

# CRS Report for Congress

Received through the CRS Web

## **Welfare Reform Research: What Do We Know About Those Who Leave Welfare?**

**March 13, 2001**

Christine Devere  
Analyst in Social Legislation  
Domestic Social Policy Division

# Welfare Reform Research: What Do We Know About Those Who Leave Welfare?

## Summary

Cash welfare caseloads have declined 57% since peaking in 1994 at 5.1 million cases, with the largest declines occurring since the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA). PRWORA ended the entitlement program of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), and replaced it with a block grant program to the states, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Unlike AFDC, under TANF most adults are required to work as a condition of receiving benefits, and assistance from federal funds is time-limited.

States have initiated and completed studies of former welfare recipients to understand how those who exit welfare are faring. These leaver studies use a combination of administrative data and survey data, and the results differ by the type of data used. The methods used by these studies also vary, as do their outcomes.

Employment and other income-related closures are the most common reasons a recipient leaves cash assistance. To date, no information is available on those who reach the federal 5-year lifetime limit as the first recipients will begin reaching this time limit later in 2001. Some recipients have reached shorter state-imposed time limits, but these recipients do not appear to face increased difficulties or hardship.

Among the studies reviewed in this report, employment rates range considerably, but the majority report employment rates between 55% and 64% within 3 months of exit or at the time of the survey. A larger percentage, between 63% and 91% of leavers, have been employed (ever employed) for some period of time since exit. The average hourly wage reported among welfare leavers ranged from \$5.50 to \$8.80 per hour.

The leaver studies indicate that while the majority of welfare leavers are employed, most remain poor and rely on other types of assistance such as health insurance, food stamps, and child care to supplement their wages. However, declining participation in these programs has raised concerns. The leaver studies illustrate that some welfare leavers did not think they were eligible for food stamps or Medicaid, while others indicated that they did not need these services or that it was too much hassle to receive them. Receipt of child care subsidies is somewhat low, although some indicate a "lack of need" for these subsidies. Less than half of leavers also appear to be experiencing "hardships" such as difficulties paying bills, difficulties acquiring medical care, and experiencing a time with no way to buy food.

Employment is the reason the majority of recipients leave welfare, and lack or loss of employment is the most common reason individuals return to welfare. Among leavers who remained off welfare for at least 2 months, between 18% and 35% had returned for a period of time since exit. Although lack of employment is the most common reason individuals return to welfare, there is some evidence that those who leave for income-related reasons are less likely to return than those who leave welfare for failing to comply with program requirements.

## Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Introduction . . . . .   | 1  |
| Overview . . . . .   | 3  |
| Overall Well-Being of Welfare Leavers . . . . .                                  | 3  |
| Ending Dependence on Government Benefits . . . . .                               | 4  |
| Issues in Monitoring Welfare Leavers . . . . .                                   | 5  |
| Different exit cohorts . . . . .   | 5  |
| Studies funded by the Department of Health and Human Services<br>(HHS) . . . . . | 7  |
| Reason for exit from cash welfare . . . . .                                      | 8  |
| Closures due to time limits . . . . .  | 8  |
| Closures due to sanctions . . . . .  | 9  |
| Employment-Related Outcomes . . . . .  | 10 |
| Employment . . . . .   | 10 |
| Earnings . . . . .   | 12 |
| Occupations . . . . .  | 12 |
| Finding employment . . . . .   | 12 |
| Employment-related benefits . . . . .  | 12 |
| Results by time of exit from cash welfare . . . . .                              | 12 |
| Results by reason for cash welfare exit . . . . .                                | 14 |
| Employment Retention and Advancement . . . . .                                   | 14 |
| Barriers to employment and reasons for unemployment . . . . .                    | 15 |
| Overall Well-Being of Welfare Leavers . . . . .                                  | 16 |
| Income/Poverty Status . . . . .  | 16 |
| Measures of Hardship . . . . .   | 16 |
| Hardships before and after exit from cash welfare . . . . .                      | 17 |
| Child Welfare Outcomes . . . . .   | 18 |
| Receipt of Other Types of Assistance . . . . .                                   | 19 |
| Health Insurance . . . . .   | 19 |
| Child Care . . . . .   | 21 |
| Food Support . . . . .   | 22 |
| Child Support . . . . .  | 23 |
| Earned Income Tax Credit . . . . .   | 23 |
| Returns to Welfare Among Welfare Leavers . . . . .                               | 23 |

## List of Figures

**Figure 1.** Employment Rate: Number of Study Cohorts Within Each Range . . 11

## List of Tables

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Table 1. Earnings and Employment Outcomes Among Leaver Studies That<br>Examine Leavers Based on When They Exit Cash Welfare . . . . . | 13 |
| Table 2. Measures of Hardships as Reported in State Leaver Studies . . . . .  | 17 |
| Appendix Table A-1. Administrative Data: Employment and Earnings of<br>Welfare Leavers . . . . .                                      | 26 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Appendix Table A-2. Survey Data: Employment and Earnings of Welfare<br>Leavers . . . . . | 28 |
| Appendix Table B-1. Selected Outcomes from Welfare Leaver Studies . . . . .              | 30 |

# Welfare Reform Research: What Do We Know About Those Who Leave Welfare?

*This report presents information that is part of a larger review of welfare reform research, which has been published in the 2000 Edition of the House Committee on Ways and Means Green Book. That review, entitled “Appendix L: Monitoring the Effects of Pre- and Post-TANF Welfare Reform Initiatives,” includes three complementary analyses. One component is an analysis of income, work and welfare trends among single female-headed families with children, using data from the Current Population Survey and the Consumer Expenditure Survey (an update of the analysis from the Current Population Survey is also published in CRS Report RL30797, Trends in Welfare, Work and the Economic Well-Being of Female-Headed Families with Children). Another is a review of state impact evaluations of welfare reform initiatives (also published in CRS Report RL30724, Welfare Reform Research: What Have We Learned Since the Family Support Act of 1988?). The third component, a review of state studies of former welfare recipients (state “leaver” studies), is presented in an updated format in this CRS report, adding studies available between January 2000 and January 2001.*

## Introduction

There is considerable interest in the circumstances of families who have left cash welfare (the “leavers”). Since the peak of 5.1 million welfare cases in 1994, the caseload has fallen 57% with the fastest declines occurring since the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA, herein referred to as the welfare reform law).<sup>1</sup> The welfare reform law ended the entitlement program of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and replaced it with a block grant program to the states, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Unlike AFDC, under TANF most adults are required to work as a condition of receiving benefits, and assistance is time-limited. States also have broad flexibility (within minimal federal guidelines) to design their state programs within the goals of ending dependence on welfare, promoting marriage, and reducing nonmarital births.<sup>2</sup>

The unexpected caseload decline has led many to explore reasons for this dramatic drop. The number of cases receiving cash welfare expanded greatly during

---

<sup>1</sup> The caseload decline reflects not only a growing number of individuals who have left cash welfare, it also reflects a declining number of individuals who enroll in welfare.

<sup>2</sup> For more information on the state TANF programs, see CRS Report RL30695, *Welfare Reform: State Programs of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)*, by Emilie Stoltzfus, Vee Burke, and Gene Falk.

the late 1980s until reaching a peak in 1994. Contributing to the increase in the caseload was an increase in single mothers, but the decline in the caseload has not been accompanied by a decline in the number of single mothers (which has remained between 9.4 million and 10 million since 1994).<sup>3</sup> While most researchers agree that the caseload decline has been due to a combination of the economic expansion, welfare reform, increased earnings supplements provided through the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), and the expansion of other services (such as child care), there is no broad agreement on the weight of each factor.<sup>4</sup>

While the debate continues on reasons for the dramatic caseload decline, attention has turned to examining the overall well-being of those who exit welfare. A growing number of states are conducting studies to examine the characteristics and circumstances of former welfare recipients (“leaver” studies). Part of this interest is sparked by new welfare policies seeking to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits. Under TANF, the nature of cash welfare has changed. Welfare recipients are subject to time limits on assistance, which include the federal lifetime limit of 5 years, and in many instances, shorter state-imposed time limits. Recipients are also subject to work requirements and increased work sanctions. To date, a relatively small share of the national caseload has been removed from the rolls because of time limits or reported as sanctioned off the rolls. The majority of former welfare recipients attribute their exit from cash welfare to employment-related reasons, as was the case under AFDC.

This report reviews state leaver studies that focus on former recipients who exited from TANF programs or from programs with requirements similar to new TANF initiatives (such as sanctions or time limits). State leaver studies available as of January 2001 are included. Appendix **Table B-1** presents a state-by-state table of the studies reviewed in this report. This report begins with a brief overview, outlines issues that states face in examining welfare leavers, and explores how information from the leaver studies addresses the following questions:

- *Why are people leaving welfare?* What is the reason for case closing?
- *Where are former welfare recipients going?* To answer this question, states have examined information on earnings, employment rates, length of employment, and occupations. Additionally, among leavers who are unemployed, the studies examine barriers to employment and reasons for unemployment.
- *How are former welfare recipients doing?* Some studies examine family income of welfare leavers. Outcomes include earnings and unearned income of the welfare leaver as well as other household members (e.g., spouses). These studies also look at other types of assistance such as health care, child

---

<sup>3</sup> See CRS Report RL30797, *Trends in Welfare, Work, and Economic Well-Being of Female-Headed Families with Children*, by Thomas Patrick Gabe.

<sup>4</sup> See for example, *The Effects of Welfare Policy and the Economic Expansion on Welfare Caseloads: An Update*, August 3, 1999, a report by the Council of Economic Advisors; and Ziliak, James P., David N. Figlio, Elizabeth E. Davis, & Laura S. Connolly. (2000). Accounting for the Decline in AFDC Caseloads: Welfare Reform or the Economy? *Journal of Human Resources*, 35(3), p.570-586.

care, food assistance, child support, and the EITC. The studies also examine subjective measures of hardship, such as difficulty paying bills, difficulty acquiring housing, and difficulty acquiring health care. Finally, for a small number of studies, information is available on measures of child welfare, including removal of the child from home and substantiated instances of abuse and neglect.

- *Do former recipients return to welfare? And, why do they return to welfare?* The studies examine rates of return among those who leave welfare as well as their reasons for return.

## Overview

The large decline in welfare caseloads that has occurred since 1994 has been welfare reform's biggest surprise. States have initiated and completed studies of welfare leavers to better understand how those who exit welfare are faring. These leaver studies have used administrative data or survey data (and in some instances, both types of data), and the results differ by the type of data used. The studies that use surveys to track welfare leavers have been able to gather added information of interest to state administrators and policymakers than what administrative data alone provide. The outcomes collected by these survey-based studies vary, but they all illustrate the difficulty in finding individuals once they leave welfare.

Key points from this review of leaver studies are:

- Among those who leave welfare, employment and income-related closures are the most common reasons for exit from cash assistance (their "reason for case closing").
- Employment rates range considerably, but the majority of studies report employment rates between 55% and 64% within 3 months of exit or at the time of the survey. Among individuals ever employed since exit from welfare, the rates increase to between 63% and 91% of respondents.
- Although the majority of welfare leavers are employed, based on wages alone, welfare leavers in a number of states remain poor. These leavers continue to rely on programs such as food stamps and Medicaid, although declining participation rates in these programs have been noted.
- Between 18% and 35% of leavers have returned to welfare for a period of time since exit, and lack or loss of employment is the most common reason cited for individual return to welfare.

**Overall Well-Being of Welfare Leavers.** Many states have gathered information beyond income and wages to more comprehensively examine the well-being of welfare leavers, including measures such as income and wages of other household members, support from other government programs (such as food stamps and Medicaid), and "hardships" experienced by those who leave welfare (such as difficulty paying bills or accessing health care). The leaver studies indicate that while the majority of leavers are employed, most remain poor and rely on other types of assistance such as health care, child care, and food stamps to supplement their wages. However, declining participation in these programs has raised concerns. In a number of studies, respondents indicated that they did not think they were eligible for Medicaid and food stamps. However, some also indicated they did not need these

services or that it was too much hassle to receive them. A small percentage of welfare leavers are receiving child care subsidies, while a number of respondents indicate no need for these subsidies. Child support also appears to be an important source of income among welfare leavers. While a large number of individuals are leaving welfare for work, less than half of welfare leavers indicate that they have filed for or received the EITC.

State leaver studies indicate that less than half of leavers appear to be experiencing hardships after exit from welfare. Whether these problems have increased or decreased since exit varies by state and by the outcome measured. A few states have reported increases in instances where leavers experienced difficulties paying bills and/or arranging housing since exit, while other states have reported decreases in these hardship measures since exit. However, problems acquiring medical care and, on occasion, food have increased among leavers since cash welfare exit.

Some contended that children would be harmed by welfare reform, but to date little information has been collected on outcomes of children among families who leave welfare. In a small number of studies, between 3% and 19% of children in these states were reported to have left a former welfare home since cash welfare exit, but little additional information was given to explain why these children left the home (i.e., were they removed by Child Protective Services, did they go to live with their father, etc.).

**Ending Dependence on Government Benefits.** A stated goal of TANF is to end dependence on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage. While a number of welfare leavers are employed, most remain poor and rely on food stamps and Medicaid to supplement their wages. Some argue that low participation rates illustrate that leavers have replaced these government benefits with other types of support, thereby ending their dependence on government benefits. However, others argue that recipients are leaving welfare for low-wage work and therefore remain in need of health care and food assistance. They believe that eligible leavers are not participating in these programs and therefore, outreach to increase enrollment should be the emphasis.<sup>5</sup>

The role of employment in enabling individuals to leave welfare also raises concerns. Individuals who have left welfare for low-wage work may be especially vulnerable to losing their employment in the case of an economic downturn. In this case, it is unlikely that many would be eligible to receive benefits under Unemployment Insurance (UI). A recent report by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) concluded that the role of UI as a safety net for low-wage workers is

---

<sup>5</sup> See: Dion, M. and L. Pavetti,(2000). *Access to and Participation in Medicaid and the Food Stamp Program: A Review of the Recent Literature*. Washington, DC; Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. See also: *Food Stamp Program: Various Factors Have Led to Declining Participation*. Report by the U.S. General Accounting Office (1999) (RCED-99-185) and *Medicaid Enrollment: Amid Declines, State Efforts to Ensure Coverage After Welfare Reform Vary*. Report by the U.S. General Accounting Office (1999) (HEH-99-163).

limited. The report found that, nationwide, few states have adjusted their UI programs to eliminate practices that may present difficulties to low-wage workers. For example, voluntarily quitting a job for personal financial problems often disqualifies claimants from UI benefits. GAO reports that if a worker currently available for work quit his or her job because child care was temporarily unavailable, the worker would not qualify for UI benefits in 32 states.<sup>6</sup>

Researchers have also explored the circumstances of welfare leavers in comparison to those who have not recently received welfare but can be classified as low-income. Many of the provisions of TANF not only encourage recipients to leave welfare, they might also discourage enrollment in welfare in the first place. The result is a lower cash welfare caseload, and perhaps a larger number of low-income working parents. A report completed by the Urban Institute, which focused on an earlier group of welfare leavers (those who stopped receiving benefits at some point between 1995 and 1997), found considerable similarities in employment and wages among welfare leavers and low-income working mothers.<sup>7</sup>

## Issues in Monitoring Welfare Leavers

The studies undertaken by the states to track those who left welfare are fundamentally different from impact evaluations of state welfare reform initiatives.<sup>8</sup> Impact evaluations are designed to measure the difference between two sets of policies to determine how policy changes have affected reported outcomes. Studies of welfare leavers are monitoring studies, which are not designed to determine the impact, or effect, of a policy initiative.

Leaver studies track those who left welfare and provide information on why they left welfare and how they are currently doing. These studies inform state administrators and policymakers of the circumstances of former welfare recipients. Because these studies have been initiated by the states, the information collected and the outcomes reported vary considerably. These studies track different exit cohorts of welfare leavers, they examine different study populations, and they follow leavers for different periods of time.

**Different exit cohorts.** Prior to the welfare reform law of 1996, states were experimenting with welfare policy initiatives intended to promote work and end dependence on government benefits through waivers of AFDC rules. Many states incorporated a number of these waivers into their TANF programs. Therefore,

---

<sup>6</sup> See *Unemployment Insurance: Role as Safety Net for Low-Wage Workers is Limited* (GAO-01-181). Report by the U.S. General Accounting Office to Congressional Requesters, December 2000.

