

Presentation to the 2025 Health and Human Services Joint Appropriations Subcommittee

Human and Community Services Division
Human Services Practice



DEPARTMENT OF
**PUBLIC HEALTH &
HUMAN SERVICES**

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Overview

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Division Overview

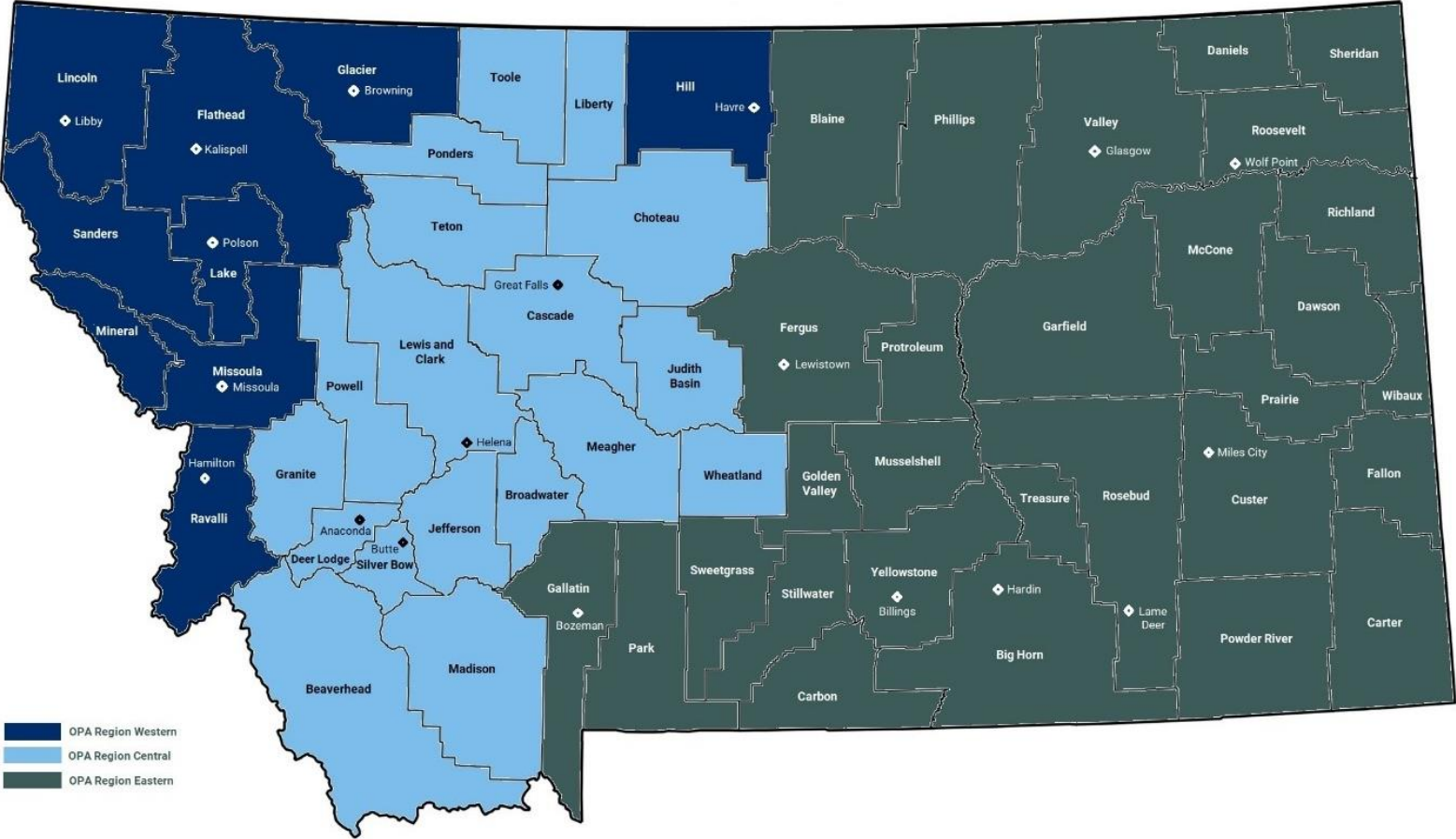
The Human and Community Services Division (HCSD) manages eligibility for no or low-income Montanans to meet food, shelter, heat, and health care.

