

HB 42 -- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Sponsor: Sater

By October 28, 2009, this bill requires the Department of Social Services to apply for a federal waiver from the United States Department of Health and Human Services to modify eligibility requirements for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program. Modifications include reducing the lifetime eligibility limits for recipients from five years to two years and requiring beneficiaries subject to any work requirements to be employed before receiving benefits.

The Department of Social Services is required to establish a cash diversion program for unemployed applicants whose TANF benefits are subject to work requirements. The department must offer job assistance services for up to three months to unemployed applicants; and if the applicant is using the services, he or she will be eligible to receive up to three equal monthly payments to be paid into the program. Each payment will be the amount the applicant would receive if he or she was eligible for TANF benefits.

A cap on TANF cash benefits for recipients will be based on the number of children in the recipient's family. Additional cash benefits will not be awarded to a recipient in the event of a child's birth after an initial award has been granted, except if a child is born as a result of rape or incest. The department must offer family planning services to all TANF cash benefit recipients.