



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Commissioner's Office
11 State House Station
221 State Street
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011

PAUL R. LePAGE
GOVERNOR

BETHANY L. HAMM
ACTING COMMISSIONER

September 25, 2018

Senator Roger Katz, Chair
Representative Mastraccio, Chair
Committee on Government Oversight
Cross Building, Room 220
82 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Chairman Katz, Chairwoman Mastraccio, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for your request for information related to the following topics:

- Is there a "catch all" or other good cause hardship extension?
- How many denials of hardship extensions have gone to hearing? Of these, what are the percentages granted or denied?
- Numbers of families termed out for no longer having an eligible minor child in the household
- Child poverty rates in Maine
- Amount of TANF spending for FY18
- Ending TANF balance for FY18
- Copy of PCG report
- Copy of Fedcap Contract

Please find our responses below. Let us know if you have additional questions.

Is there a "catch all" or other good cause hardship extension?

The rules governing the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program include a temporary hardship extension that may be used for emergency situations that do not fall within the other allowable extension types. Chapter I of the Maine Public Assistance Manual defines "Occurrence of an Emergency Situation" as follows: "A family may be eligible for an extension of up to six months when the family has experienced an emergency situation, other than citizenship or alien status, which is beyond the control of the family and prohibits them from engaging in employment. This extension must be approved by the TANF Program Manager." (page 21).

How many denials of hardship extensions have gone to hearing? Of these, what are the percentages granted or denied?

TANF temporary hardship extension decisions are made by a centralized team. This team represents the Department in all extension hearings and track those requests and results. This data comes from their records and not from the Department’s Administrative Hearings Office or the Automated Client Eligibility System.

Year	Total Extension Requests	Extension Hearing Requests	Department’s Decision is Upheld	Department’s Decision is Overturned	Hearing is Withdrawn / Abandoned	Extension Decision was reversed prior to Hearing
2014 (starting June)	440	6	2	3	1	0
2015	776	14	4	6	4	0
2016	659	20	4	5	7	1
2017	552	10	3	0	0	7
2018 (ending 7/31)	363	6	1	1	4	0

Numbers of families termed out for no longer having an eligible minor child in the household

Since January 1, 2012, 1471 cases (representing 4199 unique individuals) have closed because there was no longer an eligible child in the household.

Child poverty rates in Maine

As demonstrated in the chart below (data from Kids Count), the number of children in extreme poverty in Maine decreased by 15.8 percent from 2015 to 2016.

Children in Extreme Poverty in Maine

Location	Data Type	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Maine	Number	20,000	18,000	23,000	19,000	16,000
	Percent	8%	7%	9%	8%	7%

Amount of TANF spending for FY18

In SFY 2018, \$76,700,163 was spent from the TANF Block Grant. Below, please find brief historical and projected spending.

2016	2017	2018	Projected 2019
42,119,762	56,766,289	76,700,163	96,466,867

Ending TANF balance for FY18

The balance, as of the close of SFY18, was \$145,331,215.

Copy of PCG report

PCG does not complete reports for the Department under this contract, but rather analyzes TANF expenditures on a case-by-case basis to ensure they are allowable under TANF regulations.

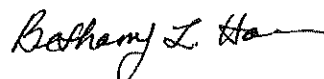
Copy of Fedcap Contract

Please see the attached. I would note a point of clarification regarding a Fedcap contract question asked during the Committee meeting—there has been a zero-cost amendment made to this contract where unspent funds, due to lease and staffing adjustments during start up, were pushed forward to future fiscal periods.

I would also like to bring to the Committee's attention that since the last meeting, U.S. HHS has notified us of a reduction in TANF penalties. These penalties were incurred due to historical failure to meet federally mandated work participation rates. Due to recognition of the progress we have made in meeting these requirements, the penalties administered in fiscal years 2012-2015 have been eliminated, and the penalties administered in fiscal years 2008-2010 have been drastically reduced. We now expect our total liability to be approximately \$1.8 million.

Thank you for your interest in this matter, and please let myself or my staff know if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,



Bethany L. Hamm
Acting Commissioner

