

## **Section 0620**

### **Client Eligibility Requirements**

#### **GENERAL**

- Eligibility requirements for clients served under grant contracts will be determined by the grantor.
- Agency must maintain a record of client eligibility (e.g. client file or electronic record) that includes documentation of:
  - ◆ Annual certification of client eligibility
  - ◆ Services provided to client
- Agency must recertify client when notified of a change in family circumstances (e.g. family income, residence, and/or family composition)
- Unless specified by Grant/Funding Source, re-certification of clients is required not less than once every 12 months (unless required earlier by a change in family circumstances)
- Homeless clients:
  - ◆ If the program eligibility requires homeless status, the residency requirements and income requirements do not apply
  - ◆ Homeless status must be documented by a signed (1) Homeless Eligibility Form or Homeless Self-Declaration Form and (2) entry into Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) database. These forms must be developed by the agency and be approved by the City contract manager.
- Other Client populations:
  - ◆ Clients in programs serving victims of violence are not subject to residency or income requirements
  - ◆ Eligibility exceptions for any other type of clients and/or documentation situations must be described in Contract Work Statement
- Date of receipt by agency must be indicated on all documentation in client file

#### **IDENTITY**

- Client must provide proof of identity in order to receive City-funded services, documented by:
  - ◆ A government –issued identification; or
  - ◆ A signed Self-Declaration of Identity supported by client residency documentation

#### **RESIDENCY**

- City-funded clients must be a resident of the City of Austin (Full Purpose Jurisdiction) and/or Travis County
  - ◆ Residence must be documented by proof of address that includes client name (e.g. City utility bill, lease, letter from landlord, etc.)
  - ◆ Residency eligibility must be verified by one or more of the following sources:
    - Austin GIS Jurisdictions Web Map (<http://www.austintexas.gov/gis/JurisdictionsWebMap/>)
    - Travis County Appraisal District website (<http://www.traviscad.org>)
    - U.S. Postal Service website (verification of County only) ([www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com))

#### **INCOME**

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- Client intake form must reflect wages/income of all family members 18 years old or older living in the household
- Determination of Family Size:
  - ♦ For the purposes of determining eligibility for City-funded services, a family unit consists of:
    - A person living alone:
      - An adult living alone
      - A minor child living alone or with others who are not responsible for the child's support
    - Two or more persons living together who are wholly or partially responsible for the support of the other person/people:
      - Two persons in a domestic partnership, or legal or common-law marriage
      - One or both legal parents and minor children
      - One or both adult caretakers of minors and the caretaker(s)'s minor children. Note: a caretaker is one or both adults(s) who performs parental functions (provision of food, clothing, shelter, and supervision) for a minor.
- Family income must be 200% or less of current Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG) to be eligible for City-funded services; agency must update its FPIG categories when Federal figures change. Income inclusions and exclusions are based on Texas Administrative Code §5.19 and are as follows:

#### **(1) Included Income:**

- (A) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF);
- (B) Money, wages and salaries before any deductions;
- (C) Net receipts from non-farm or farm self-employment (receipts from a person's own business or from an owned or rented farm after deductions for business or farm expenses);
- (D) Regular payments from social security, including Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI);
- (E) Railroad retirement;
- (F) Unemployment compensation;
- (G) Strike benefits from union funds;
- (H) Worker's compensation;
- (I) Training stipends;
- (J) Alimony;
- (K) Military family allotments;
- (L) Private pensions;
- (M) Government employee pensions (including military retirement pay);
- (N) Regular insurance or annuity payments; and
- (O) Dividends, interest, net rental income, net royalties, periodic receipts from estates or trusts; and net gambling or lottery winnings.

#### **(2) Excluded Income:**

- (A) Capital gains; any assets drawn down as withdrawals from a bank;
- (B) The sale of property, a house, or a car;
- (C) One-time payments from a welfare agency to a family or person who is in temporary financial difficulty;
- (D) Tax refunds, gifts, loans, and lump-sum inheritances;
- (E) One-time insurance payments or compensation for injury;
- (F) Non-cash benefits, such as the employer-paid or union-paid portion of health insurance or other employee fringe benefits;
- (G) Food or housing received in lieu of wages;

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- (H) The value of food and fuel produced and consumed on farms;
- (I) The imputed value of rent from owner-occupied non-farm or farm housing;
- (J) Federal non-cash benefit programs as Medicare, Medicaid, Food Stamps, and school lunches;
- (K) Housing assistance and combat zone pay to the military;
- (L) Veterans (VA) Disability Payments;
- (M) College scholarships, Pell and other grant sources, assistantships, fellowships and work study, VA Education Benefits (GI Bill); and
- (N) Child support payments.

- Client income amounts must reflect *Gross Income*, before any deductions
- If any adult family member has no income, a Self-Declaration of No Income form is required for that individual
- Income documentation requirement:
  - ♦ Programs providing financial assistance to or on behalf of clients (including but not limited to rent, utilities, arrears, child care, tuition, occupational training): the client file must include primary eligibility sources; declaration of eligibility for another program (e.g., TANF, Free/Reduced/School Lunch Program) is not adequate documentation of eligibility
  - ♦ Programs which do not provide financial assistance to or on behalf of clients: the client file must include primary eligibility sources or a self-declaration of income form