

SOME KEY RESULTS OF THE 2010-11 OHIO BUDGET

Early Learning Initiative (ELI)

Cuts affect between 12,000 and 14,000 children. Parents of children in the ELI program can apply for another child care program but must follow new eligibility guidelines. A major change is that income for all day care vouchers is now 150% of poverty instead of the previous 200%. Families with children from ELI whose income is over 150% but below 200% will still qualify for vouchers if their application is submitted prior to August 22, 2009. Parents must be working or in an education or training program to qualify for vouchers.

Child Care Vouchers

Reimbursement rates have gone down, which means child care providers will get reimbursed less money per child. The eligibility for child care has also gone down from 200% to 150% of poverty, as mentioned above. Families currently receiving subsidies with income over 150% but below 200% will keep their eligibility. This covers both children now in the program and any siblings who may be enrolled later. Families eligible for Early Learning Initiative (ELI) who make between 150% and 200% of the Federal Poverty Level must apply before 8/22/2009 in order to qualify. After 8/22, the new eligibility levels will apply.

It is critical that those in the program with income over 150% of poverty do not miss a re-determination hearing. If a hearing is missed, eligibility will then be determined at the 150% level like other new applicants. The new budget also creates the Center for Early Childhood Development as the single administrative structure for coordinating state-funded and state-administered early childhood programs and services.

Help Me Grow

This is a much more targeted program for at risk children. It will no longer receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds. Additional General Revenue Fund (GRF) dollars will fill some of the hole from the cut in TANF and be used as a match to bring in Medicaid for the Family Visiting part of Help Me Grow. The program was initially receiving about \$71.2 million over the biennium and will now be receiving \$36 million (General Revenue Fund dollars) over the biennium before any potential Medicaid match. Policy changes will limit enrollment to first time parents at 200% of poverty and below and parents of children with an identified development disability or delay.

Child and Adult Protective Services

\$92 million was provided in the budget for child welfare and adult protective services. However \$46 million comes from Tobacco Settlement funds. The availability of these dollars depends on the resolution of a lawsuit involving disputed tobacco settlement money. These funds are currently tied up in court - the state is appealing a court ruling against it - and may not turn out to be available. It is uncertain how these services will be funded if these dollars do not become available.

Senior Community Services

This impacts seniors attempting to live at home. The budget line item for Senior Community Services shows funding of \$11.8 million over the biennium. This is down from \$19.9 million over the 2008/2009 biennium.

PASSPORT

The new budget provides \$30 million in state aid over the next two years for home-care programs such as PASSPORT and assisted living. That's a 74 percent cut of state funding from the last biennium budget. Federal stimulus money has been directed to the programs that serve nearly 32,000 Ohioans, but it wasn't enough to avoid wait lists. New enrollment is limited to 680 individuals each month. New enrollment averaged 900 a month last year. This is one of the main programs that help seniors stay in their homes instead of going to more costly nursing homes. Cuts to this program may put as much as 10,000 seniors on waiting lists over the next two years. While waiting, many folks will have to go to nursing homes, a place many do not want to go, in order to get the care they need.

