



TANF 305-1 Age of Minor Child/Student Status

Supersedes: TANF 304-1 (1/01/2018)

Reference: ARM 37.78.206, .207 and .208

Overview: TANF cash assistance is provided to a family with a minor child.

A minor child is an individual under age 18, or if age 18 is attending secondary school or an equivalent level program full-time.

When the 18-year-old is no longer attending school full-time, his/her eligibility ends the last day of the month school attendance ends. The month after the child turns 19 he/she is no longer considered a minor child regardless of school attendance.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:

In most public schools (elementary and secondary), full-time attendance is defined as receiving instruction for the school term (180 instructional days) approximately 6 hours per day/30 hours per week.

Hard Copy verification or Collateral contact between Client Service Coordinator and the school for Full-time student status is required for 16 & 17 year olds. May be requested for other ages if student status is questionable. Verifications must be updated in CHIMES and documented.

HOME SCHOOLING:

Minor children may be “home schooled” rather than enrolled in public or private schools. In Montana, home-schooling arrangements must be registered with the county superintendent of schools except if the child is age 16 or older. (Registration is not required for 16-year-old because under Montana law children may choose to not attend any school upon reaching age 16.) Registration identifies those school age children living in the school district, not enrolled in the school system, but not to be considered truant.

If the home schooling average weekly hours are within plus or minus five (5) hours of the public school’s schedule of 30 hours of class time per week, consider the 16, 17, or 18-year-old a full-time student. The 16 or 17-year-old may attend less than full-time and still qualify as a minor child but the 18-year-old must be a full-time secondary school student.

HiSET CLASSES:

When the 18-year-old is enrolled and attending High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) classes rather than high school, the attendance hours may vary but should closely approximate 30 hours/week on average to qualify the 18-year-old as a full-time student or to allow the 16 or 17-year old to be considered attending school full time.

Effective Date: September 01, 2023