

Male Caseheads Receiving TCA: Who Are They and What Are Their Circumstances?

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The profile of a TANF recipient is most often exemplified through a stereotypical picture, depicting a single, and often non-white mother, who is either pregnant, or already has children. While it is true that a significant majority of TANF adults are female, there are a percentage of recipients who are male. Though this percentage represents a minority, males have embodied a consistent proportion of the caseload over the years. In the state of Maryland, the proportion of applicants for Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA, Maryland's version of TANF) who are male has been on the rise since 2006, as shown in Figure 1 (5.9% in October 2006, vs. 7.7% in October 2009).*

The increase of male representation in TCA applications is consistent with the current economic climate. Since the beginning of the Great Recession in December 2007, the number of unemployed persons has more than doubled (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010a). Although unemployment rates both nationally and locally have been decreasing recently, the unemployment rate for Maryland had been at a steady increase since the beginning of the economic recession, as seen in Figure 2 (Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, 2010).

While the recession has affected both genders and all races and ages, adult males have suffered considerably more. For those who are working, wages continue to decrease, a phenomenon that is more pronounced in the male population. Male wage growth dropped from

5.3% in 2007 to -1.3% in 2010, showing an actual *decline* in wage growth (Mishel & Shierholz, 2010). Additionally, an unemployment rate of 9.8% is maintained for adult males, a rate higher than both the adult female rate (8.0%) and the overall national unemployment rate (9.6%; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010b).

In addition to the climbing male unemployment rate and drop in wage growth, there has been a rise in the estimated number of fathers in the United States, and more specifically, custodial fathers (Grall, 2009). In 2009, it was estimated that 15% of single parents were men, a statistic that draws attention to the decreasing number of fathers who are part of a married-couple (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2008; 2009; 2010). Still, despite the increase in the male unemployment rate and TCA applications, men tend to remain a minority among TANF caseheads, and in general, little is known about these male recipients. The unique circumstances for males in this economic recession combined with the national data on increasing rates of single fathers has motivated the analyses presented in this brief. In order for Maryland TANF policymakers to understand their entire caseload composition, and not just the majority of TCA adults (i.e., females) this report will briefly investigate the male caseheads who were TCA recipients in October 2009.

*The proportion of male applicants was derived from the authors' analysis of TCA applicant data from CARES in October 2006, October 2007, October 2008, and October 2009.

The following questions will be addressed:

- 1.) What are the demographic characteristics of male TCA caseheads?
- 2.) What are the historic and current patterns of TCA participation for these caseheads?
- 3.) What are the employment experiences of male TCA caseheads?
- 4.) What are the characteristics and circumstances of male caseheads with various types of family composition?

This investigation will allow program staff, managers, and policymakers to understand who this sub-population of TCA recipients is and how male caseheads compare with the general active caseload in Maryland.

Methods

The sample for this brief includes all male caseheads from the active caseload of TCA recipients in October 2009 (n=1,434). When stating the findings, references and comparisons are made to active caseheads and the active caseload. These statements are referencing the active caseheads and caseload from October 2009.

Findings are mostly based on univariate descriptive analyses of administrative data retrieved from computerized management information systems maintained by the State of Maryland. Bivariate descriptive analyses were utilized for family composition analyses. When appropriate, family composition group characteristics were compared using Chi-square and ANOVA tests.

Demographic and program participation data were extracted from the Client Automated Resources and Eligibility System (CARES) and employment and wage data were obtained from the Maryland Automated Benefits System (MABS).

CARES

CARES became the statewide automated data system for certain DHR programs in March 1998. Similar to its predecessor AIMS/AMF, CARES provides individual and case level program participation data for cash assistance (AFDC or TCA), Food Stamps, Medical Assistance and Social Services. Demographic data are provided, as well as information about the type of program, application and disposition (denial or closure), date for each service episode, and codes indicating the relationship of each individual to the head of the assistance unit.

