



# 2017-2019 Biennial Budget Proposal Comparison

Throughout the 2017 legislative session, the Governor, House of Representatives, and Senate will each propose a budget to fund the state’s priorities for the 2017-2019 biennium. After each branch of government introduces a budget proposal, the House Appropriations committee and Senate Ways & Means committee hold hearings on these proposals and ultimately pass a negotiated budget. Throughout the legislative session, the Statewide Poverty Action Network will provide an overview of the emerging budget proposals that impact our legislative priorities.

## BASIC NEEDS

The **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** assists parents with incomes so low they cannot meet basic needs for themselves and their dependent children. Since 1998 the value of the TANF cash grant has declined 41% and today the TANF cash grant is worth just 31% of the Federal Poverty Level, which has also caused TANF eligibility to narrow. When the TANF/WorkFirst program began in 1998, it served 45 out of every 100 people living below the Federal Poverty Line; today the number has decreased to 10. This caseload decline and projected underspend for the next biennium exists despite increased poverty and need in the community. Any TANF underspend should be used to invest in this critical program, not used to fund other programs in the budget.

Governor’s budget	House budget	Senate budget	FINAL BUDGET
<p>Increases the cash grant by 7.5%; the average grant for a family of four would increase from \$613/month to \$659/month.</p> <p>Removes asset limits for accessing TANF. Current asset limits are \$1,000 in liquid assets and a vehicle appraised at no more than \$5,000.</p> <p>Eliminates means-testing for non-parental caregivers. The caregiver’s income will no longer be considered in the child’s eligibility determination.</p>			

The **Working Connection Child Care (WCCC)** program provides subsidized child care to low-income families whose incomes are below 200% of the federal poverty level. WCCC is a critical support that helps low-income parents access and afford child care so they can enter and make gains in the workforce.

Governor’s budget	House budget	Senate budget	FINAL BUDGET
Maintains current investment.			



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The **State Family Assistance** program provides cash assistance to low-income immigrant families with children who do not yet qualify for the federal TANF program.

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<p>Increases the cash grant by 7.5%; the average grant for a family of four would increase from \$613/month to \$659/month.</p> <p>Removes asset limits for accessing SFA. Current asset limits are \$1,000 in liquid assets and a vehicle appraised at no more than \$5,000.</p>			

The **Housing and Essential Needs (HEN)** program provides assistance with housing and essential needs, such as health and hygiene products, to very low-income adults who have a disability that temporarily prevents them from working.

Governor's budget	House budget	Senate budget	FINAL BUDGET
<p>Maintains current investment.</p> <p>Provides an additional \$20 per month in reimbursement for travel expenses to access support services.</p>			

The **Aged, Blind and Disabled (ABD)** program provides a \$197 monthly cash grant to low-income elderly and disabled adults who are waiting to transfer to the federal Supplemental Security Income program. A small number of disabled and elderly immigrants who are not eligible for the federal Supplemental Security Income and Social Security programs also receive assistance through the ABD program. Recipients use their cash grant to pay for housing and meet their basic needs.

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<p>Increases the cash grant to \$400/month</p>			



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The **State Food Assistance** program helps immigrant families and individuals avoid hunger by providing subsidies to help purchase food. Immigrants are not eligible for the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP – formerly called Food Stamps) until they have been in the U.S. for five years.

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Maintains current investment.			

The **Housing Trust Fund (HTF)** is the main source of funding for affordable housing in our state. This housing makes it possible for people living on low incomes to afford housing and still have enough money to cover other basic needs. Investments in the HTF have created thousands of jobs and have generated millions in state and local tax revenues. To date, the Housing Trust Fund has successfully built, rehabilitated, and preserved more than 40,000 healthy and affordable homes across the state.

Governor's budget	House budget	Senate budget	FINAL BUDGET
Adds \$101.6 million to build and preserve affordable housing.			

### HEALTH CARE

Under federal health care reform, the Affordable Care Act, states had the option to **expand Medicaid**. By choosing to adopt the Medicaid expansion in 2013, our state is now working to provide healthcare to all Washingtonians with incomes below 138% of the federal poverty level. Since expansion, a record number of Washingtonians have signed up for this critical health care program.

Washington State has consistently affirmed its commitment to health care coverage for the residents of our state. However, at the national level, it is unclear that Congress will maintain this same commitment. A repeal of the Affordable Care Act nationally will greatly impact our state's ability to provide health care coverage to people with low incomes. We will monitor the federal situation and provide updates as we know more.

**Medicaid's Adult Dental** coverage is an optional Medicaid program that had been eliminated for nearly all adult Medicaid recipients in recent years. In 2013, the legislature restored funding to Adult Dental, which ensured that the people who are newly eligible for Medicaid under the expansion could also access adult dental coverage at no cost to the state. Unfortunately, there are still many adults going without the care they need, including disabled, senior immigrants.

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Maintains current investment.			



## 2017-2019 Biennial Budget Proposal Comparison

The **Apple Health for Kids** program provides health care for children from families earning up to 300% of the Federal Poverty Level, regardless of citizenship status.

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Maintains current investment.			

### REVENUE

In Washington state, people with the lowest incomes pay seven times the amount of their personal income in taxes than those in the top one percent of income earners. Poverty Action is committed to increasing revenue for basic education and essential health and human services investments and ensuring those investments are equitable and require the wealthiest Washingtonians to pay their fair share of taxes.

Governor's budget	House budget	Senate budget	FINAL BUDGET
Enacts a tax on high-end capital gains, generating \$821 million			
Eliminates six tax breaks, generating \$320 million			
Resets business tax rates on personal and professional services, generating \$2.3 billion			
Enacts a new tax on carbon pollution, generating \$1.1 billion			
Reduces property taxes for three-quarters of households and businesses statewide			