

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES



FAMILY ASSISTANCE (FA) PROGRAM SUMMARIZED ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

IS MY FAMILY ELIGIBLE?

Persons who apply for or receive cash benefits must meet certain requirements. They must help determine eligibility for benefits. They must participate in activities that will help them become able to support and better care for their families. This includes cooperating with child support, JOBS and drug screening. Persons who do not cooperate may be denied or may lose benefits.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. The child must live in the home of a parent or other close relative.
- B. A person can only receive FA benefits as an adult for 5 years in his or her lifetime.
- C. The child must be under age 18 unless in school. If in school, the child may receive benefits through the month before the 19th birthday or the last month in school, whichever is earlier.
- D. The child must be a U.S. citizen or a legal, eligible alien.
- E. The child must live in Alabama. A person who has been convicted of giving a false address to get help from two States at the same time cannot receive benefits for ten years.
- F. The child cannot be receiving foster care from the Department of Human Resources.
- G. The child must not be participating in a strike. No family member may receive FA if a parent or stepparent is on strike.
- H. The relative must cooperate with Child Support unless the Department decides s/he has a good reason not to.

Child support received for a child is assigned to the State Department of Human Resources when an application for FA is made for the child.

- I. The relative must turn over all child support payments to the State.
- J. The relative must give a Social Security number for each member of the assistance unit. If a member does not have a Social Security number, the relative must apply for a number. The number must be provided when received.

- K. The relative must participate in the JOBS program. The relative must accept a job unless the County Department tells him or her otherwise. Parents under age 18 who are dependent children are required to participate.
- L. The relative must apply for any other benefits for which they may be eligible, such as Veteran's Benefits, Social Security, Unemployment Compensation, etc.
- M. A parent who is under age 18 and his or her children must live with an adult. This adult must be a relative or a legal guardian. If an adult relative or guardian is not available, the parent under 18 and his or her children must live in an adult-supervised supportive living arrangement.
- N. The relative must tell the worker about family circumstances. The relative may be asked to prove some or all of the family circumstances with documents.
- O. A parent under age 18 with a child that is at least 12 weeks old must have a high-school diploma or be in school or a training program.
- P. The child or relative must not be breaking a condition of parole or probation. The child or relative must not be a convicted felon who is on the run to avoid arrest, trial or jail. The child or relative must not have been convicted of a felony for the use or sale of a controlled substance or having a controlled substance unless his or her sentence has been completed.
- Q. A parent must sign and meet the terms of their Family Responsibility Plan.
- R. The applicant must participate in job search activities during the application process unless exempt or good cause exists not to do so.
- S. A parent or stepparent grantee must cooperate with drug screening activities. This means providing information and taking and paying for drug screening(s). Activities are determined on a case by case basis.



FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS



- T. The child must be in need by agency rules and not have parents or stepparents who can support him/her. "In need" means the family does not have net monthly income that equals or is more than the payment standard and is eligible for at least \$10. The payment standard is listed below. In determining need, the income of all persons in the assistance unit is counted. Before earned income is counted, a 20% work expense and childcare are subtracted from gross income.

FA STANDARDS

FAMILY SIZE	PAYMENT STANDARDS	FAMILY SIZE	PAYMENT STANDARDS
1	165	9	395
2	190	10	425
3	215	11	455
4	245	12	485
5	275	13	515
6	305	14	545
7	335	15	575
8	365	16	605

“Family” means all persons included that make up the family size. Generally, persons to be included are the parents and brothers and sisters of the child(ren) living in the home. Other children related to the parent(s) such as stepchildren and nieces, etc. may be included. (If a child in a group of brothers and sisters is included, all his/her brothers and sisters who live in the home must be included if eligible.) The income of all persons in the unit is used to determine eligibility. A family with income that is equal to or more than the payment standard for the family size is not eligible for FA.

Examples of Income:

Wages, commissions, salaries



Contributions



**Social Security,
VA, and
Unemployment
compensation**



**Child
Support**



Family assistance will be paid for recipients who are eligible for at least \$10 for up to five years.
Benefits are not paid for less than \$10.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **WHERE TO APPLY**

You must apply for FA at the Department of Human Resources in the county where you live. The application interview may start with a general explanation of the program to a group of applicants. You must take part in an in-office or telephone, private interview with a worker.

- **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants: You must report any changes in your family’s situation before your case is awarded.

Recipients: You must notify the Department of any change in your family’s situation within 10 days. You must give the Department all information needed for a complete review at least every twelve months. The County Department may ask for some of the information needed in a group interview with other recipients.

- **OVERPAYMENTS**

If you get an overpayment for any reason, you will have to pay it back. If you receive an overpayment due to fraud you may be subject to prosecution or other penalty.

- **REVIEW OF ACTION TAKEN ON YOUR CASE**

- You may notify the County Department or the State Department of Human Resources in Montgomery, Alabama if you are dissatisfied. You may ask for a conference with the County Department, a review by the State Department, or a formal hearing. (The State Department and the County Department operate under the same rules.)
- You may make a written request for a hearing within 60 days of the action taken. The parent, other relative, legally appointed representative or other authorized person must make the request.
- The hearing may be conducted by telephone.
- Your attorney or someone representing you may be present with you at a hearing or conference.
- You may withdraw your request for a hearing when concerns are otherwise resolved.

- **BENEFIT DELIVERY and RESTRICTIONS**

Benefits are issued through an electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card. There are restrictions on where the card can be used and what can be bought. Places the card cannot be used are in a liquor, wine or beer store, gambling establishment, strip club, tattoo or body piercing store or a place providing psychic services. Benefits cannot be used to buy liquor, wine or beer, tobacco products, or lottery tickets. Misuse of the card and benefits results in loss of benefits and payback of monies misused.

- **CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES**

Child support services are available to persons receiving FA. Child support services will continue even if FA payments are stopped unless you request that services stop.

- **DAY CARE**

You may be eligible for childcare after your FA benefits have been terminated. You must need childcare because you are working and you must apply for the care within six months of FA closure and meet other requirements.

- **FOOD ASSISTANCE**

You may be eligible for food assistance even if you do not get FA. For more information, contact your worker or your County Food Assistance Office.

- **HEALTH CARE COVERAGE**

You and your family members may get free or low cost health care coverage even if you do not get FA. If you want to apply for Medicaid, ALL Kids, or help paying for insurance, apply online at www.insurealabama.org or call toll-free: 1-888-373-5437 or 1-800-362-1504 if you have questions.

- **LEGAL ASSISTANCE**

You may be able to get free legal help. You may contact a local Legal Services office or other community agency. Your county office can help you find them.

- **OTHER HELP AVAILABLE**

You may want to access the Health and Human Services website at www.myalabama.gov for information about other programs and services available in the State.

- **NONDISCRIMINATION:** Program rules are the same for everyone. Your race, color, birthplace, sex, handicap, beliefs, age or religion do not matter. Tell us if you have a physical, mental or learning problem that limits a major life activity. We may be able to help you to fully use existing programs and services.

