

Connecting Clients to Mainstream Benefits

Multnomah County Continuum of Care



Learning Objectives

- Why are connections to mainstream benefits essential for clients? How do they improve the system as a whole?
- How can agencies help clients overcome barriers to enrollment & maintenance of benefits?
- What benefits are available? What are their eligibility criteria?

Agenda

- **Benefits Overview**
- **Impact of Connection to Benefits on Clients**
- **Best Practices in Overcoming Barriers to Access**
- **Mainstream Benefits**
 - Oregon Health Plan
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - Women, Infant, and Children Benefits (WIC)
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - Temporary Assistance for Domestic Violence Survivors
 - Employment Related Day Care (ERDC)
 - Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) & Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - WorkSource Oregon Employment Services
 - Honored Citizen Fare - Trimet Transportation
 - 211 Info

Benefits: An Overview

Publicly funded services, programs, & entitlements for low-income people that address basic needs, including but not limited to:

Income and Employment

Housing

Food and Nutrition

Health and Behavioral Health Services

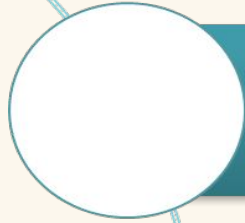
Child Welfare

Transportation

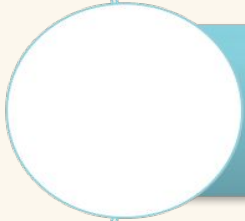
Impact of Connection to Benefits on Clients

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- Can be primary source of income & health services
 - Predictable income bolsters stability
 - May help households obtain or retain housing
 - Support for rent, food & basic needs
 - Increased independence & well-being

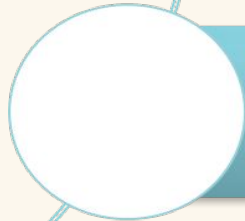
Impact in Multnomah County



Maximizing resources to address homelessness by supplementing housing interventions & scarce homeless-dedicated funding



Increased coordination between homelessness providers & benefits offices to streamline application processes for clients



Strengthened access to mainstream & community-based resources to provide for long-term stability

Best Practices Overcoming Barriers to Access

Connecting Clients to Benefits



Assess

Facilitate

Maintain

Step 1: Assess

During initial intake & case management meeting, ASSESS:

Eligibility for benefits

Systemic barriers to enrollment

Personal barriers to enrollment

Step 2: Facilitate Connection

Facilitate your client's connection to benefits by empowering the individual to overcome the systemic & personal barriers identified in Step 1.

Strategies to overcome barriers

Use online applications whenever possible

Provide transportation to benefits offices

Invite mainstream eligibility workers to hold on-site sessions at program sites

Improve communication & collaboration with mainstream eligibility workers (e.g., share success stories)

Encourage benefits offices to establish priorities for persons experiencing homelessness

Assist clients in filling out forms, gathering documentation, & preparing for appointments

Provide translation assistance for benefits appointments

Act as a contact person, appointed representative, or representative payee when possible & appropriate

Step 3: Maintain Connection

MAINTAIN clients' connections to benefits
by:

Keeping up-to-date records of continuing eligibility

Establishing systems to ensure renewals are
taking place when necessary (at least annually)

Ensuring timely data entry when changes to
income & benefits occur to accurately monitor
success

Mainstream Benefits

Oregon Health Plan (OHP)

WHAT: The Oregon Health Plan (OHP) provides health care coverage for low-income Oregonians from all walks of life.

