

Federal funds provide 38 percent of all revenues to SSA for the many services, programs, and benefits the agency offers. Federal resources have a significant history in providing support for low-income and vulnerable communities throughout Alameda County, with some programs dating back more than five decades. Funding for many of these programs are expected to be targeted by the incoming Republican-led Congress and Trump Administration to pay for tax cuts. Highlighted policies for the upcoming year include:

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):** Negotiations of a full reauthorization of the Farm Bill will occur in 2025 after Congress passes a short-term extension in the lame duck session. GOP lawmakers have expressed support for limiting SNAP through increasing work requirements, decreasing SNAP benefit amounts by rolling back updates to the Thrifty Food Plan, and imposing provisions around categorical eligibility and further ABWAD restrictions. However, the full reauthorization will require a bipartisan 60 votes in the Senate, limiting the likelihood of major changes to eligibility and work requirements. Provision that may be included in the upcoming Farm Bill that could support SNAP recipients are a priority for Alameda County SSA. These include:
 - Removing the lifetime ban for individuals incarcerated due to drug-related charges who have served their prison sentence
 - Streamlining the eligibility and redetermination process for elderly households
 - Exemption of certain earnings from income eligibility determinations
- **Medicaid:** Alameda County SSA opposes expected cuts under the Trump Administration which may include:
 - A cap on the federal government’s financial contribution to Medicaid, which would provide less funding than is needed to maintain the current program
 - Limiting participation in the program by requiring more stringent eligibility and asset test determinations, adding work requirements, and cutting federal financial assistance for Affordable Care Act marketplace coverage
 - Ending Section 1115 waivers such as CalAIM and shifting to demonstrations that restrict eligibility.
- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):** TANF is block grant; therefore, programmatic and eligibility changes will not impact overall federal spending. Funding has remained constant since 1996, with no growth for inflation. Congress last reauthorized TANF in 2005.
- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA):** WIOA is a federal law passed in 2014, which reauthorized the nation’s employment and training programs related to adult, dislocated workers and youth, as well as adult education and vocational rehabilitation programs. WIOA has been targeted for cuts in the federal budget, with funding reductions of \$3.06 billion (53%) proposed. Without sustained commitment, some of the legislation’s goals are unlikely to be met and resources to help people with employment barriers are at risk. Funding is needed for enhanced supportive services for job seekers, stipends for youth participants in work-based learning programs, and for the coordination and alignment of Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), California Community College Districts, Adult Schools/Adult Consortium, K-12 education, and Economic Development agencies.
- **Child Welfare:** Implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) and the Stronger Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (“Stronger CAPTA”) should provide flexibilities for states, so the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) in California can align with new requirements and continue to make gains in improving the lives of children and families. This could include flexibility and resources to divert and serve as many families as possible outside of the foster care system by providing families with concrete economic and material supports that help them meet their basic needs.

- **Title IV-E Eligibility and AFDC:** de-link Title IV-E eligibility standards from the AFDC lookback and modernize the current financial structure to better meet the needs of children and providers. Currently a child’s eligibility for Title IV-E foster care, adoption and guardianship assistance depends on meeting income requirements associated with the 1996 Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program. This reduces the administrative and training funding for child welfare agencies and their ability to recruit and retain resource parents.
- **Foster Care Placements with Relatives:** Promote the placement of foster children and youth with relatives, whenever possible, possibly through codifying changes consistent with the final rule by the Administration for Children and Families (9/28/2023) on kinship placement standards. Changes in law are needed to support placements with relatives by reducing burdens that may interfere with relative care, ensure that relatives receive adequate funding in support of the placement, and that permit Title IV-E agencies to claim Title IV-E federal financial participation on behalf of a child when states use separate licensing or approval standards for relative and non-relative foster homes.
- **Early Care and Education (ECE):** Federal pandemic legislation provided critical enhanced funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), which expired on September 30, 2023, along with the expanded child tax credit (CTC) that cut California child poverty by 42% in 2021. As ECE has been highlighted in the post-pandemic era as part of the essential infrastructure of this country for workforce stabilization and economic recovery, robust funding is critical. Additionally, extending the enhanced child tax credit would provide greater support for families who incur costs for out-of-home care.
- **Older Americans Act (OAA):** Reauthorized in 2020, the OAA received critical funding increases for the next four fiscal years. Over 11 million older adults and their caregivers rely on OAA programs administered by the nationwide aging services network, including senior centers, healthy aging programs, nutrition, in-home services, transportation, caregiver support, and elder abuse protections. The OAA requires increases in funding that keep pace with inflation to ensure contractors are able to conduct business operations that reach more older adults and attract qualified individuals to the workforce.

Protect Rights of Immigrants/Refugees

- **Immigration:** Heightened immigration enforcement under the Trump Administration including deportations, the reversal of humanitarian protections including the possible revocation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and humanitarian parole, and the elimination of protections for Deferred Action for Child Arrivals (DACA) recipients is expected to deter undocumented immigrants from accessing state-funded health care and other services. Alameda County is committed to upholding state and federal civil rights and privacy laws that protect information about benefit applicants or recipients from being used for enforcement purposes.
- **FEMA Funding and Reforms:** Six years have passed since the last major reform to the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (“Stafford Act”) of 1988 that guides how the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) manages disaster assistance for State and local governments. Due to the increasing frequency and magnitude of natural disasters in recent years, efforts should be made to improve capacity at the federal level to respond to natural disasters by increasing funding and addressing burnout, turnover, and vacancy rates among staff, increase pre-disaster funding to save lives and mitigate economic damage through thoughtful planning efforts in partnership with communities, and address inequities in the distribution of disaster assistance and adverse outcomes in vulnerable communities – including by allowing immigrants to apply for FEMA funding.

- **Public Charge:** In 2019, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and Department of Homeland Security released a Final Rule that expanded the “public charge” limitation for immigrants seeking residency status. In 2022, the Biden Administration returned the public charge designation application to only recipients of cash assistance or long-term care. The Trump Administration is expected to once again expand the definition of public charge to include health, nutrition and housing programs, which may deter immigrant families from participating in programs and seeking services. Alameda County opposes the expansion of public charge.
- **Refugee Services:** SSA administers the Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), Refugee Med-Cal Assistance (RMA), Older Refugee Discretionary Grant, and Social Adjustment programs. Alameda County is a designated “Welcoming County” by Board of Supervisors’ resolution, providing a home for thousands of refugees, asylum-seekers, and unaccompanied minors. Alameda County opposes the rolling back or suspension of refugee resettlement efforts that are expected to take place under the Trump Administration.