

UNWISE AND UNFAIR

CUTS AND LATE PAYMENTS JEOPARDIZE ILLINOIS HUMAN SERVICES SAFETY NET

Human services are essential supports that enhance the well-being and quality of life of people, families, and communities throughout Illinois. They affirm human dignity and avert more costly approaches to addressing individual and societal need. Such programs are among the wisest of public investments. The majority of human services provided in Illinois are delivered by organizations at the community level. The State's failure to provide timely payment to providers who are serving in this role is unfair, forcing providers, in effect, to serve as lenders to the state. As the following survey results and data indicate, continued cuts and late payments are damaging Illinois' human services safety net with negative ripple effects throughout individual lives and local communities.

OVERVIEW:

\$3,294,300,000: Amount of unpaid state bills

26%: Percent of total unpaid state bills owed to contracts held with the state's core human service agencies (Departments of Aging, Children and Family Services, Human Services, Healthcare and Family Services, and Public Health)

1,755: Number of state contracts with nonprofit organizations awaiting payment

\$20,912: Median amount owed by the state on contracts with nonprofit organizations

321: Number of contracts with nonprofits where the state owes over a quarter million dollars (with 192 owed over half a million and 106 owed over one million dollars)

118: Number of days it takes Illinois to pay a bill after the paperwork is completed

1st: Where Illinois ranks nationwide when it comes to late payments

3,802,296: Number of clients served last fiscal year by organizations in **Cook County** that responded to survey on the impact of the state budget cuts and late payments

49,850 and 12,324: The number of full-time and part-time workers currently employed by responding organizations in **Cook County**

92% and 86%

The percent of responding organizations in **Cook County** that have been negatively impacted by state budget cuts and by delayed payments, respectively. **85%** have of those impacted have been simultaneously hit by both state budget cuts and late payments.

October, 2011. Information in this fact sheet comes from three sources: data on late state payments from the Illinois Comptroller's Office, information published by the Associated Press, and a survey of human service organizations in Illinois.

State Payment Data

State payment data were obtained via a Freedom of Information Act Request submitted to the Illinois Office of the Comptroller. Data reflect a point in time snapshot as of October 12, 2011 of cleared bills awaiting payment.

Associated Press Analysis

The Associated Press analyzed state documents on unpaid bills and published its findings in a series of stories, available on Illinois Partner's website.

Survey Data

The survey was conducted in September 2011. 238 organizations responded, though not all answered every question. The most common services provided by the responding organizations were: youth (46%) mental health (44%), employment and training (39%), homeless/housing (32%), adult education (25%), disability (25%), and early childhood education (25%).

Responding organizations provide services throughout Illinois: 56% in Cook County, 32% in Northern Counties, 12% in North-Central Counties, 10% in South-Central Counties, and 8% in Southern Counties.

The survey was conducted by the Social IMPACT Research Center at Heartland Alliance on behalf of Illinois Partners for Human Service.

More information, including the state payment data, the AP stories, and regional fact sheets, is available at www.illinoispartners.org

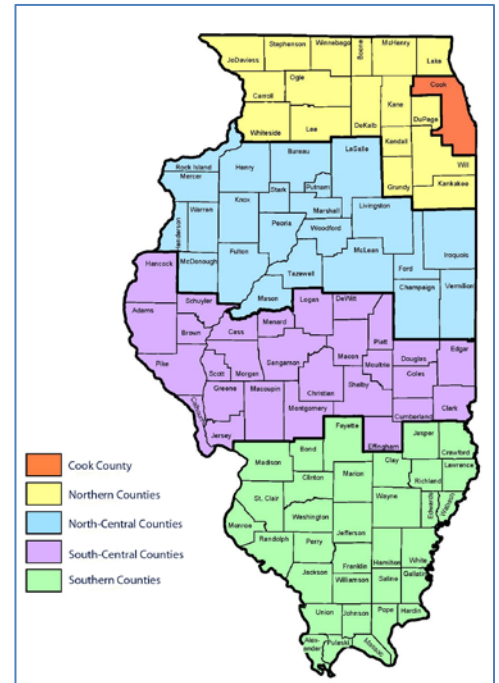
IMPACT OF STATE BUDGET CUTS IN COOK COUNTY:

Actions Taken in the Last Year by Human Service Organizations in Cook County as a Result of State Budget Cuts

n=93	Percent
Increased private fundraising	63%
Laid off staff	49%
Referred clients to other service providers	44%
Increased waiting lists for services	42%
Reduced hours or levels of service	42%
Closed programs	41%
Have not been affected by cuts	8%
Positions left vacant or frozen	4%
Reduced staff hours, benefits, and/or pay	1%

percents do not add up to 100 because respondents could choose more than one answer

92% of responding human service organizations have been negatively impacted by state budget cuts in the last year. As a result of state budget cuts, over 3 out of 5 responding organizations increased their private fundraising efforts in an attempt to fill holes. Even with these efforts, 49% laid off staff, 44% referred clients elsewhere for services, 42% increased waiting lists for services, and 42% had to reduce



hours or levels of service. State budget cuts forced the closure of programs at 41% of responding organizations.

Human service organizations have been suffering from budget cuts for years. 54% percent of responding organizations have been impacted by state budget cuts for 4 years or longer. Less than 10% have not been impacted or have only been impacted in the past year.

IMPACT OF LATE PAYMENTS IN COOK COUNTY:

Actions Taken in the Last Year by Human Service Organizations in Cook County as a Result of Late State Payments

n=91	Percent
Increased private fundraising	56%
Tapped into lines of credit	53%
Tapped into cash reserves	47%
Laid off staff	32%
Have not been affected by late payments	14%
Skipped payroll	12%
Implemented staff furlough days	8%
Late payments to vendors	4%
Reduced staff hours, benefits, and/or pay	3%
Froze wages	1%

percents do not add up to 100 because respondents could choose more than one answer

86% of responding human service organizations have been negatively impacted by late state payments. Human service organizations have had to implement a variety of strategies to mitigate the effects of delayed payments on state contracts. Over half (56%) of responding organizations had to increase private fundraising, 53% tapped into lines of credit, 47% tapped into cash reserves, and 32% have had to implement staff layoffs.

Among organizations that implemented layoffs, the average organization now has 13% fewer staff than it had a year ago. Staff layoffs, program closures, and service changes have resulted in 13% fewer clients being served, on average, and 17% of clients served less (with fewer services or less often).

85% of impacted human services organizations have been simultaneously hit by both state budget cuts and late payments. The cumulative impact is a significant reduction in the availability of human services in all parts of the state. These

reductions come at a time when need is increasing and by all indications the pressure on providers will be even worse in the coming year. This poses a threat not only to the immediate health and well-being of Illinois residents, but also to the foundational safety net available to Illinoisans in their time of need.