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GENERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS: SAFETY NET WEAKENING DESPITE INCREASED NEED

By Liz Schott and Clare Cho

State General Assistance programs, which provide a safety net of last resort for those who are very poor and do not qualify for other public assistance, have weakened considerably in recent decades and are continuing to do so, despite the large increase in need resulting from the recession. This report discusses how General Assistance Programs have been weakened over the years, with a closer look at actions in 2011 state legislative sessions, and provides an overview of program policies across the 30 states with programs in 2011.¹ The information in this report is based on our new national survey of General Assistance programs and provides the first comprehensive and published survey in 13 years.²

Thirty states³ have General Assistance programs, which generally serve very poor individuals who do not have minor children, are not disabled enough to qualify for the Supplemental Security Income program (SSI), and are not elderly.⁴ (See Figure 1.) Only 12 of these states, however, provide any benefits to childless adults who do not have some disability; the others require recipients to be unemployable, generally due to a physical or mental condition.

The benefits that these programs provide are extremely modest. In 29 of the 30 states with General Assistance programs, the maximum benefit is below *half* of the poverty line for an

¹ Appendix I sets forth which programs we collected data for and how we collected it.

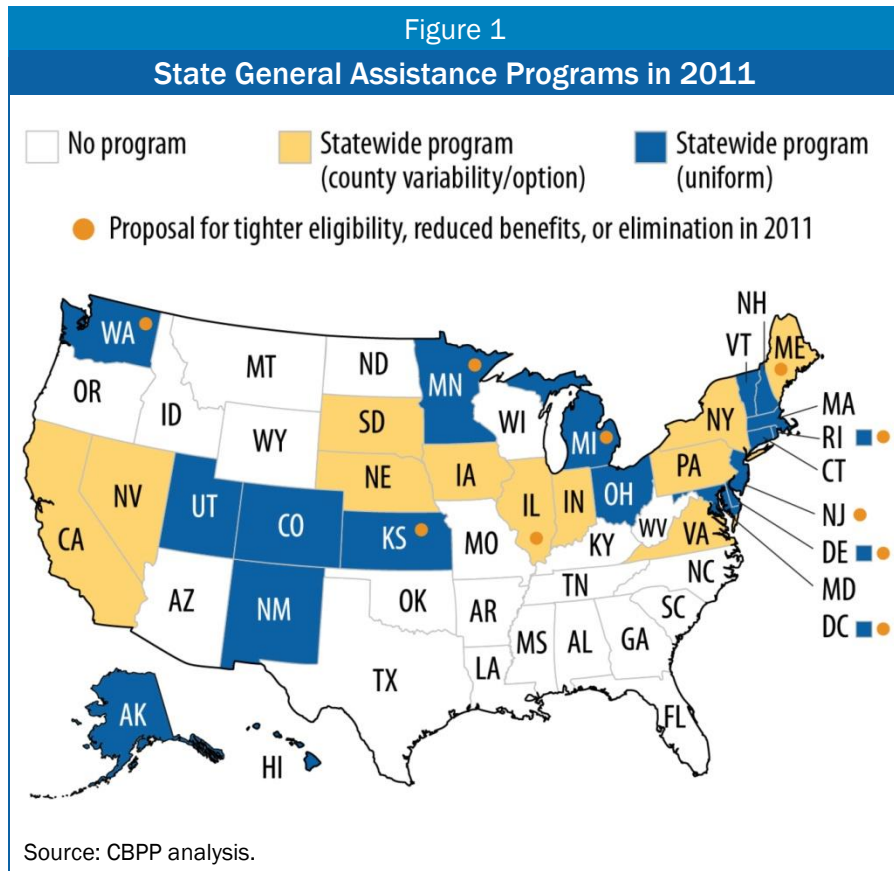
² The Urban Institute has published several comprehensive national surveys of General Assistance programs; its most recent published data is from a 1998 survey of states. See, L. Jerome Gallagher *et al.*, “State General Assistance Programs: 1998,” The Urban Institute, 1999 and a shorter policy brief, L. Jerome Gallagher, “A Shrinking Portion of the Safety Net: General Assistance from 1989 to 1998,” The Urban Institute, 1999. Since the 1998 survey, there have been several less comprehensive or less formal reviews of state General Assistance programs. See, “State General Assistance Programs for Unemployable Individuals,” Washington State Institute of Public Policy, December 2009. However, there has been no published, comprehensive review of all General Assistance programs for employable and unemployable persons that are state-run or subject to state guidelines since the 1998 survey data were published.

³ These 30 states include the District of Columbia, which is treated as a state throughout this report.

⁴ The remaining 21 states have no state General Assistance program or state guidelines or mandates for counties to provide such assistance, although some counties may offer a program operating at the county or local level in some of these states. Because there is neither a statewide program nor state guidelines, we label these states as “No Program” states in Figure 1. We have identified at least one county with a General Assistance program in three of these states; those states are identified in Appendix II.

individual. In fact, in most of these states, the maximum benefit falls below *one-quarter* of the poverty line.

There is no federally supported cash safety-net program for poor childless adults who do not receive SSI. These state or local General Assistance programs are generally the only cash assistance for which such individuals can qualify. Some of these are uniform statewide programs; others have state guidelines with options for county variability, ranging from minimal cost-of-living adjustments to significant differences in eligibility standards.⁵ (See Appendices II and III for greater detail.)



In recent decades, a number of states have eliminated their General Assistance programs altogether, while many others have cut GA funding for the programs, restricted eligibility, imposed time limits, and/or cut benefits. Most states that eliminated GA programs for people who are not disabled did so between the late 1980s and late 1990s. Between 1998 and 2010, five additional states terminated their General Assistance programs, and at least ten other states cut their programs back.

