

SAN FRANCISCO BUDGET CUTS SERVICES FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

Budget Justice Coalition

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As demand rises, budget cuts fall disproportionately on health and human services:

In the midst of an economic crisis, Mayor Newsom's proposed budget makes devastating cuts to services for the most vulnerable residents, while the need for services continues to rise. Unemployment has more than doubled in the past year to over 9%. The City's County Adult Assistance Program caseload grew by 5.2% in February alone. Statewide, applications have increased dramatically for food stamps, CalWORKs, MediCal and homeless assistance.

Last week, the Mayor announced a budget that addresses a \$438 million general fund deficit, *accomplishing about 30% of the target through reductions to health and human service departments*. The Department of Public Health (DPH) will see its general fund drop by \$97 million (24%), Human Services Agency (HSA) general funding will shrink by \$24 million (11%), and the Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF) general fund cut will be \$4.6 million (17%). Loss of funding from all sources will reduce DPH funding by over \$128 million. Proposed State cuts will reduce health and human services by billions more. Meanwhile, both the Police and Fire Departments will increase their general fund dollars by 6% (\$18.5 million and \$10.9 million respectively).

Cuts will have a devastating impact on services for our most vulnerable residents:

Cuts to health services:

- Reduce funding to 18 substance abuse treatment/prevention service providers by \$5.6 million. Many programs face severe reductions, and funding will be eliminated for Caduceus psychiatric services for the homeless, Hyde Street Services' Clubhouse, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation Stonewall program for methamphetamine users, St. Vincent DePaul's Withe Drop-In Center and Howard St. Detox program, Central City Hospitality House's Tenderloin Self-Help Center, and Walden House Central City Homeless Outpatient Program.
- Cut another \$4 million in the coming year by rebidding nonprofit contracts for mental health and substance abuse, effective January 2010, for an annualized cut of \$8 million.
- Cut funding for HIV/AIDS prevention and services by over \$1 million.
- All city funding will be eliminated (through DPH and the Department of Building Inspection) for the SRO Collaborative, which works with SRO tenants to ensure that their housing, health, and mental health needs are met.
- Other reductions including 30% of funding for the Health at Home program that serves people needing skilled clinical services in the home; 50% of funding (including cuts made mid-year) to the Community Awareness and Treatment Services' Mobile Assistance Patrol that transports public inebriates to detox and shelter services; a 10% reduction in HIV/AIDS housing subsidies; and much more.

Human services, and aging and adult services:

- Close Tenderloin adult homeless shelters during the day, reducing hours from 24 to 15.
- Eliminate homeless drop-in centers: the Tenderloin Health Resource Center and the Mission Resource Center's Ladies Night.
- Permanent supportive housing and support services reduced by \$1.6 million. Part of this cut, \$800,000, will eliminate services for 3000 tenants, doubling caseloads in programs that serve

- disabled and fragile formerly homeless adults and families. Evictions could rise by as much as 20%, as severely impaired residents are unable to live independently without support.
- Reduce the Supportive Housing Employment Collaborative by \$114,000. At least 100 people will not be served. Approximately 45 formerly homeless individuals will not be placed in permanent jobs that would have provided over \$600,000 of income, reducing the need for public assistance and rent subsidies.
- Reductions to Department of Aging and Adult Services programs including money management, Adult Day Health Care, Resource Center funding, naturalization programs, the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program, and Hoarders and Clutterers outreach.
- Reduce In-Home Supportive Services Emergency Services by \$194,000 to just \$50,000. This program provides short-term home care to the elderly and younger disabled persons who are being discharged from the hospital. Many of them are just above the SSI eligibility level, and would have no home care without this service, leading to longer hospitalizations.

Reductions to services for children and youth:

- Youth Employment: Young people supplement family income and gain skills - \$1.6 million
- Child Care: Allows families to work, subsidizes teacher salaries - \$1.1 million
- After-School Programs: Help parents, provide youth with skills and support - \$964,000
- Violence and Gang Prevention: Keeps young people safe - \$6 million
- Wellness Centers: access to health services for low-income families - \$114,000
- Family Support Services: DCYF, HSA, First Five - \$600,000
- Recreation Services: Cuts to recreation workers - \$3.8 million
- Community-Based Service Coordination: community conveners, anchor institutions, and the safety network - \$1.5 million
- School-Based Services and Partnerships: Athletics and community service - \$336,000

Public Defender:

- **Budget cuts threaten quality of representation:** The Public Defender's Office provides legal representation to 28,000 people each year who are charged with crimes and cannot afford to hire an attorney. The office is facing the loss of 12-15 staff positions. These cuts would make it impossible to provide competent representation to the public.
- **Consequences of \$1.9 million budget cut:** Because the Public Defender's Office does not control the number of cases assigned to it, the only alternative is to refer as many as 6000 cases to private lawyers who charge \$85-\$120 per hour. This will cost the city \$3 to \$4 million dollars more than what the city would save by cutting Public Defender staff.
- **Justice:** Funding police while inadequately funding the Public Defender creates an imbalance in our justice system. Public defenders are the only agency in the criminal justice system with the responsibility to ensure our constitutional rights are protected.

These cuts will hurt the economy and the city's budget in the long term:

Investing in services reduces the need for and cost of future services by preventing poverty, hospitalizations, crime and incarceration, homelessness, and substance abuse. Community-based nonprofits provide effective services, generate revenue from other sources, save the City money, employ thousands of people, and stimulate the economy. The City must seek alternative reductions and revenue solutions to protect safety net services when we most need them.