



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance



National
Responsible
Fatherhood Clearinghouse

NRFC State Profile: Utah September 2016

This profile describes state and federally funded programs and policies that aim to strengthen families. These programs and policies support parenting and father involvement, promote strong family relationships, 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 2016) but may change over time.

Programs to Support Responsible Fatherhood and Strengthen Families

Responsible fatherhood programs focus on issues such as enhancing parenting and relationship skills, keeping fathers involved with their children, improving their economic stability, helping them pay child support, and generally helping to strengthen families.

The following state and federally funded programs are available in the state:

Organization	Services Provided	Description	Service Area and Contact Information
Community Action Services and Food Bank	Economic Stability	The federally funded Community Action Services and Food Bank helps families reach financial stability by providing assistance with budgeting skills, debt management, and building credit scores. The <i>Circles Campaign</i> provides help with self-reliance, analytical thinking, and problem solving skills.	Summit, Utah, and Wasatch Counties. Website (801) 373-8200
Davis County Public Schools	Fatherhood/Parenting	Davis County Public Schools offers the federally funded <i>Fathers Involved Shaping Head Start Children (FISH)</i> , which offers monthly activities for fathers and their Head Start-enrolled children, and helps fathers develop effective parenting skills.	Davis School District. Website (801) 402-0664
Job Corps	Economic Stability	<i>Job Corps</i> is a federal job training program to help low-income young men and women ages 16 to 24 with educational and career goals.	There are two job centers in Utah. They are located in Clearfield and Ogden. Website Clearfield: (801) 479-9806 Ogden: (801) 476-5985

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Organization	Services Provided	Description	Service Area and Contact Information
Ogden Weber Community Action Partnership, Inc. (OWCAP)	Economic Stability	The state and federally funded OWCAP provides employment assistance, financial literacy and asset management, <i>Vita</i> (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance), adult education, and ESL classes.	Weber County. Website (801) 399-9281
Utah Department of Corrections	Incarceration/Reentry Fatherhood/Parenting Healthy Relationships Economic Stability Domestic Violence	The Utah Department of Corrections provides life-skills programs for inmates with a focus on parenting, relationships, financial literacy, and domestic violence. The department also offers education and vocational training, substance abuse treatment, and employment opportunities within the Utah Correctional Industries.	Utah State Prison and Central Utah Correctional Facility. Website (801) 545-5500
Utah Department of Health	Fatherhood/Parenting Healthy Relationships	The Utah Association of Family Support Centers, a service of the Utah Department of Health, offers parenting education programs that include classroom instruction and personalized, in-home support. Programs focus on problem solving, effective communication, and maintenance of healthy relationships. The centers also offer crisis care and referrals for other resources.	Serves multiple counties. Website with locations and phone numbers. (801) 393-3113
Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS)	Economic Stability	Utah Department of Workforce Services employment centers provide job search assistance for unemployed workers, veterans, dislocated workers, and others. Assistance includes skills assessments and training opportunities. The DWS website offers a state job bank and other employment resources.	Serves the entire state. Website with locations and phone numbers.
Utah State University Extension (USU-E)	Fatherhood/Parenting Healthy Relationships	USU-E was awarded a federal grant from the Office of Family Assistance in September 2015 to provide marriage and relationship education and skills for young fathers, expectant fathers, and other youth in detention facilities and alternative high schools. USU-E also provides <i>Dads Matter</i> parenting courses for fathers, <i>Parenting the Love & Logic Way</i> classes for all parents, <i>Smart Steps for Stepfamilies</i> , and healthy relationships courses for dating singles and couples.	Serves multiple counties. Healthy Relationships Utah website and locations.

Policies to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Paternal Establishment

Establishing paternity gives a child born outside of marriage the same legal rights and privileges as a child born to married parents. Children gain access to family medical history and rights to inheritance, fathers' medical and life insurance benefits, social security and veterans' benefits, and child support. In addition, Native American children gain tribal enrollment rights.

