

# **Final Report on the Two-Generation Family Economic Security Commission and Pilot Program**

December 2018

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Governor Larry Hogan established the Two-Generation Family Economic Security Commission and Pilot Program by signing Executive Order 01.01.2017.03 on 03/09/2017.

Under the provisions of the Executive Order, the Commission was charged with investigating policy challenges, opportunities, and recommendations regarding the mitigation of multigenerational poverty as follows:

1. Identify services and policies within State programs that can be coordinated to support a multigenerational approach;
2. Identify program and service gaps and inconsistencies between federal, State policies and local policies;
3. Identify, test, and recommend best practices utilized on federal, State and local levels; and
4. Solicit input and guidance regarding Two-Generation Approach practices and policies from external sources with direct knowledge and experience in the field of multigenerational poverty including, but not limited to, Two-Generation Approach practicing states, federal and Maryland Agencies, private foundations, community-action partnerships, and welfare-advocacy organizations.

The Commission, chaired by Lieutenant Governor Boyd K. Rutherford, held eight public meetings, commencing on June 28, 2017. Through a combination of constituent, research partner and practitioner feedback, the Commission identified areas in which Two-Generational interventions can improve upon our current service delivery models to align them with a more holistic family model. Throughout these meetings constituents often cited the lack of communication between service providers. This extended beyond intra-agency coordination to include a need for enhanced coordination between government agencies and private, non-profit agencies as well. Constituents also expressed they were not aware of the availability of services and that obtaining that information often depended on the success of a single interaction with a caseworker.

The Commission recognized that a primary cause of the difficulty experienced by the constituents was rooted in the traditional service delivery model which addresses either a parent or child's needs in a siloed fashion versus addressing the needs of the whole family. The Commission focused discussions on four key areas for interventions: education, family economic stability, early childhood development and health. The Commission identified that current independent programs address all four of these indicators and also determined that the success of the entire family is dependent upon realigning current service delivery models into a more holistic family model.

The Commission envisions Maryland's Two-Generation approach as extending beyond merely a program; rather, the State must fundamentally change the way it does business and centered its recommendations on this premise.

The Commission recommended the creation of a holistic assessment tool that is standardized across the State. To do this the Commission identified ongoing systems changes being implemented statewide. The Commission focused on the capabilities of MD THINK as crucial to the success of such a system that would have the capability to measure whole family success, a shift from traditional performance measures that point to the success of a child or adult beneficiary, individually.

Recognizing that an opportunity exists to bring separately provided services together in a manner that makes the most sense for those utilizing the programs the Commission recommended implementing Multi-Generational Educational Sites that connect and co-locate needed services for families who are challenged with childcare while striving to improve their educational status. As referenced through constituent feedback, high quality childcare that is both accessible and compatible with parent activities is an area of need in both rural and urban areas across the State.

The Commission recognized the importance of measuring, through clear evaluation standards, the effectiveness of the services provided by the pilot sites. The ongoing nature of the pilot work, the Commission stressed, requires a thorough evaluation of pilot activities that will result in impactful recommendations that can change the experience a family has on their journey to economic stability. The Commission recommends the creation of a Two-Generation Program Officer within the Department of Human Services to fully evaluate the work of the two pilot sites and remain focused specifically on the Two-Generation mission and approach on behalf of the State.

Finally, the Commission recommends that the State explore the provision of a transitional, short-term cash assistance provided to Temporary Cash Assistance families who exit the program due to employment that places families above the income limit to receive monthly benefits. These transitional benefits would be used to assist families with their transitions from welfare to work and lessen the effect of the benefits cliff immediately upon obtaining employment.

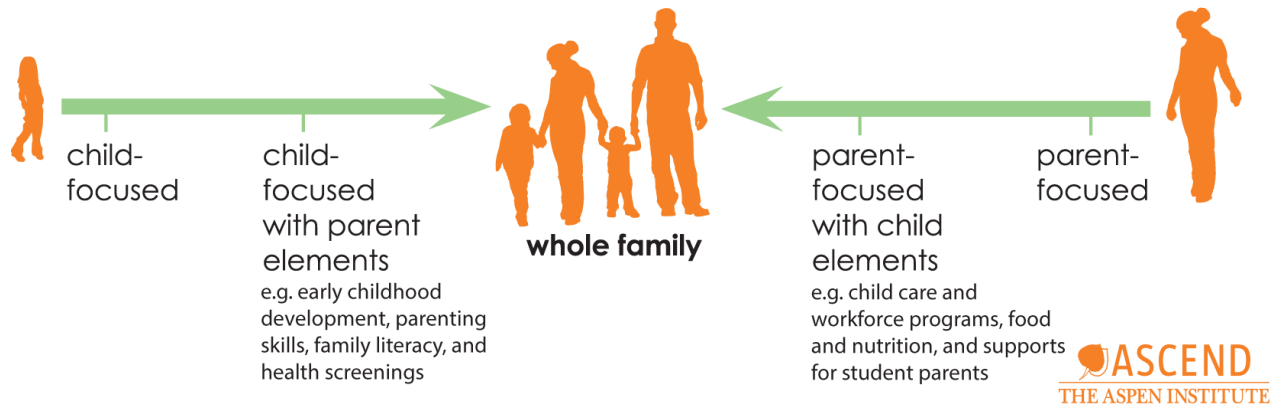
## **BACKGROUND**

Intergenerational poverty occurs when two or more successive generations of a family continue in the cycle of poverty, as measured through the utilization of public assistance for at least 12 months as an adult and at least 12 months as a child. However, situational poverty does not continue to the next generation, it is generally traceable to a specific incident, and is typically time limited. Current research indicates that 40% of Maryland adults who received Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) in Fiscal Year (FY) 16 and 17 received Food Supplement Program (FSP) Benefits as a child. This data uniquely defines a group of people in the cycle of poverty based on the current and past generation's use of public assistance.

