

Vermont’s Cash Assistance (TANF) policy: Reach UP Program		
HOW MUCH CASH ASSISTANCE CAN A FAMILY OF THREE RECEIVE?		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p>Maximum benefit allowed</p> <p>What is the maximum monthly amount a family of three could receive in cash assistance?</p>	<p>\$856/month to \$880/month, or 40% to 41% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) in 2024</p>	<p>Consider increasing the maximum benefit level.</p> <p>Example: Minnesota’s maximum benefit for a family of three is \$1,370/month, or 62% FPL.</p>
<p>Recurring benefit increases</p> <p>Has the state mandated increases to these amounts, as the cost of living rises?</p>	<p>Yes. Effectively, there are increases scheduled since the reduction rate used to compute benefits will itself be reduced gradually to 0% by 2030.</p>	<p>Consider increases to the benefit level tied to either the cost of living or the FPL.</p> <p>Example: In New Hampshire, legislation mandates that the maximum monthly cash benefit is equal to 60% FPL.</p>
WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR CASH ASSISTANCE?		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p>Maximum income</p> <p>How much can a family of three earn and still be considered eligible to receive cash assistance?</p>	<p>After deductions and income disregards, a family of three may earn as much as \$856/month or \$880/month, depending on location (either 40 or 41% FPL).</p>	<p>Consider increasing the income limit.</p> <p>Example: New Hampshire’s gross income limit is \$1,291/month, or 60% FPL.</p>
<p>Asset limit</p> <p>How much can a family maintain in savings while still being eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Families can retain assets up to \$9,000.</p>	<p>Consider eliminating the asset limit to promote economic mobility by enabling families to maintain savings (e.g., Massachusetts).</p>

<p>Eligibility during pregnancy for parents without children</p> <p>Are pregnant people with no children in the household eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Yes. Vermont will provide cash assistance to pregnant parents without children in the last month of pregnancy, or in the last trimester in cases of high-risk pregnancy.</p>	<p>Consider providing eligibility to low-income pregnant people with no other children from the first month of pregnancy, in order to support basic needs required for maternal health and children’s early development (e.g., Connecticut, Rhode Island).</p>
<p>ADDITIONAL RULES AND RESTRICTIONS</p>		
<p>Flexibility</p>	<p>Current policy</p>	<p>Potential improvement</p>
<p>Time limit</p> <p>Does the state allow families to receive cash assistance up to the federal limit of 60 months?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Lifting full-family sanctions</p> <p>Are other family members able to continue receiving cash benefits if an adult does not meet work requirements?</p>	<p>Benefit amounts are reduced for noncompliance with work requirements; termination of financial assistance can result from a parent’s failure to keep an appointment with a case manager while the benefit has been reduced.</p>	<p>Consider only reducing the benefit amount in all cases, so that children continue to receive assistance (e.g., Maine).</p>
<p>Lifting drug felony bans</p> <p>Are persons convicted of drug-related felonies eligible for cash assistance?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Lifting the family cap for a new birth</p> <p>Can families receive additional cash assistance if they have another child while receiving assistance?</p>	<p>Yes. Vermont never implemented a family cap policy.</p>	<p>N/A</p>