

FISCAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**Measure: HB 2959**79th Oregon Legislative Assembly – 2017 Regular Session
Legislative Fiscal Office***Only Impacts on Original or Engrossed
Versions are Considered Official***Prepared by: Kim To
Reviewed by: Laurie Byerly
Date: 3/29/2017**Measure Description:**

Appropriates moneys from General Fund to Department of Human Services to administer general assistance project.

Government Unit(s) Affected:

Department of Human Services (DHS)

Analysis:

HB 2959 appropriates an unspecified amount to the Department of Human Services (DHS) for the 2017-19 biennium to provide funding to enable DHS to continue the administration of the General Assistance program established under HB 4042 during the 2016 Legislative Session.

Note that the cost for continuing the General Assistance program outlined below is included in the 2017-19 Current Service Level (CSL) budget for the Department of Human Services.

Department of Human Services (DHS)

	2017-19 Biennium	2019-21 Biennium
Personal Services	115,976	119,152
Services & Supplies	37,788	37,804
Special Payments	1,560,419	1,179,903
GENERAL FUND	\$1,714,183	\$1,336,859
Personal Services	\$111,014	\$126,874
Services & Supplies	\$10,468	
Special Payments	888,551	1,717,006
OTHER FUNDS	\$1,010,033	\$1,843,880
Personal Services	115,976	119,152
Services & Supplies	37,374	37,374
Special Payments	60,741	63,437
FEDERAL FUNDS	\$214,091	\$219,963
Personal Services	342,966	365,178
Services & Supplies	85,630	75,178
Special Payments	2,509,711	2,960,346
TOTAL FUNDS	\$2,938,307	\$3,400,702
Positions	3	3
FTE	3.00	3.00

DHS estimates the cost of continuing the administration of the General Assistance program established under HB 4042 (2016) to be \$2,938,307 Total Funds [\$1,714,183 General Fund, \$1,010,033 Other Funds, \$214,091 Federal Funds], and 3 FTE for the 2017-19 biennium. These amounts include the costs of administering the program, as well as the cost of the actual benefits. Staffing costs assumes

one Human Services Specialist 1 position, one Office Specialist 2 position, and one Accounting Technician 3 position. The Human Services Specialist 1 position will determine eligibility for the program, monitor case status, and issue housing payments. The Office Specialist 2 will handle data entry, code cases in the mainframe, and act on status changes. The Accounting Technician 3 position will track payments and collections. Federal Funds reflect the fact that these three positions are available for federal match.

The program would serve a maximum of 200 Medicaid clients per month who have disabilities that meet Presumptive Medicaid disability criteria and who are experiencing homelessness. The program would provide clients with up to \$545 a month for housing, up to \$90 a month for utilities, and up to \$60/ a month for Personal Incidental Fund (PIF), as well as professional level assistance with the Social Security Administration (SSA) application and appeals process. Pursuit of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits would be a condition of eligibility. Clients would be required to sign an Interim Assistance Reimbursement agreement similar to the State Family Pre-SSI/SSDI program before benefits were issued. Housing payments, utility payments, and PIF expenditures could be recovered from clients' Supplemental Security Income (SSI) lump sum payments when and if benefits are awarded.

DHS projections assume that only 65% of General Assistance participants will receive the housing assistance portion of the General Assistance payment due to the current housing shortage and associated difficulties finding housing for individuals with limited and/or complex rental histories. This percentage will increase to 80% over the course of the biennium to reflect concentrated efforts to increase housing options for General Assistance individuals. DHS projections also assumes a 14-month average lag time between the time individuals apply for SSI benefits and the time the state begins recouping a portion of the General Fund distributed on their behalf. Also, DHS projections assume that only 80% of the clients will be approved to receive the federal benefit; and of those who qualify, DHS projections assume a recovery of only 80% of client disbursements.

The \$888,551 Special Payments Other Funds in the 2017-19 biennium represents a projection of recoverable funds from the prior biennium. The Other Funds Personal Services and Services & Supplies amounts reflect Shared Services expenses funded through the DHS and Oregon Health Authority's cost allocation process.