Programs intended to be short term interventions are being used to support generations of families. The Two-Generation approach creates an opportunity to realign programs and deliver services using a more holistic, family-centric model.

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## The Two-Generation Continuum



*Source: Ascend – The Aspen Institute*

To break the cycle of poverty in Maryland families, Governor Larry Hogan signed Executive Order 01.01.2017.03 to establish the Two-Generation Family Economic Security Commission and Pilot Program an interagency, multidisciplinary commission to evaluate current programs and policies in order to develop recommendations on how to better link programs and services to create opportunities for both parents and children.

Under the provisions of the Executive Order, the Commission was charged with investigating policy challenges, opportunities, and recommendations regarding the mitigation of multigenerational poverty as follows:

1. Identify services and policies within State programs that can be coordinated to support a multigenerational approach;
2. Identify program and service gaps and inconsistencies between federal, State policies and local policies;
3. Identify, test, and recommend best practices utilized on federal, State and local levels; and
4. Solicit input and guidance regarding Two-Generation Approach practices and policies from external sources with direct knowledge and experience in the field of multigenerational poverty including, but not limited to, Two-Generation Approach practicing states, federal and Maryland Agencies, private foundations, community-action partnerships, and welfare-advocacy organizations.

The Commission, chaired by Lieutenant Governor Boyd K. Rutherford, held eight public meetings, commencing on June 28, 2017. The meeting locations have included community

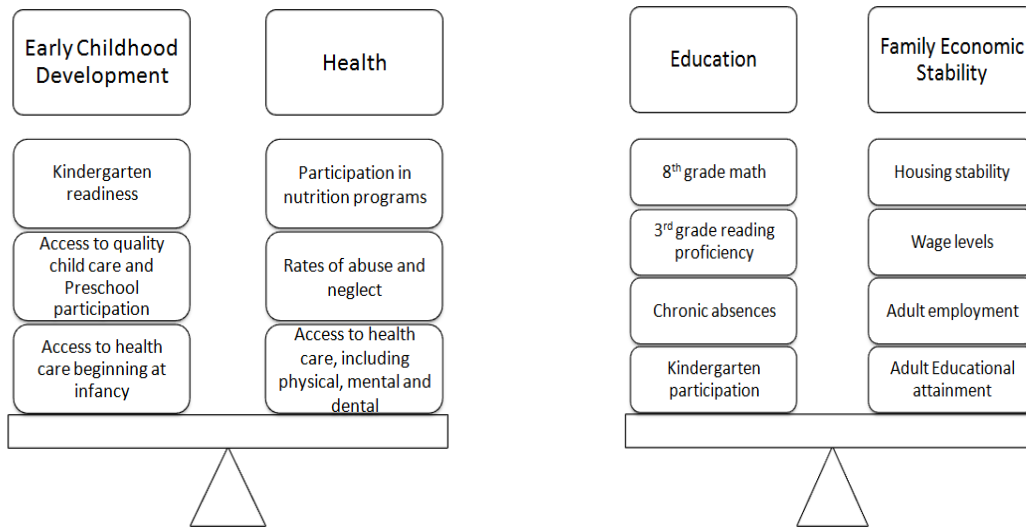
partner sites such as St. Edward's Head Start in Baltimore, MD, the Allegany County Department of Social Services where Community Action Agencies were represented, Delmarva Community Services, Inc. and the Prince George's Community College Culinary Arts Center where we learned more about supportive services provided to students referred to the College's Next Step Education and Training Program by the Prince George's Department of Social Services. These meetings provided families the opportunity to share with the Commission their personal experiences and provide an opportunity for members to hear firsthand how utilizing Maryland programs have impacted their ability to attain self sufficiency.

The final report that follows is the result of an interagency, intergovernmental and community collaboration involving:

1. A member of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee appointed by the President of the Senate
2. A member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate
3. A member of the House of Appropriations Committee appointed by the Speaker of the House
4. A member appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Appropriations
5. The Maryland Department of Health
6. The Department of Housing and Community Development
7. The Department of Human Services
8. The Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
9. The Governor's Office for Children
10. Maryland Department of Education
11. A Director of a Local Department of Social Services appointed by the Maryland Association of Social Services Directors
12. A County Health Officer appointed by the Maryland Association of County Health Officers
13. A member appointed by the Maryland Association of Community Colleges
14. Four Public members

Through a combination of constituent, research partner and practitioner feedback, the Commission identified areas in which Two-Generational interventions can improve upon our current service delivery models to align them with a more holistic family model. With the support of Ascend at the Aspen Institute, a nationally recognized institution committed to supporting efforts that move children and adults towards economic security, the Commission explored what the Two-Generation approach would look like in Maryland.

The Commission focused discussions on four key areas. Maryland's holistic family model identifies education, family economic stability, early childhood development and health as four key areas for interventions. Current programs address all four of these indicators however the Commission determined that the success of the entire family is dependent upon realigning current service delivery models. The following graphic was created in response to the identified focus areas and which indicators within those areas are important to the Commission.



Discussions and constituent feedback brought partners at the table together to determine that realigning current service delivery is imperative to create the most effective model. Almost all practitioners agreed that with budget constraints in mind, a culture shift in service delivery is key to the success of targeted interventions in these four areas.

**CASE STUDY: THE WESTERN MARYLAND TWO-GENERATION MODEL**

The State is currently recognized as a leader in the Two-Generation approach to service delivery. Maryland is one of a handful of states that has developed a statewide Two-Generation model. Additionally, a number of local entities have received federal funding through the Rural Impact grant and by targeted funds provided by philanthropic groups such as the Annie E. Casey Foundation and W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Maryland’s two furthest western counties, Garrett and Allegany, have become national leaders in the implementation of the Two-Generation approach to service delivery.