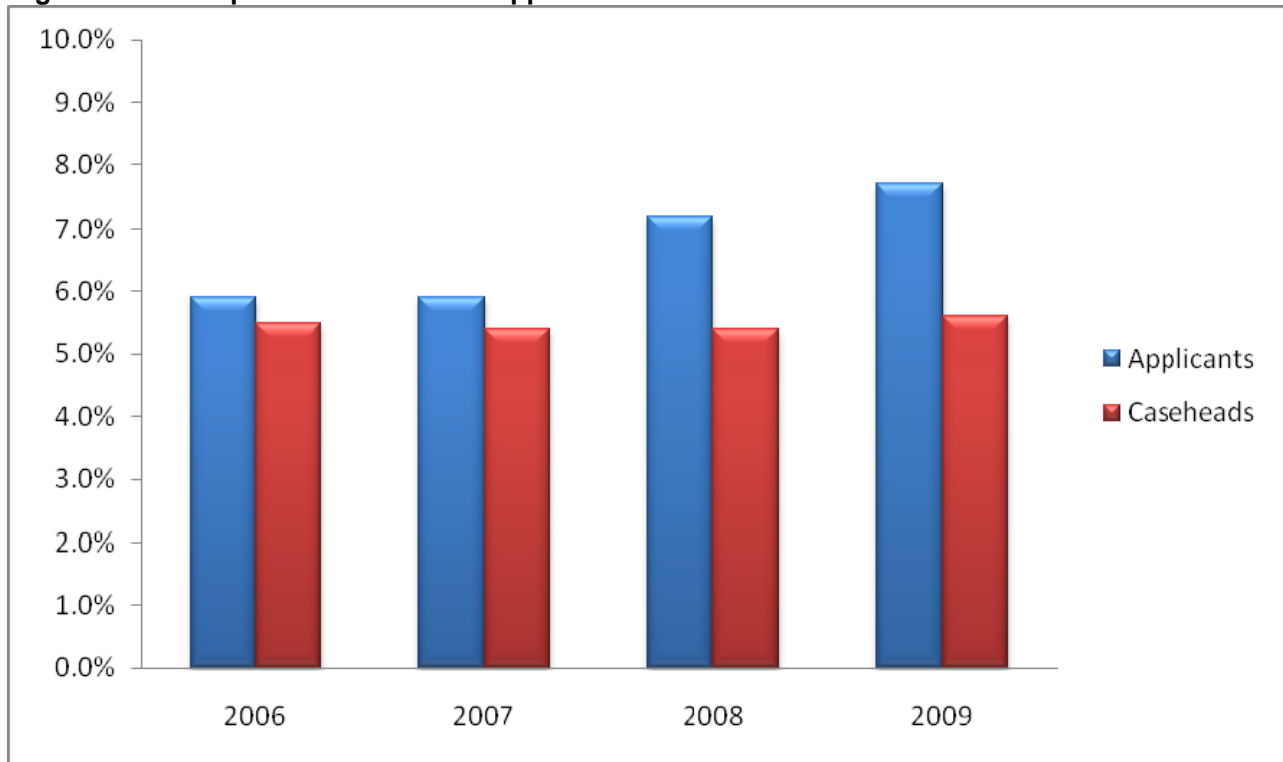
MABS

Our data on quarterly employment and earnings come from the Maryland Automated Benefits System (MABS). MABS includes data from all employers covered by the state's Unemployment Insurance (UI) law (approximately 93% of Maryland jobs). Independent contractors, sales people on commission only, some farm workers, federal government employees (civilian and military), some student interns, most religious organization employees, and self-employed persons who do not employ any paid individuals are not covered. "Off the books" and "under the table" wages are not included, nor are wages from jobs located in other states.

The lack of administrative data on jobs in other states and federal jobs is particularly important. According to the 2000 census, the rate of out-of-state employment among Maryland residents (17.4%) was nearly five times greater than that of the nation as a whole (3.6%)*. Moreover, jurisdictions vary significantly in their rates of out-of-state employment. In certain populous counties with sizable TANF caseloads (Prince George's and Montgomery), one-third or more of employed residents work outside Maryland; in contrast, only 2.3% of Baltimore City residents do so. Thus, our access

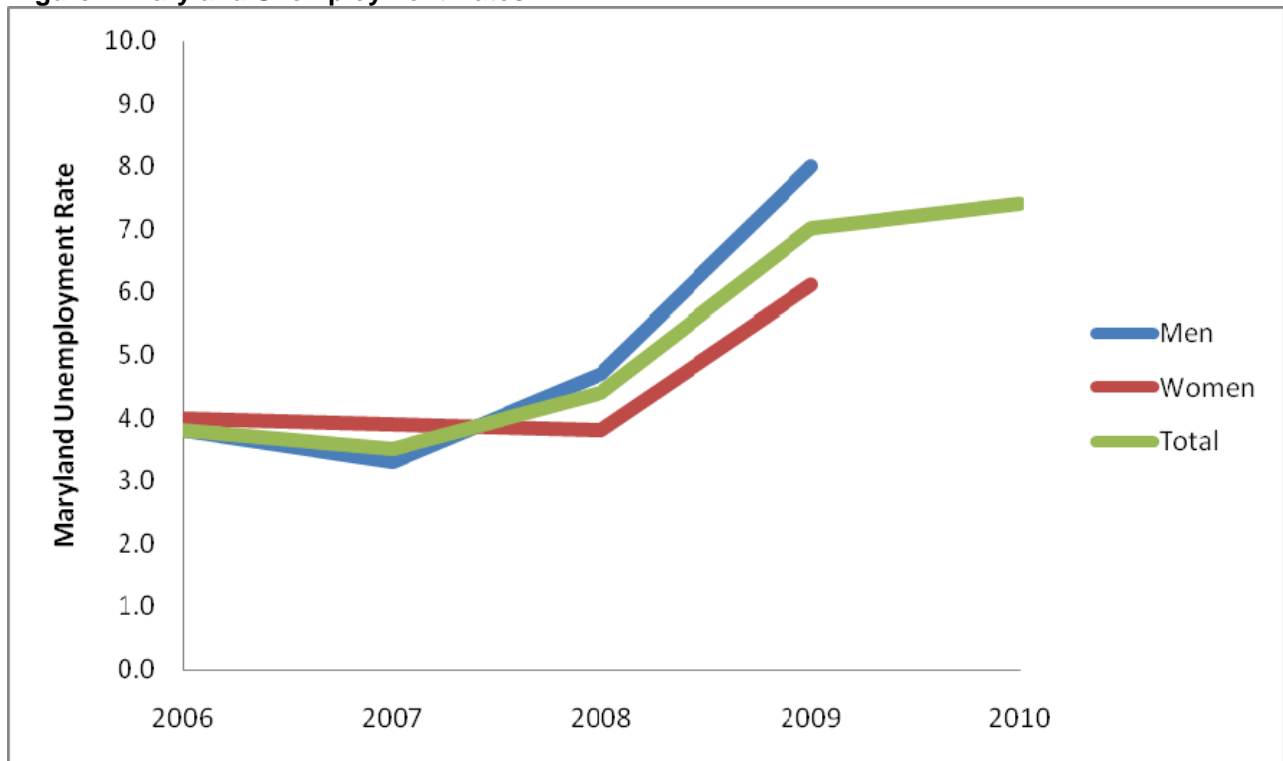
*Data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau website <http://www.factfinder.census.gov> using the Census 2000 Summary File 3 Sample Data Table QT-P25: Class of Worker by Sex, Place of Work and Veteran Status, 2000.

