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Maria MacDougal
College Access Counselor

Welcome! The webinar will begin shortly.

Use the “Q&A” box to let me know if you can’t hear or if you have any questions before we begin.

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Higher Opportunity for Pathways to Employment (HOPE) and Parents as Scholars (PaS): Programs for Family Success

Maria MacDougal, College Access Counselor
Sheri Wilkens, HOPE Program Manager

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Agenda

- Introduction
- DHHS Overview
- Higher Opportunity for Pathways to Employment (HOPE)
- Parents as Scholars (PaS)
- Key Differences
- Best Practices
- Q&A

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The Expert

Sheri Wilkens

HOPE Program Director

Office of Family Independence

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DHHS Overview

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner

Maine DHHS
11 State House Station
109 Capitol Street
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel.: (207) 287-3707

What We Do
DHHS Goals

Health | *Safety* | *Resilience* | *Opportunity*

Maine children grow up in safe, healthy, and supportive environments, allowing them to thrive throughout their lives.

★

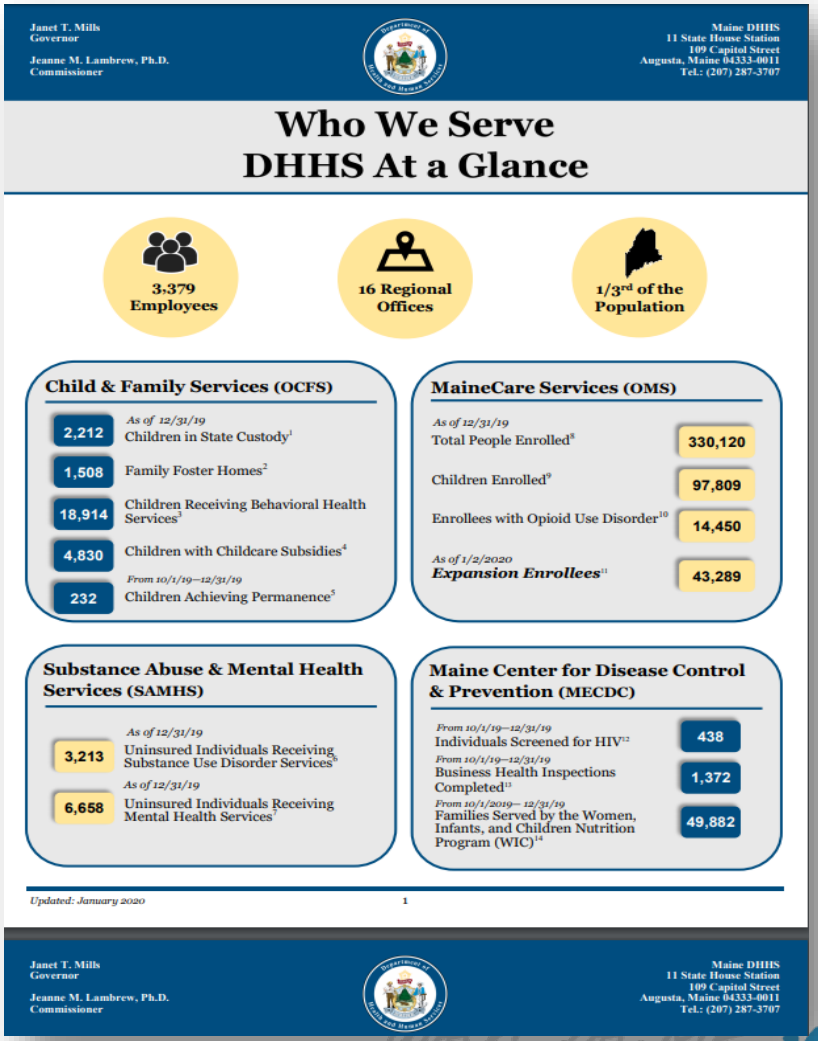
All adults have the opportunity to work, live with independence, and have good health.

★

Older Mainers live with dignity in the place that balances their needs and preferences.