The Garrett County Community Action Committee built an innovative model of focusing on the whole family’s needs by linking children to high quality early education and their parents to services that build their security and strength through job coaching, adult education, and by meeting health care needs. Garrett County Community Action has also invested in a data management system to ensure that outcomes are tracked and appropriately shared. This national example was built around the array of services provided by the community action entity. In a neighboring county, the Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission addresses issues around poverty by providing a holistic approach to the families in the program. Career coaches work with families to develop a strengths based plan that focuses on the family’s goals and desired outcomes. Staff is cross-trained to ensure that there is “no wrong door” for the customer. These efforts have organically grown into a unified, regional partnership in western Maryland where counties work together to serve their community and share ideas on regionally solutions addressing poverty.

Western Maryland's Two Generation or a whole family approach to services has evolved out of the community's primary child and family serving agencies growing understanding that the traditional service delivery approach often fails to meet the needs of our families. A traditional service delivery model addresses either a parent or child's needs in a siloed fashion versus addressing the needs of the whole family. This typically means travelling to several agencies to seek assistance, completing numerous applications and providing the same documentation multiple times while relaying their personal stories over and over again to virtual strangers. At best, this process can be stressful and time consuming; at worst it can serve as a barrier for individuals accessing needed services. This is especially true for low-income residents in Western Maryland that have few public transportation options, often lack internet access to be able to apply for services on-line, work during traditional business hours, and those without child care.

Proven Two Generation strategies for providing enhanced customer service include:

- Creating a culture of No Wrong Door - A common intake application and customer release of information which allows agencies to assess the needs of the whole family and connect them to appropriate resources;
- The intentional alignment of services for households to assist agencies in making appropriate internal and external referrals guided by the families' stated needs;
- Co-location of services, in a child friendly environment, to mitigate child care and transportation barriers;
- Partnering with the local Chamber of Commerce, economic development entities, area businesses and the community college to identify and connect parents to career pathways, address employment barriers and provide needed employment supports;
- Building organizational and staff knowledge to support eligibility determination and referral for multiple programs;
- Provide training and support for agency staff that work with families to transition from a case management process to a coaching model. Coaching is a holistic practice that relies on relationship building and developing trust with families; and
- Utilization of data at all staff levels to inform and refine an organization's approach to supporting families.

The effective utilization of these strategies resulted in the implementation of the following ground-level service delivery enhancements:

- Garrett County Department of Social Services common customer approach to a singular intake form assessing all of the client's needs at once.
- Garrett County Department of Social Services partnership with Garrett County Community Action Council and Garrett College to serve TCA customers through SNAP Employment and Training;
- Allegany County Department of Social Services (ACDSS) creation of a service hub for customers by housing various community partners within ACDSS and having others provide weekly services on-site. This allows all of the agencies to better meet the needs of families and enhances communication and collaboration across agencies.



- The Western Maryland Consortium, the local Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) provider, has co-located with ACDSS, enhancing training and job placement offerings with a goal to increase income and resources for families involved with the Family Investment Administration, Child Support, and Services. In January 2019, Allegany College of Maryland will begin providing GED classes and will locate a Career Pathways Transition Specialist at ACDSS.
- Allegany County partner organizations are building an on-line resource through the Aunt Bertha platform which will allow families to learn about available programs/services to enhance their knowledge of community resources and program eligibility and support them in advocating for themselves. Individuals and partner organizations will also be able to make direct referrals for themselves or customers through this system.

## STATEWIDE STRATEGIES

The discussion of what the Two-Generation approach looks like for Maryland has resulted in identified strategies that Commission would like to see implemented. The Commission envisions Maryland's Two-Generation approach extending beyond merely a program; rather, the Maryland approach must fundamentally change the way we do business. The following strategies should be leveraged to affect systems change in a truly intergenerational manner:

- MD THINK
- Utilizing data to identify service gaps and measure *whole family* outcomes
- No Wrong Door
- Two-Generation In & Out

Through Maryland's Total Human-services Information Network (MD THINK), the Commission envisions a system which allows for a common intake with the opportunity for a holistic family assessment that will identify the needs of the entire family at the first point of contact. The intended outcome is to improve customer service by bringing coordinated interventions to the family, at their place of need. Additionally, MD THINK will provide service providers the capability to make referrals in real time and access a catalog of potential programs a family may be able to utilize.

MD THINK will allow Maryland to access data in real time and enhance strategies for intervention. Through quick data collection and analysis, responses to identified trends will be intentional and proactive. MD THINK will also drastically reduce duplicative work as partner agencies are given access to information that has already been collected. The cloud based technology will not only revolutionize the experience of the customer but also vastly improve the quality and amount of time caseworkers can dedicate to their customers. As many states dream of an integrated system that links state agencies, Maryland is the first state to make these dreams a reality.

Through the implementation of MD THINK, Maryland will be able to improve upon its ability to identify service gaps and create targeted interventions that address the needs. The Commission

envision a system that has the capability to measure whole family success, a shift from traditional performance measure that point to the success of a child or adult, individually.

As the State works to break down silos, it is imperative that the No Wrong Door initiative is emphasized when coordinating services between agencies. It is clear that not one agency can be the change agent for a family. A customer should not be sent door to door to access services provided by separate agencies. Warm hand offs and strong interagency relationships are improved service delivery.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly when talking about a culture change, the Two-Generation approach must be understood and practiced by those who most often touch our constituents. This is considered “Two-Gen In & Out.” Buy-in from on the ground caseworkers who interact daily with Maryland families is essential for the success of this approach. Strategies such as caseworker trainings and relationship building between agencies are imperative.

