The County Human Services and Education Landscape

January 2026

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Executive Summary

Regardless of population size, geography and available resources, counties are deeply invested in our residents' health and well-being. Every day, we provide services that help vulnerable individuals and families thrive, functioning as an integral part of the federal, state and local partnership in human service delivery. Whether keeping families sheltered when they face homelessness, providing nutrition support to infants and toddlers, operating job training programs, or protecting children from abuse and neglect, counties provide services that break cycles of poverty and help our residents thrive. The role of counties varies widely from state to state, but human services and education expenditures are among the largest parts of county budgets: every year, counties invest $63.5 billion in federal, state and local resources and employ 248,000 human services workers to provide safety net services for millions of residents. Additionally, counties spend $121 billion annually on elementary, secondary and post-secondary education.

While many federal human services and education programs are delivered as a partnership between the federal government and states, certain states further delegate the administration of key safety net programs to county governments. However, county administration differs by program and can include a range of responsibilities, such as contributing administrative dollars, making eligibility determinations, delivering services or contracting with providers, determining how to spend program funds, contributing to Maintenance of Effort (MOE) and non-federal share requirements, collecting data to meet program requirements, enrolling program participants and more.

This resource provides a breakdown of the county, state and federal partnership key human services and education programs.

Methodology

This report's assessment of the county role in program administration draws on a wide array of sources such as state plan submissions, state statute, federal reports, agency websites and direct feedback from county government officials. In some instances, we rely on inferences or estimations based on the best available data. Feedback and suggestions can be directed to Emma Conover, Associate Legislative Director, Human Services and Education at **econover@naco.org.**

Public Education

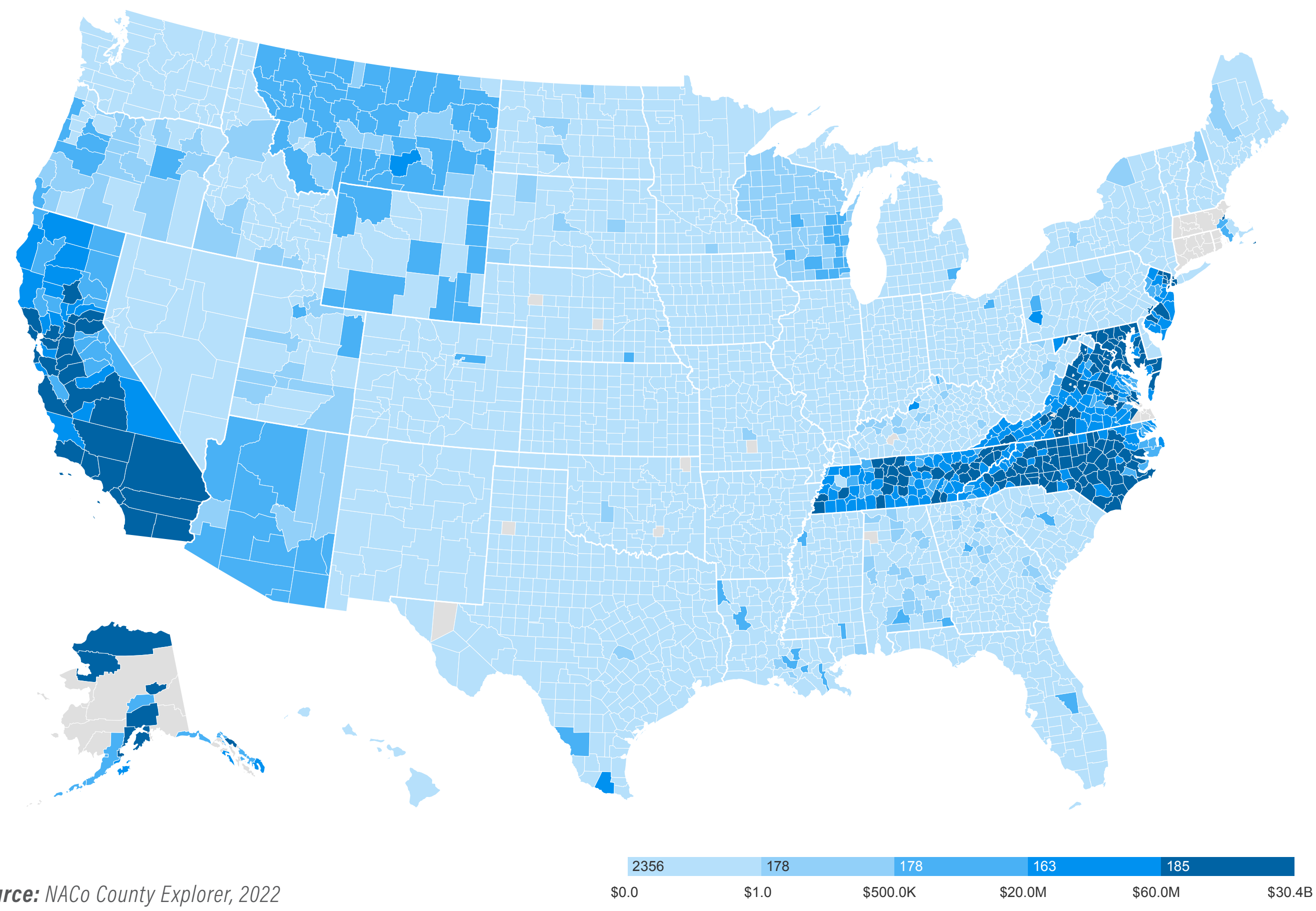
While the federal government enacts legislation and establishes policies that shape and fund education at the national level, education is primarily a state and local responsibility. States and communities, along with public and private organizations, establish and fund schools and colleges, develop curricula and determine requirements for enrollment and graduation.

Elementary and Secondary Education

While K-12 education is generally a state and local partnership, the county role in that partnership varies, as most states designate authority to independently elected or appointed school boards. In almost all states, school districts are mandated to raise a certain amount of revenue for schools through property and other taxes, with the state providing the remainder.

Public school districts are only dependent on county governments in Alaska, Tennessee, North Carolina, Maryland and Virginia, meaning counties in those states have a statutory obligation to directly fund K-12 schools. Exceptions include unique educational settings such as agricultural extension schools, special or alternative education programs and vocational schools, which are in some instances dependent on county governments

COUNTY EXPENDITURES ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION



Source: *NACo County Explorer, 2022* in Arizona, California, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey and Wisconsin. Additionally, the Coos County School district in New Hampshire is dependent on the county government. [1]

Counties may also contribute funds to K-12 public education in states where they are allowed to increase property taxes or impose sales taxes and excise taxes (often via voter referendum), the revenue from which can support K-12 education. Each year, counties invest an estimated $113 billion dollars in K-12 education. [2]

Even when counties do not play a direct role in funding K-12 education, we share a tax base with school districts and often provide complementary services to the same students through our other roles and responsibilities.

Post-Secondary Education

Counties' decision-making authority in the post-secondary education sector varies; however, counties remain critical actors in driving integration and coordination among human services, workforce and economic programs and systems to strengthen career pathways for residents. Each year, counties invest $9 billion in higher education, including 2-year junior colleges or community colleges, 4-year universities and graduate schools, agricultural colleges, land grant institutions and other institutions granting post-secondary education degrees. Many counties also have career readiness or educational attainment initiative that partner with higher education.