For More Information Visit us at www.maine.gov/dhhs

Updated: July 2019



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Who We Serve
DHHS At a Glance

3,379 Employees

16 Regional Offices

1/3rd of the Population

Child & Family Services (OCFS)

2,212	*As of 12/31/19* Children in State Custody[1]
1,508	Family Foster Homes[2]
18,914	Children Receiving Behavioral Health Services[3]
4,830	Children with Childcare Subsidies[4]
232	*From 10/1/19—12/31/19* Children Achieving Permanence[5]

MaineCare Services (OMS)

As of 12/31/19 Total People Enrolled[8]	330,120
Children Enrolled[9]	97,809
Enrollees with Opioid Use Disorder[10]	14,450
As of 1/2/2020 ***Expansion Enrollees***[11]	43,289

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services (SAMHS)

3,213	*As of 12/31/19* Uninsured Individuals Receiving Substance Use Disorder Services[6]
6,658	*As of 12/31/19* Uninsured Individuals Receiving Mental Health Services[7]

Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention (MECDC)

From 10/1/19—12/31/19 Individuals Screened for HIV[12]	438
From 10/1/19—12/31/19 Business Health Inspections Completed[13]	1,372
From 10/1/2019— 12/31/19 Families Served by the Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program (WIC)[14]	49,882

Updated: January 2020 1

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HOPE

Education is a Marathon

We want our participants to continue to run the race without stopping!

Our program is designed to facilitate a streamlined and rapid response that eliminates barriers to persistence and attainment for student-parents.

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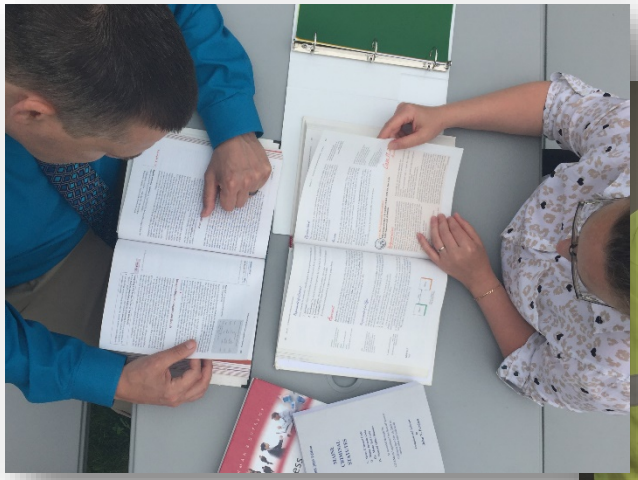
HOPE

HOPE is a statewide program that can serve up to 500 students at one time with applicants being considered on a first come, first served basis. There is no annual limit for how many students can participate in HOPE.



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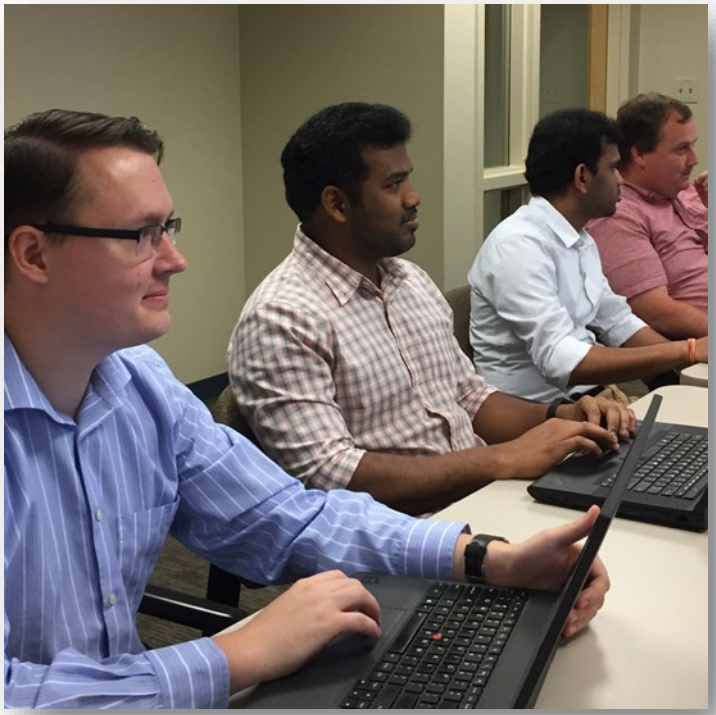
HOPE Eligibility

