

GENERAL INFORMATION SYSTEM
DIVISION: Employment & Transitional Supports

February 10, 2006

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TO: Commissioners, Employment Coordinators, TA Directors, FS Directors

FROM: Russell Sykes, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Employment & Transitional Supports

SUBJECT: Reauthorization of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

CONTACT PERSON: Welfare-To-Work Technical Advisor

The purpose of this notice is to inform district staff that reauthorization of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program has occurred and that it includes considerable changes to federal work participation rate requirements.

The enacted TANF reauthorization bill (S.1932) signed by President Bush on February 8, 2006, includes the same TANF employment program changes as outlined in a letter from Commissioner Doar and Deputy Commissioner Sykes dated January 18, 2006. These increased federal requirements will require significant immediate changes in order to meet increased participation requirements starting **October 1, 2006**.

As indicated in that letter, the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) is committed to working with districts to enhance your welfare-to-work efforts to meet these increased federal requirements. We will work with HHS and other federal officials in an attempt to retain the flexibility currently afforded in defining work activities and reporting participation.

The Office strongly recommends that districts thoroughly review the extent to which it is dedicating the necessary resources, including FFFS funds, to maximize client engagement. Districts should also evaluate employment program operations and make changes as necessary to meet the increased federal requirements to ensure New York avoids significant federal fiscal penalties. Districts are encouraged to implement these changes immediately in order to avoid fiscal penalties for not achieving the federal work participation rates.

Please contact your district's WTW Technical Advisor with any questions.