Then in 2011, as states struggled to close large budget shortfalls, ten states considered proposals to further shrink or eliminate General Assistance, and seven states adopted such measures. Illinois and Kansas eliminated their programs, Minnesota restricted eligibility, Michigan reduced benefit levels for all recipients, Washington restricted eligibility and reduced benefit levels for all recipients

⁵ Of the states that provide General Assistance with county variability, Virginia is the only one that gives counties the option of not providing the program.

who still qualify, and Rhode Island is cutting benefits for some recipients. The District of Columbia reduced funding for its program by two-thirds and plans to limit the size of its caseload accordingly.

Overview of General Assistance Programs

As of January 2011, 30 states had a General Assistance program that either operates statewide or is governed by statewide guidelines.⁶ (Figure 1) This section reviews key eligibility provisions and related benefits for these 30 states. (See also Table 1 and Appendices II and III.)

Eligibility Groups

Every state General Assistance program offers benefits to individuals with disabilities. Some programs also offer assistance to other individuals; others do not.

- *Individuals with a disability.* General Assistance programs in the 30 states serve needy individuals who are unable to work due to incapacity or disability but who are not receiving SSI. (In some of these states, disabled individuals may be served through a program providing assistance to employable and disabled individuals alike, solely because of their financial need; most of these 30 states, however, have a program that only serves individuals who are disabled or otherwise considered unemployable).

States requiring the individual to be disabled require some type of medical documentation of incapacity. State policies vary in the severity of the disability that qualifies an individual for General Assistance, ranging from a temporary inability to work due to incapacity to the much more severe SSI disability standard. Some of the states using the SSI disability standard require General Assistance recipients to apply for SSI, often requiring recipients to repay the program once they begin receiving SSI. Nineteen states require a minimum duration of disability — that is, a disability that is expected to last for anywhere from at least 30 days to at least one year, depending on the state.

- *Other unemployable individuals.* In addition to serving low-income individuals with a disability, 11 states serve other categories of individuals who are considered unemployable because they are, for example, over 65, in a substance abuse center, or needed at home to care for a young child or a disabled family member.
- *Employable individuals.* Twelve states assist individuals who are employable but ineligible for other public assistance programs. These states also serve unemployable individuals, either in the same program or a separate program; some states have different eligibility criteria or benefit levels for employable and unemployable individuals. For example, in New Jersey, maximum benefits are \$140 per month for an employable recipient and \$210 per month for an unemployable recipient.

⁶ The programs, eligibility policies, and benefit levels discussed in this section are based on state policies in place as of January 1, 2011. Since January, some of these programs have been eliminated and benefit levels have been reduced in others; these recent cutbacks are discussed later in this report.

Table 1 Overview of 2011 General Assistance Programs				
	Eligibility			Time Limit
	Disabled	Employable	Other	
Alaska	X	X		
California	X	X		Some
Colorado	X			Some
Connecticut	X		X	
Delaware	X		X	X
DC	X			
Hawaii	X			
Illinois	X		X	Some
Indiana	X	X		
Iowa	X	X		
Kansas	X			X
Maine	X	X		
Maryland	X			X
Massachusetts	X		X	
Michigan	X		X	
Minnesota	X		X	
Nebraska	X	X		
Nevada	X	X		X
New Hampshire	X	X		
New Jersey	X	X		X
New Mexico	X		X	
New York	X	X		X
Ohio	X		X	
Pennsylvania	X		X	Some
Rhode Island	X			
South Dakota	X	X		
Utah	X			X
Vermont	X		X	Some
Virginia	X	X		X
Washington	X			

Time Limits

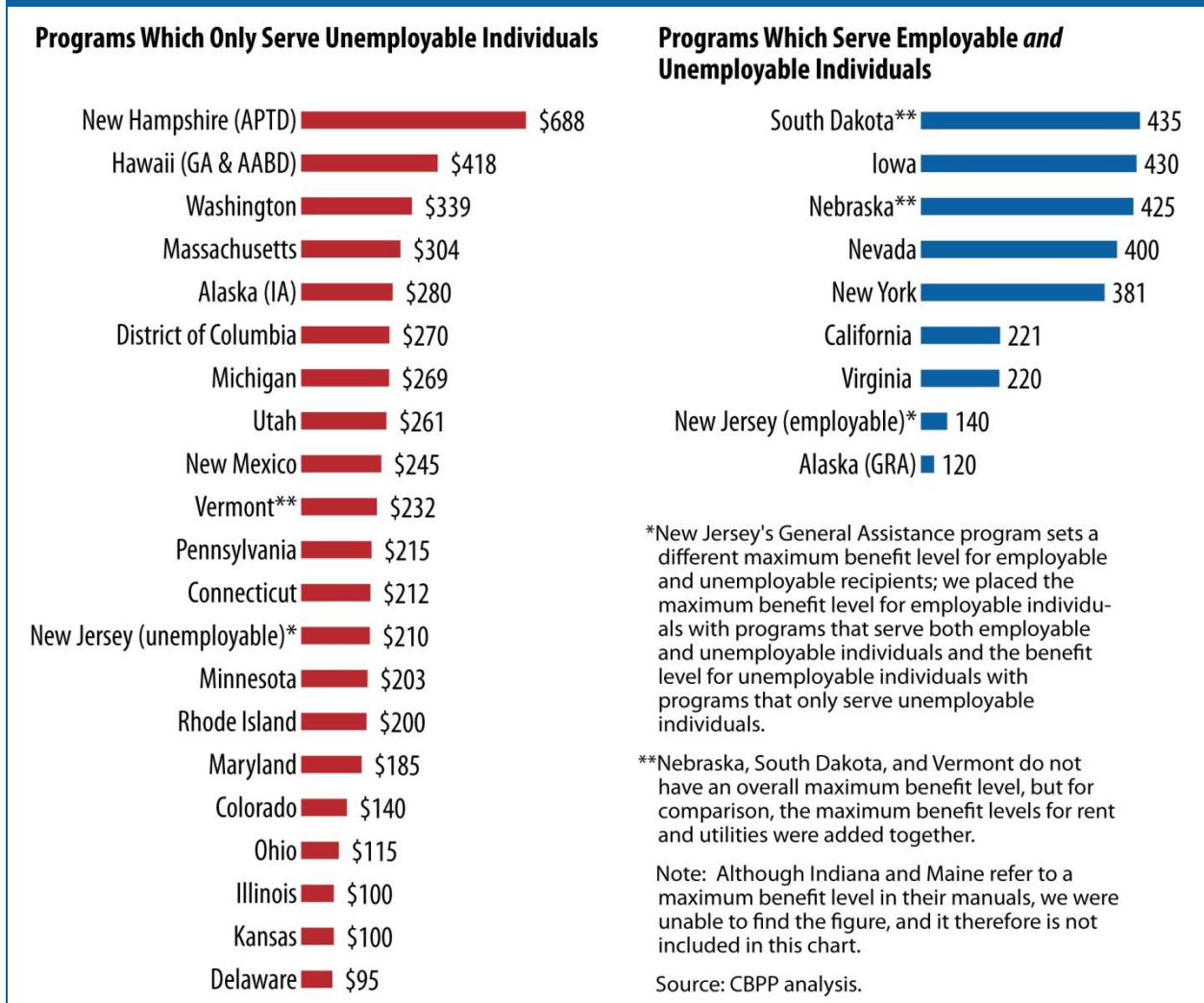
Thirteen of the 30 states limit how long an individual can receive aid, but time-limit policies vary.

