipient qualifies for a time limit extension.

The entire assistance unit remains eligible for TANF/SFA if at least one parent has 60 months or more and qualifies for an extension.

A caregiver relative who doesn't live with the child's parent and has 60 months or more of TANF/SFA may choose to receive a child-only grant as allowed under [WAC 388-408-0025\(2\)\(c\)](#). There are no time limits for child-only TANF cases.

An adult recipient may qualify for a time limit extension (See the [Time Limit Hardship Extension chart](#)) when the adult recipient:

1. Qualifies for an exemption under [WAC 388-310-0350](#); because they are:
 - A needy caretaker relative age 55 or older (#4).
 - Applying for SSI as required in their IRP (#8).
 - An adult with mental, physical, emotional or cognitive condition, based on medical evidence, that prevents them from working more than 10 hours per week and is expected to last 12 months or longer (#5).
 - Receiving SSI or Social Security Disability Insurance (#5).
 - Caring for a child or adult with a disability (#6 or #7).
2. Homeless, living outside; in a building or other location not meant for human habitation, in a building or other location which they have no legal right to occupy, in an emergency shelter, in a temporary housing program, which may include a transitional housing program with a limited duration of stay (#14).
3. Caring for a homeless child per McKinney-Vento criteria; focuses on the unhoused youth in the household. A youth who doesn't have a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. Local school districts use the McKinney-Vento definition to determine how many households are lacking a nighttime residence and provides access to resources such as free lunch, transportation, and educational supports (#15).
4. Participates satisfactorily in specialized family violence activities according to a service plan developed by a person trained in family violence (#9).

5. Has an open child welfare case with a state or tribal government and this is the first time the adult recipient has had any child in dependency (#10).
6. Works 32 hours or more per week in an unsubsidized job (#11). Use the [ACES-eJAS](#) calculated number of hours for self-employment. ~~Participants unless the person chooses may verify their self employment with to provide alternative~~ proof from a credible, knowledgeable, reliable source to confirm self-employment hours (see [WAC 388-490-0005](#)). Please note this ~~alternative proof~~ doesn't affect how we determine actual hours of participation or whether we allow the adult recipient to engage in full-time employment as described in the WorkFirst Handbook 8.2, Self-employment.
7. Is 65 years old, or older, blind as defined by the Social Security Administration or likely disabled as defined under chapter [388-449 WAC](#) (#5).
8. Caring for a child in their home under the age of two years old and have available days and chooses to take the Infant, Toddler Post-Partum exemption. This extension applies even if required to participate in mandatory activities (such as mental health or substance use treatment) as long as they are participating satisfactorily.
9. Was on TANF assistance during specific months of High Unemployment. The applicant or participant may qualify for this reason if they don't qualify for any other time limit extension criteria and received TANF during a month on or after March 1, 2020, when the Washington State unemployment rate (provided by ESD) was at 7% or above. The extension is equal to the number of months they received TANF on or after March 1, 2020, when the Washington state employment security department's unemployment rate (provided by ESD) was at 7% or above (#16).
10. Reaches 60-month time limit, don't meet any other time limit extension category, and the most recent published Washington State unemployment rate is 7% or higher (#17).

Base the determinations for time limit extensions on whether the adult recipient meets the criteria for an extension. See the [Time Limit Hardship Extensions Chart](#) for more details about the extension categories, criteria, required documentation, participation requirements and review cycle.

Note: An adult recipient parent may qualify for more than one time limit extension at a time. In most circumstances, WorkFirst staff review the case and **marks all extensions that apply** to the adult recipient parent in the eJAS time limit tool and eJAS will use the extension with the longest duration to extend TANF/SFA. eJAS uses any other approved extension if an adult recipient parent no longer qualifies for the longest duration time limit extension. **Exception the High Unemployment Rate TLE category can't be selected in combination with any other TLE category.**

Below is additional criteria for use when determining if a household meets the homeless or caring for a homeless child as defined by McKinney-Vento Act:

1. Children and youth sharing housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason
2. Children and youth living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative accommodations
3. Children and youth living in emergency or transition shelters
4. Children and youth whose nighttime residences such as but not limited to;
 - cars
 - parks
 - public spaces
 - abandoned buildings
 - substandard housing

Note: The homeless TLE extension category is open for 6-months in duration. The TLE must not be updated before the 6-month duration expires, unless the recipient stops participating as required to obtain stable housing.