When exploring potential pilots for the state, the Commission sees an opportunity to integrate these strategies into the implementation of pilot interventions. Targeted interventions supported by the above mentioned strategies is the Commission’s vision for a system rooted in the Two-Generation approach.

## **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

During the meetings, Commission members heard from families on their successes as well as their struggles. Constituents often cited the lack of communication between service providers. This extended beyond intra-agency coordination to include a breakdown in coordination between government agencies and private, non-profit agencies as well. Constituents also expressed they were not aware of the availability of services and that obtaining that information often depended on the success of a single interaction with a caseworker. Families described the care that invested caseworkers took when identifying interventions for their families was something that not only motivated them but brought relief.

During one meeting, one of the families represented spoke about the challenges fathers faced. Programs often target single mothers, leaving fathers and other non-custodial parents feeling lost and unclear on what programs they can access. Barriers in child-support arrearages and criminal records were also identified when considering increasing the earning capacity of non-custodial parents.

Perhaps most commonly cited as a barrier to family self-sufficiency is the “benefits cliff.” The cliff effect is the reduction in spending power as a family’s income increases. When a family’s income increases, they begin to lose financial supports such as nutrition assistance, housing, home energy assistance, cash assistance, child care, and housing assistance. Often, due to the strict income limits associated with the programs, the increase in income is substantially less than the amount they lose in benefits. In Maryland, the point at which resources equal expenses is about \$21 per hour for a single parent family with two children. Consider the detriment to the entire family when TCA eligibility is lost when a single parent of two works part time for \$8.46

per hour. Programs such as Child Case Subsidy are directly tied to TCA eligibility and subsequently affected by such low wages. The quality of childcare may be sacrificed when a mother has to decide between a high quality licensed child care center for cheaper, and often less safe child care in order to make the rent payment. Caretakers often find themselves faced with difficult decisions regarding where to cut costs as family supports diminish. A single parent, two-child family loses access to following services before reaching \$21 per hour:

- Temporary Cash Assistance at \$8.46 per hour;
- Food Stamps at \$18.00 per hour;
- Medical Assistance at \$14.67 per hour;
- Child Care Subsidies at \$14.42 per hour;
- Public Housing Vouchers at \$16.42 per hour;
- Energy Assistance at \$17.18 per hour; and
- WIC benefits at \$18.00 per hour.

Table 1. Statewide Public Assistance Benefits – Impact of Hourly Wage Rates

Single Parent of Two Children aged 4 and 6						
Type of Income/Expense	Hourly Wage Rate					
	\$10	\$12	\$14	\$16	\$18	\$20
Gross Annual Earnings	\$20,800	\$24,960	\$29,120	\$33,280	\$37,440	\$41,600
TCA Benefit (Estimate)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
FSP Benefit (Estimate)	\$280	\$194	\$107	\$21	\$0	\$0
Potentially Eligible for Child Care Subsidy Program Benefit	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Potentially Eligible for Women, Infant, and Children's Program Benefit	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Rent Payment (30% of income)	\$480	\$576	\$672	\$768	\$864	\$960
Pays for Heating/Cooling	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Telephone Expense	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Families earning wages closer to \$20 per hour face different barriers than lower wage earning families. Leveraging community resources such as nonprofits and community action agencies to align services and create a network of transitional supports will better support Maryland families as they navigate their paths to self-sufficiency. Driven by both constituent and Commission member feedback, the Commission is committed to evaluating barriers faith based organizations may have in partnering with the State’s efforts in fighting intergenerational poverty. Churches

often function as a community center where families can go in times of need. They also give the opportunity to grow social capital and strengthen ones roots within their own neighborhoods. It is important to allow such strong resources the opportunity to participate in coordinated interventions for our shared customers.

Practitioners are rightfully concerned by conditions that limit and/or prohibit their ability to develop comprehensive family plans that include necessary partners across multiple disciplines. The most commonly cited areas revolved around data sharing and access to partner agencies. A traditionally isolated approach has resulted in duplicated and uncoordinated services that often have conflicting requirements.

## **PILOT MODELS**

### *Uniform Assessment Tool*

A holistic assessment tool that is standardized across the state can open the door to available resources and interventions relevant to the area a family lives in. Many families, while reporting being unaware of available programs, also noted that they have difficulty in having to identify their own areas of need to locate the specific service that may potentially assist. Doing so may at times be nearly impossible considering the complicated web of services found in many areas across the state. A holistic family assessment tool that is supported by a robust catalog of local programs will aim to connect families to interventions based not on reported barriers but rather barriers identified by the assessment tool. The tool will provide case managers the opportunity to focus less on duplicative data entry but rather communicating and assisting the families they serve.

Maryland's Department of Human Services (DHS) is exploring a similar model. "wQ" is an assessment tool that will connect opportunities within Maryland's labor market and available programs and supports across the state to better support Maryland families as they work towards self-sufficiency. To be successful and two-generation in approach, the following should be considered when aligning the pilot;

- Holistic family assessment;
- Strengths based assessment that identifies career pathways which align with a family's goals;
- Questions framed to identify needs of the entire family;
- Localized resource mapping that can suggest interventions based specifically on identified needs;
- Data collection capabilities for the entire family;
- Case Manager training.

Pilot implementation will provide an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the tool within multiple jurisdictions. The model can be easily applied to both rural and urban settings but will allow program evaluators to understand the dynamic needs and program effectiveness in the chosen areas. The holistic family assessment pilot success will be dependent upon a breakdown of silos and inter-agency collaboration. Worth noting, lessons learned through this pilot can be used to inform decisions regarding MD THINK capabilities and what is crucial to a successful

system model. As mentioned previously, true systems changes depend on a culture shift within the State's service providers. Services must be coordinated and intentional to reduce duplicative work not only on the service provider's end but the family's as well.

