



Response to Questions on the 2016 LOBs

Request By: Supervisor Storck

Relevant LOB(s): N/A

Question: Explain the reimbursement process for federal and state funding in the human services system.

Response:

Much of the reimbursement process for federal and state funding in the human services system requires determining potential eligible expenses, conducting analyses, and preparing requests for reimbursement, and in some cases, organizing data from the County's financial system, FOCUS, to comply with federal and state reporting requirements and information systems. These reimbursement processes are complex and time-sensitive.

Each grantor or funding source often requires different data with varying deadlines and reporting nuances that necessitate staff to be specifically trained and cross-trained on the various regulations and data systems. Additionally, staff must often times pull data from County systems and manually organize it to meet each grantor's unique reporting and program requirements.

Further complicating these processes is updated federal Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards issued by the Federal Office of Management and Budget, which require changes to many local processes and requirements.

Generally, reimbursements for eligible expenses are received via electronic check or by wire transfer, often in aggregate form, which must then be broken down by staff to discrete categories of expenses. Reimbursements are received monthly, quarterly, twice-yearly, or annually. Some reimbursements are dependent on submission of reports by County staff while others are based on availability of federal and/or state funding that varies each fiscal year.

For all programs, proper segregation of duties must be maintained for the billing, recording, collection, and reconciliation processes. Written documentation of these processes must be current and readily available for auditing purposes.

In addition, programs that receive federal and state funding are audited frequently by County auditors (for the single audit) and by federal and state grantors. Staff must maintain accurate and well-organized backup documentation and be prepared to respond to questions related to the use of the funds and the processes followed to expend funds that may be determined eligible for reimbursement.



The Department of Administration for Human Services (DAHS) performs key roles in the reimbursement process for federal and state funding in the human services system. Some examples of reimbursement processes in the human services system include:

- **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA):** Monthly reports are submitted to the state; reimbursement is received on a quarterly basis via electronic payment or by wire payment.
- **State Ward Per-Diem:** Reimbursement is received from the state on a case-by-case basis, when a youth is held in custody for the state and if state funding is available. Program staff enter client information into the state juvenile justice for all detained youth. Reimbursement is received via electronic payment or by wire on a periodic basis.
- **State-Shared Juvenile Residential Block Grant:** Funds are received via electronic payment or by wire bi-annually, depending on availability of state funding. No “drawdown” submission is required.
- **State Salary Reimbursement:** Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court (JDRDC) payroll information is sent bi-annually via email to the state while creating the required accounts receivable documents in FOCUS. Generally, a reimbursement check is received from the state within the month of submission if funding is available in the state’s annual budget.
- **Grants:** Quarterly reports are entered into the required state systems, concurrent with establishing accounts receivable documents in FOCUS. For most grants, reimbursement for eligible expenses is received electronically or by wire transfer within a few weeks.
- **Comprehensive Services Act (CSA):** Currently, data and reports are prepared which are required by the State Office of Children’s Services specifically for obtaining reimbursement for certain expenses. DAHS prepares expenditure-level details and works closely with the Department of Finance to verify the information. It should be noted that the state will be implementing a new process in the next year for localities seeking reimbursement that will require significant changes in the process.
- **Social Services Programs Administered by the Department of Family Services (DFS):** For many of the County’s social services programs, DAHS prepares monthly reimbursement requests using the state’s LASER system. Reimbursement for eligible expenses is received based on availability of funding at the state level.
- **Office to Prevent and End Homelessness (OPEH) Programs:** For OPEH, quarterly reports are prepared and sent to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) via the federal government’s eLOCCS system.
- **Area Agency on Aging grants:** These program grants, and several other grants, require monthly reports to be compiled using Excel spreadsheets which are then mailed to the appropriate grantors for reimbursement.