

**Department:** County Human Services      **Program Contact:** Peggy Samolinski  
**Program Offer Type:** Existing Operating Program      **Program Offer Stage:** As Requested  
**Related Programs:**  
**Program Characteristics:** In Target

**Executive Summary**

A stable source of income is critical to stabilizing individuals and families and helping them reach their goals and achieve economic stability. Having an income empowers individuals and allows them to focus on other service needs and goals. This offer funds Benefits Acquisition Program which 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 that they've been unable to access 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 federal 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 individuals who are served in County-funded programs such as the Multnomah Treatment Fund, the Homeless Families System of Care, domestic violence services, 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 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 by 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 County General funded programming through Youth & Family Services Division. Funds allocated by the City of Portland, funds for the Benefits and Entitlement Specialist Team (BEST) program, and the Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS) are budgeted through JOHS to provide similar services and are administered through Youth and Family Services.

**Performance Measures**

Measure Type	Primary Measure	FY18 Actual	FY19 Purchased	FY19 Estimate	FY20 Offer
Output	Number of individuals served	498*	125	175	175
Outcome	Percentage of individuals served who receive benefits	97%	75%	75%	75%

**Performance Measures Descriptions**

\*The numbers of participants engaged has exceeded targets for the second year in a row. We have increased the proposed estimate for the current year and for next year's program as well.

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
Program Expenses	2019	2019	2020	2020
Contractual Services	\$417,551	\$0	\$504,223	\$0
<b>Total GF/non-GF</b>	<b>\$417,551</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$504,223</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Program Total:</b>	<b>\$417,551</b>		<b>\$504,223</b>	
Program FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Program Revenues				
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

Explanation of Revenues

Significant Program Changes

Last Year this program was: FY 2019: 25115-19 YFS - Benefit Acquisition Program