Figure 1. Male Representation in TCA Applications and Caseload



Note: There is no statistically significant difference in the percent of male caseheads across years.

Figure 2. Maryland Unemployment Rates



Note: Unemployment rates for men and women are based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Total unemployment rate is based on the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation's monthly unemployment data. Data are seasonally adjusted. 2010 unemployment data separated by gender were not available at the time this study was done.

to employment data from the states that border Maryland understates true rates of employment. Also, there are more than 100,000 federal jobs in Maryland and the majority of state residents live within commuting distance of Washington D.C.

Finally, because UI earnings data are reported on an aggregated, quarterly basis, we do not know, for any given quarter, how much of that time period the individual was employed (i.e., how many months, weeks or hours). Thus, it is not possible to compute or infer hourly wages or weekly or monthly salary from these data. It is also important to remember that the earnings figures reported do not necessarily equal total household income; we do not include information on earnings of other household members, if any, or data about any other income (e.g. child support, Supplemental Security Income) available to the family.

Findings

As mentioned, our overall purpose in this brief report is to provide simple, descriptive information about a subpopulation of TCA caseheads that is rarely discussed – male caseheads. We begin this section on findings by presenting the proportion of active caseheads who were male across the past four years, and then move on to discuss characteristics of male caseheads and their TANF cases as well as their personal welfare and employment histories. We conclude with an analysis of certain subgroups of male caseheads, based on their family composition.

Figure 1 shows the percent of male caseheads in Maryland's TCA caseload from 2006 to 2009. The percentage of male representation dropped slightly from 2006 (5.5%) to 2007 (5.4%), remained unchanged in 2008 (5.4%), and then rose slightly in 2009 (5.6%). Overall, though, there was no statistically significant difference in the percent of male caseheads across the four years. This may be surprising considering the rise in proportion of male TCA applicants.

We also find that there is a higher denial rate for male applicants than female applicants. Additionally, the denial rate for males has increased over time, from 67.5% in October 2006 (vs. 57.7% for female applicants) to 75.0% in October 2009 (vs. 57.9% for female applicants).

Figure 3. Male Application Denial Rate

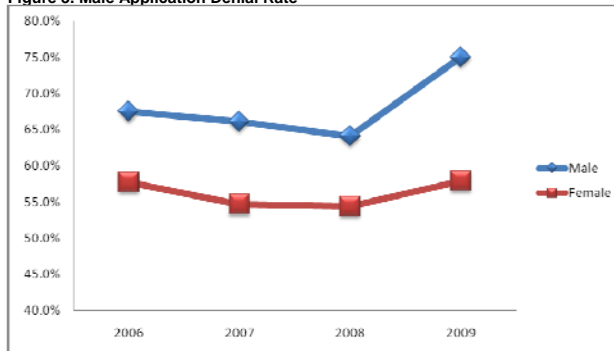


Table 1 presents demographic information on the active male caseheads from October 2009. Of these active male caseheads, the majority was African-American (64.9%) and approximately one-quarter were Caucasian (27.3%). Other groups represented only a very small proportion of the cases (7.8%). Over half (56.4%) of the active male caseheads had never been married, although one-quarter of them were married in our critical month (October 2009). When compared to the characteristics of TCA caseheads overall, these active male caseheads were generally older on average. Almost three-quarters (72.7%) of the caseheads were age 36 or older with an average age of 44.6 years. Exactly one-third of male caseheads received a disability payment in the critical month, a rate that is much higher compared to the overall caseload.

Table 2 shows the jurisdictional distribution of male caseheads. Baltimore City, where the plurality of TCA cases are in Maryland, had a bit more than two-fifths of all male caseheads (43.2%). Prince George's County and Baltimore County followed with 13.1% and 9.1% of the male caseheads respectively. All other jurisdictions ranged from 0.1% to 5.8%, but the majority of remaining counties had less than 2% of the male caseheads.