<sup>7</sup> See Loprest, P. (1999). *Families Who Left Welfare: Who are they and how are they doing?* Washington, DC; Urban Institute. Available at [<http://newfederalism.urban.org/pdf/discussion99-02.pdf>]

<sup>8</sup> For a review of state impact evaluations of welfare reform initiatives, see CRS Report RL30724, *Welfare Reform Research: What Have We Learned Since the Family Support Act of 1988?*, by Christine Devere, Gene Falk, and Vee Burke.

welfare reform has been occurring among the states for varying lengths of time. The leaver studies examine different exit cohorts, as each state defines its study cohorts by determining which group of former recipients to monitor. The leaver studies reviewed in this report follow recipients who left welfare at different times from 1995 to 2000. This may affect how outcomes are interpreted.

**Different study populations.** It is important to understand that the populations vary across these studies when interpreting reported outcomes. The studies vary in *how* they define their leaver population. Examples include:

- While the vast majority of the caseload is comprised of single mothers, states have chosen also to include two-parent families and child-only cases in studying welfare leavers (although most exclude child-only cases).
- States have chosen to look at cases closed for different periods of time. That is, some states define a leaver as an individual who left for any period of time, while others define leavers as those who remain off welfare for at least 2 months.
- Some states have defined their leavers by their reason for case closing. This includes following those who leave welfare for work, those who leave welfare because of a time limit, or those who leave welfare because of a sanction.
- Finally, states have differed in the geographic location they choose to examine. While some limit their study to only a few counties in the state, others examine a large metropolitan area (such as Los Angeles). The majority examine a group of leavers from across the state.

**Different interview dates/follow-up periods.** The leaver studies vary in the length of time between the cash welfare exit and when the leaver is examined in the study. Those that use administrative data follow individuals *over* a period of time, reporting quarterly (3 months) data on employment, earnings, and participation in other assistance programs (such as the Food Stamp program and Medicaid). The survey studies use information *at a point in time*, and the length of time between exit and the survey varies. The majority of the studies have monitored leavers over 12 months, with a few examining those off welfare for a longer period of time (up to 30 months).

**Types of data used.** State leaver studies have used administrative data or survey data (and in some instances, both types of data) to monitor former welfare recipients. One of the major challenges in following welfare leavers lies in tracking these individuals once they leave cash assistance. Studies that use administrative data generally track a much larger number of former recipients than surveys, but may miss segments of the population. For example, most individuals who leave welfare for employment appear in the state's Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage files. However, these UI files do not cover *all* types of employment (e.g., they do not include any federal government employment), and UI files cannot track individuals who move and/or work out-of state.<sup>9</sup> When using administrative data, evaluators are

---

<sup>9</sup> Because of these concerns, the District of Columbia leaver study used data available from the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) to track employment and earnings of  
(continued...)

also limited to the information that is collected. For example, the UI wage files collect quarterly earnings information, but it is not possible to identify how many hours of work have occurred over the quarter, or the average hourly wage.

To collect information on outcomes not available through administrative data (such as the hourly wage rate), states have also conducted *surveys* of welfare leavers. These surveys allow states to ask many different types of questions to gather information that is of interest to state administrators and policy makers. However, survey samples are typically much smaller than those used in administrative data, the information may be more expensive to collect, and surveys often take more time and resources. Efforts are made to minimize these costs by identifying a representative sample of welfare leavers to survey, with the goal of generalizing these results to the entire population of leavers in the state.

However, studies that use survey data have found that locating and monitoring welfare leavers is difficult. Information collected through a survey represents the situations of those who respond to the survey. If the individuals who respond to the survey systematically differ from those who do not respond, the findings may not be representative of the survey population, let alone the state's entire population of welfare leavers. Previous reviews of state leaver studies have not included results from survey studies with low response rates, given the difficulty in generalizing these results to a larger population.<sup>10</sup>

**Studies funded by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).** With the goal of increasing the ability to compare outcomes *across* leaver studies, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) at HHS awarded funding to nine states, the District of Columbia, and three large counties or consortia of counties to examine welfare leavers. Grants were awarded to Arizona, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, Washington, Wisconsin, Cuyahoga County (Ohio), Los Angeles County (California), and a consortium of San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties in California. Somewhat comparable studies were funded in Wisconsin, through the Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP), and in South Carolina, resulting in a total of fifteen studies of former recipients funded by ASPE in FY1998. In addition, Iowa received a grant from ASPE in FY1999 to examine welfare leavers. Studies available as of January 2001 are reviewed for this report.

The ASPE leaver studies use a common definition of the "leaver" population, studying those who leave cash assistance and remain off the rolls for at least 2 months. Most studies are reporting on outcomes for at least two cohorts of leavers, an early cohort that left welfare in 1996 or 1997, and a later cohort that left in 1998 or 1999, after the transition from AFDC to TANF. Additionally, to address a number of the concerns raised by the source of data (as discussed above), the researchers are

---

<sup>9</sup>(...continued)  
welfare leavers.

<sup>10</sup> See Welfare Reform: Information on Former Recipients' Status, Report by the U.S. General Accounting Office, HEHS-99-48, April 28, 1999.

using a *combination* of linked administrative data sets and surveys to provide information on the overall well-being of welfare leavers.<sup>11</sup>

## Reason for exit from cash welfare

State administrators and policymakers want to understand *why* individuals leave welfare. However, this outcome has proven difficult to compare across the studies given a number of differences in reporting among the states. The states vary in which reasons for exit they report and how they collect this information. This report makes efforts to place the categories reported across the studies into groupings for purposes of providing an overview. In general, the studies show:

- **Employment/income-related reasons** account for the largest number of case closings, with the majority of states attributing over 40% of welfare exits to these reasons.
- Case closures for **failure to redetermine eligibility/failure to report for re-certification** were reported by a number of welfare leavers, including 26% of leavers in Maryland and 24% of leavers in New York.
- **Marriage** accounted for a small number of case closings, ranging from 2% (Florida) to 9% (Arizona).
- A small number of individuals **didn't want to be on welfare anymore/requested case closure**, ranging from 4% (Kentucky) to 15% (New York).
- A small number of states also asked if “**hassle**” was a reason for case closing. The percentage varied by state, ranging from 2% (Florida) to 9% (Pennsylvania).

Methodological questions cloud interpretation of this outcome. Among the studies, survey data report a higher percentage of case closures because of employment compared to studies that rely on administrative data.<sup>12</sup> Administrative data may not capture all reasons for exit (such as employment) from cash welfare as reasons for exit are based on information as reported by the case worker. If individuals do not return to the welfare office or contact the welfare caseworker, their case may be closed for failure to cooperate by the caseworker. For example, Arizona attributed a substantial number of case closings to failure to comply with program procedures (37%), loss of contact (3%), and voluntary withdrawal (7%), using administrative data. However, using a survey to collect additional information on these leavers, researchers found that almost half of the leavers with the above case closures (48%) reported that their case closed because they either got a job, or increased their earnings.

---

<sup>11</sup> For more information, see: *A Cross-State Examination of Families Leaving Welfare: Findings from the ASPE-Funded Leaver Studies*, by Julia B. Isaacs and Matthew R. Lyon, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), HHS, revised November 6, 2000 available at: [<http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/leavers99/cross-state00/index.htm>]

<sup>12</sup> Two examples are studies from Arizona and Illinois. Arizona reported that 19% of the closures in the administrative data were employment-related compared to 54% in the survey data. Illinois reported a similar result when examining employment-related closures in administrative data and survey data (33% vs. 53%, respectively).

**Closures due to time limits.** With the federal time limit of five years and shorter state-imposed time limits, time limits may be affecting individuals in two ways.<sup>13</sup> First, they may encourage those on welfare to leave more quickly, perhaps to “bank” their time for future use. In Illinois, when asked to elaborate on other factors that influenced their decision to leave welfare, 24% of leavers responded that they were influenced to leave welfare by perceived time limits on welfare receipt.

Second, time limits may end cash assistance for those who exhaust their time on welfare. Thus far under TANF, the majority of leavers attribute their cash welfare exit to employment. To date, no information is available on individuals who leave welfare because of the 5-year lifetime limit on federal cash welfare receipt (recipients may begin reaching this time limit in some states beginning in 2001). However, in a small number of states, leaver studies have focused on individuals whose reason for exit from cash welfare was a shorter, state-imposed time limit. In general, these leavers do not appear to be experiencing increased hardships or difficulties when compared to those whose reason for exit was not a time limit.<sup>14</sup>

Individuals who have reached shorter state-imposed time limits *may not be indicative* of individuals who will reach the federal 5-year lifetime limit. Individuals whose exit from welfare is caused by a *state time limit* may be considered by some as more ready for employment, as these individuals did not qualify for any state exemption or exception to this time limit. In the Connecticut study, almost all of the individuals in the sample were employed when they hit the 21-month time limit. However, Connecticut does grant an extension to any individual not employed when (s)he reached this time limit (assuming the individual is complying with the program requirements).<sup>15</sup>

**Closures due to sanctions.** TANF law requires states to penalize families if an adult recipient refuses to engage in required work without good cause. For a first work violation, 19 jurisdictions end TANF family benefits until compliance (full

---

<sup>13</sup> For more information on time limits under TANF, see CRS Report RL30838, *Welfare Reform: Time Limits Under TANF*, by Gene Falk, Emilie Stoltzfus, Holly Goodliffe, and Courtney Schroeder.

<sup>14</sup> North Carolina, and Virginia have studies that examined individuals whose reason for exit was a state time limit. In Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Utah, while the study focused on a larger population of welfare leavers, results were also reported separately for those whose reason for exit was a time limit. Detailed information on each of these studies is available in Appendix **Table B-1**.

<sup>15</sup> The Connecticut study illustrates an example of the interaction of the state time limit with incentives to work in the states by offering increased disregards of earnings. That is, a number of those in this study maintained eligibility for TANF while working due to a TANF state policy that disregarded a higher percentage of their earnings than would have been available under AFDC. See: Melton, L. and D. Bloom (2000). *Connecticut Jobs First Program: An Analysis of Welfare Leavers*. New York, NY; Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

family sanction) while the remainder of the jurisdictions either remove the parent's share of the benefit or reduce the family's benefit (partial family sanction).<sup>16</sup>

Tennessee is one of the states that ends TANF family benefits for the first work violation. In Tennessee, which provided separate data for sanctioned welfare leavers, it appeared that individuals understood they would be sanctioned for failure to comply with program requirements. The state reported that 67% of leavers who were sanctioned for refusal to sign a personal responsibility plan and 84% of those who were sanctioned for noncompliance knew that this sanction meant less money or no benefit.<sup>17</sup>

A small number of states reported the number of exits attributed to sanctions. In Maryland, a state with a full family sanction for the first work violation, 11% of leavers had their cases closed for work sanctions. Arizona and New Mexico are both states that do not impose a sanction until the third work violation, and the sanction is a partial benefit reduction. Approximately 20% of leavers in Arizona and 11% of leavers in New Mexico had their cases closed because of a sanction. In both states, sanctioned leavers were less educated when compared to the full sample of welfare leavers. Those sanctioned in Arizona were also more likely to have reached the 24-month time limit and to have less income from wages.<sup>18</sup>

## Employment-Related Outcomes

As discussed earlier, the majority of welfare recipients attribute their exit to employment-related activities. Although leavers may be employed when they *leave* cash welfare, it may not be the case that they are employed *after* they leave cash welfare.

**Employment.** Consistent with the finding that most leavers exit for employment-related reasons, the leaver studies reported that from 63% to 91% of those who left welfare had been employed (ever employed) for a period of time since exit from welfare. The studies also report the percent employed at a certain point in time, such as those employed when the study is being completed. A number of states explored multiple groups of leavers who left cash welfare at varying times (i.e., those who left in 1997 and those who left in 1998) and for different reasons (i.e., those who left for employment and those who left due to a time limit). Because some states

---

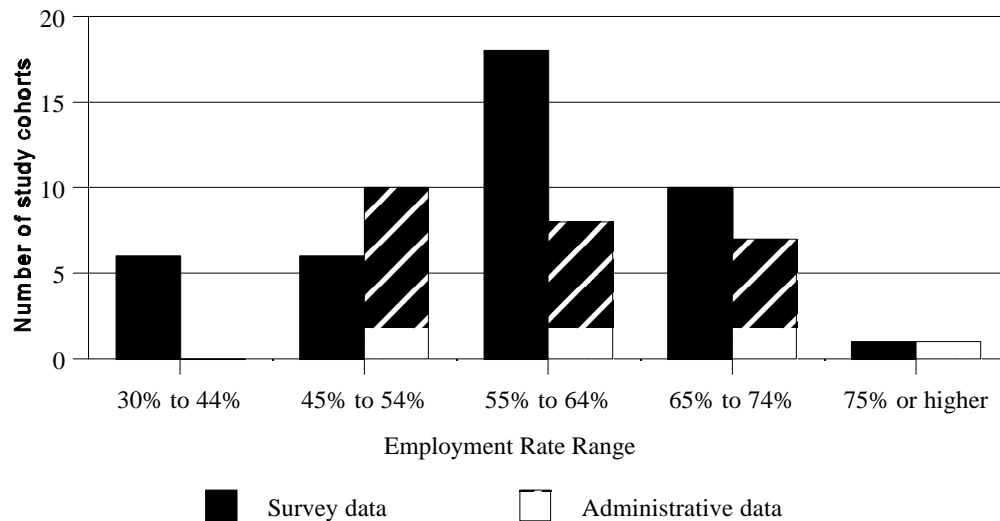
<sup>16</sup> For more information on sanctions in state welfare programs, see CRS Report RL30767, *Welfare Reform: Work Activities and Sanctions in State TANF Programs*, by Vee Burke.

<sup>17</sup> Iowa, also a state with a full family sanction for the first work violation, completed a study of the state's "Limited Benefit Plan," where benefits were discontinued in the 7th month for failure to comply with procedural requirements. This program operated *prior* to TANF, but the results are included in **Table B-1**.

<sup>18</sup> Cases that reach the 24-month time limit in Arizona are neither considered to be sanctioned, nor are they closed. Upon reaching the time limit, the family's benefit is reduced as the adult member of the household is "removed" from the cash assistance grant. The adult continues to be eligible for supportive services. However, the cases may be subsequently closed for other reasons.

examined multiple groups of welfare leavers, these states reported outcomes for more than one study cohort. **Figure 1** illustrates the number of leaver study cohorts that reported employment rates within these defined ranges. **Figure 1** illustrates results using survey data and administrative data for *each* cohort (group) examined in the leaver studies. The employment rates from the administrative data represent the percent employed in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit (3 months after the quarter of exit); for survey data, they represent the percent employed at the time of the survey (which varies from 3 months to 30 months after exit).

**Figure 1. Employment Rate: Number of Study Cohorts Within Each Range**



**Source:** Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on information contained in the state leaver studies.

**Figure 1** illustrates three points:

- Among the study cohorts, the majority report employment rates between 55% and 64% among welfare leavers.
- The employment rates vary considerably among the studies. Administrative data (26 cohorts in 14 states and the District of Columbia) illustrate that from 45% to 72% of leavers are employed in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit.<sup>19</sup> Survey data (41 cohorts in 35 states and the District of Columbia) illustrate that between 34% and 77% are employed at the time of the survey.
- Studies that use the survey data reported a higher number of recipients employed. Employment rates from administrative data come from the state Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage files, which do not capture all types of employment, such as “off-the-books” employment, employment outside of the state, and federal employment. For this reason, some states have supplemented their administrative data with survey data. Four states and the District of Columbia reported both survey and administrative data results and

<sup>19</sup> The Connecticut study reported a much higher employment rate (87%) for a sample of leavers who left due to the state time limit.

found that employment rates in the survey results were higher (Arizona, Illinois, Missouri, and Montana).<sup>20</sup>

**Earnings.** As with the employment rates, the earnings among *employed* leavers vary dramatically among the states. The studies that use administrative data (26 cohorts in 14 states and the District of Columbia) report that quarterly earnings in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit (period of 3 months) range from \$1,999 to \$3,868. Survey data (17 cohorts in 15 states and the District of Columbia) illustrate that the average hourly wage varies from \$5.50 to \$8.80.<sup>21</sup> While the average wage reported shows substantial variation, a number of states also examined the distribution of the wages and found that the majority of workers were making between \$5.15 and \$7.00 an hour at the time of the survey. Further examination of wage information based on full-time employment and part-time employment shows higher wage rates among those employed full-time.

