

15.1 INTRODUCTION

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and WV WORKS are both cash assistance programs funded under a block grant authorized by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA). In West Virginia, these cash assistance programs replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), which included cash assistance to families of unemployed parents (AFDCU), on January 1, 1997. AFDC/U recipients were automatically eligible for Medicaid.

The emphasis of the PRWORA is on personal responsibility and employment. States are not required to offer the same cash assistance program in all parts of the state. In West Virginia, some counties operated the WV WORKS Program with Workers who handle both the eligibility determination and the work requirement components of the Program beginning January 1, 1997. The focus of WV WORKS is in assisting clients in becoming self-sufficient. Intensive interaction between the client and the Worker is necessary to establish and maintain the Personal Responsibility Contract (PRC) between the Department and the client.

In the other counties beginning January 1, 1997, one Worker determined initial and ongoing TANF eligibility and another Work and Training Worker handled the work requirement component of the TANF Program. Emphasis was placed on personal responsibility and employment, but the two components of eligibility and work requirements were handled by different, specialized staff. These TANF counties were phased into the WV WORKS Program through January, 1998.

Those requirements mandated by the PRWORA were found in TANF and in WV WORKS. However, where the State has discretion, there were some differences between TANF and WV WORKS.

Even though the PRWORA replaced AFDC/U with a block grant, the link between the former AFDC/U Program and automatic Medicaid eligibility was maintained. In addition, any link between the block grant cash assistance program and automatic Medicaid eligibility was expressly prohibited. Therefore, only those TANF and WV WORKS recipients who would have met the requirements of the former AFDC/U Program, are Medicaid eligible as cash assistance recipients, i.e., AFDC/U Medicaid recipients.

The purpose of this Chapter is to set forth the specific eligibility requirements that apply only to TANF, WV WORKS, AFDC/U Medicaid and AFDC/U-Related Medicaid. The program to which each section applies is indicated in the title of the section.