It is also evident from Table 2 that most jurisdictions had a larger representation of males than might be expected based on their proportion of active cases overall. Jurisdictions with the largest discrepancy were: Anne Arundel County (5.8% male vs. 5.0%

Table 1. Payee Demographics

	Total (n=1,434)
Race	
African-American	64.9% (883)
Caucasian	27.3% (371)
Other	7.8% (106)
Marital Status	
Never married	56.4% (758)
Married	24.8% (333)
Divorced	6.5% (87)
Separated	10.3% (138)
Widowed	2.0% (27)
Age at Study Month	
Younger than 20	.5% (7)
20 - 25 years	5.8% (83)
26 - 30 years	8.6% (124)
31 - 35 years	12.3% (177)
36 and older	72.7% (1043)
Mean	44.60
Median	44.18
Standard deviation	12.59
Range	18.54 – 86.95
Disability in Critical Month?	33.3% (478)

Note: Counts may not sum to actual sample size because of missing data for some variables. Valid percents are reported.

overall); Harford County (3.5% male vs. 2.6% overall); and St. Mary's County (2.9% male vs. 2.0% overall). A minority of jurisdictions had a smaller male representation than expected, and among these the largest discrepancies were found in the larger jurisdictions: Prince George's County (13.1% male vs. 14.7% overall); Wicomico County (0.6% male vs. 2.2% overall); and Baltimore City (43.2% male vs. 46.2% overall). Information regarding case characteristics (size of the assistance unit,

number of children and adults in the assistance unit, and age of the youngest child included in the TCA grant) for October 2009 is presented in Table 3.

There was not much variation in the size of the assistance unit, as more than half of assistance units with a male casehead had either one (29.0%) or two (37.7%) people. The average size of an assistance unit was 2.31 persons, but ranged from one to eleven persons. In terms of the number of

Table 2. Jurisdictional Distribution of Male Caseheads

	Total Male Caseheads (n=1,434)		Total Active Caseheads (n=11,742)	
Allegany	1.7%	(24)	1.1%	(280)
Anne Arundel	5.8%	(83)	5.0%	(1283)
Baltimore County	9.1%	(131)	8.7%	(2202)
Calvert	0.7%	(10)	0.5%	(134)
Caroline	1.1%	(16)	0.7%	(168)
Carroll	1.5%	(21)	0.9%	(240)
Cecil	1.9%	(27)	1.9%	(478)
Charles	1.2%	(17)	1.0%	(250)
Dorchester	0.6%	(9)	1.0%	(257)
Frederick	1.8%	(26)	1.6%	(410)
Garrett	0.5%	(7)	0.3%	(76)
Harford	3.5%	(50)	2.6%	(657)
Howard	2.0%	(29)	1.9%	(493)
Kent	0.1%	(1)	0.2%	(54)
Montgomery	4.3%	(61)	4.1%	(1,044)
Prince George's	13.1%	(188)	14.7%	(3,732)
Queen Anne's	0.4%	(6)	0.4%	(100)
St. Mary's	2.9%	(42)	2.0%	(518)
Somerset	0.3%	(4)	0.6%	(140)
Talbot	0.2%	(3)	0.2%	(52)
Washington	2.1%	(30)	1.8%	(450)
Wicomico	1.4%	(20)	2.2%	(559)
Worcester	0.6%	(9)	0.4%	(103)
Baltimore City	43.2%	(620)	46.2%	(11,742)

Note: Counts may not sum to actual sample size because of missing data for some variables. Valid percents are reported.

Table 3. Case Characteristics

	Total (n=1,434)
Size of Assistance Unit	
1	29.0% (416)
2	37.7% (541)
3	18.1% (260)
4 or more	15.1% (241)
Mean	2.31
Median	2.00
Standard deviation	1.30
Range	1 – 11
Number of Adults in AU	
0 (child only)	43.5% (623)
1	44.4% (636)
2	12.1% (174)
Mean	0.69
Median	1.00
Standard deviation	0.68T
Range	0 – 2
Number of Children in AU	
0	1.1% (16)
1	57.9% (831)
2	27.1% (388)
3 or more	13.9% (199)
Mean	1.62
Median	1.00
Standard deviation	.984
Range	0 – 8
Age of Youngest Recipient Child	
Younger than 3	20.0% (281)
3 - 5 years	18.3% (257)
6 – 12 years	34.4% (482)
13 - 18 years	27.3% (383)
Mean	8.60
Median	8.23
Standard deviation	5.36
Range	0.02 – 17.98

Note: Counts may not sum to actual sample size because of missing data for some variables. Valid percents are reported.

