



NRFC State Profiles Connecticut (2012)

This profile describes state-funded and federally funded programs and policies that aim to strengthen families. These programs and policies support parenting and father involvement, help couples maintain strong bonds, enhance fathers' economic stability, and provide support during incarceration and reentry. The profile lists phone numbers and websites for the programs. This information was correct when the profile was written (in 2012) but may change over time.

Programs to Support Parenting and Responsible Fatherhood

Responsible fatherhood programs often focus on improving parenting skills, keeping fathers involved with their children and helping them pay child support. A few such programs, shown in the table below, are available in the state.

Program or Organization	Topic	Description	Contact Information
Children's Trust Fund	Parenting	State program to provide family empowerment programs that work with fathers to address poverty, domestic violence, substance abuse, and other issues. The Trust Fund also provides support for nurturing parenting and child development and other resources.	www.ct.gov/ctf/cwp/view.asp?a=1786&q=293148 (860) 424-5212
Catholic Charities Responsible Fatherhood Initiative	Parenting	Federally funded healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood program offered through the Archdiocese of Hartford. Services include workshops on communication, conflict management, and relationship commitment. Some job and career services are also available. Program activities are located in Hartford and Waterbury.	www.archdioceseofhartford.org/ (860) 541-6491
Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative	Preventing unwanted or early fatherhood	State program to fund local community providers of pregnancy prevention curricula. Programs are offered in 12 communities in Connecticut.	www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?a=2353&q=305234 State info line: dial 211

Take Time to Be a Dad Today

Toll-free: 877-4DAD411 (877-432-3411) | Fax: 703-934-3740 | info@fatherhood.gov | www.fatherhood.gov

 facebook.com/fatherhoodgov

 [@fatherhoodgov](https://twitter.com/fatherhoodgov)

Programs to Promote Healthy Relationships

Programs that support healthy marriages and relationships may focus on skills such as communication and dealing with conflict. One such program, shown in the table below, is available in the state.

Program or Organization	Topic	Description	Contact Information
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Migration and Refugee Services	Healthy marriage and relationships	Federally funded programs to help refugee couples improve communication, conflict resolution, financial skills, parenting, and other skills.	www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/ (202) 541-3000

Programs to Support Prevention of Domestic Violence

Programs to prevent domestic violence currently operate in the state may offer shelters for victims, counseling, and legal advice. One such program, shown in the table below, is supported by the state.

Program or Organization	Topic	Description	Contact / Website
Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Domestic violence prevention	State program to provide emergency shelter services, a 24-hour crisis line, and other services to victims of domestic violence.	www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?a=2353&q=305234 State Info line: dial 211 24 hour crisis line: (888) 774-2900

Programs to Enhance Economic Stability

Economic stability programs help parents support themselves and may include services to help fathers find jobs or increase their earnings. A few programs, shown in the table below, are available in the state.

Program or Organization	Topic	Description	Contact / Website
Jobs First Employment Services	Job training and employment	Fathers who receive public assistance benefits through Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) are required to participate in Jobs First Employment Services program, which offers skill assessments, job search services, educational and training opportunities, and support services.	www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?a=2353&q=305260 (800) 842-1508

Program or Organization	Topic	Description	Contact / Website
JobCorps	Job training and employment	Federal job training program for low-income young men and women to help with education and career goals.	http://www.jobcorps.gov/centers/ct.aspx Hartford Center (860) 953-7201 New Haven Center (203) 397-3775
CTWORKS One-Stop Career Centers	Job training and employment	Connecticut has a network of Regional Workforce Boards and One-Stop Career Centers that offer employment services and training to low-income and unemployed individuals.	www.ctdol.state.ct.us/contactinfo/ctworks/directory.htm (860) 263-6000

Programs for Incarceration and Reentry

Programs for incarceration and reentry aim to meet the needs of people involved with the criminal justice system. One such program, shown in the table below, is available in the state.

