

**Responses to Questions from the General Government B Subcommittee
of the Appropriations Committee
for the Office of Policy and Management – Feb. 13, 2025**

- 1. Provide more information on the justice assistance grants. Provide a total dollar amount for each JAG. (A breakdown of what we are putting in and what they are sending us.)**

OPM Response: The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) administers several United States Department of Justice (US DOJ) grants. Four of these grants require a state match or cost sharing, whereby a portion of the project costs must be covered by the state. OPM budgets for the matching funds requirement in the General Fund in the Justice Assistance Grants account, SID 12251.

The following describes in more detail each of the programs Connecticut receives funding for in FY 2025.

I. National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP)

The US DOJ Bureau of Justice Statistics, through NCHIP, provides direct awards and technical assistance to states and localities to improve the quality, timeliness, and immediate accessibility of criminal history records and related information. Complete records require that data from all components of the criminal justice system be integrated and linked, including law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, and corrections. NCHIP assists states to establish an integrated infrastructure that meets the needs of all components.

- 21NCHIP and 22NCHIP require a 10% cash or in-kind match for all federal funds expended through this program.
- The 22NCHIP federal award is the most recent award that requires state match, with a total project budget of \$4,624,670. The split is as follows:
 - Federal share (90%): \$4,162,203
 - State share (10%): \$462,467
- The most recent NCHIP federal awards that OPM has been allocated funding include FY24 National Criminal History Improvement Program, and FY24 National Criminal History Improvement Program Supplemental Funding, these awards do not require state match funding.
- FY 2025, the Judicial Branch and Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) have received state match funds through NCHIP.
 - The Judicial Branch is using funding from NCHIP to hire contractors to develop the security requirements specifications for an electronic document storage system for official records of Connecticut's Criminal Courts. The system will provide a more efficient medium for criminal justice agencies to gain access to official court documents that may be used to support arrest and conviction records in various state and national records repositories.
 - DESPP is utilizing NCHIP funding to enhance multiple projects, such as supporting the implementation and design of Clean Slate, contributing legacy palm print records to the FBI NGI system, and continuing the analysis, assessment and planning related to the ongoing sustainability of DESPP's internally developed message switch.

II. Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Grant Program (RSAT)

The objective of the RSAT grant program is to enhance the capabilities of state, local, and Indian tribal governments to provide residential substance use disorder treatment to adult and juvenile populations during detention or incarceration; prepare them for their reintegration into a community by incorporating reentry planning activities into their treatment programs; and assist them and their communities throughout the reentry process by delivering community-based treatment and other broad-based aftercare services.

- RSAT requires a 25% cash or in-kind match requirement for all federal funds expended through this program.
- The most recent RSAT allocation, RSAT 2024, has a total project budget of \$341,818.67. The split is as follows:
 - Federal share (75%)- \$256,364.00

- State share (25%)- \$85,454.67
- In FY 2025, the Department of Correction was the sole recipient of state match funds through RSAT. DOC uses the RSAT funding to subcontract with Wheeler Clinic and the Connecticut Community Action Recovery (CCAR). Wheeler Clinic provides case management and aftercare services, including conducting screening/assessment, counseling and behavioral health groups, peer recovery support pre- and post-release and other re-entry services. CCAR provides recovery coaching for incarcerated individuals diagnosed with substance use disorder and co-occurring disorders.
- As the recipient of the federal award, OPM is allocated up to 10% of the total federal award to use for administrative purposes. Federal funds used for administrative purposes must be matched at 25%. OPM staff only bill for administrative costs to the grant for activities directly related to the administration of that program including, but not limited to, developing and submitting applications to federal solicitations, reviewing grant applications, meetings with subgrantees, reviewing programmatic and financial reports, reviewing cash requests and supporting documentation, and meetings with federal grant administrators.

