

Presentation to the 2022 Joint Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Human Services

ODHS Budget Request

Strengthening the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Program

Liesl Wendt, Deputy Director, ODHS

Claire Seguin, Deputy Director, ODHS Self-Sufficiency Programs

Eric Moore, Chief Financial Officer, ODHS

Supporting families and confronting poverty



We must create a more resilient system that recognizes the precarious conditions facing kids and families in poverty: they are often one accident, health issue, job loss or large rent increase away from having a major disruption to their lives.

*– State of Oregon Children's Agenda
Office of the Governor, 2018*

What we do

ODHS Self-Sufficiency Programs (SSP) is comprised of many programs aimed at **supporting families, reducing poverty, and mitigating economic inequities**, including:

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (**TANF**)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (**SNAP**)
- Employment Related Day Care (**ERDC**)
- Temporary Assistance for Domestic Violence Survivors (**TA-DVS**)



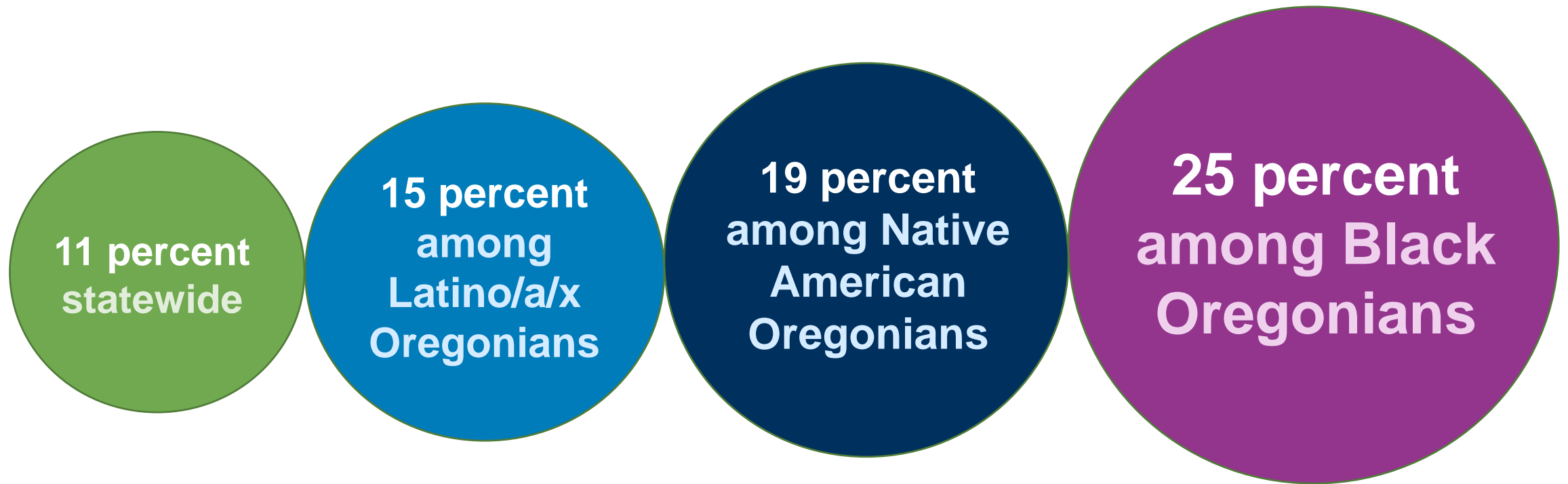
TANF

The **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** program provides cash benefits to low-income families with children. These benefits help families meet basic needs including:

- **Food**
- **Clothing**
- **Rent and utilities**



2019 Oregon poverty rates



2019 Oregon child poverty rates



13 percent
statewide

20 percent
among
Latino/a/x
Oregonians

Ranging from
16 to 32
percent
in rural
counties

Oregon children living in areas of concentrated poverty



White
non-Hispanic
children:
4 percent

Black
children:
14 percent

Native
American
children:
20 percent

TANF and racial equity

In Oregon, **Black, Indigenous, and families of color** are **disproportionately represented** in the TANF program:

Race/Ethnicity	Percent of State Population	Percent of TANF Population
African American	2.2	9.1
Native American	1.8	3.8
Hispanic or Latino/a/x	13.4	14.6

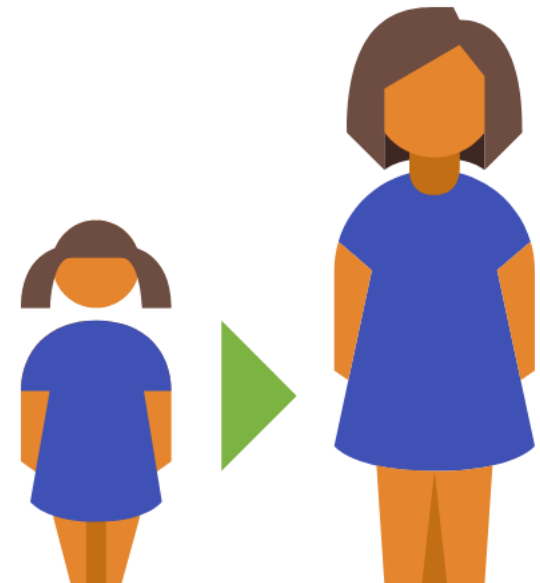
Source: [U.S. Census Bureau](#)

Child poverty and life outcomes

Citing national studies, the *Roadmap to Reducing Child Poverty** reports that, compared to affluent children, **children with family incomes below the poverty line:**

- Complete **fewer years of schooling**;
- As adults, face **higher levels of unemployment** and **earned less** than half the income;
- Are more than twice as likely to report **poor overall health** or **high levels of psychological distress**.

