



**Impact of Recession and September 11 Seen on Welfare Caseloads:
Caseloads Up In Most States Between September and December 2001**
Caseloads Also Up Throughout 2001

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With the cooperation of state Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) agencies, CLASP has gathered and posted recent TANF caseload data in an effort to supplement data available from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).¹ CLASP has collected data through December 2001 for 49 states and the District of Columbia. (For simplicity's sake, we refer to the District as a state in the rest of our analysis.) Please note that initial caseload data are sometimes subsequently modified, and some states reported data slightly differently from how they are reported on the website of DHHS's Administration for Children and Families (ACF), so these numbers may change somewhat by the time they are formally posted by ACF. In addition, due to the missing data from one state (California), we are unable to sum figures to obtain a national trend. Although we could not calculate a complete national figure, it appears that because caseloads continue to fall in a few of the larger states while rising in many smaller states, the national caseload total is relatively stable over the time frame we are looking at. Summing the figures across states to look at the national trend, however, obscures the fact that caseloads in most states continue to rise.²

In reviewing the new caseload data, CLASP finds:

- **In most states — 40 out of 50 — TANF caseloads increased between September and December 2001.** These increases have been fairly large, rising over 4 percent in one quarter on average, among the 40 states showing an increase. This is more than double the number of states that reported increases between September and December 2000.
- **Most states have also had caseload increases since March 2001, when the recession began.** Thirty-seven states report higher caseloads in December 2001 than in March 2001. In contrast, only 12 states reported higher caseloads in December 2000 than March 2000.
- **For the first time since TANF was implemented, the average annual change in states' caseloads was an increase.** From December 2000 to December 2001, the average caseload change in the 49 states and the District of Columbia was a 3.8 percent increase. In contrast, the average change from December 1999 to December 2000 was a 6.5 percent *decrease*, and the average change from December 1998 to December 1999 was a 12.2 percent decrease.
- **Over the entire past year, 34 states had caseload increases, and 16 had decreases.** In contrast, in the prior year, from December 1999 to December 2000, nine states had increases, and 42 had decreases.
- **A dozen states have shown continuous caseload growth in recent months.** Twelve states show continually increasing caseloads between July and December 2001 (Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Mississippi, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, South Carolina, and Texas).

¹ Currently, TANF caseload data through September 2001 is posted on the ACF website, at <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/news/stats/familiesL.htm>.

² One note about the analysis presented here and the caseload data presented on the CLASP website is that the figures include only TANF cases. They do not include cases being served in separate state programs, which may count toward a state's Maintenance of Effort (MOE) expenditures.

- **A number of states experienced substantial caseload growth in the past year.** The states with the largest increases from December 2000 to December 2001 were Nevada (69 percent), Indiana (27 percent), Montana (20 percent), South Carolina (19 percent), and Arizona (18 percent). There does not appear to be a strong geographic pattern explaining which states have seen the greatest rises in caseloads.
- **Many states are seeing larger increases, and more states are seeing smaller decreases.** From December 2000 to December 2001, nine states reported their caseload increased by more than 10 percent, compared with two reporting that size increase from December 1999 to December 2000, and one reporting such an increase from December 1998 to December 1999. Meanwhile, from December 2000 to December 2001, only six states reported caseload decreases greater than 10 percent. The prior year, 20 states reported that size decrease, and the year before that, 30 states had such decreases.

To view the caseload figures from the states, please visit the CLASP website:

http://www.clasp.org/pubs/TANF/Final_2001_Q4_caseload.pdf

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