The 1996 welfare reform act created 50 state “workfare” systems. This study analyzes the impacts of reform on the survival strategies of single-female headed families in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. The findings indicate that variation in outcomes results from the interaction of structural conditions with private network strength and that access to state support services is determined less by need than by the political-organizational goals of workfare states. The findings suggest that studies of welfare reform incorporate analyses of workfare state policies and practices into explanations of how reform affects household survival strategies and well-being.