

Advocacy Made Easy (TANF)

Take 2 minutes right now to support the needs of your community at this critical juncture in our state's legislative session!

Step One. Browse the background on TANF below.

Step Two. Call the legislative hotline at **1-800-562-6000** and ask to leave a message for your representatives.

Step Three. Say something like:

"TANF is a critical piece of our state's Safety Net and we should do more to ensure that families can access TANF when they need it. Please support HB 1136 & SB 5144 to reinstate the Child Support Pass-Through AND HB 1603 & SB 5684 to undo harsh policies that keep families from accessing TANF."

Background

Washington state protects families with children from the debilitating effects of deep poverty with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/WorkFirst. TANF provides cash assistance and child care to families while parents participate in WorkFirst, which helps with job searching, training, and addressing barriers to employment. Although there are thirty percent more families with children living in deep poverty today than a decade ago, our TANF program is serving 30,000 fewer families today than ten years ago. That's tens of thousands of children in poverty who we are leaving behind.

Bills that center a path to stability for families and children:

HB 1136/SB 5144: TANF Child Support Pass-Through

This bill would re-instate the Child Support Pass-Through for TANF families, which would allow families to receive a portion of their child support payments currently withheld entirely by the state.

HB 1603/SB 5684: #TANFisALifeline

This bill would undo harsh policies that keep families from accessing TANF assistance including expanding time limit extensions, eliminating permanent disqualifications, and easing harsh sanction policies.

Advocacy Made Easy (Working Families Tax Credit)

Take 2 minutes right now to support the needs of your community at this critical juncture in our state's legislative session!

Step One. Browse the background on the Working Families Tax Credit below.

Step Two. Call the legislative hotline at **1-800-562-6000** and ask to leave a message for your senator and representatives.

Step Three. Say something like:

“Please support HB 1527 & SB 5810 to fund and modernize the Working Families Tax Credit. Earned Income Tax Credits are proven poverty-relief tools. These bills will put money back in the pockets of nearly 1 million low- and middle-income tax payers.”

Background

For years, Washington state has had the worst tax code in the country. Families making the least amount of money pay up to six times more as a share of their income in taxes compared with the wealthiest Washingtonians. This tax system exacerbates the racial wealth gap created by long-standing policy barriers that prevent families of color from accessing housing, education, and employment opportunities.

In addition to raising new, progressive revenue, we support a rebalancing of the tax code by funding and modernizing the Working Families Tax Credit

The Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC), which became law in 2008, is Washington state's version of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), the federal government's most successful poverty reduction program. But the state legislature has never funded the WFTC in the budget, missing a vital opportunity to rebalance our tax code for low- and moderate-income Washingtonians. If implemented, the WFTC would refund a portion of the state sales tax — an average of \$400 — to eligible households, thereby boosting families' economic security and mitigating the impact of our state's regressive tax structure.

HB 1527/SB 5810 propose to modernize the WFTC by:

- Expanding eligibility to workers without children age 19 and up;
- Using a modern definition of work to include low-income college students and people who care for family members; and
- Recognizing immigrant workers who are not eligible for the federal EITC as eligible for the WFTC.
- Recognizing the increasing cost of living in our state by increasing the EITC match from 10% of the EITC to 15%.