



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE

If I am a working youth, how will my wages affect my family's benefits?

Who We Are

The mission of the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) is to assist low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, increase their incomes, and improve their quality of life. DTA serves one out of every ten people in the Commonwealth - including working families, children, elders, and people with disabilities. Our services include food and nutritional assistance, cash assistance, and employment supports.

What are youth earnings?

If you are between the ages of 14 and 18, and you have a job, then you have earnings. In most cases, these wages will have little or no effect on your family's food and cash assistance benefits.

Youth earnings and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/Food Stamps)

Will my wages make my SNAP benefits be lowered or stop?

There will be no change to your family's SNAP benefits if you are under age 18 and attending school or GED classes.

Youth earnings and Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC)

Will my wages make my family's TAFDC benefits be lowered or stop?

The affect of your wages on your family's TAFDC benefits depends on how much you are earning, whether you are in school, and your family's other income. In most cases, we may only count part of your earnings which could slightly lower your family's TAFDC benefit.

How does DTA decide if my earnings will change my family's TAFDC benefits?

Your age and whether you attend school help determine whether your earnings will change your family's benefits.

If you are age 13 or younger, any money you earn (for example: paper route or babysitting) will not affect your family's benefits.

If you are age 14 to 18, and in school full-time, your wages will not be counted for a total of six months in a calendar year. After six months, your earnings will count towards your family's benefits. If you work only a summer job, your income will not be counted and it will not lower or stop your parent's benefits.

If you are age 16 or 17 and not in school, you must participate in a DTA Employment Services activity in order for your family's TAFDC benefits to continue.

If you are 17, have graduated from high school, and you are working, all of your wages will be counted.

When you turn 18, you are considered an adult, and your family will no longer receive cash assistance for you. You may have your own case, and your earnings will impact your own benefits.

How does DTA decide how much of my wages will be counted towards my family's benefits?

If you are between the ages of 14 and 18 and you work for seven months or more in a calendar year, the amount of your wages that count toward your family's benefits is decided by a calculation that includes income from you and other family members in the household.

We look at the gross earnings your family gets in a month, including your wages. We subtract \$120 from your total earnings. Then we look at other factors such as your family's work program status to make additional deductions. We add any of your earnings that are left over with your family's income. This amount is used to decide your family's benefits. Your family's case manager can review this calculation with your parents.

What if I still have questions?

For more information, please have your parents call our Recipient Services hotline at 1-800-445-6604, or call your family's case manager.

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