**Occupations.** In general, the studies indicate that most leavers are employed in retail or clerical occupations. A study in New Mexico reported that persons employed in retail jobs and restaurant jobs were more likely to work non-traditional hours (defined as work that starts before 6 a.m. or ends after 6 p.m.) than persons employed in office jobs, schools, or in similar situations. North Carolina (using two separate studies) reported that a sizable number of welfare leavers “usually had to work weekends”: 43% of those who left due to the time limit and 55% of its sample of welfare leavers in 8 counties (who left for varying reasons).

**Finding employment.** A few surveys also asked leavers about how they found their jobs. The majority of respondents in these surveys reported friends, family, or their own search as the source of their job.

**Employment-related benefits.** The information available on employment related benefits is limited, as only a few states that administered surveys collected data. It is possible some individuals have to wait for employer-related benefits for a few months after beginning employment. Therefore, the length of time between exit and the interview may affect the results reported among the studies. Among employed leavers in Missouri who were interviewed approximately 30 months after exit, 53% were in jobs that offered health insurance, 52% had paid vacation days, 43% had dental benefits, 40% had paid sick days, 32% of the jobs had job training or tuition reimbursement, and 4% offered paid child care. Approximately 71% of welfare leavers interviewed in 8 North Carolina counties between 2 to 12 months after exit were working for employers that offered health insurance. However, only 1 in 3 of these individuals (35%) were participating in employer-provided health care.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> A study in Washington reported that the employment rate in the first quarter after exit (administrative data) was higher (62%) than the employment rate at the time of the survey (59%).

<sup>21</sup> Assuming the leaver worked 30 hours in all 13 weeks of the quarter, quarterly earnings at these hourly wage rates would range from \$2,145 to \$3,432.

<sup>22</sup> This issue is discussed in more detail in the section on health care among welfare (continued...)

**Results by time of exit from cash welfare.** State leaver studies have turned to administrative data to examine employment and earnings outcomes among those who have left welfare at different points in time. That is, the studies have examined whether those who left welfare during earlier years report higher employment rates or earnings when compared to a cohort of leavers from a later period of welfare reform.

**Table 1** reports the results among four state studies that use administrative data to examine leavers based on when they exit cash welfare. For each state, Cohort I is the earliest group of welfare leavers as defined by the state. For example, in Maryland, Cohort 1 is comprised of the *first* group of individuals who left welfare during the study. Therefore, Cohort 3 is comprised of the most recent group of welfare leavers in the study.

**Table 1. Earnings and Employment Outcomes Among Leaver Studies That Examine Leavers Based on When They Exit Cash Welfare**

| State                 | Employment rate in 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit | Quarterly earnings in 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Maryland              |   |  |
| Cohort I              | 53%   | \$2,474  |
| Cohort II             | 49%   | \$2,560  |
| Cohort III            | 45%   | \$2,412  |
| North Carolina        |   |  |
| Work First Cohort I   | 68%   | \$2,251  |
| Work First Cohort II  | 71%   | \$2,135  |
| Work First Cohort III | 70%   | \$1,999  |
| Washington            |   |  |
| Cohort I              | 51%   | \$2,778  |
| Cohort II             | 57%   | \$2,714  |
| Cohort III            | 62%   | \$2,387  |
| Wisconsin             |   |  |
| Cohort I              | 69%   | \$2,545  |
| Cohort II             | 70%   | \$2,081  |

**Source:** Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on information in the state leaver studies.

Many contend that those who were among the first to exit under welfare reform (the early leaver study cohorts) were perhaps the most ready for employment, and therefore that individuals in these early cohorts would report higher employment rates and higher earnings. This pattern emerges in Maryland, and also is consistent with earnings data from the three other studies. However, as **Table 1** illustrates,

employment rates in the later cohorts in North Carolina, Washington, and Wisconsin are *higher*.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, a larger percentage of these leavers are working in the first 3 months after their exit, but these leavers report lower average quarterly earnings. These lower earnings may reflect lower wage rates, or they may reflect fewer hours of work (i.e., part-time employment rather than full-time employment).

**Results by reason for cash welfare exit.** States have used leaver studies to explore outcomes among those who leave welfare for different reasons, such as time limits and sanctions. The low average hourly wage of \$5.50 was reported in Tennessee, where the sample was comprised of those whose case was closed by a sanction. Among the states' studies that examined individuals whose reason for exit was a state time limit, the average hourly wage in Virginia was \$5.99 while the majority of those employed in North Carolina (55%) were earning between \$5.00 and \$6.99 per hour. Massachusetts reported a much higher hourly wage among those who left due to time limit, \$8.21 per hour. Some of the variation may reflect the differing economic conditions as the minimum wage in Massachusetts is *above* the federal minimum wage.

The highest employment rates at the time of the survey were reported in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Virginia, and North Carolina (88%, 73%, 71%, and 66%, respectively), all of which were studies of individuals who left due to state time limits on cash welfare. The state-imposed time limits often exempt individuals who may not be considered "job-ready," such as individuals with younger children or other barriers to work. States may aid families beyond the federal time limit of 5 years, as federal funds may be used for up to 20% of a state's caseload without regard to the time limit or states may use their own funds to continue aid to these families. However, these studies of state-imposed time limits may not be representative of individuals who may hit the federal time limit of 5 years (which will begin occurring in some states later in 2001).

**Employment Retention and Advancement.** The data illustrate that between 63% and 91% of welfare recipients have been employed for a period of time since exit. However, the percentage employed at any given time is lower which indicates that a number of leavers are not continuously employed. While this has generated interest in examining employment patterns among welfare leavers, there is very little information on employment retention and advancement among this population.

Based on administrative data, between 35% and 58% of leavers in five states were employed in four post-exit quarters.<sup>24</sup> It is important to understand that these

---

<sup>23</sup> The North Carolina study was divided into four exit cohorts: one cohort of recipients who left AFDC (AFDC exit cohort), and three cohorts of recipients who left Work First (TANF exit cohorts). Work First began as a waiver program in July of 1996, and when the welfare reform law was signed in August of 1996, Work First was established as the state's TANF program with only minor programmatic changes needed to comply with the new law. Among the three cohorts who left Work First, earnings have declined over time.

<sup>24</sup> This is based on information for Los Angeles (35%), Illinois (39%), New York (40%),  
(continued...)

data may not reflect *continuous* employment in these quarters, as it is not possible, using these data, to determine the length of employment, the hours of employment, or whether individuals were continuously employed. The UI wage files used to provide employment and earnings information are not designed to provide information on continuous employment or wage advancement. For example, the studies show that quarterly earnings in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit are higher than quarterly earnings in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit. However, these data do not illustrate wages among the same population of welfare leavers. Rather, they illustrate wages among leavers employed in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit and leavers employed in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit. The composition of these populations is likely to be different, as some employed in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit may not be employed in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit (and vice-versa).

A few studies have also used surveys to provide more subjective information. In New Mexico, 58% of employed respondents were very satisfied with their job and 55% said it was very likely that they would stay in their current job. In Ohio, 42% of welfare leavers were employed by a single employer for 6 months after leaving.

**Barriers to employment and reasons for unemployment.** The leaver studies indicated that the majority of leavers are employed for a period of time since exit, and between 55% and 64% are employed at the time of the study. Among those leavers who are *unemployed* at the time of the study, a number of studies examined barriers to employment or reasons for unemployment. Some of the studies asked for the “main reason” individuals were unemployed, while in other studies individuals could provide more than one response. Highlights include:

- **Health/Physical/Mental Illness:** Health, physical illness, or mental illness of the respondent was the number one reason *unemployed* individuals gave when asked for the main reason for unemployment in Arizona (23%), Missouri (26%) and Kansas (43%), and accounted for the most responses in North Carolina (18%) and Illinois (32% expressed physical illness and 18% expressed mental illness). Among the 19% of unemployed leavers in New Mexico who indicated that their health, physical or mental illness was a reason for unemployment, 78% said that the disability was permanent. The health, physical illness, or mental illness of others (e.g., dependents or other members of the household) was seen as a reason for unemployment by 35% of the respondents in Utah, but other studies (6 states) indicated a much smaller percentage, ranging from 4% (North Carolina time limit study) to 9% (South Carolina).
- **Couldn't find a Job/Couldn't find a Job that Pays Enough:** When asked for the main reason leavers were unemployed (6 states), between 6% (Washington) and 25% (Idaho) said that they couldn't find a job or that they couldn't find a job that pays enough. Among those who could offer multiple reasons for unemployment (5 states), between 8% (Pennsylvania) and 46% (Illinois) indicated that difficulty finding employment was a reason for unemployment. In Missouri, 4% said they did not want to work. Among those who left due to the time limit in North Carolina, 42% expressed that they

---

<sup>24</sup>(...continued)

Wisconsin (40%), and Maryland (58%).

couldn't find a job at the time of the second survey, up from 29% at the time of the first survey.

- **Child Care Problems:** Between 3% (Washington) and 22% (Arizona) of unemployed leavers indicated that child care problems were the *main* reason for unemployment. Child care was the number one reason (21%) leavers quit their jobs in New Mexico. Child care problems were also *one* potential reason for unemployment, ranging from 11% to 15% (3 states). In Illinois, 52% indicated that they had a problem finding child care for work hours. In four states, unemployed leavers chose to stay home and care for their children: this was the number one reason for unemployment in Washington (21%) and accounted for a sizable number of responses in Pennsylvania (6%) and New Mexico (19%).
- **Transportation Problems:** From 1% in Washington to 42% in Utah of unemployed leavers indicated that transportation problems were a reason for unemployment.
- **Domestic Violence:** A small number of the state leaver studies collected information on whether domestic violence was a barrier to employment. In Oklahoma, 15% of leavers reported domestic violence or alcohol problems that interfered with work. In Illinois, 27% of leavers were ever in an abusive relationship. Of these, 35% said that this abusive relationship had been a problem in getting/keeping a job.

## Overall Well-Being of Welfare Leavers

Many states have gathered information beyond income and wages from employment to more comprehensively examine the well-being of welfare leavers, including measures such as income and wages of other household members, support from other government programs (such as food stamps and Medicaid), and “hardships” experienced by those who leave welfare (such as difficulty paying bills or accessing health care). Some administrators and policymakers are concerned about whether those who are eligible for assistance under other government programs such as food stamps and Medicaid are continuing to receive these benefits upon exit from cash assistance, especially given declines in these non-cash programs caseload.

**Income/Poverty Status.** Between 55% and 64% of leavers were employed at the time of the studies, and an even larger majority had been employed for some time since exit. However, although the majority of welfare leavers were employed, based on wages alone, most welfare leavers remained poor.

Among single-parent families with a child under the age of 18 in Missouri, 34% of the families were in extreme poverty (defined as 50% of the poverty line or less), 43% were below the federal poverty level, and 92% were below or near the federal poverty level. In addition to the earnings of the welfare leavers, measures of family income typically include earned and unearned income of other household members (e.g., spouses) which may be important sources of support for welfare leavers.

**Measures of Hardship.** Table 2 illustrates information from state leaver studies on measures of hardships, as reported. These studies use survey data to ask families to provide more subjective assessments of the hardships they have faced since

leaving welfare. **Table 2** includes information on four areas: paying bills, health care, food insecurity, and housing arrangements. The table also provides the range of results (i.e., percent of leavers who reported experiencing a particular hardship) and indicates the number of states included in this range of results.

**Table 2. Measures of Hardships as Reported in State Leaver Studies**

| <b>“Hardship” measure</b>                | <b>Percent of respondents reporting hardship</b> |
|--|--|
| Paying bills                             |  |
| Behind on utility bill                   | 11% to 59% (11 states)                           |
| Electricity shut off                     | 2% to 36% (6 states)                             |
| Phone cut-off                            | 22% to 48% (6 states)                            |
| Help from family or friends              | 20% (2 states)                                   |
| Health care                              |  |
| Needed medical care but couldn’t get it  | 13% to 54% (8 states)                            |
| Food insecurity                          |  |
| Had a time when no way to buy food       | 13% to 44% (8 states)                            |
| Housing arrangements                     |  |
| Moved or evicted since cash welfare exit | 5% to 21% (11 states)                            |
| People move in to share expenses         | 1% to 17% (4 states)                             |
| Move in with people to share expenses    | 8% to 30% (8 states)                             |
| Had been or were homeless                | 1% to 4% (8 states)                              |

**Source:** Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on information in state leaver studies.

**Hardships before and after exit from cash welfare.** Table 2 illustrates that individuals experienced difficulties after leaving welfare. However, a number of states also asked welfare leavers to provide “hardships” experienced *while* receiving welfare as well as *after* exit from welfare. Findings include:

- **Paying bills:** While leavers in Illinois reported greater problems in paying utilities *before* leaving welfare (27% before compared to 14% after), well-over twice as many leavers in South Carolina reported a problem paying utilities *after* leaving welfare (4% before compared to 11% after). A similar result was found among those who left due to the time limit in North Carolina, where 4% reported a problem paying utilities before leaving welfare compared to 11% who reported the problem after leaving welfare.
- **Health care:** There is some evidence that welfare recipients experience more difficulty acquiring health care *after* leaving welfare (3 states). Illinois and New Mexico both reported an increase in the number of individuals who needed medical care but couldn’t get it after leaving welfare, among their overall sample of welfare leavers (9% needed medical care but couldn’t get it before leaving welfare compared to 19% after leaving welfare in New Mexico; 26% needed medical care but couldn’t get it before leaving welfare compared to 31% after leaving welfare in Illinois). North Carolina also reported an increase in the number of adults who needed medical care but couldn’t get it after leaving welfare among those who left welfare due to the time limit (4% before compared to 24% after), but reported no difference among children.
- **Food insecurity:** There also is some evidence that the problem of food insecurity in some places has *increased* after exit from welfare. Wisconsin,

New Mexico, and South Carolina all reported a larger percentage of respondents with this hardship after leaving welfare compared to when the respondents were receiving welfare (32% after leaving welfare compared to 22% while receiving welfare in Wisconsin; 25% after leaving welfare compared to 15% in New Mexico; 13% after leaving welfare compared to 6% while receiving welfare in South Carolina).<sup>25</sup>

- **Housing arrangements:** Illinois, New Mexico and Wisconsin reported that the incidence of problems with housing arrangements was lower since their exit than it had been while the respondents were on welfare, although in Illinois this varied by employment status. While those currently employed reported greater problems in housing *before* leaving welfare (43% before leaving welfare compared to 29% after), those currently unemployed reported greater problems in housing after leaving welfare (54% after leaving welfare compared to 47% before leaving welfare). In two North Carolina studies, leavers indicated that they were more likely to get behind on rent *after* leaving welfare (10% before leaving compared to 22% after leaving welfare among those who left due to the time limit; 21% before leaving compared to 31% after leaving welfare among leavers in 8 selected counties).

**Child Welfare Outcomes.** Some contended that children would be harmed by welfare reform, but to date little information has been collected on outcomes of children among families who leave welfare.<sup>26</sup> State leaver studies report that in 3% to 19% of households, a child(ren) left the home since cash welfare exit. However, no additional information was provided to determine where these children were placed, such as whether the child was removed from the home by a child welfare agency, whether the child moved in with the father, or perhaps whether the child moved out on their own. The sample sizes also were quite small, as the children in these situations comprised a small portion of the overall sample of leavers. For example, 74 children (19%) in Utah left the home since cash welfare exit. When asked why the children left home in Utah, the majority of respondents (43%) gave “other” as the reason, with no additional clarification. Additional reasons offered were that 18% were removed by Child Protective Services (CPS), 12% indicated that they couldn’t afford to care for their child, and 4% indicated that the child left to establish his/her own household.

Both Arizona and Illinois reported no increase in the number of substantiated child protective service (CPS) reports or out-of-home placements following exit from cash assistance. In Utah, 50% reported a CPS referral, a slight increase over the 44% who reported a CPS referral during an earlier survey. Maryland reported that 12%

---

<sup>25</sup> In South Carolina, respondents were asked to give the reasons for their inability to buy food after leaving welfare. The most common responses were “food stamps were not enough to pay for food” (28%), “had unexpected or emergency expenses” (18%), “spent all money on things other than food” (16%), “lost job or lost job that provided food” (16%), and “had a hard time budgeting” (14%).

<sup>26</sup> Child Trends, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization that studies children, youth and families, recommended a set of child outcomes to be examined, in response to a request of those awarded grants through ASPE to conduct leaver studies. Their recommendations can be found at: [<http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/leavers99/recommended.htm>]

of the children in the sample had a pre-exit indication or confirmation of child abuse or neglect; 90 days after exit, 1% reported an indication or confirmation of child abuse or neglect compared to 2% in the 12 months after exit.

