

NATIONAL LAW CENTER ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

Fact Sheet: SSI Outreach and Application Assistance Funding

What is the SSI outreach funding? After advocacy by the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (NLCHP) and other groups, Congress approved \$8 million in SSI outreach and application assistance funding, as part of the fiscal year (FY) 2003 federal budget for the Social Security Administration (SSA). The funding is a part of SSA's research and demonstration project budget account. SSA will be targeting these funds towards projects that work to expedite the enrollment of homeless people in the SSI disability program.

How will the funding be distributed? SSA will distribute the \$8 million through a competitive grant application process. A grant announcement will be posted in the Federal Register, soliciting applications. SSA will then review and score the applications, based on criteria that will be listed in the grant announcement. The highest scoring projects will receive funding.

What groups are eligible to apply for funding? Non-profit service providers and government agencies should be eligible to apply for funding. It is likely that both new and existing projects will be eligible to receive funding.

What types of programs does SSA want to provide funding for? Until the grant announcement is released, this question cannot be answered with 100% accuracy. However, NLCHP does have a general sense about what sorts of projects are likely to be favored by SSA. SSA is interested in providing funding to programs that focus on expediting SSI eligibility for homeless persons. Successful applicants will be able to bring together three program components - outreach to homeless persons, development of the medical evidence needed to establish disability for homeless persons (under SSA's rules), and assistance to homeless persons in completing SSI applications and in proceeding through the SSI application process in an expedited manner.

When will the funding become available? The precise timing of funding availability is not yet known. However, the grant application is likely to be available by the summer, with funding to start in October or November.

How long will funding be available for? Initial project funding will likely extend for somewhere between 12 and 18 months.

Will renewal funding be available? Efforts are underway to seek additional resources for FY 2004 and FY 2005, in order to provide both renewal funding and funding to expand to additional program sites. Advocates are hopeful that this funding will be made available. However, any additional funding must be approved by Congress, through the appropriations process. Therefore, renewal funding cannot be guaranteed at this time.

How can I find out when the grant application is available? There are two ways to obtain this information. You can check the Federal Register, and the SSA website (www.ssa.gov). Alternatively, you can join the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty's SSI listserv. Listserv members will be informed when grant applications are available. They will also get opinions and advice, from the Law Center, on the grant application process. The listserv is free, and can be joined by emailing Jeremy Rosen, at jrosen@nlchp.org, and requesting that your name be added to the SSI listserv.

How can I get assistance in completing my grant application? The grant application form will contain contact information for SSA's project officer. The project officer will be able to answer technical questions about how to complete the application. However, the project officer will not be able to provide advice about the substantive content of an application. To receive substantive advice about the details of an application, you may call or email Jeremy Rosen, at (202) 638-2535 x207, or jrosen@nlchp.org. Email communications are preferred.