

OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE

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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |
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OTDA-4037EL (Rev. 11/98)

Transmittal No: 00 LCM-18

Date: September 26, 2000

Division: Transitional
Supports and Policy

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Availability of Funds to Provide Services to Certain Safety
Net Recipients (SNAP - Safety Net Assistance Project)

ATTACHMENTS: I. Funding Level Maximums (Available On-Line)
II. Program Template (Not Available On-Line)
III. Sample Budget Worksheet (Not Available On-Line)

I. Introduction

One of the greatest challenges facing local districts today is helping safety net clients with multiple barriers to self-sufficiency. In particular, the need exists for programs targeted to clients with mental and/or physical disabilities, whose situation is not severe enough to qualify for SSI, yet who still have problems in achieving self-sufficiency.

Recognizing this, the SFY 00-01 Enacted Budget provides \$800,000 in State funds for services and expenses related to innovative programs targeted to federally non-participating (FNP) safety net recipients who are unable to obtain or retain employment due to mental and/or physical disability.

Additional services beyond the traditional employment services are needed for these hard to place/serve individuals. It is anticipated that funding will be available for new and innovative programs, as well as duplication of successful programs for similarly situated TANF clients. Funding is not intended, however, to replace or duplicate current activities.

II. Program Services

These funds will provide districts additional resources to serve hard to place/serve recipients, with significant barriers to obtaining long term independence. Although flexibility is encouraged, this initiative cannot duplicate or supplant activities currently provided through other funding streams.

The following are examples of services which may be funded under this program:

- Assessment - Identification and assessment of those factors which may inhibit the client from achieving long term independence including, but not limited to, learning disabilities, mental health issues, physical disability, etc.
- Case Management Services - Case managers could develop multi-faceted strategies that will eventually lead to long term independence. This can be done by building trusting worker/client relationships in order to overcome barriers to long term independence.
- Remedial Programs for the Learning Disabled - Proposals may seek to identify learning challenged recipients, and partner with the local education and training community, to develop appropriate remedial programs. These plans should work in concert with the district's other efforts, such as VESID, to improve client and/or family functioning, thereby enhancing future steps to gain employment.
- Support Groups - Peer groups can be supported for a wide variety of issues, such as substance abuse, learning disabilities, or recipients' fear of change. The support groups' overriding goal should be to promote independence by taking incremental steps toward gainful employment.
- Home and Money Management - This could include a set of services which would be designed to assist recipients in learning and/or improving basic home management skills, especially money management. Concepts such as blending benefits, including food stamps, with the resources available through a paycheck and stretching those to their maximum, preparing personal budgets, planning for future fiscal needs, and smart money management techniques could be included. Funds can be used to develop support programs designed to counsel recipients on managing time and stress, balancing work and home commitments, and accepting new responsibilities. The goal of such a program would be to develop recipient confidence to the point that they will be able to manage their own affairs, once they have eliminated their dependency on temporary assistance programs.

- Contact Programs - Development of frequent and large scale client contact programs that ensure that the self-improvement needs of the client are met and the self-sufficiency message is delivered repeatedly. These contacts could take place in individual or group settings, at or near clients' places of work - with permission of the employees and employers, or at some other neutral safe location. Districts may consider contracting with faith based organizations for this or other services in their project.

- Benefits Counseling - A service which could be designed to help recipients understand the positive impact which obtaining employment will have on their overall situation. Included could be such topics as: Earned Income Tax Credit and availability of transportation services. The intent would be to remove anxieties related to work and self-sufficiency.

Note: The services funded under this program must compliment, not duplicate or replace, those offered by the Department of Labor (DOL).

We are seeking flexible, innovative and creative approaches to serving this population. Acceptable activities are not limited to the above listed examples. Plans must have key design points that encompass a combination of at least two of the following criteria: assessment and early identification of barriers, building a trusting relationship, case management, incremental steps and flexible design.

Districts may also consider the establishment of Safety Net plans for self-support to incorporate into their project (352.20(f), 92 ADM-17). These plans allow a district to disregard all or a portion of a Safety Net applicant/recipient's earned income and/or resources when the district determines that the disregard will lead to the elimination of the recipient from the Safety Net rolls in a reasonable length of time.

