

## Welfare Time Limits Update

# The Supplemental Work Support Program

**The Supplemental Work Support Program can help some working families that receive TANF so that they can get off of the WFNJ welfare program**

Many people who receive WFNJ/TANF welfare assistance are also working, but they still get some welfare payments because they do not make enough to support their families without it. Unfortunately, even if you get only \$1 worth of welfare cash assistance in a month, that month counts against the family's lifetime limit for welfare assistance. Since April 1997, most people are eligible to get only 60 months (five years) of welfare during their entire lives. New Jersey now has a new program called the *Supplemental Work Support (SWS) Program* that can help working families that get TANF to move off of the WFNJ/TANF program.

If you are currently working and continue to receive a partial WFNJ/TANF cash assistance grant, you may be eligible for this program. If you are eligible, you can receive a \$200 per month "work support payment" *instead of* your current WFNJ/TANF grant. You can receive work support payments for up to 24 months, as long as your income is below 250% of the federal poverty level. You will also receive your full child support payment for the current month, instead of just the \$50 maximum payment that you receive if you get TANF. If you get SWS payments instead of TANF cash assistance payments, this money will not count towards your WFNJ/TANF lifetime limit. You will still be eligible for "post-TANF" transitional benefits, such as food stamps, Medicaid, and child care.

To be eligible, you must meet the following requirements:

- Your family must have been getting WFNJ/TANF for at least the last six months;
- You must be currently working for a minimum of four consecutive months; and
- You must be working at a minimum average of 20 hours per week.

If you think that you might be eligible for this program, contact your welfare caseworker. For additional information about the Supplemental Work Support Program or about the Work First New Jersey Program, you can also contact the Legal Services program in your county (see the back page of *Looking Out*), or LSNJ-LAW<sup>TM</sup>, the statewide legal hotline, at 1-888-LSNJ-LAW (1-888-576-5529).