

11. Social Services

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Social Services Block Grant

Community Services Block Grant

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Statutory Authority	Title IV-A of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), P.L.104-193. Formerly the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program; 42 U.S.C. § 601 et seq.
Federal Agency	Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services
Program Type	Capped entitlement block grant to move welfare recipients to work and self-sufficiency by providing cash assistance. The program's authority expired in FY 2002, but Congress has continued to provide funding.
Eligibility, General	<p>Eligible recipients are families with dependent children or pregnant women. Eligibility extends for no more than five years total (except for child-only cases). States have some flexibility in eligibility definitions and may define families for the purpose of providing assistance. Natural and adoptive parents who live with the child can be included as recipients.</p> <p>Families can be subject to sanctions for failure to comply with state-plan requirements. States can be subject to federal penalties for not meeting work-participation rates and for other factors, such as failure to provide reports.</p>
Eligibility, Age	<p>Minor children (for purposes of benefits) are those under 18, or under 19 when a full-time student in a secondary school or vocational/technical training program. Single parents under 18 are required to live with their parents or relatives in a supervised setting.</p> <p>Minor children can also receive child-only assistance. This could occur when a relative cares for a child whose parents are incarcerated, who have been sanctioned under TANF and are no longer eligible for assistance themselves or when parental whereabouts are unknown.</p>
Eligibility, Income	There are income limits for eligibility (50% of earned income is counted) and limits on resources. Income eligibility is determined at the state level. Rules on exempting certain earned income as families transition into the workforce are also set at the state level.
Eligibility, Work Requirements	<p>States are accountable for moving families towards self-sufficiency and required to ensure that 50 percent of their caseload families are engaged in work activities. When there are dramatic declines in state caseloads, states receive caseload-reduction credits. When the law was first enacted, these credits meant that states did not initially have to ensure that half their caseloads were engaged in activities that counted toward the work-participation rate. Some states used this flexibility to provide services and programs that helped people prepare for a successful transition to work. Examples include rehabilitative services and higher education.</p> <p>Work requirements do not always apply. Although the five-year time limit on cash benefits still applies, the following populations can be excluded from the work requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ individuals with mental or physical disabilities who are unable to work;

- ◆ parents of children under 6 with no available child care;
- ◆ parents of children under 1 year old, and
- ◆ minors who are heads of household and go to school or pursue a GED.

Eligibility, Other

Generally, TANF benefits are available to adult or minor heads of households for no more than five years. However, states may exempt 20 percent of their caseload from this requirement. Child-only cases are not subject to the five-year time limit. There are statutory exceptions for family hardship and victims of domestic violence. States can waive program requirements if compliance would make it difficult for a victim to escape domestic violence or unfairly penalize a victim.

Youth in Transition

Not targeted

Services

TANF funds are to be used to:

- ◆ assist needy families so children can be cared for in their own homes;
- ◆ reduce dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage;
- ◆ prevent out-of-wedlock pregnancies, and
- ◆ encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Eligible households receive cash assistance. States help each recipient develop a personal responsibility plan that identifies the educational, training and job placement services needed to move the person into the workforce. This plan is reviewed on a regular basis.

Services can include case management, vocational training, job development, job screening and assessment, development of employability and work services activities plans, education, pregnancy prevention, family-formation activities and child care. No medical services can be furnished with TANF funds, although other mental health and substance abuse services may be funded.

States can transfer up to 30 percent of their TANF funding to either the Child Care and Development Fund or the Social Services Block Grant (but no more than 10 percent of transferred resources may be transferred to the block grant). Transferred funds must be used to assist families with incomes no higher than 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

States must screen and refer victims of suspected domestic violence to appropriate counseling and support services.

Funds can also be used for vouchers for those who are not eligible for cash assistance under TANF because they have exceeded the time limit or are children denied cash because they were born into families who received cash for another child.

Activities Funded

Funds can also pay for transportation, child care, uniforms, tools, car repairs, school supplies and other items.

