



Parents Organizing for Welfare and Economic Rights

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WorkFirst Support Services

POWER members want you to know your rights. We copied these WACs (Washington Administrative Code) from the Internet. You can find a complete list at the Washington State Legislative site at the laws and agency rules link. All WACs guiding DSHS (the Department of Social and Health Services) start with 388. You can also find other handy information there, like who are your elected officials and how you can contact them. Let them know if your caseworker is not following the rules or if there are changes you would like to see at DSHS.

Support services should be available to anyone receiving TANF to support the activities listed in your IRP (Individual Responsibility Plan). You are also eligible after leaving TANF. You are eligible for up to \$3,000 a year in support services, but these can be hard to access. The chart (pg. 3) shows what's available and for what purposes. If you need more money than the limit, you can ask for an exception to rule. Ask for what you need and if you are refused ask for a fair hearing.

WorkFirst — Support services. WAC 388-310-0800

(1) Who can get support services?

People who can get support services include:

- (a) WorkFirst participants who receive a TANF cash grant;
- (b) Sanctioned WorkFirst participants during the required participation before the sanction is lifted or applicants who were terminated by a sanction review panel who are doing activities required to reopen cash assistance (WAC [388-310-1600](#));
- (c) Unmarried or pregnant minors who are income eligible to receive TANF and are:
 - (i) Living in a department approved living arrangement (WAC [388-486-0005](#)) and are meeting the school requirements (WAC [388-486-0010](#)); or
 - (ii) Are actively working with a social worker and need support services to remove the barriers that are preventing them from living in a department approved living arrangements and/or meeting the school requirements.
- (d) Former WorkFirst recipients who are working at least twenty hours or more per week for up to six months after leaving TANF if they need support services to meet a temporary emergency. This can include up to four weeks of support services if they lose

a job and are looking for another one (see also WAC [388-310-1800](#)); or

(e) American Indians who receive a TANF cash grant and have identified specific needs due to location or employment.

(2) Why do I receive support services?

Although not an entitlement, you may receive support services for the following reasons:

(a) To help you participate in work and WorkFirst activities that lead to independence.

(b) To help you to participate in job search, accept a job, keep working, advance in your job, and/or increase your wages.

(c) You can also get help in paying your child care expenses through the working connections child care assistance program. (Chapter [388-290](#) WAC describes the rules for this child care assistance program.)

(3) What type of support services may I receive and what limits apply?

There is a limit of three thousand dollars per person per program year (July 1st to June 30th) for WorkFirst support services you may receive. Most types of support services have dollar limits.

The chart below shows the types of support services that are available for the different activities (as indicated by an "x") and the limits that apply.

Definitions:

- Work-related activities include looking for work or participating in workplace activities, such as community jobs or a work experience position.

- Safety-related activities include meeting significant or emergency family safety needs, such as dealing with family violence. When approved, safety-related support services can exceed the dollar or category limits listed below.

- Some support services are available if you need them for other required activities in your IRP.

(4) What are the other requirements to receive support services?

Other restrictions on receiving support services are determined by the department or its agents. They will decide what support services you receive, as follows:

(a) It is within available funds; and

(b) It does not assist, promote, or deter religious activity; and

(c) There is no other way to meet the cost.

Type of support service	Limit	• Work	•• Safety	••• Other
Reasonable accommodation for employment	\$1,000 for each request	x		
Clothing/uniforms	\$75 per adult per program year	x		
Diapers	\$50 per child per month	x		
Haircut	\$40 per each request	x		
Lunch	Same rate as established by OFM for state employees	x		
Personal hygiene	\$50 per adult per program year	x		
Professional, trade, association, union and bonds	\$300 for each fee	x		
Relocation related to employment (can include rent, housing, and deposits)	\$1,000 per program year	x		
Short-term lodging and meals in connection with job interviews/tests	Same rate as established by OFM for state employees	x		
Tools/equipment	\$500 per program year	x		
Car repair needed to restore car to operable condition	\$250 per program year	x	x	
License/fees	\$130 per program year	x	x	
Mileage, transportation, and/or public transportation	Same rate as established by OFM for state employees	x	x	
Transportation allotment	Up to: \$25 for immediate need, or \$40 twice a month if you live within 40 miles of your local WorkFirst office, or \$60 twice a month if you live more than 40 miles	x	x	

	from your local WorkFirst office.			
Counseling	No limit	x	x	x
Educational expenses	\$300 for each request if it is an approved activity in your IRP and you do not qualify for sufficient student financial aid to meet the cost	x		x
Medical exams (not covered by Medicaid)	\$150 per exam	x	x	x
Public transportation	\$150 per month	x	x	x
Testing-diagnostic	\$200 each	x	x	x

(5) What happens to my support services if I do not participate as required?

