

**Priority:** Basic Needs  
**Program Offer Type:** Innovative/New Program  
**Related Programs:** 25133A  
**Lead Agency:** County Human Services  
**Program Contact:** Mary Li

**Program Characteristics:**

**Executive Summary**

The Homeless Benefits Recovery Project (HBR) will utilize a proven program model to assist 120 chronically homeless individuals with mental illness, addictions, and disabilities in accessing federal benefits and services to which they are entitled, but have been unable to receive because their disability prevents them from successful navigation of the appeals system. Locally only 11% of those eligible receive their benefits. HBR is a tested, evidence based program that can expect a 50-70% success rate in gaining benefits for eligible individuals with a minimum annual cash benefit amount of \$7476 per person

**Program Description**

HBR will provide benefits eligibility determination, systems advocacy, short term case management, and gap benefits funding to approximately 120 individuals annually who are Verity Plus eligible. Verity Plus is a general fund program serving a limited number of individuals with mental illness without insurance or benefits.

Services include: eligibility screening, appeals process advocacy, case management, medical and other documentation, and bridge services to individuals evaluated to be potentially eligible while the appeals process continues. In the first year of service, approximately 120 Verity Plus eligible clients will be served.

Studies estimate that as many of 60% of those living on the streets are living with disabilities. Often the nature of those disabilities makes it impossible for an individual to successfully complete the benefits eligibility process. Without those benefits, individuals are either without services utilizing expensive, locally funded safety net services – jail, hospital/medical care, other safety net services – or have to be served with scarce local community (non-federal) funds. Providing this unreimbursed care creates significant impact on the County’s general fund.

**Program Justification**

HBR will meet the Basic Living Needs (BLN) priority area goals to provide intervention & coordination of services and assure care for vulnerable members of the community. HBR will target those who would be on the County’s caseload if they had access to the benefits for which they are eligible or those currently on the County’s caseload for which the County is not reimbursed. Local estimates identify 39% of the chronic homeless population is eligible for SSI/SSDI as a result of mental illness and 46% eligible as a result of their physical health. Only 11% of the chronic homeless population receives the benefits to which they are entitled.

Benefit recovery efforts are a key strategy of the County-City of Portland 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness.

**Performance Measures**

Measure Type	Primary Measure	Previous Year Actual (FY06-07)	Current Year Purchased (FY07-08)	Current Year Estimate (FY07-08)	Next Year Offer (FY08-09)
Output	# of chronic homeless individuals with disabilities served	0	0	0	120
Outcome	% of individuals served that receive benefits	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%
Outcome	Amount of cash benefit leveraged	0	0	0	358,848

**Performance Measure - Description**

**Legal/Contractual Obligation****Revenue/Expense Detail**

	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
<b>Program Expenses</b>	2008	2008	2009	2009
Contracts	\$0	\$0	\$998,509	\$0
<b>Subtotal: Direct Exps:</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$998,509</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Administration	\$0	\$0	\$125,178	\$0
Program Support	\$0	\$0	\$100,454	\$0
<b>Subtotal: Other Exps:</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$225,632</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total GF/non-GF:</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,224,141</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Program Total:</b>	<b>\$0</b>		<b>\$1,224,141</b>	
Program FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Program Revenues</b>				
Program Revenue for Admin	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**Explanation of Revenues**

County General Fund requested

**Significant Program Changes**

Last year this program was: