

Community Mental Health Block Grant (MHBG)

Overview

The Community Mental Health Block Grant (MHBG) supports states in reducing their reliance on psychiatric inpatient services and facilitates the development of effective community-based mental health services and programs. The MHBG supports critical services that Medicaid or state funds do not cover, such as homeless services, housing assistance, crisis outreach, peer-operated programs (including mental health clubhouse services, help lines, and education), training, and support for individuals seeking services and their families.

This program has the following specific goals:

- To ensure access to a comprehensive system of care including employment, housing, case management, rehabilitation, as well as mental health services and supports for individuals diagnosed with a Serious Mental Illness or Serious Emotional Disturbance.
- To promote participation from individuals seeking services and their families in planning and implementing services and programs, as well as in evaluating state mental health systems.
- To ensure access for underserved populations including people who are homeless, residents of rural areas, and older adults.
- To promote recovery and community integration.
- To increase accountability through uniform reporting on access, quality, and outcomes of services.

Eligibility requirements

Individuals who:

- Are non-Medicaid eligible children with Serious Emotional Disturbances (SED) and non-Medicaid eligible adults with Serious Mental Illness (SMI).

- Services and activities that are not covered by Medicaid for Medicaid enrollees who have Serious Emotional Disturbances or a Serious Mental Illness.

Authority

- Title XIX of the Public Health Service Act as amended by Public Law (P.L.) 102-321 and P.L. 106-321 (Children's Health Act of 2000)
- Definition of adults with serious mental illness and children with serious emotional disturbances, as published in the Federal Register May 20, 1993 (Volume 58, No. 96)
- The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 2 CFR Part 200

Budget

Federal fiscal year 2024: \$23,423,510

- This grant does not require a state match. However, it requires a statutory maintenance of effort to document that the state has maintained expenditures for community mental health services at a level that is not less than the average level of such expenditures maintained by the state for the two-year period preceding the fiscal year for which the state is applying for the grant.
- Federal law requires that the funds awarded to states be obligated and expended within two years. SAMHSA operates on a federal fiscal year (October to September) while Washington state operates on a July through June state fiscal year. Block grant funds awarded in October cannot be allocated until the state budget is approved the following year.
- The MHBG requires that 10 percent be set aside to develop programs for First Episode Psychosis mental health services.
- The MHBG requires that five percent set-aside of the total is for evidence-based crisis care programs addressing the needs of individuals with serious mental illnesses and children with serious mental and emotional disturbances

Numbers served

Fiscal year 2024 number of individuals who received mental health services: 327,155.

Partners

Outpatient providers collaborate with residential treatment programs, community service offices, medical providers, courts, and others involved in the individual's life.

Oversight

Health Care Authority has implemented a state Behavioral Health Advisory Council (BHAC) which includes membership from substance use disorder, mental health, problem gambling, individuals with lived experience of behavioral health disorders, providers, tribes, and other interested parties. BHAC reviews the state block grant plan and progress reports and provides recommendations for changes when necessary.

MHBG COVID American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) funding

Supplemental MHBG ARPA funding (American Rescue Plan Act of 2021) was provided to support states through Block Grants to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic for individuals diagnosed with Serious Mental Illness or Serious Emotional Disturbances.

MHBG ARPA funding is being used to extend projects planned for and implemented via the MHBG Covid Enhancement awards. The MHBG ARPA funding will allow projects to extend through September 30, 2025.

Budget

MHBG ARPA Budget is \$33,202,279

Budget topic	Dollar amount
FEP Set-Aside	\$3,984,273
Treatment	\$13,229,639
Recovery Support Services	\$6,308,433
Tribal	\$1,660,144
Crisis Set-Aside	\$3,320,228
Technology Infrastructure	\$3,039,478
Administration	\$1,660,114
Total budget	\$33,202,279

For more information

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