

Observations at the frontlines

January – June 2000

- Georgia, Michigan, New York and Texas
- Observed 969 encounters between workers and clients
- 392 encounters for the purpose of applying for TANF
- 121 encounters for recertification/exit

Treatment of potential TANF recipients

1. Application (with fraud detection) is completed before mandates are imposed. Job search and other mandates after becoming a recipient.
2. Application is pended. Satisfies Work First and other behavioral mandates.
3. Application is pended. Does not pursue assistance.
4. Does not apply due to neighborhood effects.

Expressed goals of Work First for applicants:

- Georgia: explicit diversion
 - 3 to 6 weeks of job search before eligible for TANF
- Texas: explicit diversion
 - Orientation at workforce agency before eligible for TANF
- Michigan: employment
 - Orientation at workforce agency before eligible for TANF

Factors supporting diversion:

- Other behavioral mandates
(immunizations, PRA's, child support)

- Funds for child care
- Eligibility for Medicaid without welfare
- Statements about plentiful jobs

- Already working off the books; other sources of support

Fraud detection

- Access to wage reporting
- Finger-imaging: New York and Texas
- Home visits: Michigan
- Data-broker: Texas

Recertification

- Work mandate
- Time limit evoked to support the work mandate

Sanctions