

## News Release

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### **HHS AWARDS \$200 MILLION IN BONUS PAYMENTS TO STATES FOR WELFARE-TO-WORK ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN FISCAL YEAR 2002 Awards Reflect Improvements in Finding Jobs and Increasing Earnings For Recipients**

HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson today announced the awarding of \$200 million in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) bonuses to 40 states and the District of Columbia for success in employment and other program achievements during fiscal year 2002. Today's awards are in addition to the fiscal year 2001 awards announced last week.

"We continue to see national improvement in employment for families seeking to leave welfare, and these bonuses to states reflect the effective efforts of states to help families achieve self-sufficiency," Secretary Thompson said. "TANF is an important part of how we are helping America's families take advantage of the improving economy."

Today's awards were given for achievement and improvement in helping recipients find jobs and succeed in employment. The indicators showed improvements nationally over the past year in both job entries and earnings gains of recipients who became employed.

The welfare reform legislation of 1996 authorized funding for annual performance achievement bonuses, called the High Performance Bonus, as part of the TANF program. States can choose to compete in any or all of the performance bonus categories, but must supply data to HHS in order to be considered for the award.

The awards for performance in fiscal year 2002 represent the fifth year for which bonuses have been made and today's release is the earliest these awards have been made after the end of a performance year. These awards closely follow the fiscal year 2001 awards due to improvements in data collection and processing methods during the past year.

About 70 percent of the 2002 bonuses were awarded for employment achievement among TANF adult recipients, including job entry, job retention and increased earnings. Bonuses were also awarded for program achievements in helping low-income working families obtain food stamps, Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program coverage, in providing child care, and in increasing the proportion of children living in families with married parents. Most of these awards are made for relative performance in the given year and for the greatest improvement from the previous year.

"These awards emphasize TANF's important focus on helping recipients find work and improve their lives through work," said Wade F. Horn, Ph.D., assistant secretary for children and families. "The success many states have experienced in 2002 is very heartening, and now we need to enact the President's TANF reauthorization plan so that states will be able to do even better in the future."

Award amounts for each state depend on the size of the state's TANF block grant. Under the law, states are limited to receiving bonuses in a given year of no more than five percent of their annual TANF grant. Eleven states and the District of Columbia received their maximum possible bonus.

The states receiving bonuses and the amount of their bonuses are listed below:

<b>State</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Alabama	\$505,051
Alaska	3,180,454
Arizona	1,203,807
Arkansas	2,836,643
California	7,485,855
Delaware	896,712
Dist. of Col.	4,630,491
Florida	9,975,324
Georgia	4,398,207
Hawaii	688,421
Idaho	739,406
Indiana	10,339,955
Iowa	6,576,248
Kansas	5,096,553
Kentucky	8,490,818
Louisiana	3,760,164
Maine	3,906,044
Michigan	12,952,613
Minnesota	13,399,244
Mississippi	429,982
Missouri	10,852,587
Montana	2,276,700
Nebraska	2,901,429
Nevada	1,733,051
New Hampshire	1,146,956
New Mexico	2,092,578
New York	12,106,095
North Carolina	3,517,651
North Dakota	428,962
Ohio	21,385,937
Oregon	1,954,409
Pennsylvania	12,692,557
Rhode Island	704,793
South Dakota	635,614
Tennessee	1,599,716
Texas	2,631,774
Utah	2,133,528
Vermont	351,228

Virginia	7,914,259
Washington	7,983,058
West Virginia	1,465,126

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