

## Governor Knowles' 4 point "Blueprint for Welfare Reform"

1. Train people for work and strengthen families
2. Put people to work by making government services more efficient
3. Keep people at work by setting assistance time limits
4. Make work pay better than welfare

# WELFARE IN ALASKA: THE MYTHS AND THE FACTS

### MYTHS

### FACTS

1. There is a lot of fraud in the welfare system.
2. There are a lot of teenagers on the welfare rolls.
3. The welfare rolls are increasing dramatically.
4. People on welfare have lots of kids.

1. The federal government has determined that 5% of Alaskan AFDC cases and 8% of Alaskan Food Stamp cases are in error through fraud or through error by the client or caseworker.
2. Only 714 AFDC recipients are 19 years old or younger (5.3% of the caseload).
3. AFDC single parents rolls: 1981 - 4.1% of Alaskans; 1994 - 4.8% of Alaskans. All AFDC, both single and two parent families in 1994: 6.2% of the Alaskan population.
4. Children in AFDC families in 1994:  
50% - one child  
28% - two children  
14% - three children  
8% - more than three

Source: Governor's Welfare Reform Task Force March 1, 1995

### MYTHS

### FACTS

5. People are on public welfare all their lives.
6. Welfare is a large component of the state budget.
7. Food Stamps are an expensive program for the state.
8. Welfare recipients are unwilling or too lazy to work.

5. Between 1984 and 1994, roughly 63% of AFDC families received AFDC for less than two years; 13% of AFDC families received AFDC for 5 years or more.
6. Less than 3% of general funds are spent on AFDC.
7. The Food Stamp Program benefits are fully funded by the federal government. In 1994, Food Stamps and Administration totalled \$66 million, of which only \$7.5 million was state general fund.
8. The recent Self-Sufficiency Project survey showed that 88% of AFDC clients said they would rather work than receive welfare.

### MYTHS

### FACTS

9. People move to Alaska to get on welfare.
10. Welfare recipients are not taking advantage of job training and educational programs.
11. Welfare recipients get housing subsidies in addition to their welfare grants.
12. Sufficient jobs are available to keep people off welfare if they really wanted to work.

9. Confidential and anonymous surveys show that being with family, previous residence and "hope" for work are the primary reasons new applicants give for coming to Alaska.
10. 1700 welfare parents a month are required to participate in training and educational programs. One percent of these refuse to participate in JOBS and as a result lose part of their AFDC benefits.
11. In 1993, 2,000 of the 21,600 families who received AFDC and APA (9.2%) also received subsidized housing from the ASHA Section 8 program.
12. Gross monthly income:  
\$748.00 @ minimum wage  
\$860.00 @ \$5/hour  
\$1204.00 @ \$7/hour  
Some living costs:  
Daycare - one child - \$400-500/month  
HUD's fair market rent for two-bedroom unit - \$600/month  
Winter unemployment rate of 10%.  
In many rural communities, there are no jobs available.