## **Receipt of Other Types of Assistance**

A stated goal of TANF is to end dependence on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage. The leaver studies indicate that while leavers are employed, most remain poor and may therefore rely on other types of assistance to supplement their wages. For example, employed leavers may qualify for (EITC).

After cash welfare exit, a number of leavers and their children also remain eligible for health insurance, child care, and food stamps. However, declining participation in these programs has raised concerns. Some argue that low participation rates illustrate that leavers have replaced these government benefits with other types of support, thereby ending their dependence on government benefits. However, others argue that recipients are leaving welfare for low-wage work and therefore remain in need of health insurance and food assistance. They believe that eligible leavers are not participating in these programs and therefore, outreach to increase enrollment should be the emphasis. Each of these areas, as examined in the leaver studies, is briefly discussed below.

**Health Insurance.** When welfare recipients leave welfare for work, they do not always replace public insurance with private or employer-provided health insurance. In part, this may be because some who leave welfare are not employed or because some are not offered health insurance through their employment. Among the state leaver studies, participation in private health insurance ranged from 7% in South Carolina to 21% in Illinois. However, this low rate of private insurance coverage may also be due to the fact that some employer-provided health plans require a certain period of time in employment before eligibility, the costs of the employer provided health-insurance may be too high, and/or the insurance doesn't meet the needs of the individual. For example, 43% of employed leavers in New Mexico were participating in an employer health plan if available; among those not participating, 32% had not worked in the job long enough and 31% indicated that the cost was too high.

There is some evidence that likelihood of participation in employer-provided health insurance may increase the longer the individual has been employed. Among those in North Carolina who reached the time limit, 65% were participating in employer-provided health insurance if available at the time of the second survey, compared to 33% when the first survey was administered. This increase was due to an increasing number of individuals who were eligible to participate in employer-provided health insurance. Among those who were not participating, 44% were working part-time, 28% hadn't worked there long enough, and 12% indicated that the cost was too high; among those not participating in employer-provided health insurance if available, 80% were enrolled in Medicaid.

The state leaver studies indicate that health care coverage is an issue for many welfare leavers. Prior to TANF, individuals qualifying for AFDC were automatically eligible for, and in most states, automatically enrolled in Medicaid. The welfare

reform law of 1996 “delinked” Medicaid from cash assistance, and therefore TANF eligibility does not confer automatic Medicaid eligibility. Rather, Medicaid entitlement was retained for individuals who meet the requirements of the former AFDC program in effect on July 16, 1996 (herein referred to as eligibility under Section 1931) *regardless* of whether they are receiving TANF.

Because Medicaid eligibility is not based on TANF eligibility, states may not deny Medicaid to any member of a family, if the family loses eligibility for TANF because of employment, time limits, sanctions, or for any other reason. States are to “exhaust all avenues to eligibility before denial or termination” of Medicaid eligibility.<sup>27</sup> States are also required to provide transitional medical assistance (TMA) for up to 12 months to families who, because of hours of work, income from employment (or loss of the earned income disregard), or child support income, lose their eligibility under Section 1931. Regardless of whether they lose TANF assistance, it is the loss of Medicaid eligibility under Section 1931 that triggers eligibility for TMA. Finally, states also have the option to provide continuous Medicaid eligibility to children, and to terminate Medicaid coverage for a TANF recipient whose assistance is terminated for refusing to cooperate with TANF work requirements.<sup>28</sup>

Medicaid coverage rates, as reported in the studies, are difficult to interpret given the structure by which those who leave welfare continue to qualify for Medicaid (as discussed above). Results for each state are included in Appendix **Table B-1**. Among those studies that ask if anyone in the household was receiving Medicaid since exit or at the time of the survey (adults or children), the range was from 58% in New Mexico (6 to 18 months after exit) to 87% in Wisconsin (6 to 9 months after exit).

Among those studies that examine rates of participation for adults and children, the rates for children are higher *regardless* of the period of time since exit. For adults, participation rates range from 15% in Colorado (2 years after exit) to 72% in Arizona (ever received in the 12 months since exit). Among children, participation rates range from 35% in New York (9 to 12 months after exit) to 77% in Washington state (6 to 9 months after exit). Utah found that participation rates in Medicaid varied by reason for case closing: among those who left due to income or other reasons, participation rates in Medicaid were lower (64% and 63%, respectively) than those who left due to the time limit (84%).

Compared to the children of respondents who leave welfare, the respondents themselves are more likely to be uninsured. In Missouri, 11% of households had uninsured children while 41% of the households had uninsured adults; the lowest rates of uninsurance were found in households where the leaver had *never* worked. In Illinois, 29% of children and 36% of respondents were uninsured.

---

<sup>27</sup> For more information, see : *Supporting Families in Transition: A Guide to Expanding Health Coverage in a Post-Welfare Reform World*, available at [<http://www.hcfa.gov/medicaid/welfare.htm>]

<sup>28</sup> Excluded from this option are pregnant women and children eligible under a poverty-level group and minor children who are not heads-of-household under TANF. For more information, see: *Supporting Families in Transition*.

Among those who are not receiving Medicaid, reasons for not participating vary. In Arizona, 66% of those not receiving Medicaid thought they were not eligible and 13% considered it not worth the effort. In New Mexico, 23% were planning to apply, 20% were told they were not eligible, 18% didn't believe they were eligible and 16% said they no longer needed Medicaid; 9% thought it was not worth the effort. In Illinois, among those who never applied and never received Medicaid, 45% did not need Medicaid or had other health insurance; 17% didn't believe they were eligible and 16% believed it was too much hassle/too time consuming.

While a number of studies indicate that individuals think they are not eligible for Medicaid and therefore are not participating, there is some evidence that individuals may be receiving Medicaid services although they think the services have been discontinued. Among the 22% of welfare leavers in Washington state who did not know that they could continue to receive Medicaid when they exit cash assistance, 1 in 3 *were* enrolled in Medicaid.

To address issues related to Medicaid coverage for welfare leavers, on April 7, 2000, HHS ordered states to search computer files to identify families improperly dropped from Medicaid and to reinstate them retroactively. HHS has also included, beginning in TANF performance year FY2001, a Medicaid/State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) performance measure in awarding TANF bonus funds. States have the option of competing on this performance measure, and may forego reporting this measure but still compete on other TANF performance measures, such as work and family formation measures. If the state chooses to compete, to be eligible the state will have to follow certain qualifying procedures and will be judged on the percentage of welfare leavers who continue to be enrolled in Medicaid or SCHIP 6 months after leaving TANF.<sup>29</sup>

**Child Care.** Individuals who have left welfare have indicated some barriers to child care, such as the cost of child care or difficulty obtaining child care.<sup>30</sup> As discussed earlier, some welfare leavers have also said that child care related problems have been a barrier to employment. Among the studies that include child care information, relatives and friends are reported as the primary source of care, but use of government subsidies varies considerably from 3% in the New Orleans metropolitan area to 55% in Missouri. When examining the percent who receive child care subsidies *among those who are eligible for subsidies*, the percentages increase but still vary considerably from 20% in Illinois to 67% in North Carolina.

Some of the leaver studies indicate that a major reason for the low receipt of child care subsidies is that many individuals simply judge that they do not need child care assistance, and many individuals do not want their children cared for by someone else. However, a number of individuals also appear to be unaware of the availability of child care assistance. For example, among those not using a subsidy in Arizona, 62% said they did not need the subsidy, while 21% said they were not eligible.

---

<sup>29</sup> For more information, see CRS Report RS20552, *Welfare Reform and Medicaid: Brief Overview*, by Vee Burke.

<sup>30</sup> See: Schumacher, Rachel, and Mark Greenberg. *Child Care After Leaving Welfare: Early Evidence from State Studies*. Center for Law and Social Policy, 1999

Among those who were not using subsidies in Washington, 39% had no need and 13% thought it was too much trouble to apply. Among those who were paying for child care but were not receiving help in New Mexico and North Carolina, respectively, 31% and 27% didn't know they could get help and 18% and 20% applied but did not qualify.

The type of child care used among welfare leavers also varied considerably. In Washington state, leavers with subsidies were more likely to use day-care centers than those without subsidies (39% vs. 8%); those without subsidies were more likely to use grandparents or other relatives when compared to those with subsidies (49% vs. 20%). In New Mexico, 73% of individuals who pay for child care and receive help from the county use informal child care. Leavers *without* subsidies in Missouri lived in households with more adults, which may imply less need for outside care.

**Food Support.** Participation in food stamps fell from 25.5 million individuals in fiscal year (FY) 1996 to 17 million in July 2000, a decline of 33%. A report completed by the GAO found that the strong U.S. economy, tighter food stamp eligibility requirements, and welfare reform initiatives are the primary reasons for the decline in food stamp participation. However, the report also found that some households, including those with eligible children, have had problems obtaining food stamps because some state and local governments "have gone farther than the law permits in limiting benefits."<sup>31</sup>

According to the leaver studies, the number of individuals who received food stamps after leaving cash assistance ranged from 30% in Kansas to a high of 83% of children in Oklahoma at the time of the survey, with the majority of studies reporting food stamp participation rates between 46% and 78%. In Missouri, eligible households that were not receiving food stamps were better off financially than households that did receive food stamps; median income was 40% higher and these households were more likely to own their own home. In households that didn't receive food stamps in Missouri, 90% had someone receiving Medicaid.

As with Medicaid and child care, reasons for not participating in food stamps vary among the studies. Among those not receiving food stamps in Arizona, 58% believed they were not eligible and 19% said they did not need food stamps. Individuals who left because of sanctions in Arizona were more likely to report that they believed they were not eligible (69% vs. 58% overall). Among those not receiving food stamps in New Mexico, 32% were told they were not eligible, 24% no longer needed food stamps, 16% didn't believe they were eligible, and 8% believed it was not worth the effort.

There is some evidence that eligible individuals choose *not* to participate in food stamps. In Illinois, of those who had not received food stamps since exit, 41% thought they were eligible and 29% said a caseworker told them they were eligible. In New Jersey, approximately 3 out of 4 of those who left TANF and weren't receiving food stamps (72%) knew that they could receive food stamps.

---

<sup>31</sup> See: *Food Stamp Program: Various Factors Have Led to Declining Participation*. Report by the U.S. General Accounting Office, RCED-99-195, July 1999.

**Child Support.** Among welfare leavers, a number of studies report child support as an important source of income. Among the studies that reported the percent who *collected* child support, the range varied from 8% of leavers in metropolitan New Orleans to 41% of leavers in Idaho. In general, the studies also show that less than half of those who have court-ordered child support arrangements are actually receiving a payment. In Massachusetts and Washington, respectively, 41% and 44% report a child support agreement, but only 22% and 23% report actually receiving child support. In New Mexico, 30% had orders while only 10% received child support. However, there is also some evidence that leavers receive child support even without court-ordered support payments. In Illinois, 20% of those without court-ordered child support reported some child support payments.

Approximately 31% of the leavers in Utah were receiving child support, but this number varied greatly by reason for case closing. Among those who left for income, 48% reported receiving child support, while the percentages among those who left because of the time limit or for other reasons were smaller (23% and 25%, respectively).

**Earned Income Tax Credit.** The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) offers a refundable tax credit to low-income working parents who care for dependent children (with smaller credits available for low-income individuals with no children). Although EITC is available on an ongoing basis (e.g., supplement to their paycheck), most receive it when they file for their federal income taxes. A small number of surveys collected information on the EITC among welfare leavers. While a number of leavers were aware of the EITC, a small percentage actually filed for the tax credit. In Illinois, 85% of leavers had worked during the study period, but only 41% have received the EITC. Part of this may be attributed to the fact that only 47% of the leavers in the Illinois study had a clear idea of what the EITC was.

## Returns to Welfare Among Welfare Leavers

Given the dramatic declines in the welfare caseload, many are interested in whether individuals leaving welfare remain off welfare. A number of the studies measured how many leavers return to cash welfare. In general, the studies find that between 18% and 35% of those who leave welfare have returned in a period of time since exit (which varies by study). For example, Arizona reported that 28% of leavers had returned at least once in the 12 months since exit, while New York reported that 21% of leavers had returned at least once in the 12 months since exit.

Studies have found that many cases that were closed and re-opened within a month had been closed in error. Others may have their cases closed on technical grounds (e.g., failure to report income). These individuals may return to cash assistance immediately (“churners”). To include “churners” in these studies may overstate the incidence of recidivism among leavers. Maryland found that 40% of all cases returned within 36 months of exit, but after excluding those who returned within 30 days of case closure (the “churners”), the number declined slightly to 36%.

Employment is the most common reason for leaving welfare, and lack or loss of employment is also the most common reason individuals return to welfare. In Illinois, survey data illustrate that 44% of welfare returns were because the individual couldn’t

find a job or lost a job; 12% were child-care related. In Arizona, 54% of those who returned lost a job or had a reduction in earnings (40% for those who were sanctioned and 58% of those who left for other reasons); 11% returned due to divorce. In Washington, 47% of welfare returns were employment-related (25% were laid-off or fired, 10% lost work hours, and 12% quit the job for health reasons); 13% were due to a marriage or partnership breakup.

A few states asked respondents questions regarding the likelihood that they thought they would return to welfare. In North Carolina, 43% thought it was very unlikely they would reapply to welfare in the next 6 months while 15% found it very likely that they would return. New Mexico reported a similar result: 57% thought it was very unlikely they would reapply to welfare in the next 6 months while 15% found it very likely that they would return. However, New Mexico respondents who left because of benefit cut-off or a sanction were more likely to indicate that they were “very likely” to reapply for welfare (38%); those who left because of employment were less likely to indicate that they were “very likely” to think they would reapply (9%).

Along with differences in employment and earnings, studies have reported differences in rates of return to TANF among cohorts of welfare leavers. Some expect that those who left welfare more recently may be harder to serve and therefore may be more likely to return. Because these leavers didn’t leave welfare during the early period of reform, they may have more barriers to employment that might impede a successful transition to work. In Maryland, those who left in the later years were far more likely to return to welfare. In general, those who left in Year 1 of the study had lower rates of return than those who left in Year 2, who in turn had lower rates of return than those who left in Year 3. Among all cases who left welfare (including those who returned within 30 days), 24% of those who left in Year 1 returned within 12 months, 41% of those who left in Year 2 returned within 12 months, and 54% of those who left in Year 3 returned within 12 months. Excluding those who returned within 30 days (the “churners”), 18% of those who left in Year 1, 21% of those who left in Year 2, and 34% of those who left in Year 3 returned within 12 months. It appears that, not only were those who left welfare in later years returning at a higher rate, they were more likely to return within 30 days of exit. This may also be another indication the later cohorts are less ready to find and retain jobs after leaving welfare.

Why a family left welfare also appears to play a role in why a family returns to welfare. Those who leave welfare for income reasons appear less likely to return than those who exit because they failed to fulfill program requirements. In Maryland, while 25% of those who left because of income returned within 12 months of exit, 53% of those whose cases were closed by family sanction and 52% of those whose cases were closed for failure to reapply/redetermine eligibility returned within 12 months; in both cases, approximately half of those who returned within 12 months did so within 30 days of exit (“churners”). In Illinois, 21% of those leaving for income reasons returned within 12 months of exit compared to almost 40% of cases closed for non-cooperation.

Finally, a number of state leaver studies asked those still receiving welfare what they considered to be an important resource that would enable them to leave welfare. In the 8-county study completed in North Carolina, respondents were asked what

types of services they felt they would need in the next 6 months to remain off welfare (including services they were currently receiving and wished to continue receiving). Child support was the service respondents felt they would need (55%), with child care the next most identified service (50%).

