

4.A. EXCEPTIONAL ITEM REQUEST SCHEDULE
 80th Regular Session, Agency Submission, Version I
 Automated Budget and Evaluation System of Texas (ABEST)

DATE: 8/18/2006
 TIME: 11:50:28PM

Agency code: 529

Agency name:

Health and Human Services Commission

CODE DESCRIPTION

	Item Name: Maintain Support of EBT Infrastructure and Implement Integrated Benefits Card	Excp 2008	Excp 2009
	Item Priority: 18		
Includes Funding for the Following Strategy or Strategies: 01-01-02 Integrated Eligibility and Enrollment (IEE)			
OBJECTS OF EXPENSE:			
1001	SALARIES AND WAGES		
2001	PROFESSIONAL FEES AND SERVICES	122,722	473,553
2004	UTILITIES	0	359,600
2009	OTHER OPERATING EXPENSE	0	60,000
5000	CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	1,603,841	3,313,858
TOTAL, OBJECT OF EXPENSE		1,600,000	0
		\$3,326,563	\$4,207,011

METHOD OF FINANCING:

555	FEDERAL FUNDS		
10.557.001	SPECIAL SUPPL FOOD WIC		
10.561.000	St Admin Match Food Stamp	6,328	70,351
93.558.000	Temp AssistNeedy Families	1,582,397	1,716,577
93.778.003	XIX 50%	94,008	70,352
758	GR MATCH FOR MEDICAID	28,476	316,577
759	GR MOE FOR TANF	28,477	316,577
8014	GR MATCH FOOD STAMP ADM	4,480	0
TOTAL, METHOD OF FINANCING		1,582,397	1,716,577
		\$3,326,563	\$4,207,011

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITIONS (FTE):

DESCRIPTION / JUSTIFICATION:

This request would maintain support of the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system and implement the Integrated Benefits (IBC) Card. Texans receiving TANF cash assistance and Food Stamps obtain their benefits electronically. HHSC uses an EBT system, known as the Lone Star Card, to deliver TANF and Food Stamp benefits. The EBT system has not requested new funding since 1999 and is being reprocured during the 2006-07 biennium. The integrated benefits card project would integrate the Lone Star Card with the Medicaid Access card, allowing clients to use a single card for all target programs and provide a platform for expansion to other programs. A feasibility study has been completed for IBC.

Funding would cover variable contract costs such as transaction fees, card issuance and increased call center activity, associated with caseload growth.

The EBT system has been operating for twelve years with no major updates to the central processing hardware or the operating system. In order to ensure compliance with federal Food Stamp Program requirements, the EBT system needs to be migrated to a platform that is fully supported. Maintenance for one of the key components of the current

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platform is no longer available in the current environment. Migration to a Unix platform would resolve this issue as well as improve overall system performance and reliability. An additional advantage is that the new system may be easily scaled to adjust to changes in volume or to expand services and programs covered by the Lone Star Card.

The IBC implementation would consolidate card management functions and would provide savings in future biennia for program operations, card issuance, replacement, and storage. It would provide greater convenience and security for clients and providers.

EXTERNAL/INTERNAL FACTORS:

Implementation of an integrated benefits card would require federal approval and would have federal cost allocation issues to address.

The reprocurement of the EBT contracted services could also impact future costs.

The MOF for this exceptional item includes TANF federal. If sufficient TANF federal is not available, then GR would be needed instead.