

public benefits

for low-income individuals and families
applying for and using
public benefit programs

cash assistance
transitional benefits

Center for
Benefits and
Services

Community
Service
Society | Fighting Poverty
Strengthening
New York

The Community Service Society of New York, a non-partisan social services agency, has been in the forefront of the fight against poverty for over 150 years. It has pioneered programs for school children, low-income tenants, health care patients, immigrants and poor people of every color and race throughout its history. At the midway point of its second century, CSS continues to do research on the causes and solutions to poverty-induced problems and to provide needy people with direct emergency help. Using advocacy and court challenges, CSS works to effect societal changes to improve the lives of those in poverty and empower them to provide better conditions for their children and communities.

Part of CSS, the Center for Benefits and Services is a single source for social service providers for information, training, and expert case assistance on the full range of government benefit programs. The Center provides training on government benefits, telephone consultations to service providers, direct assistance to the general public and publications, including the *PBRC Manual*, a comprehensive guide to government benefit programs.

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Cash Assistance Transitional Benefits

Center for Benefits and Services
(formerly the Public Benefits Resource Center)

A PROGRAM OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY

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Publication of this brochure was made possible with funding from
the Booth Ferris Foundation



Last Updated: November 2008

Cash Assistance Transitional Benefits

What are Transitional Benefits?

When a household with minor children lose Cash Assistance (CA), they may become eligible for transitional benefits. There are three types of transitional benefits available, Transitional Benefit Alternative (TBA), Transitional Child Care (TCC) and Transitional Medicaid (TMA). The Human Resources Administration manages the TBA and TMA programs. HRA works with the Administration for Children Services to run the TCC program.

**TRANSITIONAL
BENEFIT ALTERNATIVE,
CHILDCARE, AND
MEDICAID**

What is Transitional Benefit Alternative (TBA)?

When your Cash Assistance (PA) case closes, you may be able to get an extension on your food stamp (FS) benefits for 5 straight months without recertifying or filing a new application.

What is Transitional Child Care (TCC)?

When your Cash Assistance case closes because of your income or if you decide you just want to close your CA case, the transitional child care unit at ACS can help with the cost for your child care for up to 12 months.

What is Transitional Medicaid (TMA)?

When your Cash Assistance case closes because of earnings only, you and your family can continue to get Medicaid coverage for up to 12 months.

Who Can Get These Transitional Benefits?

Transitional benefits are available to households with children and must pass certain eligibility tests for each program, called eligibility criteria. Single adults and childless couple are not eligible for these transitional benefits

What are the eligibility criteria for transitional benefit alternative (TBA)?



- You must have had food stamps (FS) before your case closed
- You must have been on CA, it does not matter how long you were on CA.

Note: You will not be eligible for TBA if you have a work related sanction or failed to comply with CA or FS reporting requirements

What are the eligibility criteria for transitional child care?



- You must have a child under 13 years old, or a child who is physically or mentally unable to care for his or her self, up to the age of 17.
- You must have been on Cash Assistance for at least three of the previous six months.
- You must need child care in order to work. If you are not working you are not eligible for transitional child care.
- Either your income from work has made you ineligible for Cash Assistance, or you voluntarily closed your case, or you have an increase in child support.
- Your household income must be below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). See the chart below.

Eligibility Chart for Transitional Child Care 2008

Note: There are no resource limits.

Household Size	200% FPL	Household Size	200% FPL
1 Monthly Annual	\$1,733 \$20,800	5 Monthly Annual	\$4,133 \$49,600
2 Monthly Annual	\$2,333 \$28,000	6 Monthly Annual	\$4,733 \$56,800
3 Monthly Annual	\$2,933 \$35,200	7 Monthly Annual	\$5,333 \$64,000
4 Monthly Annual	\$3,533 \$42,400	8 Monthly Annual	\$5,933 \$71,200

What are the eligibility criteria for transitional Medicaid?

- You must have a dependent child under the age of 21 living in the household.
- You must have been on Cash Assistance for at least three months of the previous six months.
- Your income from work made you ineligible for Cash Assistance, and you must continue to work.

There are no income requirements for the first 6 months of TMA. To continue to get Medicaid coverage for months 7 through 12 your household income must be below 185% FPL. See chart below.

Eligibility Chart for Transitional Medicaid 2008

Note: There are no resource limits.