The department will give you ten days notice, following the rules in WAC [388-310-1600](#), then discontinue your support services until you participate as required.

SUPPORT SERVICES AFTER TANF

WorkFirst — Post employment services. WAC 388-310-1800

(1) What is the purpose of post employment services?

Post employment services help low-income parents who are working twenty hours or more a week keep and cope with their current jobs, look for better jobs, gain work skills for a career and become self sufficient.

(2) How do I obtain post employment services?

(a) You can obtain post employment services by:

- (i) Asking for a referral from the local community service office;
- (ii) Contacting community or technical colleges; or

(iii) Contacting the employment security department. Employment security department staff may also telephone you if you got a job while you were on TANF or SFA to see if you are interested in receiving these services.

(b) You may qualify for different services (from various state or federal programs) depending on whether you:

- (i) Are a mandatory participant (that is, you currently receive TANF or SFA benefits);
- (ii) Used to receive TANF or SFA benefits; or
- (iii) Have never been on TANF or SFA.

(3) Who provides post employment services and what kind of services do they provide?

(a) The employment security department can help you increase your wages, increase your job skills or find a better job by providing you with:

- (i) Employment and career counseling;
- (ii) Labor market information;
- (iii) Job leads for a better job (sometimes called job development);
- (iv) On the job training;
- (v) Help with finding a job that matches your interests, abilities and skills (sometimes called job matching); and
- (vi) Help with finding a new job after job loss (sometimes called reemployment).

(b) Any Washington state technical and community college can approve a skill-training program for you that will help you advance up the career ladder. Their staff will talk to you, help you decide what training would work best for you and then help you get enrolled in these programs. The college may approve the following types of training for you at any certified institution:

- (i) High school/GED,
- (ii) Vocational education training,
- (iii) Job skills training,
- (iv) Adult basic education,

(v) English as a second language training, or

(vi) Preemployment training.

(4) What other services are available while you receive post employment services?

While you receive post employment services, you may qualify for:

(a) Working connections childcare if you meet the criteria for this program (described in chapter [388-290 WAC](#)).

(b) Other support services, such as help in paying for transportation or work expenses.

(c) Other types of assistance for low-income families such as food stamps, medical assistance or help with getting child support that is due to you and your children.

(5) Who is eligible for post employment service, support services and childcare?

You may qualify for post employment services, support services and child care if you are working twenty hours or more a week, and:

(a) You are current TANF or SFA recipient. You qualify for:

(i) All types of post employment services, unless you are in sanction status;

(ii) Tuition assistance from the community and technical college system;

(iii) WorkFirst support services; and

(iv) Working connections childcare.

(b) You are a former TANF or SFA recipient. You qualify for:

(i) Employment retention services (help with keeping a job) for up to twelve months after exiting TANF or SFA.

(ii) Wage and skill progression services (help with finding a better job and/or obtaining better wages) for up to twelve months after exiting TANF or SFA.

(iii) Tuition assistance or preemployment training from the community and technical college system;

(iv) Working connections childcare assistance; and/or

(v) WorkFirst support services for up to six months after exiting TANF or SFA.

(c) You are a low wage earner (that is, your family income does not exceed one hundred seventy-five percent of the federal poverty level) who has never received TANF or SFA benefits, and are in a community or technical college-approved skill training program. You may qualify for:

(i) Tuition assistance or preemployment training from the community and technical college system; or

(ii) Working connections child care while you are in training or school for up to a total of thirty six months.

(6) What if I lose my job while I am receiving post employment services?

If you now receive or used to receive TANF or SFA, help is available to you for up to four weeks so that you can find another job and continue in your approved post employment.