Program or Organization	Topic	Description	Contact / Website
Family ReEntry, Inc.	Reentry	State-funded program works with inmates and families to ease inmates' transition into the community. Family reentry programs offer employment training, substance abuse and behavioral health assessment, empowerment programs, and programs for families and youth.	www.ct.gov/doc/lib/doc/PDF/Compendium/CompendiumALL.pdf (203) 838-0496 or (866) 302-8030
Families in Crisis, Inc. Inside Out Dad Program	Reentry	Federally funded program to prepare inmates for reentry to the community through group sessions, counseling, and financial education.	www.familiesincrisis.org/fic-services/121?task=view

Policies to Promote Responsible Fatherhood and Parenting

The Family and Medical Leave Act

Connecticut has a Family and Medical Leave Act, which allows fathers and mothers time off after the birth or adoption of a child or during an illness, without fear of losing their jobs. This applies to employers with 75 or more employees. Parents are entitled to unpaid leave in any two-year period, for up to 16 weeks, to care for a new child, an ill family member, to serve as an organ donor, or to recover from a serious illness. The act protects fathers and mothers who have worked with the same organization for at least one year and have worked at least 1,000 hours within the past year. In addition, parents are allowed to use up to two weeks of sick leave as paid family leave.¹

Paternaly Establishment

Establishing paternity is the legal process to be identified as the father of a child. If the parents are not married at the time of birth, and the father has not signed an Acknowledgement of Paternity at the hospital, the father can still acknowledge paternity by completing this acknowledgement at the Connecticut Department of Social Services or other state government offices. In cases of contested paternity, a court order is required to establish paternity.ⁱⁱ

Child Custody

After the dissolution of a relationship, both parents have the right to petition the Connecticut court system to determine the custody of the children. Child custody decisions are made in the best interest of the child, which includes the child's developmental needs, each parent's ability to respond to the child's needs, the wishes of the child and the parents, past behavior, child adjustment, and a range of other factors. The state presumes that joint custody is in the child's best interest. Parents also must participate in a parenting education program designed to help parents understand how children are affected by changing family structure, how to reduce stress, and how to manage conflicts with the child's other parent.ⁱⁱⁱ

Child Support Assistance

The Bureau of Child Support Enforcement is charged with improving the self-sufficiency of Connecticut families through increased parental support and paternity establishment. The bureau locates noncustodial parents, establishes paternity if necessary, establishes and modifies support orders for never married parents, collects child support payments, and distributes payments to children and their families. The bureau provides child support services to any individual or agency that requests assistance. Families that receive TFA benefits automatically turn most of their child support payments over to the state to reimburse some of the cost of public assistance.^{iv}

Low-income fathers who are unable to pay their child support orders can receive child support assistance services through programs funded by the Fatherhood Initiative of Connecticut. Services and supports offered by these programs include legal advocacy and employment services, which may help fathers better provide financial and medical support for their children.^v

Child Support Enforcement

Connecticut enforces child support orders using three methods: (1) withhold income, including wages, workers' compensation benefits, unemployment benefits, and retirement benefits; (2) hold the parent ordered to pay child support in contempt of court; and (3) suspend driver's, professional, occupational, or recreational licenses of the noncustodial parent in order to induce payment.^{vi}

Policies to Promote Economic Stability

TFA is a state program that provides cash benefits to impoverished single parents and two-parent families. There are no specific marriage benefits for welfare recipients. TFA recipients must begin work activities immediately upon receiving benefits; however, education and training activities can fulfill part of this requirement. The state limits benefit receipt to 21 months for most families.^{vii}

Resources

Connecticut Fatherhood Contact: John S. Martinez Fatherhood Initiative of Connecticut,
<http://www.ct.gov/fatherhood/site/default.asp>, fatherhood.dss@ct.gov, (866) 6CT-DADS.

The Fatherhood Initiative of Connecticut also provides a listing of state and local programs supporting fathers in Connecticut. This directory of services is available at
www.ct.gov/fatherhood/lib/fatherhood/pdfs/fatherhooddirectory.pdf.

References

ⁱFor more information on the Connecticut Family and Medical Leave policy, see www.ctdol.state.ct.us/wgwkstnd/fmla/FMLAstatute.pdf.

ⁱⁱSee www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3132&q=390668#Process for more information on where you can complete the Acknowledgement of Paternity form and how to establish paternity through a court order.

ⁱⁱⁱTo learn more about the state child custody policy, see www.jud.ct.gov/lawlib/Notebooks/Pathfinders/bestinterest.pdf.

^{iv}To learn more about the child support policy in Connecticut, including how the state handles and processes support payments, see www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?a=2353&Q=305184.

^vTo learn more about the types of services available through the Fatherhood Initiative of Connecticut, see www.ct.gov/fatherhood/site/default.asp, or contact the Fatherhood Initiative at (866) 6CT-DADS.

^{vi}To learn more about the various ways that Connecticut enforces child support orders, see <http://www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?a=2353%C2%AD&Q=305184>.

^{vii}To learn more about TFA, see www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?a=2353&q=305260.