- *Four states impose a lifetime limit for anyone receiving benefits.* Delaware and New Jersey have cumulative lifetime limits of two years and five years, respectively. Kansas has a one-year time limit for individuals with a severe disability that prevents employment (but does not meet the SSI disability standard) and a two-year time limit for an individual who appears to meet the SSI disability standard but is not yet approved for and receiving SSI benefits. New York has a two-year limit for cash assistance but no time limit for assistance provided through vouchers for rent and utilities, which is how it provides most aid.⁷

⁷ New York doesn't apply the time limit on cash assistance if the head of the household is disabled.

Figure 2

States by General Assistance
Maximum Benefit Level



- *Four states⁸ have intermittent time limits for anyone receiving benefits.* In Utah, individuals may receive benefits for 12 out of every 60 months; in Virginia, individuals may receive benefits for nine months out of every year. In Maryland, individuals may receive benefits for nine or 12 out of every 36 months, depending on the basis of their eligibility for General Assistance; in Nevada, individuals may receive benefits for one, three, or six months out of each year.
- *Five states have time limits for a subset of recipients.* In California, employable recipients have a time limit (nine months out of every year for recipients who are participating in job training, six

⁸ In addition to these four states, Washington has adopted a time limit of 24 out of every 60 months, but courts have blocked its implementation.

months out of every year for recipients who are not).⁹ Colorado, Pennsylvania, and Vermont have a time limit for recipients who are receiving aid for a disability that is due to alcoholism or drug abuse; Pennsylvania also includes victims of domestic violence in its time limit. Illinois has a time limit for individuals who are eligible for assistance solely because they are homeless.

Benefit Levels

General Assistance benefit levels are very low. Most states or county guidelines set maximum standard benefit levels; these maximum levels are below half of the federal poverty line for an individual in all states but one¹⁰ and below one-quarter of the federal poverty level in most of the states. Some states provide benefits to recipients either in cash or through vouchers; others make all payments directly to landlords or service providers. Although the services vary for each state, the benefit levels are intended to help recipients meet their basic needs, such as shelter and utilities.

Moreover, some of the lowest benefit levels are in states that only serve individuals whom the state has found to be unable to work and are therefore, by definition, unable to supplement the low benefits with earnings (see Figure 2). For programs serving only unemployable persons, the median benefit level is \$215 monthly, whereas the median benefit level for programs that also serve employable individuals is \$381. For example, Delaware, Illinois, Kansas, and Ohio serve only unemployable individuals, yet they set the maximum benefit level at or below \$115.

Medical Coverage

In most of the 30 states with General Assistance programs, most recipients qualify for health coverage, generally through Medicaid or a state-funded health care program.

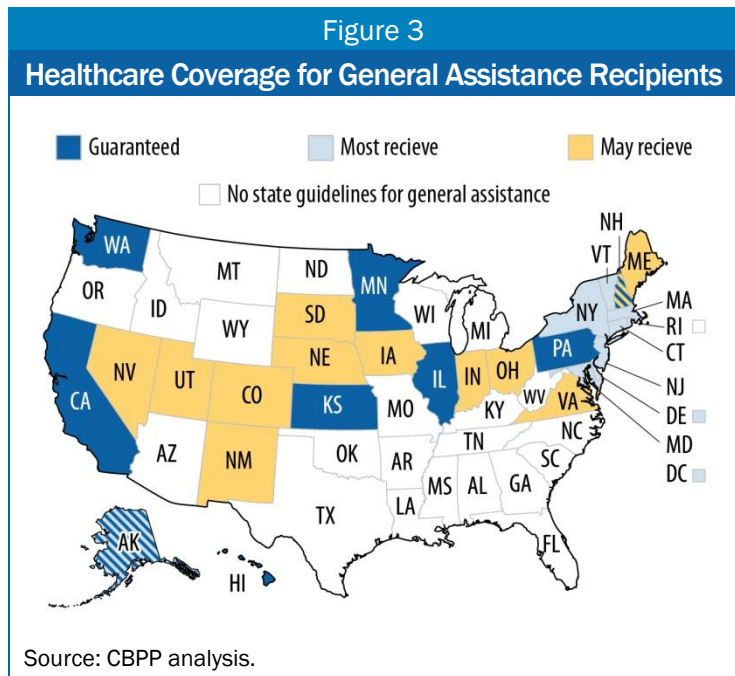
In ten of these states, General Assistance recipients are guaranteed health coverage, either through Medicaid or a state-run medical program, and approved applicants are automatically placed in a medical assistance program.¹¹ In the General Assistance programs in nine states, most recipients receive health coverage through either Medicaid or a state-run medical program with similar eligibility requirements, but receipt of General Assistance does not guarantee health coverage and recipients must apply separately for the medical assistance program.¹² In 13 states, General Assistance recipients may qualify for health coverage if the recipient can show medical need and

⁹ The California information is based on the Los Angeles County program. Some other counties have different time limits (in many cases, three months out of every 12). Other California counties also have different — and generally higher — benefit levels than Los Angeles.