Community colleges represent a significant area for county involvement. In 2024, 921 two-year public colleges served communities across the nation. Funded by a combination of tuition and public dollars, state and local contributions represent the largest share of community college revenue. [3] Local property taxes are overwhelmingly the main source of local funding for community colleges, though other taxes and appropriations from local school districts, cities and county governments also provide funding streams. As with K-12 education, the county role in funding and operating community colleges varies. However, community colleges in New York, New Jersey, Maryland and North Carolina are dependent on funding from county governments. Counties in California, Mississippi, Michigan, Montana and Ohio may also play a more limited role in funding community colleges and/or technical and vocational schools.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE REVENUES BY SOURCE

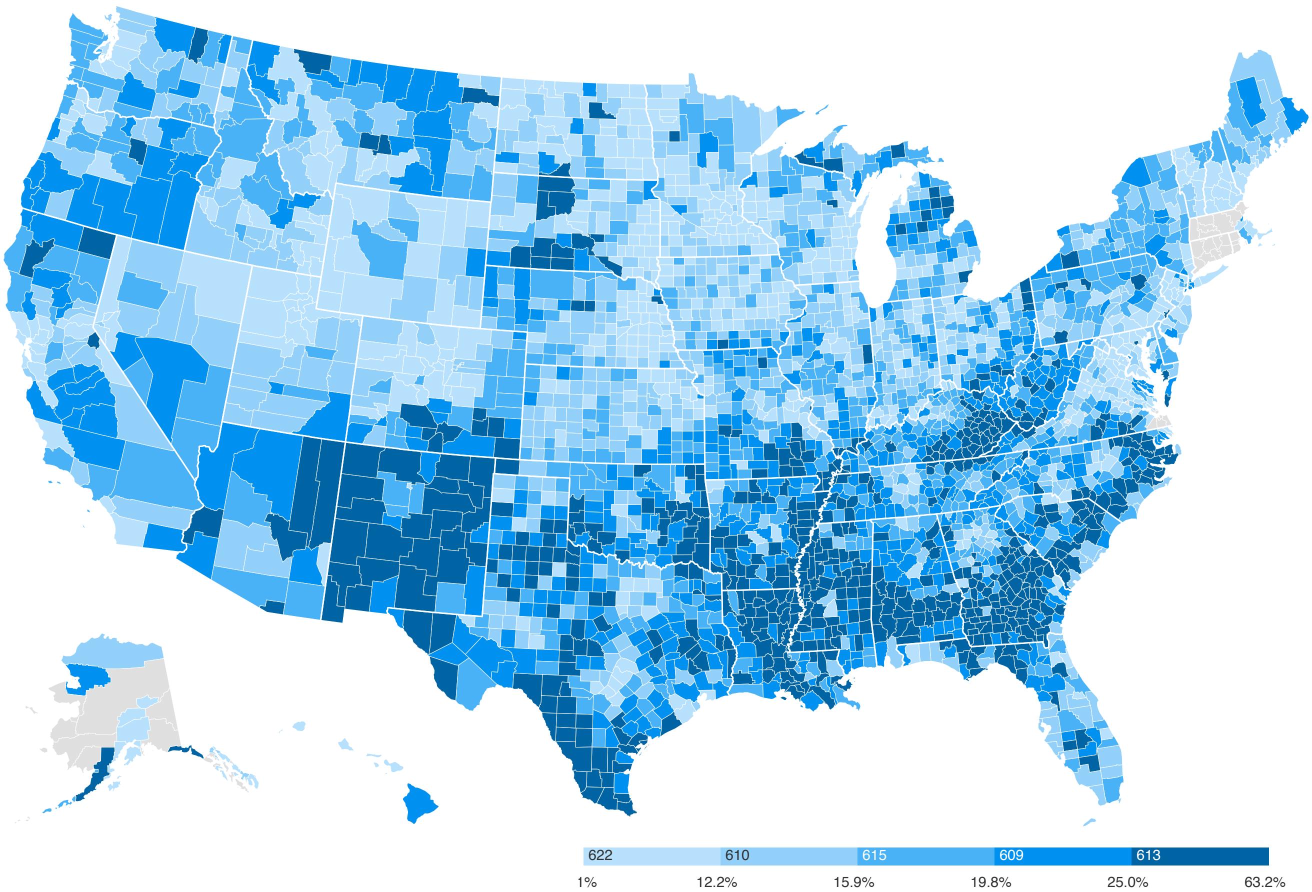
State	$24 B	31.7%
Tuition	$15 B	24.1%
Local	$15.7 B	20.6%
Other	$2.9 B	3.8%
Total	$76.1 B	100%

Source: *American Association of Community Colleges, Fast Facts 2024*

Children and Families

Counties are key intergovernmental partners across the many initiatives administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to combat poverty, stabilize families, prevent child abuse and neglect, promote early childhood development and more.

2023 CHILD POVERTY RATE



Source: *NACo County Explorer, 2023*

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)

CCDF is the federal government's funding source for child care subsidies to help eligible low-income families access childcare and improve the quality of childcare for all children.

County governments are responsible for administering CCDF in eight states, according to the most recent available state plans: Colorado, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, county administered CCDF states represented $3.1 billion in total federal, state and local program expenditures (roughly 19 percent).[4] County administered CCDF states represented 16 percent of total children served by the program on an average monthly basis that same year. [5]

STATE	TOTAL FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL CCDF EXPENDITURES IN FY 2022
Alabama	$290,028,771
Alaska	$42,627,462
Arizona	$322,824,548
Arkansas	$221,682,300
California	$1,472,877,994
Colorado	$221,937,618
Connecticut	$172,569,544
Delaware	$70,736,572
Florida	$1,083,048,050
Georgia	$625,660,993
Hawaii	$81,855,243
Idaho	$144,003,566
Illinois	$465,839,492
Indiana	$366,477,545
Iowa	$165,849,363
Kansas	$138,214,795
Kentucky	$211,504,429
Louisiana	$334,377,637
Maine	$58,753,751
Maryland	$242,267,667
Massachusetts	$487,438,791
Michigan	$698,023,298
Minnesota	$206,510,840
Mississippi	$170,022,469
Missouri	$289,603,974
Montana	$54,553,556
Nebraska	$79,879,421
Nevada	$97,374,354
New Hampshire	$39,825,235
New Jersey	$658,584,991
New Mexico	$187,121,763
New York	$825,191,780
North Carolina	$460,627,170
North Dakota	$42,603,558
Ohio	$507,652,972
Oklahoma	$257,190,682
Oregon	$174,649,784
Pennsylvania	$530,372,101
Rhode Island	$49,328,142
South Carolina	$238,797,466
South Dakota	$27,591,155
Tennessee	$335,971,131
Texas	$1,407,574,435
Utah	$179,371,727
Vermont	$33,093,721
Virginia	$263,081,360
Washington	$404,708,430
West Virginia	$144,429,085
Wisconsin	$255,101,936
Wyoming	$24,309,836
TOTAL	**$16,051,716,235**

CCDF ADMINISTRATION

County   State

Source: *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services FY 2022 CCDF Expenditure and Program Data*

STATE	TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED IN FY 2022
Alabama	36,600
Alaska	-
Arizona	26,900
Arkansas	23,200
California	176,300
Colorado	15,900
Connecticut	15,800
Delaware	6,400
Florida	98,500
Georgia	56,600
Hawaii	4,700
Idaho	6,200
Illinois	62,300
Indiana	33,200
Iowa	13,200
Kansas	11,700
Kentucky	19,700
Louisiana	23,000
Maine	4,700
Maryland	16,500
Massachusetts	26,700
Michigan	30,900
Minnesota	18,900
Mississippi	22,700
Missouri	28,900
Montana	2,600
Nebraska	8,400
Nevada	6,600
New Hampshire	3,000
New Jersey	36,200
New Mexico	14,700
New York	66,000
North Carolina	35,400
North Dakota	3,200
Ohio	46,000
Oklahoma	29,100
Oregon	14,400
Pennsylvania	79,700
Rhode Island	4,100
South Carolina	17,400
South Dakota	3,000
Tennessee	19,300
Texas	146,100
Utah	13,300
Vermont	1,900
Virginia	26,200
Washington	23,300
West Virginia	15,500
Wisconsin	19,200
Wyoming	2,500
NATIONAL TOTAL	**1,434,900**

