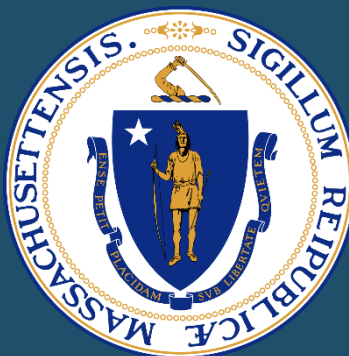


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TAFDC and EAEDC Benefit Increase Report

January 2021



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE TAFDC and EAEDC BENEFIT INCREASE REPORT

JANUARY 2021

OVERVIEW

Line Item 4403-2000 of the FY21 GAA (Chapter 227 of the Acts of 2020) requires the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) to submit a report related to increased benefit levels of its two economic assistance programs, Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) and Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children (EAEDC).

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE

DTA's mission is to assist and empower low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, improve their quality of life, and achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency. To do this, DTA offers a comprehensive system of programs and supports, including food and nutritional assistance, economic assistance, and employment services and supports.

DTA serves one out of every eight residents in the Commonwealth including working families, children, older adults, and people with disabilities.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

DTA administers two core benefit programs that provide economic assistance to low-income families and individuals in the Commonwealth: TAFDC and EAEDC.

TAFDC is a state and federally funded program that provides economic assistance and employment support to families with children, and pregnant women, with little or no assets or income. TAFDC is operated under the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. TAFDC clients are eligible for child care and transportation supports to help them participate in employment or employment-related services. Some TAFDC clients are required to participate in work-related activities as a condition of eligibility. These requirements continue to be suspended due to the public health emergency but TAFDC clients are being offered the opportunity to participate in DTA employment programs, which continue to operate across the state.

EAEDC is a state funded program which provides economic assistance primarily to the elderly or disabled. Those eligible for EAEDC include individuals unable to work due to a physical or mental incapacity who are waiting for Supplemental Security Income payments to begin and people over 65 not eligible for Social Security.

TAFDC AND EAEDC BENEFIT INCREASE

In response to COVID-19, the Commonwealth's Fiscal Year 2021 General Appropriations Act included provisions that increased the benefit level for both of DTA's economic assistance programs by 10% effective January 1. The increase is authorized through June 30, 2021.

DTA implemented the increase to households' benefit amounts effective with payments issued for January 2021. The following two tables depict the increased TAFDC and EAEDC payment standards that went into effect on January 1, 2021.

TAFDC PAYMENT STANDARD MATRIX		
Household size	Public or subsidized housing	Private housing
1	\$427	\$467
2	\$540	\$580
3	\$652	\$692
4	\$760	\$800
5	\$871	\$911
6	\$986	\$1,026
7	\$1,097	\$1,137
8	\$1,207	\$1,247
9	\$1,317	\$1,357
10	\$1,428	\$1,468
Each additional household member	+\$116	+\$116

EAEDC Payment Standard Matrix		
Living Arrangement	Household size	Monthly Benefit Amount
You live alone, or you live with your spouse or children who do not get TAFDC or EAEDC. You have shelter costs.	1	\$334.10
	2	\$434.70
	Each additional household member	\$100.80
You live with your spouse who gets TAFDC for your stepchild(ren).	1	\$100.80
	2	\$201.60
	Each additional household member	\$100.80
You live with your spouse who gets EAEDC personally or TAFDC for a young extended family member. You have shelter costs.	1	\$222.80
	2	\$289.80
	Each additional household member	\$67.30
You live in a halfway house or an institution like a psychiatric hospital, licensed nursing home, or residential treatment center.	1	\$72.80
You do not have a place to live or you live in a shelter during the night. You have no shelter costs.	1	\$334.10
	2	\$434.70
	Each additional household member	\$100.80
You live in a licensed rest home, also known as a residential care facility.	1	The facility's monthly rate plus \$72.80.
You live in a therapeutic community center.	1	\$215.60

As a result of this increase, 26,745 households that were receiving TAFDC and 18,521 households that were receiving EAEDC prior to the benefit increase saw an increase to their respective monthly benefit amounts as of the January 2021 benefit issuance cycle. Consistent with federal rules, these increases may have impacted households' Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) monthly benefit levels and could impact eligibility for or the benefit amounts of other public assistance programs.

Since economic assistance benefits are distributed semi-monthly, benefit distribution under the increased rates remains underway as of this report's filing. Furthermore, caseload fluctuations continue to add an elevated level of uncertainty in future caseload projections. Nonetheless, the Department estimates the cost to annualize these increases into FY22 at \$17.7M for TAFDC and \$7.6M for EAEDC.

The Department will continue to monitor the distribution of increased benefit levels and their impact on caseload and expenditures in the coming months to further refine an FY22 annualization estimate.