¹⁰ New Hampshire's Local Welfare program is the only program that doesn't specify a maximum benefit level for any category of recipient.

¹¹ These ten states include New Hampshire and Alaska where health coverage is guaranteed for one but not the other of the two General Assistance programs in the state. New Hampshire's Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled program guarantees health coverage, as does Alaska's General Relief Assistance program. Both states have different medical coverage policies for each of their two General Assistance programs; as a result, they are included in more than one count in this paragraph. See footnotes 12 and 13, below.

¹² These nine states include Alaska because its Interim Assistance program falls into this group.



meet other program criteria, for example, an inability to obtain coverage without the program's intervention.¹³ (See Figure 3; see footnote 11 for details on Alaska and New Hampshire.)

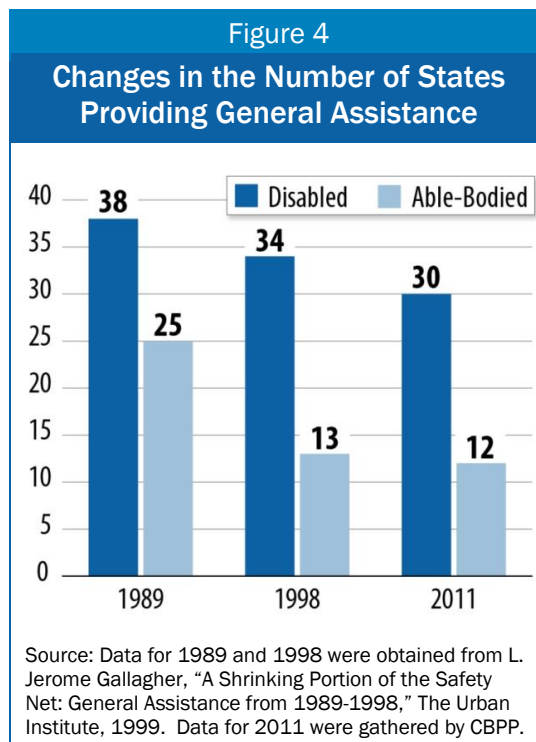
The Affordable Care Act (ACA), enacted in 2010, will extend Medicaid eligibility to all individuals at or below 138 percent of the federal poverty line, starting in 2014, with an option for states to expand eligibility earlier. Prior to this change, states could not receive federal matching funds to provide health coverage to non-disabled, non-elderly childless adults unless they obtained a federal waiver. The ACA provision will allow low-income childless adults, including those

receiving General Assistance, to qualify for Medicaid. Connecticut, the District of Columbia, and Minnesota have taken up the early adoption option and now extend Medicaid to childless adults. California also obtained a waiver that enables it to continue and to strengthen county-level adult coverage initiatives. Other states that provide Medicaid to some groups of non-disabled childless adults are Hawaii, Montana, New York, and Vermont. In these states, most General Assistance recipients have become eligible for Medicaid.