HCSD employs just under 500 PB

Expenditures for personnel, operation, and distributed benefits just below \$300,000,000

19 local Offices of Public Assistance (OPAs) across the state

OPA Locations in Montana



Summary of Major Functions



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Food Security

Commodity Food Distribution Program (includes CSFP, FDPIR and TEFAP)

- 9 million pounds of food / 310,000 cases delivered in FY2024; of those cases:
 - 29% supports food distribution on Indian Reservations
 - 27% supports the school lunch program through OPI
 - 23% feeds low-income seniors
 - 21% supports emergency food needs through food banks, homeless shelters, and soup kitchens

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- 41,795 households receive benefits monthly (on average); \$332 per household
 - 40% children
 - 16% disabled non-elderly adults
 - 11% seniors

Energy Assistance

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

- 17,607 households received assistance with seasonal heating bills in FY2024; \$245 per month (on average)
 - 44% disabled
 - 48% elderly
 - 15% households with children aged 0-5

Weatherization Assistance Program (Wx)

- 648 households received weatherization assistance
 - 17% disabled
 - 18% elderly
 - 15% households with children aged 0-5

Community Investment

Human Resource Development Councils (HRDCs) support community specific efforts to address poverty

- Youth employment, job counseling and skills training, money management classes, transportation, emergency assistance
- Homeless assistance program
- Over 65,000 individuals received these services in FY2024

AmeriCorps Vista projects help organizations with poverty-reduction efforts

- 17,859 low-income youth and 3,070 veterans and military families were served by VISTA programs in Montana

Health Care Coverage

Over 200,000 Montanans receive health care coverage through Medicaid monthly

- Includes children and adults, individuals with disabilities in need of community services and long-term care

Eligibility and enrollment on tribal reservations are supported through partnerships with four tribal governments: Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, the Chippewa Cree Tribe, the Blackfeet Tribe, and Fort Belknap Tribe

Employment and Family Support

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Cash assistance and/or other supports to meet goals such as family stability, employability, and financial security
 - 3,669 individuals in 1,631 households receive cash assistance monthly (on average)
- Barriers to employment are addressed through referrals or services to help individuals set goals and support a path to employment

Highlights and Accomplishments During the 2025 Biennium



Summer EBT (SEBT) Program

DPHHS and the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) launched a new Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (SEBT) program to issue funding for qualified families in 2024 and 2025

The intent of the program is to provide additional food security during the summer when schools are closed

Families who qualified received \$120 per eligible child in addition to information on how their benefits can be utilized

Medicaid Redetermination

During the Public Health Emergency, most rules governing ongoing Medicaid eligibility were suspended. Individuals who were already enrolled in March 2020 and those who applied later, and were found eligible, were not disenrolled from Medicaid during the PHE with very few exceptions

CMS directed the “PHE unwind” in early 2023; DPHHS elected to begin the unwinding activities in April 2023

Over the last 18 months, the Offices of Public Assistance have processed 440,773 redeterminations and applications

Operational Improvements

Following the Medicaid redetermination process, DPHHS conducted an analysis of operations to identify efficiencies and opportunities for improvement for all programs. These improvements include:

- Public Assistance Help Line redesign
- Targeted trainings
- Workflow and process enhancements
- Correspondence updates
- Focused examination of casework requirements

Employment and Training Procurement

HCSD has two programs offering employment and training programs to participants

- TANF Pathways program requires many participants to meet employment and training requirements through the Pathways program
- SNAP Employment and Training program helps SNAP participants enhance skills, training, or work experience to obtain regular employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency

HCSD made the decision to procure a single statewide vendor for both programs through a pay for performance contract

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

Eligibility for LIHEAP was moved into the integrated eligibility system, CHIMES, to streamline processes for clients in need of assistance

Clients can apply for health, food, and cash benefits and energy assistance in one location

The integration also streamlined processes for eligibility staff, who can provide comprehensive assistance to clients as they can see LIHEAP eligibility in CHIMES along with other programs

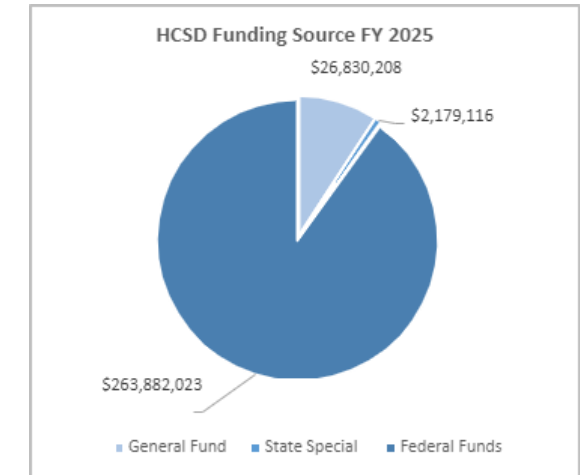
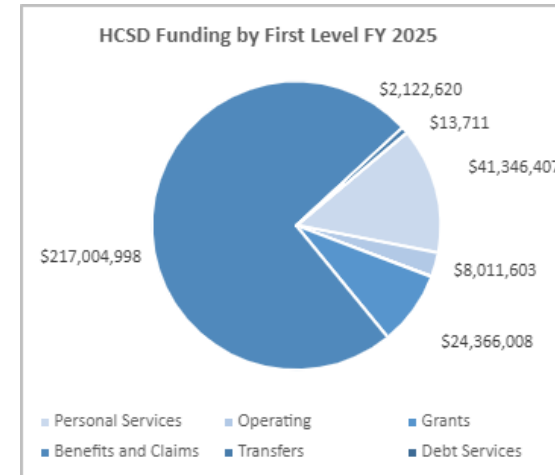
Funding and PB Information



