

Department: County Human Services **Program Contact:** Rose-Ellen Bak
Program Offer Type: Existing Operating Program **Program Offer Stage:** As Adopted
Related Programs:
Program Characteristics:

Executive Summary

A stable source of income is critical to stabilizing individuals and families and helping them reach their personal goals and achieve economic stability. Having an income source empowers individuals and allows them the ability to focus on other service needs and goals. The Benefits Acquisition Program utilizes a proven program model to assist individuals with mental illness, addictions, and other disabilities in accessing federal disability benefits, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

Program Summary

ISSUE: The application process for federal benefits is long and complicated. Many individuals have disabilities that entitle them to benefits yet they have been unable to access them because the application and appeals processes are not easily navigated, and require a high level of documentation.

PROGRAM GOAL: The goal of the program is to ensure that anyone entitled to disability benefits is able to access them as quickly as possible. Seventy-five percent of those served receive benefits, a significantly higher percentage than would have received benefits without the program's assistance. Based on Census data estimates and data from the Social Security Administration, locally only 11% of those eligible receive benefits without assistance. Without benefits, individuals are either without services and utilizing expensive, locally-funded safety net services (including jail or hospital/medical care), or have their treatment paid for with scarce local community (non-federal) funds. The Benefits Acquisition Program assists an average of 245 individuals annually who are served in County-funded programs such as the Multnomah Treatment Fund, the Homeless Families System of Care, or other County-funded programs.

PROGRAM ACTIVITY: Services include eligibility screening, application assistance, appeals process advocacy, case management, transportation to appointments and hearings, and medical and other documentation to individuals evaluated to be potentially eligible for SSI/SSDI.

At the start of services, clients were receiving an average of \$107 per month, and at exit, they were receiving \$788 per month. Forty-one percent of clients had no primary health care option at the start of services and 99% are now covered through Medicaid. Program clients also secure benefits at a much younger age than those who apply on their own, saving public systems tens of thousands of dollars over the course of a person's life.

This program offer includes City of Portland funds for the Benefits and Entitlement Specialist Team (BEST) program that are jointly contracted with the Benefits Acquisition Program to provide similar services.

Performance Measures

Measure Type	Primary Measure	FY16 Actual	FY17 Purchased	FY17 Estimate	FY18 Offer
Output	Number of individuals served	351	175	175	175
Outcome	Percentage of individuals served who receive benefits	44%	75%	75%	75%

Performance Measures Descriptions

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
Program Expenses	2017	2017	2018	2018
Contractual Services	\$443,453	\$223,000	\$453,431	\$223,000
Total GF/non-GF	\$443,453	\$223,000	\$453,431	\$223,000
Program Total:	\$666,453		\$676,431	
Program FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Program Revenues				
Intergovernmental	\$0	\$223,000	\$0	\$223,000
Total Revenue	\$0	\$223,000	\$0	\$223,000

Explanation of Revenues

\$223,000 - City of Portland general fund based on current award

Significant Program Changes

Last Year this program was: FY 2017: 25115A Benefit Recovery Program