Non-Financial Requirements



- Are parents or caretaker relatives of a minor child or a pregnant person applying at 6th month of pregnancy or after
- Are Maine residents ages 16-64 years
- Are U.S. Citizens or qualified non-citizens
- Are not receiving a TANF cash benefit
- Are accepted to or enrolled in an eligible training or education program
- Are making satisfactory progress
- Have the aptitude to complete the program of study
- Are not disqualified from TANF for certain reasons
- Lack a marketable bachelor's degree

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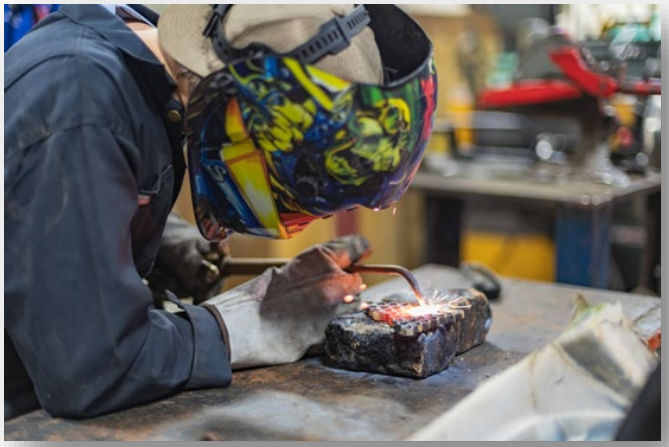
HOPE Eligibility



Educational Program Requirements

- A short-term training, certificate, Associate, or Bachelor's degree program leading to a credential of value or industry recognized certificate
- If a Bachelor's degree program, must be in a health care, technology, or engineering field
- The most cost-effective option
- Leads to a job with at least 30 or more total annual openings according to Maine's DOL-CWRI: https://www.maine.gov/labor/cwri/outlook.html

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HOPE Eligibility

Financial Requirements

- Countable gross income at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Some forms of income are not counted.
  - The FPL is published annually at: https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines
- Countable assets equal to or below $10,000. Some assets are not counted, such as primary home and vehicle.

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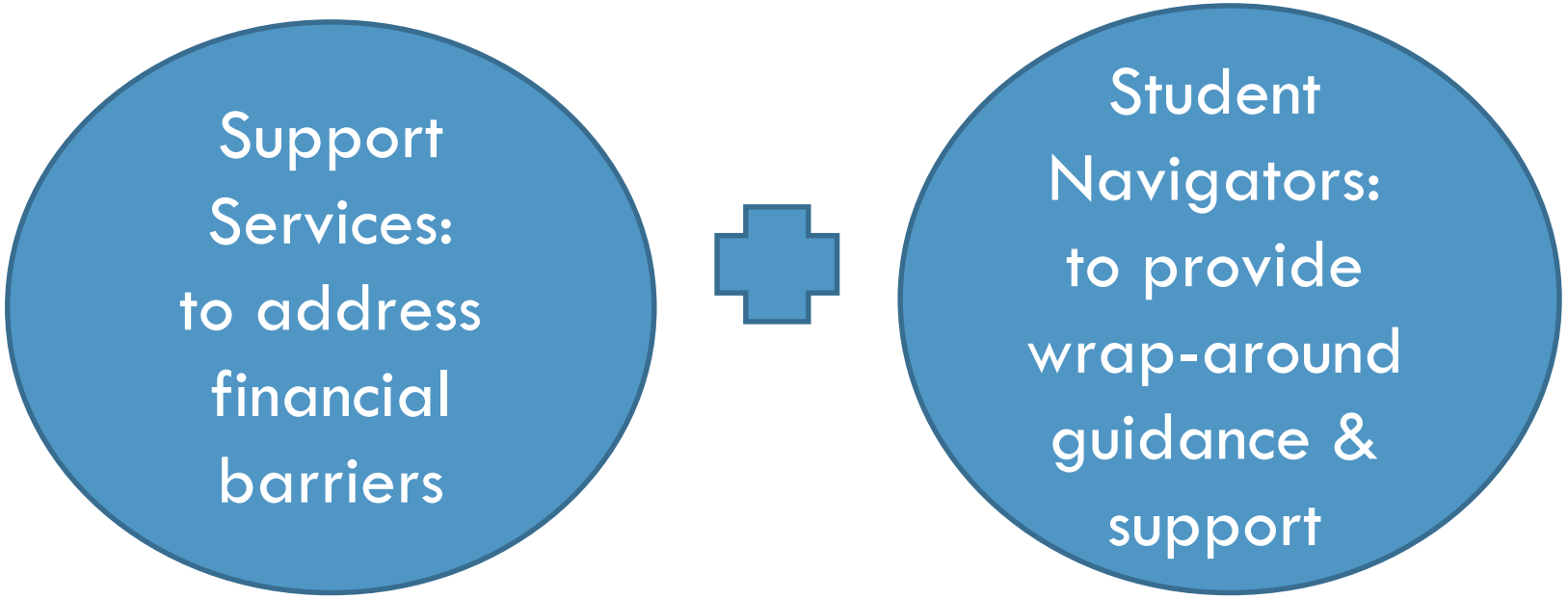
HOPE Structure

