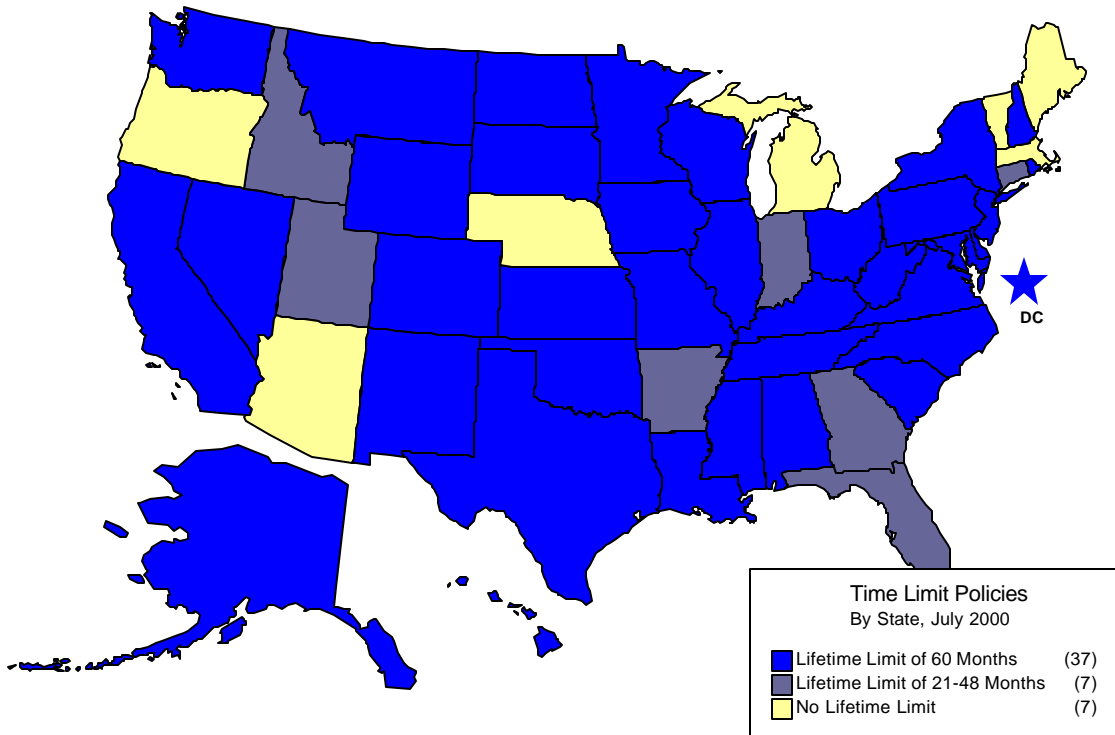




Fast Facts on Welfare Policy

State Policies on Lifetime Time Limits



With the TANF program now in its sixth year, time limits will increasingly become a barrier to program eligibility. There is a lifetime limit of 60 months of federal TANF funding, except in “child-only” cases (when the only TANF recipients are children) or in cases where a family qualifies for a “hardship” exemption according to state rules. As of July 2000, 37 states terminated benefits after 60 months of receipt, seven states imposed shorter lifetime limits (ranging from 21 months to 48 months) and seven chose to fund recipients after the 60 months with state dollars. Of the states with limits, California, Indiana, Maryland, and Rhode Island only terminate benefits to the adults in the unit; all children in the assistance unit remain eligible for benefits after the lifetime limit expires. In at least one state that imposes a 60-month lifetime time limit (New York), the state provides benefits in the form of vouchers to families who reached their 60 months, but not cash assistance.

Source: [The Welfare Rules Database](#) The Urban Institute's *Assessing the New Federalism* project. 2000.