In Utah, there are three ways for unmarried parents to establish paternity. 1) Parents can sign a Voluntary Declaration of Paternity (VDP) at the hospital or birthing facility when the child is born, the Office of Vital Records and Statistics, or any local health department. 2) Paternity is established through an Administrative Paternity Order. One parent applies for child support services with the Office of Recovery Services. Once the case is open, both parents will be served with a Notice of Agency Action (NAA), which provides proposed child support amounts, information about medical insurance coverage, and a list of options available for each parent after receiving the notice. If paternity needs to be established, the NAA will either contain an appointment date for genetic tests or provide instructions about how either parent can request genetic tests. After the parents have had time to respond to the NAA, to provide more information, or to request genetic tests, the administrative paternity order is issued. The administrative process does not involve the judicial court system, but an administrative paternity order has the same effect as a judicial paternity order. 3) A parent can establish paternity using the judicial process by starting a Judicial Paternity Order. A judicial paternity order is the result of a court action in front of a judge or commissioner in either a district or juvenile court. The parents may hire attorneys or represent themselves in court. Both parents receive court documents and have an opportunity to provide more information to the court. After all issues are resolved, a judicial paternity order is issued.ⁱ

Child Custody

If unmarried or divorced parents cannot reach agreement concerning child custody or visitation, a legal order can be made through the court system. Either parent may be granted custody of the child, or both may share equally in physical custody and/or decision-making responsibilities. There is no legal connection between payment or non-payment of child support and rights to visitation.

In Utah, the court may order any custody or parent time arrangement created by the parents once it determines that the arrangement is in the child's best interests. If parents cannot reach a custody agreement, then the court will order the custody arrangement that is in the child's best interests. There are two parts to custody: physical custody and legal custody. Physical custody dictates where the children live. Legal custody dictates which parent has the right to make important decisions about the children. The court may award any combination of 1) sole legal and sole physical, 2) joint legal and joint physical, 3) joint legal and sole physical, and 4) split custody. Sole legal and sole physical custody means that children live with one parent and that parent also makes all major decisions about the children's lives. Joint legal and joint physical custody means that children live with each parent for at least 111 nights a year, and both parents make decisions about the children's lives. Joint legal and sole physical custody means that children live with one parent for more than 225 nights per year, and the other parent has regular parent time, but both parents make important decisions about their children. Split custody is when each parent is awarded the sole physical custody of at least one of the children when there is more than one child. In cases of split custody, legal custody of the children may or may not be shared by the non-custodial parent, as ordered by the court. The court may order any custody or parent time arrangement that it considers to be in the child's best interests. Factors that may be weighed in determining this include the parents' conduct and moral standards, any history of abuse, and what will most likely be beneficial for the child's physical, psychological, and emotional needs. Parent time, also known as "visitation," is the time the non-custodial parent spends with a child. When parents cannot reach an agreement on a parent time schedule, the court can order any schedule that is appropriate for the children and the parents and in the children's best interests.ⁱⁱ

The Utah Co-Parenting Mediation Program helps parents with parent-time (visitation) problems resolve conflicts without formal court intervention. A mediator assists parents with parent-time and other co-parenting issues such as

school, medical, and safety issues. Parties are not required to come to an agreement regarding their issues in mediation, but they are expected to make a good faith effort to resolve co-parenting issues.ⁱⁱⁱ

Child Support

The Federal Child Support Enforcement Program was established in 1975 as Title IV-D of the Social Security Act to locate noncustodial parents, establish paternity and establish and enforce child support orders. General services available in all states and territories include voluntary in-hospital paternity acknowledgement, genetic testing, explanation of state guidelines for determining child support orders, and review of child support orders at least every three years at the request of either parent. State child support offices are responsible for the collection and distribution of child support payments and can modify orders when appropriate. If a parent is behind in their payments, the office may use enforcement tools such as license revocation (including drivers, professional, recreational or occupational licenses), seizure of assets, property liens, passport denial, and federal and state tax refund offsets.^{iv}

Utah's Child Support Program is run the by the Department of Human Services. Parents can apply for services online. Go to the [website](#) or call (801) 536-8500 for more information.