Core components for persistence and completion:



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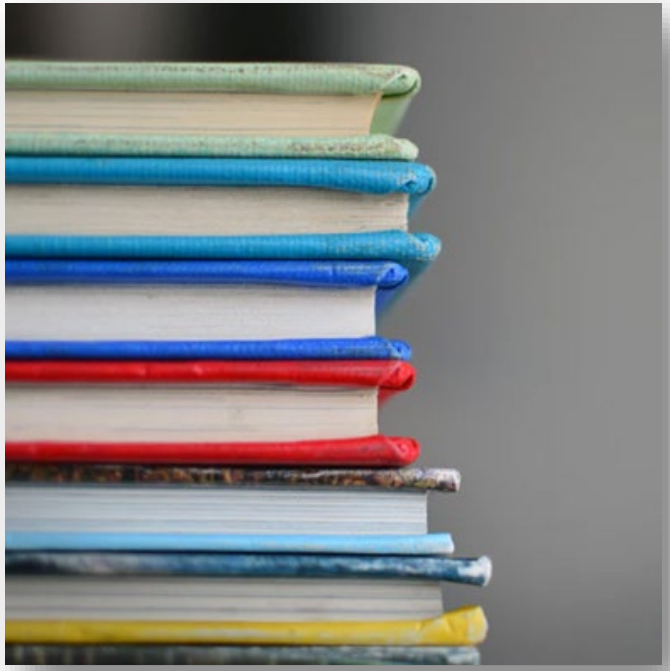
HOPE Eligibility

Support Service	Limit	Period
Tuition and Fees (Current)	$6,000	Annual
Tuition and Fees (Prior)	$1,500	Lifetime
Child Care	Office of Child and Family Services Market Rate Cap	Weekly
Transportation	$140	Weekly
Books and Supplies Tools and Equipment	$2,000	Annual
Technology and Software	$500	Lifetime
Vehicle Inspection Vehicle Registration Vehicle Repair	$1,000	Annual
Vehicle Insurance	$600	Annual
Corrective Eyewear	$200	Annual
Dental Care	$2,000	Lifetime
Other Supports	$500	Annual