The assessment tool can be used in conjunction with other pilot models as a way to evaluate the effectiveness in identifying families who are in need of the below mentioned pilot interventions. An opportunity exists to pair pilot programs with new mechanisms used to identify family barriers to self-sufficiency.

### Multi-Generational Educational Sites

Implementing Multi-Generational Educational Sites will connect and co-locate needed services for families who are challenged with childcare while striving to improve their educational status. As referenced through constituent feedback, high quality childcare that is both accessible and compatible with parent activities is an area of need in both rural and urban areas across the state.

Placing quality childcare on a community college campus where a parent works on their own educational attainment addresses many of the barriers identified through constituent and practitioner feedback. A barrier in both rural and urban areas, parents often struggle with getting their children to their childcare center or school with enough time to make it to their own classes or place of employment. Additionally, placing children in a familiar and accessible environment and close to where a parent is attending classes may alleviate parental worry and concern.

Community colleges across the state offer classes such as; GED prep courses, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), adult basic education, etc. Often, these same campuses also have programs where adults can receive their Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education. Perhaps an opportunity for a fiscally responsible program that does not compromise on quality may exist where children attend a childcare program overseen by the colleges' Early Childhood Education department with supervised students in the program as instructors.

An opportunity exists to bring separately provided services together in a manner that makes the most sense for those utilizing the programs. Finding a quality child care facility that accepts vouchers, has openings, and is in a feasible location has proven to be a barrier. Connecting child care programs to adult education and/or job training opportunities allows a parent to focus on their own progress without the stress of securing care for their child. Exploring opportunities to bring interventions to families in their place of need does not stop at child care and adult education. One example of a successful co-located partnership is the *Next Step Training and Education Program*.

Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) recipients often struggle to identify and obtain jobs with clear career pathways. While one of the main goals of the TCA program is to obtain employment, it is imperative to note that more emphasis must be made on the availability of jobs with clear career pathways. A family's economic success is limited when their source of income is an inflexible job with a lack of wage progression. Prince George's County Department of Social Services (PGC DSS) understands this need and operates a program for former and current

Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) recipients targeted at creating the opportunity to engage in career pathways.

The Next Step Training and Education Program provides current or former TCA recipients with access to post-secondary education opportunities that have clear connections to higher wage positions. PGC DSS did not create a newly funded program but rather orchestrated an approach that involves leveraging resources and a strategic partnership with the local community college. The ongoing support provided to the family in the program is what makes the Next Step Program more than just post-secondary education and a clear example of an intergenerational approach. The Next Step Program shares the commitment of success with its customers and operates through a crisis intervention model specifically tailored to meet the needs of its families. Understanding that those on TCA are parents, the program is intentional in providing developmental activities in an academic environment for the children while parents work on their own educational attainments.

### Transportation

Transportation is consistently identified as a barrier in both rural and urban areas. Constituents in rural areas face a landscape with limited public transportation options and long commutes. Similarly, constituents in urban areas struggle with inconvenient bus stop locations, wait times, and often complex routes. While many of the specific barriers differ area to area, it is clear break downs in transportation affect Maryland families statewide.

A potential pilot program will examine options for transportation interventions. Building off of existing work in Maryland's Mid-Shore area, the Commission will explore retooling the Delmarva Community Transit (DCT) to be available to families struggling to get their children to school with enough time to arrive at a job or adult education activity timely. Currently, the program provides door to door service with 24 hour notice to seniors over 60 years of age and people with a disability. To extend availability to families, the pilot will evaluate eligibility through participation in the TCA program. TCA dollars can be leveraged to fund drivers to participate in the program while large vans will be supplied by the area's community action agency, Delmarva Community Services, Inc. The success of the program will be clearly identified through an evaluation of work activity participation, school attendance, and participant feedback.

### Intergenerational Case Management Supports

Inspired by both the States' strategy of "Two-Gen In & Out" and the "Friendship Benches" program in Zimbabwe, Maryland seeks to implement an intergenerational case management model that not only provides relief for practitioners but also extends the approach beyond a traditional parent-child model.

Zimbabwe's innovative response to the lack of mental health practitioners in their country included a program that provided young mothers who were struggling with their mental health the opportunity to receive six one-on-one counseling sessions with lay health workers who were known as "grandmother health providers." The program provided an interim intervention that

resulted in decreased reports of depression and suicidal thoughts. Beyond creating a mental health intervention, the program also led to an enriched social support system and a stronger connection to ones' community.

Using this model to inspire the incorporation of Maryland's "Two-Gen In & Out" strategy, the pilot will provide an opportunity for retired workers such as social workers, teachers, therapists, counselors, etc. to volunteer their time supporting assigned case managers in Maryland's foster care reunification program. An opportunity exists to provide parents and guardians the appropriate supports within areas such as mental health, parenting, stress management, etc. These supports will not only provide the parents/guardians tools to better navigate the reunification process but will also assist assigned social workers with increasingly overwhelming caseloads. The program aims to bring an intergenerational facet to case management through retired workers who may be viewed similarly to the lay-health workers in Zimbabwe, as a "grandmother" support. Evaluation of the program will be monitored through the feedback of parents and children as well as the assigned case managers and support workers. Goals include a decrease in interactions with the Child Welfare System following reunification as well as feedback supporting the effectiveness of the interventions.