The Family and Medical Leave Act

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) protects employees who have worked with the same organization for at least twelve months and worked at least 1,250 hours within the past year. It contains provisions for both fathers and mothers to take time off after the birth or adoption of a child, or during a serious illness, without fear of losing their jobs. Employees in companies with 50 or more employees are entitled to up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave, over a one-year period, to care for a new child, recuperate from a serious illness, care for a seriously ill family member, or handle issues arising from a family member's call to active military duty. The FMLA also gives employees the right to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a family member who is seriously injured or becomes ill while on active military duty.^v

Utah has no additional state provisions for paid or unpaid leave.

Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded school readiness program for young children from low-income families. The program, currently delivered by about 1,700 local organizations – public and private, non-profit and for-profit – provides preschoolers with comprehensive services, such as education and health screenings, with the goal of building their skills across five school readiness domains: language and literacy, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, physical development and health, and social and emotional development. Head Start encourages the role of parents (both mothers and fathers) as their child's first and most important teachers. Programs build relationships with families that support positive parent-child relationships, family well-being, and connections to peers and community. Early Head Start, also managed by the federal Office of Head Start, is directed toward children up to the age of three and their parents. While the program is federally funded and managed, local agencies make decisions regarding service delivery based on the specific needs of their communities; for example, some may opt to include home-based services for families in their programs. Most states have multiple Head Start programs providing services for fathers.

To find information on Head Start programs in Utah, go to this [website](#).

Policies to Promote Economic Stability

Child Care Assistance

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) works with states to provide support for children and their low-income families. Subsidized child care services are available to eligible families through certificates (vouchers), grants, or contracts with providers. Fathers and mothers may select a child care provider that satisfies applicable state and local requirements, including basic health and safety requirements.^{vi}

Utah's Child Care subsidy program helps low-income parents pay a child care provider. To be eligible, the household must meet income requirements and include an eligible child under the age of 12, or under the age of 18 if a child has special needs. Parents must be working or enrolled in a training program for a minimum number of hours per month. Parents who lose their job while receiving childcare assistance may also qualify for up to two additional months of Job Search Child Care Assistance.^{vii}

Rental Assistance

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides rental assistance to low-income families and individuals through a number of methods. HUD subsidizes privately owned apartments, allowing low-income tenants to rent them at reduced rates. In the Public Housing program, local housing agencies manage rental housing for low-income tenants, while HUD provides professional and technical assistance in their planning, development, and management. The Housing Choice Voucher Program, better known as Section 8, provides eligible families and individuals with vouchers that they can use to pay for all or part of the rent at housing units of their choice. Generally, eligibility for the HUD rental assistance programs is based on annual gross income, assets, family size, and other considerations such as elderly or disabled status. Local housing agencies generally set the fixed eligibility rules for their regions, determine assistance amounts, and manage waiting lists for assistance.^{viii}

Utah has no additional state provisions for rental assistance.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly the Food Stamp program, provides low-income individuals (both men and women) and families with funds delivered in an electronic benefit transfer card, or EBT card) that can be used to purchase food. SNAP is administered within the Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Services and is federally funded, but applications, delivery, and outreach are handled at the state or local level. In general, individuals and households are eligible to receive SNAP if they have less than \$2,250 in countable resources and earn less than 130 percent of the poverty line in gross monthly income. However, characteristics of recipients (for example, age or disabled status) can affect eligibility requirements, and states have flexibility in determining eligibility, particularly with regard to what is considered a countable resource. In 2014, the average monthly SNAP benefit per individual was \$125.35.^{ix}