General Assistance Has Eroded Severely

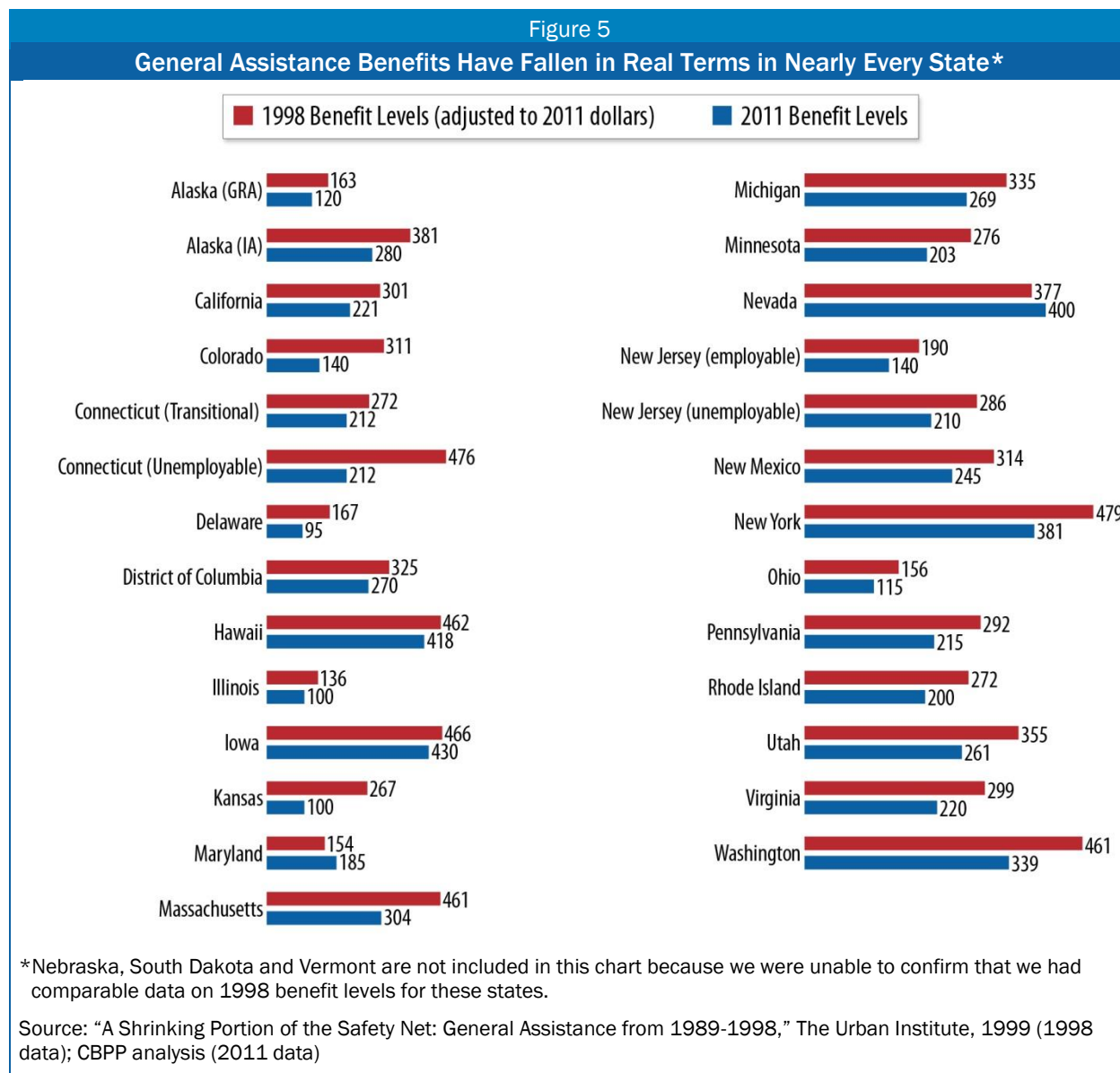
General Assistance has become a much weaker safety net over the years. Many states have eliminated their programs or have scaled them back by reducing funding, imposing tighter eligibility restrictions and/or time limits, and/or reducing benefits. These cutbacks continued during and after the recession despite high unemployment and the growing number of individuals who have exhausted unemployment insurance benefits. Consequently, an increasing number of needy individuals are left without any cash assistance or similar income support.

This erosion has been going on for more than two decades. Between 1989 and 1998, Montana, South



¹³ These 13 states include New Hampshire because its Local Welfare program does not include coverage.

Carolina, and Wyoming eliminated their General Assistance programs altogether and 12 other states eliminated General Assistance for employable individuals, while continuing some aid to unemployable persons. By 1998, only 13 states offered any aid to individuals considered employable. (See Figure 4.)



Between 1998 and 2010, another five states — Missouri, Oregon, Arizona, Wisconsin, and Idaho — eliminated their statewide programs,¹⁴ and Utah eliminated General Assistance for employable childless individuals (while maintaining it for unemployable people).

¹⁴ Idaho eliminated its Aged, Blind, and Disabled program in 2010. Although the state statute still requires a General Assistance program and Ada County continues to offer one, aid is provided to recipients for only one month in a year, which the Urban Institute — and this report — consider emergency assistance rather than General Assistance.

Almost all the states that did not eliminate their programs over the last two decades provide lower benefits now than they did in 1998, in real dollars (i.e., after adjusting for inflation), as Figure 5 shows.

- Ten states have increased *nominal* benefit levels since 1998, but only three of them — South Dakota, Nevada, and Maryland — by a large enough margin to provide at least as much in *real* (inflation-adjusted) dollars as they did in 1998.
- Another 11 states have frozen benefit levels since 1998, reducing them by 26.5 percent in real dollars.
- Five states¹⁵ have reduced benefits between 1998 and January 2011 even in nominal dollars. Colorado and Kansas imposed the most significant rollbacks; benefits there are less than half their 1998 levels in real dollars. (Additional states have reduced benefits since January 2011; see discussion below.)

Cutbacks Continuing in 2011

At least ten states considered proposals to eliminate or scale back General Assistance in 2011. Two states eliminated their programs. Five others reduced benefit levels and/or restricted eligibility:

- Illinois stopped its statewide program effective July 1, ending benefits for 10,000 individuals in Chicago, though locally funded programs have continued in other areas of the state.
- Kansas stopped providing cash benefits for General Assistance recipients statewide effective July 1. (Kansas will continue funding medical care for another year.)
- Washington reduced benefit levels from \$339 (the benefit level for the last 20 years) to \$266 on February 1 and to \$196 on April 1. Washington also scaled back its General Assistance program by requiring recipients to have a more severe disability that meets the SSI standards; a disability that prevents employment will no longer be sufficient. This change, slated for November 2011, means that approximately 19,000 low-income individuals will cease receiving cash assistance benefits.
- The District of Columbia is reducing General Assistance funding by about two-thirds.¹⁶ This will force the program to maintain an enrollment cap it temporarily imposed earlier this year because of budget cuts instituted in December 2010, shrinking the program sharply over time through attrition.
- Minnesota now requires that, to qualify for General Assistance, individuals must be unable to

¹⁵ In Connecticut, the maximum benefit level was redesigned to provide the same maximum benefit for the different categories of unemployable recipients, resulting in a slight increase for some recipients and a significant decrease for others.

¹⁶ Although D.C.'s local appropriation for fiscal year 2012 is the same as for 2011, D.C. will no longer be able to use federal funds that supplemented local funding in previous years, which effectively reduces program funding by about two-thirds.

work for at least 45 days rather than 30 days.

- Michigan reduced its benefit levels from a maximum of \$269 to \$200 a month.
- Rhode Island reduced benefit payments to General Public Assistance recipients to \$200 every four months rather than \$200 every other month. (Those applying for SSI will continue to receive \$200 every month.)

