

OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE

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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |
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OTDA-4037EL (Rev. 11/98)

Transmittal No: 00 LCM-22

Date: October 24, 2000

Division: Transitional
Supports & Policy

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: \$4.5 Million in Additional TANF Funds Available via
Competitive Applications

ATTACHMENTS: None

The purpose of this release is to advise local social services districts that an additional \$4.5 million of TANF funding is available for special initiative projects. These funds will be awarded to districts based upon a competitive basis.

A total of \$4 million has been designated for TANF recipients in four targeted program areas:

1. Child-only cases;
2. Families with both an open TANF (Family Assistance or FP Safety Net Assistance) and Child Welfare case (an open Child Protective or Preventive Services case or an open Foster Care case in which the child has a permanency goal of reunification);
3. Families that have been in receipt of TANF benefits since 12/96 and are likely to exhaust their 60 months of TANF assistance; and
4. School collaboration initiatives.

Please note that this \$4 million will be a new allocation separate and apart from any existing allocations. Further, this funding can only be used to serve open TANF cases and cannot be used to serve families with income up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

As compared with the projects that local districts previously submitted in their TANF Services Plans, we envision that these projects will focus on the most challenging families in each district. This would include families with children at risk of entering foster care, as well as those families with mental health, substance abuse or domestic violence issues. In addition, we would support local district collaboration with schools that could include voluntary attendance tracking, placement of caseworkers in schools, or funding of additional school based activities.

Since these funds will only be available on a competitive basis, we are establishing minimum and maximum award amounts. For NYC the award minimum is \$300,000 with a \$500,000 maximum. For Erie, Monroe, Nassau, Onondaga, Suffolk and Westchester the minimum is \$100,000 with a \$300,000 maximum. All other districts will have a minimum of \$50,000 with a \$100,000 maximum. A district may submit more than one project proposal, however, the total amount requested for all projects must be within the established ranges.

Proposals will be reviewed by OTSP, OTDA Office of Budget Management and OCFS staff. Proposals will be reviewed and rated based on the following factors: proposal meets the program goals noted below; the service delivery model is realistic and can be replicated by other districts; the data and outcome measures support the program goals; the project can be successfully implemented by 2/1/01.

Child Only Cases - The proposal must clearly articulate the goals of the child remaining in the home of the caretaker relative, rather than being placed in foster care and/or reducing next generation dependency.

Families with Both an Open TANF and Child Welfare Case - The proposal must clearly articulate the goal of providing coordinated case management which results in family stability and movement toward self-sufficiency.

Families that have been in Receipt of TANF Benefits since 12/96 and are Likely to Exhaust Their 60 Months of TANF Assistance - The proposal must clearly articulate the goal of eliminating or reducing the need for cash PA benefits by the 60 month point.

School Collaboration Initiatives - The proposal must clearly articulate the goal of improved school attendance and academic achievement.

Federal legislation has encouraged collaboration with faith-based providers. Districts proposing non-traditional service programs which embrace the tenants of Welfare Reform by reducing generational dependency are encouraged. Last year, local district commissioners were informed of faith-based initiatives at the White Eagle Commissioner's Conference and, more recently, at regional conferences held in New York City and Buffalo. Separately, \$500,000 has been designated for those districts interested in establishing a faith-based program. Awards will be provided as increases to local district calendar year 2001 block grants. Some districts have expressed interest in developing faith-based programs and, in particular, there is interest in utilizing the North Carolina Families First program, which was presented at the White Eagle meeting as a model. The North Carolina model provides a range of family support services, such as home management practices, family communications, activities to strengthen family relationships, and positive reinforcement activities designed to enhance family stability. Local districts may use the faith-based providers to obtain a full range of services for TANF families which may include, but are not limited to, peer support, mentoring, parenting skills, respite care for family members other than parents who are taking care of TANF children,

enrichment activities for TANF children, and activities designed to strengthen individuals self-esteem among family members. Since OTDA has not previously funded faith-based programs, we are uncertain about the number of districts that will request this funding. As a result, we are not establishing a minimum or maximum funding level. Rather, we will determine funding levels based on the number and size of projects proposed. At a minimum we would like to fund six projects representing a variety of different size districts. The \$500,000 allocation may be used to serve TANF eligible families up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

OTSP, OTDA Office of Budget Management and OCFS staff will review and rate these proposals based on the following factors: the proposal clearly articulates the role of the faith-based community in meeting a service need of the TANF eligible caseload; the service delivery model is realistic and can be replicated by other districts; the data and outcome measures support the goals of the project; the project can be successfully implemented by 2/1/01.

Proposals for each of these two allocations are to be submitted on the TANF Services Plan templates. Districts should call the Division of Transitional Supports and Policy in order to obtain an e-mail of the Excel budget spreadsheet or a diskette for completion. If you are interested in applying, please call (518) 473-1193 in order to obtain this information. All proposals must be submitted by November 22, 2000. Awards will be made on a competitive basis. OTDA will provide approvals on or about December 15, 2000. All approved projects will become part of the district's CY 2001 TANF Services Plan with all the TANF services plan rules, policies applying to these projects. Please note that these funds may only be used for non-assistance programs. Local districts are specifically reminded that all approved projects, including faith-based initiatives, are subject to reporting requirements and claiming instructions put forth by OTDA in relation to the TANF Services Plan.

Fiscal Implications

Claiming Instructions for TANF Competitive Projects

Those local districts that have a project(s) approved for funding under this initiative will report their expenditures as follows:

Administrative costs relating to those TANF competitive projects will be claimed for reimbursement on the Schedule D-17, "Distribution of Allocated Costs to Other Reimbursable Programs" (LDSS-3274) that supports a LDSS-3922A "Reimbursement Claim for TANF Services Block Grant Projects". Each project may be accumulated as a separate column on the Schedule D-17, but only one LDSS-3922A covering all the projects under this grant needs to be submitted. The project name should be TANF Sp. Init. Because of federal reporting requirements, the costs should be identified as program or administrative costs on the LDSS-3922A.

100% TANF reimbursement is available up to the limit of the approved budget.

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Claiming Instructions for Faith Based Initiatives

Since awards for faith based initiatives will be provided as increases to local district calendar year 2001 block grants, expenditures should be reported along with other block grant expenditures on the LDSS-3922A submitted for the block grant.

Questions regarding this funding and program design should be directed to the Bureau of Transitional Programs at 518-473-1179.

All proposals must be submitted by November 22, 2000 to:

Shari Noonan, Director
Office of Transitional Supports and Policy
Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
40 North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12243

Shari Noonan, Director
Office of Transitional Supports and Policy