III. The Services Training Officers Prosecutors Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program (VAW STOP)

The VAW STOP Formula Grant Program supports community efforts to develop and strengthen effective law enforcement responses, victim services and prosecution strategies in cases involving domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

- The most recent STOP VAW allocation, STOP 2024, has a total project budget of \$2,824,461.33. The split is as follows:
 - Federal share (75%) \$2,118,346
 - State share (25%) \$706,115.33
- VAW STOP requires a 25% cash or in-kind match requirement for all federal funds expended through this grant program not qualifying for an exemption.
- In FY 2025, the Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ), Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV), Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence (The Alliance), and the Hispanic Health Council (HHC) were recipients of state match funds through the VAW STOP formula grant program. OPM has active awards with the Judicial Branch, but there have not been any state match expenditures as of 2/14/25. The following are some examples of how the funding was used in FY 2025:
 - DCJ uses the funding to pay the salaries of three dedicated domestic violence prosecutors located in the New Haven and Hartford Judicial Districts. Additionally, funding was used to send the three prosecutors to national training sessions at the 20th Annual Conference on Crimes Against Women. This professional development opportunity is process-informed and prosecutor-focused and will meet the goal of prosecutors to identify and respond to violent crimes against women more effectively. It is a national forum to disseminate the highest level of training, information and strategies to professionals who are responders and advocates to victims of the many and varied forms of crimes against women including domestic violence and sexual assault.
 - CCADV strengthened and expanded their Law Enforcement Initiative with VAW STOP funds. The funding went towards improving communication, collaboration and outreach with law enforcement statewide, and developing training and professional opportunities that increase the knowledge, skills, abilities, and capacities of law enforcement personnel, domestic violence advocates, and community partners. Also, it was used to encourage new victim engagement strategies that are trauma-informed, and victim centered and maintain CCADV's law enforcement advisory group and support the Survivor Leadership Committee.
 - The Alliance utilized VAW STOP funding to provide services and materials to Spanish speaking survivors and to conduct outreach to and link underserved communities with local sexual assault crisis services. In addition, the funds supported focused efforts to reach youth and older adults who have been impacted by sexual violence. STOP funds are used to support the Post-Conviction Victim Services (PCVS) team which supports victims through the post-conviction process including participation in unit monitoring activities, assisting with community notification, and participating in offender counseling and family meetings.

- HHC provides resources and a network of support services with the funding to individuals who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking within the Hartford area. Additionally, HHC can do outreach services and conduct support groups because of VAW STOP funds.
- As the recipient of the federal award, OPM is allocated up to 10% of the total federal award to use for administrative purposes. Federal funds used for administrative purposes must be matched at 25%. Administrative costs include, but are not limited to, developing and submitting applications to federal solicitations, writing multi-year implementation plans, reviewing grant applications, meetings with subgrantees, reviewing programmatic and financial reports, reviewing cash requests and supporting documentation, and meetings with federal grant administrators.

IV. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency (OJJDP) Title II Formula Grants Program

The OJJDP Title II Formula Grants Program supports state, Tribal, and local delinquency prevention, intervention, and juvenile justice system improvements. The Formula Grants Program is authorized under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act of 1974, as amended, at 34 U.S.C. §§ 11131. Funds are provided directly to states to assist in planning, establishing, operating, coordinating, and evaluating projects directly or through grants and contracts with public and private agencies for the development and implementation of comprehensive juvenile justice plans based on the needs in their jurisdictions. The objective of this grant is to assist states in establishing an effective juvenile justice system that prevents the institutionalization of status offenders, separates juveniles from adult inmates, removes juveniles from adult jails and lockups, and reduces racial and ethnic disparities.

- Connecticut was awarded the FY 2023 OJJDP Title II Formula Grant in the amount of \$600,554. The application for the FY 2024 OJJDP Title II Formula Grant has been submitted.
- The Title II program allows for up to 10% of the award to be used for administrative costs. Any funds used for administrative costs must be matched by the state at 100%, so Connecticut's proposed match for this grant totals \$60,554. To date, OPM has not used any administrative funds available through this grant.

