

Customer Handbook

Navajo Nation
Program for
Self Reliance



Ya' atééh!

Welcome to the Navajo Nation Program for Self Reliance (NNPSR). We are glad that you have taken the first step by coming to our office. We look forward to working with you to strengthen you and your family's well-being. Our staff is committed to providing quality services to help Customers and their families move toward self-reliance.

As a NNPSR Customer, you will gain new information, knowledge, and skills. This handbook will help you understand your role as a NNPSR Customer by providing information about the Program, the services that are available to Customers, and your rights and responsibilities as a NNPSR Customer.

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WELFARE REFORM LAW

In 1996, the Welfare Reform Law, known as the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), was signed into law. Welfare reform happened because the leaders of the United States saw that the welfare system was not working and had to be changed.

Some of the changes are:

Welfare programs should help people to move off welfare and begin working.

Financial assistance should be given to families for only a short time while the adults gain skills and find work. Families should not depend on getting financial assistance their entire life.

Parents should have child care and health care services for their children while they are learning new skills and preparing to get a job.

Child support programs should be tougher and more successful in getting support from absent parents.

States, Tribes, and local communities should have many solutions to help families stay away from poverty and dependency.

It is more important to get an education and add to your job skills so you can work and be self-reliant rather than depending on welfare.

All TANF programs have to meet the four (4) goals which are in the Welfare Reform law:

Provide assistance to eligible families so that children may be cared for in their homes or in homes of relatives.

Help families get ready to go to work and to have healthy marriages. Programs have to help families stop believing that government benefits will always be there for them.

Help individuals to understand that they should wait to have children until they are married and can provide for their children.

To encourage and support parents to have a healthy relationship so they can teach and raise their children properly.

In addition, the NNPSR has added two (2) more goals:

To encourage children to do well in school and get a college education so they will not depend on government benefits when they become adults.

To teach parents to raise their children properly by being involved in the lives of their children.

NAVAJO NATION PROGRAM FOR SELF RELIANCE

The Navajo Nation Program for Self Reliance (NNPSR) has a Mission Statement and Service Delivery Model which guide staff in providing services to Customers.

NNPSR Mission Statement:

*We shall serve, with integrity
and in an ethical manner,
to empower all families,
based on the Navajo teachings
of the concept of
T'áá hwó ájít éego,
to become Self-Reliant.*

Service Delivery Model

The Navajo people face many hardships. Our ancestors were able to overcome the hardships and survive on their own because they were taught and believed in the basic values and principles of iina (life). Our Service Delivery Model called the Pathway to Self Reliance has four important life activities:

- Thinking (Nitsahakees)**
- Planning (Naa hat a)**
- Doing (Aadiilil)**
- Growing (Bee Niiseeldoo).**

The NNPSR utilizes traditional teachings and values to help Customers become self-reliant. The values are represented in the Service Delivery Model as the steps an individual and family must take to become self-reliant.

T'áá hwó ájít éego is a traditional concept which is taught and explained in many different ways including:

*If you want to
live a successful and
productive life, it is up
to you.*

*If you want to
have the best things in
life, you have to work
hard for it.*

Based on this teaching, if you want to become self-reliant, you must be willing to do the work necessary and not expect others to do it for you. We are here to help you develop a plan on how you and your family will become self-reliant; support you while you increase your skills and knowledge; assist you in overcoming barriers; and, when you are ready, help you find a job.



CUSTOMER RIGHTS

AS AN NNPSR CUSTOMER, YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS:

- To apply and receive services at any NNPSR office.
- To be treated fairly with dignity and respect.
- To have your personal information protected.
- To be provided services without regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, or sexual orientation.
- To be included in decisions being made regarding your case.
- To have someone you know and trust help you apply for assistance and represent you in receiving your benefits and services.
- To be given verbal information in the Navajo language.
- To be given the services and support that will help you and your family gain education, skills, and obtain work.
- To be provided information on assistance and services offered by other programs and, if necessary, be referred to those programs.
- To get information about how you can file an appeal if you do not agree with a decision made on your case.
- To get information on filing a complaint if you feel that you have not been treated fairly.
- To look at your case file and get copies of documents you turned in.
- To withdraw your application or close your case.