**Appendix Table A-1. Administrative Data: Employment and Earnings of Welfare Leavers**

| State  | Earnings                                 |  | Employment                               |  |                                |
|--|--|--|--|--|--------------------------------|
|  | 1 <sup>st</sup><br>Quarter<br>after exit | 4 <sup>th</sup><br>Quarter<br>after exit | 1 <sup>st</sup><br>Quarter<br>after exit | 4 <sup>th</sup><br>Quarter<br>after exit | Ever<br>employed<br>since exit |
| <b>Study examined a single group of leavers</b>  |  |  |  |  |                                |
| Arizona <sup>a</sup>   | \$2,211                                  | \$2,511                                  | 53%                                      | 50%                                      | 73%                            |
| Arkansas   | \$2,034                                  | \$2,299 <sup>b</sup>                     | 50%                                      | NR <sup>b</sup>                          | 66%                            |
| California (3 counties)  | \$3,373                                  |  | 57%                                      |  | NR                             |
| Colorado   | \$2,400                                  | \$2,603                                  | 52%                                      | 51%                                      | NR                             |
| Connecticut  | \$3,369                                  | \$3,516 <sup>b</sup>                     | 49%                                      | 50% <sup>b</sup>                         | 63%                            |
| Connecticut (Time limit)   | \$2,966                                  |  | 88%                                      |  | NR                             |
| Cuyahoga County (Ohio) <sup>a</sup>  | \$2,756                                  | \$2,952                                  | 59%                                      | 57%                                      | NR                             |
| District of Columbia   | \$3,416                                  | \$3,934                                  | 62%                                      | 60%                                      | NR                             |
| Georgia <sup>a</sup>   | \$2,193                                  | \$2,389                                  | 64%                                      | 53%                                      | 74%                            |
| Illinois   | \$2,659                                  | \$2,961                                  | 54%                                      | 54%                                      | 69%                            |
| Los Angeles (California) <sup>a</sup>  | \$3,414                                  | \$3,576                                  | 47%                                      | 47%                                      | NR                             |
| Missouri   | \$2,192                                  | \$2,698                                  | 58%                                      | 58%                                      | 80%                            |
| New York <sup>c</sup>  | \$3,868                                  | \$4,230                                  | 55%                                      | 53%                                      | 66%                            |
| <b>Study examined multiple groups of leavers based on their time of exit from cash welfare</b> |  |  |  |  |                                |
| Maryland   |  |  |  |  |                                |
| Cohort 1   | \$2,474                                  | NR                                       | 53%                                      | NR                                       | NR                             |
| Cohort 2   | \$2,560                                  | NR                                       | 49%                                      | NR                                       | NR                             |
| Cohort 3   | \$2,412                                  | NR                                       | 45%                                      | NR                                       | NR                             |
| North Carolina   |  |  |  |  |                                |
| AFDC exit cohort   | \$2,075                                  | \$2,211                                  | 66%                                      | 62%                                      | NR                             |
| Work First Cohort I  | \$2,251                                  | \$2,275                                  | 68%                                      | 65%                                      | NR                             |
| Work First Cohort II   | \$2,135                                  | \$2,374                                  | 71%                                      | 66%                                      | NR                             |
| Work First Cohort III  | \$1,999                                  | \$2,119                                  | 70%                                      | 63%                                      | NR                             |
| Washington   |  |  |  |  |                                |
| Cohort I   | \$2,778                                  | \$3,340                                  | 51%                                      | 56%                                      | NR                             |
| Cohort II  | \$2,714                                  | \$3,351 <sup>b</sup>                     | 57%                                      | 58% <sup>b</sup>                         | NR                             |
| Cohort III   | \$2,387                                  |  | 62%                                      |  | NR                             |
| Wisconsin <sup>a</sup>   |  |  |  |  |                                |
| Cohort I   | \$2,545                                  | \$2,940                                  | 69%                                      | 69%                                      | 81%                            |
| Cohort II  | \$2,081                                  | \$2,744                                  | 70%                                      | 68%                                      | 84%                            |

**Source:** Table prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on state leaver studies. The results among four state studies that use administrative data to examine leavers are based on when they exit cash welfare. For each state, Cohort I illustrates results for the earliest group of welfare leavers (i.e., the first group of leavers) as defined by the state. For example, in Maryland,

Cohort 1 is comprised of the *first* group of individuals who left welfare during the study. Therefore, Cohort 3 is comprised of the most recent group of welfare leavers in the study. Detail may differ from data reported in **Table B-1** due to rounding. NR (Not Reported) indicates that the state did not report this information .

<sup>a</sup> Study includes only single-parent welfare cases.

<sup>b</sup> Fourth quarter data were as not available.

<sup>c</sup> In New York, the authors attempt to adjust the earnings to reflect employment not captured by the Wage Reporting System, which was found to understate quarterly earnings by 16% to 21%. If a 16% adjustment were used, the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter earnings reported here would increase from \$4230 to \$5034.

**Appendix Table A-2. Survey Data: Employment and Earnings of Welfare Leavers**

| State   | Length of time between survey and exit | Wage reported at time of survey                    | Percent employed at time of survey | Percent ever employed since exit |
|---|--|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Reporting average hourly wage</i>                                    |  |  |                                    |                                  |
| Alabama   | 7 to 12 months                         | \$6.08   | 54%                                | NR                               |
| Arizona   | 12 to 18 months                        | \$7.52   | 58%                                | NR                               |
| California (3 counties)   | 6 to 12 months                         | \$8.80   | 56%                                | NR                               |
| District of Columbia  | 12 months                              | \$8.74   | 60%                                | NR                               |
| Illinois  | 6 to 9 months                          | \$7.89   | 63%                                | 85%                              |
| Massachusetts (Time limit)  | 6 to 16 months                         | \$8.21   | 73%                                | NR                               |
| Massachusetts (Non-time limit)  | 6 to 16 months                         | \$8.62   | 71%                                | 91%                              |
| Michigan  | 1 to 21 months                         | \$7.02   | 71%                                | NR                               |
| Mississippi   | 3 to 9 months                          | \$5.77   | 35%                                | 47%                              |
| Missouri  | 30 months                              | \$6.00   | 65%                                | 90%                              |
| Oklahoma  | 3 to 18 months                         | \$6.51   | 50%                                | NR                               |
| South Carolina  | 12 to 15 months                        | \$7.00   | 55%                                | 81%                              |
| Tennessee - sanctioned  | 1 to 9 months                          | \$5.50   | 39%                                | NR                               |
| Texas   | 6 months                               | \$6.28   | 55%                                | 68%                              |
| Virginia  | 6 to 12 months                         | \$5.99   | 71%                                | 86%                              |
| Washington  | 6 to 9 months                          | \$7.70   | 59%                                | 86%                              |
| Wisconsin   | 6 to 9 months                          | \$7.42   | 62%                                | 83%                              |
| <i>Reporting a distribution of the average hourly wage <sup>a</sup></i> |  |  |                                    |                                  |
| Colorado  | 24 months                              | Less than \$5.16 = 10%<br>\$5.16 - \$7.00 = 26%    | 65%                                | 89%                              |
| Connecticut   | 18 months                              | Less than \$7.50 = 26%<br>\$7.50 - \$11.99 = 47.9% | 70%                                | NR                               |
| Idaho   | 1 to 5 months                          | Less than \$5.25 = 27%<br>\$5.25 - \$7.00 = 51%    | 53%                                | NR                               |
| Indiana   | 12 to 18 months                        | Less than \$6.00 = 39%<br>\$6.00 - \$7.99 = 41%    | 64%                                | 84%                              |
| Kansas  | 12 months                              | Less than \$5.01 = 10%<br>\$5.01-\$7.00 = 51%      | 36%                                | NR                               |
| Kentucky  | 12 to 20 months                        | Less than \$5.16 = 13%<br>\$5.16 - \$6.99 = 46%    | 48%                                | NR                               |
| New Mexico  | 6 to 18 months                         | Less than \$5.00 = 9%<br>\$5.00 - \$6.99 = 49%     | 63%                                | NR                               |

| State                                 | Length of time<br>between survey<br>and exit | Wage reported at<br>time of survey              | Percent<br>employed<br>at time of<br>survey | Percent<br>ever<br>employed<br>since exit |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| New York (New<br>York City)           | 6 months                                     | Less than \$5.75 = 10%<br>\$5.75 - \$7.00 = 30% | NR  | 67%                                       |
| North Carolina - 8<br><i>counties</i> | 2 to 12 months                               | Less than \$7.00 = 39%                          | 64%   | NR  |
| North Carolina -<br><i>time limit</i> | 13 to 16 months                              | \$5.00 to \$6.99 = 55%                          | 66%   | NR  |
| Wyoming                               | 1 to 15 months                               | Less than \$5.01 = 4%<br>\$5.01-\$7.50 = 47%    | 61%   | NR  |

**Source:** Table prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on information in the state leaver studies. Detail may differ from data reported in **Table B-1** due to rounding. NR (Not Reported) indicates that the state did not report this information .

<sup>a</sup> The percentage of employed respondents who earn within this range of wages is reported.

## Appendix Table B-1. Selected Outcomes from Welfare Leaver Studies

**Table B-1** presents a state-by-state table of the studies reviewed in this report. This table presents descriptive information on the study population and methodology (such as the length of follow-up and the response rate) and highlights selected outcomes among the state studies. For each state, the most recent study available is included. However, **Table B-1** includes more than one study for those states where methods of collecting the data were different among the studies (i.e., a study that used administrative data versus a study that used survey data), the study populations were different, and/or the studies reported different types of outcomes.

| Study  | Earnings/Recidivism   | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Alabama: Welfare Reform Follow-up Survey, January 2000</b>  |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of all cases closed between July and November of 1998 that contained a valid Alabama phone number. | Earnings:<br>Average hourly wage: \$6.08  | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid (self/children) at time of survey: 33.7%/72.8%  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted between May and July of 1999, 7 to 12 months after exit.                                | Hours of employment:<br>Average hours per week: 33.9  | Child care assistance:<br>Receiving help paying for child care at time of survey: 20.4%  |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 416 respondents surveyed.  | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 53.8%  | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 59.9%;<br>Receiving WIC at time of survey: 34.9%                              |
| <b>Arkansas: Evaluation of Arkansas's Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) Program, July 1999</b>                      |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Single and two-parent cases closed between June 1996 and December 1998.                                   | Earnings (cases closed July 1997 to September 1998):<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,034;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,299 | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid within 2 months of exit among cases closed July 1998 to September 1998 (adults/children): 56%/60% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.   | Employment rate (cases closed July 1996 to September 1998):<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 50%;<br>Ever employed since exit: 66%            |  |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> Up to 4 quarters (varies).   | Recidivism:<br>Ever received cash aid from June 1996 to December 1998: 23.2%  |  |

| Study  | Earnings/Recidivism   | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Arizona: Cash Assistance Exit Study: First Quarter 1998 Cohort Final Report, January 2000</b>   |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Single-parent cases closed between January and March of 1998 that remained closed for at least 2 consecutive months.  | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,211;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,511  | Health assistance:<br>Ever received Medicaid in the 4 quarters since exit: 71.7%             |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.   | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 53.1%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 50.1%;<br>Ever employed since exit: 73.3% | Child care assistance:<br>Ever received child care in the 4 quarters since exit: 21.8%       |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 12 months.   | Recidivism:<br>Ever received cash aid in the four quarters since exit: 27.7%  | Food assistance:<br>Ever received food stamps in the 4 quarters since exit: 66.5%            |
| <b>Arizona: Cash Assistance Exit Study: First Quarter 1998 Cohort Final Report, January 2000</b>   |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Single-parent cases closed between January and March of 1998 that remained closed for at least 2 consecutive months.  | Earnings:<br>Average hourly wage: \$7.52;<br>Average total monthly household income: \$1,467  | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at the time of survey (adult/children): 58.7%/71.8% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted 12 to 18 months after exit from cash assistance.  | Hours of employment:<br>Average hours per week: 33.9  |  |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 72%.   | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 58.4%  |  |
| <b>California: Examining Circumstances of Individuals and Families Who Leave TANF: Assessing the Validity of Administrative Data - 12 Month Report, December 2000</b>                  |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Single and two-parent cases in three counties (San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz) closed in the last quarter of 1998 that remained closed for at least 2 months. | Earnings (family):<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,373;<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,785                               | Health assistance:<br>Received Medi-Cal in month 12 after exit: 59.9%                        |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.   | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 57.2%;<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit: 57.6%;                                    | Food assistance:<br>Received non-assistance food stamps in month 12 after exit: 5.3%         |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 12 months.   | Recidivism:<br>Respondent receiving cash aid in month 12 after exit: 19.9%  |  |
| Note: Earnings reported are for the family, including all earnings in the household, rather than simply  |   |  |

| Study  | Earnings/Recidivism  | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food  |
|--|--|--|
| earnings of the respondent as reported by the other studies.   |  |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Single and two-parent cases in three counties (San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz) closed in the last quarter of 1998 that remained closed for at least 2 months. | Earnings:<br>Median hourly wage rate: \$8.80<br><br>Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 55.6% | Health assistance:<br>Health insurance at time of survey:<br>Medi-Cal: 63.6%;<br>Private/Government: 27.5%<br><br>Child care:<br>Adult relative as primary child care arrangement at time of survey: 47.6%;<br>Respondent has out-of-pocket child care expenses at time of survey: 22.4% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted 6 to 12 months after exit.  |  |  |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 66.4%.   |  |  |

---

**California: Los Angeles County Post-TANF Tracking Project: Quarterly Progress Report, January 2000**

---

|   |   |               |
|---|---|---------------|
| <i>Universe:</i> Single-parent cases who exited cash assistance in the third quarter of 1996. | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,414;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,576    | Not reported. |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.  | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 47.2%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 46.6% |               |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 12 months.  |   |               |

Note: Data are preliminary.

---

**Colorado: Evaluation of the Colorado Works Program: First Annual Report, November 1999**

---

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <i>Universe:</i> Single and two-parent cases closed between July 1997 and December 1998. | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,400;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,603    | Health assistance:<br>Enrolled in Medicaid in the first two months after exit (adults/children): 29%/36% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.   | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 52.4%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 51.0% |  |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 5 quarters (15 months).  | Recidivism:<br>Cases reopened by December 1998: 18.8%   |  |

| Study   | Earnings/Recidivism  | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Colorado: Evaluation of the Colorado Works Program: First Annual Report, November 1999</b>   |  |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single and two-parent cases closed July to September of 1997 that had not reopened as of December 1998.  | Earnings:<br>\$5.15 or less: 9.6%;<br>\$5.16 - \$7.00: 25.6%;<br>\$7.01 or more: 64.9%   | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey (adults/children): 14.9%/43.2%   |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted approximately two years after program exit, mostly between June and August 1999.   | Hours of employment:<br>Less than 35 hours per week: 25.7%;<br>35 hours or more per week: 74.3%                                  | Child care:<br>Employed respondents receiving government or employer child care subsidy at time of survey: 14%                            |
| <i>Response Rate:</i> 78%.  | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 65%;<br>Ever employed since exit: 89%   | Food Assistance:<br>Eligible respondents receiving food stamps at time of survey: 47%   |
| <b>Connecticut: Connecticut's Jobs First Program: An Analysis of Welfare Leavers, December 2000</b>   |  |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single and two-parent cases closed because of the 21-month time limit on cash assistance as of March 1998.   | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,966;<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,485                         | Food assistance:<br>Ever received food stamps:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 66.7%;<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit: 48.8% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.  | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 87.8%;<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit: 77.2%                      |   |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 9 months after exit.  | Recidivism:<br>Ever received welfare:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 3.3%;<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit: 4.1%   |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single and two-parent cases who left Jobs First for at least 2 consecutive months sometime in the first 18 months of random assignment into the program. | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,369;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,516                         | Food assistance:<br>Ever received food stamps:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 29.5%;<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit: 31.7% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.  | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 48.7%;<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit: 49.6%                      |   |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 12 months.  | Recidivism:<br>Ever received welfare:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 10.6%;<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit: 18.9% |   |

| <b>Study</b>  | <b>Earnings/Recidivism</b>   | <b>Health Care/ Child Care/ Food</b>  |
|---|--|---|
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single and two-parent cases who left Jobs First for at least 2 consecutive months prior to the 18 month interview. | Earnings:<br>Average hourly wage:<br>Less than \$6.00: 12.7%;<br>\$6.00 - \$7.49: 13.3%;<br>\$7.50 - \$11.49: 47.9%;<br>\$12.00 or more: 22.3% | Health assistance:<br>Respondent covered by Medicaid in month prior to interview: 59.6% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted 18 months after entry into Jobs First.   | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 69.6%   |   |
| <i>Response rate:</i> Not reported.   |  |   |

