

POWER Program

About the Program



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About the University of the District of Columbia

The University of the District of Columbia, the State University, is the only urban land grant institution in the United States. The UDC land grant mission focuses its activities on improving the quality of life for the residents of the District of Columbia. UDC is conveniently located on the red line at the Van Ness Metro station.

Fact Sheet - Paving Access Trails for Higher Security (PATHS) provides a set of specialized services and resources to incapacitated D.C. residents receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) from the D.C. Department of Human Services/Income Maintenance Administration (DHS/IMA). In partnership with DHS/IMA, the University of the District of Columbia (UDC)/School of Business and Public Administration/PATHS Program offers these specialized services and resources through the Program on Work, Employment, and Responsibility (POWER) Program.

Eligibility requires that participants must be parents (or caretakers) receiving TANF benefits from the District of Columbia and facing incapacities which interfere with their ability to participate in conventional work activities. These incapacities may be physical and/or mental inclusive of problems related to substance abuse, which may require rehabilitation and/or specialized job training that prepares an individual to join the workforce.

Participation in POWER can help individuals overcome barriers to getting and keeping a job which will lead to a more financially secure future. POWER provides an array of benefits that include rehabilitative services, personal counseling, psychological assessments, job readiness, individual treatment planning, and detoxification services and relapse prevention. POWER participants are not subject to the TANF 60-month lifetime limit, and changing from TANF to POWER, will not result in a delay or loss of benefits.

The Process: A client may initiate the POWER process:

- At any point during the TANF application
- While the client is already receiving TANF
- As a part of re-determination for benefits

To engage the POWER application process, the incapacity must be made known by the customer. This information can be shared with either an IMA caseworker or an employment vendor. A caseworker or employment vendor provides a copy of the required medical and social evaluation forms to the POWER applicant. A medical provider must complete the medical evaluation form inclusive of all facts about the incapacity that interferes with work activities. The customer must complete the social evaluation form (with the assistance of a caseworker, if necessary). The completed forms are returned to the caseworker or employment vendor within 30 days. IMA will use the completed medical evaluation to determine eligibility for POWER. Once approved IMA can refer eligible customers to PATHS for special services that prepare them for work. A re-evaluation of the medical incapacity and POWER eligibility is subject to review at intervals.

After POWER – Participation in POWER may be terminated when:

- POWER customer becomes employed
- POWER activities have been completed by the customer and the customer may return to TANF because he/she is work-ready
- IMA determines the individual is no longer incapacitated
- The customer fails to cooperate with re-evaluation of the incapacity
- The customer fails to comply with treatment, training plans, and other POWER requirements

After participation in POWER, TANF benefits continue without loss or delay for eligible customers. The TANF sixty-month lifetime limit and work participation requirements will apply when the customer returns to TANF.

For more information contact:
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A continuum of support services is available to participants during the program and subsequent to completion.