Three other states considered but did not adopt their cutback proposals: Delaware to eliminate the program; Maine to reduce funding (resulting in a variety of changes, including limiting eligibility to once a year); and New Jersey to reduce benefits by \$15 a month.

Conclusion

By and large, the federal government has left it up to states to provide basic assistance to childless adults in need of assistance. While states have never provided significant support for this group, the safety net for these individuals has weakened significantly over the past two decades and continues to erode. This trend is especially troubling because of the persistently high levels of unemployment that make it particularly difficult for this group to find work. As a growing number of jobless and elderly exhaust their unemployment insurance benefits, poor childless adults are becoming even more vulnerable to severe hardship than in the past and are doing so in greater numbers.

Appendix I: Methodology

We collected information on General Assistance current policies and proposals for 2011 using a range of methods: checking state and county public assistance agency websites (including manuals and rules) and directly contacting agencies or advocates in states to seek or confirm information. We looked at the policies and benefit levels as of January 2011 and indicated where we have information on any subsequent changes.

Not all state programs are named “General Assistance”; we included state-funded programs available to individuals who are ineligible for other forms of cash public assistance. As a result, we included programs with names such as Interim Assistance, State Disability Assistance, or Local Welfare (see Appendices II and III). Some state General Assistance programs also serve *families* that are ineligible for other aid; we have included this information in Appendix II, but have not otherwise focused on those categories in this report.

For historical information, we relied on reports from the Urban Institute, which include information for 1998 and comparative information back to 1989.¹⁷ Because we compared 2011 program information to the 1998 and 1989 data from the Urban Institute to make comparisons across time, we generally followed the Urban Institute classifications for states with county variability and gathered information for the same county used for the earlier Urban reports (which was, and often still is, the county with the highest population). In some cases, we included different information or classified it differently than in the earlier Urban Institute reports.¹⁸

This report focuses on the 30 states with either a statewide program or statewide guidelines for county or local programs. Some counties in some other states may operate their own programs; we tried to identify such states in Appendix I but did not otherwise collect information on specific county programs. In some cases where historical data from the Urban Institute indicate that a county in such a state operated a program in the past, we were unable to find evidence that the county still offers the program but cannot say with certainty that it no longer does.

¹⁷ L. Jerome Gallagher *et al.*, *State General Assistance Programs 1998*, The Urban Institute, 1999; L. Jerome Gallagher, “A Shrinking Portion of the Safety Net: General Assistance from 1989 to 1998,” The Urban Institute, 1999.

¹⁸ For example, we included New Hampshire’s Aid for Permanently and Totally Disabled program in this report because we concluded that it was comparable to other state General Assistance programs, although the Urban Institute did not include it in its reports.

**Appendix II:
Summary for All States as of January 2011**

	State Program Name	State Guidelines: Uniform Statewide	State Guidelines: Vary by County	No State Program, and no State Guidelines or Requirements for County Programs
Alabama	N/A			X
Alaska	General Relief Assistance Interim Assistance	X X		
Arizona	N/A			X
Arkansas	N/A			X
California	General Assistance or General Relief (GA/GR)		X	
Colorado	Aid to the Needy Disabled	X		
Connecticut	State Administered General Assistance	X		
Delaware	General Assistance	X		
District of Columbia	Interim Disability Assistance	X		
Florida	N/A			X
Georgia	N/A			X
Hawaii	General Assistance Aid to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled	X X		
Idaho	N/A			X
Illinois	General Assistance Transitional Assistance		X	
Indiana	Township Assistance		X	
Iowa	General Assistance		X	
Kansas	General Assistance	X		
Kentucky	Emergency Financial Assistance			X*
Louisiana	N/A			X
Maine	General Assistance		X	
Maryland	Temporary Disability Assistance	X		
Massachusetts	Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children	X		
Michigan	State Disability Assistance	X		
Minnesota	General Assistance	X		
Mississippi	N/A			X
Missouri	N/A			X
Montana	N/A			X
Nebraska	General Assistance		X	
Nevada	Financial Assistance		X	
New Hampshire	Local Welfare Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled	X	X	
New Jersey	General Assistance (Work First NJ)	X		
New Mexico	General Assistance	X		
New York	Safety Net Assistance	X		
North Carolina	N/A			X
North Dakota	General Assistance			X*
Ohio	Disability Financial Assistance	X		
Oklahoma	N/A			X
Oregon	N/A			X
Pennsylvania	General Assistance		X	
Rhode Island	General Public Assistance	X		
South Carolina	N/A			X
South Dakota	County Poor Relief		X	
Tennessee	N/A			X

Appendix II (continued)	State Program Name	State Guidelines: Uniform Statewide	State Guidelines: Vary by County	No State Program, and no State Guidelines or Requirements for County Programs
Texas	N/A			X
Utah	General Assistance	X		
Vermont	General Assistance		X	
Virginia	General Relief		X	
Washington	Disability Lifeline	X		
West Virginia	N/A			X
Wisconsin	Interim Disability Assistance			X*
Wyoming	N/A			X

* While no statewide program or guidelines, for these states we found a website for at least one county in the state that offers General Assistance and included the name of that county program in the State Program Name column.

Appendix III

Detailed Information for States with General Assistance

Note: Information is for January 2011 except for material in red italics, which represents changes in 2011. States whose names appear in red italics eliminated their program in 2011. Details of other cutbacks adopted in 2011 also are shown in red italics.