CHILDREN SERVED IN FY 2022

State

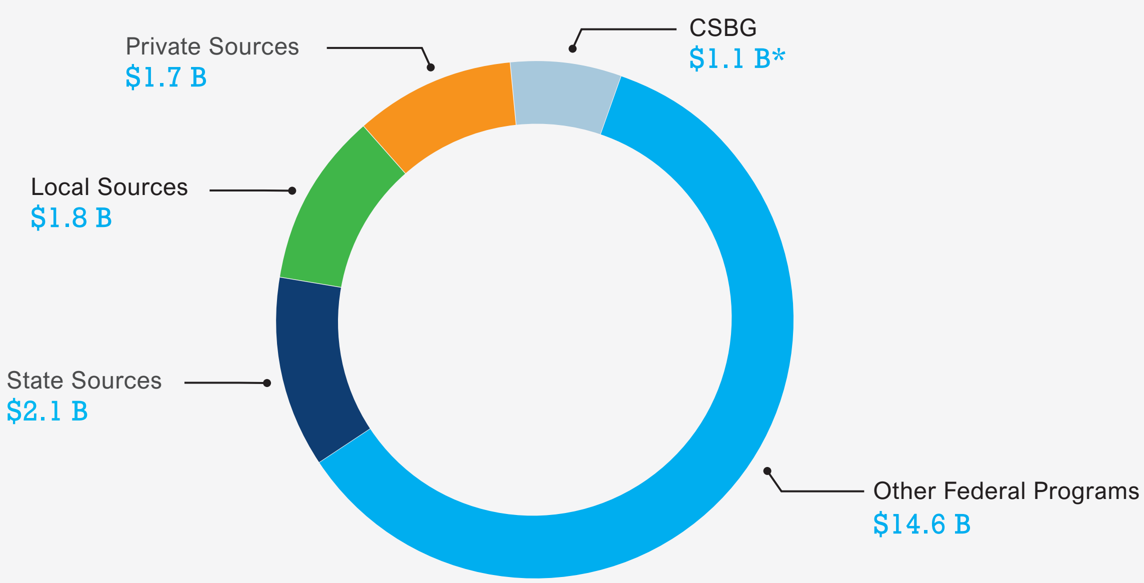
Source: *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services FY 2022 CCDF Expenditure and Program Data*

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

CSBG supports local agencies in designing and implementing anti-poverty programs tailored to an individual community's needs, with a focus on housing, health, employment, income and civic engagement outcomes. Most CSBG funding is distributed to states, which must pass at least 90 percent of the funds to a network of more than 1,000 Community Action Agencies (CAAs) in 99 percent of America's counties. CAAs are local organizations (primarily private nonprofits, though 159 grantees are units of local government) with the mission of reducing poverty through locally designed and delivered programs and services. CAAs are governed by a tripartite board that represents the low-income community, local elected officials, and private and public community stakeholders. In FY 2023, the CSBG network served 10 million individuals living in poverty, including 1 million children aged 5 and under. [6] While CSBG is the core source of federal funding for all CAAs, many also operate a variety of grants that come from federal, state and local sources. In FY 2020, local sources, including county governments, contributed $1.78 billion to Community Action Agencies. [7]

> In FY 2023, the CSBG network served **10 million individuals** living in poverty, including 1 million children aged 5 and under.

FUNDING SOURCES FOR COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES IN FY 2022



Source: *CSBG FY 2022 Report to Congress, p.19*

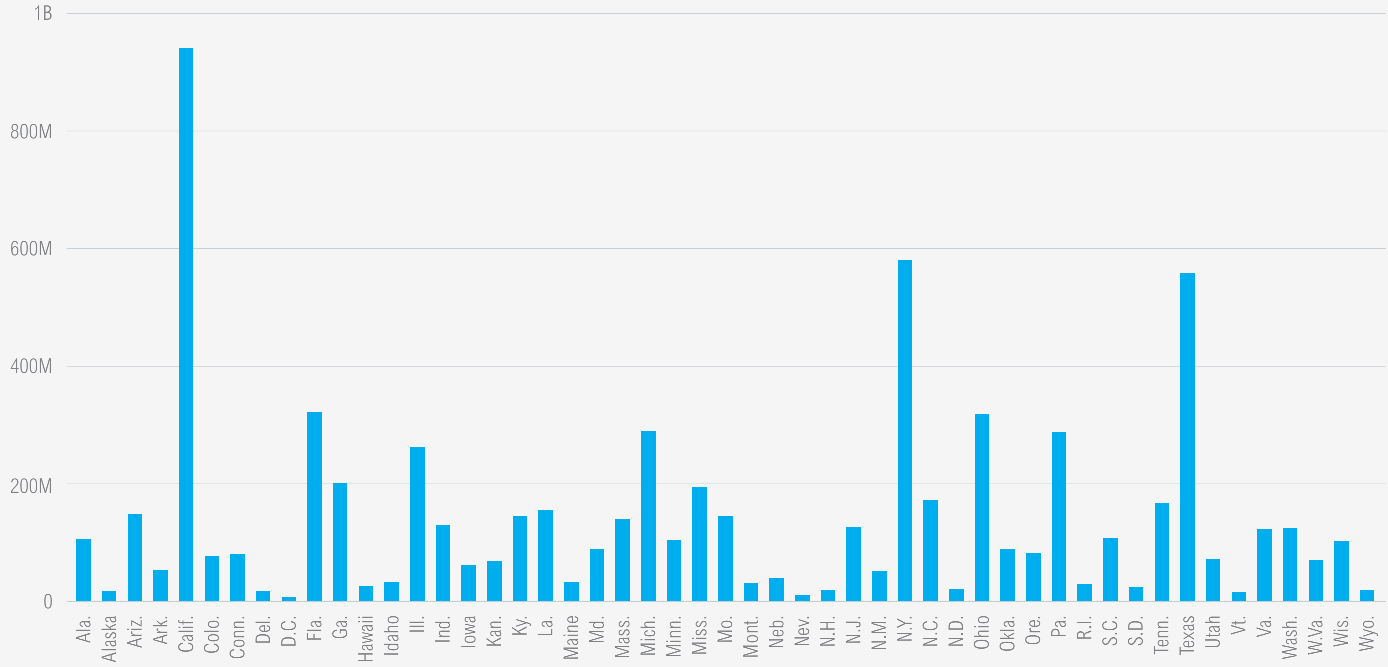
**Includes emergency funding authorized for COVID-19 response*

Head Start and Early Head Start

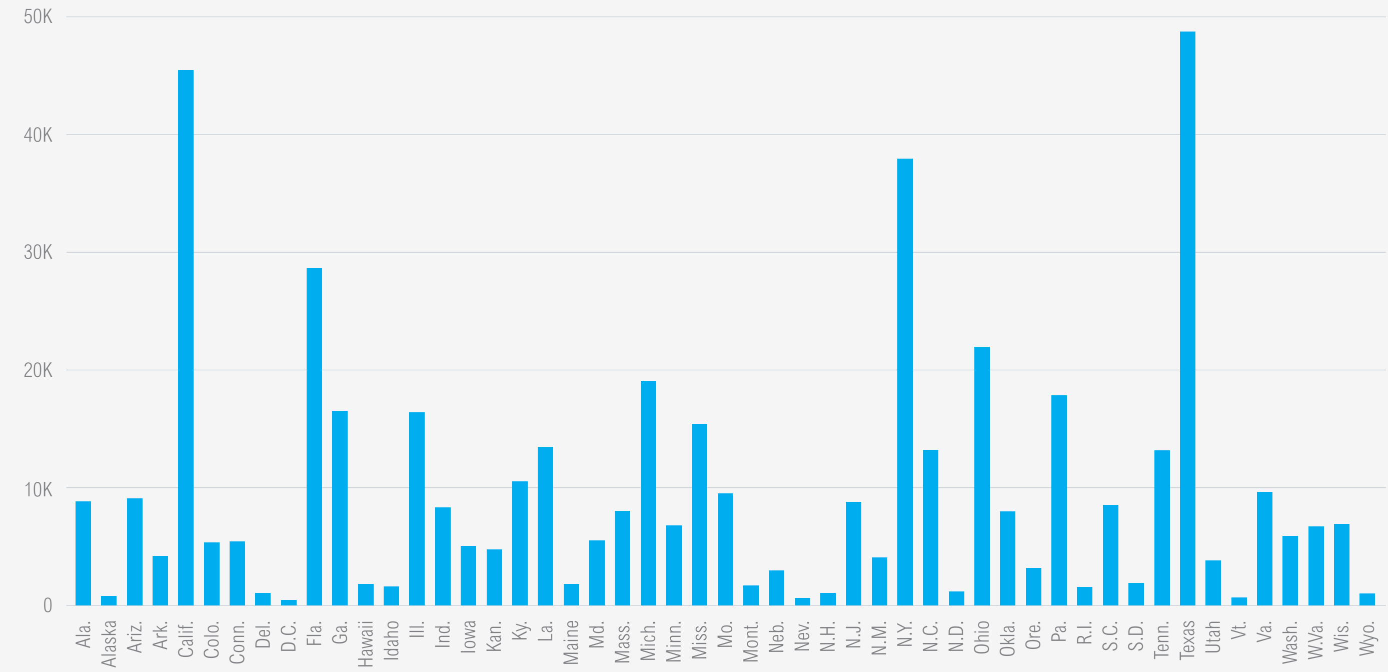
Head Start and Early Head Start targets children under 5 from low-income families with comprehensive programming to meet their emotional, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs and bolster school readiness. Head Start preschool programs serve 3- and 4-year-old children, while Early Head Start programs focus on infants, toddlers and pregnant women. Head Start services are delivered nationwide through 1,600 agencies that tailor the federal program to the local needs of families in their service area. County governments often play an important role in the operation of Head Start and Early Head Start programs, whether by directly serving local grantees and/or by contributing supplemental funding to support the program.

HEAD START FUNDING AND FUNDED ENROLLMENT BY STATE, FY 2024

Federal Funding



Funded Enrollment



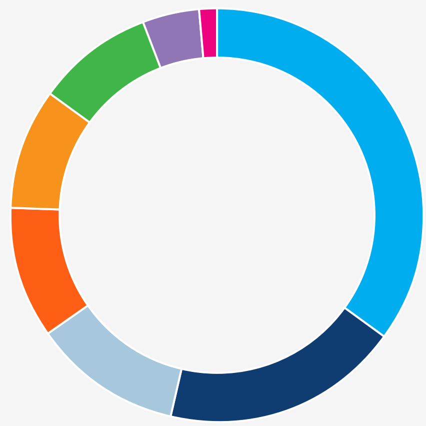
Source: *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Head Start Program Facts: Fiscal Year 2024*

Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)

SSBG funds support 29 different types of services across eight High Level Service Areas that reduce dependency and promote self-sufficiency; protect children and adults from neglect, abuse and exploitation; and help individuals who are unable to take care of themselves to stay in their homes or to find the best institutional arrangements. Nine states pass SSBG funds directly to counties: Colorado, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin, though counties in other states can access SSBG funds as well. These nine states represented 32 percent of total recipients of SSBG services and $299 million (25 percent) of FY 2022 SSBG expenditures.[8] States may also transfer up to 10 percent of their Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grants to the SSBG for programs or services to children or their families whose income is less than 200 percent of the federal income poverty. In FY 2022, states transferred a total $1.1 billion from TANF for SSBG expenditures. [9]

In 2022, SSBG served over **20 million individuals,** 46 percent of whom were children.

NATIONAL SSBG EXPENDITURES BY HIGH-LEVEL SERVICE AREA (HSLA)



- Child Welfare/Youth at Risk **$910 M**
- Additional Support Services **$485 M**
- Counseling and Support **$297 M**
- Special services for disabled individuals **$270 M**
- Child Care **$245 M**
- Vulnerable and Elderly Adult **$239 M**
- Health and Well-being **$112 M**
- Self-Sufficiency **$33 M**

Source: *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, SSBG Annual Report 2022. Includes TANF expenditures.*

Child Welfare

The child welfare system primarily functions to prevent and respond to the abuse or neglect of children by their parents and caregivers. This mission is accomplished through a federal, state and local partnership that encompasses a wide range of services, such as in-home family preservation, child protection, foster and kinship care placements, residential treatment, adoption, independent living, mental health care, substance use treatment, education, parenting skills, domestic violence, employment assistance, health care, child care, financial support and housing.

In nine states, county governments are responsible for administering the child welfare system: California, Colorado, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia. These states generally offer significant authority and much-needed flexibility to county child welfare agencies, and counties may in turn be responsible for contributing to the non-federal share of programs such as Title IV-E Foster Care and Maintenance Payments. In Nevada and Wisconsin, counties share administration of the child welfare system with the state in a hybrid system. Together, the 11 states with a county role in the child welfare system represented 33.8 percent of the population of children served in formal foster care in 2022.[10]

STATE	CHILDREN SERVED IN FOSTER CARE IN 2023
Alabama	6217
Alaska	1942
Arizona	9589
Arkansas	3518
California	65144
Colorado	7051
Connecticut	5353
Delaware	914
District of Columbia	1708
Florida	22181
Georgia	9984
Hawaii	1613
Idaho	1723
Illinois	14991
Indiana	11899
Iowa	6649
Kansas	6247
Kentucky	7146
Louisiana	5065
Maine	1859
Maryland	7598
Massachusetts	10411
Michigan	18734
Minnesota	5993
Mississippi	3143
Missouri	6865

STATE	CHILDREN SERVED IN FOSTER CARE IN 2023
Montana	1582
Nebraska	5194
Nevada	5015
New Hampshire	963
New Jersey	8451
New Mexico	2216
New York	25869
North Carolina	9565
North Dakota	1201
Ohio	13460
Oklahoma	10589
Oregon	8545
Pennsylvania	25144
Rhode Island	2211
South Carolina	5050
South Dakota	1471
Tennessee	6422
Texas	28152
Utah	2540
Vermont	1163
Virginia	6980
Washington	11039
West Virginia	4313
Wisconsin	7236
Wyoming	1063

CHILD WELFARE ADMINISTRATION

County State Hybrid

Source: *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Trends in Foster Care & Adoption Statistics: FY 2013-2023.*

Child Support Enforcement (CSE)

The federal CSE program (also referred to as Title IV-D) is a federal, state and local partnership to promote parental responsibility so children receive support from both parents, even when they live in separate households. CSE enforcement agencies locate non-custodial parents, establish legal parentage, establish and enforce support orders, increase health care coverage for children, and remove barriers to regular payments by referring parents to employment services. Their work supports healthy co-parenting relationships, responsible fatherhood and helps to prevent and reduce family violence. Anyone with custody of a child needing help establishing a child support or medical support order—or collecting support payments—can apply for Title IV-D services. However, individuals receiving public assistance from the state are required to participate in the public child support program..

The structure of child support programs varies widely from state to state, including whether a judicial, administrative or hybrid process is used. Most states have centralized programs with local service offices. California, Colorado, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio and Wisconsin have county-administered programs. In FY 2024, these states represented $8.3 billion, or 30 percent, of total CSE collections.[11] However, many states also utilize cooperative agreements with county courts and county law enforcement agencies (among other entities) to carry out the program.

Title IV-D programs are primarily funded by the federal government, which reimburses states for 66 percent of allowable child support outlays at a minimum. The financing structures for the remaining state match are complex and may draw on revenue from the state CSE agency, county and other local administrative agencies and the family and domestic court system, even in states that are not county administered.

FEDERAL CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT CASELOADS AND COLLECTIONS, FY 2024

STATE	CASELOAD	COLLECTIONS
Alabama	179,393	$295,180,750
Alaska	33,378	$86,782,335
Arizona	129,692	$260,013,194
Arkansas	124,758	$258,518,081
California	1,020,241	$2,417,666,249
Colorado	122,581	$288,256,526
Connecticut	110,037	$204,362,183
Delaware	74,174	$65,004,332
Florida	570,733	$1,417,075,760
Georgia	295,601	$618,091,340
Hawaii	46,252	$79,238,203
Idaho	82,300	$155,870,774
Illinois	326,885	$688,473,145
Indiana	207,143	$477,591,100
Iowa	134,313	$295,343,203
Kansas	119,286	$183,393,665
Kentucky	226,064	$309,646,502
Louisiana	222,050	$406,146,591
Maine	33,399	$85,176,865
Maryland	158,114	$417,406,593
Massachusetts	182,119	$558,979,369
Michigan	721,239	$1,156,654,033
Minnesota	173,152	$492,843,734
Mississippi	226,622	$326,422,974
Missouri	282,153	$474,441,233
Montana	27,758	$62,611,955