Funding

FY 2005, \$17.881 billion. FY 2006 budget request, \$16.689 billion.

Evaluation

Data-collection and reporting requirements are built into the law in order to meet performance goals. Annual reports are required from the states.

Each state collects data monthly and also reports to the Secretary of HHS on a quarterly basis on a variety of disaggregated case-record information on the families

receiving assistance, including work-participation rates and the number of months the family has received assistance. Additionally states must report on eligibility changes.

HHS also conducts research on the program, including research regarding benefits, effects and costs of operating different state programs.

**Relevance for
Youth with Serious
Mental Health
Conditions**

Low-income youth with serious mental health conditions may be heads of households for purposes of TANF. Pregnant youth may also qualify for cash assistance. Some youth may also qualify as child-only TANF recipients. Funds may assist them in the difficult years of transition, and the array of services that can be offered could be extremely valuable in helping them make a transition to adult roles.

However, youth who tap into TANF resources as an adult could become ineligible for further assistance in later years if they hit the five-year limit. In addition, youth with serious mental health conditions may find it difficult to meet the work requirements of the program and may not be included in the group of individuals permitted an exemption from work requirements under state rules.

Social Services Block Grant

Statutory Authority	Title XX of the Social Security Act created by P.L. 93-647 and amended by OBRA 1981, P.L. 97-35, to create a block grant to states; 42 U.S.C. § 1397 et seq.
Federal Agency	The Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services
Program Type	Formula/block grant.
Eligibility, General	States determine services to be provided, eligible categories and populations of adults and children to be served.
Eligibility, Financial	Usually states provide services only to low-income families and individuals.
Youth in Transition	Not targeted
Services	<p>States have wide discretion regarding definition of the services provided and the groups that may be eligible. The program supports social services programs for adults and children, including those with disabilities. Services must be directed at one or more of the following statutory goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ achieve or maintain economic self-support to prevent, reduce or eliminate dependency; ◆ achieve or maintain self sufficiency, including reduction or prevention of dependency; ◆ prevent or remedy neglect, abuse or exploitation of children and adults who are unable to protect their own interest; ◆ preserve, rehabilitate or reunite families; ◆ prevent or reduce inappropriate institutional care by providing community-based care, home-based care and other forms of less intensive care; ◆ secure referral or admission for institutional care when other forms of care are not appropriate or, for individuals in institutions, provide appropriate services. <p>Specific services that may be funded include child care, child welfare, home-based services, employment services, case management, adult protective services, prevention and intervention programs and special services for people with disabilities. Some states use the funds for mental health services.</p> <p>Services for people with disabilities include information, referral and counseling, health-support services and combinations of services designed to meet the needs of eligible populations, including youth with serious mental health conditions.</p> <p>States have used only limited amounts of Title XX funds for services relevant to youth in transition. For example, states report the following rates of spending in 2001: on independent living/transition services (0.1 percent of total expenditures), on special services for youth at risk (2.3 percent of total Title XX expenditures), on information and referral (2.6 percent of total expenditures) and on counseling services (1.6 percent of total expenditures).</p> <p>Services that are prohibited include: medical care (except family planning); rehabilitation; certain detoxification services; most room and board except emergency short-term services; most social services provided in and by employees of hospitals,</p>

nursing homes and prisons; educational services; cash payments for subsistence; child day care services that do not meet state and local standards; and wages to individuals except welfare recipients who are employed in child day care.

Activities Funded

Other uses of the block grant include: staff training, administration, planning, evaluation and purchase of technical assistance in the development, implementation or administration of the state program.

Funding

FY 2005, \$1.700 billion. FY 2006 budget request, \$1.700 billion.

The block grant has been the target of appropriation reductions in recent years.

Evaluation

States prepare annual report on activities carried out with the funds. In addition, states must report annually on projected activities prior to receiving funding, and must detail the intended uses of the grants. These reports show that many states use some Title XX funds for mental health services and services for youth.