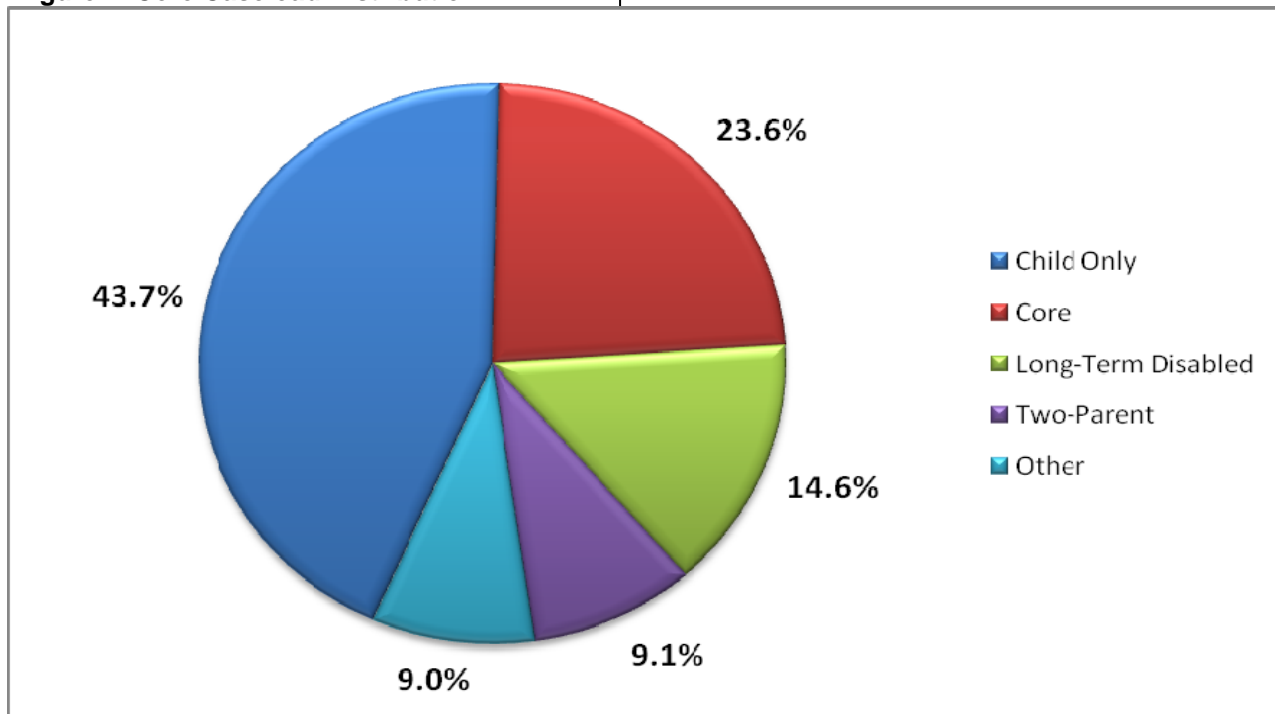
adults, most assistance units were either child only cases or included a single adult (43.5% and 44.4% respectively). This proportion of child only cases is considerably higher for male caseheads than among the overall caseload (32.6% in October 2009, forthcoming in Williamson, Saunders, & Born).

Regarding the number of children per case, over half (57.9%) of the assistance units with a male casehead included only one child and approximately one-quarter (27.1%) included two children. Except for a minority that included only adults (1.1%), the rest of the assistance units included three or more children (13.9%). The age of the youngest recipient child in cases with male caseheads varied and was evenly distributed across the spectrum from infancy to the late teen years. One in five (20.0%) of the youngest children were infants or toddlers. One in five (18.3%) was preschool age. Approximately one-third (34.4%) was elementary school age, and one-quarter (27.3%) were teenagers. When compared to overall TCA cases, the youngest recipient child for the typical male casehead in October 2009 was much

older. Specifically, the median youngest recipient child age for all cases was 4.24 years (forthcoming in Williamson, Saunders, & Born), whereas it was 8.23 years old among cases with male caseheads.

Figure 4 presents information about the distribution of core caseload categories. Overall, the majority of male caseheads were in “non core” categories. For instance, one out of three male caseheads were in the *Child Only* category, the largest group (43.7%). One in seven (14.6%) had long-term disabilities, and roughly equal percentages (9%) were either two parent cases or part of another non-core group. The “core” group typically consists of mostly work-eligible adults that are included in the denominator of the Work Participation Rate (WPR), and most caseheads in the active TCA caseload are normally part of this group. Not quite one in four (23.6%) male caseheads fell into this category, which is a lower percentage than is generally found in the active caseload as a whole. For the most part, male caseheads in the active TCA caseload are exempt from work requirements.

Figure 4. Core Caseload Distribution



Note: “Other” includes the following Core Caseload categories: Needy Caretaker Relative (2.5%), Legal Immigrant (.4%), Caring for a disabled household member (1.3%), Child under one (1.3%), Earning (2.2%), and Short-Term Disabled (1.3%). Valid percents are reported. The percentage of cases designated as child-only in the core caseload analysis may differ slightly from the percentage of child-only cases presented in Table 3 because they are based on two different data sources, at two different time points. Table 3 is based on the number of adults included in the grant amount paid at the beginning of the month of exit. Figure 4 is based on the core caseload calculations performed at the end of the month.

It is important to know not only the descriptive characteristics of the male caseheads who participate in Maryland's cash assistance program, but also their welfare participation history and employment history. This information is especially relevant, given the state of the economy. Historic and current TCA participation and historic and current employment data are presented in Tables 4 and 5, respectively.

The first section of Table 4 shows how many months out of the last year that active male caseheads participated in the TCA program. Slightly over half (52.9%) of them had received assistance for between 10 and 12 months out of the previous year, with an average of 7.98 months out of the year.

The middle section in Table 4 shows how many months out of the previous five years that the active male caseheads participated in the TCA program. Nearly one-half (49.1%) of them had received funds for 12 months or less, though very few were brand new entrants (6.1%). Less than one-fifth (17.7%) of them were long-term recipients, having received TCA funds for 49-60 months. Male caseheads who were enrolled in TCA benefits in October 2009 had received, on average, 21.46 months of assistance in the past 60 months.

