

HB 2302 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Human Services and Housing

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 1/30, 3/11, 3/20, 3/25

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Appropriates money from general fund to the Department of Human Services (DHS) to administer General Assistance Project. Takes effect 91st day following sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Length of time it usually take individuals to be approved for disability payments
- Percentage of funds that state is refunded
- Cost of case management and administrative costs
- Homeless individuals and veterans impacted

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The General Assistance Project (GA program) was established in Oregon via House Bill 4042 (2016), codified at ORS 411.752. It is designed to help individuals with severe disabilities who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. It is administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS) Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) Collaborative Disability Determination Unit (CDDU). Benefits include housing, utility, and cash assistance, and assistance with the Social Security application and appeals processes, including legal assistance.

To be eligible for the GA program, individuals must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- Be an adult, age 18-64, with no minor children living with them;
- Have a severe disability that meets Social Security disability criteria;
- Be receiving Presumptive Medicaid medical assistance;
- Meet all eligibility criteria for Supplemental Security Income (SSI);
- Apply for SSI and appeal any denials received; and
- Sign an Interim Assistance Agreement (IAR), allowing DHS to recover GA funds paid to them once awarded SSA benefits.

Benefits of the GA program include up to \$545 per month in housing assistance, \$80 in utility assistance per month, \$60 in cash assistance per month, and free assistance with the Social Security application and appeals processes.

House Bill 4042 appropriates \$2 million from the General Fund to the Department of Human Services to administer the general assistance program.

Subsequent referral to Joint Ways and Means

PRELIMINARY