CUSTOMER RESPONSIBILITIES

AS AN NNPSR CUSTOMER, YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING RESPONSIBILITIES:

- To treat NNPSR staff and other NNPSR customers with courtesy, dignity, and respect. This means you cannot verbally or physically abuse program staff, service providers, and other NNPSR customers.
- To provide accurate and complete information, to the best of your knowledge, about your present situation.
- To cooperate with NNPSR staff in determining your eligibility and to comply with all NNPSR requirements.
- To report any changes in your circumstances (income, household members, address, etc.) immediately.
- To arrive on time and complete an NNPSR orientation session, and all scheduled appointments and trainings.
- To work with your NNPSR staff to plan how you and your family will become self-reliant.
- To participate in approved Work Activities and meet the required number of hours each month, unless an exception applies.
- To submit a completed timesheet with the required hours by the fifth (5th) day of each month, unless an exception applies.
- To submit a completed Monthly Update Report (MUR) by the fifth (5th) day of each month, unless an exception applies.
- If you are unable to keep your appointment, contact NNPSR at least twenty-four hours (24 hours) prior to your scheduled appointment to reschedule let NNPSR staff know. You can reschedule a missed appointment one time.
- To know, on your own, when your certification period ends and to reapply for continued assistance prior to the expiration date. The NNPSR will not remind you by letter when you must return to reapply.
- To be in compliance with Child Support Enforcement, Child Care Development Fund Program, Workforce Development and other programs.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ELIGIBILITY

What happens after my eligibility interview?

If you have not turned in all forms needed to determine your eligibility, you will be given a Eligibility Checklist which shows the forms that you still need to return. You will have ten (10) working days to get the forms completed and returned to the NNPSR office.

The quicker you return all your paperwork, the sooner a decision can be made on your application and a decision letter will be mailed to you.

If you do not turn in all of the missing forms by the due date (10 working days), your case may be denied.

Why do I have to apply with child support?

If one or both legal parents are absent from the home, the NNPSR requires that you apply with the Navajo Child Support Enforcement Program because all parents, even the absent parent, are responsible to support their children with basic needs (food, shelter, clothing, and personal items). If an absent parent is working, they should provide the basic needs for their children, instead of having their children on welfare assistance.

If you have a child support case with the State, you will still be referred to the Navajo Child Support Office. They will verify that you have an active case with the State Child Support Office.

Why does the father's name have to be on my child's birth certificate?

For a child to be included in a NNPSR benefit group, deprivation has to be established. Deprivation is established when a minor child's legal parent is absent from the home, disabled, or deceased. For two-parent families, deprivation is established when both legal parents are unemployed or underemployed (are working but do not make enough to support their family).

There are different ways to become a legal parent. A legal parent is the biological or adoptive parent of a child. The ways that a person can be recognized as a legal parent are: their name is on the child's birth certificate; they sign an Acknowledgment of Paternity form; he had genetic testing done which shows that he is the father; or they have a court order which says he is the legal parent.

Why do I have to get a background check

TANF programs cannot give federal monies to a person who has been convicted of certain crimes. A background check will show if a Customer was convicted of any of the crimes which disqualifies them.

What is an Approval Period?

The Approval Period is the months that you are eligible to receive assistance as long as there is no change in your situation.

The date that your Approval Period ends is indicated on your Decision Notice.

It is your responsibility to know when your Approval period ends.

If you want to continue receiving benefits beyond the end of your Approval Period, you must submit a new application at least one (1) month before your Approval Period Ending date.

If you are not reapproved before the end of your Approval Period, we cannot provide assistance to you after the end of your Approval Period.

When you reapply, you will need to submit new verification documents so that your Case-worker can determine if you are still eligible.

What happens when my child turns eighteen years old?

If your child is still in high school or in a GED Program on a full time basis, they can stay in the benefit group until they graduate from high school or get their GED. Otherwise they will be removed from the benefit group.

Once your child turns nineteen (19), they must be removed from the benefit group even if they are still in high school, college, or in a GED Program.