#### *Sustainability of the Two Generation Work Statewide*

In the interim report, the Commission recognized the importance of measuring, through clear evaluation standards, the effectiveness of the services provided by the pilot sites. The ongoing nature of the pilot work, as the Commission stressed, requires a thorough evaluation of pilot activities that will result in impactful recommendations that can change the experience a family has on their journey to economic stability.

To that end, the Commission recommends the creation of a Two Generation Program Officer within the Department of Human services to fully evaluate the work of the two pilot sites and remain focused specifically on the Two-Gen mission and approach on behalf of the State. Other states with successful Two-Gen programs have established a leadership position that serves as the liaison between state agencies, executive staff, the legislature, and federal partners. Additionally, creation of a permanent position will ensure the longevity and sustainability of the program.

#### *Colorado Model*

The sustainability of Colorado's Two Generation approach is due in large part to the work of a Statewide Two-Generation Program Coordinator position within the Governor's Office. The Program Coordinator is responsible for:

- Developing a Two Generation Action Plan within and across Colorado's state agencies and community partners;
- Convening quarterly webinar meetings to discuss Action Plan implementation efforts;
- Supporting county-based innovation to refine child and family serving programs; and

- Engaging in cross-sector outreach with stakeholders who are interested in adopting a Two Generation approach.

The State also hosts a Two-Generation Approach webpage on the Governor's Office website that serves as a real time communication tool for their Statewide and national Two Generation partners and repository for all Two Generation related information.

#### Tennessee Model

Similarly, the State of Tennessee's Department of Human Services also hosts a Two Generation website that outlines the Department's strategy for implementing the statewide Two Generation strategy. Additionally, the State has also initiated an annual Resilient Families Forum and Two Generation Accelerator Awards Ceremony, highlighting the work of State agencies and community based partners in their efforts to serve families in a more holistic, innovative manner.

#### Transitional TANF Benefits – Overview

The University of Maryland School of Social Work conducted research in the area of benefits cliff mitigation for vulnerable Maryland families. A study of national models for Transitional Cash Benefits for TANF families was provided to the Commission for consideration. A summary of those findings are described in this section.

Transitional TANF benefits are cash assistance provided to TANF families who exit the program due to employment that places families above the income limit to receive monthly benefits. These transitional TANF benefits are used to assist families with their transitions from welfare to work and lessen the effect of the benefits cliff immediately upon obtaining employment. According to the University of Maryland School of Social Work, as of 2016, 21 states provided families with short-term Transitional Cash Benefits as shown below in Table 2.



Table 2. Transitional TANF Benefits – National Landscape

State	Monthly benefit amount for transitional benefits	Time limit for transitional benefits
Arkansas	\$204	24 months
Georgia	\$200	12 months
Kansas	\$50	5 months
Kentucky	\$130	9 months
Maryland	None	None
Missouri	\$50	6 months
Montana	Benefit phases out	3 months
Nebraska	Benefit phases out	5 months
Nevada	\$350	1 month
New Jersey	\$200	24 months
New York	Other calculation	24 months
North Carolina	\$100	3 months
North Dakota	Other calculation	6 months
Oklahoma	Equal to grant amount	3 months
Oregon	Benefit phases out	3 months
Pennsylvania	\$100	3 months
South Dakota	Equal to grant amount	1 month
Utah	Benefit phases out	3 months
Virginia's VIEW program	\$50	12 months
Washington	Other calculation	1 month
West Virginia	Equal to grant amount	6 months
Wyoming	Benefit phases out	6 months

States provide transitional TANF benefits between 1 and 24 months, but 15 of the 21 states provide the benefit for 6 months or less. In 10 states, the monthly benefit amount varies from \$50 to \$350. However, there are 5 states that provide a benefit amount that phases out over the benefit period to reduce the cliff effect. For example, in Montana the benefit amount is \$375 in the first month, \$275 in the second month, and \$175 in the third month. Three states provide a benefit that is equal to the grant amount the family was receiving before their earnings made them over scale, and in 3 states, a calculation is used to determine the benefit amount.

States vary on implementation of these benefits. In 14 states, adults are required to work a minimum number of hours generally ranging from 20 to 30 hours. Some states vary these requirements based on family structure. That is, single-parent families with children under age six work 20 hours per week, while those with older children work 30 hours, and two-parent families work 55 hours per week.

Other states phase out the benefit amount throughout the benefit period. In 2016, Oregon revised its benefit structure to mitigate the effects of the benefit cliff by increasing the income limit for current recipients, providing a 3-month phased-out transitional benefit for families with an over-scale closure, and extending a reduced child care co-payment for 3 months.

Unfortunately limited research has been conducted on the effectiveness of these transitional benefits on reducing returns to TANF, increasing employment and earnings, or encouraging employment retention. Research completed in the late 1990s suggests that these work incentive payments were effective at increasing employment and earnings and reducing poverty.<sup>1</sup> More recent research indicated that 3 months of transitional TANF reduced the 6-month rate of returns to the TANF program.<sup>2</sup>

### *Pennsylvania Model*

In Pennsylvania, the stated purpose of Transitional Cash Assistance is to provide “an incentive for TANF recipients to move from public assistance to employment while also allowing Pennsylvania to increase the number of family households meeting the WPR [Work Participation Rate].” See [PA Cash Assistance Handbook](#) (Section 137.3)

\*A summary of the Pennsylvania model’s funding and eligibility criteria are provided in Appendix C.

### Potential Benefits to Families

While transitional TANF benefits programs vary state to state there are general potential benefits and impacts that have been identified as consistent across the existing programs and therefore should be considered.

- Employment stability and increased earnings
- Ability to manage new and reoccurring expenses
- No benefit cliff immediately after employment
- Potential Effect on Other Transitional Benefits
- Food Supplement Program (FSP) may decrease because the transitional benefit would be considered income. However, transitional FSP benefits, can still be provided at the same level along with the transitional TANF benefit when MOE funds are used for the transitional TANF.

