



INNOVATE

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

January 9, 2018
10:00 a.m.

Embassy Suites Hotel
11301 Financial Centre Parkway
Little Rock, Arkansas

Arkansas Workforce Development Board

TANF Oversight Committee



AGENDA

January 9, 2018

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD TANF OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING

10:00 A.M.

Call to Order.....Thomas Anderson, Committee Chair

Chairman's Comments.....Thomas Anderson, Committee Chair

ACTION Item 1

Minutes of the October 10, 2017 Committee Meeting

Staff Report on TANF Program Activities

Phil Harris

Announcements

Adjournment

NEXT MEETING DATES

April 10, 2018	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Committees Full Board Meeting	Little Rock Little Rock
July 10, 2018	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Committees Full Board Meeting	Little Rock Little Rock
October 9, 2018	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Committees Full Board Meeting	Little Rock Little Rock

Embassy Suites Hotel
11301 Financial Centre Parkway
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**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board
TANF Oversight Committee**

January 9, 2018

AGENDA ITEM 1 – ACTION: Minutes of the October 10, 2017 TANF Oversight Committee Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the TANF Oversight Committee approve the minutes of the October 10, 2017 meeting.

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: Minutes of the meetings are attached.

MINUTES
ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Oversight Committee
October 10, 2017

A meeting of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board's (AWDB) TANF Oversight Committee was held on October 10, 2017 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 201 S. Shackelford Road in Little Rock, Arkansas. Chairman Thomas Anderson presided with the following members present: Mr. Lindsay Brown, Judge Brandon Ellison, Mr. George Nunnally, and Mr. Robert Thorne. Mr. Daryl Bassett, Ms. Mary Franklin and Mr. Johnny Key were unable to attend.

Chairman's Comments: Recognizing the presence of a quorum, Chair Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Agenda Item 1- Minutes of the July 11, 2017 Committee Meeting: Chair Anderson proceeded to Agenda Item 1, asking if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes. The minutes were approved on **a motion by Judge Brandon Ellison, seconded by Mr. Lindsay Brown, and carried unanimously.**

Chair Anderson introduced Mr. Phil Harris, Assistant Director for TANF.

Mr. Harris presented a PowerPoint on the following topics: State and Federal legislative updates, TANF policy changes, ARWINS implementation, and committee action plan updates.

Mr. Harris' first update provided recent changes by State legislation. He proceeded to speak about a bill that was recently passed having Arkansas opt out of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), a section of the 1996 welfare reform law that prevents anyone who has been convicted of a felony drug offense from ever receiving TANF benefits. The federal law only applies to drug felonies. The TEA 2201 and TEA 2203 drug-related policies have been removed from the TEA policy manual. This allows the program to implement additional slots for clients who were previously denied eligibility due to a drug conviction (at least 56 denied in the last year). This process should be ready between November and December. Mr. Harris presented TANF drug testing cumulative totals: since April 2016, 5,747 TANF clients were screened, 29 were found suspicious, 19 refused testing, 8 were tested, 2 tested positive, 6 tested negative, and 2 declined any treatment or counseling.

Discussion: Chair Anderson asked if the numbers presented are provided for legislature. Mr. Harris responded yes, they are provided in annual reports. Chair Anderson asked about suspicion-based testing. Mr. Harris explained all testing is suspicion-based and noted that TANF does not allow for mandatory drug screening. Suspicion is based upon the client responses. Mr. Harris stated that TANF tries to address mental health and substance abuse issues by providing counseling more than treatment. The TANF block grant can't pay for medical expenditures, which drug treatment is considered to be. However, it can pay for counseling. Mr. Harris learned this from North Carolina and Oklahoma, which have rewritten their policies to consider treatment "counseling" and use TANF funds to pay for treatment that way.

During Federal legislative updates, Mr. Harris discussed House resolution 2842, Accelerating Individuals into the Workforce Act. This bill amends part A TANF of title IV of the Social Security

Act to require the Administration for Children & Families (ACF) to make grants to states for demonstration projects that provide wage subsidies to enable low-income individuals to enter and retain employment. Now, states may use grant funds to subsidize an individual's wages for up to 12 months, instead of only 6 months. The subsidy may be up to 50% of an individual's wages. States must ensure that participants in subsidized job programs do not displace current workers.

Mr. Harris proceeded to cover policy changes. The TEA eligibility policy has been adjusted to be in line with the prevailing State minimum wage and should push the TEA Net Income Eligibility Standard from 223 to 368. This would increase the applicants' earned income deduction from 20% to 30%.

They are using ARWINS (Arkansas Workforce Integrated Network Systems) to capture much of the data. The goal is to include other partners such as WOTC, Career Pathways, CPI, etc.

Arkansas Works gets referrals from DHS. Come January, 39,000 people will be required to participate in a mandatory work requirement. Ultimately, the goal is to get able-bodied individuals off of Medicaid. That number is broken down by month and into age groups; the first phase in January will consist of 6,170 people age 30-49. The age group that the program will serve overall is 19-49. Those over 50 years old are exempt. ADWS does not receive additional funding for this, note the program currently is based on low-income clients without dependents so TANF can't provide intensive case management services to those who do not meet those requirements. This will be done through a simple screening, intake and referral system. Mr. Harris used a flowchart to illustrate the process of how we can service these individuals through "Bridging the AR Works Recipient with the Workforce System". This is all contingent upon a pending waiver approval. The work requirement is designed to mimic the current SNAP EMT program. For 20 hours a week or 80 hours a month participants must do one or more core activity (education, job training, vocational training, etc.).

For TANF action plan updates, Mr. Harris mentioned the new Career Pathways director was present in the meeting. The reverse referral process has been implemented for Career Pathways.

TANF met both the required TANF work participation rates for all families and for 2-parent families for FY2016. For all families, 50% must be participating in core work activities; for 2-parent families, 90% must be participating in core work activities.

Mr. Harris told a TANF success story about a participant named Ruby who he spoke with recently. She is a single parent who dropped out of high school in 9th grade, successfully completed the GED program, got her CRC, and went to Eastern College to be a dental assistant. She did an externship with a dentist who found her to be such a great worker that she was placed in on-the-job training at his practice. She graduated from Eastern College with an undergraduate degree. She is now a certified home caregiver and sells Avon.

Mr. Harris introduced Ms. Willie Murdock, the new Director of Career Pathways. She has been on the job for five weeks. Chairman Anderson welcomed her and congratulated her on the new job.

Announcements: Chair Anderson stated that the next meeting of the TANF Oversight Committee will be at 10:00 a.m., January 9, 2018, followed by a regular quarterly meeting of the full board at 1:00 p.m. The location of the meeting will be announced by staff at a later date.

Adjournment: Chair Anderson adjourned the meeting at 11:13 a.m. on **a motion made by Judge Brandon Ellison, seconded by Mr. Lindsay Brown and carried unanimously.**

Mr. Tom Anderson, TANF Oversight Committee Chair

Arnell Willis, Director Workforce Investment
Department of Workforce Services

*Minutes recorded by Zoe Calkins
Department of Workforce Services Staff*