WHO: Low-income families, children, pregnant women, single adults, seniors and more. [Find income thresholds here](#)

WHEN: Enrollment is open all year long

HOW: Apply online at one.oregon.gov or apply with a paper application (available in 15 languages)

QUESTIONS: Call OHP Customer Service at 1-800-699-9075. Customer service is open 7 AM - 6 PM, Monday-Friday

Oregon Health Plan (OHP)

OHP provides Oregonians access to coordinated health care. It covers services such as:

- Regular check-ups
- Prescriptions
- Mental health care
- Addiction treatment
- Dental care
- Hearing
- Hospice Care
- Hospital Care
- Vaccines
- Labor and Delivery
- Labs and X-Rays
- Medical Equipment
- Medical Transportation
- Vision

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

WHAT: SNAP provides food benefits to eligible, low-income individuals and families. SNAP participants will receive their benefits on an Oregon Trail Card (EBT). The Oregon Trail Card can be used to purchase food at most places where you can buy food.

WHO: Eligibility is based on Income, below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line

Support for Eligibility Determination:

- Contact 211info to find out if you qualify for SNAP
- Seniors and people living with disabilities can also contact the Oregon ADRC by calling 1-855-673-2372 or visiting the [ADRC website](#)
- College Students age 18-49 who attend school at least half-time may be eligible for SNAP by meeting income guidelines and additional criteria

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

HOW to Apply:

- [Apply online](#). Available in English. For help with the online application call 1-855-626-2050.
- Contact your local office to get a paper application. Return the completed applications to DHS by mail, fax, dropping it off at a local office or emailing SSP.StatewideWorkshare@dhsosha.state.or.us
- Multco SNAP Outreach - call text/ 503-320-6658 or email SNAP@multco.us; available on weekends and evenings by appointment

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Work Requirements on SNAP:

- To be eligible and maintain eligibility for SNAP benefits, you must accept offers of employment, even if it is temporary or part-time;
- Maintain employment by not voluntarily reducing your hours below 30 hours per week, not quitting your job within 30 days prior to your application (or any time you receive SNAP benefits)
- If you are not already working, you must look for a job or go to job search training classes

STEP Program: Can help support employment and training goals at no cost for people who enter the program. Community Partners help people gain skills for the job they want. They may also help with things like transportation, work clothing, work tools, and so much more

WIC Benefits (Women, Infants, & Children)

WHAT: WIC is a supplement nutrition program for lower-income pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, infants, and children under 5 who have a health or nutritional risk. WIC provides additional funds for WIC approved foods as well as nutritional classes.

WHO: Women, Infants, and Children who meet the below criteria

- Must live in Oregon
- Must be pregnant, postpartum or breastfeeding, an infant, or a child under 5 years of age
- Must have a household income less than 185% of the federal poverty limit
- Have a nutritional need or risk

WIC Benefits

HOW to Apply:

- Call 503-988-3503 to make an appointment to apply in person at a WIC clinic.

WHAT to Expect:

At your first appointment the clinic will see if you're eligible and ask to see proof of income, identification and address. They'll also check your health.

- You and your child will be weighed and measured.
- Your child's growth and development will be discussed with you.
- You will receive a hemoglobin or iron screening.
- Your eating habits will be reviewed.
- Your medical/nutritional history will be taken.
- Together we'll create a family health and nutrition plan
- You'll get an electronic benefits card to buy WIC-approved foods

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

WHAT: TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) provides cash benefits to low-income families with children. These benefits help meet a family's basic needs like food, clothing, rent and utilities while they work toward self-sufficiency. Employment and training services are provided through the JOBS program. DHS also provides case management to support families.

WHO: TANF is for Families who

- Live in Oregon
- Have low income and very few assets
- Are either:
 - 18 or younger and head of their household, or
 - Are pregnant, or
 - Have a child who is 18 or younger

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

HOW to Apply:

- Apply online at one.oregon.gov
- Contact a local office to apply in person
- Fill out a paper application and mail it to a local office or email it to SSP.StatewideWorkshare@dhsosha.state.or.us

JOBS Program: provides support services in 4 core areas

- stability
- well-being,
- education & training
- job readiness.

Family coaches meet with families and connect them to local services and helps the family meet self-identified goals.

Temporary Assistance for DV Survivors

WHAT: This program can give temporary financial help to families whose safety is at risk because of domestic violence. Most often this is when a domestic violence survivor and their children are fleeing domestic violence or are at risk of going back to an abusive situation.

