



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

July 27, 2023

Dear Partner in Health and Human Services,

Since you work for a human services organization or health-related entity that receives state funding, we are writing to update you on the status of the Commonwealth's budget.

As you may know, the State Senate passed HB 611, the General Appropriations bill for FY 2023-2024, on June 30, 2023, and the State House concurred on July 5, 2023. Now that the budget has passed both the House and the Senate, Governor Josh Shapiro will sign this bipartisan budget as soon as it reaches his desk.

In order for the Governor to sign this budget bill, the Senate President Pro Tempore must first complete the simple administrative step of delivering a signed physical copy of the bill to him. Unfortunately, the Pro Tempore — who is the only person with the power to call the Senate into session to complete this procedural step — has adjourned the Senate until September 18, 2023. If she does not reconvene sooner, or until she does, we do not have the ability to disburse critical state and federal funding at this time.

We recognize the inner workings of Harrisburg are often complex, but in this case, the situation is relatively simple. This is unlike previous years when our Commonwealth faced budget impasses where the two chambers of the Legislature could not agree — they have already agreed and passed a bipartisan budget. It is now awaiting the necessary, procedural step that only the Senate Pro Tempore can complete.

If the Senate does not return before September 18, 2023, the Commonwealth will be unable to disburse an estimated \$5.9 billion in planned state and federal funding, including some funding that you would normally expect to receive.

Please know that Governor Shapiro finds the failure of our full-time state legislature to reconvene and deliver a signed copy of an already-passed budget bill unacceptable and has repeatedly urged the Senate to return to the Capitol immediately so that he can sign this bill and get you the critical funding needed to support your work.

In the short term, it's important for you to know how this situation will impact your organization and its fiscal responsibilities. To that end, we have compiled the following general information about some of the payments from the Departments of Aging, Drug and Alcohol Programs, Health, and Human Services that will be delayed until the Senate reconvenes and the budget can be signed into law.



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

**Department of Aging cannot distribute:**

- \$15 million in payments to the Area Agencies on Aging, beginning in August.
- Approximately \$1 million in funding for Shared Housing for the Elderly.

**Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs cannot distribute:**

- \$11.5 million to the Single County Authorities, beginning in July.
- \$140,000 for training of substance use disorder and problem gambling service professionals, to begin in July.
- \$20 million in State Opioid Response funding, beginning in August.

**Department of Health cannot distribute:**

- Reimbursements to County Municipal Health Departments.
- More than \$2 million to support operation and administration of EMS services.
- \$4 million to school districts for health services, beginning in July.
- More than \$2 million in payments for the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, beginning in July.
- Payments for critical health services, including, but not limited to: Tuberculosis screening, Cystic Fibrosis, Lyme Disease and Cancer Screening, beginning in August.
- More than \$1 million in payments for Maternal and Child Health services and \$500k for Newborn Screening, beginning in September.

**Department of Human Services cannot distribute:**

- \$27 million in quarterly advances for Behavioral Services, beginning in July.
- Quarterly advances for Breast Cancer Screening services.
- \$730 million in County Child Welfare payments, beginning in July.
- \$7.5 million in payments for Domestic Violence, beginning in July.
- \$7 million in quarterly advances from the Human Services Development Fund.
- An estimated \$26 million in Child Support Enforcement payments, beginning in July.
- \$3.6 million in payments for Rape Crisis, beginning in July.
- Approximately \$10 million for Community-Based Family Centers, beginning in July.
- \$10 million in quarterly advance payments for Homeless Assistance, beginning in July.

We recognize this information is concerning, and it is to the Governor and us as well. Our Administration continues to urge the Senate to reconvene immediately, and we are encouraged by the Senate Pro Tempore's recent public comments that she will send the bill to the Governor in August. As soon as she acts, we will work to support you and your organization as you manage the current situation.



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

As soon as the Senate reconvenes and delivers the bill to the Governor's desk for his signature, we will work expeditiously to put these investments to work for communities across Pennsylvania once the FY 2023-2024 budget is enacted.

As always, thank you for everything you do in support of public health and human services across our great Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Valerie A. Arkoosh in blue ink.

Valerie A. Arkoosh, MD, MPH  
Secretary of Human Services

Handwritten signature of Debra L. Bogen MD in blue ink.

Debra L. Bogen, MD, FAAP  
Acting Secretary of Health

Handwritten signature of Latika D. Davis-Jones in blue ink.

Latika D. Davis-Jones, PhD, MPH, MSW  
Secretary of Drug and Alcohol Programs

Handwritten signature of Jason Kavulich in blue ink.

Jason Kavulich  
Secretary of Aging