

Important Social Service Concepts

SSI vs SSDI

Supplemental Social Security Income (SSI) is given to individuals with a disability that makes them unable to work and who don't have enough work credits with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to receive support based on previous earnings. Each year, the SSA decides how much SSI funds individuals will receive, based on inflation the SSA occasionally issues a cost of living adjustment. In 2019, SSI is \$771. Individuals receiving SSI can work and earn funds (up to ~\$2000 monthly) without losing their benefits.

Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) is given to individuals with a disability that makes them unable to work and who have work credits through the SSA. The amount of their SSDI is based on their previous earnings. Individuals receiving SSDI can work and earn funds (up to ~\$2000 monthly) without losing their benefits.

Section 8

"Section 8" is a term no longer used by the Chicago Housing Authority to describe the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV). It refers to the federal legislation that provides for housing subsidies through housing authorities. Chicago's waitlist for HCV has been closed since 2014. The waitlist is open for seniors.

Cash Assistance/ welfare/ government aid

See SSI vs SSDI above

SNAP- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Also called "Link" and "Food Stamps". This program provides assistance that is only to be used on food to individuals and families within 100% of the federal poverty guidelines. Benefits are issued electronically on a LINK card. Benefits cannot be used on personal care items like toilet paper or soap.

TANF- Temporary Aid for Needy Families. This is assistance given to families with children under 5. There is a work requirement to receive this assistance and families can only receive these benefits for two years. Benefits are based on the cost of living determined by the Illinois Department of Human Services. Benefits are issued electronically like SNAP benefits.

AABD- Aid to the Aged Blind and Disabled. This is assistance given to individuals with disabilities or low income seniors. It is intended to provide funds for needed medical necessities for individuals living on SSI. Not time limited, very small amount of assistance.

WIC- Women Infant Children. This program provides assistance to parents with children under 2 to purchase diapers and formula. There are also classes and additional programs offered to parents enrolled in this program. There is no cash assistance in this program.

Bottom line: no single adult is receiving cash assistance based solely on income.

Services to undocumented persons

Adults without documentation cannot receive ANY federal assistance (SNAP, TANF, etc.) Refugees or those with legal status (non citizens) can receive SNAP benefits. Undocumented children can receive children's medical assistance (in Illinois "All Kids"). Private agencies like food pantries and religious organizations often give assistance to undocumented individuals. Employment agencies generally cannot serve anyone without a social security number.

A note for individuals seeking citizenship about public charge. See Immigrant Legal Resource Center's explanation of the policy here: https://www.ilrc.org/sites/default/files/resources/public_charge_naturalization-20181121.pdf

Dimensions of Social Services

Service Area	General Description of Resources	Specific Resources
Hunger	Individual Food Pantries throughout the city, most bounded by zip codes.	Greater Chicago Food Depository supplies most. Use their website to locate a pantry near your client. www.Chicagosfoodbank.org/findfood
Housing/ Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelters generally provide a place to sleep and a hot meal. Almost all shelters require a DFSS referral, shelters generally separate Men, Women and Families. Chicago Housing Authority to access Housing Choice Vouchers (section 8) is closed. Federally (HUD) funded housing is all accessed through the Coordinated Entry System (CES). Third party agencies maintain their own waitlists which open periodically and have different requirements Illinois Homeless Prevention Funds can be accessed by households with one time emergencies that have impacted their housing. Almost no organizations do Housing Location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call 311 to get directed to nearest DFSS or look up closest office. Generally assessments happen between 8-4p. Visit CSH.org/CES to find an Access Point Call 311 to be screened for Illinois Homeless Prevention Funds
Domestic Violence	Only a few shelters in Chicago are designed as DV shelters. The Illinois DV hotline handles their referrals. Multiple agencies provide case management services and other supports for survivors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illinois DV Hotline -877-863-6338 Also visit batteredwomensnetwork.org
Health/Well being	Almost all US citizens are entitled to medical insurance if they are income eligible. There are a number of free clinics for people who are uninsured. All Medicaid covered individuals are assigned a Managed Care Organization (CountyCare, Atena, BCBS, Illini Care, etc.) Coverage is recertified every six months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply at IllinoisABE.org Visit local DHS Office (often called Family and Community Resource Centers) For Income requirements visit Illinois.gov/hfs
Mental Health/ Substance Use	Services through the city of varying quality based on insurance and level of need. City operates six mental health centers mostly on the south side.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the client is insured, call "support" or "behavioral health" number on back of MCO card to get resources for the insured. To locate city services, search "City of Chicago Mental Health Centers"
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For literate adults who are US Citizens, multiple programs exist. Start with Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership. Other programs exist with more specialized services in manufacturing, food service, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, https://chicookworks.org/our-network/find-your-agency/ CARA Program
Childcare	Challenging and limited resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illinois Action For Children, illinoisactionforchildren.org

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of Illinois Childcare Assistance Program (IDHS 3211)
Legal	Various organizations maintain hotlines and provide pro bono work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Assistance Foundation https://www.lafchicago.org/ • Chicago Volunteer Legal Services https://www.cvl.org/ • Uptown Peoples Resource Center https://www.uplcchicago.org/
Financial-public benefits	SNAP- Link Card, "Food Stamps" TANF- Temporary Aid for Needy Families (cash) AABD- Aid to the Aged Blind and Disabled	Apply at IllinoisABE.org Visit local DHS Office (often called Family and Community Resource Centers)
Financial-financial coaching	Various organizations help people create budgets, repair their credit and work towards their financial goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Changing Lives • Central States SER, http://www.centralstatesser.org
Financial-emergency cash	State and city programs for individuals with income who can prove a one time emergency. Generally can be accessed once a year (some are every two years). Some private agencies have their own emergency assistance programs- these are less common.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicago's Emergency Fund programs accessed through 311's "short term help" option • EZRA center in Uptown (has a zipcode specific catchment area) juf.org/ezra