

CONNECTING CLIENTS TO MAINSTREAM BENEFITS

MONTEREY/SAN BENITO'S CONTINUUM OF CARE

2019

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Advancing Solutions to Homelessness

AGENDA

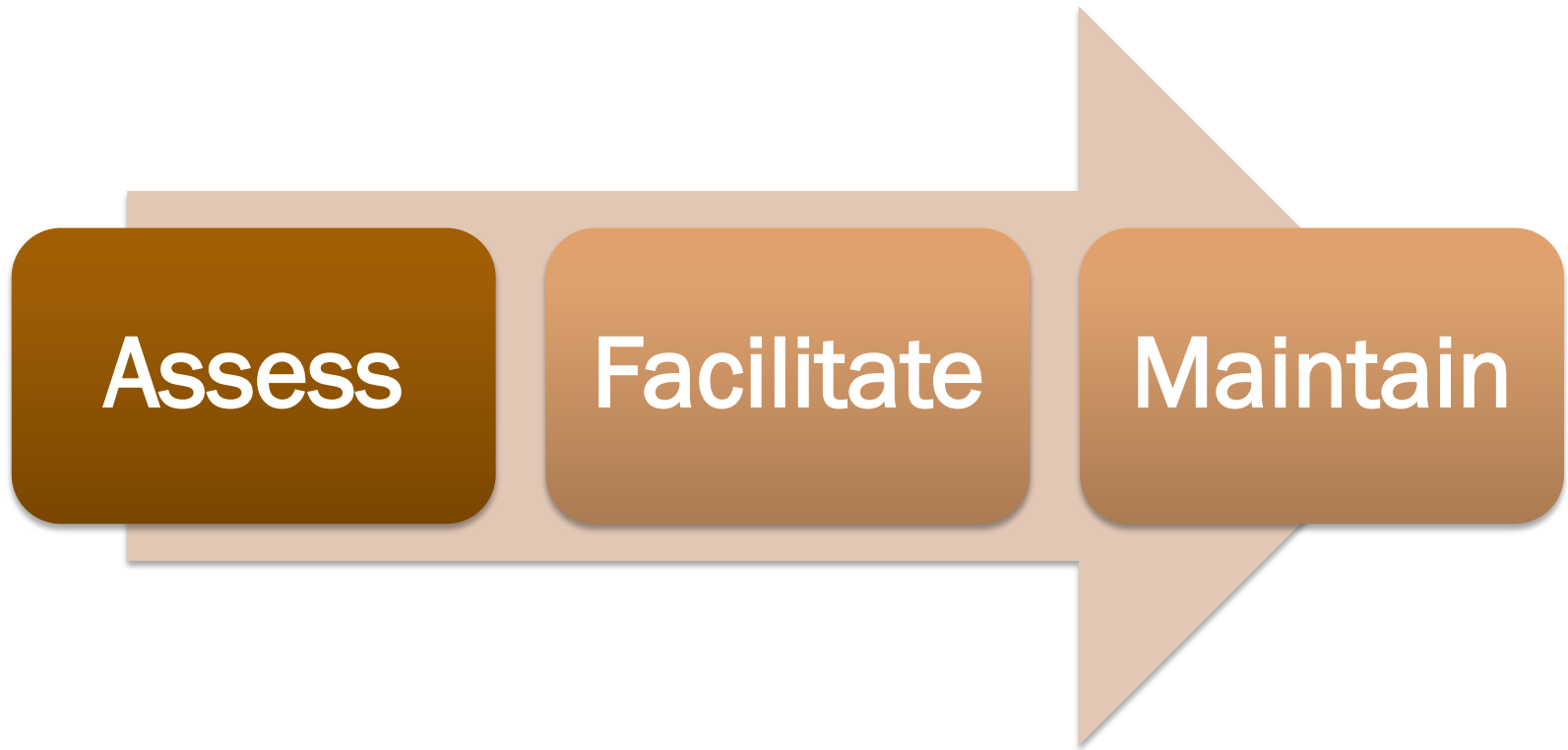
- I. Best Practices: Assess, Facilitate, Maintain
- II. Benefits and Resources
 - A. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - B. Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
 - C. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - D. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, aka "Food Stamps")
 - E. Medicaid
 - F. Population-Specific Benefits: Veterans, Women & Children, Refugees