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<sup>1</sup> Greenberger, D. & Andelmi, R. (2003). Making work pay: How to design and implement financial work support to improve family and child well-being and reduce poverty. Retrieved from: [https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/full\\_436.pdf](https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/full_436.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Vogel-Ferguson, M.B. (2010). Transitional cash assistance: Bridging welfare-to-work. Retrieved from: <https://socialwork.utah.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/09/TCAfinalreport.pdf>

- The effect on Medicaid would depend on whether the transitional TANF benefit is counted or disregarded as income in determining eligibility.
- Child care subsidy may also be affected if the transitional TANF benefit is counted as income.
- Child support may be recouped by the state and the state would be required to pay the federal government their share of collections. To avoid this, MOE funds in a separate state program must be used or states can pass-through and disregard child support payments in accordance with DRA rules.

### Improved Work Participation Rate

If TANF funds are used for the transitional benefit, then these individuals can be counted in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services mandated Work Participation Rate (WPR).

### Other Resources to Consider

In accordance with the Two Generation approach to self-sufficiency, Maryland should offer voluntary or required services to families who receive the transitional TANF benefit. These services may include case management services to address barriers families may experience during their welfare to work transition such as transportation. They can also include budgeting classes or the extension of educational opportunities.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Commission identified a vision of Maryland's Two-Generation approach that will extend beyond merely a program. Through a combination of constituent outreach, research, and practitioner feedback, the Commission identified specific areas in which Two-Generational interventions can improve upon the State's current service delivery models to align them with a more holistic family model.

By identifying existing resources available within the State coupled with ongoing systems improvements available to be leveraged the Commission has assisted the State in moving toward this vision. By bringing separately provided services together in a manner that makes the most sense for those utilizing the programs alongside a set of clear evaluation standards of the effectiveness of the services provided by the pilot sites examples of this holistic model can be realized.

To continue this work in an ongoing capacity the Commission recommends creation of a Two-Generation Program Officer within the Department of Human Services to fully evaluate the work of the two pilot sites and remain focused specifically on the Two-Generation mission and approach on behalf of the State. The Commission additionally recommends that the State explore the provision of a transitional, short-term cash assistance provided to Temporary Cash Assistance families who exit the program due to employment that places families above the income limit to receive monthly benefits. These transitional benefits would be used to assist

families with their transitions from welfare to work and lessen the effect of the benefits cliff immediately upon obtaining employment.

Through this ongoing role with robust evaluation and monitoring provided by statewide systems improvements coupled with evidence based programs a system can exist that would have the capability to measure whole family success marking a true shift from traditional performance measures that point to the success of a child or adult beneficiary, individually. Through this the State can truly make a positive change in the experience a family has on their journey to economic stability

**APPENDIX A: Executive Order 01.01.2017.03**



**The State of Maryland**  
**Executive Department**

EXECUTIVE ORDER  
01.01.2017.03

Two Generation Family Economic Security Commission and Pilot Program

- WHEREAS, 26.5 percent of children in Maryland are from low-income families, 36 percent of children in Maryland live in single-mother households, and 50.2 percent of African-American or Hispanic children who live in single-mother households are from low-income families;
- WHEREAS, 42 percent of children who grow up in poverty or in low-income families experience economic hardship themselves as adults;
- WHEREAS, Individuals in multigenerational poverty require support to make sound long-term personal and financial plans;
- WHEREAS, The “Two-Generation Approach” seeks to break the cycle of multigenerational poverty by implementing and intentionally linking programs and services that create opportunities for, and address the needs of both parents and children, particularly in the areas of early-childhood education, elementary education, economic stability, and family engagement;
- WHEREAS, Higher education leads to stable careers with family-sustaining wages, providing opportunities for families to break the cycle of multigenerational poverty;
- WHEREAS, The State of Maryland can foster greater family economic security and child well-being by serving parents and children individually and together as a family unit through the Two-Generation Approach;
- WHEREAS, The Two-Generation Approach improves the strength and resilience of families and assists them in building societal relationships, helping parents achieve the aspirations they have for their children and themselves and;

WHEREAS, The Two-Generation Approach provides the State of Maryland with an opportunity to pursue innovative reforms that seek to improve academic achievement of children and increase the earning potential of parents, which are supported by, among others, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Aspen Institute, National Governors Association, and Urban Institute.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, LAWRENCE J. HOGAN, JR., GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF MARYLAND, HEREBY PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

A. There is a Two-Generation Family Economic Security Commission (“Commission”).

(1) The Commission shall initially consist of the following members:

(a) The Lieutenant Governor, who shall serve as the ex officio chair of the Commission;

(b) Two members of the Maryland Senate, appointed as follows:

(i) One member of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee appointed by the President of the Senate, and;

(ii) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;

(c) Two members of the Maryland House of Delegates, appointed as follows:

(i) One member of the House Appropriations Committee appointed by the Speaker of the House, and;

(ii) One appointed by the Minority Leader of the House;

(d) The Secretary of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, or the Secretary’s Designee;

(e) The Secretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development, or the Secretary’s Designee;

(f) The Secretary of the Department of Human Resources, or the Secretary's Designee;

(g) The Secretary of the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, or the Secretary's Designee;

(h) The Executive Director of the Governor's Office for Children, or the Executive Director's Designee;

(i) The Superintendent of the Maryland State Department of Education, or the Superintendent's Designee;

(j) One Director of a Local Department of Social Services appointed by the Maryland Association of Social Services Directors;

(k) One County Health Officer appointed by the Maryland Association of County Health Officers;

(l) One member appointed by the Maryland Association of Community Colleges; and

(m) Five public members appointed by the Governor, including one parent with experience in child-welfare advocacy or community-action partnerships. The public members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

(2) If one or more pilot program sites are selected pursuant to section B(2) of this executive order, the following members shall be appointed to the Commission by the Governor:

(a) One representative of a pilot program site;  
and

(b) One local-government representative from a jurisdiction containing a pilot program, nominated by a County Executive, County Administrator, or Mayor as appropriate.

