TANF should keep up with the cost of living

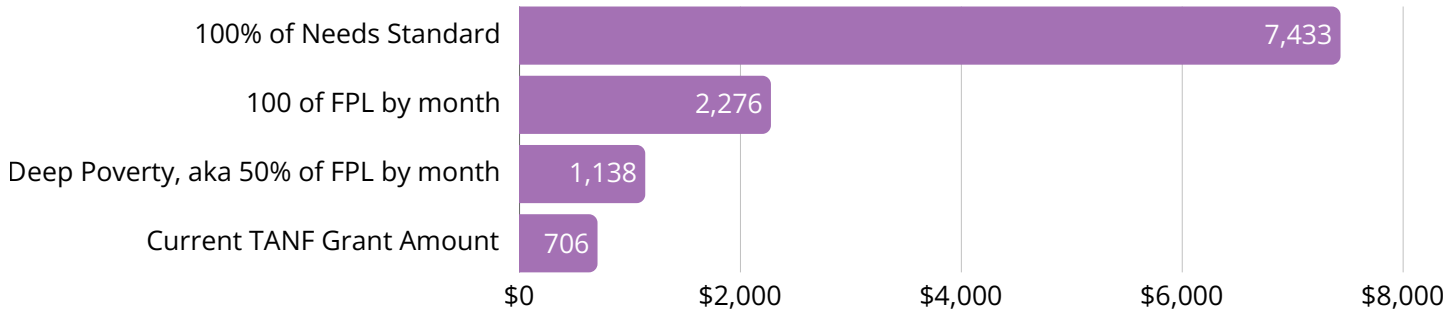
Statewide POVERTY ACTION NETWORK

The TANF cash grant should be tied to a percentage of the Needs Standard that reflects the cost of living.

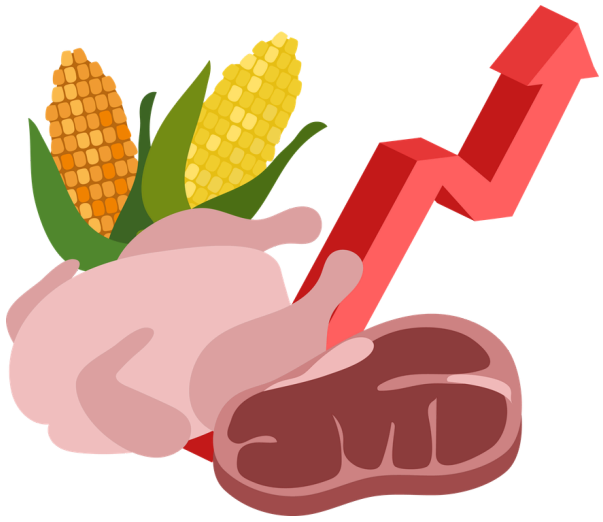
Other safety net programs like SNAP, SSI, and Foster Care payments go up each year - but families who qualify for TANF are left out. Currently, the TANF grant doesn't go up without an act of the legislature.

The current maximum TANF cash grant for a family of three is $706, **well below the deep poverty line.**

In 2026, the TANF grant for a family of three is 31% of the Federal Poverty Level, or 9.5% of the Needs Standard in WA.



The grant hasn't seen an increase since 2023, but **inflation has gone up by 11.6%.** This means that every single year, the grant has **less and less buying power.**



In order to be an **effective program** that mitigates the worst effects of deep poverty, TANF should be **tied to the cost of living.**