



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



NRFC State Profile: North Dakota 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 Partnership, Minot Region	Economic Stability	The state and federally funded Community Action Partnership, Minot Region offers several self-sufficiency programs, including <i>Four Cornerstones of Financial Literacy</i> , which helps individuals create savings, reduce debt, build assets, improve credit ratings, and learn about consumer protection and financial institutions.	Serves several counties in North Dakota. Website (701) 839-7221
Dakota Prairie Community Action Agency, Inc.	Economic Stability	The state and federally funded Dakota Prairie Community Action Agency, Inc. offers several programs to help families with financial skills and self-sufficiency. Services address topics such as financial literacy, employment and education, money management, housing, and emergency shelter.	Rolette, Towner, Cavalier, Benson, Ramsey and Eddy counties. Website (701) 662-6500
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 is one Job Corps center in North Dakota. It is located in Minot. Website (701) 857-9600

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)

Organization	Services Provided	Description	Service Area and Contact Information
Job Service North Dakota	Economic Stability	<i>Job Service North Dakota</i> provides resources, job search assistance, and trainings for unemployed workers, veterans, dislocated workers, and other state residents. Job-seekers can access resources online or go to a local Job Service center. Job Service North Dakota also administers the state and federal <i>Unemployment Insurance Program</i> and provides labor market information for community leaders.	There are 16 Job Service centers in North Dakota. Website with office locations.
North Dakota Department of Commerce Division of Community Services	Economic Stability	The North Dakota Department of Commerce Division of Community Services administers <i>Self Reliance</i> , which assists low-income individuals and families in reaching self-sufficiency and includes group sessions to foster self-esteem and employment skills.	Serves the entire state. Website (701) 328-5300
North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation	Fatherhood/Parenting Incarceration/Reentry Economic Stability	The North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation provides programs for inmates in the North Dakota State Penitentiary who are about to transition back into the community. These include the <i>Positive Parenting</i> program, which helps parents build relationships with their children, practice positive discipline, manage anger, and build their parenting skills. The penitentiary also assists inmates with job-seeking skills such as resume writing, job interviews, money management, and goal-setting.	North Dakota State Penitentiary. Website (701) 328-6390

Organization	Services Provided	Description	Service Area and Contact Information
<p>North Dakota Department of Human Services</p>	<p>Fatherhood/Parenting</p>	<p>The North Dakota Department of Human Services sponsors <i>Nurturing Parenting</i> Programs at 10 locations in the state. These family-based education programs help families build stronger, healthier relationships. There are two separate programs, one for parents with children ages 0-5 years and one for parents with children ages 5-12 years.</p> <p>The Department also provides programs for families at risk of abuse or neglect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Parent Aide Services</i>, to help parents identify where improvement is needed. • <i>Intensive In-Home Services</i>, to help families who have a child at risk of being removed from their home. • <i>Prime Time Child Care Services</i>, temporary child care for families where child abuse or neglect has occurred so that parents can attend counseling, addiction treatment, or other required services. • <i>Respite Care Services</i>, temporary child care services to provide caregiver with short-term relief from the pressures of caring for disabled children. • <i>Safety/Permanency Funds</i>, flexible funding for rent, utilities, food, clothing, or transportation to services. • <i>Crossroads Services</i>, temporary child care for teen parents pursuing their educations. 	<p>Serves the entire state.</p> <p>Nurturing Parenting Program: Website with location and contact information (701) 845-6652</p> <p>Website with a link to contact information for each County Social Service Office (701) 328-2310</p>
<p>Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians</p>	<p>Fatherhood/Parenting Healthy Relationships Economic Stability</p>	<p>The Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians was awarded a federal <i>New Pathways for Fathers and Families</i> grant from the Office of Family Assistance in September 2015. The program provides training in parenting, relationship, and communication skills, plus economic stability activities such as job skills development, job training, and employment services.</p>	<p>Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation in North Central North Dakota.</p> <p>Website 701-477-2600</p>

