

# NM center on law and poverty

## **TANF: Rights for Domestic Violence Survivors**

### **What if I don't have all of the documents I need to get TANF?**

If you need TANF help now but because of domestic violence you don't have the documents you need to prove your eligibility, you can turn in a sworn statement instead. This can give you benefits and time to get new documents.

### **What if I can't cooperate with child support enforcement because of safety concerns?**

If you think that cooperating with child support enforcement will increase the risk of abuse to you or the children, or if your child was conceived due to sexual assault, you can request a good cause waiver. A waiver can excuse you from cooperating. Use the form on page 9 of your child support cooperation packet to request it. You will be asked to provide documentation supporting your request.

### **What if I have trouble meeting work requirements because of domestic violence?**

If domestic violence makes it difficult or impossible for you to meet the work requirement or if the work requirement would make it more difficult for you to escape domestic violence, you can ask that the work requirements be waived. Some activities that you do related to domestic violence (such as getting a protective order, attending court dates and receiving domestic violence counseling) can also count toward the work requirements for up to 24 weeks. You will need to provide documentation.

### **What if I am going to be sanctioned for not doing something on time?**

If you were unable to make an appointment because of domestic violence, that is called "good cause" and can excuse you from a sanction. Be sure to tell both your ISD worker and your Career Development Specialist that you have good cause for not doing something on time.

### **What if I have hit my 60-month lifetime limit but still need help?**

If domestic violence is the reason you still need help, you may be able to get a hardship extension that lets you continue to receive benefits. You will be asked to provide documentation that domestic violence is one of the reasons you still need help.

### **What kind of documentation can I provide to show domestic violence?**

You can provide medical reports, psychological reports, court orders, police reports and statements from domestic violence counselors. If you don't have these, you can offer a sworn statement.

*If you think any mistake has been made on your TANF case, you should ask for a fair hearing right away. You can request a hearing at the ISD office or by calling 1-800-432-6217 ext 6.*

**Always make sure you get a receipt showing that you turned something in or asked for a waiver, exemption or hearing!**

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