



**Written testimony submitted to the Joint Fiscal Committees
on the SFY 2025-2026 Executive Budget
Human Services Budget Hearing
February 12, 2025**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on the 2025-26 New York State Executive Budget. Founded in 2021, NYC Family Policy Project (FPP) explores and builds evidence—through original research, policy and data analysis—for the policy visions of parents and youth impacted by the child welfare system. Policy visions developed by the advocacy groups [Rise](#), [YouthNPower](#) and the [Narrowing the Front Door to NYC's Child Welfare System Work Group](#) emphasize the need for a limited child welfare system and expansive and reparative investment in families and communities. FPP focuses on economic investments that can strengthen family well-being and reduce child welfare involvement; investments in community conditions that support healthy family life; and policy and practice efforts to move toward a more limited child welfare system with a narrow front door.

Dozens of studies on the effects of economic policies on child welfare involvement find that policies that protect against economic hardships, shocks and setbacks reduce investigations, maltreatment and family separation.¹ Specifically:

- Each additional \$1,000 that states spend annually on public benefit programs per person living in poverty is associated with a reduction of 4.3% in child maltreatment hotline calls, 4% in substantiated maltreatment, 2.1% in removals and 7.7% in child fatalities (Puls, 2021).
- A 10% increase in refundable state Earned Income Tax Credits is associated with a 5% decline in any reported maltreatment and 9% decline in reported neglect (Kovsi, 2021).
- Access to public assistance buffers against repeat child welfare investigations, especially when kids are 0-4 (12% lower likelihood of any investigation and 50% lower physical abuse investigations) (Cai, 2021).

Further, families benefit in unique ways when cash support is significant enough to cover basic needs; is provided in ways that are dependable and aren't time-consuming and shaming; and can be accessed in difficult times. Results from dozens of guaranteed income pilots show that families are able to stabilize, plan ahead, save, meet children's needs and spend more time together when offered reliable, significant support provided without strings attached. Currently, cash policy in New York does not ensure that families have enough to live on and cash assistance is unpredictable, burdensome and stigmatizing while leaving families vulnerable to state intervention.

¹ The national child welfare research center Chapin Hall has synthesized this research in a comprehensive slide deck, [linked](#).

FPP applauds the Governor’s acknowledgment of the deep economic stress families face, particularly amidst continuing high inflation, and the Governor’s embrace of direct cash support as a strategy to fight poverty and promote family well-being. The Executive Budget includes several exciting proposals to expand direct cash support for families, including expanded tax credits and a “BABY” benefit to assist parents during pregnancy. Yet, this current budget does not do enough to align with the Governor’s commitment through the Child Poverty Reduction Act to reduce child poverty by 50% by 2032. FPP urges the Legislature to channel the proposed Executive Budget allocation of \$3 billion for Inflation Refund Payments toward strategies that would target lower-income New Yorkers who are struggling most.

FPP priorities align with the recommendations of the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council (CPRAC), [linked](#). In 2021, the New York State Legislature passed, and Governor Hochul signed into law, the Child Poverty Reduction Act. The Act committed the State to cut child poverty in half over 10 years and the governor appointed the CPRAC to examine potential policy recommendations that can enable the State to reach that goal.

In particular, two of the more modest CPRAC recommendations—increasing public assistance by 50% and expanding the CTC to \$1,000 for children under 6 and \$500 for older children—are complementary, high-impact strategies to combat poverty equitably and sustainably. They have comparable costs and poverty-reduction impacts, have different strengths and drawbacks, and serve distinct but overlapping populations.

Refundable Child Tax Credit Increase (\$1,000 for children under 6 and \$500 for ages 7-17)	Cash Assistance 50% Increase
<i>Cost:</i> \$937 million	<i>Cost:</i> \$1,123 million
<i>Child Poverty Reduction Estimate:</i> -9.7%	<i>Child Poverty Reduction Estimate:</i> -8.1%
Supports the majority of families with children	Supports very low-income families with children as well as very low-income adults
Infrequent payments help with major one-time costs	Frequent payments help families cover ongoing basic needs
Total annual benefit for a family of 3 with one child under 6 and one older: \$1,500	Total annual increase for the same family of 3: \$2,334
Available to undocumented families	Not available to undocumented families
Barrier: tax filing	Barrier: lengthy cash assistance application

Note: FPP is supportive of a number of different tax credit and cash assistance proposals under consideration. This table draws on the analysis provided by Urban Institute on CPRAC recommendations.