STATE	CASELOAD	COLLECTIONS
Nebraska	90,378	$193,742,910
Nevada	78,276	$176,051,276
New Hampshire	27,571	$74,451,554
New Jersey	209,444	$870,156,921
New Mexico	46,589	$104,121,313
New York	599,515	$1,570,516,590
North Carolina	317,283	$615,016,533
North Dakota	29,856	$106,403,845
Ohio	669,007	$1,384,160,089
Oklahoma	149,433	$285,101,017
Oregon	127,714	$298,837,126
Pennsylvania	272,061	$1,109,892,188
Rhode Island	46,688	$74,856,105
South Carolina	141,875	$272,611,090
South Dakota	37,891	$91,094,320
Tennessee	292,073	$538,552,221
Texas	1,462,739	$4,285,157,499
Utah	76,309	$186,838,532
Vermont	10,798	$35,788,174
Virginia	248,194	$556,621,124
Washington	238,002	$598,565,823
West Virginia	72,928	$139,613,571
Wisconsin	340,564	$622,148,712
Wyoming	20,132	$62,778,118

ADMINISTRATION

County   State

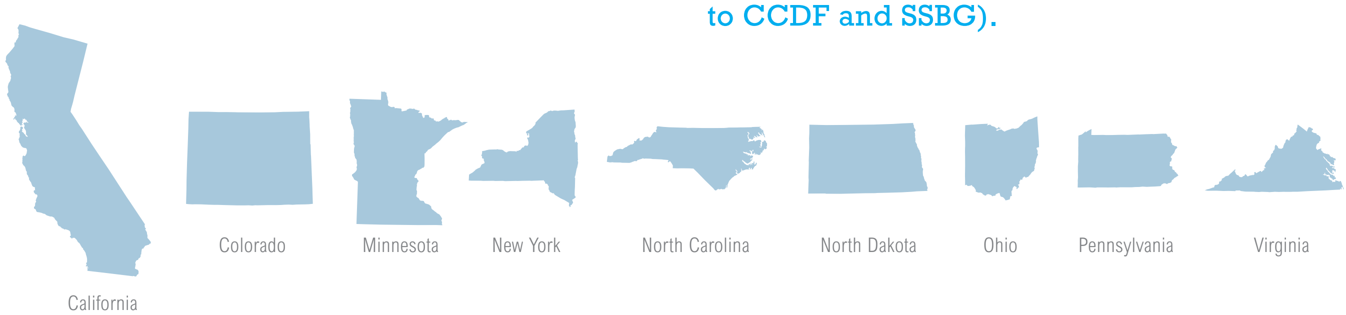
Source: *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child Support Enforcement, FY 2024 Preliminary Data Tables*

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

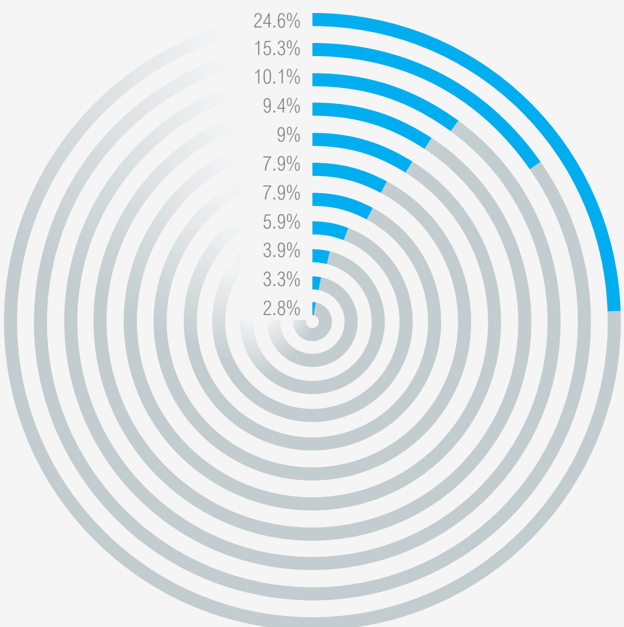
TANF provides states with flexible funding for programs aimed at promoting stability, family preservation, and access to employment among low-income households with children. Nine states representing more than half of the national caseload delegate TANF administration, including Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements, to counties: California, Colorado, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio and Virginia. In FY 2023, these states represented $16.8 billion, or 53 percent, of total federal, state and local TANF expenditures (including funds transferred to CCDF and SSBG).[12]

Along with cash assistance (which requires recipients to participate in work activities and meet a minimum weekly work threshold), TANF grants may be used for a wide range of benefits and services for families with children. Counties in county-administered states therefore often have broad flexibility in how they utilize their TANF allocations.

In FY 2023, TANF-administering counties represented **$16.8 billion, or 53 percent,** of total federal, state and local TANF expenditures (including funds transferred to CCDF and SSBG).



TOTAL TANF SPENDING BY CATEGORY, FISCAL YEAR 2023



24.6 percent Basic Assistance

15.3 percent Child care

10.1 percent Program Management

9.4 percent Pre-kindergarten/Head Start

9 percent Refundable Tax Credits

7.9 percent Child Welfare

7.9 percent Work, Education, and Training Activities

5.9 percent Other

3.9 percent Services for Children & Youth

3.3 percent Transfers to the Social Services Block Grant

2.8 percent Work Supports & Supportive Services

Source: *Administration on Children and Families, TANF and MOE Spending and Transfers by Activity, FY 2023*

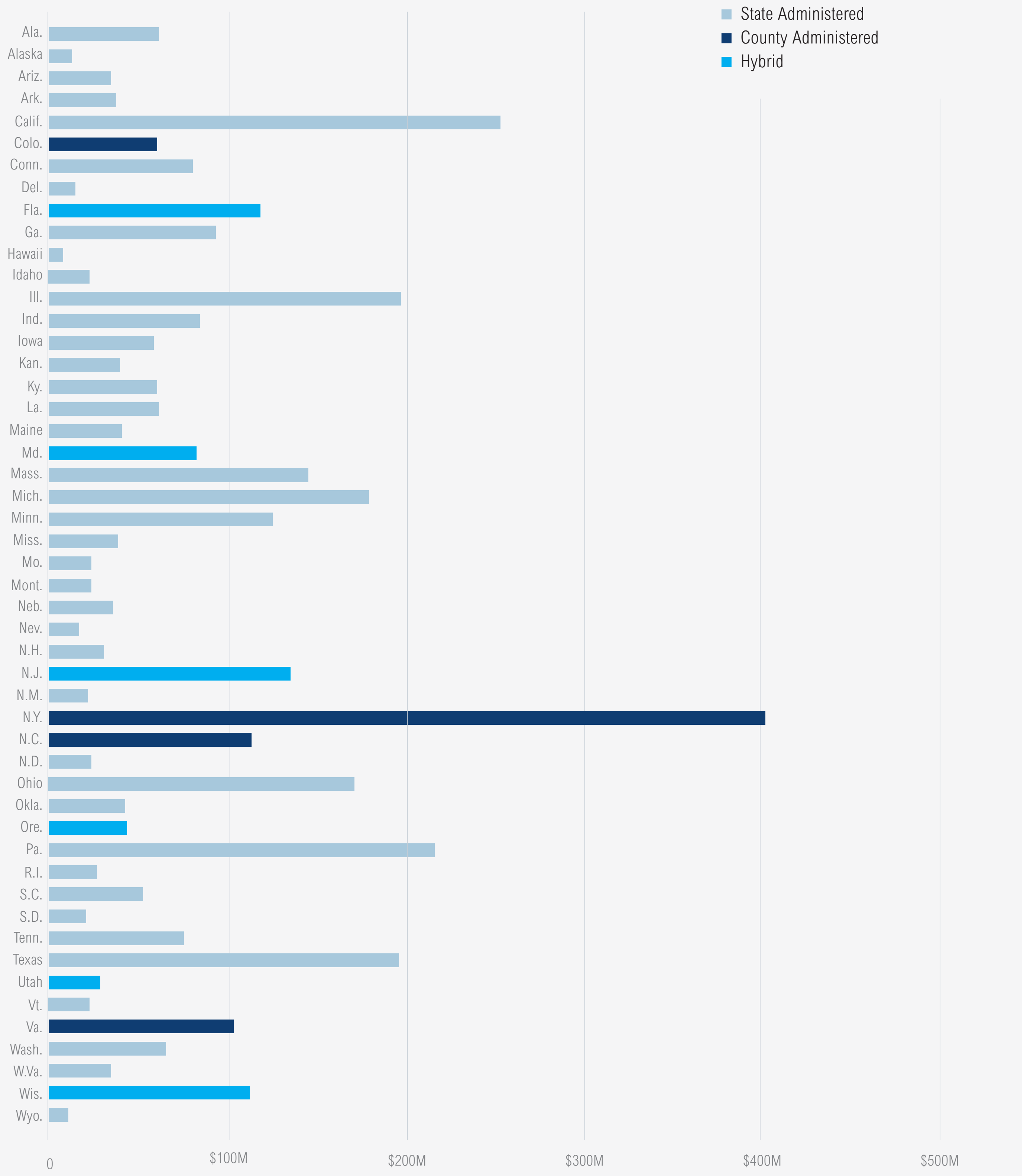
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

LIHEAP provides federally funded assistance to reduce the costs associated with home energy bills from heating and cooling, energy crises, weatherization and minor energy-related home repairs. Typically, a utility company will directly bill the local program administrator for a household's LIHEAP benefit, leaving the recipient to pay off the remaining amount of their bill.

