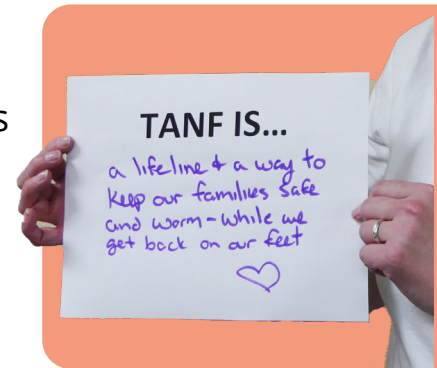


Equitable access to help should be a cornerstone of our safety net, and we should uproot policies with racist outcomes.

Increase Equitable Access to TANF, Support HB 2007

To qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), a family of three cannot make more than \$1,412 a month – or \$16,944 a year. The Federal Poverty Level for a family of three is \$24,860 a year.



- Prior to the Great Recession, families receiving TANF in Washington state could still get cash assistance if they needed it past the 60-month federal lifetime limit through broad hardship exemptions.

In 2011, Washington cut access to the TANF program by imposing punitive policies and removing broad hardship exemptions to reduce the caseload.

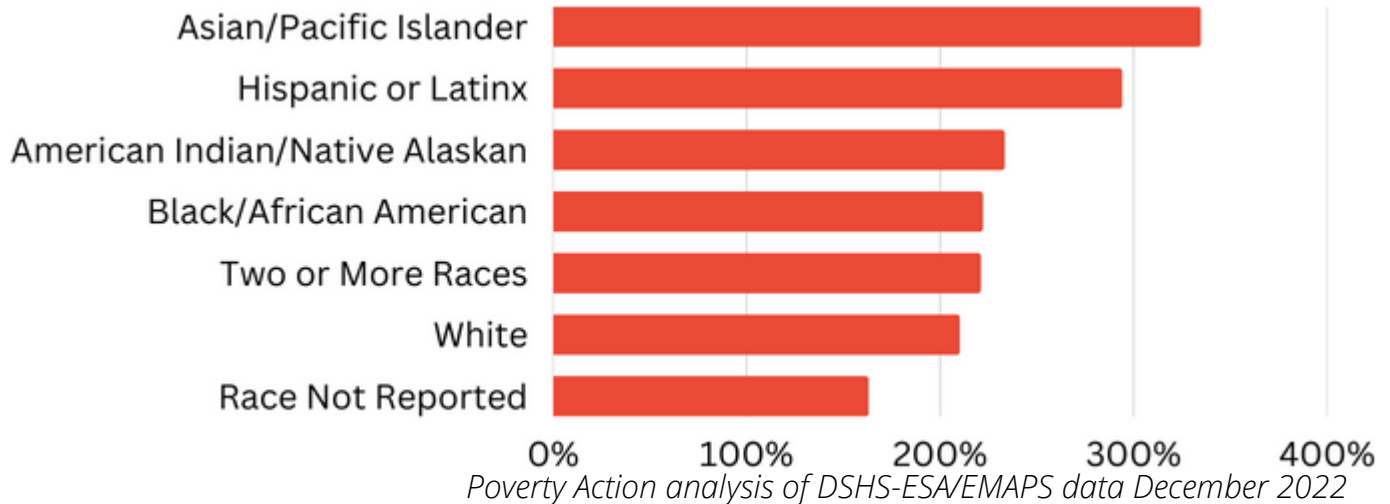
- Over a decade later, recession-era policies are still in place. As a result:

- Extremely **narrow hardship exemptions disproportionately cut off Black, Indigenous, and Latinx families** trying to access help.
- Despite efforts from the department, disproportionate time limit terminations are increasing for Black, Indigenous, and multiracial families.

Race/ Ethnicity	% of TANF cases with adult recipients in 2023	% of TANF cases terminated for time limits in 2023
American Indian/Alaska Native	3	4
Black or African American	13	18
Two or More Races	3	5

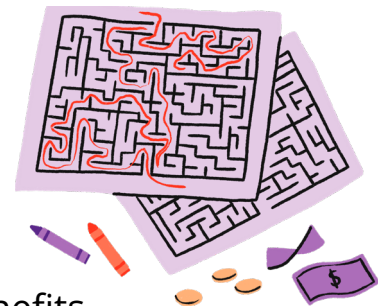
- In response to the pandemic, the legislature temporarily restored broad hardship exemptions and eliminated time limits for child-only cases. This significantly increased racial equity in access to TANF.

Percentage Increase of Families on Time Limit Exemptions, 2020-2022



- Time Limit Exemptions increased access to help during times of need for all families, with families of color benefitting the most.

- Although time limits were removed for child-only cases during the 2023 legislative session, **the temporary extension of broad hardship exemptions expired in June 2023**. This reinstated a policy with documented racist outcomes and forced families in need off of benefits.



During the COVID-19 pandemic, we increased access to help for families in need, and gains in equity followed. To make those gains permanent, we need to continue the work we started last session:

- Remove the 60-month lifetime limit on child-only cases
- Permanently re-instate broad hardship exemptions