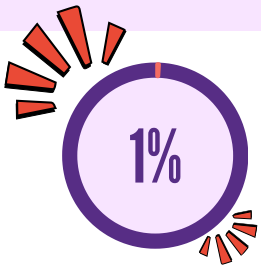
Remove Barriers to Support Services

Statewide POVERTY ACTION NETWORK

TANF should be a pathway out of poverty for families living with the least in our state.

Part of the design on the TANF program is access to **Support Service dollars**, which are intended to help families **overcome barriers to work by providing cash for tangible goods and services.** Approved costs include funds for: car repairs, uniforms, haircuts and personal hygiene, license fees, etc.

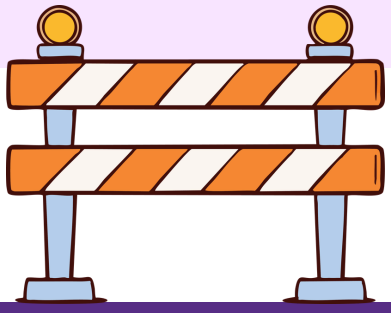


Although **every adult on TANF is eligible for up to $5000 per year** to cover these costs, **only 1% of the TANF caseload ever receives this support** because of a lack of a functional distribution mechanism.

Families should be able to access the supports designed for them.

Many years ago, "Food stamps" were colorful paper coupons that spent like cash. These were modernized fully by 2002, when EBT cards became the gold standard nationwide. TANF recipients deserve to have their supports modernized too.

EBT card technology allows clients to use the same card to spend TANF and SNAP dollars. We should deploy this same technology to allow clients to **use the EBT card they already have to access their support service funds,** which could be pre-loaded and spent on costs already approved in rule.



In California, **transportation costs are pre-loaded onto your EBT card** and expire if not used.