The bottom section of Table 4 presents information regarding the number of months male caseheads had used toward their TANF time limit, which is 60 months unless there is a documented hardship. It is important to note that child-only cases are excluded from time limits all together. As of October 2009, a minimal number of male caseheads (1.3%) were approaching, or had already reached (1.5%) their TANF limit. What is interesting about this section of Table 4 is that just under half (44.4%) of the male caseheads had not used any months toward their time limit. Furthermore, most of the remaining cases (46.3%) had used less than two years of their TANF time limit. When compared to the overall TCA caseload from October 2009, male caseheads had used less time

towards their limit, and we surmise this is probably due to the higher proportion of child-only cases.

The historic and current employment data presented in Table 5 shows that during the two years before the critical study date, slightly over half (51.2%) of male TCA recipients had been employed at some point.

However, within the year preceding the critical study date, only 37.1% had been employed at some point during the year. Only one-quarter (23.3%) had been employed during the critical quarter (the fourth quarter of 2009). When looking at both the previous eight quarters and the previous four quarters, male caseheads had worked on average, slightly over half of the time (4.35 of the 8 quarters and 2.60 of the 4 quarters).

When looking at the earnings for each of the time periods, it is important to look at both the mean and the median. Although the mean is an important figure to understand, it is affected by outliers; the median however, gives a more accurate picture of the "middle" earnings of these male caseheads. In the previous eight quarters before the critical date, male caseheads who worked were earning on average, \$4,244 each quarter, with median earnings of \$2,734 for each quarter. In the previous eight quarters before the critical date, the average total earnings were \$24,579 while the total median earnings were much lower at \$10,038. In fact, there are a handful of outliers (male caseheads who earned much more than the others) that contributed to the large discrepancy between mean and median earnings. In the previous four quarters before the critical date, male caseheads were earning on average, \$4,275 each quarter, with median earnings of \$2,544. The average total earnings for the four quarters before the critical date were \$14,313, while the median was again, much lower, at \$6,280. During the fourth quarter of 2009, which was the critical quarter, male caseheads earned an average of \$5,749, with median earnings of \$4,013.

These employment data show that at any given point, most of these male caseheads are not

Table 4. Historic and Current TCA Participation

	Total (n=1,434)
Months of Receipt in Last 12 Months	
None	7.5% (108)
1 – 3 months	16.9% (242)
4 – 6 months	11.7% (168)
7 – 9 months	10.9% (157)
10 – 12 months	52.9% (759)
Mean	7.98
Median	10.00
Standard deviation	4.45
Months of Receipt in Last 60 Months	
None	6.1% (88)
1 – 12 months	43.0% (617)
13 – 24 months	17.4% (250)
25 – 36 months	8.1% (116)
37 – 48 months	7.6% (109)
49 – 60 months	17.7% (254)
Mean	21.46
Median	13.00
Standard deviation	20.57
Months Used Toward TANF Time Limit	
None	44.4% (636)
1 - 12 months	36.3% (520)
13 - 24 months	10.0% (143)
25 - 36 months	4.4% (63)
37 - 48 months	2.2% (32)
49 - 60 months	1.3% (19)
More than 60 months	1.5% (21)
Mean	7.85
Median	2.00
Standard deviation	13.95

Note: Counts may not sum to actual sample size because of missing data for some variables. Valid percents are reported.

Table 5. Historic and Current Employment

	Total (n=1,434)
Previous 8 Quarters (10/07 - 09/09)	
Percent employed	51.2% (719)
Mean # of quarters worked - employed only	4.35
Average total earnings	\$24,579
Median total earnings	\$10,038
Average quarterly earnings	\$4,244
Median quarterly earnings	\$2,734
Previous 4 Quarters (10/08 - 09/09)	
Percent employed	37.1% (521)
Mean # of quarters worked - employed only	2.60
Average total earnings	\$14,313
Median total earnings	\$6,280
Average quarterly earnings	\$4,275
Median quarterly earnings	\$2,544
Fourth Quarter of 2009 (10/09 - 12/09)	
Percent employed	23.3 % (327)
Average total earnings	\$5,749
Median total earnings	\$4,013

Note: Counts may not sum to actual sample size because of missing data for some variables. Valid percents are reported.

employed. Among those who are employed, there is a wide range in earnings. This could be related to the high proportion of child-only cases among male caseheads, who are exempt from income eligibility requirements and therefore may earn substantially more than a typical TCA recipient.

One of the more important findings of this brief lies in Figure 5. It may be surprising to learn that half (51.7%) of the male caseheads from October 2009 TCA cases were single parents with their own children. Single adults who are caring for relative children comprise approximately one-quarter (23.6%) of the cases while two parents with their own children (16.7%) and two adults

with relative children (5.9%) make up the third and fourth largest family composition groups. The information presented in this figure is very important

because it challenges what may have been assumed about adult male welfare recipients. Most of these male caseheads are not caring for their grandchildren or other relatives; they are caring for their own children. This finding illustrates a point that is often given minimal attention in the welfare reform literature. That is, there are low-income single fathers out there who are raising their children on their own and are in need of financial assistance.

