



Budget Digest – Week of April 11th

FY 2017 House Budget Resolution: Work Requirements

The FY 2017 House Budget includes positive solutions to improve and ultimately ensure that Federal safety-net programs are sustainable for those in need of assistance. One of the key budget reforms is to ensure that able-bodied adults receiving welfare are required to work or prepare for work. Work requirements were very successful in the 1996 welfare reform law and led to substantial declines in poverty, increases in work, and decreases in government dependency (see chart below). The budget specifically strengthens work requirements for the SNAP, TANF, and Medicaid programs as follows:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): The budget resolution eliminates waivers from work requirements in the SNAP program for able-bodied adults without dependents. Under current law, able-bodied adults without dependents must meet work requirements for 33 months out of 36 in order to receive benefits. This budget would eliminate state waivers that weaken these work requirements, while still retaining the ability of states to exempt up to 15% of their caseload.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): A 2012 Obama Administration guidance claims the authority to waive TANF work requirement targets for states. These work targets generally require states to have 50% of their TANF population engaged in work activities (with certain exceptions allowed). The House budget eliminates any authority the Administration claims to waive TANF work requirements.

FAMILIES RECEIVING AFDC/TANF ASSISTANCE



Authorized by Chairman Tom Price, M.D., House Budget Committee

Source: CRS

Medicaid: The budget proposes to create a work requirement for all able-bodied adults who are enrolled in Medicaid, modeled after the TANF Program. This proposal would ensure that an able-bodied, childless working-age adult could qualify for Medicaid only if he or she were actively seeking employment or participating in an education or training program.