Examples

SSI Related Two-Parent Examples

1. Jasmine is on SSI and has received 45 months on TANF for her two children. She marries Albert and he is added to the TANF grant. Jasmine reaches 60 months on TANF, she is no longer subject to TANF time limits as an Ineligible Parent. Approving the TLE is a workaround until IT is updated. When Albert reaches 60 months, staff must complete a TLE review with Albert to see if he meets any of the TLE criteria. If Albert doesn't qualify for a TLE at that time, the three person TANF grant must close.

2. Tommy has been on receiving TANF for himself and his son for 55 months. He married Tina who is on SSI and has a daughter who has been on TANF for 30 months. Tommy doesn't qualify for a TLE and the two person TANF grant will close when Tommy's 60 months on TANF unless he qualifies for an extension.

Homeless TLE Examples

1. Rita was approved for a 6-month TLE due to experiencing homelessness. She participated with her local coordinated entry provider and obtained housing three months into her TLE. Rita reported to her Case Manager she established housing at the third month. Her Case Manager let her know she had three months remaining left in her extension, and at month 6, unless she meets another hardship TLE category, her grant will close.

2. Steven was approved for a TLE due to experiencing homelessness. At month 6, Steven was still unable to find housing. He met with his Case Manager and completed a new TLE review, where it was determined he had engaged in activities to work towards locating stable housing. Due to meeting the homeless TLE requirements, he now qualifies for an additional 6 months. A new IRP was developed with his Case Manager, which requires Steven to continue to participate in activities to secure stable housing.

McKinney-Vento Related Homelessness TLE Examples

1. Maria is homeless, staying in a storage shed at night with her two children on a friend's property. Maria is applying for TANF/SFA TLE as a homeless household. She declares she doesn't have a permanent nightly residence; her school district verifies her daughter meets McKinney-Vento criteria. She is approved for a homeless TLE hardship for 6 months. She develops an IRP with her Case Manager for housing related activities to establish safe and stable housing.

2. Jada and her two children, Cory and Mikal are living in a shelter, they meet McKinney-Vento criteria due to an unstable nightly residence. She applies for TANF/SFA, is already over 60 months of assistance, and so is approved for a homeless TLE hardship. She develops an IRP with her Case Manager for housing related activities to establish safe and stable housing.

3. Fatima lost her job and had to move in with her parents. Her son, Muhamad meets McKinney-Vento criteria by sharing housing with Fatima's parents, due to an economic hardship. She applies for TANF/SFA, is already over 60 months of assistance, and so is approved for a homeless child TLE. She develops an IRP with her Case Manager for activities to establish safe and stable housing and any stackable activity to obtain employment or employment related activities.

Infant, Toddler or Post-Partum TLE Examples

1. Kali has exhausted 60-months of TANF cash assistance. Kali provides the department verification of her newborn child's birth. The Case Manager reviewed their case, and they have 288 remaining infant exemption days. Kali is approved for a TLE for an additional 288 days, (all months included in which the 288 days fall in.)

2. Jessie had a baby this month and provided verification to the department. She has exhausted 60 months of TANF cash assistance, and all of her infant/toddler exemption days. After meeting with the Case Manager to complete a TLE review she is eligible and approved for 12 weeks of the post-partum exemption.

Note: The infant, toddler and post-partum exemption is approved for a full month. If the day falls in one day of the month, the household is approved for a full month of TANF cash assistance (all months included in which the days of the remaining exemption days fall in.)

