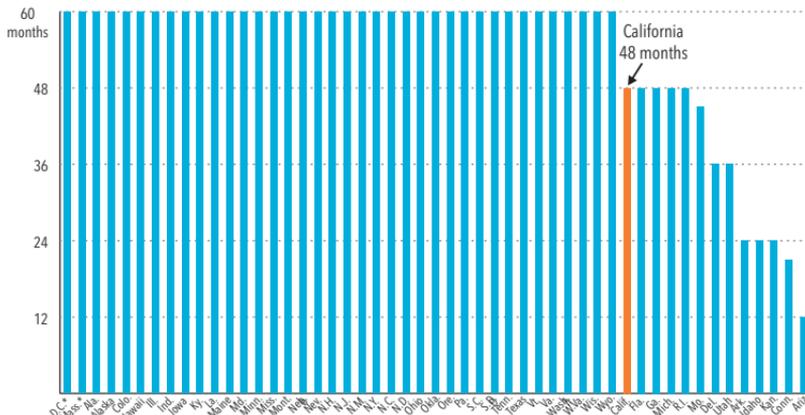




FEBRUARY 2020 | BY SARA KIMBERLIN

## Nearly 3 in 4 States Have Welfare-to-Work Parent Lifetime Time Limits That Are More Generous Than California's

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Lifetime Time Limits for Parents by State, 2018



\*The maximum lifetime limit for benefits funded by federal TANF is 60 months. District of Columbia and Massachusetts do not have a lifetime time limit for parents, using other funds to support benefits beyond 60 months. Note: Based on rules in place as of July 2018 for each state's primary TANF program. Source: Urban Institute Welfare Rules Database

Funding for this Data Hit was provided by First 5 California.

- California allows parents less time receiving welfare-to-work cash support than 37 states and D.C. In most states, parents' lifetime time limit is 60 months, the maximum allowed for federally-funded TANF support. But California restricts parents in CalWORKs, the state's TANF program, to only 48 months – a full year less.

- California's restrictive CalWORKs lifetime limit was adopted in 2011 to address a state budget shortfall in the wake of the Great Recession. State revenues have improved, but the previous 60-month lifetime limit has not been restored.

- California also imposes confusing CalWORKs "time clock" requirements, which limit parents to only 24 months to focus on addressing serious work barriers or completing education.

- Allowing parents a more realistic time period to address barriers and improve skills, and restoring the 60-month lifetime limit, would help more families achieve stability.