
REVIEW OF VIRGINIA’S TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF) PROGRAM

Draft Recommendations for Public Comment

FINDING #1 – TANF RECIPIENTS ARE NOT AUTOMATICALLY GUARANTEED HOUSING ASSISTANCE.

Recommendation 1

Request the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA), with input from local housing authorities; evaluate the feasibility of prioritizing housing services for Virginia’s TANF recipients. Such an evaluation will assess the barriers to providing housing assistance to TANF recipients including the time limitations of TANF and any other housing assistance program participation requirements. Request VHDA report findings and recommendations to the Commission on Youth prior to the 2018 General Assembly Session.

Recommendation 2

Take no action.

Recommendation 3

Other options?

FINDING #2 – ACCESS TO CHILD CARE IS ESSENTIAL FOR TANF FAMILIES AND THOSE TRANSITIONING FROM TANF TO THE WORKFORCE.

Recommendation 1

Support the Virginia Department of Social Services’ (VDSS) efforts to include a component within the Virginia Case Management System (VaCMS) that allows the seamless transition of the TANF child care subsidy from one LDSS to another LDSS.

Recommendation 2

Introduce a budget amendment to increase funds for child care subsidies to the working poor.

Recommendation 3

Support continued efforts to provide market-based subsidies to make quality child care a reality for vulnerable families.

Recommendation 4

Provide resources to assist families in identifying and accessing child care to meet their needs such as non-traditional hours of care, children’s special needs or other considerations.

Recommendation 5

Take no action.

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Recommendation 6

Other options?

FINDING #3 – VIRGINIA’S VIEW RECIPIENTS RECEIVE A COMPREHENSIVE ARRAY OF SUPPORTIVE AND TRANSITIONAL SERVICES WHICH HELP THEM TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT AND ACHIEVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

Recommendation 1.a.

Introduce legislation/budget amendment to extend transitional services available to Virginia’s VIEW recipients from 12 months to 18 months. Virginia’s TANF funds appropriated for expanded/discretionary services may be utilized to fund this expansion.

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Recommendation 1.b.

Request VDSS to assess the feasibility and fiscal impact of extending transitional services available to Virginia’s VIEW recipients from 12 months to 18 months. Request that VDSS report findings and recommendations to the Commission on Youth prior to the 2018 General Assembly Session.

Recommendation 2

Request VDSS to assess the feasibility and fiscal impact of increasing Virginia’s TANF income eligibility threshold for VIEW participants. Request that VDSS report findings and recommendations to the Commission on Youth prior to the 2018 General Assembly Session.

Recommendation 3

Introduce legislation/budgetary language for VDSS develop policies for an improved temporary medical exemption determination process and the transition of TANF cases which are exempt due to a temporary medical condition. Such policies shall have the goal of expeditiously transitioning TANF’s medically exempt cases to VIEW or facilitate their application to appropriate disability benefits and similar to the Veterans’ Administrations’ Stabilization Compensation Grant.

Recommendation 4

Introduce legislation/budgetary language to fund designated staff to work with the TANF population that are exempt from VIEW due to a temporary medical condition to either transition them to VIEW, facilitate approval of disability benefits, or otherwise resolve medical issues.

Recommendation 5

Provide funding for training for LDSS workers who work with TANF recipients to fulfill the goals of self-sufficiency.

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Recommendation 6

Request a presentation from the Secretary of Technology and Finance and the Commonwealth’s Chief Information Officer on Executive Directive 7 on increasing the use of shared data and analytics among Virginia agencies with focus on enhancing government transparency, increasing operational efficiency and effectiveness, and minimizing duplication with particular emphasis on addressing Virginia’s welfare and health and human services’ programs for children and families.

Recommendation 7

Take no action.

Recommendation 8

Other options?

FINDING #4 – VIRGINIA’S LOCALITY GROUPINGS NEED TO BE RE-ASSESSED TO ENSURE THEY ARE KEEPING UP WITH CURRENT COSTS OF LIVING.

Recommendation 1

Request the Virginia Board of Social Services to review the statewide locality groupings utilized by LDSS determining TANF payment amounts and assess the feasibility and fiscal impact of combining Locality Groupings I and II for the purposes of TANF cash benefits and using the Group II rates for the new group.

Recommendation 2

Take no action.

Recommendation 3

Other options?

FINDING #5 – THERE IS A STRUCTURAL IMBALANCE IN TANF FUNDING.

Recommendation 1

Support the General Assembly’s efforts which ensure that Virginia’s TANF program is adequately funded and ensure that the primary purposes of TANF are maintained.

Recommendation 2

Take no action.

Recommendation 3

Other options?