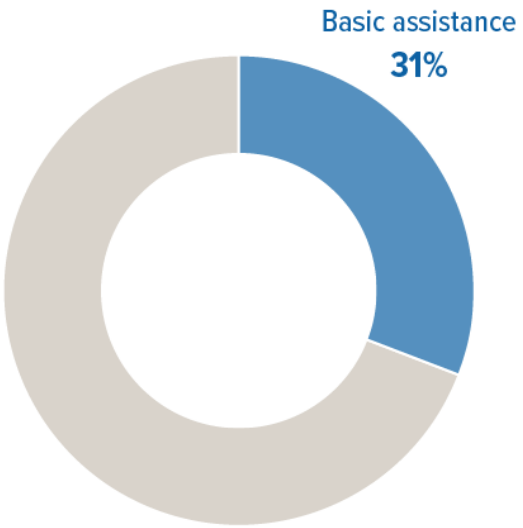
New York TANF Spending

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

In 2021 New York spent about $5.1 billion in federal and state funds under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. **It spent 31 percent of these funds on basic assistance**, generally as cash assistance to TANF families.



Federal and State TANF Spending by Category, 2021

	New York		National
	Millions of dollars	Share of spending	Share of U.S. spending
Basic Assistance	$1600	31%	23%
Work Activities	$141	3%	8%
Work Supports and Supportive Services	$40	1%	2%
Child Care	$376	7%	16%
Administration and Systems	$481	9%	11%
Tax Credits	$1000	19%	9%
Pre-K	$819	15%	10%
Child Welfare	$361	7%	9%
Other Services	$426	8%	14%
Total	$5100	100%	100%

Federal and State TANF Spending on Select Activities (millions of dollars)

	2006	2011	2016	2018	2021
Basic Assistance	$1600	$1400	$1600	$1500	$1600
Work Activities	$209	$171	$125	$132	$141
Child Care	$651	$568	$479	$577	$376

Federal TANF Allocation and State Maintenance-of-Effort (MOE) Amounts

- In 2021 New York was awarded its TANF block grant of $2.4 billion and an additional $290 million in contingency funds.
- Since unspent block grant funds can be carried over to future years, a state may spend more or less than its annual block grant allocation in any given year. As of 2021, New York has accumulated $1.3 billion in unspent TANF block grant funds, equal to 52 percent of its block grant.
- Every year each state must also spend, from its own funds, at least 80 percent of its historical spending on low-income families with children. (A state may spend more than its minimum.) This "MOE" requirement can be reduced to 75 percent if a state meets specific work participation rate requirements. In 2021 New York met these requirements and was subject to the 75 percent MOE obligation.

2021 TANF Allocation and MOE Obligation for New York

Federal Funds Awarded	$2.7 billion
80% MOE Obligation	$1.8 billion

2021 Federal and MOE TANF Expenditures for New York

Federal Spending	$2.2 billion
MOE Spending	$2.9 billion

The annual federal TANF block grant has been frozen since its creation and lost about 47 percent of its value between 1997 and 2021 due to inflation.

Source: The spending data are based on CBPP analysis of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services TANF financial data. New York's TANF block grant amount has been adjusted to exclude Tribal TANF and research expenditures.