Policies to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Paternity 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 North Dakota, an unmarried couple may establish paternity by completing a Voluntary Acknowledgement of Paternity form in the hospital within three days of the child's birth. If the form is not completed in the hospital, the parents may receive these services at any time from Vital Records or from one of North Dakota's Regional Child Support Units. Parents in North Dakota also have the option to sign the Voluntary Acknowledgement of Paternity form before the child's birth. If they do so, it takes effect when it is filed with Vital Records or when the child is born. If either parent is unsure of paternity or will not sign the voluntary acknowledgement form, the parent may request assistance from their Regional Child Support Unit for genetic testing.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 North Dakota, courts make custody decisions based on the best interests of the child if parents cannot reach a custody agreement on their own. Unless there is abuse or domestic violence involved, North Dakota law recognizes that it is generally best for a child to have a healthy relationship with both parents. The higher the degree of love and affection between a child and parent, the more likely it is in the child's best interest to have a custody arrangement that supports that relationship. Courts also examine the overall ability of a parent to provide for a child, including a parent's ability to care for a child with special needs.ⁱⁱ

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.ⁱⁱⁱ

North Dakota's Child Support Division is run by the Department of Human Services. Either parent can apply for services at no cost. Services are provided by eight Regional Child Support Units. Go to the [website](#) or call (701) 328-3582 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.^{iv}

North Dakota has no additional 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 North Dakota, 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.^v

North Dakota's Child Care Assistance Program helps income-eligible families pay for child care while they work or attend school or training. To qualify, families must fall under the maximum monthly income, which is calculated by family size. In most cases, families pay a co-payment, which goes towards the cost of child care. Parents can submit applications online, in person, or by mail.^{vi}

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.^{vii}

North Dakota 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 many states, individuals over the age of 18 and under the age of 50 are limited to three months of SNAP benefits every three years unless they are working or in a work or training program 20 hours a week. Some states have waivers to this rule for all or part of the state – for detailed state eligibility requirements, consult the [state SNAP agency](#).^{viii}

SNAP in North Dakota is administered through the state Department of Human Services. Families may apply through their County Social Service Office. The application may be completed online,^{ix} mailed to the County Social Service Office, or filled out during the visit.^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.

Households in North Dakota can receive TANF benefits for up to 60 months. Families may apply through their County Social Service Office. The application may be completed online,^{xi} mailed to the County Social Service Office, or filled out during the visit. In addition to providing cash assistance, TANF in North Dakota assists families in reaching self-sufficiency through the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) Program. JOBS is a companion program that focuses on work-readiness, education, training, job search, and job placement services. Individuals receiving TANF assistance are required to participate in JOBS. Exceptions include: caretakers or parents over age 65, caretakers or parents of a child younger than four months of age, and teens who are enrolled in school full-time.^{xii}

Other Helpful Resources

North Dakota Council on Abused Women's Services (NDCAWS)

NDCAWS is a statewide sexual and domestic violence coalition of 20 crisis intervention centers throughout the state. The goal of the coalition is to spread awareness of domestic violence, crisis interventions for victims, and prevention/community outreach. Go to the [website](#) or call (701) 255-6240 for more information.

References

ⁱ For more information on Paternity Establishment in North Dakota, see

<http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childsupport/progserv/paternity/>.

ⁱⁱ For more information on Child Custody in North Dakota, see <http://www.divorcenet.com/resources/child-custody/child-custody-basics/child-custody-north-dakota-th>.

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

^{iv} For more information on the Family and Medical leave Act, see

<http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs28.pdf>.

^v For more information on the Child Care and Development Fund, see

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

^{vi} For more information on Child Care Assistance in North Dakota, see

<https://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/financialhelp/childcare.html>.

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

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

^{ix} To apply for North Dakota's SNAP program online, see <https://www.nd.gov/dhs/info/pubs/application.html>.

^x For more information on SNAP in North Dakota, see <https://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/financialhelp/foodstamps.html>.



^{xi} To apply for North Dakota's TANF, SNAP or Child Care programs online, see <https://www.nd.gov/dhs/info/pubs/application.html>.

^{xii} For more information on TANF and JOBS in North Dakota, see <https://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/financialhelp/tanfjobsfaq.html>.