

## TANF CASELOAD FELL NATIONALLY AND IN THIRTY FOUR STATES IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2010

Despite continued exceptionally high poverty and unemployment rates, the national TANF caseload *declined* in 34 states<sup>1</sup> and nationally by about 1.4% between December 2009 (1,914,102 families nationwide) and March 2010 (1,887,133 families nationwide) according to the revised caseload figures that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has posted on its web site.<sup>2</sup> By contrast, over this same period, the national Food Stamp caseload *increased* by about 3.6%.<sup>3</sup>

In March 2010, the TANF caseload was only 12% higher than in December 2007, the beginning of the great recession. By contrast, in March 2010, the Food Stamp caseload was 51% higher than in December 2007.

The number of children receiving TANF in March 2010 (3,370,022) was but 22% of the number of children reported as being poor in 2009 (15,451,000) in the recently released U.S. Census Bureau report.<sup>4</sup>

(Supported in part by a grant from the Open Society Foundations.)

(October 2010)

---

<sup>1</sup> In some states, the use of the TANF Emergency Fund to provide subsidized employment to some low income parents may have contributed to TANF caseload decline. However, caseload decline was just as likely in states not providing any parents with subsidized jobs as in states providing some parents with subsidized jobs.

<sup>2</sup> The TANF figures cited here were derived from the HHS tables at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload\\_current.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm). The figures include recipients in separate state programs funded with maintenance of effort dollars. The national figures cited in the text are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia, and assume that Idaho's caseload was the same in December 2009 as in October 2009 (1,647). The revised HHS caseload figures are lower than the figures that HHS had reported earlier this year.

<sup>3</sup> Food Stamp participation increased from 17,886,338 households in December 2009 to 18,531,999 households in March 2010 according to the USDA table titled "SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM", available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/34SNAPmonthly.htm>

<sup>4</sup> *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2009*, U.S. Census Bureau, P60-238 (2010). This report is available at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/p60-238.pdf>.