

## Can I still get cash assistance if I quit school?

If you are a minor parent and you quit school, only your baby can get cash assistance. This means you will get less money from DSS. Also, you will have to work or look for a job. If you stay in school, both you and your baby can get assistance. As long as you are in a program to receive a high school diploma or GED for 20 hours per week, you and your baby can get assistance.

If you are 18 or 19 years old and you quit school, you will be required to work with the Department of Labor (DOL) to find work. But, if you are in a full-time program to receive a high school diploma or GED, you will not be required to work.

## How long can I get cash assistance?

Minor parents can get cash assistance as long as you are in a high school diploma program or a GED program at least 20 hours per week. If you are not in school (so only your baby is receiving cash assistance), then the amount of time you can get benefits will depend on many factors. Please call us if you have questions about this.

Parents who are 18 or 19 years old are limited to 21 months, unless you can get an exception. After 21 months, you will probably be able to get more time if you are following the rules with DOL. Call us if you have any problems with this.

## If I'm not a U.S. citizen can I still get cash assistance?

Maybe. It's going to depend on your situation. Call us if you have questions about this.

## How do I apply for cash assistance?

Go to DSS with your parent/guardian or payee, and bring:

- Long form Birth Certificate
- Social security numbers (for both you and your baby)
- Rent/mortgage receipt
- Copies of utility bills (phone, heat/oil, cable, electric, etc.)
- Bank account statement
- Car registration
- Proof that you are a full-time student

When you go to DSS, you should also ask about applying for help with food, medical and child care. The rules for these programs are all different.

## Need Help?

**For DSS locations and phone numbers**, call 211 Infoline.

**For more information about receiving cash assistance or about your legal rights**, call CCA's Teen Legal Clinic at (860)570-5327 or (203)223-8975.

**For questions about child support and cash assistance**, please see our brochures called "How can I get child support?" and "What do I do if I owe child support?"



The information in this brochure is intended as reference only and should not be interpreted as legal advice in an individual case. If you need specific information about the law, please call 860-570-5327 or 203-223-8975.



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Cash Assistance  
State  
TFA  
Can I get help?

Cash  
Assistance for  
Teen Parents

## How can I get cash assistance?

It's important to know what your rights are.

### What is TFA?

TFA is Temporary Family Assistance. It's usually called "welfare" or "state". TFA is Connecticut's cash assistance program for low-income parents and their children, including parents who are minors (under 18 years old). You can apply for cash assistance at the Department of Social Services (DSS).

### How do I get TFA?

Teen parents have to follow a lot of rules to get cash assistance. But, there are some exceptions to the rules, so make sure you read all of this brochure to find out what they are. It's important that you know what your rights are.



## How can parents who are minors (under 18 years old) get cash assistance?

In order to get cash assistance, a minor parent must meet *all* of the requirements listed below, or an exception described in this brochure. You must be:

- Low income, *and*
- Either pregnant or living with your baby, *and*
- Living with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian, *and*
- Going to school, *and*
- A U. S. citizen, legal permanent resident, or some other categories of immigrants.

### I don't have a parent/ guardian to live with. Can I still get cash assistance?

Yes. You can get cash assistance if you live with one of your relatives, or a relative of your baby, or in another place where there is an adult taking care of you. You must bring this adult with you when you apply at DSS. If DSS approves, this person will be your "payee" and s/he will be in charge of your money. Make sure it is someone you trust!

In order for DSS to approve, you must show *one* of these:

- You do not have a living parent, stepparent or legal guardian to live with, *or*
- You do not know where your parent/stepparent/guardian is, *or*
- They will not allow you to live with them, *or*
- Living with them will be harmful for you or your baby.

### Can I get cash assistance if I don't have any relatives or other adults who can take me in?

Maybe. You may be able to get cash assistance in your own name if you show *one* of these:

- There aren't any relatives or other adults who can help you, *or*
- You don't know where your relatives are, *or*
- None of your relatives or other adults will let you to live with them, *or*
- Living with any of your relatives or other adults will be harmful for you or your baby.

### If my mom or dad is receiving cash assistance, can I still get it?

Yes. You and your first-born baby can get cash assistance. But, if you have a second baby while you or your mom/dad is on assistance, you will *only* get an additional \$50 per month.

### Can I get cash assistance if I get married?

Yes, but if you are married and living with your husband or wife **you are treated as an adult**. This means you may be required to go to school, and you are not required to live with an adult. This also means you will only get cash assistance for 21 months (exceptions are available) and you may be required to work, look for a job, attend school or job training.

## How can parents who are 18 or 19 years old get cash assistance?

In order to get cash assistance, an 18 or 19 year old parent must meet *all* of the requirements listed below. You must be:

- Low income, *and*
- Either pregnant or living with your baby, *and*
- Going to school or working with the Department of Labor (DOL) to find work, *and*
- A U.S. citizen, legal permanent resident, or some other categories of immigrants.

Sometimes there are exceptions to the work requirements. Call us if you have questions about this.

