

TANF EBT Card Restrictions Questions & Answers

Q1. What are the TANF EBT card restrictions?

A1. TANF cash benefits may not be used in any EBT transaction or accessed in any EBT transaction in a:

Liquor store – This means any retail establishment that sells exclusively or primarily intoxicating liquor. This does not include a grocery store that sells both intoxicating liquor and groceries that include staple foods

Casino, gambling casino or gaming establishment – This means any establishment that offers casino, gambling or gaming activities as their primary or main purpose for being in business.

Examples of casinos, gambling casinos and gaming establishments where EBT use or access is prohibited include horse or dog racing tracks, casinos, and bingo halls.

Strip Clubs - Retail establishment that provides adult-oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state for entertainment (strip clubs).

Q2. Which TANF recipients are subject to these restrictions on using or accessing TANF cash benefits in an EBT transaction?

A2. These restrictions apply to all recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) monthly cash assistance payments.

Q3. Why is Arkansas restricting where TANF cash benefits may be used or accessed in an EBT transaction?

A3. Federal law passed in 2012 requires all states to maintain policies and practices to prevent TANF cash assistance from being used or accessed in an EBT transaction in a prohibited location.

Q4. Why does implementing these TANF EBT restrictions matter?

A4. In addition to helping the state become better stewards of federal TANF resources, these restrictions are critical to helping ensure Arkansas avoid penalties to the TANF block grant.

The state must report to the federal government by February 2014 on the implementation of policies and practices to restrict TANF EBT transactions in prohibited locations.

If the federal government finds the state has not implemented and maintained such policies and practices, the TANF block grant may be reduced by approximately \$3 million.

Q6. How will TANF recipients know about these new restrictions?

A6. Informational letters were mailed to each TANF recipients in Arkansas advising them of these restrictions, notification of these restrictions has been added to the DWS website, and signage has been placed in all DWS offices across the State.