In Utah, families can apply for SNAP online, at their local Department of Workforce Services office, or by requesting an application be mailed to them. The family's size and income determines whether they qualify and the amount of benefits they receive per month. Verification of identity is all that a family needs to provide when filing an application. Depending on their level of need, families may be eligible to receive benefits within 7 days of applying. All able-bodied adults in the household must participate in the Employment and Training (E&T) Program for the family to receive benefits. The E&T Program helps individuals learn the skills needed to find work and increase household income. Participants are required to register as a job seeker at <https://jobs.utah.gov/> and complete job search activities. Non-US citizens may also qualify for SNAP benefits under certain circumstances.^x

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program grants federal funds to states for developing and implementing their own welfare programs that provide assistance and work opportunities to needy families.

Utah's TANF program is called the Family Employment Program (FEP). The family's size and income determines whether they qualify and the amount of benefits they receive per month. As part of the application process, families may be asked to provide proof of: household members and income, U.S. citizenship, and any financial assistance received in other states. Families can receive benefits for up to 36 months. To be approved for benefits after submitting an application, families must 1) complete an orientation, 2) meet with an Employment Counselor, 3) complete a Substance Abuse Screening Questionnaire, 4) complete an Office of Recovery Services (ORS) Application, 5)

complete an Agreement of Mutual Responsibility, and 5) create or update "My Job Search" registration on <https://jobs.utah.gov/>. To receive benefits, parents must develop an employment plan to meet their family's needs and participate in employment activities.^{xi} In certain cases, parents may be able to receive child care through the Family Employment Program.^{xii}

Other Helpful Resources

United Way of Salt Lake

United Way 2-1-1 Information and Referral is a statewide service that connects people to important health, human, and community service programs including: emergency food pantries, rental assistance, public health clinics, child care resources, support groups, legal aid, and nonprofit and government agencies. All calls are free and confidential, and interpreters are available in 170 languages. Resources and information are also available on the [website](#).

Utah Domestic Violence Coalition

UDVC is a statewide coalition which supports and assists domestic violence prevention agencies and shelters throughout Utah. While the coalition does not provide direct services, individuals can call Utah's statewide domestic violence hotline at (800) 897-LINK (5465) or visit the [website](#) for links to external resources. UDVC also conducts statewide advocacy to support victims of domestic violence, and creates awareness on the issue of domestic violence.

Utah Coalition Against Sexual Assault (UCASA)

UCASA is a statewide coordinating coalition of rape crisis providers that facilitates rape and sexual assault prevention programs throughout the state. UCASA's [website](#) also lists local programs and resources for survivors of sexual assault.

References

ⁱ For more information on Paternity Establishment in Utah, see http://www.paternitymatters.utah.gov/parents_faq.html.

ⁱⁱ For more information on Child Custody in Utah, see <https://www.utcourts.gov/howto/divorce/custody.html>.

ⁱⁱⁱ For more information on Utah's Co-Parenting Mediation Program, see <https://www.utcourts.gov/mediation/cpm/>.

^{iv} For more information on the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, see www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/css.

^v For more information on the Family and Medical leave Act, see <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs28.pdf>.

^{vi} For more information on the Child Care and Development Fund, see

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/about/what-we-do>.

^{vii} For more information on Child Care Assistance in Utah, see

https://jobs.utah.gov/customereducation/services/childcare/employment_support.html.

^{viii} For more information on Rental Assistance, see http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/rental_assistance.

^{ix} For more information on SNAP and to find services in your state, see <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/apply>.

^x For more information on SNAP in Utah, see <http://jobs.utah.gov/customereducation/services/foodstamps/>.

^{xi} For more information on Utah's Family Employment Program, see

<https://jobs.utah.gov/customereducation/services/financialhelp/family/index.html>.

^{xii} For more information on Family Employment Program Child Care see

https://jobs.utah.gov/customereducation/services/childcare/family_employment.html.