BEST PRACTICES
OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO ACCESS

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CONNECTING CLIENTS TO BENEFITS: A THREE-STEP APPROACH



STEP 1: ASSESS

During initial intake & case management meeting, **ASSESS:**

Eligibility for benefits

Systemic barriers to enrollment

Personal barriers to enrollment

SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO ENROLLMENT

Systemic barriers can prove prohibitive for clients to access benefits:

Geographic/transportation demands

Negative atmosphere or stigma in application offices

Complex & lengthy application processes

ID/documentation requirements

Complexity of maintaining enrollment

Lack of knowledge regarding availability, eligibility, & process

System interaction challenges

PERSONAL BARRIERS TO ENROLLMENT

Common client barriers include:

Extreme lack of financial resources

Lack of transportation to apply or follow up

Loss of essential documents

Limited social networks

Lack of stable housing, required to receive some services

Difficulty receiving mail, proving residency, & staying connected to caseworkers

Complications proving eligibility

Prioritization of survival over enrollment logistics

STEP 2: FACILITATE CONNECTION

FACILITATE your client's connection to benefits by empowering the individual to overcome the systemic & personal barriers identified in Step 1.

STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME BARRIERS

Agencies may choose to:

Use online applications whenever possible

Provide transportation to benefits offices

Invite mainstream eligibility workers to hold on-site sessions at program sites

Improve communication & collaboration with mainstream eligibility workers (e.g., share success stories)

Encourage benefits offices to establish priorities for persons experiencing homelessness

Assist clients in filling out forms, gathering documentation, & preparing for appointments

Provide translation assistance for benefits appointments

Act as a contact person, appointed representative, or representative payee when possible & appropriate

STEP 3: MAINTAIN CONNECTION

MAINTAIN clients' connections to benefits
by:

Keeping up-to-date records of continuing eligibility

Establishing systems to ensure renewals take place (at least annually)

Ensuring timely data entry when changes to income & benefits occur to accurately monitor success

BENEFITS AVAILABLE
PROGRAMS AND ELIGIBILITY

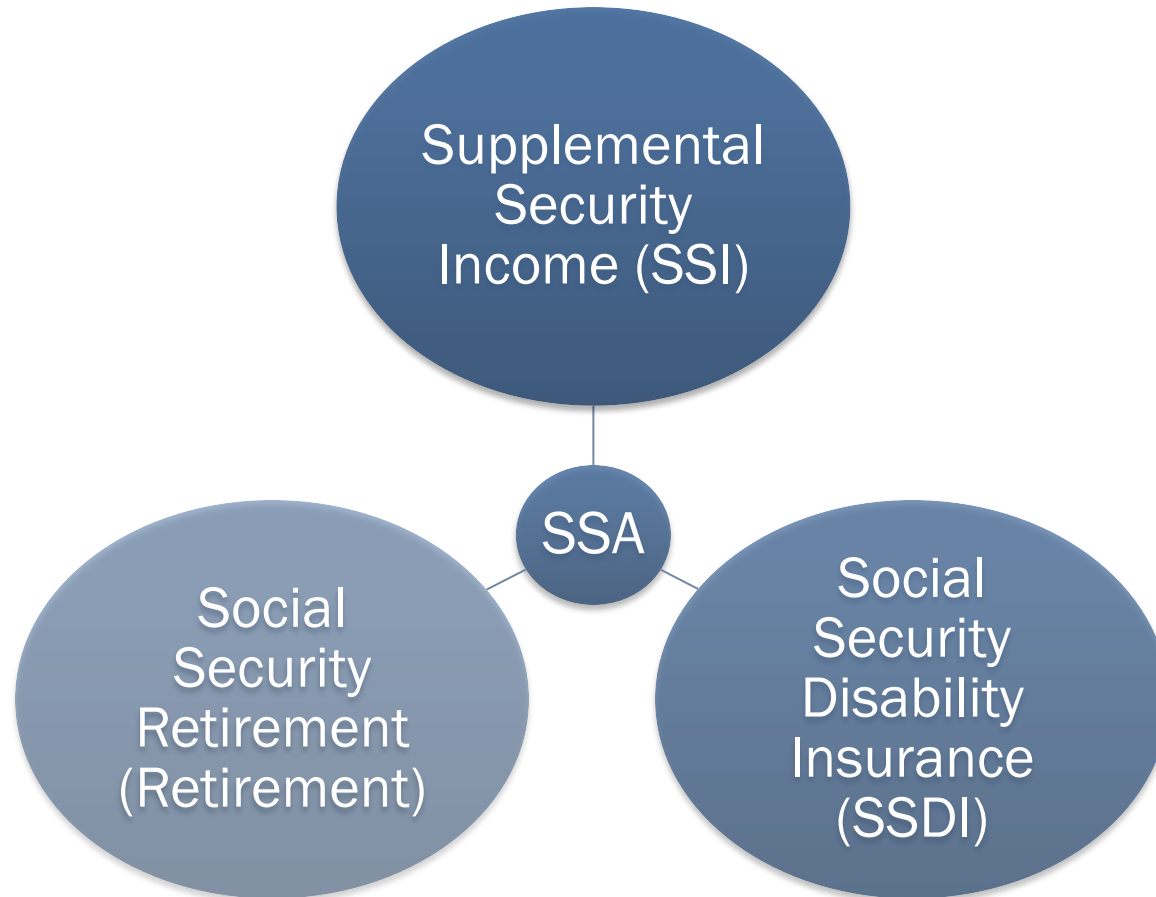
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**SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY
INCOME & SOCIAL SECURITY
DISABILITY INSURANCE**