---

**District of Columbia: The Status of TANF Leavers in the District of Columbia - Final Report, January 2001**

---

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single and two-parent cases closed in the 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter of 1997 that remained closed for at least 2 consecutive months. | Earnings (Median):<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,416;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,934 | Health assistance:<br>Participating in Medicaid in month 12 after exit: 37.6%   |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.   | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 62.2%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 59.8%       | Food assistance:<br>Participating in food stamps in month 12 after exit: 34.2%  |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 12 months.   | Recidivism:<br>Ever returned to TANF within 12 months of exit: 18.9%  |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single and two-parent cases closed in the 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter of 1998 that remained closed for at least 2 consecutive months. | Earnings:<br>Average hourly wage: \$8.74  | Health assistance:<br>Participating in Medicaid at the time of the survey (adults/children): 53.8%/60.4%;<br>Participating in health insurance through employer (adults/children): 19.1%/11.9%  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted 12 months after exit.   | Hours of employment:<br>Average hours per week (all jobs): 35.5   |   |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 61%.   | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 60.3%  | Child care assistance:<br>Type of arrangement among leavers with children 3 and younger:<br>Child in school: 31.7%;<br>Licensed Registered Provider: 21.7%<br>Paying for child care among leavers with children 3 and younger<br>Received any source of child care assistance: 30.0%;<br>Received child care assistance from welfare office: 6.6% |
|  | Recidivism:<br>Received TANF since exit: 24.6%  |   |

| Study  | Earnings/Recidivism   | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food   |
|--|---|---|
|  |   | Food assistance:<br>Received food stamps since exit: 55.2%<br>Received WIC since exit: 16.3%                          |
| <b>Florida: Tracking the Outcomes of Welfare Reform in Florida for Three Groups of People - Leaver Sample, October 2000</b>  |   |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Single-parent cases closed in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter of 1997 that remained closed for at least 2 consecutive months.                                       | Earnings:<br>Average annual earnings July 1997 - June 1998: \$6,893   | Health assistance:<br>Average percent receiving Medicaid in each month after exit (respondent/children): 45.5%/52.2%  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.   | Employment rate:<br>Average quarterly employment rate July 1997 - March 1999: 53.3%;<br>Ever employed July 1997 - June 1998: 70.4%                      | Food assistance:<br>Average percent receiving food stamps in each month after exit (respondent/children): 35.8%/41.3% |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 21 months.   | Recidivism:<br>Ever using cash assistance within 12 months of exit: 26.1%;<br>Average percent receiving cash assistance in each month after exit: 10.1% |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single-parent cases closed in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter of 1997 that remained closed for at least 2 consecutive months.                             | Hours of employment:<br>Average hours per week:<br>Less than 25: 20.6%;<br>25 - 40: 29.0%;<br>40 or more: 50.0%   | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey: 56.9%   |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted between May and December 1999, approximately 21 months after exit.  | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 56.7%  | Child care assistance:<br>Receiving child care assistance at time of survey: 27.0%                                    |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 23.0%  |   | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 48.1%  |
| <b>Georgia: Amended Quarterly Progress Report: Outcomes for Single Parent Leavers by Cohort Quarter for January-March 1999 – 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 1997 Leavers, April 1999</b> |   |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Single-parent cases closed in 1997 that remained closed to cash aid for at least 2 consecutive months.  | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,193;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,389  | Not reported.   |
| <i>Data Type:</i> Administrative data.   | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 64.2%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 53.3%;<br>Ever employed since exit: 73.9%         |   |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 12 months.   |   |   |

| Study  | Earnings/Recidivism   | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food  |
|--|---|--|
|  | Recidivism:<br>Returned in 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 13.4%  |  |
| <b>Georgia: Welfare Leavers Study Initial Results, December 1999</b>   |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single-parent cases closed beginning July 1999 that remained closed to cash aid for at least 2 consecutive months.        | Earnings:<br>Self-reported monthly income:<br>Less than \$500: 12%;<br>\$500-\$999: 58%;<br>\$1,000-\$1,499: 24%;<br>Greater than \$1,499: 5%   | Health assistance:<br>Children covered by insurance at time of survey: 78%   |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted monthly for period July 1999 through mid-November 1999.   | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 59.0%  |  |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 53.7%.   | Recidivism:<br>Returned in September of 1999: 12%   |  |
| <b>Idaho: Project Self-Reliance: TAFI Participant Closure Study (II), March 1998</b>   |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of all cases closed July 1997 to December 1997.  | Earnings:<br>Less than \$5.25: 27%;<br>\$5.25 - \$7.00: 51%;<br>\$7.01 or more: 21%   | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey: 80%  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted in January 1998 between 1 and 5 months after exit from cash assistance.   | Hours worked per week:<br>40 or more: 32.7%   | Child care assistance:<br>Receiving help from ICCP (government) at time of survey: 15.2%   |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 16.5%.   | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 52.9%  | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 77%;<br>Receiving WIC: 41%  |
| <b>Illinois: Study of Former TANF Clients - Final Report, August 2000</b>  |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Single and two-parent cases closed once for at least 2 consecutive months during study period from July 1997 through December 1998. | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,659;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,961  | Health assistance:<br>Among cases that remained closed for 12 months, percent who ever received Medicaid within 7 months after exit: 54.8%                                     |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.   | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 53.6%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 54.1%;<br>Ever employed since exit: 69.1% | Child care assistance:<br>Among cases with child under the age of 13 at first exit, percent who received a child care subsidy in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 20.3% |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> Up to 24 months (varies).  | Recidivism:<br>Ever returned within 7 months of exit: 24.0%   | Food assistance:   |

| Study  | Earnings/Recidivism  | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  | <p>Among cases that remained closed for 12 months, percent who ever received food stamps within 7 months after exit: 35.3%</p> <p>Among cases with child under the age of 6 at first exit, percent receiving WIC in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 38.2%</p>  |
| <p><i>Universe:</i> Sample of single and two-parent cases closed in December 1998 that remained closed for at least 2 consecutive months.</p> <p><i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted in Mid-June 1999 through late August 1999.</p> <p><i>Response rate:</i> 51.3%.</p> | <p>Earnings:</p> <p>Average hourly wage in current main job: \$7.89;</p> <p>Average weekly take home pay in current main job: \$274</p> <p>Hours of employment:</p> <p>Average hours worked per week on current main job: 36.4</p> <p>Employment rate:</p> <p>At time of survey: 63.2%;</p> <p>Employed continually since exit: 36.6%</p> <p>Recidivism:</p> <p>Returned to welfare at least once in 6 to 8 months since exit: 18.5%</p> | <p>Health assistance:</p> <p>Some medical coverage since exit (respondent/children): 63.8%/71.7%</p> <p>Child care assistance:</p> <p>Pay for at least one child care arrangement at time of survey: 43.5%</p> <p>Food assistance:</p> <p>Received food stamps since exit: 44.1%;</p> <p>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 32.9%</p> <p>Received WIC after exit: 19.5%</p> |

---

**Indiana: Who is on and who is off? Comparing Characteristics and Outcomes for Current and Former TANF Recipients, September 1997**

---

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><i>Universe:</i> Families who had received AFDC sometime between May 1995 and May 1996.</p> <p><i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted early in 1997, 12 to 18 months after individuals enrolled in the state's welfare demonstration program.</p> <p><i>Response rate:</i> Not reported.</p> | <p>Earnings:</p> <p>Less than \$6 hour: 39.4%;</p> <p>\$6 -7.99 hour: 40.7%;</p> <p>\$8 or more: 19.9%</p> <p>Hours of employment:</p> <p>Full-time employment (35 or more hours per week): 61.7%</p> <p>Employment rate:</p> <p>At time of survey: 64.3%;</p> <p>Ever employed since exit: 84.3%</p> | <p>Health assistance:</p> <p>Receiving Medicaid (families): 52.9%;</p> <p>Covered by health insurance (adults/children): 46.1% / 65.1%</p> <p>Child care assistance:</p> <p>Received child care assistance from a community organization since exit: 6.4%</p> <p>Food assistance:</p> <p>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 37.9%;</p> <p>Receiving WIC at time of survey: 24.6%;</p> <p>Receiving school lunch at time of survey: 46.2%;</p> <p>Receiving school breakfast at time of survey: 34.7%</p> |
|---|---|--|

| Study  | Earnings/Recidivism  | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Iowa: Iowa's Limited Benefit Plan (LBP), May 1997</b>   |  |  |
| <p><i>Universe:</i> Individuals in active welfare cases who, in November or December of 1995, or January of 1996 entered month seven of their initial assignment to the LBP.</p> <p><i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted between February and April of 1996 (during months 7 and 12 of the Limited Benefit Plan).</p> <p><i>Response rate:</i> Not reported.</p> | <p>Earnings:<br/>Average weekly earnings: \$170.20</p> <p>Hours of employment:<br/>Average number of hours worked: 31.27;<br/>Percentage working 40 or more hours per week: 38.1%;</p> <p>Employment rate:<br/>Ever employed since exit: 52.6%</p>   | <p>Health assistance:<br/>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey: 66.4%;<br/>Health insurance available from most recent job held: 36.4%</p> <p>Child care assistance:<br/>Child care is a type of support received from family, friends and neighbors since FIP benefits were terminated.</p> <p>Food assistance:<br/>Received food stamps: 63.5%;<br/>Received WIC: 29.9%;</p> |
| <b>Kansas: Statistical Summary of Leaver Survey: Twelve Month Survey Results, June 1999</b>  |  |  |
| <p><i>Universe:</i> Sample of all cases closed December 1997 to November 1998.</p> <p><i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted 12 months after exit.</p> <p><i>Response rate:</i> 51.8%.</p>   | <p>Earnings:<br/>Less than \$5.00 per hour: 10%; \$5.01 to \$7.00: 51%;<br/>\$7.01 or more: 33%</p> <p>Hours of employment:<br/>Full-time employment (more than 37.5 hours/week): 65%</p> <p>Employment rate:<br/>At time of survey: 36%</p> <p>Recidivism:<br/>TAF cases reopened: 18%;<br/>Average months off cash assistance: 7</p> | <p>Health care:<br/>Receiving Medical Assistance (families) at time of survey: 60%</p> <p>Child care assistance:<br/>Receiving child care assistance at time of survey: 6%</p> <p>Food assistance:<br/>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 30%;</p>   |
| <b>Kentucky: From Welfare to Work: Welfare Reform in Kentucky (No. 2) Second Year Survey of Discontinued K-TAP Recipients, January 1999</b>  |  |  |
| <p><i>Universe:</i> Sample of all cases closed January to November 1997 that were still closed at the time of the survey.</p> <p><i>Data Type:</i> Survey conducted October 1998.</p>  | <p>Earnings:<br/>\$5.15 or less per hour: 13.1%;<br/>\$5.16 - \$6.99: 46.1%;<br/>\$7.00 or more: 37.4%</p> <p>Hours of employment:<br/>40 or more hours per week: 59.5%</p>  | <p>Health assistance:<br/>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey (adult): 27.8%;<br/>Medical card or passport at time of survey (children): 60.4%;<br/>Receiving other medical insurance at time of survey (adults/children): 27.0%/18.6%</p>  |

| <b>Study</b>               | <b>Earnings/Recidivism</b>                              | <b>Health Care/ Child Care/ Food</b>  |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Response rate:</i> 42%. | Employment rate:<br>Left program for employment: 48.3%  | Child care assistance:<br>Respondents using some type of child care at time of survey: 37.5%;<br>Respondents using and paying for child care at time of survey: 69.9%;<br>Respondents using and paying for child care who receive payment assistance at time of survey: 28.1% |
|                            | Recidivism:<br>Would return to K-TAP of possible: 18.2% | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 45.6%;<br>Receiving WIC at time of survey: 24.7%   |

---

**Louisiana: Exiting Welfare: The Experiences of Families in Metro New Orleans, June 1998**

---

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of all cases closed January to March of 1998. | Earnings:<br>Average monthly income - working: \$802.59;<br>Average monthly income - not working: \$403.65;<br>Average total Monthly Household Income: \$533.41; | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey: 39.8%  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted in April and May 1998.             |  | Child care assistance:<br>Receiving child care assistance at time of survey: 3.2%                              |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 17.5%.  | Hours of employment:<br>Full-time (40 or more hours per week):18.7%<br>Part-time: 14.9%  | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 49.0%;<br>Receiving WIC at time of survey: 23.5%; |
|   | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 33.6%   |  |

---

**Maryland: Life After Welfare: Fifth Report, October 2000**

---

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single and two-parent cases closed for any period of time from October 1996 to March 2000. | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2485;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2753;<br>12 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$3441    | Health assistance:<br>After exit, anyone in unit received Medical Assistance/S-CHIP in months 1-3: 50.0%;<br>After exit, anyone in unit received Medical Assistance/S-CHIP in months 25-36: 55.5%; |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.  | Employment rate<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 49.2%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 48.4%;<br>12 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 51.9% | Food assistance:<br>After exit, received food stamps in months 1-3: 78.4%;<br>After exit, received food stamps in months 25-36: 42.7%  |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> Up to 36 months (varies).   | Recidivism:<br>36 months after exit (excludes those who return within 30 days): 36.0%   |  |

| Study  | Earnings/Recidivism  | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Massachusetts: After Time Limits: A Study of Households Leaving Welfare Between December 1998 and April 1999, November 2000</b>   |  |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of cases closed for reaching the time limit between December 15, 1998 and April 30, 1999.<br><br><i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted October 1999 through March 2000.<br><br><i>Response rate:</i> 75.5%. | Earnings:<br>Average hourly wage: \$8.21<br><br>Hours of employment:<br>Average hours per week: 31<br><br>Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 72.6%;<br>Ever employed since exit: 90.2% | Health assistance:<br>Medicaid coverage at time of survey (respondent/children): 83.7%/87.0%<br><br>Child care assistance:<br>Children less than 13 years of age in child care while respondent at work or school: 54%;<br>Child care arrangement and receiving federal or state subsidy: 38.7%<br><br>Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 52.4%;<br>Received food stamps ever since exit: 67.0%   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of cases closed for non-time limit reasons between December 15, 1998 and March 14, 1999.<br><br><i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted October 1999 through March 2000.<br><br><i>Response rate:</i> 74.4%.  | Earnings:<br>Average hourly wage: \$8.62<br><br>Hours of employment:<br>Average hours per week: 34<br><br>Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 70.5%;<br>Ever employed since exit: 90.5% | Health assistance:<br>Medicaid coverage at time of survey (respondent/children): 80.0%/80.5%<br><br>Child care assistance:<br>Children less than 13 years of age in child care while respondent at work or school: 59.8%;<br>Child care arrangement and receiving federal or state subsidy: 49.2%<br><br>Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 29.0%;<br>Received food stamps ever since exit: 44.3% |
| <b>Michigan: Longitudinal Study of Family Independence Program (FIP) Recipients: 1998 Closed FIP Cases, 1998</b>   |  |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Cases that were receiving cash assistance (FIP) in 1/97, but were closed at time of survey.<br><br><i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted 6/98 - 9/98.<br><br><i>Response rate:</i> 44.5%.                          | Earnings:<br>Average hourly wage: \$7.02<br><br>Hours of employment:<br>Average hours worked per week: 31.7<br><br>Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 71.1%                            | Not reported.   |

| Study  | Earnings/Recidivism   | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food   |
|--|---|---|
|  | Recidivism:<br>All of the cases included in the analysis were closed at the time of the survey.   |   |
| <b>Mississippi: Tracking of TANF Clients: First Report of a Longitudinal Study, January 1999</b>   |   |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of all cases closed January to April 1998 for any length of time.  | Earnings:<br>Average hourly wage: \$5.77 (\$5.97 urban, \$5.57 rural)   | Health assistance:<br>Children receiving Medicaid at time of survey: 44%;<br>Children receiving private insurance at time of survey: 10%  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted July to September 1998.   | Hours of employment:<br>Average Hours per week: 35;<br>Full-time (35 or more hours per week): 67% (75% urban; 59% rural);<br>Part-time: 33% (25% urban ; 41% rural) | Child care assistance:<br>Respondents using child care in the last 6 months who received state sponsored payments: 56%;   |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 86.7%.   | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 35% (27% rural, 46% urban);<br>Ever Employed in last 6 months: 47% (52% urban; 43% rural)                                    | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 58% (47% urban, 67% rural);<br>Participate in school lunch program at time of survey (of families with school age children): 82%   |
|  | Recidivism:<br>Received TANF, Medicaid, and food stamp benefits at least one month since originally leaving the rolls: 47% (37% urban; 73% rural)                   |   |
| <b>Missouri: Former AFDC Recipients in Missouri - Chapters 1-3, June 2000</b>  |   |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single and two-parent AFDC/TANF cases (those receiving a cash payment) who were active during September, October, and/or November 1996, and who left AFDC during the fourth quarter of 1996 and remained off the rolls for at least 2 consecutive months. | Earnings:<br>Average hourly wage: \$6.00  | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey (adult/children): 38%/65%  |
|  | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 65%;<br>Not employed at survey, but had worked since exit: 25%   | Child care assistance:<br>Percent of eligible population who received a subsidy at time of survey (administrative data): 28%;<br>Percent of eligible population who received a subsidy since leaving cash assistance (administrative data): 55% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted between March 15 and August 31, 1999 (Supplemented with administrative data records where noted), approximately 30 months after exit.   | Hours of Employment:<br>Average hours worked per week: 39   | Food assistance:<br>Received food stamps in last month: 47%;<br>Received food stamps any time since exit (administrative data): 80%;  |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 74.5%.   | Recidivism:<br>Received cash assistance since exit: 31% (survey); 44% (administrative data); 50% (either source).<br>Receiving cash assistance at time of survey:   |   |

| Study | Earnings/Recidivism | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food   |
|-------|---------------------|---|
|       | 14%                 | Received food stamps any time since exit (either data source): 83%<br>Received WIC when surveyed: 23% |

