



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Arizona to Spearhead Workforce Pilot for TANF Participants**

*The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Pilot Program Will Connect Program Participants with Quality Jobs*

**PHOENIX - (September 25, 2025)** In partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through its Administration for Children and Families (ACF), the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) is pleased to announce its participation in the TANF Pilot Program created under the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023.

Arizona joins Ohio, Iowa, Nebraska, and Virginia in testing innovative approaches to help TANF Cash Assistance recipients enter the workforce and create a national model that focuses on transitioning families from short-term assistance to longer-term independence.

“The TANF pilot reflects the Trump Administration’s commitment to helping vulnerable families achieve self-sufficiency through meaningful employment,” said Acting Assistant Secretary of ACF Andrew Gradison. “Arizona’s pilot approach exemplifies our vision for welfare reform in America, and we look forward to working with Arizona to deliver scalable results for the American people.”

Arizona will focus on identifying employers with quality job openings in in-demand industries, with a special focus on those willing to provide paid training opportunities. DES will then connect TANF Program participants to these sustainable, higher-paying positions.

“DES is thrilled to participate in this pilot, demonstrating how our state’s commitment to workforce participation and opportunity can help empower individuals and families to reach greater independence, while at the same time meeting the needs of Arizona employers,” said DES Director Michael Wisheart. “We are eager to test meaningful employment strategies that can be scaled for the rest of the United States.”

DES was selected based on its proposal, which showcased how Arizona's robust labor market and DES's housing benefit and workforce programs make the state an ideal candidate for the pilot. These traits provide a foundation DES will build upon during the six years of the TANF Pilot Program.

The success of the TANF Pilot Program will serve as a blueprint for other states, demonstrating the power of innovative, collaborative approaches in transforming pathways to work. Through these efforts, Arizona and its partner states are taking significant steps toward creating a more resilient and sustainable future for families across the nation.

Pilots will be in effect for six years, beginning on October 1, 2025. The first year is intended to establish baseline data and negotiate targets, and the remaining years of participation are to measure performance against the targets.

Additional information on the TANF Pilot Program can be found on ACF's [Fiscal Responsibility Act implementation page](#).

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