



DCF Legislative Testimony

April 8, 2026

TESTIMONY OF: Dr. Carla Whiteside-Hicks, Director of Economic and Employment Services

TESTIMONY ON: Performance Audit Report: Reviewing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Eligibility Processes and Spending.

DCF RESPONSE TO TANF AUDIT

Chair Thompson and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Performance Audit Report: Reviewing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Eligibility Processes and Spending. We appreciated the professional conduct and attention to detail of the LPA staff during the course of this review.

The first finding of the report states “**to comply with state law, DCF should offer to place recipient photographs on the TANF EBT cards.**” This recommendation comes with logistical barriers, as these benefits are issued on the same Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card as other agency facilitated programs: SNAP and Child Care. This would mean that the SNAP federal requirements would also apply.

In FFY2025, the TANF program provided benefits to an average of 2,853 Kansas families each month. For families receiving TANF cash assistance, the Economic and Employment Services (EES) Whole Family Services team provides direct case management services to an average of 2,052 adults each month to assist families in becoming stable, connected, and empowered to reach their goals. Families needing child care services to allow participation in required work activities are approved to receive federally funded, DCF administered, Child Care Assistance. Additionally, in Federal Fiscal Year 2025, approximately 79% of TANF households also received SNAP benefits.

Due to the issuance of all federally administered benefits onto a single EBT card per household, all cards would need to be reissued to implement the photo ID requirement. Under the current EBT contract, the cost for each card with no photo is \$0.20 and the cost for each EBT card with a photo is \$2.65. Based on January 2026 data, the additional cost for implementation, equipment, and training/education for cardholders, staff, and retailers if the agency were to offer the photo ID is as follows:

- **97,370 active EBT cards** for 88,565 households.
- At this participation rate, **the cost to renew all cards to include photo ID would be approximately \$258,030.**
- **An increase in the amount of SNAP would require an increase in SGF by approximately \$111,882.**
 - o The current funding mix for EBT card costs in FY26 includes
 - SGF (43.36%),
 - Federal SNAP Admin (43.36%),
 - Federal TANF (1.19%); and
 - Federal CCDF (12.09%).

Without fiscal appropriation by the Kansas legislature to pay for the reissuance of all current (and future) EBT cards with a photo of a household member, the agency cannot begin taking steps to plan for implementation of the recommended finding.

The second finding that **‘DCF should follow up on the questionable transactions we identified and sent to them’** has been completed by the agency. DCF reviewed each cash transaction at a questionable location noted by LPA.

The TANF Cash Assistance program differs from other federal benefit programs facilitated by the DCF. Unlike the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Medicaid, the federal government provides little oversight or monitoring on state TANF eligibility determinations or accuracy of TANF payments. This can be further highlighted by the occurrence that some recipients may use their TANF benefits at prohibited locations (liquor stores, casinos, tattoo parlors). This is because **the state is federally required to allow TANF recipients to withdraw cash from ATMs (7 CFR 27.2(f)(1)(x) / [Verification Requirements and State Options | Food and Nutrition Service](#))**. This allowance means recipients may bypass the point-of-sale controls DCF has put in place to block prohibited purchases.

Procedurally, DCF staff currently run reports on all cash transactional data and research addresses for each cash withdraw transaction listed. If the location yielded a finding of a prohibited location/expense for TANF benefits, it is added to the TANF cash block list to prohibit future EBT card to cash transactions at said locations. Attempts to use an EBT card at these locations also creates a notification when the attempt to withdraw cash is made. Staff would note that ATMs are frequently relocated, requiring a consistent review of the cash transactional report.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide a response to the LPA Performance Audit on the TANF program.