Broadly, the CTC supports a broad swath of families, while public benefits prioritize New Yorkers with the most acute economic needs. Pairing a refundable, expanded child tax credit with a permanent increase in public benefits grants will ensure that New York offers consistent support for all families (including all immigrant families) while directly targeting the lowest-income households. Adopting both measures, as highlighted in CPRAC recommendations, ensures a dual approach that closes gaps in the safety net, addresses systemic inequities and builds a foundation for lasting economic security.

New York State can afford both fiscal investments. In contrast to the proposed \$3 billion Inflation Reduction payments, making a permanent investment in cash assistance grants will cost only \$328 million this year.² It's critical to redirect funds back toward cash assistance in order to strengthen economic security and mobility, protect family autonomy and integrity, and buffer families against setbacks and separation. Investing upstream in family health and wellbeing can reduce often traumatizing involvement with the child welfare system, as well as reduce high state spending on child welfare investigations and foster care. This shift can function as part of a larger strategy of repair and reinvestment for families and communities systematically excluded from economic power.

FPP Top Budget Recommendations

Cash Assistance

- Increase the benefit amount so families can meet their basic needs, lowering stress and increasing the time parents can spend with their children (A.106 Rosenthal / S.1127 Persaud).
- Establish parity for homeless recipients living in certain shelters, who currently receive only \$1.50 per day for basic needs (A.108 Rosenthal / S.113 Cleare).
- Better enable families to exit cash assistance prepared to cope with future economic setbacks (S.182 Persaud).
- Reduce barriers to accessing cash assistance by removing resource limits and expanding how much families can earn and still apply for benefits (A.4352 Rosenthal).
- Expand access to short-term emergency cash to cushion families facing economic shocks and setbacks.

Unconditional Cash Transfers or Guaranteed Income

- Provide direct cash assistance to income-eligible parents, for the last three months of pregnancy and first 18 months of a child's life (A.1597 Clark / S.2132 Ramos).

One-Time Cash Grants

- Improve and expand tax credits provided to families by delivering cash quarterly, and on a sliding scale based on income (A.3474 Hevesi / S.2082 Gounardes).
- Build on the proposal to expand the Child Tax Credit as recommended in the CPRAC recommendations. Specifically, increase the amount to \$1,500 for all children 0-17, ensure that any enhancement is permanent and indexed to inflation.

² Estimate provided by the Legal Aid Society.

- Dedicate funds to support tax filing for New Yorkers that have not filed previously.
- Redirect the proposal to provide \$3 billion in Inflation Refund tax credits towards other legislation referenced in this testimony and CPRAC recommendations.

Community Investment to Address Conditions of Poverty

- Establish the Child and Family Well-Being Fund for communities to use to support the needs of children and families, including cash assistance (A.63 Hevesi)

FPP urges the legislature to shift New York’s cash support to be sufficient, reliable, respectful and responsive to intentionally build family well-being and protect against child welfare involvement.

Policy visions from Rise, YouthNPower and the Narrowing the Front Door to NYC’s Child Welfare System Work Group have called for a shift toward unconditional cash support for families:

- **Narrowing the Front Door:** “Provide direct, unrestricted financial support to families and concrete resources in communities to ensure that all families can meet basic needs (such as, guaranteed income, cash transfers, childcare, housing, etc.). Dedicate new investments to families and communities most impacted by the family regulation system and administer such investments independent of the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS). Shift flexible sources of federal, state and city funding to address concrete basic life necessities rather than for ‘preventive services’ designed for so-called ‘at-risk’ populations.”
- **YouthNPower:** “Unconditional cash support is an emergent policy that holds great promise for young people leaving foster care. The data thus far from the YouthNPower direct cash transfer pilot identifies significant material need among young people who have recently left foster care. Unconditional cash support can address these immediate material needs and create the necessary conditions for young people to embrace work opportunities that suit their interests, and reduce future vulnerability to the child welfare system.”
- **Rise:** “Parents call for well-resourced communities, including childcare, jobs, housing, community centers and supports such as therapy. Parents want financial investment in families, access to information about their rights, non-judgmental and compassionate care, and care from people with similar experiences and backgrounds. Prioritize funding progressive forms of public assistance... such as no-strings-attached cash; accessible and quality food; affordable, quality housing; and free childcare.”