SSI & SSDI

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (SSA) BENEFITS



SSI & SSDI– BENEFIT OFFERED

- **Cash assistance that can be used for any purpose**
 - Monthly payments by check or direct deposit

SIDE-BY-SIDE: SSI, SSDI, & RETIREMENT

SSI	SSDI	Retirement
Disabled or blind, or age 65 or older	Disabled or blind	Retired insured worker age 62+
Not based on insurance or past wages/work history	Qualified person is insured (paid Social Security taxes on wages)	Qualified person is insured (paid Social Security taxes on wages)
Limits on income and resources	No limits on unearned income or resources	Income may affect amount of benefit
Payment set by Federal Benefit Rate	Payment depends on earnings during work	Payment depends on earnings during work

SSI- ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility: Qualified recipient:

Blind, disabled, or 65+ years old

Limited income and resources

Citizen or eligible immigrant

Resident of the United States

Not confined to institution (hospital or prison) at government expense

Must apply for any other cash benefits for which person is eligible

SSDI- ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility: Qualified recipient:

Blind or disabled

Unable to work for a year or more due to disability

Citizen or eligible immigrant

Resident of the United States

Insured by paying Social Security taxes on wages during work history

SSI & SSDI- PRO TIPS


- **Medicare Eligibility**
 - SSI: Generally not eligible for Medicare
 - SSDI: After 2 years on SSDI, eligible for Medicare
- **Substance Use & Disability Determination**
 - Sobriety not required, but must be able to show that substance use is not material to determination of disability
- **Apply in person at SSA office, or online (SSDI only)**
- **Post-Entitlement: Must report changes in work, income, address, marital status, and institutionalization**

SSI & SSDI– PRO TIPS

- **Application Process**

- Denials are common for SSI & SSDI applications
- Eligible applicants may need legal representation for appeals

- **Ways to Assist Clients**

- Help create online SSA account & use account to verify benefits status
 - Assist with obtaining ID and other documents
 - File SSDI application online with applicant
 - Collect medical evidence for client to support medical eligibility determination
 - Provide legal referrals in the case of denial
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TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES

TA or TANF

TANF – BENEFIT OFFERED

- **Cash benefits to low-income persons to help pay for basic needs of children**
 - Monthly, paid to EBT card or bank
- **Participation in the Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) Program, required**
 - Transportation help
 - Job preparation
 - Childcare
 - Assistance with clothing, tools, other expenses for training and jobs

TANF – ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility: Parents, Caretakers, Legal Guardians:

Have a child under 18 y.o. (or 19 if in high school)

