

## **The Claims Resolution Act of 2010 Reporting Requirements**

The Claims Resolution Act of 2010 set forth new reporting requirements on States as it extended the funding for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) financial assistance program through September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Sec.812. *Modifications to TANF Data Reporting*, specifies new reporting requirements for engagement in additional work activities to be published on each State's website. Further guidance was provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children & Families (ACF) in a formal Program Instruction, Transmittal No.TANF-ACF-PI-2011-03. ACF is the federal regulatory agency overseeing the State's TANF program.

This is the first submission of the two new required reports per this law. This first reporting period is for the month of March 2011. The second reporting period is from April 1 through June 30, 2011. These new reports supplement existing, extensive federal reporting that States provide to ACF on a quarterly basis. ACF in return, provides States with quarterly reports, including the official TANF work participation rate, which is a federal program measure of success.

It is required by federal law that States have a minimum of 50% of their work-eligible adults in countable work activities in order to stay in compliance with program requirements and avoid federal financial penalties. This is known as the TANF work participation rate. The official work participation rate for Mississippi for FFY 2009 was 67.5%, far exceeding the national average of 29.4%. For FFY 2008, our rate was 63.2% and again, above the national average which remained at 29.4%.

### **Work Activities Defined**

A definition of which activities are countable can be found at 45 CFR, Part 261-Ensuring That Recipients Work. For an individual to be counted towards the rate, they must verify participation hours in a countable activity for a specific number of hours each month. Parents with children, age 6 or older, must participate in a countable activity for 30 hours a week for each week they are receiving a TANF benefit. Parents with children under 6 years old must participate for 20 hours.

- Countable activities include:
- Unsubsidized employment;
- Subsidized employment;
- Volunteer work or community service work;
- Vocational education/training (time-limited); and
- Job search/job readiness (is time-limited and no more than 4 weeks can be consecutive).

Those with a 30 hour requirement must participate in the above activities for 20 hours and then also participate for 10 more hours in the above and/or:

- Job skills training;
- Education directly related to employment; and
- Basic education.

All other activities are considered "non-countable".

## Report Summary

The following is a breakdown of the Mississippi TANF caseload data from October 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011.

	Oct-10	Nov-10	Dec-10	Jan-11	Feb-11	Mar-11
TOTAL TANF CASES	12,137	12,044	12,047	11,754	11,563	11,355
LESS CHILD ONLY CASES	5,311	5,285	5,265	5,314	5,241	5,141
TANF CASES WITH AN ADULT	6,826	6,759	6,782	6,440	6,322	6,214
LESS CARETAKER CHILD <12 MONTHS COUNTABLE FOR PARTICIPATION RATE	1,616	1,589	1,650	1,561	1,519	1,523
	5,210	5,170	5,132	4,879	4,803	4,691
LESS EXEMPTIONS( TIME LIMITS & TWP)	105	103	105	102	103	101
AGE OVER 60 YEARS	0	0	0	0	0	0
INCAPACITATED	101	97	100	96	96	97
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	4	6	5	6	7	4
LESS TEMPORARY EXEMPTIONS(TWP ONLY)	130	131	140	115	120	112
THIRD TRIMESTER OF PREGNANCY	42	45	50	41	34	32
TEMPORARY ILLNESS OR INJURY	87	85	88	73	86	80
IN TREATMENT PROGRAM	1	1	2	1	0	0
ADULTS IN ALLOWABLE WORK ACTIVITIES	3,599	3,656	3,493	3,331	3,279	3,289
ALTERNATIVE WORK EXPERIENCE	608	628	701	628	602	646
COMMUNITY SERVICE	1,063	1,078	1,244	1,121	992	1,073
SECONDARY EDUCATION(18&19 YEAR OLD)	258	272	287	282	282	300
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	875	882	826	840	924	909
JOB READINESS/JOB SEARCH	159	173	65	133	93	52
SUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT	19	12	12	8	8	11
UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT	1,202	1,165	1,116	917	919	1,095

The new federal guidelines require states to collect and report whether work eligible individuals participated in work activities that were “countable” towards the work participation rate, but were not reported towards the work participation rate; and activities that were “non-countable” towards the rate. For the March 2011 quarter, one hundred and three (103) work-eligible individuals did not count in participation. Most of them, ninety-five (95) work-eligible individuals, did not participate in countable work activities for a sufficient number of hours for the family to count toward the work participation rate. Four individuals were in the process of being sanctioned for noncompliance with the work program. One individual was a new TANF recipient and was not assigned to a work activity. The state failed to engage on individual in an activity timely. One individual met a work program exemption. One individual was in a non-countable activity (age of 20, in High School/GED class).

### Analysis Statement

The data provided demonstrates that Mississippi’s definitions for countable work activities are in alignment with the federal guidelines. The most significant group are those that did not participate in countable work activities for a sufficient number of hours for the family to count toward the work participation rate. New policy has been implemented to ensure participants are fully engaged in TANF Work Program activities.