Recommendations in this testimony to shift toward unconditional cash for families—including investing in direct cash transfers, refundable tax credits and raising public assistance benefit levels while reducing conditions on assistance—would put New York at the forefront of investing in families.

Cash Assistance

Increase Benefit Levels So Families Can Meet Basic Needs

Research is clear that families turn to cash assistance in times of deep hardship and emergency. Today, the number of people needing to rely on cash assistance in New York City is the highest it has been in almost 25 years. In October, more than 100,000 NYC families were enrolled in cash assistance for needed support.

New York state law is clear that financial inability to provide is not neglect. However, in practice, reports often align closely with the consequences of living in poverty. Research shows that material hardship is associated with CPS involvement beyond caregiver psychological distress and parenting factors (Yang, 2015), and the association of individual factors (such as substance abuse or mental health) with maltreatment is reduced after accounting for poverty (Escaravage, 2014), meaning poverty alone is a driving factor.

Yet, cash assistance in New York City offers a maximum monthly benefit of just \$789 per month for a family of three. Far below any cost of living standard, this places families 41% below the federal poverty line, leaving families struggling to afford essentials like housing, food, toiletries and healthcare. Additionally, regulations require that more than half of the cash assistance families receive must be spent on utilities (\$53) and rent (\$400). The only flexible cash that families have is \$336 per month for a family of three—or about \$10 per day.

In 2022, almost 1 out of 5 New York City families receiving cash assistance experienced homelessness. Redlining and racism in housing mean that housing instability disproportionately affect families of color, and almost 90% of “heads of households” of families in shelter in New York City are Black or Latino. Shelter stays also increase exposure to child welfare. Typically, a quarter of families in shelters have been ACS-involved. Cash benefit amounts in New York City are further reduced for some families living in shelters, with these families receiving only \$189 per month for a family of three, or \$6 per day, making it even harder to make ends meet.

CPRAC’s recommendations to the governor include increasing the grant amount. Modeling of the impact of increasing the cash assistance grant shows that a 50% benefit increase would reduce child poverty statewide by 8% and a 100% increase would reduce child poverty by 18%.

In the 2024 legislative session, a bill to increase the cash assistance grant amount for the first time since 2012 was included in the Assembly budget proposal but not in the final budget. In 2025, bill (A.106 Rosenthal / S.1127 Persaud) to increase the benefit by 100%, in line with the CPRAC recommendation—and (A.108 Rosenthal / S.113 Cleare) to provide equal cash assistance to those in shelter. The **Executive Budget** contains no language nor allocates any funds to increase the benefit amount or to expand assistance to excluded families.

The NYC Family Policy Project urges the legislature to:

- Increase the benefit amount so families can meet their basic needs, lowering stress and increasing the time parents can spend with their children (A.106 Rosenthal / S.1127 Persaud). This would double the amount of the grant from \$389 for a family of three to approximately \$778 per month and ensure that it keeps pace with inflation.
- Establish parity for homeless recipients living in certain shelters, who currently receive only \$1.50 per day for basic needs (A.108 Rosenthal / S.113 Cleare). That amount hasn't been updated since 1997. This bill would include certain shelter residents in grant raises tied to inflation.

Better Protect Savings So Families Can Cope with Future Economic Setbacks

To qualify for cash assistance in New York, families must hit rock bottom. A family of three cannot make more than \$9,468 per year (or \$789 per month) when applying, which is below the federal definition of “deep poverty.”

This low limit leaves many families— those making \$15,000 per year, for example—without relief from the cash benefits system. While ‘living in poverty’ by all measures, they can’t access cash support. This means that low-income families have little possibility of saving to protect against future setbacks.

In addition, a family of any size cannot have over \$2,500 in savings to be approved for assistance (or \$3,750 if a household member has a disability, or is 60 or older). Families have to be down to less than one month of reasonable rent in savings when they start the application process. They can’t keep money saved up to get through future tough times, like moving or having a medical emergency.

For families on cash assistance, requirements to continue receiving benefits also limit savings. A family of three, for example, can’t make more than \$29,640 per year and still receive cash support, yet this income level is still associated with experiencing significant hardships and minimal savings.

Research shows that, for low-income families with recently closed investigations, income “shocks” are associated with an 18% increased risk of subsequent investigation and 26% of a physical abuse investigation, while access to public assistance buffers against repeat involvement, especially when kids are 0-4 (12% lower risk of any investigation and 50% lower physical abuse investigation) (Cai, 2021).

The Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council (CPRAC) has made initial recommendations to expand income eligibility so that applicants would be able to make up to \$29,640 per year at time of application and still qualify for assistance, and to remove savings limits. Removing these barriers to savings could protect families against future economic shocks and setbacks, reducing child welfare involvement. The **Executive Budget** contains no language nor allocates any funds to protect families against future economic setbacks.

The NYC Family Policy Project urges the legislature to:

- Better enable families to exit cash assistance prepared to cope with future economic setbacks (S.182 Persaud). New York allows current recipients who start a new job, paid training, or work activity to continue receiving benefits for 6 months if they are making below 200% of the poverty line, which is \$51,640 for a family of three. This bill would expand eligibility to include recipients earning up to 400% of the poverty line, or \$103,280, helping recipients earn more and still receive support.
- Reduce barriers to accessing cash assistance by removing the \$2,500 resource limit and expanding how much families can earn—from \$9,468 to \$29,640 per year for a family of three—and still apply for benefits (A.4352 Rosenthal).

Unconditional Cash Transfers / Guaranteed Income

Invest in Unconditional Cash Transfers to Build More Stable Households, Healthier Babies and Stronger Communities

For years, New York State has had one of the highest child poverty rates in the nation and a public benefits system that is difficult to navigate and does not lift families out of poverty. Statewide, almost 1 in 5 children lives with the instability and stress of poverty, compared to 1 in 8 families nationwide, with Rochester, Syracuse and Albany having some of the highest child poverty rates in the country.

In the “world’s wealthiest city,” a shameful 25 percent of children are living in poverty, which means that a family of three is earning under \$25,000 a year. Even with every form of additional assistance, from food stamps to housing vouchers, city families on benefits cannot break through the poverty line.

Half of New York City’s residents can’t actually afford to live there, and a family must be earning six figures to afford basic needs like food, shelter, transportation, and health care. Not to mention, these troubling trends disproportionately affect communities of color. This inequity is reflected in New York State’s significant disparities in maternal health outcomes across racial lines. In NYC, Black women are eight times more likely than white women to die from a pregnancy-related cause. New York simply cannot keep turning a blind eye to the horrific conditions new families are living in.

The prenatal-to-three period is one of, if not the most, important times in a child’s life. The conditions they grow up in during that time are critically important for a child’s future prospects, as they greatly affect their physical, mental, emotional, and social outcomes.

Research and evidence from the Bridge Project, the nation’s largest direct cash program for mothers and babies in New York—and five other states—makes clear that supporting new parents and their babies for sustained periods over the first few years of a baby’s life has the greatest impact on maternal and infant health and child and family well-being. This is supported additionally by evidence from dozens of U.S. and international programs as well. However, the little progress that has been made does not sufficiently address the need statewide.

The **Executive Budget** contains a proposal to direct \$9.5 million to provide free diapers and other supplies to parents of newborn babies. While FPP applauds this investment in parents, significant research supports the provision of flexible and unrestricted cash. As Dr. Vanessa Dor from The Bridge Project shares, ‘We start with the hypothesis that every mom’s situation is different. We have really learned that when you provide flexible cash, everyone can access what they actually need.’ We urge the Legislature to adapt this proposed cost so that parents of newborn babies can benefit from the freedom to purchase supplies and address family needs they consider pressing.

For the past several years, members of the Senate and Assembly have been pushing to put flexible cash into the hands of pregnant and newly parenting people. The Mothers and Infants Lasting Change Allowance, also known as MILC, was introduced by Sen. Jessica Ramos and AM Sarah Clark in 2023. And in 2024, the Senate and Assembly both included proposals in their one-house budgets based on MILC that would provide cash to new moms in New York State.

This year, Governor Hochul announced her intention to create the nation’s first statewide baby allowance program. The BABY (Birth Allowance for Beginning Year) Benefit will provide families with monthly payments throughout their pregnancy plus a one-time baby allowance of \$1,200 at the point of delivery. Specifically, the **Executive Budget** directs \$8.5 million to this program. Families experiencing hardship, though not receiving cash assistance, are not eligible for the BABY Benefit.