Citizen or eligible immigrant

Resident of Missouri

Income and resources under \$1,000

No felony drug conviction after 1996 (though children may still be eligible)

TANF – PRO TIPS

- **Benefits limited to 45 months**
 - Exceptions: teen parent in high school; 60+ years old; disabled; caring for disabled family member
- **Look out for Child Support issues – rights for child support must be assigned to Family Support Division (FSD) while receiving TANF**
- **Annual review verifies income and resources**
- **Requires drug testing or substance abuse treatment; failure creates 3 year bar to receiving TANF**
- **Applications can be mailed or dropped off at any FSD Resource Center**

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

SNAP OR FOOD STAMPS

FOOD STAMPS – BENEFIT OFFERED

- **Assistance for purchasing food**
 - Monthly, paid to EBT card
 - Excludes alcohol, prepared foods, vitamins, & non-food items such as soap or pet food
- **May be used in grocery stores or anywhere authorized to accept SNAP**

FOOD STAMPS – ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility: All household members:

Citizen or eligible immigrant

Resident of Missouri

Income and resources under \$2,250 (or under \$3,500 if all members of household 60+ y.o.)

Low income, with gross income limit varying by household size

No felony drug conviction after 1996 (unless exemption applies)

FOOD STAMPS – PRO TIPS

- Requires an interview
- For faster processing, include with the initial application as many of the required verifications as possible:
 - ID, proof of residency, citizenship status document, income verification for each household member
- Applications can be completed online or in person at a Family Support Division (FSD) office

MEDICAID

HEALTH CARE – MO HEALTHNET

MEDICAID– BENEFIT OFFERED

- **Health Coverage**
- **Mandatory covered services include**
 - Physician, laboratory, and X-ray services
 - Inpatient & outpatient hospital services
 - Screening, diagnostic, and treatment for those under age 22
 - Family planning services
 - Rural and federally qualified health center (FQHC) services
 - Nursing facility services for those over age 21
 - Home health care services for those entitled to nursing facility care
 - Transportation to medical care

MEDICAID- ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility: Eligible groups generally include:

Children and pregnant women

Persons age 65+

Persons with disabilities or visually impaired

Single parents with dependent children

Low-income (for all groups)

MEDICAID– PRO TIPS

- **Participants receive MO HealthNet ID Card or letter from FSD to identify them as eligible for services**
- **Apply for MO HealthNet online or in person through FSD**
- **Additional programs include**
 - Home and community based services to help seniors stay in their homes
 - Nursing home coverage
 - Refugee medical assistance for up to 8 months
 - Non-emergency medical transportation

POPULATION-SPECIFIC BENEFITS

VETERANS, WOMAN & INFANTS, ELDERLY/DISABLED, REFUGEES

VETERANS BENEFITS

- **Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Services**
 - Available through Veterans Health Administration
- **Veteran's Pension & Survivors Pension**
 - For low-income veteran or un-remarried surviving spouse
- **Disability Compensation**
 - For those with disability caused or aggravated by military service
- **Many other benefits offered; contact local VA services office for details**

WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC)

- **WIC Program supports supplemental nutrition for:**
 - Pregnant women
 - Breastfeeding women for 1 year from birth
 - Nonbreastfeeding women for up to 6 months from end of pregnancy
 - Infants & children up to age 5 (including to foster parents, fathers with custody, etc.)
- **Benefits include payment for food, nutrition education and counseling, screening and referrals to social services**

REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

- **Cash assistance program for adult refugees with no minor children**
 - Part of Refugee Resettlement Program
- **Time limited to first 8 months of U.S. residency**
- **Training and job placement services may be required**

SOURCES

- 20 CFR §§ 404.1505-416.920 (2012).
- Missouri Department of Social Services, Family Support Division, <https://mydss.mo.gov/>.
- Social Security Administration, <https://www.ssa.gov>.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (March 18, 2016), <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-income-eligibility-guidelines>.
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Compensation (February 3, 2016), <http://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation>.
- Webinar, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, *Key Strategies for Connecting People Experiencing Homelessness to SSI/SSDI* (May 19, 2016), <https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/webinar-key-strategies-for-connecting-people-experiencing-homelessness-to-ssi-ssdi>.

THANK YOU!