



**Allegheny County**  
**Department of**  
**Human Services**

# **State Budget Impact on Human Services in Allegheny County**

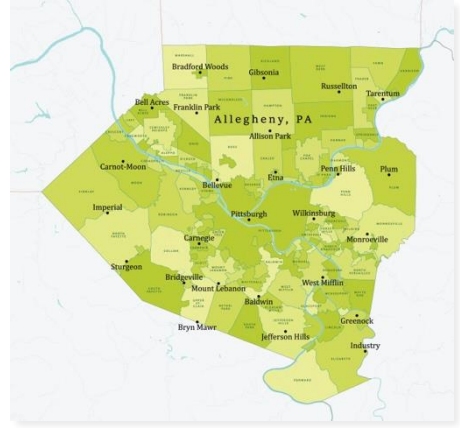
The following brief was prepared to support greater understanding of how the Governor's proposed 2024-25 budget impacts the delivery of human services in Allegheny County.



## Allegheny County DHS Background

Allegheny County Department of Human Services (AC DHS) is an integrated system responsible for administering publicly funded human services. DHS serves more than 200,000 County residents each year, many of whom engage with more than one of the following services:

- Mental health & substance abuse services: including Medicaid behavioral health services, reentry and diversion programs, crisis prevention and response.
- Family strengthening and youth programs: including child care subsidy, 26 family centers, home visiting, out-of-school time programs, services for transition aged youth, juvenile justice diversion programs and self-sufficiency programs.
- Child protective services: including abuse and neglect investigations, out-of-home placements, and family reunification on efforts.
- Housing and support for people experiencing homelessness: including eviction prevention, supportive housing, emergency shelter, homeless system coordination.
- Support for older adults: including enrichment activities, coordinated long-term care, adult protective services.
- Supports for people with intellectual disabilities/autism: including independent living, support coordination, 24-hour staff support.



The Department manages more than \$1 billion in funding to support human services in our region, contracting with over 300 community-based providers. (Note: Please see our [Human Services Community Profile](#) for specific information the constituents we serve in your district and the types of services being utilized).

## Importance of State Funding for Human Services

Approximately 76% of the AC DHS budget relies on state funding, making state funding imperative to our ability to provide services. Needs within Allegheny County underscore the importance of funding for housing and homelessness services, mental health, aging and intellectual disability services, and more. The following are items in the Governor's proposed budget that are of particular importance to AC DHS's ability to meet these growing needs:

### *Homeless Assistance Program (HAP)*

The proposed increase to the Homeless Assistance Program (HAP) is the first time this funding has received additional investment in over a decade. AC DHS relies on this funding to provide services to people who are unhoused – and consistent with national trends, the need for these supports in Allegheny County has increased significantly. In recent years, both the number of people needing services and the cost of services have increased.



Between 2022 and 2023, our annual point-in-time (PIT) count demonstrated a 24% increase in the number of people staying in emergency shelters or experiencing unsheltered homelessness.<sup>1</sup> Comparing 2023 PIT data with the same count two years prior (from 2021) demonstrates an even steeper increase of 59%.

In SFY23, AC DHS spent more than \$13M on HAP-funded services –\$10M more than it was awarded– which required us to supplement our HAP allocation with Human Services Block Grant funding initially allocated for other categorical programs (such as mental health, drug and alcohol, and others). Even further investment in HAP will better support us in meeting the growing needs of our constituents.

### ***County Mental Health Base***

Increased county Mental Health (MH) Base funding addresses a top priority for AC DHS. Allegheny County relies on MH Base to provide behavioral health supports that cannot be billed to Medicaid (i.e., HealthChoices) or private insurance. AC DHS spends most of this funding on mental health residential programs, which are the community-based alternative to people living in state institutions. Since the closing of state hospitals, counties have picked up the responsibility of housing people with serious mental illness. Last year, Governor Shapiro increased MH Base funding by \$20 million from which AC DHS received \$1.6M, or less than 5% the cost of our mental health residential programs alone. We expect to receive a similar increase from this proposed budget. AC DHS is supportive of additional investments and encourages further investments to meet our constituents’ needs.

### ***Intellectual Disability / Autism Services***

The large investments in intellectual disability and autism services are expected to expand our systems capacity. The \$214 million proposed by the Governor will increase reimbursement rates by 12% to support our community providers in recruiting and retaining. This investment is sorely needed to maintain and expand programs’ existing capacity, which at times is limited due to workforce challenges. An additional \$34.2 million will expand the number of individuals we are able to serve in our Waiver program, reducing our current wait list.

### ***Other Key State Funds***

Finally, the Governor’s proposed investments in childcare, aging services, gun violence prevention, the 9-8-8 crisis hotline, and transportation are each expected to better support our community members in accessing high-quality human services that address their needs.



For additional data and information on current spending and community need, please contact Maya Schreiber ([maya.schreiber@allegenycounty.us](mailto:maya.schreiber@allegenycounty.us)).

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<sup>1</sup> [Point-in-time count](#)