The Baby Bucks legislation would offer monthly cash support of up to \$1,000 to 15,000 new moms and their babies across the state in the areas with the highest childhood poverty rates. The cost of the 15,000 participant, 21-month Baby Bucks program is approximately \$247 million. Given that Baby Bucks is a time-limited initiative designed to provide targeted financial assistance to needy families, improve family and child outcomes, and set families up for longer-term financial success, it meets the requirements of TANF. Precedent for the use of TANF funding to support an unconditional cash program targeting moms and babies has been recently established in Michigan.

The NYC Family Policy Project urges the legislature to:

- Provide direct cash assistance to income-eligible parents, for the last three months of pregnancy and first 18 months of a child's life (A.1597 Clark / S.2132 Ramos).
 - Consider the state’s \$1 billion in unspent TANF block grant funding to fund a portion of the Baby Bucks Allowance.

One-Time Cash Grants

Expand Child Tax Credit to \$1,500 and Cover all Children in Line with CPRAC Recommendation

New Yorkers are struggling with the high cost of living. The costs of housing, child care, utilities, and basic living needs have put many families in financial crisis. By making changes to our tax code, New York can give economically burdened workers and families the means to pay for what they need—food, rent, utilities, child care, and more. Tax credits that function as a savings jolt on an annual basis are promising

ways to bolster family income, allowing families to access big ticket items, like appliances or summer camp payments.

Research has found that states with refundable Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), compared to those without, had 11% fewer entries into foster care even after controlling for poverty, race, education and unemployment. (Rostad, 2020). A 10% increase in refundable state EITC benefits is associated with a 5% decline in any reported maltreatment and 9% decline in reported neglect (Kovsi, 2021). And finally, \$1,000 increase in income via EITC is associated with 8–10% reduction in self-reported CPS involvement for low-income single-mother household (Berger, 2017).

In FY24, the ESCC was expanded to children under 4, including over 800K formerly excluded children, and in FY25, the Legislature approved a supplemental ESCC payment worth \$350M. The **Executive Budget** contains a proposal to direct \$825 million to expand the Child Tax Credit over two years, giving eligible parents \$1,000 for kids under 4-years-old and \$500 for kids ages 4-16.

Additionally, the **Executive Budget** contains a proposal to direct \$3 billion to provide one-time Inflation Refund checks to 8.6 million New Yorkers, including \$500 for joint filers making less than \$300,000 and \$300 for single filers making less than \$150,000.

The NYC Family Policy Project urges the legislature to:

- Improve and expand tax credits provided to families by delivering cash quarterly, and on a sliding scale based on income (A.3474 Hevesi / S.2082 Gounardes).
- Build on the proposal to expand the Child Tax Credit as recommended in the CPRAC recommendations. Specifically, increase the amount to \$1,500 for all children 0-17, ensure that any enhancement is permanent and indexed to inflation (\$3,228 million).
- Dedicate funds to support tax filing for New Yorkers that have not filed previously
- Redirect the proposal to provide \$3 billion in Inflation Refund tax credits towards other legislation referenced in this testimony and CPRAC recommendations.

Community Investment to Address Conditions of Poverty

Child and Family Wellbeing Fund

Research shows how everyday surroundings offer significant advantages to children even if their own family is struggling. Yet decades of redlining and racist disinvestment have resulted in vastly inequitable neighborhood conditions. The Child and Family Wellbeing Fund is a chance to make a corrective shift to ensure that all New York children live within neighborhoods that are set up to support their well-being. New York State’s “family policy guidelines” prioritize government support for families that promote “safe, nurturing environments which support the healthy growth of all family members.” However, the current framework of CPS/child welfare intervention investigates and prosecutes families for “neglect”—allegations related to parental inability to provide basic necessities. The majority of reports to the state child abuse hotline are made not for abuse, but for symptoms of poverty (i.e., homelessness,

lack of transportation to school, inability to obtain medical care, lack of food and other basic needs, etc.). Parents earning low incomes are disproportionately reported to CPS for experiencing domestic violence or struggling with substance use, despite these situations impacting families regardless of socioeconomic status.

Many families who live in communities that have been disenfranchised and targeted by CPS are in survival mode, with limited trusted options for support. In fact, many state-funded resources available in communities are staffed by mandated reporters whose presence makes many families uncomfortable due to the implicit threat of child welfare involvement.