*National Academies of Sciences, 2019



Reinvesting now to create a more just future

We must **reinvest TANF savings into Oregon families** as part of our wider effort to realize the state's racial equity goals.

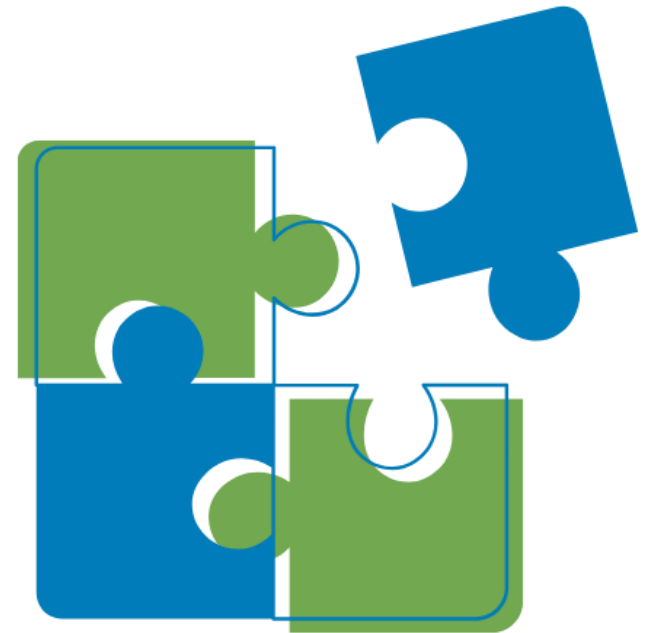
By increasing the resources available to TANF-eligible families and children now, we reorient Oregon's TANF program so that it meaningfully invests in the **health, well-being, and self-sufficiency of tomorrow's adults.**



Improving outcomes for TANF participants

ODHS proposes **four solutions** to better support children in TANF-eligible families:

1. Clothing allowances
2. Ending full-family disqualifications
3. Increased funding for Family Support & Connections
4. Increasing the TANF resource limit



Clothing allowances

Currently, TANF benefits cover **only the most basic expenses** and often leave families unable to provide their children with adequate clothing.

ODHS requests funding to issue **three \$300 clothing allowances per year** to help parents pay for seasonal weather-appropriate clothing for their children.

*\$15.3 million
TANF Federal
Funds Limitation*

Clothing allowance payments are considered **Non-Recurrent Short-Term (NRST) benefits**, which allows us to issue payments using federal dollars instead of General Fund.



Ending full-family disqualifications

TANF program disqualifications that revoke cash assistance from entire families negatively impact dependent children's health and food security.

The proposed investment will allow ODHS to preserve **the majority of the monthly TANF cash grant for the dependent child/children in the assistance unit**, contributing directly to their well-being now and in the future.

*\$941,679 General Fund
+ \$3,581,925 TANF
Federal Funds Limitation*



Family Support & Connections

Family Support and Connections (FS&C) is a **child abuse and neglect prevention** program that serves TANF-eligible and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)-eligible families in Oregon.

FS&C is an emerging, evidence-informed* program designed to **promote family strengths and optimal child development** and reduce the likelihood of abuse and neglect.

*Center for the Study of Social Policy, 2014



Family Support & Connections

ODHS requests the support necessary to **extend these contracted services to more families that need them**, prioritizing Black, Indigenous, and families of color.

The investments will:

- **Increase the number** of TANF- and SNAP-eligible families that can be served through FS&C,
- Provide compensation to parents to **facilitate their participation in service design and programming**, and
- Fund **two staff positions** to implement program expansion.

*\$7,487,638 TANF
Federal Funds Limitation*



Increasing the TANF resource limit

To qualify for TANF benefits, a family must not have resources above \$2,500. During the pandemic, **ODHS increased the limit to \$10,000 to allow families to retain more of their resources.**

Leaving more of a family's resources intact before TANF program entry **can reduce the length of time families need public assistance, helps families save for emergencies, and increases their access to fair, affordable credit.***

The proposed investment will allow ODHS to **permanently increase the TANF resource limit** for new applicants from \$2,500 to \$10,000.

*\$63,650 General Fund
+ \$270,921 TANF
Federal Funds Limitation*



Budget request

The **\$27.6 million investment** includes:

- \$1,005,329 GF
- \$26,631,484 FF





Q+A