	State Program	Eligibility Criteria	Duration of Incapacity	Medical Coverage	Benefit Levels (Max. for One Person)	Time Limits
Alaska	General Relief Assistance	Eligibility based solely on financial need.	N/A	All recipients eligible for General Relief Medical Program	\$120	None; eligibility redetermined each month
	Interim Assistance	1 - Elderly, blind, or disabled, and 2 - Awaiting SSI determination	Expected to last for at least 12 months or terminally ill	Most recipients eligible for Medicaid or Chronic and Acute Medical Assistance	\$280	None, but eligibility ends upon final SSI determination
California (Los Angeles County)	General Assistance or General Relief (GA/GR)	Employable	N/A	All recipients eligible for General Relief Healthcare Program; some eligible for Medi-Cal	\$221	6 months every 12 months (9 months if participating in work training)
		Temporary Unemployable: temporary physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment	None			Receive benefits while unemployable
		Unemployable: physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment	Expected to last for at least 12 months or terminally ill			None
Colorado	Aid to the Needy Disabled	Physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment	6 months or more	None	\$140	None (12 month cumulative time limit if disabled due to alcoholism or drug abuse)
Connecticut	State Administered General Assistance	Unemployable: 1 - severe physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment (SSI disability criteria) , or 2 - under age 16 or over 65; over age 55 and no recent work history; full-time high school student; needed at home to care for child under 2 or incapacitated spouse or child; pending receipt of a state or federal means-tested program	6 months or more	Most recipients eligible for Medicaid for Low-Income Adults (replaced SAGA medical program)	\$212	None
		Short-term Transitional: physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment	2 to 6 months (must have recent work history)			
		Long-term Transitional: physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment	6 months or more			

	State Program	Eligibility Criteria	Duration of Incapacity	Medical Coverage	Benefit Levels (Max. for One Person)	Time Limits
Delaware	General Assistance	1 - ill or incapacitated, preventing employment, or 2 - appealing SSI or SSA decision (not to exceed 2 months); needed at home to care for child under 6 or incapacitated spouse or child; over age 55 and no recent work history; full-time high school student	30 days or more	Most recipients eligible for Medicaid	\$95	24 months
<i>District of Columbia (funding reduced; will limit enrollment)</i>	Interim Disability Assistance	Physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment and high probability of receiving SSI	12 months or more	Most recipients eligible for Medicaid or DC Healthcare Alliance	\$270	None, but eligibility ends upon final SSI determination
Hawaii	General Assistance	Physically and/or mentally disabled (including drug abuse); unable to work more than 30 hrs/week; don't meet SSI requirements	60 days or more	All recipients eligible for QUEST	\$418	None
	Aid to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled	1 - meets SSA definition of disabled, or 2 - age 65 or older	Expected to last for at least 12 months or terminally ill	All recipients eligible for QUEST Expanded Access	\$418	None
<i>Illinois (City of Chicago) (Chicago program eliminated; program continues in other parts of state)</i>	General Assistance Transitional Assistance	1 - serious disability preventing employment with an application or appeal pending with SSI, or 2 - temporary illness or incapacity; age 55 or older and underemployed; regularly taking prescribed medication to control seizures, severe high blood pressure, or diabetes; needed at home to care for incapacitated spouse or child; under 20 and full-time student; homeless because court-ordered, domestic violence, or natural disaster	Expected to last for at least 12 months or terminally ill	Full medical coverage if recipient has serious disability. All other recipients are eligible for limited medical assistance with no hospitalization	\$100	None (except 6 month limit if homeless)
Indiana (Center Township of Marion County)	Township Assistance	Based solely on financial need. Must seek and accept employment unless individual is disabled, a minor, over 65 or caring for incapacitated spouse or child	None	May be eligible for coverage through "medical institutions" and/or Medicaid	No overall maximum	None (issues one month's assistance at a time)
Iowa (Polk County)	General Assistance	Individuals and families in financial need due to a mental or physical incapacity preventing employment	None (for long-term incapacity, must be applying for SSI, with disability expected to last for at least 12 months)	None	\$430	None

	State Program	Eligibility Criteria	Duration of Incapacity	Medical Coverage	Benefit Levels (Max. for One Person)	Time Limits
<i>Kansas (program eliminated)</i>	General Assistance	Tier 1: individual meets SSA definition of disability or blindness Tier 2: severe impairment which significantly limits physical and/or mental ability to do basic work activity (Medikan definition)	Expected to last for at least 12 months or terminally ill	All recipients receive coverage through Medicaid or MediKan	\$100	Tier 1: 24 months Tier 2: 12 months
Maine	General Assistance	Eligibility based solely on financial need	N/A	Recipients receive medical assistance if able to show medical need and inability to receive assistance without municipality's assistance	Varies by locality	None, but assistance provided for 30 days with limitless renewals
Maryland	Temporary Disability Assistance	Physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment	3 months or more	Most recipients eligible for Primary Adult Care	\$185	If disability expected to last more than 12 months: 12 months out of 36 months (but no time limit if pursuing SSI or appealing SSI) If disability expected to last less than 12 months: 9 months out of 36 months
Massachusetts	Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children	1 - physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment, or 2 - over 65 years old and waiting for SSI payments; participating in a Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission program; needed at home to care for a child not related to the individual or an incapacitated individual	60 days or more	Most recipients are eligible for MassHealth Basic health care. If the recipient meets the SSI disability standard or is 65 or older, recipient will be eligible for Medicaid	\$303.70	None
Michigan	State Disability Assistance	Caretaker of or individual who is: 1 - certified as having AIDS or unable to work due to mental or physical disability, or 2 - receiving disability-based Medicaid, Michigan Rehabilitation Services or Special Education services; living in a County Infirmity, adult foster care, home for aged, or substance abuse treatment center	90 days or more	Recipients may be eligible for Medicaid (if meet definition of disability) or Adult Medical Program (has capped enrollment)	\$269 <i>\$200</i>	None