If I reach my sixty (60) month time limit, can I apply for just my children?

No. When an adult reaches sixty (60) countable months, they cannot receive any more Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits. Your Senior Caseworker can tell you how many Countable Months you have.



MONTHLY PAYMENTS

What is a Wells Fargo PayCard and how do I get one?

The Wells Fargo PayCard is a plastic card that you can use to buy items at stores and get cash at an Automatic Teller Machine (ATM).

You must attend a NNPSR Orientation so a Wells Fargo PayCard can be ordered for you. In the beginning, you will receive your benefits by checks. But, after you receive your Wells Fargo PayCard, your monthly benefits will be placed into a bank account.

If you attended a NNPSR orientation and you still have not received your Wells Fargo PayCard, contact your local NNPSR office.



What do I do if my Wells Fargo PayCard is lost, stolen, or damaged?

You must call Wells Fargo Customer Service at 1-866-298-9378 and ask for a new card. Wells Fargo will charge you \$15.00 to replace the card.

The NNPSR cannot order a new Wells Fargo PayCard for you if your Wells Fargo PayCard is lost, stolen or damaged. The NNPSR is only responsible for setting up the account and depositing your monthly benefits into the account.

What if someone else used my Wells Fargo PayCard without my permission? What if there are charges I did not make?

You must call Wells Fargo Customer Services at 1-866-298-9378 and report it. VISA will decide if you will be reimbursed.

If you see charges to your account that you did not make, you must contact Wells Fargo.

Do not share your Personal Identification Number (PIN) with anybody and do not give your Wells Fargo PayCard to anyone.

What can I use my monthly benefits for?

The NNPSR benefits are given to families to pay for basic needs. Basic needs are food, shelter/housing, utilities, clothing, and personal items.

What happens if I don't get my monthly benefit payment?

There are many reasons you may not have received your monthly benefits. Contact your local NNPSR office and ask to speak with your Caseworker/Senior Caseworker.

Why did my Wells Fargo PayCard account close?

Your Wells Fargo PayCard account can be closed for several reasons. You might have withdrawn more money than you have in your account or your Wells Fargo PayCard might have expired. Contact your local NNPSR office. Give us some time to look into what happened.

What happens if my Wells Fargo PayCard expires?

Wells Fargo will mail you another Wells Fargo PayCard before it expires. If you do not receive a new Wells Fargo PayCard before it expires, call the Wells Fargo Customer Service at 1-866-298-9378. You should not be charged a replacement fee.

What if I overdraw on my Wells Fargo PayCard account?

Your Wells Fargo PayCard will no longer work and you will be charged a \$25.00 fee. You must contact Wells Fargo to open a new account. It is important that you keep track of how much you spend using the Wells Fargo PayCard so you do not overdraw on your account.

Can I deposit money into my Wells Fargo PayCard account?

No. Your Wells Fargo PayCard account is a special account that is set up only for deposit of NNPSR benefits. If you want an account to deposit money into, you can open your own personal account at any bank.

What is a protective payee?

A protective payee is a person who will receive benefits on behalf of the benefit group. The person can be appointed by you in writing or may be appointed by a court.

Can I pick up a check at the NNPSR central administration office in Window Rock, Arizona?

No. All checks are mailed to the address you reported to NNPSR.

If the head-of-household or payee is deceased or absent from home for a while, how can the family and children continue to use the benefits?

Contact your local NNPSR office and ask to speak with your Senior Caseworker.

Customer Rights

If I do not agree with the NNPSR's decision to deny my application, reduce my benefits, or close my case, what can I do?

If you do not agree with a decision made by the program, you have the right to appeal the decision.

You can appeal the decision by writing a request for an Informal Hearing to your local NNPSR office. Date and sign your request. Your request must be received within ten (10) working days from the date the decision notice was mailed.

After your appeal is received, the NNPSR office will schedule an Informal Hearing.

If you still do not agree with the results of the Informal Hearing, you may request in writing for a Formal Hearing.

Who can look at my case?

As a Customer, you can look at your own case file. If you want copies, the NNPSR can copy up to ten (10) pages for you free of charge.