2. Provide nursing home rerun Medicaid rate analysis based on acuity payment phased in over three years. Provide data on where nursing homes are.

OPM Response: The acuity-based reimbursement system was implemented on July 1, 2022, and phased-in over three-years from July 1, 2022, to July 1, 2024. Phase-in parameters included a stop gain and stop loss limit to the Medicaid rate during each year of the phase-in to provide rate predictability for providers during the phase-in period.

The Medicaid rate study analysis and comparison of Connecticut rates was completed *prior to July 1, 2024*, when the stop-loss/stop-gain provisions of the nursing facility rate methodology terminated. An update to the nursing home portion of the rate study below shows Connecticut rates are now comparable to peer states. Rates are now updated quarterly based on the acuity of the resident to support care and increases are reflected in the rates going forward.

		<u>Update: Nursing Home Rate Study</u>							
		Acuity guardrails removed 7/1/24, below reflects rates in effect 1/1/2025							
		Comparison of Connecticut NF Per Diem Rates to Rates of Comparison States							
			CT[1]	MA[2]	ME	NJ	NY	OR[3]	CT as % of Five-State Comparison
		Number of Providers	176	344	90	319	594	130	
		Low Per Diem	\$210.85		\$166.21	\$232.97	\$161.58	\$478.15	81.18%
		High Per Diem	\$440.63		\$468.03	\$358.30	\$658.48	\$478.15	89.79%
increase >>>	\$31.85	Median Per Diem	\$329.98		\$302.51	\$270.68	\$271.38	\$478.15	99.79%
increase >>>	\$30.89	Average Per Diem	\$328.31	\$326.00	\$305.11	\$271.77	\$279.35	\$478.15	98.86%
		Acuity Index	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	

3. Provide income limits (elderly and veterans property tax).

OPM Response: Attached as separate document.

Renters Rebate for Elderly Disabled Renters Tax Relief Program

- Qualifying income limits
- [Renters Questions and Answer Booklet](#)
 - Applicants shall not receive financial aid or subsidy from federal, state, county or municipal funds, excluding Social Security receipts, energy assistance, SSI payments, veteran's benefits, subsidized housing accommodations and DSS cash assistance. The cash assistance received, if less than the Renter's Rebate, will be deducted from the check, provided it leaves \$10.00 or more. If the check is not \$10.00 or more, it will not be sent.

ELDERLY FREEZE / ELDERLY CIRCUIT BREAKER:

Old program:

- [Homeowners Elderly Disabled Freeze Tax Relief Program](#)
- CGS 12-129b
- No new applicants since 1978

Current program:

- [Homeowners Elderly Disabled Circuit Breaker Tax Relief Program](#)
- CGS 12-170aa, 12-170bb and 12-170cc
- Eligible: Elderly (65 and over) or totally disabled, and whose annual incomes do not exceed certain limits. The credit amount is calculated by the local assessor and applied by the tax collector to the applicant's real property tax bill. The amount of the credit that may be granted is up to \$1,250 for married couples and \$1,000 for single persons.

4. Re: previous question, what would the impact be if the income levels were raised?

OPM Response: CGS 12-170e determines the qualifying income for renters and provides the rate of adjustment methodology. Any adjustment in the qualifying income will affect the number of eligible program applicants. This number is adjusted annually, and we have seen a consistent level of applicants. Over the last five years, OPM has

received an average of 47,427 applications annually, and over the last three years OPM has received an average of 46,629 applicants annually.

5. How many towns are subject to oversight by the Municipal Accountability Review Board?

OPM Response: Two: West Haven and Hartford.