The purpose of Table 6 is to give the reader a clearer picture of whom exactly the October

2009 TCA male caseheads were. It is separated into two columns distinguishing whether the casehead was caring for only his children or only relative children. It is further separated by whether the casehead was a single parent or adult, or if there were two parents or adults on the TCA grant.

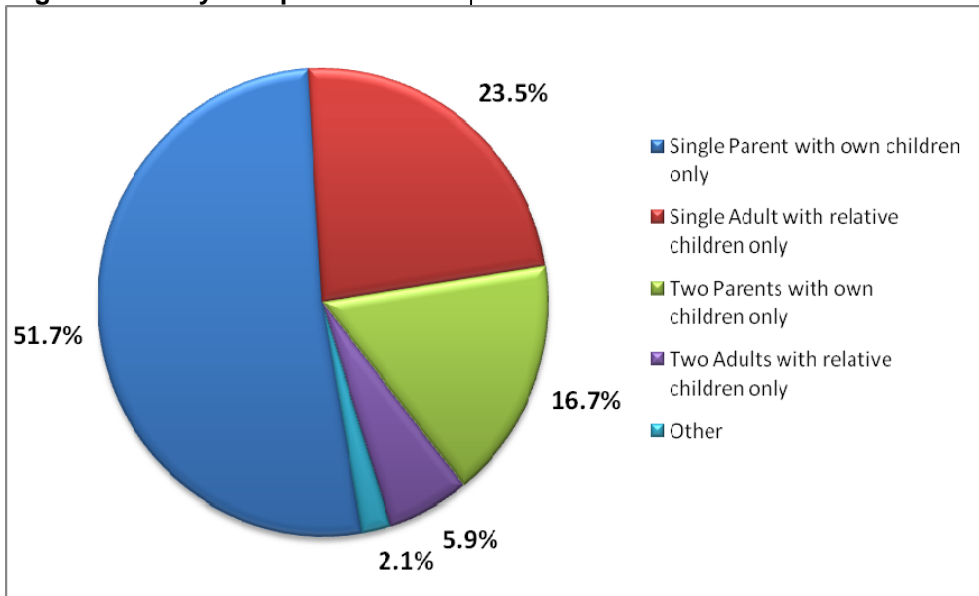
As noted above, the typical male casehead was a single parent taking care of his own children only. He was most likely African-American (74.6%) and never married (72.0%). He lived in Baltimore City (51.5%), was older than age 35 (65.6%), and was likely to have a documented disability (45.3%). His youngest child was an average of 8.68 years old and he had received approximately 13 months of TCA assistance in the past five years. Though this description fit the majority

of single male parents, it was not characteristic of all single male parents. One out of five single male parents were Caucasian (22.6%) and one-quarter had been previously married (24.4%). Also, the age of the youngest recipient child varied. There

was wide distribution across all age groups.

When looking at two-parent families who had their own children, the picture is slightly different. There were more equal distributions of African-American families, Caucasian families, and families of other races (39.6%; 26.9%; 33.5%). Only one-third of male caseheads who were part of two-parent TCA families lived in Baltimore City (35.8%). These two-parent couples were more likely to be married (72.3%), and the male casehead was, most often, over the age of 35 (65.0%) with an average age with 40.69 years. For almost half of these families, the youngest recipient

Figure 5. Family Composition



Note: "Other" includes the following family composition categories: Single Parent with no children (.1%), Single Parent with relative and own children (1.0%), Two Parents with no children (.2%), and Two parents with relative and own children (.8%). Valid percents are reported.

Table 6. Characteristics by Type of Family Composition

	Own Children		Relative Children	
	Single Parent (n=742)	Two Parents (n=240)	Single Adult (n=337)	Two Adults (n=85)
Race***				
African-American	74.6% (529)	39.6% (90)	65.6% (208)	49.4% (40)
Caucasian	22.6% (160)	26.9% (61)	32.2% (102)	48.1% (39)
Other	2.8% (20)	33.5% (76)	2.2% (7)	2.5% (2)
Located in Baltimore City?***	51.5% (382)	35.8% (86)	38.0% (128)	16.5% (14)
Marital Status***				
Never Married	72.0% (528)	23.5% (56)	53.6% (149)	21.2% (14)
Married	3.5% (26)	72.3% (172)	25.9% (72)	75.8% (50)
Previously Married	24.4% (179)	4.2% (10)	20.6% (57)	3.0% (2)
Age at Study Month***				
Younger than 20	0.5% (4)	.8% (2)	0.3% (1)	0.0% (0)
20 - 25 years	6.9% (51)	7.5% (18)	3.6% (12)	0.0% (0)
26 - 30 years	10.6% (79)	12.9% (31)	3.3% (11)	1.2% (1)
31 - 35 years	16.3% (121)	13.8% (33)	4.5% (15)	4.7% (4)
36 and older	65.6% (487)	65.0% (156)	88.4% (298)	94.1% (80)
Mean***	40.71	40.69	52.78	56.96
Median	40.88	41.5	53.95	57.26
Age of Youngest Recipient Child***				
Younger than 3	15.2% (110)	48.5% (116)	10.3% (34)	12.9% (11)
3 – 5 years	22.9% (166)	15.1% (36)	10.6% (35)	18.8% (16)
6 – 12 years	36.2% (262)	19.7% (47)	39.5% (130)	42.4% (36)
13 – 18 years	25.7% (186)	16.7% (40)	39.5% (130)	25.9% (22)
Mean***	8.68	5.62	10.65	9.08
Median	8.31	3.16	11.26	8.84
Core Caseload				
Core	42.9% (318)	6.7% (16)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
% Child Only	26.3% (195)	11.6% (28)	90.2% (304)	97.6% (83)
Disability in Critical Month?	45.3% (336)	30.8% (74)	13.9% (47)	10.6% (9)
Mean # of Months of TCA Receipt in the Past 60 Months	13.06	13.18	14.28	12.92
Median Total Earnings in Previous 4 Quarters	\$2,396	\$3,135	\$23,548	\$30,002