III. Evaluation Criteria

A review team, consisting of staff from the Office of Transitional Supports and Policy and the Office of Budget Management, along with a final approval from the New York State Division of the Budget (DOB), will evaluate and rate all plans submitted within the established timeframe. Due to the limited amount of funding available for this project, it may not be possible to fund all proposals. As such, the review team will rank the received proposals. Proposals will be assessed and ranked according to the following criteria:

1. The ability to identify and assess the target population(s).
2. The number of people to be served.
3. Demonstrating an understanding of various problems and barriers faced by the targeted population.

4. Explanation of the service model(s) to be used, and how the model(s) will help recipients achieve long term independence.
5. A description of the outcomes anticipated from the program, and performance measures that will be used to evaluate those outcomes.
6. If applicable, a description of how the proposed program would augment district programs made available through employment initiatives funded by the New York State Department of Labor.

In addition, plans will be reviewed for cost effectiveness of the proposed services, and for overall fiscal appropriateness.

Districts should complete the program template (Attachment II) and a budget worksheet. Both formats are similar to the TANF Services Plan. Attachment III is a sample of the budget worksheet. Districts should call the Division of Transitional Supports and Policy in order to obtain an e-mail of the program template and the Excel budget spreadsheet or a diskette for completion. If you are interested in applying, please call Jim Yonkers at (518) 486-3460 in order to obtain this information.

Funding

There are \$800,000 in State Funds (SFY 00-01) available to fund projects. Local Districts are not required to provide a local match for these funds. Districts with populations less than two million are eligible to apply and may request funding up to the maximum for their district, as shown on Attachment I.

It is anticipated that approved proposals will commence on 01/01/01 and operate for one year. However, availability of unspent funds after 3/31/01 is contingent upon reappropriation in SFY 01-02. Funding beyond this initial period is subject to annual appropriation by the State Legislature.

Fiscal Implications

The administrative and/or contracted costs associated with SNAP should be reported as F17 function code expenditures and claimed on the "Schedule D-17 Distribution of Allocated Costs to Other Reimbursement Programs", (LDSS-3274). These costs should be carried through to a LDSS-3922 form entitled, "Financial Summary For Special Projects".

Both forms should be labeled as "SNAP" and have the expenditures reported on the appropriate lines (e.g., Salary costs on the salary line or Contracts costs on the Contractual Services line, etc.). Local district staff working only part time on SNAP must be time studied and only those costs should be charged to SNAP. The LDSS-3922 should be submitted on a monthly basis to the Bureau of Financial Services.

For individuals who are eligible for SNAP, the costs should be reported in the Total Column and claimed at 100% State share. Employees who are not devoted full time to this project will need to complete time studies so that their salary and fringe benefits costs for this program can be segregated from the function they are normally assigned.

A-87 costs are not reimbursable under this program and are 100% local share. Reimbursement for all other expenditures is available up to the limit of the approved project budget, with those costs being outside the local district administrative cost cap.

For those districts pooling their resources under SNAP, only one district should submit claims for reimbursement for the group.

Any questions of a fiscal nature from Region I through IV should be directed to Roland Levie at 1-800-343-8859, extension 4-7549 (User ID FMS001). Fiscal questions from Region V should be directed to Marvin Gold at (212)383-1733 (User ID 0fm270).

Submission of Proposals

A local social services district may submit a proposal individually or may collaborate with another district(s) to submit a combined plan. Plans should include the name and phone number of an individual that we may contact if any questions arise in the review process. Plans must be submitted to:

Shari Noonan, Director
Office of Transitional Supports and Policy
8th Floor
40 North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12243
Fax # (518) 473-6207

Proposals must be received by close of business Friday, October 27, 2000, to be considered for funding. If you have any questions concerning this release, please contact Jim Yonkers at (518) 486-3460.

Shari Noonan
Director
Office of Transitional Supports and Policy

Funding Level Maximums

\$160,000	Erie	Monroe	Westchester
\$80,000	Albany Oneida Suffolk	Nassau Onondaga	Niagara Orange
\$40,000	Allegany Cayuga Chenango Cortland Essex Genesee Herkimer Livingston Ontario Otsego Rockland Schenectady Seneca Tioga Warren Wyoming	Broome Chautauqua Clinton Delaware Franklin Greene Jefferson Madison Orleans Putnam St. Lawrence Schoharie Steuben Tompkins Washington Yates	Cattaraugus Chemung Columbia Dutchess Fulton Hamilton Lewis Montgomery Oswego Rensselaer Saratoga Schuyler Sullivan Ulster Wayne