If a third party wants to review or receive copies of your case file, you must authorize the individual to have access to your file. The authorization must be in writing and, if you do not sign it in front of a NNPSR staff, must be notarized.

Can I request to have my case transferred to another NNPSR office?

You can submit a written request to have your case transferred to another NNPSR office. It may take several weeks to transfer your case because a review must be completed on your case file before it is transferred.



Customer Responsibilities

Why do I have to attend Orientation and Assessments?

All NNPSR Customers must attend an Orientation Session to get information about the Program and what is expected of you if you receive NNPSR monthly benefits.

The Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and other assessments will help us know what you are interested in and how we can help you to work toward self-reliance. The information we get from the assessments will be used to develop your Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP).

What is a Personal Responsibility Plan?

The Personal Responsibility Plan is your plan saying how you will reach your personal goals and become responsible for your family. You and your Senior Caseworker must develop a Personal Responsibility Plan by no later than forty-five (45) days after you are approved.

A plan helps you to stay on track to reach the goals you set for yourself.

Your Senior Caseworker will review your Personal Responsibility Plan with you on a regular basis. Your Personal Responsibility Plan will change as you progress.

What is a Monthly Update Report? Do I have to submit one every month?

A Monthly Update Report is a form that you must provide every month to let us know about any changes in your household in the last thirty (30) days. If you report a change, your Senior Caseworker will determine if your benefit amount needs to be changed or if your case needs to be closed because you are no longer eligible.

For one-parent and two-parent cases, a timesheet and Monthly Update Report form must be submitted on or before the fifth (5th) day of each month. For child-only cases, a Monthly Update Report must be completed and submitted every three (3) months.

Your next monthly benefit payment cannot be processed until you submit a Monthly Update Report. If you do not submit a Monthly Update Report, your case may be closed.

What do I need to do if I get a job?

You need to tell your Senior Caseworker right away that you got a job.

Your Senior Caseworker will ask your employer to fill out a Employment Verification form.

After the form is returned to NNPSR, your Senior Caseworker will use the information on the verification form to determine if you are still eligible for NNPSR assistance.

What do I need to do if the absent parent comes back?

You need to tell your Senior Caseworker right away that the absent parent has come back home.

After the absent parent has been back for thirty (30) days, your eligibility will have to be re-determined.

What happens if I get reported for giving false information?

Remember, it is very important that you are honest and report changes in a timely manner (ten working days).

You might also be contacted by the NNPSR Fraud Investigation Unit who will investigate your case.

If the NNPSR believes you committed fraud, you will be disqualified and your case will be closed. You may be required to pay back any overpayments. This is why you must be honest and report changes in a timely manner.

Why and how do I report changes?

Any changes within your household must be reported within five (5) working days after the change. If changes are not reported timely, it may cause an overpayment, underpayment or case closure. Changes may be reported by phone, fax or in writing.

Why do I have to pay back any payment errors?

The amount of benefits you will receive every month is on the Eligibility Decision Notice which is mailed to you. At any time, if you receive more benefits than what is on the Eligibility Decision Notice, it means you received more benefits than you were eligible for. You must immediately contact your local NNPSR office so the NNPSR can make payment arrangements with you to collect the amount you were not eligible for.

If you receive less than what is on the Eligibility Decision Notice, you must immediately contact your local NNPSR office. You have a right to get the amount you were determined to be eligible for.

Work Participation

What is Work Participation?

Adult members of the Benefit Group are required to begin participating in Work Participation activities immediately after your case has been approved.

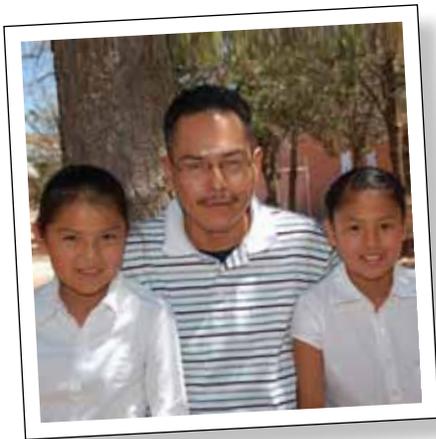
Your assigned Senior Caseworker will identify Work Participation activities based on your assessment results and the goals you set for yourself.