Household Size	185% FPL	Household Size	185% FPL
1 Monthly Annual	\$1,603 \$19,240	5 Monthly Annual	\$3,823 \$45,880
2 Monthly Annual	\$2,158 \$25,900	6 Monthly Annual	\$4,378 \$52,540
3 Monthly Annual	\$2,713 \$32,560	7 Monthly Annual	\$4,933 \$59,200
4 Monthly Annual	\$3,268 \$39,220	8 Monthly Annual	\$5,488 \$65,860

If I do not have any children under 21 living in my household, can I get transitional Medicaid?

No, this benefit is only for families with children under 21.

Where Must I Live?

You must be a resident of New York State to qualify for any of the transitional benefits.



How Can I Apply for Transitional Benefit Alternative (TBA)?

You don't necessarily apply for TBA. When you CA case closes, the benefit is automatic. As long as you have not been sanctioned or it was closed because of fraud, your TBA benefits should begin the following month after your PA case is closed. The TBA benefit should remain active for five straight months.

Do I have to report my income during the 5 months?

That depends. You are not required to report your income unless you feel it is to your advantage. For example, if you lose your job you might be able to

get an increase in your food stamp benefits, so it might be a good idea to report it. However if you get a raise in your job you have the option not to report it.

What happens after the 5 months?

You should receive a notice from the Food Stamp office before the 5 months of TBA are over to recertify for regular ongoing food stamps. When you recertify the food stamp office will recalculate your budget and you will have to report your earnings from that point on.

How Can I Apply for Transitional Child Care (TCC)?

When you begin to work you must report your income to the Job Center (JC) within 10 days after receiving your first paycheck. Make sure you receive a copy of a **Notification of Employment**, or another document from your case worker showing that you reported your earnings to them. This document will be proof that you have reported your income in a timely manner and you were not trying to conceal income from the agency.

What happens next?

The case worker should rebudget your Cash Assistance case. If you are still eligible for a cash grant you will receive child care assistance but it will not be transitional child care. If you are no longer eligible for a cash grant the JC will send you a notice stating that your case is closed due to employment income. The JC should then refer your case to the Administration for Children's Services (ACS)/Transitional Child Care Unit.



If you meet the income criteria, and the information about the number of children in child care is in the system, and if the child care provider is in the system, you will receive a notice informing you that TCC has been approved. If the information ACS has is wrong, you should fix it and send the correct information back to them. If the ACS/Transitional Child Care Unit does not have your income or child care provider information, they will contact you to get this information. You must send in the missing information in order to get transitional child care.

What if I receive a notice from the JC stating my case is closed for reasons other than employment?

Your case does not have to be closed for employment reasons to receive transitional child care. You can contact the ACS/Transitional Child Care unit (see below “Where Can I Turn for Help?”) and they will process transitional child care for you. You must be working and need child care to receive transitional child care.

**Your case
must be
closed by the
agency**

How Does My Child Care Provider Get Paid? ?

ACCIS is the system that manages child care information and issues payment to day care centers, family day care providers, group family providers and informal providers.

Child care payments are generated each month based on receipt of completed child attendance documents from the provider. Payments are paid directly to the provider, less your fee.

What is my fee?

You are required to pay a monthly co-payment toward your child care expenses. Your fee is based on your income, ages of your children, the type of care you are using, and whether the child care is full time or part time. You must pay your fee every week to the child care provider. The fees can be as little as \$2 and as much as \$123.



What if I was never referred to the ACS/Transitional Child Care Unit and I applied for transitional child care several months after my Cash Assistance case closed?

Transitional child care is available for up to 12 months after your Cash Assistance case is closed. You can, receive back benefits for all the months you were eligible, but did not apply.

What if I waited 12 months or more to apply for transitional child care?



If you wait longer than 12 months after your CA case closes to apply for transitional child care you will not be eligible.

How do I apply for my back benefits?

You must contact the ACS/Transitional Child Care unit and give them documentation about when your CA case closed, when you started to pay for child care, and how much you have been paying your child care provider.

How Do I Apply for Transitional Medicaid?

When you begin to work you must report your income to the Job Center (JC) within 10 days after receiving your first paycheck. Make sure you receive a copy of a *Notification of Employment*, or another document from your case worker. This document will be proof that you have reported your income in a timely manner and you were not trying to conceal income from the agency.

What happens next?

The caseworker should rebudget your Cash Assistance case. If you are still eligible for a cash grant you and your family will continue to receive Medicaid.

