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Department of Social Services Office of Community Services

Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) Public Hearing

The Department of Social Services (DSS) announces opportunities for public review of the state's pre-expenditure report on intended uses of Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funds for the State Fiscal Year (FY) beginning July 1, 1996 and ending June 30, 1997. The proposed FY 96-97 SSBG Intended Use Report has been developed in compliance with the requirements of Section 2004 of the Social Security Act, as amended, and includes information on the types of activities to be supported and the categories or characteristics of individuals to be served through use of the state's allocation of SSBG funds. Section 2004 of the Social Security Act further requires that the SSBG pre-expenditure report shall be "made public within the state in such manner as to facilitate comment by any person." The Department of Social Services (DSS) as the designated state services agency will continue to administer programs funded under the Social Services Block Grant in accordance with applicable statutory requirements and federal regulations. The DSS/ Office of Community Services (OCS) will be responsible for provision of social services, by direct delivery and vendor purchase, through use of federal SSBG funds. Estimated SSBG expenditures for FY 1996-97 total \$46,203,849.

Louisiana through the DSS Office of Community Services will utilize its allotted funds to provide comprehensive social services on behalf of children and families in fulfillment of legislative mandates for child protection and child welfare programs. These mandated services, and certain other essential social services, are provided without regard to income (WRI) to individuals in need. Individuals to be served also include low-income persons as defined in the Intended Use Report who meet eligibility criteria for services provided through SSBG funding.

Services designated for provision through SSBG funding for State Fiscal Year 1996-97 are:

Adoption (pre-placement to termination of parental rights).

Child Protection (investigation of child abuse/neglect reports, assessment, evaluation, social work intervention, shelter care, counseling, referrals, and follow-up).

Day Care for Children (direct care for portion of the 24-hour day).

Family Services (social work intervention subsequent to validation of a report of child abuse/neglect, counseling to high risk groups).

Foster Care/Residential Habilitation Services (foster, residential care and treatment on a 24-hour basis).

Definitions for the proposed services are set forth in the Intended Use Report.

Persons eligible for SSBG funded services include:

Persons, without regard to income, who are in need of adoption services, child protection, family services, and foster care/residential habilitation services.

Individuals, without regard to income, who are recipients of Title IV-E Adoption Assistance.

Recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and those persons whose needs were taken into account in determining the needs of AFDC recipients.

Low-income persons (income eligibles) whose gross monthly income is not more than 125 percent of the poverty level. A family of four with gross monthly income of not more than \$1,625 would qualify as income eligible for services.

Persons receiving Title XIX (Medicaid) benefits and certain Medicaid applicants identified in the proposed plan as group eligibles.

The proposed SSBG Intended Use Report for FY 1996-97 is available for public review at OCS parish and regional offices Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Copies are available without charge by telephone request to (504) 342-6640 or by writing the Assistant Secretary, Office of Community Services, Box 3318, Baton Rouge, LA 70821. Inquiries and comments on the proposed plan may be submitted until May 31, 1996 to the Assistant Secretary, OCS, at the above address.

A public hearing on the proposed SSBG Intended Use Report for FY 1996-97 is scheduled for 10 a.m. on Wednesday, May 8, 1996 at the Office of Community Services, Conference Room 806, Commerce Building, 333 Laurel Street, Baton Rouge.

At the public hearing all interested persons will have the opportunity to provide recommendations on the proposed SSBG plan, orally or in writing. Written comments will be accepted through May 31, 1996.

Post-expenditure reports for the SSBG program for state fiscal years 1993-94 and 1994-95 are included in the SSBG Intended Use Report for FY 96-97 and are available for public review at the Office of Community Services, 333 Laurel Street, Room 802, Baton Rouge.

Madlyn B. Bagneris
Secretary

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