**B. Duties.**

(1) The Commission shall investigate policy challenges, opportunities, and recommendations regarding the mitigation of multigenerational poverty as follows:

(a) Identify services and policies within State programs that can be coordinated to support a multigenerational approach;

(b) Identify program and service gaps and inconsistencies between federal, State policies, and local policies;

(c) Identify, test, and recommend best practices utilized on federal, State and local levels;

(d) Solicit input and guidance regarding Two-Generation Approach practices and policies from external sources with direct knowledge and experience in the field of multigenerational poverty including, but not limited to, Two-Generation Approach practicing states, federal and Maryland Agencies, private foundations, community-action partnerships, and welfare-advocacy organizations.

(2) The Commission may utilize State and federal funding to establish criteria for the assessment and selection of up to four pilot program sites in areas with the highest percentage of children experiencing multigenerational poverty, and then implement such programs.

(3) The Commission shall submit its recommendations to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House as follows:

(a) An interim report shall be submitted on or before December 31, 2017; and

(b) A final report summarizing Commission and pilot-program activities and outcomes, and recommended legislative, policy, and regulatory actions that would better support a multigenerational approach to breaking cyclical poverty, shall be submitted on or before December 31, 2018, for consideration during the 2019 legislative session of the Maryland General Assembly.

C. Procedures.

(1) The Department of Human Resources shall provide staff to support the Commission. Other State agencies and their staff may be invited to participate by the Lieutenant Governor.



(2) All State agencies, departments, boards, and commissions within the Executive Branch are authorized and directed to coordinate with the Commission in implementing the provisions of this Executive Order.

(3) The Commission shall meet as frequently as necessary to meet the deadlines established herein.

(4) The Commission may adopt such other procedures as may be necessary to ensure the orderly transaction of business, including the creation of committees.

(5) A majority of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business.

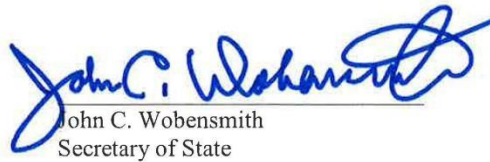
(6) On December 31, 2018, with no further action required by the Governor, this Executive Order shall be abrogated and is of no further force and effect.

GIVEN Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in the City of Annapolis, this 9th Day of March 2017.



Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.  
Governor

ATTEST:



John C. Wobensmith  
Secretary of State



## APPENDIX B: Roster of the Commission Members

<b>Slot</b>	<b>Appointee</b>
Ex Officio Chair	Lieutenant Governor Boyd K. Rutherford
Senate Member	Senator Adelaide C. Eckardt
Senate Member	Senator Johnny Ray Salling
House of Delegates Member	Delegate Geraldine Valentino-Smith
House of Delegates Member	Delegate Ric Metzgar
Department of Health	Courtney Lewis
Department of Housing and Community Development	Stuart Campbell
Department of Human Services	Lourdes Padilla
Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation	
Governor's Office for Children	Jaclin Warner Wiggins
Maryland State Department of Education	Dr. Sylvia Lawson
Maryland Association of Social Services Directors	Gloria Brown Burnett
Maryland Association of County Health Officers	Dr. Gregory Branch
Maryland Association of Community Colleges	Alison Buckley
Public Member	Dr. Heather Lyons
Public Member	Alexandria Warrick Adams
Public Member	Kirkland Murray
Public Member	Angela Martin
Public Member	Shirley Crawford

## **APPENDIX C: Pennsylvania Transitional Cash Assistance Model Summary**

### **Funding:**

- Transitional Cash Assistance benefits are funded through state Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds.

### **Benefit Amount:**

- Eligible families receive six \$50 payments over a 3-month period for a total of \$300

### **Initial Eligibility:**

- Case closed due to income over scale (sanctioned or disqualified individuals are not eligible)
- Has earned income
- Meeting WPR at closure
- Has a TANF recipient child

### **Multiple Eligibility Periods:**

- There are no limits to the number of times a family can receive Transitional Cash Assistance. As long as the family meets the initial eligibility requirements, then the family can receive Transitional Cash Assistance. That is, if a family leaves once due to income over scale, but returns to the TANF program at a later point and the case closes again for income over scale, then the family will be eligible for two 3-month periods of Transitional Cash Assistance.

### **Reporting Requirements:**

- Families are not required to report changes while receiving Transitional Cash Assistance.
- WPR is not re-evaluated while the family is receiving Transitional Cash Assistance.
- This is intended to reduce the burden on caseworkers; however, if families do report a change then this may affect eligibility of Transitional Cash Assistance.

### **Eligibility for Other Transitional Benefits:**

- Families eligible for the 12-month Transitional Medical Assistance will begin the 12-month period when the TANF case closes.
- The Transitional Cash Assistance benefits are counted as unearned income for the Extended SNAP benefits.
- While the family receives Transitional Cash Assistance, the family will maintain the child care eligibility as a TANF recipient; after the 3-month period of Transitional Cash Assistance, the family's child care eligibility will be the same as a former TANF recipient.

### **TANF Time Limit**

- Months in which a family receives Transitional Cash Assistance do not count toward the 60-month federal time limit.

### **Child Support**

- Any support received while a family receives Transitional Cash Assistance is provided to the family.