

**DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (DDD)
STATE SUPPLEMENTARY PAYMENTS (SSP)**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

August 13, 2003

What is the SSP Program?

In the state of Washington approximately 90,000 aged, blind and disabled individuals receive monthly SSI payments from the Social Security Administration. Prior to July 2002 these payments included a state funded supplemental payment (SSP). The state is required by federal law to continue to spend the same amount of funds on SSP as paid out in the previous year, currently \$28.9 million. This expenditure requirement is known as the Maintenance of Effort (MOE). The state must continue to meet this obligation or risk the loss of approximately \$3 billion in federal Medicaid matching funds.

Who gets an SSP now?

Until 2002, Washington paid an SSP to anyone who was eligible to receive SSI. The benefits ranged from \$3 to \$166 per person per month, based on the category of living situation and the individual's geographic location.

Effective July 2002, the State Legislature divided funding for SSP between the Economic Services Administration (ESA) and the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) in an effort to help address the State's budget issues.

- ESA was allotted \$4.9 million, with spending restricted to SSI recipients grand-fathered under the original program (referred to as Mandatory Income Level clients or MILs) or those with an ineligible spouse.
- The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) was directed to spend the remaining balance (\$24 million) for their clients receiving SSI who received state-funded DDD services.

Why is the State considering more changes to the SSP program?

DSHS has been working with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to implement the state legislative changes from 2002 and still meet SSA's MOE requirements. There is some dispute over some of the expenditures, requiring DSHS to spend additional funds before the end of the calendar year to meet its MOE obligation.

What DDD/SSP payments will be affected by these changes?

- There will be no changes to SSP for people in the Family Support Programs
- Restrictions on SSP expenditures for Residential Services have been removed
- Cash payments to individuals for Employment/Day Program services will no longer count as SSP

Does this mean some services will no longer be available to DDD clients?

No. Those services will continue to be provided with state funds, but will no longer be funded with SSP MOE monies.

In what form will SSP payments be made?

Payments will be made in the form of a monthly check issued at the end of each month that you are eligible. These payments will be for the following month. The checks will be issued to the individual's Representative Payee or Protective Payee. If a person does not have a Representative Payee or Protective Payee, the check will be issued directly to the individual or another designated payee.

How will the check be sent?

Checks will be delivered through the US Postal Service. An electronic funds transfer may be requested.

How much money will each person receive?

This is based on the current assessed need of the individual and available state funding and will be specified in the Change of Service Notification letter.

Will SSP affect my income for SSI eligibility?

No

Will SSP affect my resources for SSI eligibility?

SSP, if retained by the recipient, is considered to be a resource on the first day of the month following the month you receive your check.

Are there restrictions on the use of my SSP money?

There are no restrictions on how you spend your SSP money.

Is there information I must report to DDD?

You must report any change in your eligibility for SSI or any changes in your living situation.

Will more information be available soon?

Yes. We will provide additional information to clients, staff, and stakeholders regarding the amount of the payment, affect on other benefits, etc. prior to the November payment. **DDD Clients** calling with questions should be referred to:

Linda Lunsford
360-902-8446