The program can help with up to \$1,200 over a 90 day eligibility period. Payments are given directly to the landlord or other service provider. The money can be used to help pay for:

- Relocation costs - deposits for rent and utilities, replacement of items left behind
- Items that help address safety - new locks, security cameras or post office boxes.

The amount you receive is based on your situation. Your worker will explain how your benefits can be used.

Temporary Assistance for DV Survivors

WHO: People who are fleeing domestic violence or trying to stay safe from domestic violence, and who:

- Are a parent or relative caring for a minor child, or are pregnant.
- Meet the income criteria for the program. (only income that is on hand and available to you for any emergency needs.)
- Live in Oregon

HOW to Apply:

Call a local [self-sufficiency program office](#) to talk about the safest way to apply

HOW is Domestic Violence Defined? Hurting, threatening or putting someone down or making them afraid. It also includes trying to control them or make them do things. Domestic violence can happen between people in a family, intimate partners, or other people who live in the same house

Employment Related Day Care

Employment Related Day Care (EDRC) is a subsidy program to help eligible working families with child care costs, including registration fees

Eligibility:

- Must be an Oregon resident and employed
- When you first apply, income cannot be above 200% of the federal poverty level
- Must have a qualifying child or children
- Must need childcare to stay employed

How to Apply:

- Apply online
- Apply in person at a local office
- Fill out a paper application - mail/drop it off at local office or email

SSP.StatewideWorkshare@dhsosha.state.or.us

Social Security Disability Insurance

WHAT: Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) is a cash assistance program that pays benefits to individuals and certain family members who have become disabled, but worked long enough and paid Social Security taxes on their earnings.

WHO: Individuals who cannot work because they have a medical condition that is expected to last at least one year, or result in death and have worked for a prescribed period of time in line with the age an individual developed a disability.

HOW: [You can apply for Disability benefits online](#), or you can apply by calling, 1-800-772-1213, between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Representatives can make an appointment for you to apply. Individuals should apply as soon as they become disabled - there is a five month waiting period.

Supplemental Security Income

WHAT: Supplemental Security Income or SSI is a cash assistance program for individuals who are aged, blind, or disabled and who have limited income and resources. The amount of cash assistance that a person receives is based on their income.

WHO: Any person who is aged, blind, or disabled who income and resources are below specified amounts. In addition, you need to be a citizen or permanent resident of the US, not be absent from the US for a calendar month, not be a resident of a public institution, and not be violating conditions of parole or probation.

HOW: [You can apply online](#), or you can apply by calling, 1-800-772-1213, between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Representatives can make an appointment for you to apply.

WorkSource Oregon

WHAT:

- Apply for jobs, sign up for trainings, develop a career plan
- Get a one-on-one career coach
- Match your interests and abilities to jobs you'd be good at and enjoy doing
- Learn about free training to help you advance in your career or learn a new industry
- Explore paid internships, apprenticeships, on-the-job training, GED programs, and college classes
- Take part in workshops on resumes, interviewing, networking, soft skills, applying for state jobs, and more
- Get help with housing, transportation, childcare, food, internet access, tuition, textbooks, school fees, identification, work clothes and tools, and more.
- Use computers, internet, phones, fax, copiers, and printers

Honored Citizen Fare - Trimet

Honored Citizen is Trimet's reduced fare for seniors age 65+, people on Medicare, people with disabilities, and people who qualify based on income.

Honored Citizens can save up to 72% on transportation fare through the program

How to apply:

- If you participate in Oregon Health Plan/Medicaid, SNAP, TANF, Free & Reduced Price Lunch, HUD Housing Choice Voucher, LIHEAP (Home Energy Assistance), Employment Related Daycare, or Women Infants and Children (WIC), you qualify for the reduced fare
- You also qualify if your gross income is below 200% of the federal poverty rate
- Apply in person at a [tri-met office](#) or [online](#)