Relevance for Youth with Serious Mental Health Conditions

Although some states use Title XX fund for mental health services, there is no federal targeting of funds for this purpose. However, Title XX funds a broad range of relevant services for youth and the services are available to youth in foster care and as they are transitioning out of care.

Funding for the block grant has been reduced in recent years and there is little to no new money available to use for new populations. Thus, although some states might redirect current spending (especially mental health spending) to help transition-age youth with serious mental health conditions, there is little likelihood that the program can provide significant new resources nationwide to address these needs.

Community Services Block Grant

Statutory Authority	The Community Services Block Grant Act (CSBG), Title VI, Subtitle B, of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, P.L. 97-35 as amended, and the COATS Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1998, P.L. 105-285; 42 U.S.C. § 9901 et seq.
Federal Agency	Office of Community Services, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services
Program Type	Formula grant for states, territories and federally and state-recognized Indian tribes. Grants are determined by a statutory formula based on population.
Eligibility, General	States make grants to qualified locally based nonprofit community anti-poverty agencies and other eligible entities which provide services to low-income individuals and families. The nonprofit entities are community services networks (predominantly community action agencies, but also other neighborhood-based organizations). All CSBG-funded agencies must be governed by a board composed of elected local officials and including representatives of low-income populations. Faith-based organizations may also receive funding.
Eligibility, Financial	The program serves individuals at or below the federal poverty level. When a state determines that it serves the objectives of the block grant, it may raise the income limit, but not to exceed 125 percent of poverty.
Eligibility, Other	Low-income beneficiaries typically served include the unemployed, those on public assistance, seniors, at-risk youth, custodial and non-custodial parents, public housing residents, homeless individuals and people with disabilities.
Youth in Transition	Not targeted
Activities Covered:	<p>The purpose of the Community Services Block Grant is to reduce poverty, revitalize low-income communities and provide supportive services to assist low-income individuals and families. Local community services networks use the funds for a variety of services that assist low-income people with basic needs and to develop their ability to become self-sufficient. Typical services include childcare, employment, education, emergency services, health care, housing, nutrition, transportation, youth development and community participation.</p> <p>Funds may also be used for activities designed to address the causes of poverty in communities and to improve coordination between governmental and other social services programs to assure the effective delivery of services. Local agencies use funds to leverage additional resources from public and private sources to combat causes of poverty and to help low-income individuals and families become self-sufficient.</p> <p>The community action agencies funded through this block grant are the primary delivery systems for a number of other federally supported community programs, including Head Start, Legal Services, the Community Food and Nutrition Program, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program and the Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program, Foster Grandparents and National Youth Sports.</p>

At least 90 percent of funding must be spent locally. The states administrative costs are limited to 5 percent. States may use the remaining 5 percent of funds to support innovations and to fill service gaps.

Funding

FY 2005, \$637 million. The FY 2006 budget request does not include funding for the CSBG. Instead, it proposes a new initiative, Strengthening America's Communities (SACI), housed in the Department of Commerce. This would combine and replace the CSBG 17 other economic and community programs. The SACI proposal would cut funding from \$5.6 billion for the 18 programs to \$3.7 billion.

Evaluation

States must prepare and submit an annual report which must include an accounting of the expenditure of funds received under the CSBG, administrative costs incurred, funds spent on direct delivery of local services, information on the number of and characteristics of clients served and a summary description of the training and technical assistance offered by the state.

In 2003, the Community Services Network served over 13 million people. States administered nearly \$589 million in federal CSBG funds and community action agencies were also able to leverage almost \$5 million from state, local and private sources.

**Relevance for
Youth with Serious
Mental Health
Conditions**

Local programs serving low-income, transition-age youth with serious mental health conditions might benefit from the funds that flow to local community services networks. Additionally, low-income youth may benefit from many of the programs funded through the block grant, particularly those offering education, employment, housing, transportation or youth development. In some communities, these funds may play a significant role.