



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor



Oregon Department of Human Services

Office of the Director

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April 13, 2021

Senator Kate Lieber, Co-Chair
Representative Rob Nosse, Co-Chair
Members of the Joint Ways and Means Human Services Sub-Committee

From: Aging and People with Disabilities (APD), Oregon Department of Human Services

Re: Public Hearing on SB 5529, APD Presentaion April 6, 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Aging and People with Disabilities Program Budget on April 6, 2021. This letter provides answers to questions not addressed at the hearing.

Request: Please provide an update on General Assistance implementation and whether the State of Oregon is recovering the 80% as anticipated in 2016?

Response: The current General Assistance (GA) program was established during the 2016 Legislative Session, and became operational on July 1, 2016. The program is funded to serve a capped caseload of 200 individuals with severe disabilities who are homeless or at risk of homelessness at the time of program entry. GA recipients receive free assistance with the Social Security disability application and appeals process, \$90 per month for utilities, \$60 per month for personal needs, and up to \$545 per month for housing, which is paid directly to the recipient's landlord.

In 2020, APD recovered 82% of funds paid for all General Assistance (GA) recipients awarded Supplemental Security Income (SSI) during that year (recovered \$393,275.27 of \$478,097.44 paid). To date, in 2021, APD has recovered 85% of General Assistance funds paid to allowed individuals (recovered \$112,479.99 of \$132,693.64 paid).

Quick Facts:

- GA staff have processed approximately 9,940 GA referrals since the program's inception July 1, 2016. As of February 2021, approximately 400 individuals were awaiting a GA eligibility decision, and 140 individuals were receiving GA benefits.
- 77% of the current GA population is housed.
- To date, 468 GA individuals have been awarded Social Security disability benefits.
- Average number of days from GA approval to date housed: 10.5 dyas
- Average number of months from GA approval to SSI approval in 2021: 9.8 months

“Assisting People to Become Independent, Healthy and Safe”

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- In 2020, the department recovered 82% of funds paid for all General Assistance recipients awarded SSI during that year (the department recovered \$393,275.27 of \$478,097.44 paid).
- In 2021, to date, APD has recovered 85% of GA funds paid to allowed individuals (\$112,479.99 of \$132,693.34).
- In 2021, the department has received an average of six (6) new GA referrals per working day, however referrals have decreased in volume during the COVID-19 pandemic. We believe this is a result of several factors, including:
 - Decreased evictions due to the residential eviction moratorium;
 - Decreased consumer engagement with community partners due to fear of COVID-19 infection;
 - Decreased outreach to homeless individuals.

(Please see attached for maps and detailed housing data.)

Request: Why are adult protective services investigations going up? Is it related to COVID-19?

Response: To date in 2021, APD has received 11,601 calls, with 7,486 of those calls were screened out, and 4,110 assigned for investigation.

During 2020, APD received 12,092 calls, with 8,129 of those being screened out and 3,963 assigned for investigation.

In 2019, APD received 12,031 calls, with 7,814 screened out, and 4,217 assigned for investigation. (Please see attached for more information).

- Calls that report abuse and meet the definition of abuse are assigned for investigation.
- Calls that report abuse that fall under the jurisdiction of another agency are referred to the appropriate agency; coordination occurs as appropriate.
- For calls that do not meet the official definition of abuse and criteria for an investigation, APS will look for other ways to help the caller and/or employ Risk Management strategies as appropriate.
- Referrals are made to licensing entities to ensure they are aware of the concerns.

Many of the calls in are requests for information, referrals and other services which APS provides to the caller. In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, many calls were from concerned family members and friends about the safety of their loved ones in facilities, visitation protocols and other COVID-related issues.

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For more information please contact:

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