

**INITIAL E-MAIL TO STATE TANF DIRECTORS (TELEPHONE INTERVIEW)**

**From:** Heather Hahn

**To:** [STATE TANF DIRECTOR]

**Cc:**

**Subject:** Urban Institute Descriptive Study of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Programs (Two-Parent TANF)

Dear [Ms./Mr.] [NAME],

We at the Urban Institute are interested in interviewing you in your role as [STATE's] TANF director as part of our study of two-parent TANF programs. This e-mail provides an overview of our study and identifies the topics we would like to discuss during the interview. Although participation is voluntary, we hope that you will be willing to take part in our study. For reference, I have attached our discussion guide for material we intend to cover in the call. One of our research assistants [NAME; E-MAIL ADDRESS; PHONE] can work with you (or your designee) on scheduling the call, which we anticipate to take no more than 90 minutes. We would like to schedule the call with [STATE] for a date in [MONTH(s)].

**The Study**

The goal of the study, conducted by the Urban Institute under contract with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), is to provide information on the characteristics of two-parent families on or eligible for TANF. Specifically, we are seeking to provide a systematic understanding of the characteristics of two-parent families participating in or eligible to receive TANF, the variety of services two-parent families receive through TANF, how state policies may help or hinder participation in TANF among two-parent families, and how the beliefs of staff and eligible families help or hinder two-parent families' participation in TANF.

As part of our study, we will be visiting five states [including [STATE], IF APPLICABLE] meeting with key state and local staff, community-based organization representatives, and recipients or potential TANF recipients in two-parent families. While the greatest degree of focus will be on the sites selected for visits, we are also having telephone discussions with state TANF directors in five additional states [including yourself here in [STATE], IF APPLICABLE]. This interview will [select as appropriate: provide important context and a foundation of understanding as we prepare to visit your state; help expand our understanding of states' approaches to two-parent family service provision. Our study will culminate with a report to HHS in March 2016, and we expect that report to later be made publicly available.

If you wish to contact HHS directly about the study, you may contact our project officer Aleta Meyer at 202-401-5262 or [Aleta.Meyer.hhs.gov](mailto:Aleta.Meyer.hhs.gov).

**The Telephone Interview**

Our general plan for the telephone interview, again expected to average 90 minutes, is to cover roughly five areas of TANF administration:

- I. Overview (including history of two-parent TANF administration, funding levels/mechanisms for serving these families, and possible use of data tracking on specific to two-parent families)
- II. Characteristics of Two-Parent Families Participating or Eligible to Receive TANF (including strengths and challenges of these families)
- III. Variety of Services Two-Parent Families Receive through TANF
- IV. Policies and Rules Affecting Two-Parent Families
- V. Beliefs, Attitudes, and Perceptions of Staff (and how these beliefs may help or hinder two-parent families' participation in TANF)

If you have any questions, please let me know. Again, we hope you will be willing to participate in the study and share your TANF program experiences.

## APPENDIX A-1

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Sincerely,

Heather Hahn

Heather McCallum Hahn, Ph.D.  
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