

ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Office of the Assistant Secretary | 330 C Street, S.W., Suite 4034
Washington, DC 20201 | www.acf.gov

January 6, 2026

Governor Gavin Newsom
Office of the Governor
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom,

The Trump Administration has made clear its commitment to rooting out fraud, protecting taxpayer dollars, and ensuring program integrity across all federal benefit programs. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is concerned by the potential for extensive and systemic fraud in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) services that rely on federal funding. These concerns have been heightened by recent federal prosecutions and additional allegations that substantial portions of federal resources were fraudulently diverted away from the American families they were intended to assist. Additionally, ACF has reason to believe that the State of California is illicitly providing illegal aliens with TANF benefits intended for American citizens and lawful permanent residents.

Effective today, ACF is reviewing California's TANF State Plan for completeness and for program compliance with applicable laws. As a result, ACF is placing the state TANF program on a restricted drawdown in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.339.

To aid ACF in a timely review, I am requesting that the State of California provide the complete universe of TANF administrative data that exist and are in the state's possession for all recipients for all available years, and at least 2022 to 2025. This includes recipient name, address, Social Security Number (if collected), date of birth, A-number (as applicable), and any state identification numbers used for program administration. This information, requested pursuant to 45 C.F.R. § 98.90, is necessary for ACF to conduct a thorough review of program operations and to assess the extent of any irregularities that may have occurred.

ACF also requests documentation demonstrating that the State of California has verified the eligibility of all TANF applicants and recipients in accordance with the requirements of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1611, which limits TANF eligibility to United States citizens and qualified aliens. This documentation should include the policies, procedures, system controls, and verification records used by California to confirm citizenship or qualified alien status during the application and recertification processes.

In addition to individual-level recipient data, ACF is requesting a comprehensive list of all organizations, subcontractors, service providers, local agencies, community groups, and any other entities that received TANF funds from the State of California, directly or indirectly, during the period from 2019 through 2025. For each organization, to the extent the information exists and is in the state's possession, I request the amount of TANF funding provided, the purpose for which the funds were awarded, and documentation describing the State's oversight mechanisms, monitoring activities, and verification processes used to ensure proper use of TANF dollars.

I request that this information be transmitted to ACF by January 20, 2026. My staff will coordinate directly with the appropriate state officials to establish a secure transfer method and confirm technical specifications.

The State of California is placed on a temporary restricted drawdown for all TANF funds provided by ACF until further notice, pending review of the state's current TANF plan for completeness and ACF confirming compliance with applicable laws.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. Please contact my office with any questions or to arrange next steps.

Sincerely,



Alex J. Adams
Assistant Secretary
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

CC: Kim Johnson, Secretary, California Health & Human Services Agency
Jennifer Troia, Director, California Department of Social Services