3. Cory is pregnant in her 3rd trimester and has exhausted 60 month on TANF. She is no longer eligible for assistance and doesn't meet an infant, toddler or post-partum TLE until the baby is born, she has 150 days of infant exemption available. The Case Manager explores other programs available to Cory, and determines she is eligible for Pregnant Women Assistance (PWA) see CSD Procedure "**Pregnant Women Assistance.**" Program change is completed and Cory will receive PWA until the birth of the child. The Case Manager shared with Cory when reporting the birth of the child, Cory may qualify for a TANF TLE under the infant, toddler, post-partum TLE.

4. Rebecca has an 18 month old toddler and a five year old. She has exhausted her 60 months of TANF cash assistance. During the TLE review, the Case Manager noticed Rebecca has exhausted all of her infant and toddler exemption days and does not qualify for the post-partum exemption. The Case Manager explores and determines Rebecca is not eligible for any other TLE criteria. The Case Manager denies the TLE, after following TLE supervisory/designee review process, and provides Rebecca with the [Transitioning off TANF flyer](#) resource and discusses supports she might be able to access in her local community.

High Unemployment Rate TLE Examples

1. Rita is reapplying for TANF but has exhausted her 60 months of cash assistance and does not qualify for any other TLE category, but still needs assistance to support her family. Rita received TANF during high unemployment months of April, May, and June of 2020. The Case Manager verifies in ACES and approves the High Unemployment TLE recording the 3 TANF months of April, May, and June 2020 in the eJAS tool. This approves Rita and her family for 3 additional months of TANF cash assistance.

2. Micha is at 60 months of cash assistance and doesn't meet any TLE criteria, but received TANF during high unemployment months of May, July, August, and September of 2020. The Case Manager verifies the month and approves a 4-month TLE, recording the 4 TANF months Micha received of May, July, August, and September 2020 in the eJAS tool.

3. Rayla is applying for TANF and she has exhausted her 60 months of cash assistance. She has met with a family violence advocate and has been approved for 6 additional months to work on family violence activities. Rayla is not eligible at this time for the High Unemployment Rate TLE even though she has 4 months of pandemic related high unemployment months available, because she qualifies for the Family Violence TLE hardship extension first. The High Unemployment rate TLE hardship can only be utilized if the applicant/participant doesn't meet any other TLE hardship category, and the High Unemployment TLE category can't be approved alongside an additional TLE hardship category in the system.

4. Nevaeh applies for TANF cash assistance and she has exhausted her 60 months. She didn't receive TANF during the pandemic high unemployment months and she doesn't meet any other extension category. Nevaeh is not eligible for TANF cash assistance and isn't approved for additional months. The Case Manager explores all other programs and resources with Nevaeh to determine if there is any assistance to provide. The Case Manager gives her the following flyer, [Transitioning off TANF](#) resource.

Recent High Unemployment Rate TLE Examples

1. Marty applies for TANF for assistance. They have already used 60 months of assistance and all other TLE criteria, including their banked High Unemployment TLE months. It is determined, upon reviewing [Employment Security Department's Washington State Unemployment data](#), that the most recently unemployment rate is over 7%. They determine Marty meets the Recent High Unemployment TLE and approves a 3 month extension on assistance.
2. Lee is at 67 months of their TANF assistance and used all other applicable TLE categories. When Lee meets with their Case Manager, they complete the TLE review and determine Lee doesn't meet any of the TLE criteria. After reviewing the [Employment Security Department's Washington State Unemployment data](#) they determine the recent (latest) Unemployment rate is at 5%. Lee doesn't meet the Recent High Unemployment Rate TLE criteria. The Case Manager gives Lee the [Transitioning off TANF](#) resource flyer and discusses resources in their community to support Lee and their family.

Reminder- The Recent High Unemployment Rate TLE can only be used once **all other TLE criteria** have been exhausted and the TLE determination is completed in the month when the Washington State recent unemployment rate is 7% or higher. The Recent High Unemployment Rate TLE is to be approved for 3 months in duration.