

## **Temporary Assistance for Families Funds Available for Families Needing Short Term Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment Services**

In the face of growing need for mental health and substance abuse treatment, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) are notifying states about how Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds can be used to help families in their communities in need of short term mental health or substance use treatment services.

The grant notification includes an explanation of how resources under the TANF Emergency Fund – a provision of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act – can be used to support such services.

The TANF block grant provides states and tribes federal funds and wide flexibility to develop time-limited assistance programs, employment services for parents, and a broad array of specialized services – including mental health and substance abuse services - for struggling families in their communities. For example, a jurisdiction can use federal TANF funds to provide appropriate short-term counseling services such as mental health services.

“Now is a time of great stress for low-income families, putting those already vulnerable to mental health and substance abuse issues at even greater risk,” said HHS Assistant Secretary for Children and Families, Carmen R. Nazario. “We recognize that the challenges facing families looking for a job are complex, and we are committed to building as many partnerships as possible in providing support to Americans in crisis.”

“ACF and SAMHSA are working together to help ensure that TANF funds are available to states to support substance abuse and mental health services,” said SAMHSA Administrator, Pamela S. Hyde, J.D. “These funds can be used to provide relief to families coping with these disorders and trying to achieve self-sufficiency. All too often mental and substance use disorders are overlooked and go untreated which undermines the potential for recovery.”

For pertinent information TANF jurisdictions can contact the Office of Family Assistance on its Welfare Peer TA Web site at <http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/>. In addition, technical assistance can be obtained through the SAMHSA Web site at <http://www.samhsa.gov/>.

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SAMHSA is a public health agency within the Department of Health and Human Services. The agency is responsible for improving the accountability, capacity, and effectiveness of the Nation's substance abuse prevention, addictions treatment, and mental health services delivery system.

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