Note: Counts may not sum to actual sample size because of missing data for some variables. Valid percents are reported. For marital status, 'Previously Married' includes: Divorced, Separated, And Widowed. The following family composition categories were not included in this table: Single Parent with no children, Single Parent with relative and own children, Two Parents with no children and Two Parents with relative and own children. *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

child was under three years old (48.5%). Nearly one in three of the male caseheads who were part of a two-parent family had a documented disability in the critical month (30.8%). Similar to single fathers, they too, had received TCA assistance for an average of 13 months out of the previous five years.

The first two columns of Table 6 show that most of the male caseheads in October 2009 were taking care of their own children; however, there were some –about three of ten– who were caring for relative children on their own, or in a two-adult family. Single males caring for relative children were more often African-American (65.6%), never married (53.6%), and age 36 or older (88.4%). Almost one-third however, was Caucasian (32.2%) and one out of five had been previously married (20.6%). For four out of five single males caring for relatives, the youngest child on the TCA grant was between 6 and 18 years old (79.0%). Almost two out of five were residing in Baltimore City (38.0%) and relatively few had a documented disability (13.9%).

The picture is different for male caseheads who were part of a two-adult family caring for relative children. For these caseheads, half were African-American (49.4%) and half were Caucasian (48.1%). Less than one-fifth was located in Baltimore City (16.5%). Three-quarters were married (75.8%) and almost all were age 36 or older (94.1%) with an average age of 56.96 years. The youngest child on the TCA grant was dispersed among all age groups, but most were at least six years of age (68.3%). Only one out of ten had a documented disability (10.6%).

When comparing the two categories of 'own children' versus 'relative children' it is apparent that there are some general differences regardless of the number of parents or adults on the TCA grant. For example, men who were caring for relative children were more likely to be older, with an average age in the 50's com-

pared to those caring for their own children, who had an average age of roughly 41. Those caring for relative children also were caring for children who were older on average.

Additionally, men caring for relatives had markedly higher median total earnings in the previous four quarters than those who were caring for their own children. Lastly, those adults caring for relative children were more likely to be a *Child-Only* case, indicating, most likely, that these are grandparents or other relatives caring for a younger family member's child or children.

Conclusions

This report briefly examined male caseheads who were receiving Temporary Cash Assistance in Maryland in October 2009. The rise in male TCA applicants and current economic climate which has been more unfavorable for males prompted this investigation. The purpose of this section is to highlight the most salient findings and address the possible implications of those findings.

The most important finding of this research brief challenges what may often be assumed about male welfare recipients (i.e., that they are mainly grandfathers). While some male caseheads were caring for relative children, they represented only a minority of the male caseheads. Most of the male caseheads who were receiving TCA assistance were single fathers taking care of their own children. Consistent with the current economic situation and rise in TCA applications, these single fathers were earning very little money and needed financial assistance and support. Additionally, many of these male caseheads had a documented disability, placing them in one of the non-core categories which are exempt from work requirements.

There is virtually no literature on male TANF recipients. The field may be lacking in literature on this sub-population because it is only a small proportion of the overall caseload. However, it is important for program staff, managers, and TANF policymakers to be familiar with the entire caseload, in-

cluding even its smaller subgroups. The single fathers represented in Maryland's TCA caseload are very different from the overall active caseload in regards to demographics, TCA history, and employment history.

We recognize that male caseheads are a small portion of the work eligible recipients and the overall active caseload. Still, it is important to recognize the differences between this population and the rest of the caseload and understand how programs and policy may be affected by this diversity and, in turn, how the circumstances and service needs of male-headed households could, perhaps, be better reflected in policies and programs.

Maryland, to its great credit, has consciously not adopted a 'one size fits all' approach in its reformed welfare program and prides itself on doing case-by-case assessment of households' situations and their service as well as financial needs. Given the still overwhelming preponderance of female caseheads, however, and the nature of federal TANF rules and requirements, it is not surprising that the literature is generally silent with regard to the situations and service needs of male-headed TANF households and how they and their children have been affected by welfare reform.

Cash assistance cases headed by men unquestionably remain a very small cohort of cases compared to the cohort headed by women. However, while their numbers are small and thus they are relatively invisible, they—and the children in their care—are no less important. Thus, the purpose of this research brief was to present a descriptive profile of these men and their families and to shed light on the diversity that exists within this population in our state. Hopefully, study results also offer food for thought for policy-makers, program managers, community service providers and advocates who work with and/or are concerned about this population.

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