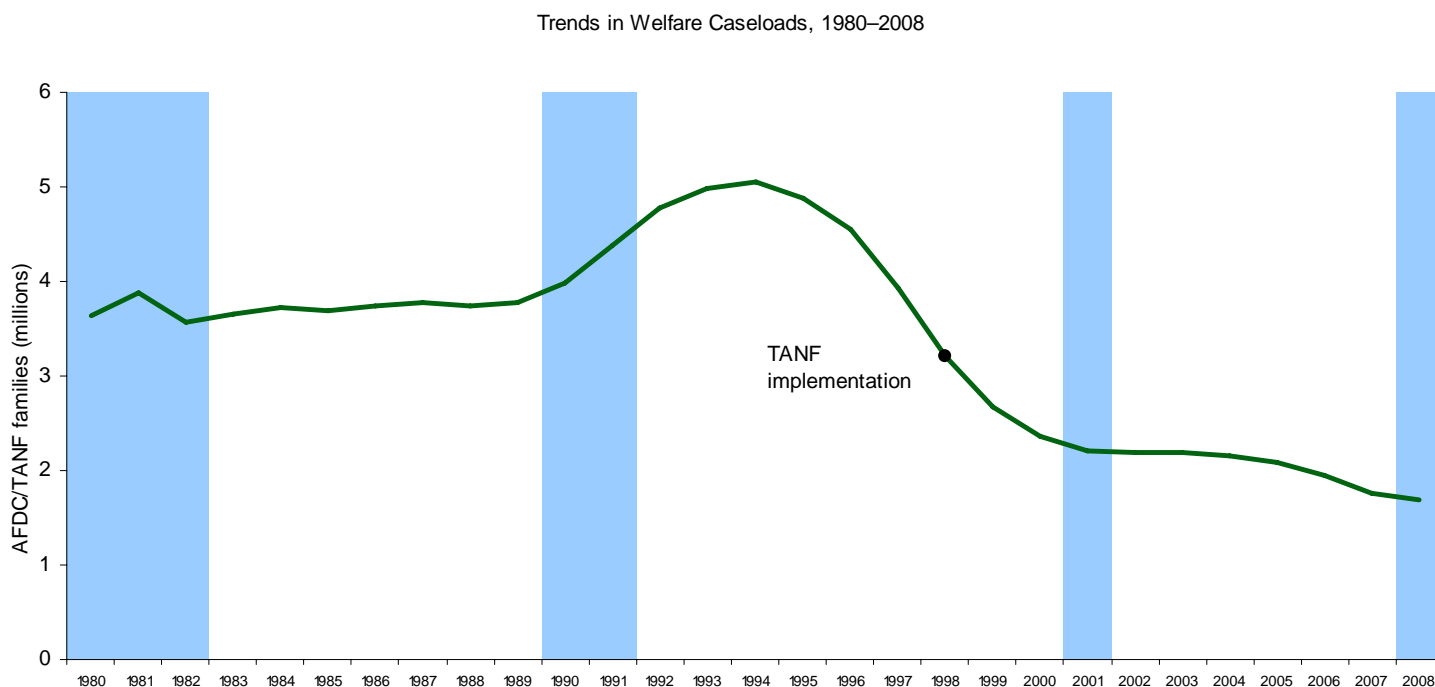


TRENDS IN WELFARE CASELOADS

Jim Kaminski



- Between FY 1997 and FY 2008, welfare caseloads dropped by 47 percent. The decline was over 70 percent in seven states (AK, CO, GA, ID, IL, LA, and WY) and the District of Columbia.
- From the beginning of the recession in December 2007 to December 2008, TANF caseloads have increased by 3 percent. Caseloads increased in 30 states but have fallen in 20 states, including drops of over 10 percent in 5 states (CT, MN, PA, TX, and VT).
- Nearly half (46 percent) of TANF families are “child only”—without a parent in the TANF unit because the parent is absent, ineligible, or in sanction status. In four states (FL, GA, ID, and IL), over three-quarters of the TANF cases are child only.
- The percentage of poor families with children receiving TANF varies dramatically across the states, from 10 percent or less in six states (ID, IL, LA, OK, TX, and WY) to 50 percent or more in five states (CA, ME, MA, RI, and WA).

Sources: AFDC/TANF caseload data are from the TANF Seventh Annual Report (2007) to Congress and HHS/ACF files at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm.

Notes: Starting from 2000, AFDC/TANF families include families in Separate State Programs. Shaded areas indicate periods of recession.

Characteristics of the TANF Caseload

	December 2008 caseload	Change in caseload 1997–2008 (FY average, %)	Change in caseload December 2007– December 2008 (%)	Child-only units (FY 2008, %)	Poor families on TANF (FY 2008, %)
U.S. total ^a	1,763,397	-47	3	46	30
Alabama	18,476	-36	-1	49	16
Alaska	2,821	-75	-6	33	39
Arizona	38,171	-14	3	51	30
Arkansas	8,664	-59	-1	44	11
California	515,698	-22	8	46	73
Colorado	8,507	-71	-6	50	12
Connecticut	16,570	-45	-15	44	50
Delaware	4,482	-59	12	61	34
Dist. of Columbia	5,726	-78	9	42	47
Florida	54,064	-64	11	78	16
Georgia	21,743	-74	-4	87	11
Hawaii	6,862	-70	4	26	49
Idaho	1,600	-77	5	92	5
Illinois	19,572	-90	-5	81	9
Indiana	40,952	-9	32	28	25
Iowa	18,878	-13	-4	28	41
Kansas	12,193	-21	-5	31	28
Kentucky	29,917	-42	2	60	26
Louisiana	10,502	-76	-5	74	9
Maine	13,042	-13	7	19	54
Maryland	22,606	-56	10	41	35
Massachusetts	63,544	-5	21	30	67
Michigan	64,169	-43	-7	33	32
Minnesota	20,875	-57	-21	44	35
Mississippi	11,501	-63	-1	54	11
Missouri	37,725	-32	-3	25	31
Montana	3,440	-56	8	43	17
Nebraska	8,218	-27	9	44	31
Nevada	7,853	-21	6	45	18
New Hampshire	5,531	-28	23	48	35
New Jersey	33,203	-54	-3	31	31
New Mexico	15,123	-52	24	41	28
New York	150,491	-48	-3	38	42
North Carolina	25,353	-68	3	70	12
North Dakota	2,291	-52	11	28	20
Ohio	86,271	-44	7	54	35
Oklahoma	8,639	-64	-4	65	10
Oregon	23,353	8	21	40	30
Pennsylvania	46,663	-68	-16	40	25
Rhode Island	8,064	-58	-3	32	54
South Carolina	16,889	-45	17	49	15
South Dakota	2,980	-28	3	70	21
Tennessee	58,329	-3	6	32	38
Texas	50,447	-68	-11	70	9
Utah	5,849	-47	14	53	15
Vermont	3,031	-43	-29	33	45
Virginia	33,276	-32	7	36	27
Washington	58,144	-26	12	39	52
West Virginia	9,301	-70	7	53	19
Wisconsin	17,809	-47	0	69	22
Wyoming	281	-89	6	73	4

Sources: Caseload data were obtained from HHS-ACF files at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm.

The number of poor families was obtained from table C17010 of the 2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates at <http://factfinder.census.gov/>.

Note: Starting from 2000, AFDC/TANF families include families in separate state programs.

a. Data from Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands were included in calculations for the U.S. total, except for the percentage of poor families on TANF.