

State of Kansas
House of Representatives

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Daniel R. Hawkins
House Majority Leader
Representative, 100th District

October 14, 2021

Laura Kelly
Governor, State of Kansas
300 SW 10th
Topeka, KS 66612

Governor Kelly:

It has been brought to my attention that your administration may be attempting to circumvent Kansas law through the issuance of policy memos.

On September 16, 2021, the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) issued EES No. 21-09-10 related to eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

This memo waives important work requirements, codified in Kansas statute, that adults must meet prior to receiving cash-assistance or other TANF benefits.

K.S.A 39-709 (b) § 2 clearly states:

“During the application processing period, applicants must complete at least one module or its equivalent of the work program assessment to be considered eligible for TANF benefits”

However, EES No. 21-09-10 provides a list of requirements that will no longer need to be completed prior to the issuance of TANF benefits that include, but are not limited to, an online work program orientation and important information about work requirements. Your administration’s memo simultaneously undermines the rule of law and the dignity of work.

Kansas businesses should not have to compete with government welfare programs to get applicants. At a time when frontline employers are in desperate need of employees, I am surprised your administration would perpetuate unemployment by waiving policies that are proven to get Kansans back on their feet.

Unemployed Kansans deserve for your administration to prioritize helping them find jobs and achieve self-sufficiency rather than providing an easy-out that encourages ongoing dependency. During a time of crisis, the self-respect associated with having a steady job is even more important for the mental health of our state than ever.

I look forward to hearing from your administration on its efforts to comply with state law and help Kansans get back to work.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel R. Hawkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

Representative Dan Hawkins, Majority Leader
Kansas House of Representatives

Cc: Secretary Laura Howard