Support Services are intended to meet an unmet need and require HOPE preapproval

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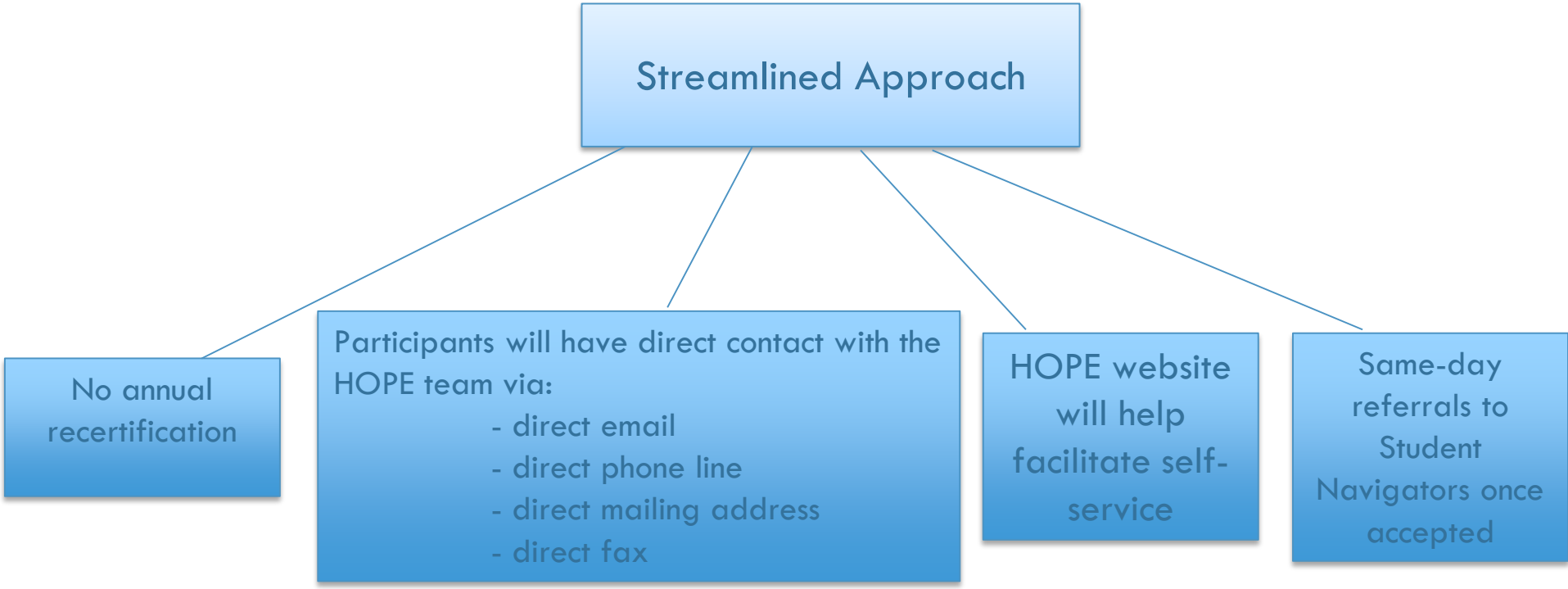
The weekly period is Sunday to Saturday. The annual period is January 1st to December 31st

HOPE Structure



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Apply

- Find an application at www.maine/gov/dhhs/HOPE or at a local DHHS office
- Mail application to:

  HOPE Program
  DHHS-OFI
  11 State House Station
  Augusta, ME 04333

- Fax application to 207-287-3455
- Email application to HOPE.DHHS@maine.gov

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Questions on HOPE Program?

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Parents as Scholars (PaS)

TANF/PaS

Parents as Scholars (PaS) is a student aid program that helps low-income parents in two or four-year college programs and is run through the DHHS ASPIRE* program for TANF** qualified participants. All of the same financial and non-financial eligibility requirements that apply to TANF apply to the PaS program.

There is space for up to 2,000 students in the program!

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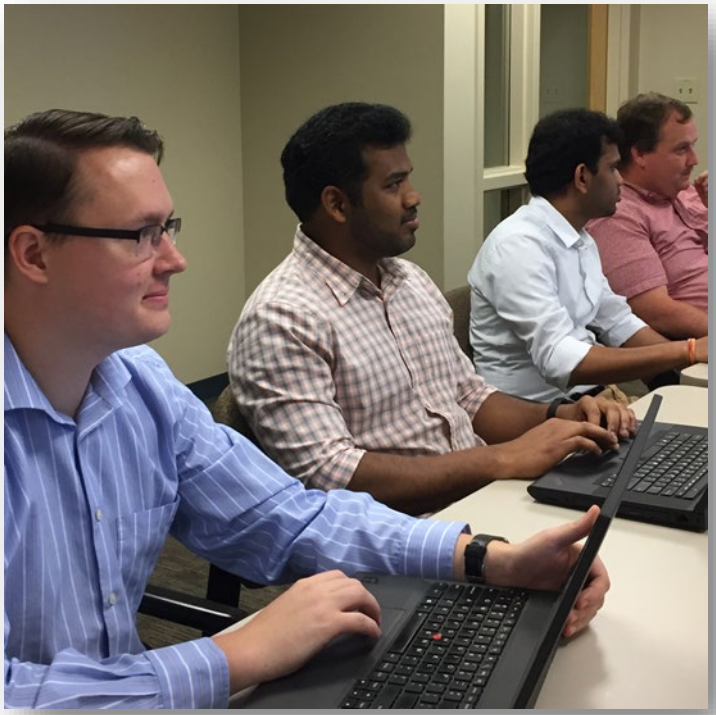
*Additional Support for People in Retraining and Employment
**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