Kinship Care	The Kinship Permanency Incentive Program was funded at \$5 million per year as opposed to the \$10 million in funding for FY2009. This program provides fiscal incentive supports for permanent kinship families accepting judicial custody of children after January 1, 2006. There are over 6,000 children in Ohio who are fortunate enough to have a kin caregiver when their birth parents are unable to care for them. The benefits of kinship care over typical foster care are a higher degree of stability for the children and lower government intrusion into the families' lives. The Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS) may be revising eligibility and benefit parameters for this program.
Adoption Assistance	Funding cut, estimated Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS) state investment in Adoption Subsidies to be reduced from current \$300/month down to \$235/month. Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy (PASSS) program was maintained at same funding level. PASSS helps families address an adoptive child's problems.
Mental Health	<p>Community mental health budget line items have taken a \$111 million loss for FY2010-11. This translates into a 12% decrease in funding for FY 2010 and a 10.5% decrease in FY 2011. These cuts are on top of the 3 rounds of budget cuts that the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) took last fiscal year, over \$60 million, which significantly reduced ODMH staff, closed two state psychiatric hospitals, and reduced funding for community- based services. Our understanding is that during the corrections bill process, an additional \$14.7 million may be added to the budget line item over the biennium in order to correct a budgeting error.</p> <p>This means longer mental health intake wait times, longer emergency room wait times, folks put in jail instead of receiving treatment, students flunking out and dropping out of school, people having more accidents at work, and a greater likelihood that some will lose families and homes. Worst of all, without prevention and treatment, people will die.</p>
Addiction Services	Cut by 30%. Community alcohol and drug addiction services (line items: GRF 401 and 404) has taken a \$23 million loss over the biennium from FY 2009 after the three rounds of cuts, this translates into a 31% decrease in funding for FY 2010 and a 29% decrease in FY 2011. This will cause many of the same issues seen above with Mental Health Treatment.
Free Health Clinics	Looks to be funded at about \$875,000 over the biennium, which is about \$1.2 million short of what was needed. Most free clinics receive funding from multiple sources, so this cut will likely halt free clinic expansion as opposed to closing down free clinics. However, as unemployment rates continue to rise, more and more people will seek the limited services of underfunded free clinics.
Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)	Restores Health Center funding from \$500,000 back to the House and Senate passed level of \$2.68M per state fiscal year. This is the FY2008-09 level.
Medicaid Optional Services (Dental, Vision, Chiropractic, etc...)	These benefits, like other services, rely on the successful results of disputed tobacco settlement money. These funds are currently tied up in court and may not turn out to be available. It is uncertain how these services will be funded if these dollars do not become available. If the court decision is favorable, then the Treasurer of State may transfer "up to \$31.8 million in fiscal year 2010 and up to \$129.8 million in fiscal year 2011 to the Health Care Services – Other (Fund 5HA0), used by ODJFS, to support health care services under the state Medicaid plan."
Benefit Bank	Funded at FY2008/2009 levels. It is funded for FY 2010/11 with federal food stamp matching reimbursement (The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks (OASHF) funds the match with private \$\$), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds from the Governor's office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives, and General Revenue Funds at \$2.7 million.

State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)	Coverage up to 300% of the Federal Poverty Level. This will be effective 7/1/2009.
Independent Living Council	This is the council that administers independent living assistance to people with disabilities. They will see a cut of about \$200,000 each year, about 44% of the state assistance they're used to receiving. Line item 415402 Independent Living Council was funded at \$450,000 in FY2009 and will be cut in half to \$252,000 for each year of FY2010-2011.
Disability Medical Assistance	Like ELI, this program has been eliminated. Ohio's Disability Medical Assistance (DMA) Program is designed to provide medical assistance to Ohioans who are medication dependent and not eligible for Medicaid. Even though the program hasn't been accepting new applicants for a while now, the applicants previously accepted into this program have been helped greatly. Now, these people will have to find another source to help them pay for their medications and medical care.
Foodbanks	<p>A silver lining amidst dark clouds, the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks (OASHF) received an increase in funding when compared to previous years. However, the OASHF stresses that even with the increased funding, there will be insufficient funding to adequately meet new need brought about as job loss continues to grow and more and more people seek assistance for food.</p> <p>Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, executive director of the OASHF, said the compromise allocates \$12 million a year to the feeding program, which is more than the \$8.5 million the group is now receiving, but below the \$17 million it requested. Demand has been rising 30 percent while food costs are up 26 percent.</p>
State Employees	The reduction in funding to various departments such as the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services is estimated to translate into 1000 to 3000 people being laid off in the next two years. Employees will also be taking 10 furlough days. This will have a dramatic effect on the delivery of services at a time when these services are most needed.
Birth Certificates	Look out for increases to the cost of getting Birth Certificates! The new budget raises the minimum fee from \$7 to \$12. This means counties will now be receiving a lower margin of profit. In order to make up for this loss, counties may decide to raise the consumer fee for birth certificates.
Fees	<p><u>Driver's License Renewal</u> - Raised \$1.75 from \$24 to \$25.75.</p> <p><u>Duplicate / Replacement Driver's License</u> - Raised \$5 from \$19.50 to \$24.50</p> <p><u>Late Transaction Fees</u> - Raised \$20 from \$0 to \$20</p> <p><u>Court Costs (Misdemeanor)</u> - Raised \$5 from \$15 to \$20</p> <p><u>Court Costs (Felony)</u> - Raised \$15 from \$15 to \$30</p>
Revenue	The budget was balanced primarily through program cuts and not through revenue increases that included fair and equitable tax reform.
Libraries	Libraries have been cut by about 30%. This will result in the closure of some branches and many layoffs throughout the Ohio library system. Operating days and hours may be shortened, Volunteers will be used more and it's possible that fees may be raised, all in order to deal with the state budget cuts.