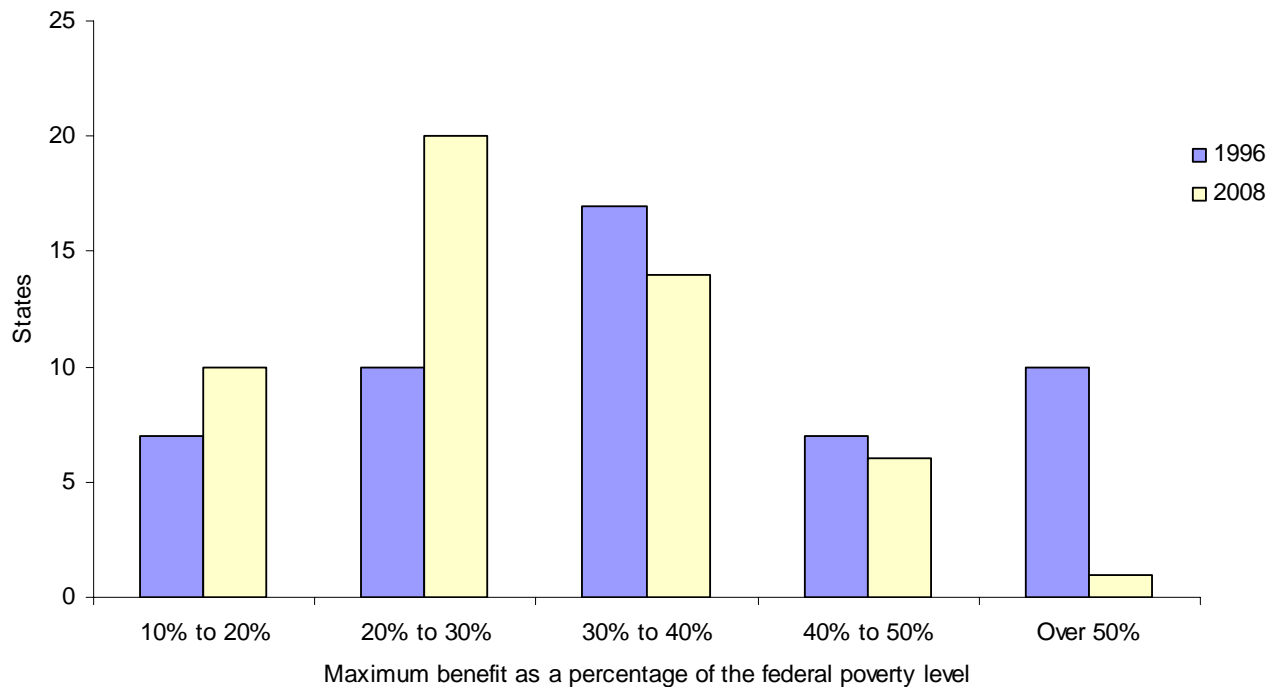


HIGHLIGHTS OF STATE TANF PROGRAMS IN 2008

Mary Murphy

Maximum TANF Benefit for a Family of Three, 1996 versus 2008



- Thirty states now pay a maximum TANF benefit that is less than 30 percent of the federal poverty level.
- Rules that discourage enrollment—formal diversion and job search requirements—are now used in 42 states.
- Twenty-two states use a full (100 percent) family sanction the first time a family fails to meet participation requirements.
- The majority of states (29) use the federal five-year benefit time limit, 5 states have no time limit, and 17 states use an initial time limit shorter than 5 years.

A Snapshot of State TANF Policies, July 2008

State	Diversion program	Job search as a condition of eligibility	Reduction in benefit for initial sanction (%) ^a	Months of assistance before first time limit	Maximum benefit (%)	Maximum income for initial eligibility (%)
Alabama	No	No	50	60	15	18
Alaska	Yes	Yes	40	60	50	80
Arizona	Yes	No	25	60	24	40
Arkansas	Yes	Yes	100	24	14	19
California	Yes ^b	No	19	60	49	80
Colorado	Yes ^c	No	25	60	24	35
Connecticut	Yes	No	25	21	38	59
Delaware	Yes	No	100	36	23	29
D.C.	Yes	Yes	21	—	29	40
Florida	Yes	No	100	48	21	27
Georgia	Yes	Yes	25	48	19	35
Hawaii	Yes	No	100	60	38	107
Idaho	Yes	Yes	100	24	21	44
Illinois	Yes	Yes	50	60	27	33
Indiana	No	No	100	24	20	26
Iowa	Yes	No	100	60	29	72
Kansas	No	No	100	60	29	35
Kentucky	Yes	No	33	60	18	62
Louisiana	No ^d	Yes	100	24	16	25
Maine	Yes	No	46	—	33	70
Maryland	Yes	Yes	100	60	39	48
Massachusetts	No	No	0	24	43	49
Michigan	Yes	No	100	48	33	55
Minnesota	Yes	Yes	17	60	36	76
Mississippi	No	Yes	100	60	12	31
Missouri	No	Yes	25	60	20	38
Montana	No	No	20	60	32	48
Nebraska	No	No	100	60	25	58
Nevada	No	Yes	100	24	26	94
New Hampshire	Yes	No	11	60	43	53
New Jersey	Yes	Yes	33	60	29	43
New Mexico	Yes	No	25	60	30	69
New York	Yes	Yes	33	—	47	53
North Carolina	Yes	Yes	100	24	19	46
North Dakota	Yes	Yes	40	60	33	85
Ohio	No	No	100	36	28	67
Oklahoma	Yes	No	100	60	20	56
Oregon	No	No ^e	28	60	35	42
Pennsylvania	Yes	Yes	22 ^f	60	27	34
Rhode Island	Yes	No	19	60	38	87
South Carolina	No	Yes	100	24	18	49
South Dakota	Yes	No	0	60	37	52
Tennessee	Yes	No	100	60	13	90
Texas	Yes	No	100	12, 24, or 36 ^g	17	27
Utah	Yes	No	21	36	32	46
Vermont	Yes	Yes	12	—	44	72
Virginia	Yes	No	100	24	22	100
Washington	Yes	No	40	—	38	77
West Virginia	Yes	No	33	60	23	39
Wisconsin	Yes	Yes	Varies ^h	60	43	115
Wyoming	No	No	100	60	23	37

Source: The Urban Institute's Welfare Rules Database, funded by DHHS/ACF and DHHS/ASPE, <http://anfdata.urban.org/wrd/WDRWelcome.cfm>.

— = data not available

Notes: The policies in this table reflect the rules affecting the majority of the caseload in each state. Where applicable, rules for a family of three are presented. The maximum benefit and eligibility thresholds are shown as a percentage of the federal poverty level.

a. We assume that at the time the sanction is applied, the family is receiving the maximum benefit for a family of three.

b. Counties have the option to vary their diversion programs. These policies refer to Los Angeles County.

c. Counties have the option to vary their diversion programs. These policies refer to Denver County.

d. Although it still exists in the law, Louisiana's diversion program has not received funding since September 2002 and is not included in this table.

e. Job search is not an eligibility requirement but many applicants will be assigned to job search.

f. This sanction applies to noncompliance that occurs during the first 24 months of assistance.

g. The time limit varies depending on a recipient's level of education and previous work experience.

h. The amount of the sanction depends on the number of hours the recipient has not participated. The sanction is equal to the minimum wage times the number of hours of nonparticipation.