



Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) Eligibility

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Social Services Block Grant

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I. Purpose

The procedures are intended to provide instructions for applying the Eligibility policy.

II. Definitions

A glossary of terms for the document.

Term	Definition
ADLs	Activities of Daily Living
Adult day services	Adult day care
APS	Adult Protective Services
CMS	Case Management System
Current Income	Income received within the three (3) months prior to the date the Social Services Block Grant application is signed.
Fixed Income	An income from a pension, investment, or benefit that is set at a particular figure and does not rise except perhaps annually in a cost-of-living adjustment.
Household	Any individual or group of individuals on a single tax return or whose income is low enough that filing is not required.
Household Income	The total gross income for all individuals in a household.
IE	Income Eligible
Monetary payments	Payments of cash in any form from Social Services Block Grant or its subcontracted agencies to Social Services Block Grant recipients for any purpose.
Representative Income	Income that represents the usual amount of income earned over an equivalent period of time.
Self-declaration	When a client states in writing and under signature that he or she is a United States citizen or qualified non-citizen and/or financially eligible for Social Services Block Grant funds, even though the client has no proof.
SSBG	Social Services Block Grant
SSN	Social Security Number
Tangible Benefits	Physical goods such as groceries, household items, personal care items, cleaning supplies, furniture, etc.
TDHS	Tennessee Department of Human Services

III. Procedure

Verification for Zero Income Individuals and Households

Confirmation must be obtained when an entire household has zero income.

1. Both individual applicants and entire households which have family assistance cases that are active during the verification period can provide printouts from the Family Assistance case management system (CMS) as a sole source of zero income verification.
2. When whole households report zero income, statements from relatives and friends may be used, but only when other sources of verification are not available.
 - a. The documentation must be reasonable and clearly indicate how the household is surviving without any cash income.
 - b. Gifts of cash or in-kind contributions (food, clothing, etc.) are not considered income. However, all gifts (cash, goods to meet basic necessities, etc.) must be documented by a statement of support placed in the applicant's file.

The statement of support is a written document that must identify:

1. who is being supported,
2. what support is given,
3. who is providing the support, and
4. the relationship between the applicant and the person giving the support.

When zero income is claimed, this document must be signed by both parties and attached to the application for assistance.

In all cases where zero income is verified for the entire household, redetermination must be completed quarterly.

Calculating Income

Eligibility is determined by the client need for services and household income.

- Household is defined as: any individual or group of individuals on a single tax return or whose income is low enough that filing is not required.
- Household income is based on gross, rather than adjusted gross, income from the tax return.
- The income of minors is not considered.

If filing is required but not completed, proof of income or zero income must be documented for the entire household at application and each subsequent redetermination.

In situations where there has been an abrupt change in income, such as the death of a family member or loss of a job, income should be determined by documenting both the change in circumstances and the new household income. e.g., letter from Social Security indicating that benefits are stopping for the deceased individual, layoff notice, bank statements indicating direct deposits are no longer being received, etc.

Application Determination

Eligibility is effective with the closure of the “Approve/reject ADC state decision for non-APS clients” task.

All providers must notify each applicant of the outcome of his or her application within fifteen (15) days of determination.

Application determination letters that deny services based on income must also include or enclose a copy of the current income guidelines.

Adult Protective Services (APS) Referral to Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) and Closure of APS Case

All APS referrals to SSBG are sent electronically through the case management system (CMS). Case authorizations remain effective until APS initiates termination through the CMS. APS terminations indicate whether SSBG services should continue after the APS case is closed.

In circumstances where an income-eligible client is already receiving services and the provider receives a CMS referral, the client is then considered without regard to income (WRI) from the date of the authorization. The client will no longer pay ADC fees during this period, nor will the provider need to perform the periodic redetermination required for income-eligible (IE) clients.