Each adult in the Benefit Group must complete an average of 24 hours of work participation activities per week every month.

On a monthly basis, hours must be reported using a timesheet. Timesheets must be turned in to the NNPSR Office by the fifth (5th) day of each month.

What happens if I do not meet the required Work Participation hours?

If you do not meet the required Work Participation hours, your monthly benefit payment may be reduced or your case may be closed. We encourage you to work with your Senior Caseworker to identify ways that you can meet your required Work Participation hours.



Other

Why is my case closed?

There are many reasons why your case is closed. You should contact your Caseworker/Senior Caseworker for an explanation. You will also receive a written notice from your Caseworker/Senior Caseworker telling you why your case closed.

Can I change my Senior Caseworker?

If you want to change your Senior Caseworker, put your request in writing to the NNPSR Office Supervisor.

Can I fax in my verification documents?

You can fax in documents, but you must turn in the original documents in the next five (5) working days.

What if I want to be served by the State TANF program instead of the NNPSR?

Customers do not have a choice on which TANF program serves them.

You will be served by the NNPSR if:

- you live on the Navajo Nation; or
- you live in a Navajo Nation border town and your head-of-household is Navajo.

You will be served by the State TANF program if:

- you do not live on the Navajo Nation; or
- you live in a Navajo Nation border town and your head-of-household is not Navajo.

What is an incentive and how can I get an incentive?

An incentive is a reward that is available for Customers who meet educational and employment goals. It is not provided to everyone, it must be earned. When you or a member of your benefit group meets an educational or employment goal, your Senior Caseworker will request an incentive. The request must be checked to make sure that a goal was met and all required documents are attached before it can be approved.

CHINLE Office
P.O. Box 2420
Chinle, Arizona 86503
(928) 674-8194
TOLL FREE: (866) 700-5175
FAX: (928) 674-2351

GALLUP Office
2907 East Aztec
Gallup, New Mexico 87301
(505) 722-8415, 8940, 8948, 8475
TOLL FREE: (866) 704-6940
FAX: (505) 722-8959

PINON Sub-Office
P.O. Box 650
Pinon, Arizona 86510
(928) 725-3715, 3716
FAX: (928) 725-3717

SHIPROCK Office
P.O. Box 3649
Shiprock, New Mexico 87420
(505) 368-1457
TOLL FREE: (866) 309-0346
FAX: (505) 368-1456

CROWNPOINT Office
P.O. Box 818
Crownpoint, New Mexico 87313
(505) 786-2384, 2385, 2386, 2387
TOLL FREE: (866) 784-1694
FAX: (505) 786-2394

TUBA CITY Office
P.O. Box 3050
Tuba City, Arizona 86045
(928) 283-6613/6978/4219
TOLL FREE: (866) 731-7015
FAX: (928) 283-3413

FORT DEFIANCE Office
P.O. Box 920
St. Michaels, Arizona 86511
(928) 810-8592, 8593, 8594 8595
TOLL FREE: (866) 860-9549
FAX: (928) 810-8598

KAYENTA
P.O. Box 570
Kayenta, Arizona 86033
(928) 697-5660/5661/5662/5663/5664
FAX: (928) 697-5665

GREASEWOOD Sub-Office
P.O. Box 920
St. Michaels, Arizona 86511
(928) 654-3909/3910
FAX: (928) 654-3905

MONTEZUMA CREEK Sub-Office
P.O. Box 463
Montezuma Creek, UT 84534
(435) 651-3535
FAX: (435) 651-3543

NNPSR – Support Services
P.O. Box 2279
Window Rock, Arizona 86515
(928) 810-8553
(866) 347-2403
FAX: (928) 810-8557



Navajo Nation TANF Program changes name to Navajo Nation Program for Self Reliance through NN Council Resolution.

2007



NNPSR holds first Healthy Marriage Workshop in Shiprock, NM.

2007



NNPSR provides school supplies for school children.

2008



NNPSR introduces PayCard to disburse benefits.

2008



NNPSR trains first group of customers for Child Care Academy.

2010