



Mississippi's welfare benefits lowest in the nation

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The Cato Institute says Mississippi has the lowest benefits for the poor in the nation, at \$16,984, the equivalent of a job that pays about \$12,000, after accounting for earned-income and child tax credits.

This is an update to a 1995 Cato study that shows in many states, it's better to be on government assistance than to have an entry level job. Cato's analysis found that in 35 states welfare pays more than a minimum wage job, and in 13 states, it pays more than a \$15-an-hour job. To see the study, [click here](#).

More from Cato:

The federal government currently funds 126 separate programs targeted toward low-income people, 72 of which provide either cash or in-kind benefits to individuals. As no one receives all of these programs, this study created a profile family assuming use of seven key welfare programs: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; Medicaid; Housing Assistance; Utilities Assistance; Women, Infants and Children Program; and The Emergency Food Assistance Program Commodities.

The states with the highest levels of welfare benefits are: 1) Hawaii, 2) Washington D.C. 3) Massachusetts, 4) Connecticut, 5) New Jersey, 6) Rhode Island 7) New York, 8) Vermont, 9) New Hampshire, and 10) Maryland.

The states with the lowest levels of welfare benefits are: 1) Mississippi, 2) Tennessee, 3) Arkansas, 4) Idaho, 5) Texas, 6) Florida, 7) Kentucky, 8) Illinois, 9) Utah, and 10) Georgia.