LIHEAP is a partnership between the federal government, states, and local public or non-profit agencies tasked with administering the program. County governments serve as the primary LIHEAP agency in Colorado, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Pennsylvania and Virginia. A hybrid model is used in Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, New Jersey, Oregon, Utah and Wisconsin where either the county government or a non-profit organization acts as the LIHEAP agency. In states that only contract with non-profit organizations to administer LIHEAP, the agencies are often represented by Community Action Agencies (CAAs), meaning they partner closely with local governments, including counties.

In FY 2023, county-administered and hybrid states represented 30 percent of total state LIHEAP allocations.[13]

FY 2023 FEDERAL LIHEAP ALLOCATION BY STATE



Source: *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, FY 2023 Final Release of Regular LIHEAP Block Grant Funds to States and Territories*

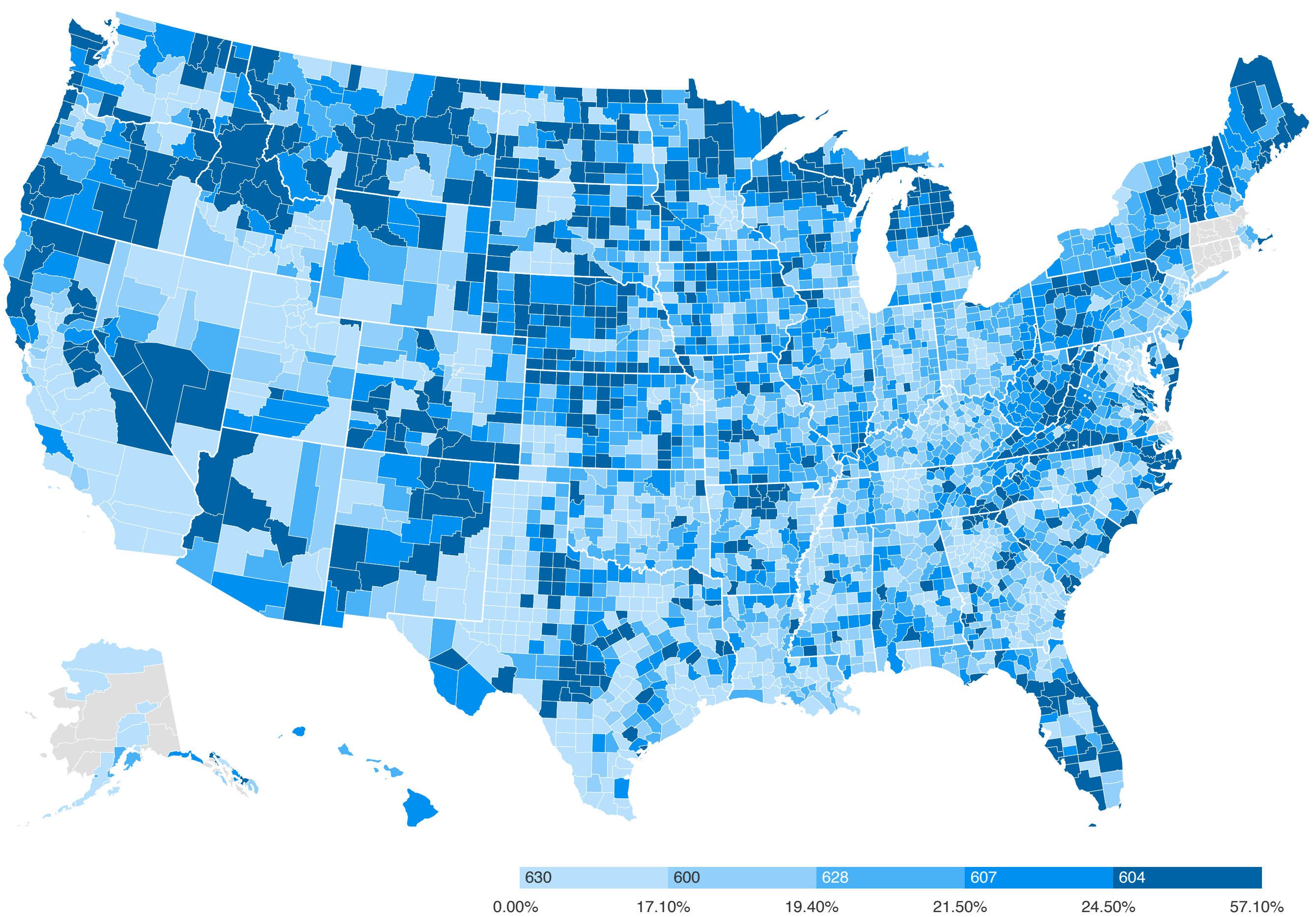
Aging and Disability Services

County governments play an essential role in ensuring the health and safety of older Americans and individuals with disabilities, including through county-owned or operated long-term care facilities and community-based services. The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging (AOA) under the Administration for Community Living (ACL) oversees services, supports and research aimed at ensuring that older adults and people of all ages with disabilities can live where they choose, with the people they choose, and with the ability to participate fully in their communities.

Older Americans Act (OAA) Programs

The Older Americans Act (OAA) supports activities that help older adults live independently and remain part of the community. Most programs under OAA are Title III "core services," which vary based on local needs. Common services include transportation, nutrition, caregiver support, recreational activities, in-home assistance and disease prevention. Additionally, the OAA provides funding for training, research and demonstration projects in the field of aging, along with grants supporting services for Native American communities and elder rights initiatives.

2023 PERCENT 65 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER



Source: *NACo County Explorer, 2023*

States receive Title III Grants according to a formula based on their share of the nation's population of individuals 60 and older. States then pass these funds to Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), public or private non-profit agencies which coordinate programs and services for senior citizens at the local level. In the few states without an AAA infrastructure—due to small populations or sparsely populated land areas—the state serves the AAA function.

Counties are key recipients of these dollars and frequent administrators of these programs. Roughly 31 percent of the 614 AAAs across the nation operate within county or city governments, while another 23 percent operate within regional planning councils or councils of governments that often include counties. Meanwhile, 55 percent of AAAs rely on local funding streams through counties or other local governments to provide additional programs and services.[14]

Adult Protective Services (APS)

APS programs prevent neglect, self-neglect and fiduciary and physical abuse of older and disabled adults. While services vary from state to state and county to county, most states provide APS for adults 18 and older with a significant physical and/or mental impairment. In some states, APS serves older individuals without disabilities, and about half of all states allow APS reporting of vulnerable older adult abuse in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. APS programs are state supervised and county administered in Alabama, Colorado, Minnesota, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oregon, South Carolina and Virginia. APS programs are county supervised and county administered in California, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. In Indiana, the state contracts 18 County Prosecutors offices to serve as regional APS hubs.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING STRUCTURE

42 percent	Independent non-Profit
31 percent	Part of county/city government
23 percent	Part of a council of governments or regional planning and development agency
3 percent	Other
1 percent	Tribe or Tribal Organization

Source: *USAging, 2023 Chartbook, More Older Adults, More Complex Needs: Trends and New Directions from the National Survey of Area Agencies on Aging. Numbers may not equal 100 due to rounding.*

The federal government provides minimal dedicated funding for APS programs, meaning counties often rely on state funds and local dollars to fulfill these responsibilities.