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Budget Summary

HUMAN AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION	FY 2025 BUDGET	FY 2026 REQUEST	FY 2027 REQUEST
PB	492.5	504.5	504.5
Personal Services	\$41,346,407	\$40,183,796	\$40,259,489
Operating	\$8,011,603	\$8,705,419	\$8,462,617
Equipment	\$26,000	\$26,000	\$26,000
Local Assistance	\$0	\$0	\$0
Grants	\$24,366,008	\$24,149,708	\$24,149,708
Benefits and Claims	\$217,004,998	\$53,862,376	\$53,862,376
Transfers	\$2,122,620	\$2,122,620	\$2,122,620
Debt Services	\$13,711	\$13,711	\$13,711
TOTAL COSTS	\$292,891,347	\$129,063,630	\$128,896,521
	FY 2025 BUDGET	FY 2026 REQUEST	FY 2027 REQUEST
General Fund	\$26,830,208	\$26,645,194	\$26,547,604
State Special Fund	\$2,179,116	\$2,120,784	\$2,124,069
Federal Fund	\$263,882,023	\$100,297,652	\$100,224,848
TOTAL FUNDS	\$292,891,347	\$129,063,630	\$128,896,521



Change Packages



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Present Law Adjustments

SWPL 1 – Personal Services

	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2026	(\$928,499)	(\$70,919)	(\$1,467,793)	(\$2,467,211)
FY 2027	(\$901,797)	(\$67,650)	(\$1,416,774)	(\$2,386,221)
Biennium Total	\$1,830,296	(\$138,569)	(\$2,884,567)	\$4,853,432

SWPL 1 – Inflation Deflation

	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2026	(\$471)	(\$50)	(\$1,012)	(\$1,533)
FY 2027	(\$318)	(\$34)	(\$683)	(\$1,035)
Biennium Total	(\$789)	(\$84)	(\$1,695)	(\$2,568)

PL – 2004 – Office of Public Assistance Overtime

	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2026	\$80,874	\$12,637	\$159,219	\$252,730
FY 2027	\$80,874	\$12,637	\$159,219	\$252,730
Biennium Total	\$161,748	\$25,274	\$318,438	\$505,460

New Proposals



NP - 2001 - Summer EBT Administrative and Benefits

This new proposal is necessary to incorporate funding for the Summer EBT Program into the budget for the HCSD. This package requests \$20,028,638 in total funds for the biennium, including \$584,120 in general fund and \$19,444,518 of federal funds.

	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2026	\$352,885	\$0	\$9,783,084	\$10,135,969
FY 2027	\$231,235	\$0	\$9,661,434	\$9,892,669
Biennium Total	\$584,120	\$0	\$19,444,518	\$20,028,638

NP - 2003 - PB for Medically Needy and Summer EBT Programs

This new proposal adds 12.00 PB for the Medically Needy, Summer EBT, SNAP Education, and EBT programs, in the HCSD. The increase is necessary to support compliance with federal and state regulations for the Medicaid, S-EBT, SNAP Ed, and EBT programs. This is funded with 27% general fund and 73% federal funds. This package requests \$2,263,005 in total funds for the biennium, including \$617,599 in general fund and \$1,645,406 of federal funds.

	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2026	\$310,197	\$0	\$823,954	\$1,134,151
FY 2027	\$307,402	\$0	\$821,452	\$1,128,854
Biennium Total	\$617,599	\$0	\$1,645,406	\$2,263,005



NP - 2007 - SNAP Benefits Statutory Appropriation

Due to the pass-through and unpredictable nature of permanent federal SNAP benefits, it is more prudent to remove this funding from HB 2 and establish it as a statutory appropriation. This new proposal requests that federal funds be reduced by \$172,572,822 in HB 2 during each year of the 2027 biennium. If the proposed legislation is not approved, then federal SNAP authority will need to be funded at \$172,572,822 in HB 2 in each year of the 2027 biennium.

	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2026	\$0	\$0	(\$172,572,822)	(\$172,572,822)
FY 2027	\$0	\$0	(\$172,572,822)	(\$172,572,822)
Biennium Total	\$0	\$0	(\$345,145,644)	(\$345,145,644)

NP - 2008 - Realign Appropriation with Revenue Commodity Supplemental Food Program

This new proposal reduces the appropriation of federal revenue to the CSFP program to align appropriation with anticipated expenditures. This change package requests a reduction of \$309,000 in federal revenue in each year of the biennium.

	General Fund	State Special	Federal Funds	Total Request
FY 2026	\$0	\$0	(\$309,000)	(\$309,000)
FY 2027	\$0	\$0	(\$309,000)	(\$309,000)
Biennium Total	\$0	\$0	(\$618,000)	(\$618,000)

Conclusion

