

HB 2302 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Human Services and Housing

Action Date: 03/25/19

Action: Do pass and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference

Vote: 9-0-0-0

Yeas: 9 - Helt, Keny-Guyer, Meek, Mitchell, Noble, Sanchez, Schouten, Williams, Zika

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Amie FenderSosa, LPRO Analyst

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 to administer general assistance (GA) project. Takes effect 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Length of time it usually takes 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 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 project, 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 Social Security Administration benefits.

Benefits of the GA project 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.

Beginning July 1, 2019, House Bill 2302 appropriates \$2 million from the General Fund to the Department of Human Services to administer the general assistance project.