

Lost Capacity: California Budget Cuts from 2008 to 2011

Between 2008 and March of this year, California has dismantled much of the safety net for seniors and people with disabilities. Many programs have lost all state funding. Some programs remain open – at least in some counties – with local and federal funding. Others have vanished completely. Those remaining programs that still rely on state funding have been cut so deeply that access is limited.

Here is a summary of cumulative losses over multiple budget cycles:

STATE FUNDING CUT

Adult Education – cuts and block granting have eliminated special programs for seniors and people with disabilities in most districts.

Adult Protective Services cut 10% or \$11.4 million (\$6.1 million in state funding, the rest in lost federal dollars).

Alzheimer’s Research Centers – state funding cut by over 50%.

Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI) – consecutive cuts have lowered individual grant levels by \$77 per month, well below the Federal Poverty Level.

Home Delivered Meals and Congregate Nutrition – state funding reduced by approximately 10% over the last five years.

In-Home Supportive Services cumulative cuts include:

- Reducing participation by requiring a medical provider’s written certification that IHSS services are needed to avert out-of-home placement (state “savings” of \$120.5 million).
- An “unspecified” cut of \$128.3 million.
- 3.6% reduction in hours for the majority of IHSS recipients.
- Subsidy eliminated for IHSS recipients who must pay a monthly share-of-cost.

Long Term Care Ombudsman cut 46% (over \$5 million).

Medi-Cal changes include:

- Limit doctor visits to seven per year (a “soft cap” that a doctor could overrule).
- Limit prescription medications to six per month (except “life-saving drugs”).
- Annual cap on remaining optional benefits (hearing aids, durable medical equipment, incontinent supplies urological supplies) and wound care.
- High patient copayments for services, including doctor visits, pharmacy services, emergency room and hospital visits.

No coverage for over-the-counter cough and cold medications and supplements.

Multi-Purpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) - State funding cut by 10% in 2008 and again by 18% in 2011 (a total loss of \$5 million in state funds and \$5 million in federal match).

Public Authority for IHSS – consecutive cuts have reduced PA funding by over 60%.

Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary – consecutive cuts have decreased individual grant levels by \$77 per month, well below Federal Poverty Level.

STATE FUNDING ELIMINATED

Alzheimer’s Day Care Resource Centers – state funding eliminated.

Adult Day Health Care eliminated as a Medi-Cal benefit in the FY 2011-12 state budget (a cut of \$176 million and loss of an equivalent federal match). \$85 million in funding for a restructured federal waiver program is uncertain.

Brown Bag Nutrition Program – state funding eliminated.

Foster Grandparent Program – state funding eliminated.

Linkages – state funding eliminated.

Medi-Cal assistance with paying Part B Premium eliminated for Medi-Cal recipients with share-of-cost over \$500/month (Part B premiums are about \$96/month).

Respite Care – state funding eliminated.

Senior Employment – state funding cut by \$3.16 million, a 30% cut to total funding.

Senior Legal Hotline – state funding eliminated.

Senior Companion Program – state funding eliminated.

PROGRAMS ELIMINATED

Medi-Cal Optional Benefits eliminated (dental, podiatry, acupuncture, audiology, optical, chiropractic, psychology, speech therapy, and incontinence supplies).

Senior Citizens’ Property Tax Assistance Program eliminated.

Senior Renters’ Tax Assistance Program eliminated.

Senior Citizen’s Property Tax Deferral Program eliminated.