---

**Missouri: Preliminary Outcomes for 1996 Fourth Quarter AFDC Leavers, September 1999**

---

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <i>Universe:</i> All single and two-parent AFDC/TANF cases (those receiving a cash payment) who were active during September, October, and/or November 1996, and who left AFDC during the fourth quarter of 1996 and remained off the rolls for at least 2 consecutive months. | <p>Earnings:<br/>1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,192;<br/>8<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,055</p> <p>Employment rate:<br/>1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 58.1%<br/>8<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 56.7%<br/>Ever employed since exit: 79.5%</p> | <p>Health assistance:<br/>Receiving Medicaid at any time during the 8 quarter follow-up period (self/children): 48.0%/59.2%</p> <p>Food assistance:<br/>Receiving food stamps at any time during the 8 quarter follow-up period: 74.9%</p> |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.   | Recidivism:   |  |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 2 years (8 quarters).  | Returned to cash assistance at any time during the 8 quarter follow-up period: 36.2%  |  |

---

**Montana: Montana's Welfare Reform Project: FAIM February 1998 Update, February 1998**

---

|   |  |               |
|---|--|---------------|
| <i>Universe:</i> All cases closed that remained closed from March 1996 to September 1997. | <p>Earnings:<br/>Over the 18-month period: \$5,908</p> <p>Employment rate:<br/>Reported employment earnings: 57%</p> | Not reported. |
| <i>Data Type:</i> Administrative data.  |  |               |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 18 months.  |  |               |

---

**Montana: Montana's Welfare Reform Project: FAIM February 1998 Update, February 1998**

---

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <i>Universe:</i> Current and former recipients of welfare at time of survey. | <p>Earnings:<br/>Percent earning less than minimum wage: 11%</p> | <p>Health assistance:<br/>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey 74.5%;</p>  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted December 1997 to January 1998.            | <p>Hours of employment:<br/>More than 20 hours per week: 47%</p> | <p>Child care assistance:<br/>29 survey respondents were enrolled in Job Supplement Program (JSP), with 6 utilizing publicly funded child care at time of survey</p>       |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 208 respondents (response rate not provided).          | <p>Employment rate:<br/>At time of survey: 66%</p>               | <p>Food assistance:<br/>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 63%;<br/>Receiving School Lunch at time of survey: 55.3%;<br/>Receiving WIC at time of survey: 47.6%;</p> |

| Study   | Earnings/Recidivism   | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>New Jersey: WFNJ Evaluation: Current and Former WFNJ Clients: How are they Faring 30 Months Later: Leaver Sample, November 2000</b>  |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of all cases who entered the program from July 1997 to December 1998, a subsample of which have left (the leaver sample).   | Earnings:<br>Average Total Household Monthly Income: \$1,429;<br>Average Total Household Monthly Income among employed leavers: \$1,832 | Health assistance:<br>Public health insurance at time of survey (respondent/children): 46%/59%;<br>Private health insurance at time of survey (respondent/children): 17%/14% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted in spring 2000.  | Employment rate:<br>Among those who had left 24 months after WFNJ entry : 59.7%   | Child care:<br>Percent of employed former clients were receiving government child care subsidies: 27%  |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 80%.  |   | Food Assistance:<br>Eligible for and receiving food stamps: 50%  |
| <b>New Mexico: Survey of Current and Former Welfare Recipients, 2000</b>  |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of all cases that were receiving welfare benefits in New Mexico at some time between July 1998 and June 1999 (results reported here are for those who left welfare during this period). | Earnings:<br>Less than \$5 per hour: 9.1%;<br>\$5.00 - \$6.99 per hour: 48.7%;<br>At least \$7.00 per hour: 42.2%                       | Health assistance:<br>Received Medicaid for self or children at time of survey: 58.4%  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey began in November 1999.  | Hours of employment:<br>Less than 20 hours per week: 5.7%;<br>21-39 hours per week: 40.5%;<br>At least 40 hours per week: 53.9%         | Child care assistance:<br>Pay for child care and receive help from county at time of survey : 33%  |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 72.5%.  | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 62.5%;<br>Not currently working, but had worked since leaving welfare: 51%                       | Food assistance:<br>Received food stamps at time of survey: 38.5%;<br>Received WIC at time of survey: 23.1%  |
|   | Recidivism:<br>Previously left welfare but went back: 57.0%   |  |

| <b>Study</b>  | <b>Earnings/Recidivism</b>  | <b>Health Care/ Child Care/ Food</b>  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>New York: After Welfare: A Study of Work and Benefit Use After Case Closing, December 1999</b>   |   |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Single and two-parent cases closed January to March 1997 that were closed for at least 2 months.   | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,868;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$4,230                                  | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid in the 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after case closing (all/adults/children): 45%/32%/35%   |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.  | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 55%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 53%;<br>Ever employed since exit: 66% | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps in the 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after case closing (all/adults/children): 29%/24%/29%  |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 12 months.  | Recidivism:<br>Ever returned to welfare by month 12 of follow-up: 21.1%   |   |
| <b>New York: Leaving Welfare: Findings from a Survey of Former New York City Welfare Recipients, September 1998</b>   |   |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of TANF cases closed in November 1997.  | Earnings:<br>Hourly wage rates below \$5.75: 10%;<br>\$5.75 - \$7.00: 30%;<br>Over \$7.00: 49%  | Health assistance:<br>Employed and receiving insurance through Medicaid at time of survey: 8%<br>Employed and receiving insurance through work and Medicaid at time of survey: 6% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted April 1998 through July 1998, approximately 6 months after exit.   | Hours of employment:<br>Less than 30 hours worked per week: 39%;<br>30 - 40: 26%;<br>40 or more: 29%                                      |   |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 22%; However rate increases to 60% among those with current and accurate telephone numbers.   | Employment rate:<br>Ever employed since exit: 67%   |   |
|   | Recidivism:<br>Returned to welfare since exit: 15%  |   |
| <b>North Carolina: Evaluation of the North Carolina Work First Program: Study of Families Leaving Work First in Selected Counties, May 2000</b>                                       |   |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single and two-parent cases who had left Work First for any reason between December 1998 and April 1999 for at least one month in eight selected counties. | Earnings:<br>Hourly wage rates at primary job:<br>Less than \$7.00: 38.7%;<br>\$7.00 - \$7.99: 23.0%;<br>\$8.00 or more: 38.3%            | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at the time of the survey (overall/children): 66.7%/70.8%  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted between February 1999 and June 2000.   | Employment rate:<br>Employed at time of survey: 64.1%   | Child care assistance:<br>Respondents with children under 18 who reported that they used paid or unpaid child care at time of survey: 59.7%;                                      |

| Study                        | Earnings/Recidivism   | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food  |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| <i>Response rate:</i> 70.1%. | Recidivism:<br>Returned to welfare the time of the survey:<br>17.3% | Respondents who use paid child care who receive payment assistance from the county at time of survey: 52.8%<br><br>Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at the time of the survey: 45.0%;<br>Receiving WIC at the time of the survey: 23.9% |

---

**North Carolina: Evaluation of the North Carolina Work First Program: Analysis of Administrative Data on Families Receiving Welfare and Diversion Assistance - Fourth Quarterly Report, May 2000**

---

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| AFDC exit cohort -<br><i>Universe:</i> All families who received a cash assistance payment in January 1995 but did not receive a check in February 1995.           | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,075;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,211;<br>12 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,524;<br>18 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,210 | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps:<br>12 months after exit: 33.2%;<br>24 months after exit: 29.4%;<br>36 months after exit: 27.9% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.   | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 65.7%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 61.6%;<br>12 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 62.4%;<br>18 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 59.8%  |   |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 39 months.   | Recidivism:<br>Receiving welfare in month 6 after exit: 21.2%;<br>Receiving welfare in month 18 after exit: 18.8%;<br>Returned to welfare in the first 18 months after exit: 37.6%                         |   |
| September 1996 exit cohort -<br><i>Universe:</i> All families who received a cash assistance payment in August 1996 but did not receive a check in September 1996. | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,251;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,275;<br>12 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,843  | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps:<br>12 months after exit: 32.6%;<br>24 months after exit: 29.0%;<br>36 months after exit: 31.1% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.   | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 68.1%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 65.2%;<br>12 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 59.8%   |   |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 39 months.   | Recidivism:<br>Receiving welfare in month 6 after exit: 18.0%;   |   |

| Study   | Earnings/Recidivism  | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food   |
|---|--|---|
|   | Receiving welfare in month 18 after exit:<br>14.5%;<br>Returned to welfare in the first 18 months after exit: 33.1%  |   |
| June 1997 exit cohort -<br><i>Universe:</i> All families who received a cash assistance payment in May 1997 but did not receive a check in June 1997.<br><br><i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.<br><br><i>Follow-up:</i> 30 months. | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,135;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,374;<br>8 <sup>h</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,568<br><br>Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 70.8%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 65.6%;<br>8 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 62.2%<br><br>Recidivism:<br>Receiving welfare in month 6 after exit: 18.7%;<br>Receiving welfare in month 18 after exit: 12.3%;<br>Returned to welfare in the first 18 months after exit: 32.7% | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps:<br>12 months after exit: 38.2%;<br>24 months after exit: 31.7% |
| June 1998 exit cohort -<br><i>Universe:</i> All families who received a cash assistance payment in May 1998 but did not receive a check in June 1998.<br><br><i>Data type:</i> Administrative.<br><br><i>Follow-up:</i> 18 months.      | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$1,999;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,119<br><br>Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 69.7%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 62.7%<br><br>Recidivism:<br>Receiving welfare in month 6 after exit: 15.5%;<br>Receiving welfare in month 18 after exit: 11.2%;<br>Returned to welfare in the first 18 months after exit: 30.0%  | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps:<br>12 months after exit: 39.7%                                 |

| Study  | Earnings/Recidivism  | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>North Carolina: Evaluation of the North Carolina Work First Program: Study of Families Leaving Work First due to Time Limits - Results from the Second Follow-up Surveys, February 2000</b> |  |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> All cases closed in August 1998 because of a 24-month state time limit (92% had received cash welfare for at least 40 of the 43 past months.                                  | Earnings:<br>\$5.00 - \$6.99 per hour: 55.3%;<br>\$7.00 - \$8.99: 19.3%;<br>\$9.00 or more: 25.4%            | Health care:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey: 75.6%  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted between September and December of 1999 (supplemented with administrative data), approximately 13 to 16 months after reaching the time limit.                | Hours of employment:<br>20 to 39 hours per week: 36.2%;<br>40 or more: 53.2%                                 | Child care assistance:<br>Receiving a child care subsidy at time of survey: 7%                               |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 70.2% of original sample (89.5% of respondents to first survey).   | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 65.6%   | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 58.8%;<br>Receiving WIC at time of survey: 5.4% |
|  | Recidivism:<br>All cases closed because of the time limit are ineligible for TANF cash benefits for 3 years. |  |

---

**Ohio: How Are They Managing? A Six Month Retrospective of Cuyahoga County Families Leaving Welfare, 1999**

---

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of all families who exit cash assistance in the 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter of 1998 and 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter of 1999 for at least 2 consecutive months. | Earnings:<br>Total Family Income (including cash value of food stamps) greater than or equal to 100% of 1998 Poverty Level: 55% | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey (adults/children): 59% / 69%;<br>Receiving Private Health Insurance at time of survey(adults/children): 17% / 15%; |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted 6 months after exit.  | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 67%;<br>Ever employed since exit: 87%  | Child care assistance:<br><br>Receiving child care assistance at time of survey: 22%  |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 70%.   | Recidivism:<br>Returned at least once: 24%  | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 53%  |

| Study   | Earnings/Recidivism  | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Ohio: Employment and Returns to Public Assistance Among Single, Female-Headed Families Leaving AFDC in Third Quarter, 1996 in Cuyahoga County, May 1999 (revised September 2000)</b>     |  |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Single, female headed families who exited cash assistance in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter of 1996 for at least 2 consecutive months.  | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,756;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,952                         | Health assistance:<br>Received Medicaid:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 41.4%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 37.7%   |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.  | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 59.3%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 56.8%                      | Food assistance:<br>Received food stamps:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 42.5%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 39.4%  |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 12 months.  | Recidivism:<br>Returned to cash assistance within 12 months after exit (adults/children): 35%/37%                                |   |
| <b>Oklahoma: Family Health and Well-Being in Oklahoma: An Exploratory Analysis of TANF Cases Closed and Denied October 1996-November 1997: Sample of Adult and Children, September 1998</b> |  |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of all cases that were closed or denied for any reason from October 1996 to November 1997 regardless of whether they were receiving TANF at the time of the survey. | Earnings:<br>Average hourly wage: \$6.51   | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid only at time of survey (adult/children): 60.6%/62.6%;<br>Receiving Private (work-related) & Medicaid at time of survey (adult/children): 9.2%/18.5%; |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted January 1998 through April 1998.   | Hours of employment:<br>Average hours worked per week: 34<br>Full-time employment (40 or more hours per week): 50.3%;            | Child care assistance:<br>Eligible households receiving child care assistance: 33.9%  |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 53.3%.  | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 50.3%;<br>Respondents who live in households with at least one employed individual: 68.5% | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps only: 8.9%;<br>Receiving WIC/other (including Food Banks), only: 25.7%<br>Receiving food stamps and WIC: 40.1%;                                     |
|   | Recidivism:<br>Received TANF at least once since October 1996: 33.6%   |   |
| <b>Oregon: Oregon Families Who Left Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) or Food Stamps: A Study of Economic and Family Well-being from 1998 to 2000, Volume 1, January 2001</b>   |  |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of families who left in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter of 1998 who didn't return for two consecutive months.   | Earnings:<br>Average monthly earnings: \$1,016.32  | Not reported.   |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted October 1999 through December 1999, 18 to  | Hours of employment:<br>Hours per week:<br>Less than 20: 9.7%;   |   |

| Study  | Earnings/Recidivism                        | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| 21 months after exit, supplemented with administrative data.   | 20 - 39: 36.5%;<br>40 or more: 53.8%       |                               |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 75.8%.<br>This response rate refers to the <i>second</i> survey, for which results are reported. The response rate for the first survey was 80.9%, with 93.7% of these respondents completing a second survey. | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 71% |                               |

---

**Pennsylvania: Welfare Reform After Two Years: Technical Report on Former Welfare Recipients in Pennsylvania (March 1997 - March 1999), November 1999**

---

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <i>Universe:</i> Single and two-parent cases that were closed March 1997 to December 1998 that remained closed. Food stamp and Medicaid Participation data is reported from March 1997 to April 1999. | Earnings:<br>Annualized income:<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$11,711;<br>8 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$13,759 | Health assistance:<br>Received Medicaid for some period of time since exit: 76%  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative Data.  | Employment rate:<br>Ever employed since exit: 68%  | Food assistance:<br>Received food stamps for some period of time since exit: 65% |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> Up to 8 quarters (varies).  | Recidivism: Only cases that remained closed were included in the sample.   |  |

---

**Pennsylvania: Welfare Reform After Two Years: Technical Report on Former Welfare Recipients in Pennsylvania (March 1997 - March 1999), November 1999**

---

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <i>Universe:</i> Single and two-parent cases that were closed February to November of 1998 that remained closed for 6 consecutive months. | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 58.4%;<br>Ever employed since exit: 80.8%           | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey (households): 81.6%;<br>Receiving Private insurance at time of survey: 27.2%   |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey.   | Recidivism:<br>All of the cases in the sample were still closed at the time of the survey. | Child care assistance:<br>Respondents with extended/after-school care for children who receive state child care payment assistance at time of survey: 42.1%<br>Respondents with preschool children and a caretaker who receive state child care payment assistance at time of survey: 64.4% |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 29%.  |  | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey:  |

| Study | Earnings/Recidivism | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food  |
|-------|---------------------|--|
|       |                     | 51.2%;<br>Receiving WIC at time of survey: 26.4%;<br>Receiving School lunch program at time of survey: 47.2%;<br>Receiving summer feeding program at time of survey: 25.6% |

---

**Rhode Island: Where Are They Now? A Post-Cash Administrative Data Study, May 1999**

---

*Universe:* All cases closed in April 1997 and April 1998 that remained closed for at least 31 days.