TANF/PaS Eligibility

Non-Financial Requirements



- Parent or specified relative of a dependent child whom they maintain a home for, or a pregnant person in their third trimester
- Maine resident
- U.S. Citizen or qualified non-citizen
- Cooperate with Child Support Enforcement
- Participate with ASPIRE (Fedcap)

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TANF/PaS Eligibility

Financial Requirements

- Countable TANF income at or below the applicable standard of need (SON) based on household size and shelter expenses
- Countable assets below $2,000. Some assets are not counted, such as primary home and vehicle

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PaS Specific Requirements

- Matriculated into a two or four-year degree program
- Do not have the skills to earn at least 85% of Maine's median wage
- Have the aptitude to complete the program of study
- Are not disqualified from TANF for certain reasons
- Lack a marketable skill
- Must be enrolled full time as determined by the institution

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TANF/PaS Supports

Support Service	Limit	Period
Child Care	Up to Market Rate Cap*	Weekly
Transportation	$0.44 per mile up to a maximum of $140 per week	Weekly
Auto Liability Insurance	$600	Calendar Year
Auto Repairs	$1000 per participant	Calendar Year
Books and Supplies	$1,000	Academic Year
Clothing and Uniforms	$300	Calendar Year
Dental Care	$2000	Enrollment
Education and Training (Tuition)	$3,500	Academic Year
Eye Care	$200	Calendar Year
Occupational Expenses	$500	Enrollment
Relocation Costs	Up to $500	Enrollment
Other Services not listed necessary to complete FCA activities	$500	Calendar Year

Support service benefits must be preapproved and necessary so that participants can overcome barriers to education or employment. Fedcap Case Managers can determine how ASPIRE can help and request the supports needed.

Definitions	
Calendar Year	Jan 1 to December 31
Enrollment	Starts when TANF opens. Ends when TANF closes for a reason other than a sanction
Weekly	Sunday to Saturday
Academic Year	Based on the individuals school's academic calendar. Summer classes are included in the regular academic year
Child Care	*Market Rate -Benefits for child care at a rate equal to the actual cost or the child care market cap as set by the Office for Child and Family Services (OCFS)

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Apply

- Apply for TANF/PaS
  - Online at www.maine.gov/mymaineconnection
  - By mail
  - In person at your local DHHS office
- Mail applications to:

  DHHS-OFI
  114 Corn Shop Lane
  Farmington, ME 04938
- E-mail applications to Farmington.DHHS@maine.gov
- A paper application can be obtained at www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/forms-and-applications or by calling 1-855-797-4357

Apply (continued)

- Indicate to ASPIRE case manager (Fedcap) interest in PaS
- PaS specific verifications that will be needed include, but are not limited to:
  - Acceptance letter from college
  - Financial aid offer letter
  - Class schedule including start/end dates and expected graduation
  - Tuition bill

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Key Differences

PaS

- Must be open TANF
- Must have a high school diploma or GED/HiSet
- Must be enrolled FULL time as determined by educational institution
- The expectation that the degree (either 2 or 4 year) will be obtained within the normal time frame for the particular degree
- If Good Cause exists, the participant will be allowed up to 1.5 times the normal time frame (3 years for a 2-year degree or 5 years for a 4-year degree
- Must participate with ASPIRE (Fedcap) and Child Support Enforcement

HOPE

- Ages 16-64
- Student has to be enrolled at least half time
- Gross income must be at or below 185% of Federal Poverty Level
- Can remain in HOPE program until program is complete

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Questions/ Concerns?

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Best Practices

- Make applications available
- Pay attention to if student self-identifies that they are already receiving TANF or other assistance
- Indicate “state programs are available to help” as a way to introduce the options and remove stigma
- Emphasize navigator support & network of recipients

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Best Practices

- If working closely potential participant, ask these 3 screener questions:
  - How many children under age 18 are living in the household? **Must be more than 0 unless expectant parent**
  - Have you previously earned a Bachelor's degree? **Can be "yes" but will need to be evaluated**
  - Where have you been accepted or where are you currently enrolled? **Must have acceptance letter or be currently enrolled in a program**

Questions?

Finance Authority of Maine

5 Community Drive

P.O. Box 949

Augusta, ME 04332

1-800-228-3734

TTY: 207-626-2717

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