

# AGENDA

OCTOBER 13, 2015

## ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD TANF OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING

10:00 A.M.

Call to Order.....Randy Hopper, Committee Chair

Chairman's Comments.....Randy Hopper, Committee Chair

### ACTION Item 1

Minutes of the September 24, 2015 Committee Meeting

Four Components of the TANF program.....Phil Harris, Assistant Director for TANF  
Arkansas Department of Workforce Services

Eligibility Requirements for Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA)  
and Work Pays.....Derwin Taylor, Program Operations Manager  
ADWS TANF Program

TANF State Plan Requirements.....Elroy Willoughby, Division Chief  
ADWS TANF Program

Announcements

Adjournment

### NEXT MEETING DATES

Nov 30 – Dec 1, 2015	All Day	Board Strategic Planning	Little Rock
January 12, 2016	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Committees Full Board Meeting	Little Rock Little Rock
March 8, 2016	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Committees Full Board Meeting	Little Rock Little Rock

Embassy Suites Hotel  
11301 Financial Centre Pkwy  
Little Rock, Arkansas



**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board  
TANF Oversight Committee**

**October 13, 2015**

**AGENDA ITEM 1 – ACTION:** Minutes of the September 24, 2015 Committee Meeting

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that the TANF Oversight Committee approve the minutes of the September 24, 2015 committee meeting.

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** Minutes of the meeting are attached.

UNOFFICIAL

MINUTES

**ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Oversight Committee**  
**September 24, 2015**

The first meeting of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) TANF Oversight Committee was held on September 24, 2015, beginning at 10:00 a.m., at the Arkansas Workforce Center, 5401 South University, in Little Rock, Arkansas. Chairman Randy Hopper presided with the following members present: Ms. Delia Anderson – Director of the Division of County Operations for the Department of Human Services, Mr. Tom Anderson, Mr. Lindsay Brown, Judge Brandon Ellison, Mr. Johnny Key (by proxy Ms. Susan Harriman), Mr. Jerry Riley, and Mr. Robert Thorne. Mr. Daryl Bassett was unable to attend. Also in attendance was AWDB Chair Charles Clark.

Chair Hopper called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and welcomed members to the first meeting of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board TANF Oversight Committee. Chair Hopper welcomed all board members and explained that the TANF Oversight Committee was different than the other standing committees of the AWDB in that there is a non-board member as a committee member. He further explained that Ms. Delia Anderson is a member of the committee but not a member of the AWDB, that her representation is outlined in the state law that authorizes the committee, and is intended to keep a close connection between the TANF program and the many support services that are provided by the Department of Human Services (DHS). Chair Hopper asked that the group introduce themselves and give a brief overview of their roles outside the committee.

Agenda Item 1 – Overview of Committee Responsibilities and Existing Resources: Chair Hopper asked that Ms. Cindy Varner provide an overview of the committee's responsibilities. Ms. Varner began by stating that the committee is made up of five business members, at least one Chief Elected Official, at least one member that represents workers in the state, the Director of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services and the Director of DHS Division of County Operations, who is a voting member of the committee, but not an AWDB member. She explained that the committee shall act in an advisory capacity to the AWDB to ensure that all program participants are receiving the assistance, information and services needed to help low-income parents prepare for and connect with employment that will lead to a self-sufficient wage.

Next, Chair Hopper asked that Mr. Phil Harris, ADWS – Assistant Director for TANF Programs, give a brief overview of the history of the program in Arkansas. Mr. Harris began by stating that the ADWS began administering the TANF Program in 2005. He stated that since the implementation of Arkansas' welfare reform initiative in 1995, Arkansas' TANF caseload has decreased by more than fifty percent.

Mr. Harris explained that TANF provides cash and other assistance to eligible needy families with children, that it is funded through an annual federal block grant in the amount of \$56.7 million, and Arkansas is required to spend a minimum of \$22 million annually in state matching funds, and that the state has flexibility to design programs that address the needs of Arkansas' low-income families.

Mr. Harris continued by stating that TANF Programs must meet one of four purposes of TANF, it must assure children can be cared for in their homes or homes of relatives; it must end dependence of parents on government benefits by promoting work and marriage, it must reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies; or it must encourage the formation of two-parent families. He further stated that there is a sixty month federal lifetime limit on receipt of cash assistance within the federal limits; and Arkansas has a twenty-four month limit. Next, Mr. Harris explained federal performance measures indicating that states must have fifty percent of participants for a single parent household in an allowable work activity and ninety-percent for two-parent families, or face federal sanctions. He discussed the severity of sanctions in the case of performance not being met, explaining that five percent of the TANF grant can be withheld the first year performance is not met, then two percent for each subsequent year up to a maximum of twenty-one percent. Mr. Harris further explained that state performance measures are based on the percentage of job placements, employment retention rates, employment related closures and initial hourly wages of participants.

Next, Mr. Harris discussed TANF Program State Plan Submission, stating that it must be submitted every three years indicating basic rules of the program and how funds will be spent. He discussed historical TANF Block Grant funding and awards, TANF core services, transfers to other state agencies and expanded workforce development programs. He stated that the current uses of TANF funds were for the following: TANF cash assistance through the TEA program, childcare, transportation, the Work Pays program, DHS emergency assessments (child welfare), Career Pathways Initiative, Individual Development Accounts and administration through ADWS and DHS, and information technology costs.

Next, Mr. Harris discussed recent federal and state legislation. First, the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, which requires states to prevent the use of TANF EBT cards at specific locations including liquor stores, gaming establishments and adult entertainment establishments. The second, Act 1205 of 2015, which establishes the Drug Screening and Testing Act of 2015. He reported that this act will implement a suspicion based drug screening pilot project by January 1, 2016, and will require reporting to the Arkansas legislature the number of individuals screened, the number of individuals who took the drug test and the number of screened individuals who received a positive or negative result from the drug test.

Lastly, Mr. Harris discussed the Arkansas Workforce Integrated Network System (ARWINS), which is a information technology project being developed as a unified depository for job seekers, employers and providers of service. It will have an integrated intake method, determine eligibility, provide work ready assessments, employment planning and provider

management. He stated that the system will be extendable beyond the TANF program to include SNAP, E & T, WIOA and NHR and is built on a secure open source platform.

Following questions and discussion Chair Hopper thanked Ms. Varner and Mr. Harris.

Agenda Item 2 – Individual Committee Members Comments on Their Personal Perspectives:

Chair Hopper addressed the members stating that the committee is charged with an important mission to make sure that the TANF Program is meeting expectations of low income families in helping them connect with resources and skills to become gainfully employed.

He stated that he would like to hear from the committee members regarding their thoughts on how they will pursue increased program effectiveness, attain and sustain continuous improvement and best practices sharing, resources or information needed by the committee members, any other observations they may have and how to not lose sight of the needs of employers in skilled workers. The committee discussed and shared questions with staff.

Announcements: Chair Hopper stated that the next meeting of the full board will be October 13<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. The next meeting of the TANF Oversight Committee will be at 10:00 a.m. on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at a location to be provided by staff at a future date.

Adjourn: Chair Hopper adjourned the meeting at 11:23 a.m., on a **motion made by Judge Brandon Ellison, seconded by Mr. Lindsay Brown, and carried unanimously.**

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Mr. Randy Hopper, Committee Chair

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Daryl Bassett, Director  
Department of Workforce Services

*Minutes recorded by Kim Kight  
Department of Workforce Services Staff*