



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

November 1, 2020

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Manual

Transmittal # 70

This transmittal includes changes to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program. The purpose of this transmittal is to provide new guidance for the TANF Program in regards to the new Relative Maintenance Support Payment

Unless otherwise stated, the provisions included in this transmittal are effective for all TANF eligibility determinations completed on or after November 1, 2020. For full understanding, read the transmittal in its entirety.

This transmittal and manual are available on the Intranet through FUSION at <https://fusion.dss.virginia.gov/bp/BP-Home/TANF-and-VIEW/Guidance> and on the Internet at <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/tanf/index.cgi>.

Significant changes to the manual are as follows:

Page(s) Changed	Significant Changes
Main Table of Contents, page 4	We added a new Section 304.5 for the new Relative Maintenance Support Payment.
Chapter 300, Table of Contents	We added a new Section 304.5 for the new Relative Maintenance Support Payment.

Section 304.5, pages 4-5	<p>The 2020 General Assembly appropriated funds to create the Relative Maintenance Support Payment. TANF assistance units that include one or more eligible children, and whose TANF benefit is \$10 or more, will be entitled to a Relative Maintenance Support Payment when a relative caretaker assumed care of the child(ren) on or after July 1, 2020, to prevent the child(ren) from entering Foster Care, as verified by Family Services.</p> <p>The Relative Maintenance Support Payment is a monthly payment that is included in the TANF payment, and will be paid to eligible assistance units in the amount of \$200 for each eligible child in the qualifying TANF assistance unit that was diverted from Foster Care.</p>
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Questions about this transmittal should be directed to regional program consultants or Mark Golden, TANF Program Manager, at (804) 726-7385, or mark.golden@dss.virginia.gov.

Toni Blue Washington, Director

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304.5 – RELATIVE MAINTENANCE SUPPORT PAYMENT – The 2020 General Assembly appropriated funds to create the Relative Maintenance Support Payment.* TANF assistance units that include one or more eligible children, and whose TANF benefit is \$10 or more, will be entitled to a Relative Maintenance Support Payment when a relative caretaker assumed care of the child(ren) on or after July 1, 2020, to prevent the child(ren) from entering Foster Care, as verified by Family Services. TANF assistance units that include a parent are not eligible.

The Relative Maintenance Support Payment is a monthly payment that is included in the TANF payment, and will be paid to eligible assistance units in the amount of \$200 for each eligible child in the qualifying TANF assistance unit that was diverted from Foster Care. This includes TANF assistance units that include a needy relative caretaker. If the child does not meet TANF eligibility requirements, the relative caretaker will not be eligible to receive the Relative Support Maintenance payment. The Relative Support Maintenance payment does not apply to Diversionary Assistance, Emergency Assistance or VTP.

The Family Services Specialists will be responsible for identifying the child(ren) that has been diverted from Foster Care. The Family Services Specialists will complete the Relative Maintenance Verification Form and provide the relative caretaker with a copy to verify that the child(ren) has been placed in the relative caretaker's home. If applying for TANF assistance at a Local Department of Social Services, the relative caretaker must provide the Relative Maintenance Verification Form to the Benefits Programs Worker to qualify for the additional \$200 monthly payment. The Relative Maintenance Verification Form includes the caretaker(s), child(ren) and referring agency's information, in addition to the date the child was placed in the home of the relative caretaker. The receiving locality is responsible for uploading the Relative Maintenance Verification Form into the Document Management Information System (DMIS).

Example 1: Ms. Perry assumed care of her grandchild Terri Lee on 07/01/2020, to prevent her from being placed in Foster Care. On 07/01/2020, Ms. Perry applied for TANF assistance for her grandchild Terri. On 07/20/2020, Ms. Perry provided all the requested verifications, to include the Relative Maintenance Verification Form that was provided by her Family Services Specialist and that verified Terri was placed with her on 07/01/2020. On 07/23/2020, the TANF application was approved, as all eligibility requirements were met. Ms. Perry received the \$226 standard of assistance for one in a Group II locality. In addition, Ms. Perry received the additional \$200 monthly Relative Maintenance Support Payment. Ms. Perry will receive a total of \$426 on a monthly basis.

Unlike TANF, Relative Maintenance Support Payments are not prorated based on the date of the TANF application. If a relative caretaker applies for TANF any date after the first of the month, as long as all eligibility criteria are met, the assistance unit will receive the entire \$200 payment per eligible child, for that month.

Example 2: On 10/15/2020, Ms. Tee assumed care of her niece Lala to prevent her from being placed in Foster Care. On 10/15/2020, the Family Services Specialist completed the Relative Maintenance Verification form for Ms. Tee. On 10/16/2020, Ms. Tee applied for TANF assistance for her niece Lala. On 10/23/2020, Ms. Tee submitted all the requested verifications to the local agency, to include a copy of the Relative Maintenance Verification Form that was provided by her Family Services Specialist. On 10/26/2020, the Benefits Programs Worker approved the TANF application. Although the initial TANF payment was prorated from the 10/16/2020 application date, Ms. Tee received the entire additional \$200 Relative Maintenance Support Payment for Lala for the month of October.

Example 3: Mr. Jones assumed care of his nephew Anthony Jones to prevent him from being placed in Foster Care, as verified by Family Services. Anthony receives a monthly SSI payment. Although Mr. Jones assumed care of Anthony to prevent him from being placed in Foster Care, Anthony is ineligible for TANF due to the receipt of SSI. Therefore, Mr. Jones is not eligible for the additional \$200 Relative Maintenance Support Payment. However, if Mr. Jones requests assistance for himself as a needy relative caretaker, he could receive a TANF payment if all other eligibility criteria are met.

Payment information about the Relative Maintenance Support Payment will be provided to the customer in the TANF Notice of Action at initial application, reapplication, in conjunction with changes, and at renewal.