In response to these conditions for children, youth and families in New York, a group of statewide advocates with lived expertise in the child welfare system, research, policy and advocacy came together and developed a framework and proposal for community investment with state dollars. The Child and Family Wellbeing Fund redefines what “child welfare” means in New York by investing state dollars in local community-based organizations that provide families with basic necessities, and supporting formal and informal social structures that serve as enmeshed family and community protective factors, including material supports and mutual aid, doulas/maternal health, activities for children, and peer support groups.

Legislation creating a new Child and Family Wellbeing Fund would advance the health and development of all New York’s children by investing resources in communities that have been historically disenfranchised and targeted for government intervention through the CPS system. The Fund will resource community-driven initiatives and projects that strengthen families, reduce their vulnerability to CPS system contact, and promote family preservation, reunification, and healing.

Through its innovative, community-driven structure, the Fund will operate to increase necessary and beneficial resources for families in neighborhoods with high rates of CPS contact. As conceptualized by the Working Group, the Fund would invest \$30 million annually for 5 years during a pilot period, accessing state funding to build a sustainable infrastructure for community-directed investment in supporting and building capacity of small, grassroots organizations, projects, and initiatives (A.63 Hevesi). Established by New York law, the Fund would be an innovative approach to resourcing communities to support healthy children and families. The **Executive Budget** contains no language nor allocates any funds towards this essential investment in families.

The NYC Family Policy Project urges the legislature to:

- Establish the Child and Family Well-Being Fund for communities to use to support the needs of children and families (A.63 Hevesi)

Minimize Barriers to Cash for New York Families, Especially in Times of Emergency

Many of the recommendations outlined in this testimony are the subject of existing bills that would have a profound impact on reducing poverty and addressing community conditions that compound poverty. However, as legislators move to increase cash support for families, it is important to consider the way assistance is delivered. Evidence from dozens of studies shows that families benefit in unique ways when cash support is significant enough to cover basic needs; is provided in ways that are dependable and aren't time-consuming and shaming; and can be accessed in difficult times.

Administrative burdens and regulations can make it difficult to find out about, apply for and be approved for benefits. Families that spoke with FPP shared the stresses of uncertainty, stigma and discomfort—especially the feeling of being at the mercy of the system—that can arise when interacting with the cash assistance system.

Once enrolled in benefits, confusing rules on income limits and work requirements also contribute to families' uncertainty about whether they have to say no to a promotion or a raise to maintain benefits access. The legislature can play a significant role in reducing the uncertainty families feel about income limits and benefits cliffs, making it easier for parents to plan ahead to achieve long-term goals of more secure, well-paying work.

Short-term TANF benefits could be also used to address family economic stresses closely tied to child welfare involvement, such as the diagnosis of a significant child behavioral health issue or unexpected significant parent or child hospital stay. Professionals such as hospital staff or school social workers could be trained to refer families for support. A pilot program to test the effects of emergency cash support for significant family stressors can illuminate a potential pathway to reduce child welfare involvement.

Currently in New York, most emergency assistance requires the same application and eligibility as applying for the full TANF benefit, but this short-term benefit could be targeted to families living under 200% of the poverty line, with a simple application. Reducing barriers could offer significant protection to families during setbacks, potentially helping offset the savings gap that impacts Black and Latino families. In 2021, 14% of all households and 32% of Black households in New York had zero or negative savings, and half of Black and Latino families didn't have enough cash to cover their basic needs for three months if they stopped earning money. If successful, deploying short-term benefits to address family stressors could help reduce racial disparities in child welfare involvement.

Please see this report on this topic from FPWA, *Caught in the Gaps*, [linked](#).

The NYC Family Policy Project urges the legislature to:

- Reduce uncertainty and address unnecessary shaming interactions so families can access cash support and plan ahead. Specifically:
 - Ensure OTDA implementation of CRPAC recommendations to improve experience of system interaction. CPRAC recommends adjustments that would increase the reliability

of cash assistance and reduce shaming interactions. These include simplifying and streamlining the cash assistance application process and continuing to explore how to improve how public benefit delivery is experienced by recipients.

- Require the CPRAC to further understand and apply fiscal values to the changes they recommended in 2024 to improve benefit delivery.
- Explore expanded and flexible uses of short-term benefits to address family stressors tied to child welfare involvement. Specifically:
 - Include additional categories of eligibility emergency cash, including economic shocks that research has linked to child welfare involvement.
 - Reserve funds for pilots using TANF reserve dollars that support learning on the effects of short-term emergency cash on preventing child welfare involvement.