TAFDC Time Limits and Extensions

A Guide for Families

How Long Can My Family Get TAFDC?

Massachusetts has a rule about how long families can get TAFDC when a parent or caregiver has to follow work rules:

24 months (2 years) in a
60-month (5 Year) period

- In families with two parents, each parent gets their own 24 months. The family's time limit depends on the parent who has used the most months.
- After using 24 months, TAFDC will stop, unless you are given more time. This is called an extension.



Make the most of your time on TAFDC by getting started in Pathways to Work

What Is an Extension?

An extension gives you 3 more months of TAFDC help. You can ask for more than one extension. There is no limit to how many you can get.

How Can I Get More Time with TAFDC?

When you get close to the end of your time, you will get a letter about an Extension Appointment. This is a meeting with your case manager to talk about keeping your benefits for more than 24 months.

To get more time, an extension, you must still be eligible for TAFDC.

- All parents and caregivers can ask for an extension.

Parents and Caregivers Will Get an Extension Automatically If:

- They have an active Pathways to Work Plan, and
- They are following the work rules by:
  - Working,
  - Doing a Pathways to Work activity, or
  - A combination of approved activities.

How DTA Decides About an Extension

DTA will think about these things when deciding if your family can get more time:

1. Have you participated in work or education activities and are you still doing them now?
2. Are you working on your goals to help your family?
3. Did you say no to a job, work fewer hours, or quit a job without a good reason?
4. Did you follow DTA's rules while getting TAFDC?
5. Are there jobs near you that you could do?
6. Is there child care that is safe and open when you work and travel?

If you did not participate in an activity and don't have a good reason, DTA may say no to your request.

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Who decides if I can get an extension?

At DTA the commissioner or designee will decide.

They will look at:

- What are you doing to get ready for full-time work.
- If you are in activities like:
  - Job training
  - Classes or school
  - Job search or workshops
  - Internships
- If you told DTA about things that made it hard for you to join these activities.
- If you used the help DTA gave you.
- If you had a good reason for not doing the activities.

A Good Reason Could Be:

- a temporary health condition that makes it hard for you to work or go to an activity
- a disability of another family member
- transportation or child care issues
- family crisis or emergency situation

What happens when my extension ends?

- If you are still meeting the work rules you may get another extension.

What if I don't ask for an extension?

If you cannot be automatically approved and:

- You do not attend the extension appointment or
- You do not request an extension,

Your TAFDC will close at the end of your time limit.



What if I'm Not Approved for an Extension?

If you are not approved for an extension and you use all of your time your TAFDC will close.

Can I get TAFDC Again after my time Runs Out?

Yes. If your time runs out, you might be able to get help again if you meet special rules called exemptions. Your case manager can tell you more about them.

Can the time limit rules be changed for me?

Yes. If you are a survivor of domestic violence, you can ask for a waiver. This means the time limit might not apply to you. To get a waiver, you need to meet with a DTA Domestic Violence Specialist. Your case manager can help explain the rules.

Important Things to Remember

- Start early in Pathways to Work, even if you don't have to yet.
- If something is stopping you from participating, let us know as soon as possible.
- Don't wait until your case is closed to talk to your case manager of FEW.

Need help?

- Call your case manger
- Get information online at DTA Pathways to Work or
- by connecting with a Full Engagement Worker