	State Program	Eligibility Criteria	Duration of Incapacity	Medical Coverage	Benefit Levels (Max. for One Person)	Time Limits
Minnesota	General Assistance	1 - illness, injury, or incapacity that prevents the person from getting or keeping a job, or 2 - diagnosed mental retardation or mental illness; of advanced age; needed at home to care for a person whose age or medical condition requires continuous care; placed in certified facility for care or treatment or in a shelter facility for battered women; a person under age 18 with consent of the local agency	30 days or more <i>45 days or more</i>	All recipients eligible for General Assistance Medical Care or Medical Assistance	\$203	None
Nebraska	General Assistance	Eligibility based solely on financial need	N/A	Recipients receive medical assistance if able to show medical need	Varies by county Douglas County: Rent: \$400 Non-food items: \$25	None for most counties (during last review, one county had a lifetime limit of 12 months and another one had a limit of 6 months in 12 month period)
Nevada (Clark County)	Financial Assistance	Employable	N/A	None	\$400	1 month in 12 month period
		Employable with employment barrier	N/A			3 months in 12 month period
		Unemployable: physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment; age 62 or older	Expected to last for at least 12 months or terminally ill			6 months in 12 month period
New Hampshire (City of Manchester)	Local Welfare (County Variability)	Eligibility based solely on financial need	N/A	None (may be eligible to have portion of prescription cost covered)	None	None
	Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled (Uniform Statewide)	physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment	Expected to last for at least 48 months or terminally ill	All recipients eligible for Medicaid	\$688	None
New Jersey	General Assistance (Work First NJ)	Employable: single adults and childless couples without children Unemployable: individual doesn't need to meet work requirement if physical and/or mental disability prevents employment	None	Most recipients eligible for NJ Family Care Plan G or Charity Care	\$140 \$210	60 month lifetime limit

	State Program	Eligibility Criteria	Duration of Incapacity	Medical Coverage	Benefit Levels (Max. for One Person)	Time Limits
New Mexico	General Assistance	1 - physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment, or 2 - dependent children who are ineligible for TANF and in financial need	30 days or more	No (does not provide Medicaid to individuals who are awaiting SSI determination)	\$245	None
New York	Safety Net Assistance	Eligibility based on financial need for: single adults; childless couples; children living apart from any adult relative; families of persons abusing drugs or alcohol or refusing drug/alcohol screening, assessment, or treatment; persons who have exceeded the 60-month limit for TANF; aliens who are eligible for temporary assistance but not eligible for federal reimbursement	N/A	Most recipients eligible for Medicaid	Varies by county New York City: \$381	24 month time limit for cash assistance (no time limit for non-cash assistance if head of household disabled)
Ohio	Disability Financial Assistance	1 - physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment, or 2 - individual 60 years or older who was receiving or scheduled to receive financial assistance	9 months or more	None; Hospital Care Assurance Program covers in-patient services for individuals at/below federal poverty line	\$115	None
Pennsylvania	General Assistance	1 - temporary or permanent physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment 2 - under age 18; age 18 through 20 and attending school; parents with a child under age 13 or child with disability under age 21; undergoing drug/alcohol treatment; victim of domestic violence; pregnant woman (ineligible for TANF); adult other than a relative caring for a child under age 13 or incapacitated child or spouse	30 Days	All recipients receive an ACCESS card, therefore are eligible for certain medical services through Medicaid	Varies by county Most counties: \$205 Counties in highest bracket: \$215	None (drug/alcohol abuse or domestic violence victim, lifetime limit of 9 months)
Rhode Island	General Public Assistance	1 - physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment 2 - applied for and found eligible for Title XIX Medical Assistance and actively pursuing and waiting for SSI determination	30 days or more	All recipients eligible for Medicaid or General Public Assistance Medical program	\$200 every other month <i>\$200 every 4 months</i> \$200 every month	None, but eligibility ends upon final SSI determination
South Dakota (Minnehaha County)	County Poor Relief	Eligibility based solely on financial need	N/A	Recipients receive medical assistance if able to show medical need	No overall maximum Rent: \$400 Utilities: \$35	None; each request a one-time request

	State Program	Eligibility Criteria	Duration of Incapacity	Medical Coverage	Benefit Levels (Max. for One Person)	Time Limits
Utah	General Assistance	Single individuals and married couples who have no dependent children residing with them 50% or more of the time and have a physical or mental impairment that prevents employment	60 days or more	None; recipients may apply for Primary Care Network during open enrollment period for a \$50 fee	\$261	12 months out of 60 month period
Vermont	General Assistance	1 - an individual who has or cares for someone who has a physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment 2 - age 65 or older or has a dependent child under age 18 3 - younger than 65 but facing two or more of the following barriers: 55 or older, unable to read/write or has no more than 8th grade education, employed for less than 6 months in the last 5 years, released from mental health institution in last 6 months, participating in drug/alcohol treatment program	30 days or more	Most recipients eligible for Medicaid	No overall maximum. Rent: Chittenden County: \$232 Other counties: \$198 Groceries and personal use: \$28 for 14 days	None (except for 36 month time limit if disability from alcoholism or drug abuse)
Virginia (Fairfax County)	General Relief	Eligibility based solely on financial need. Unemployable: 1 - physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment 2 - unable to find work because of age and/or lack of training/experience or because of illness in family or home responsibilities	30 days or more	Locality chooses whether or not medical coverage is provided	Varies by county. Fairfax County: \$220 Maximum state will reimburse county: \$500 (funded 62.5% from state, 32.5% from county)	Fairfax County: 9 months out of 12 months Virginia guideline: Redetermine assistance for employable individuals every three months. Redetermine assistance for unemployable individuals every twelve months.
Washington	Disability Lifeline	Physical and/or mental incapacity preventing employment <i>Eligibility guidelines altered to disability that meets SSI standard</i>	90 days or more	All recipients eligible for Medicaid (received 1115 waiver to bring recipients onto Medicaid before 2014 switchover)	\$339 <i>\$196</i>	24 months in 60 month period (not enforced due to court order)