In 2020, state and local APS programs employed a workforce of 8,592 individuals in hotline or investigator roles and 1,735 supervisors.[15] Collectively, they received 1.33 million referrals of alleged maltreatment, 58.3 percent of which were accepted for investigation.

Food and Nutrition Assistance

County governments play an integral role in our nation's food system, including by overseeing and supporting programs authorized under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to combat food and nutrition insecurity among low-income residents.

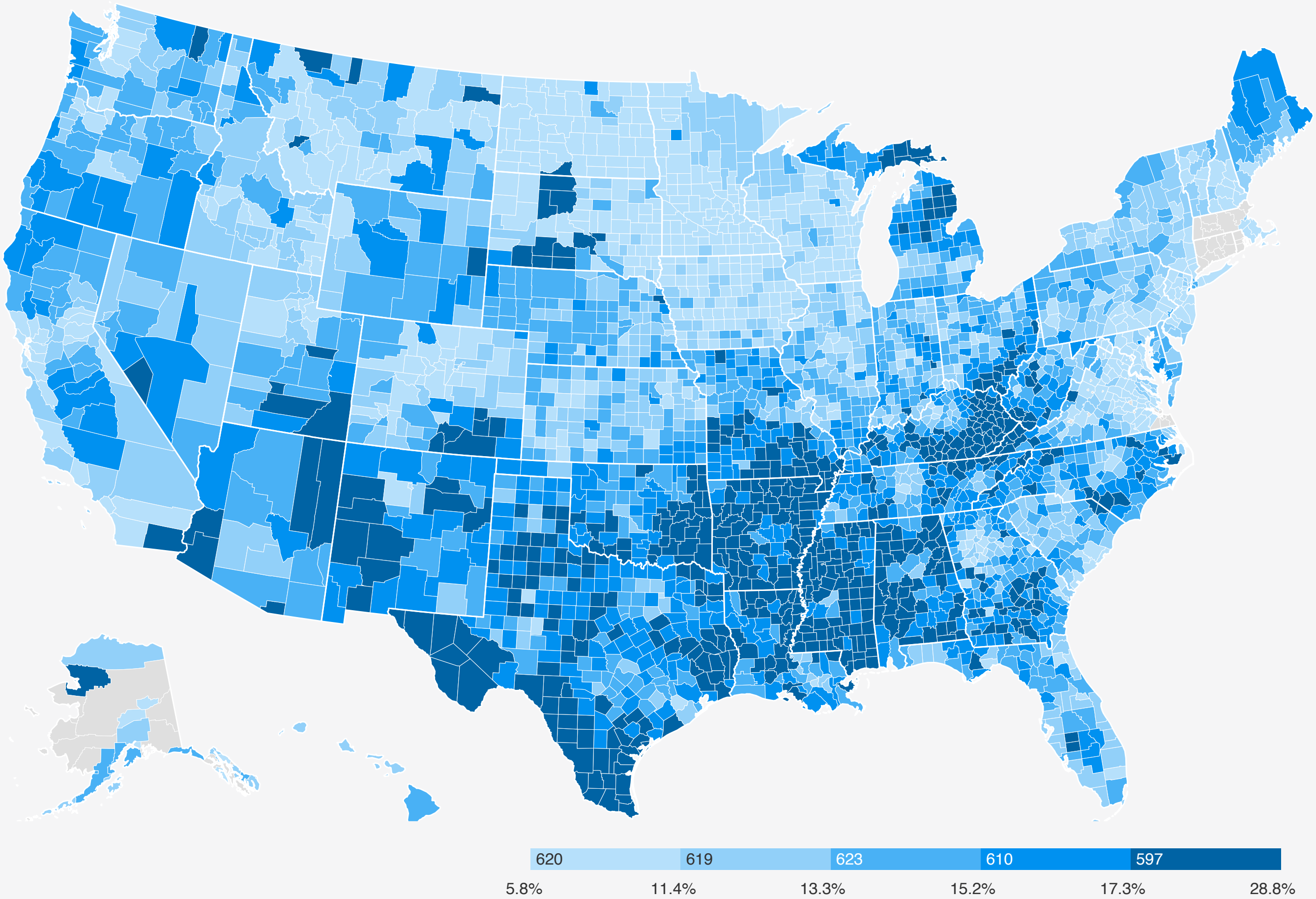
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP is the largest federal nutrition program, providing approximately 42 million low-income individuals with monthly grocery benefits as well as employment and training opportunities.

Counties are responsible for administering the program in ten states representing 34 percent of total participants (14.6 million people): California, Colorado, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin.[16] Counties operating SNAP often contribute significant levels of local funds to meet the administrative and supplemental costs of running the program. These 10 county-administered states represented $33 billion in total monthly SNAP benefits issued in FY 2024. [17]

In these states, counties often contribute substantial local funds for administrative and supplemental costs toward the program. In Minnesota, North Carolina and New Jersey counties must meet the entire 50 percent non-federal match requirement for SNAP administrative funds, while in California, Colorado, New York, Virginia and Wisconsin the counties share this financial obligation with the state. Only in Ohio and North Dakota does the state entirely fund this requirement. In FY 2021, county-administered states spent a combined $2.2 billion on the non-federal administrative share of the SNAP program.[18]

2022 FOOD INSECURITY RATE



Source: *NACo County Explorer, 2022*

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and Summer Breakfast Program (SBP)

Through the NSLP and SBP, USDA contributes funds to provide reduced-cost or free meals to millions of low-income children at school.

In FY 2024, the NSLP served free and reduced-price lunches to over 29 million students across nearly 95,000 schools and institutions daily, while the SBP served free and reduced price breakfasts to 15.6 million students in over 93,000 schools and institutions daily.[19]

These programs are administered and funded through a partnership between the federal government, states, and local school food authorities, though student payments also contribute revenue to the program. County funds supporting K-12 education may therefore represent a portion of the local expenditures on the program. Beyond directly financing schools and their operations, county governments share a common tax base with local school districts and provide complementary services to the same populations of students.

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

The SFSP provides free, nutritious meals to eligible low-income children during the summer months when school is not in session. State agencies administer the program through partnerships with sponsors (such as schools, local government agencies, and community-based organizations with food service programs) who operate sites across the community where children engage in enrichment activities and receive meals in a safe and supervised environment. An estimated 5,492 SFSP sponsors provide summer meals at 57,031 sites across the country. [20] Local, municipal and county government agencies represent 5 percent of all SFSP sponsors, though counties may also indirectly support the SFSP by providing funds to public schools, which are by far the largest share of sponsors. [21]

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

The WIC program offers nutritious foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding counseling and support as well as referrals to healthcare and social services. It serves nearly 7 million low-income pregnant and postpartum women and children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk—including more than half of all infants born in the United States. State agencies administer WIC through 1,900 local agencies in 10,000 clinic sites. Nearly 50 percent of local WIC agencies function as part of local government, including counties, while clinic sites also include county health departments and other county agencies.[22]

SFSP SPONSORS BY ORGANIZATION TYPE

Other	0.7%
Residential Camp	2.0%
Local or Municipal Government Agency	5.0%
Non-profit organization or SFA	39.0%
Public school food authority (SFA)	53.4%

Source: *USDA Food and Nutrition Service, USDA Summer Meals Study Volume 2. Sponsor and Site Operational Characteristics, 2018. Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding*

LOCAL WIC AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Part of State Agency	17.0%
Nonprofit Organization	26.1%
Local Government Entity	49.5%
Other	7.4%

Source: *USDA Food and Nutrition Service, National Survey of WIC Participants III, 2021*