Recidivism:  
Cases Re-opened Within the Year:  
April 1997: 29.9%;  
April 1998: 30.5%

Not reported.

*Data type:* Administrative data.

*Follow-up:* 12 months.

---

**South Carolina: Survey of Former Family Independence Program Clients: Cases Closed During January through March, 1998, June 1999**

---

*Universe:* Sample of all cases with at least one adult subject to FIP work requirements closed January to March of 1998 that remained closed up to the time of the survey.

Earnings:  
Average hourly wage: \$7.00  
  
Hours of employment:  
Average hours worked per week: 35.1; Work 30 or more hours per week: 81.4%

Health assistance:  
At least one household member covered by Medicaid at time of survey: 77.6%;  
Receiving private insurance at time of survey (adults/children): 7.2%; 7.4%

*Data type:* Survey conducted January 1999 through April 1999, 12 to 15 months after exit from cash assistance.

Employment rate:  
At time of survey: 54.7%;  
Ever employed since exit: 80.7%

Child care assistance:  
Receiving assistance at time of survey (all households): 9.9%;  
Among those using care at time of survey, 30% receive subsidy for preschool; 27.4% for school-aged

*Response rate:* 75.0%.

Recidivism:  
Pretty sure they will not need welfare again: 51.0%

Food assistance:  
Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 52.6%;  
Receiving school lunch program at time of survey: 52.1%;  
Receiving WIC at time of survey: 27.1%;  
Receiving Summer feeding program at time of survey: 4.9%

| <b>Study</b>  | <b>Earnings/Recidivism</b>   | <b>Health Care/ Child Care/ Food</b>   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Tennessee: Summary of Surveys of Welfare Recipients Employed or Sanctioned for Non-Compliance, March 1998</b>  |  |  |
| <p><i>Universe:</i> Sample of cases sanctioned/closed for noncompliance with Families First program requirements since January 1997.</p> <p><i>Data type:</i> Survey with data collected through October 1997.</p> <p><i>Response Rate:</i> 56%.</p>  | <p>Earnings:<br/>Average hourly wage: \$5.50</p> <p>Employment rate:<br/>At time of survey: 39%</p> <p>Recidivism:<br/>Think they will return to Families First: 47%;<br/>10% report receiving other benefit checks to help pay the bills - listed source of benefit checks is AFDC, so some of these 10% may be back on public assistance.</p>  | <p>Health assistance:<br/>Receiving TennCare at time of survey: 88%</p> <p>Child care assistance:<br/>Receive child care assistance at time of survey: 16%</p>                 |
| <p><i>Universe:</i> Sample of cases sanctioned/closed for their refusal to sign a Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP) since January 1997.</p> <p><i>Data type:</i> Survey with data collected through October 1997.</p> <p><i>Response rate:</i> 59%.</p>  | <p>Hours of employment:<br/>Full-time: 25%;<br/>Part-time: 17%</p> <p>Employment rate:<br/>At time of survey: 42%</p> <p>Recidivism:<br/>Think they will return to Families First: 25%</p>   | <p>Health assistance:<br/>Receiving TennCare at time of survey: 91%</p> <p>Child care assistance:<br/>Receive child care assistance at time of survey March 1, 2001: 21%</p>   |
| <b>Texas: The Impacts of Welfare Reform Changes in Texas: Early Findings, December 1998</b>   |  |  |
| <p><i>Universe:</i> Sample of cases closed in November 1997 that remained off TANF for 6 months, as well as a sample of cases redirected from TANF through Texas Works in December of 1997.</p> <p><i>Data type:</i> Survey, supplemented with administrative data.</p> <p><i>Response rate:</i> 51%.</p> | <p>Earnings:<br/>Average hourly wage: \$6.28 (\$6.15 for Redirects; \$6.35 for Leavers)</p> <p>Hours of employment:<br/>Average hours per week: 34 (34.1 hours/week for leavers &amp; 34.7 for redirects)</p> <p>Employment rate:<br/>At time of survey: 55% (59% of leavers &amp; 50% of those redirected);<br/>Ever employed since exit: 68% (76% of leavers &amp; 62% of those redirected).</p> | <p>Health assistance:<br/>Received Medicaid since exit (leavers/redirected): 74%/ 66%</p> <p>Food assistance:<br/>Received WIC since exit (leavers/redirected): 33% / 42%;</p> |

| <b>Study</b>   | <b>Earnings/Recidivism</b>  | <b>Health Care/ Child Care/ Food</b>   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Texas: Why People Leave Welfare II: An Expanded Follow-up Study of the Effects of Welfare Reform, December 1998</b>   |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single and two-parent cases closed November 1997 to February 1998.  | Earnings:<br>Average monthly salary: \$771  | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey: 62%  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey.  | Employment rate:<br>Percent who left cash assistance for employment: 48%  | Child care:<br>Receiving child care assistance at time of survey: 12%  |
| <i>Response rate:</i> Ranged from 54% to 66%.  | Hours of employment (among the 48% who left cash assistance for employment):<br>Percent employed full-time: 75% | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 56%   |
| <b>Utah: Multiple Impacts of Welfare Reform in Utah: Experiences of Former Long-term Welfare Recipients, June 2000</b>   |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of all cases who had received cash assistance for at least 36 months whose cases had been closed for at least 2 consecutive months whose reason for case closing was "income." | Earnings:<br>Average monthly income: \$1,092  | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey: 83%;<br>Received Medicaid since exit: 88%                    |
|  | Hours of employment:<br>Average hours per week: 35  | Child care:<br>Receiving child care assistance at time of survey: 34%;<br>Received child care assistance since exit: 37% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted from July 1999 to January 2000.   | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 77%  | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 56%;<br>Received food stamps since exit: 64%                |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 90%  |   |  |
| <i>Universe:</i> Cases who had received cash assistance for at least 36 months whose cases had been closed for at least 2 consecutive months whose reason for case closing was "time limit."           | Earnings:<br>Average monthly income: \$750  | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey: 80%;<br>Received Medicaid since exit: 81%                    |
|  | Hours of employment:<br>Average hours per week: 27  | Child care:<br>Receiving child care assistance at time of survey: 13%;<br>Received Child care assistance since exit: 14% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted from February 2000 to May 2000.   | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 43%  | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 85%;<br>Received food stamps since exit: 85%                |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 69%.   |   |  |

| <b>Study</b>  | <b>Earnings/Recidivism</b>   | <b>Health Care/ Child Care/ Food</b>   |
|---|--|--|
| <i>Universe:</i> Cases who had received cash assistance for at least 36 months whose cases had been closed for at least 2 consecutive months whose reason for case closing was "other."<br><br><i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted from July 1999 to January 2000.<br><br><i>Response rate:</i> 61%. | Earnings:<br>Average monthly income: \$814<br><br>Hours of employment:<br>Average hours per week: 30<br><br>Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 42% | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey: 64%;<br>Received Medicaid since exit: 66%<br><br>Child care:<br>Receiving child care assistance at time of survey: 11%;<br>Received Child care assistance since exit: 13%<br><br>Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 62%;<br>Received food stamps since exit: 63% |

---

**Virginia: Experiences of Virginia Time-Limit Families in the Six Months After Case Closure: Results from an Early Cohort, Final Report, November 1999**

---

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Universe:</i> All cases closed February through June 1999 due to the state time-limit.<br><br><i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted 6 to 12 months after exit from cash assistance.<br><br><i>Response rate:</i> 78%. | Earnings:<br>Average hourly wage: \$5.99<br><br>Hours of employment:<br>Average hours per week: 33.5<br><br>Employment Rate:<br>At time of survey: 71%;<br>Ever employed since exit: 85.5%<br><br>Recidivism:<br>Percent receiving income from TANF in month before interview: 2.4% | Health assistance:<br>Among working, percent who enrolled in employer-provided health benefits: 28.8%<br><br>Child care:<br>Among working or in training, percent who receive at least some government assistance: 28.7%;<br>Among working or in training, percent who were aware of government assistance but chose not to participate: 34.7%<br><br>Food assistance:<br>Percent receiving income from food stamp program in month before interview: 76.1% |
|---|---|---|

---

**Washington: A Study of Washington State's TANF Leavers and TANF Recipients - Welfare Reform and Findings from Administrative Data Final Report: February 2000**

---

Cohort I:

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Universe:</i> Single and two-parent cases closed in 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter 1996 that remained closed to cash aid for at least 2 consecutive months.<br><br><i>Data type:</i> Administrative data. | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,778;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,340;<br>8 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,701<br><br>Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 51%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 56%;<br>8 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 57% | Child care assistance:<br>Receiving state subsidized child care:<br>Quarter of exit: 11%<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 10%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 8%;<br>8 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 7% |
|---|---|---|

| Study   | Earnings/Recidivism  | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food   |
|---|--|---|
| <p><i>Follow-up:</i> 24 months.</p> <p>Note: Health and Food Assistance data is not available for Cohort I.</p>   | <p>Recidivism:<br/>Ever returned in the four quarters after exit:<br/>28.8%</p>  |   |
| Cohort II:  |  |   |
| <p><i>Universe:</i> Single and two-parent cases closed in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 1997 that remained closed to cash aid for at least 2 consecutive months.</p> <p><i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.</p> <p><i>Follow-up:</i> 18 months.</p> | <p>Earnings:<br/>1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,714;<br/>4<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$3,351</p> <p>Employment rate:<br/>1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 57%;<br/>4<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 58%</p> <p>Recidivism:<br/>Ever returned in the four quarters after exit:<br/>23.2%</p> | <p>Health assistance:<br/>Received Medical Assistance:<br/>Quarter of exit: 99%;<br/>1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 53%;<br/>4<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 43%</p> <p>Child care assistance:<br/>Receiving state subsidized child care:<br/>Quarter of exit: 14%;<br/>1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 11%;<br/>4<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 9%</p> <p>Food assistance:<br/>Received food stamps:<br/>Quarter of exit: 91%;<br/>1<sup>st</sup> quarter of exit: 46%;<br/>4<sup>th</sup> quarter of exit: 36%</p> |
| Cohort III:   |  |   |
| <p><i>Universe:</i> Single -parent cases closed in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 1998 that remained closed to cash aid for at least 2 consecutive months.</p> <p><i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.</p> <p><i>Follow-up:</i> 6 months</p>          | <p>Earnings:<br/>1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,387</p> <p>Employment rate:<br/>1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 62%</p> <p>Recidivism:<br/>Ever returned in the two quarters after exit:<br/>17.1%</p>  | <p>Health assistance:<br/>Received Medical Assistance:<br/>Quarter of exit: 98%;<br/>1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 60%</p> <p>Child care assistance:<br/>Received state subsidized child care:<br/>Quarter of exit: 18%;<br/>1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 14%</p> <p>Food assistance:<br/>Received food stamps:<br/>Quarter of exit: 90%;<br/>1<sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 47%</p>   |

| Study   | Earnings/Recidivism  | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Washington: A Study of Washington State's TANF Leavers and TANF Recipients - Findings from the April-June 1999 Telephone Survey Final Report: March 2000</b> |  |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of single and two-parent cases closed in October 1998 that remained closed for at least 2 consecutive months.                           | Earnings:<br>Average hourly wage: \$7.70   | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid, medical coupons, healthy options at time of survey (adults/children): 53%/77%         |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted April through June 1999.   | Hours of employment:<br>Average number of hours worked per week: 36;<br>Percent working full-time (35 or more hours) per week: 69% | Child care assistance:<br>State-subsidized child care among those parents who had childcare arrangements at time of survey: 39% |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 72%.  | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 59%   | Food assistance:<br>Received food stamps within the last six months: 53%  |
|   | Recidivism:<br>Returned to TANF at the time of the survey: 19%   |   |

---

**Wisconsin: Post-Exit Earnings and Benefit Receipt among Those Who Left AFDC in Wisconsin, January 1999**

---

**Cohort I:**

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <i>Universe:</i> Single mothers who left welfare in the last quarter of 1995 for at least 2 consecutive months followed through December 1998. | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,545;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,940   | Food assistance:<br>Ever received food stamps in year after exit: 57.4%;<br>Ever received food stamps in 3 years after exit: 65.8% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative Data.   | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 69.0%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 68.7%;<br>Ever employed in first year after exit: 81.1%;<br>Ever employed over 3 years after exit: 87.8% |  |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 36 months (3 years).   | Recidivism:<br>Ever received TANF in year after exit: 29.0%;<br>Ever received TANF in 3 years after exit: 34.4%  |  |

**Cohort II:**

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Universe:</i> Single mothers who left welfare in the last quarter of 1997 for at least 2 consecutive months followed through December 1998. | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,081;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,744  | Food assistance:<br>Ever received food stamps in year after exit: 80.6% |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative Data.   | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 69.6%;<br>4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 68.1%;<br>Ever employed in first year after exit: 83.9% |   |

| Study   | Earnings/Recidivism   | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food   |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 12 months.  | Recidivism:<br>Ever received TANF in year after exit: 24.5%   |   |
| <b>Wisconsin: Post-Exit Earnings and Benefit Receipt among Those Who Left AFDC in Wisconsin, January 1999</b> |   |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Cases closed for at least 2 consecutive months between August 1995 and July 1996.            | Earnings:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,440;<br>5 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: \$2,751  | Health assistance (5 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit):<br>Receiving Medicaid only: 23.4%;<br>Receiving Medicaid and food stamps: 26.0%   |
| <i>Data type:</i> Administrative data.  | Employment rate:<br>1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit: 72.4%;<br>5 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit: 75.8%<br>Ever employed in year following exit: 81.7%  | Food assistance (5 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit):<br>Receiving food stamps only: 2.3%;<br>Receiving Medicaid and food stamps: 26.0%   |
| <i>Follow-up:</i> 15 months.  | Recidivism:<br>Returned to AFDC within 15 months of leaving:<br>30%   |   |
| <b>Wisconsin: Survey of Those Leaving AFDC or W-2 January to March 1998: Preliminary Report, January 1999</b> |   |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Cases closed between January and March 1998, that remained closed at the time of the survey. | Earnings:<br>Employed at time of interview - hourly wage \$7.42;<br>Ever employed - hourly wage: \$7.28   | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid or Healthy Start Received at time of survey: 87%;<br>Private Insurance at time of survey: 26%  |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted August to November of 1998, 6 to 9 months after exit from cash assistance. | Hours of employment:<br>Mean hours per week at best job for those currently employed: 36;<br>Mean hours per week at best job for those who had worked since their exit but are currently unemployed: 33 | Child care assistance:<br>Receiving child care assistance at time of survey: 17%  |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 69%.  | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 62%<br>Ever employed since exit: 83%   | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 49%;<br>Receiving WIC at time of survey: 38%;<br>Receiving School lunch program at time of survey: 47%;<br>Receiving summer feeding program for children at time of survey: 5% |
|   | Recidivism: Agree or strongly agree that they are pretty sure they will not need to be on welfare again: 60%  |   |

| Study   | Earnings/Recidivism   | Health Care/ Child Care/ Food   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Wyoming: A Survey of Former POWER Recipients, May 1998</b>           |   |   |
| <i>Universe:</i> Sample of all cases closed January 1997 to March 1998. | Earnings: (all respondents):<br>Less than \$5/hour: 3.5%;<br>5.01 to \$7.50: 47%;<br>\$7.51 or more: 9.0% | Health assistance:<br>Receiving Medicaid at time of survey (families): 82.5%        |
| <i>Data type:</i> Survey conducted in March 1998.                       | Hours of employment:<br>40 or more hours: 47%   | Child care assistance:<br>Receive public assistance day care at time of survey: 28% |
| <i>Response rate:</i> 31.8%.  | Employment rate:<br>At time of survey: 61%  | Food assistance:<br>Receiving food stamps at time of survey: 61%                    |
|   | Recidivism:<br>Back on POWER at time of survey: 2.5%  |   |

**Source:** Table prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) based on information compiled from the state report evaluations and Isaacs and Lyon, 2000.