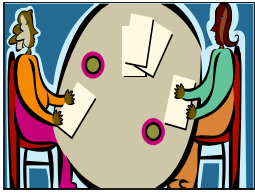


If you are no longer eligible for a cash grant the JC will send you a notice stating that your case is closed due to employment income. The JC should refer your case to the Medical Assistance Program/Transitional Medicaid Unit. You will automatically receive transitional Medicaid for six months without completing any application.

What if I receive a notice from JC stating my case is closed for reasons other than employment?

It is important your case is closed for employment in order to receive transitional Medicaid. If your case is closed for any other reason, you and your family will not receive transitional Medicaid.

What should I do if this happens?



You should ask for a conference. At the conference ask them to change the closing code. You only have 30 days from the date of your notice to ask the local center to change your closing code.

What if it is more than 30 days since the date on my notice?

You can request a fair hearing within 60 days of the date on your notice.

When will transitional Medicaid start?

Transitional Medicaid should start the first month after your cash benefits stop. For example, if your Cash Assistance case closed because of earnings on January 18th, you would be eligible for transitional Medicaid beginning in February.

What if my new job has health insurance benefits?

If your new job has health insurance you may have to pay a part of your premium. If you do, you can receive reimbursement for this from Medicaid.



How do I receive my reimbursement?

You should submit proof that you paid your premiums to the Transitional Medicaid unit to get reimbursed.

Will Transitional Child Care and Medicaid Run Out After A Certain Amount Of Time?

Yes, both transitional Child Care and transitional Medicaid are available up to only 12 months. You need to plan for when the benefits will end. It is important that you apply for other types of subsidized child care and health insurance as soon as your benefit is coming to an end.

How Do I Keep Transitional Child Care and Medicaid?

You must keep your job for both transitional Child Care and Medicaid. In addition, you must need child care in order to work to continue receiving transitional child care.

Must I recertify for transitional child care?

There is no formal recertification process for transitional child care. You must, however, inform your case worker of any changes in your income or household size, including an increase in salary, if you change how much you pay your provider, if you change your provider, or if you have another baby that your provider is caring for.

Must I recertify for transitional Medicaid?

Yes, you must recertify. For the first six months you automatically receive transitional Medicaid without applying. After about 3 months, the Transitional Medicaid unit will send you a questionnaire asking for information on your earnings and child care expenses. You must return the form before the fourth month to make sure your Medicaid continues without interruption. Based on the information and documentation you give, the Transitional Medicaid unit will determine whether you continue to be eligible for transitional Medicaid for months 7 through 9. After 7 months, the Transitional Medicaid unit will send you another questionnaire asking you the same type of information they asked you in the first questionnaire. Based on the information and documentation you give, the Transitional Medicaid unit will determine if you are eligible for months 10 through 12.

You must
Recertify

What Are My Rights?

You should know that if your case is closed, you will receive a written notice in the mail explaining why. You have the right to appeal this decision through a fair hearing. You also have the right to appeal an inappropriate case closing. You have 60 days to call, write or fax for a fair hearing.

To request a fair hearing call: **(800) 342-3334**



For adjournments call: **(877) 209-1134**

To write for a fair hearing:

New York State OTDA
Office of Administrative Hearings
P.O. Box 1930
Albany, New York 12201

To Fax for a fair hearing: FAX Number: **(518) 473-6735**

For online fair hearing request forms or to make a request online go to:
www.otda.state.ny.us/oah/oahforms/erequestform.asp

You also have the right to request an informal conference to get the problem resolved before a fair hearing is necessary. A conference can resolve your problem. However, to protect your rights to a fair hearing, always request a hearing at the same time you request a conference.

Where Can I Turn For Help?

Medical Assistance Program/Transitional Medicaid Unit

330 West 34th Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10001
212-630-1271

ACS Child Care Services/Transitional Child Care Unit

109 East 16 Street, 10th Floor
New York, NY 10003
(212) 835-7681 - automated (application processing issues)
(212) 835-7944 (fax)

Provider Payment Issues

(212) 835-7610

Monday to Friday 9:00 - 5:00, Saturdays from 9 - 4:30

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)

CCR&R assist parents seeking child care information and referrals. They can be called directly or through the CCR&R Consortium toll free number (888) 469-5999.

Center for Benefits and Services

(212) 614-5552