Veterans Services

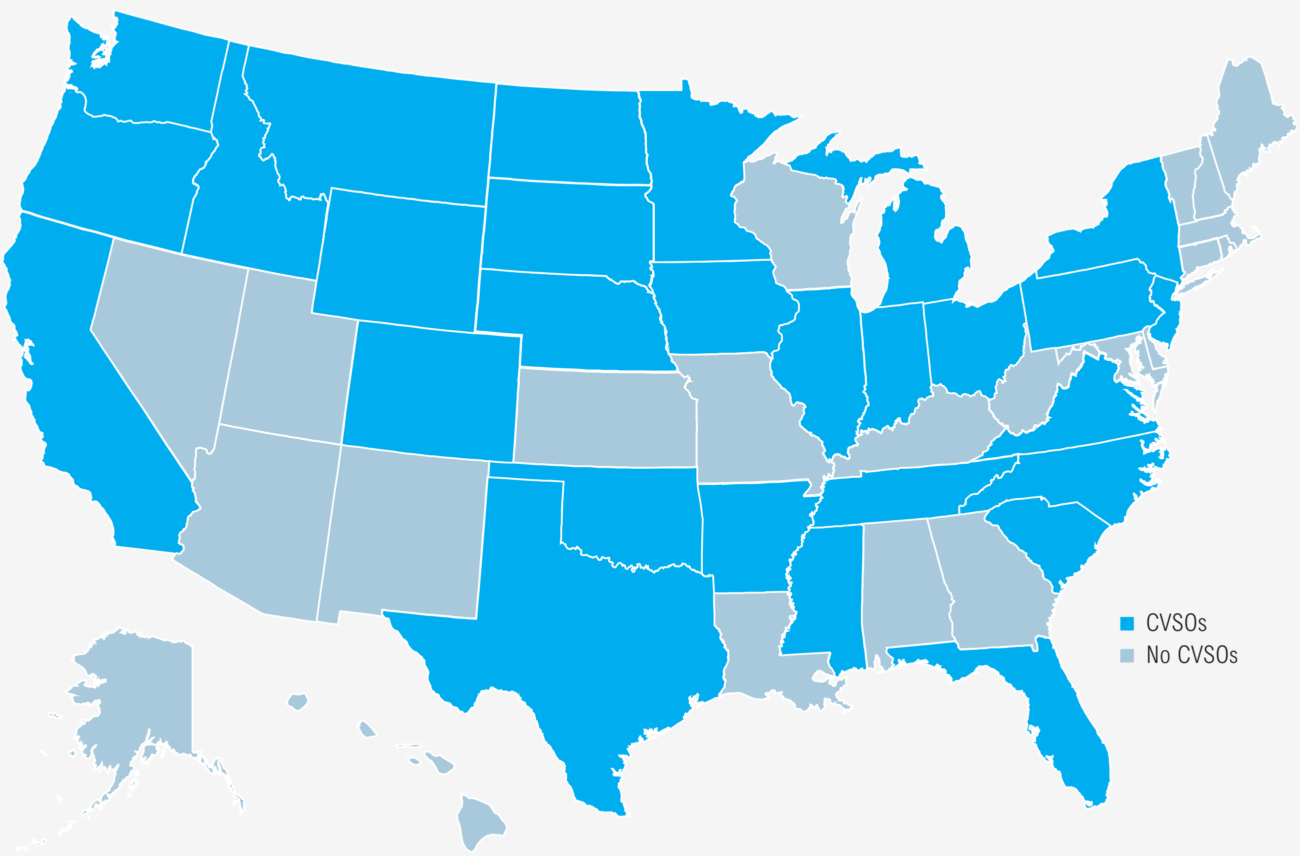
America's counties are home to 16 million veterans, and we are deeply invested in veterans' health and well-being, often assisting with pension and disability benefits, housing, employment, education and mental health services that treat trauma and prevent suicide in partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

County Veterans Services Officers (CVSOs)

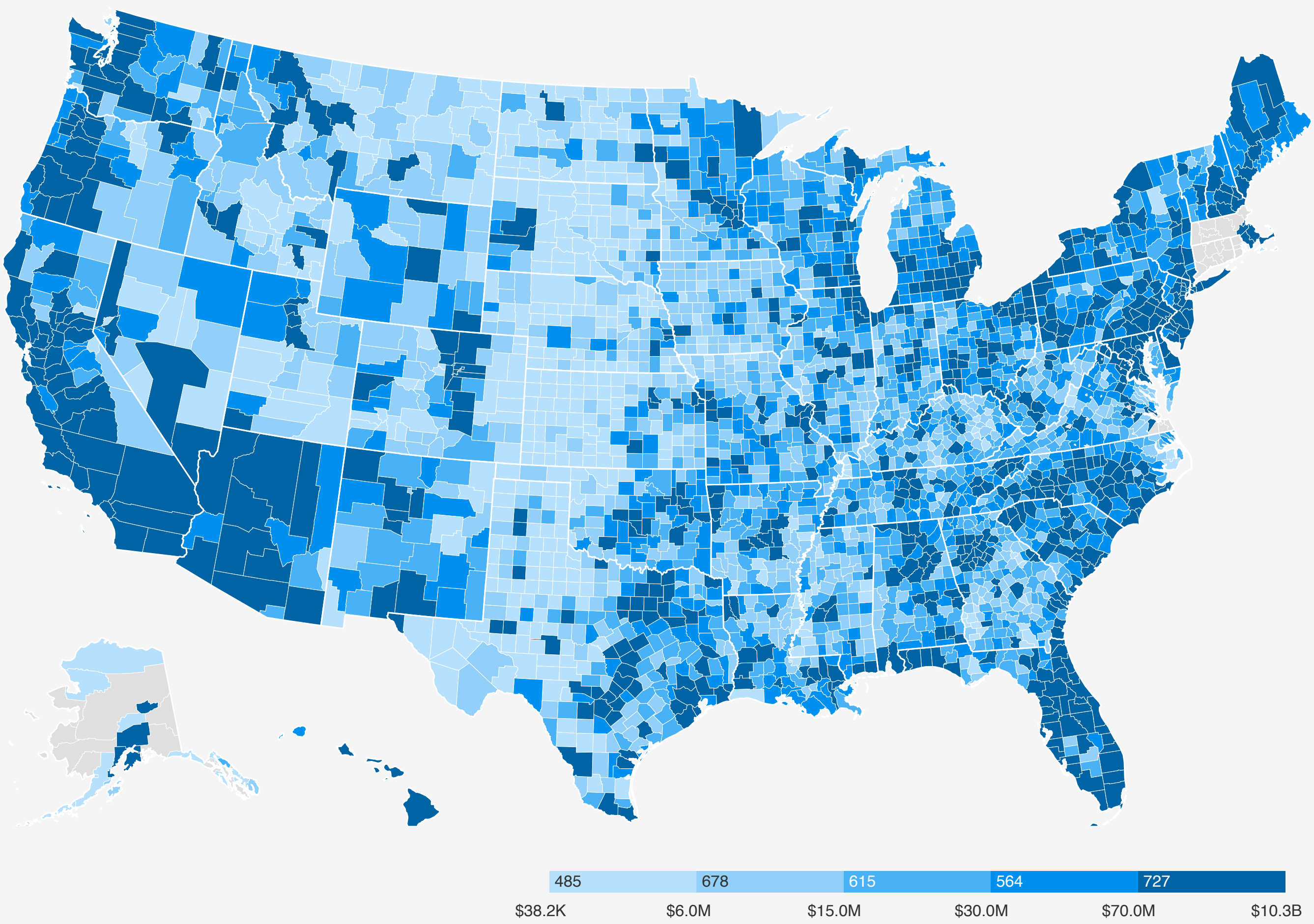
CVSOs are local county employees who are nationally accredited by the VA to prepare, present, and prosecute U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) claims. Often, CVSOs are a veteran's first point of contact in the community for accessing services. CVSOs assist veterans in accessing a range of benefits, including service-connected benefits, enrollment in VA health care, VA home loans, education benefits and job placement assistance. Veterans are not always aware of the benefits available to them, and CVSOs are often the first to inform them about their eligibility.

CVSOs operate in 29 states and perform much of the VA's legwork for filing claims in their counties. This relatively small workforce is responsible for successfully processing more than $50 billion in direct compensation, pension, health care and other benefits for veterans each year.

CVSO STATUS BY STATE



2023 TOTAL FEDERAL VETERAN FUNDING



Source: *NACo County Explorer, 2023*

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Endnotes

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