6. Clarify what is included in the adjustment titled “Annualize the Cost of Existing Wage Agreements.”

OPM Response: OPM creates adjustments to every agency’s budget to annualize the cost of existing wage agreements and to ensure that proposed appropriations adequately support anticipated payroll costs. The adjustments are based upon filled positions (i.e., “belly buttons”) and payroll estimates are based upon actual payrolls. These adjustments do not include increases for vacant positions.

ATTACHMENT - *QUALIFYING INCOME LIMITS 2024*

Date: December 12, 2024

To: Assessors and Municipal Agents

From: Patrick Sullivan, Associate Fiscal Administrative Officer

CC: Martin L. Heft, Undersecretary, Office of Policy and Management
Christine Goupil, Office of Policy and Management
Duke Chen, Office of Legislative Research
Christopher Perillo and Robert Wysock, Office of Fiscal Analysis
Jennifer Bernier, CT Legislative Library

Subject: **QUALIFYING INCOME FOR TAX RELIEF PROGRAM YEAR 2024**

The following tables show the levels of qualifying income for the Elderly and Totally Disabled Tax Relief Program applications to be filed in calendar year 2025. These levels are to be used for:

- 2024 Grand List [Homeowners' - Elderly/Disabled \(Circuit Breaker\) Tax Relief Program](#)
- 2024 Program Year [Renters' Rebate For Elderly/Disabled Renters Tax Relief Program](#)
- 2025 Grand List [Veterans' Additional Exemption Tax Relief Program](#) and may be used for any local option programs.

PLEASE NOTE: Homeowner applications that were taken for the 2023 Grand List (RENEWALS) are calculated for the 2024 Grand List using the 2023 qualifying income schedule, NOT the schedule below.

Homeowners
Income and Grant Information - 2024 Benefit Year
Filing period February 1 - May 15, 2025

Income		Tax Credit %		Tax Credit Maximum		Tax Credit Minimum	
<u>Over</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Unmarried</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Unmarried</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Unmarried</u>
\$0	\$22,700	50%	40%	\$1,250	\$1,000	\$400	\$350
\$22,700	\$30,400	40%	30%	\$1,000	\$750	\$350	\$250
\$30,400	\$37,900	30%	20%	\$750	\$500	\$250	\$150
\$37,900	\$45,200	20%	10%	\$500	\$250	\$150	\$150
\$45,200	\$55,100	10%	-0-	\$250	-0-	\$150	-0-

Renters
Income and Grant Information – 2024 Benefit Year
Filing period April 1 – September 30, 2025

Income		Maximum Rebate		Minimum Rebate	
<u>Over</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Single</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Single</u>
\$0	\$22,700	\$900	\$700	\$400	\$300
\$22,700	\$30,400	\$700	\$500	\$300	\$200
\$30,400	\$37,900	\$500	\$250	\$200	\$100
\$37,900	\$45,200	\$250	\$150	\$100	\$50
\$45,200	\$55,100	\$150	\$0	\$50	\$0

The standard monthly premium for Medicare Part B enrollees will be \$174.70 for 2024. Annual Medicare premiums for calendar year 2024 therefore, are \$2,098.80 for a single applicant and \$4,197.60 for married applicants. WE CONTINUE TO REQUIRE A FORM SSA1099, OR IT'S EQUIVALENT FOR EACH HOMEOWNER AND RENTER APPLICANT TO BE PROVIDED AT THE INTAKE SITE.

The Additional Veterans' exemption for income qualifying applicants for the 2025 Grand List will be based on the following income maximums: The maximum for single applicants will be \$45,200.00; the maximum for married applicants will be \$55,100.00. Also, if applicable in your municipality, the LOCAL OPTION exemption for the Totally Disabled, Blind and Veterans' programs may use these income maximums.

100% V. A. determined Disabled Veterans will continue to use \$18,000.00 for single applicants and \$21,000.00 for married applicants (adjusted gross income only; non-taxable Social Security Income is not considered).

If there are any questions regarding any of the income limits stated above, contact 860.418.6406 or patrick.j.sullivan@ct.gov.