



Advocates for Ohio's Future

Budget Outlook and Policy Priority Webinar

January 29, 2021



Advocates for Ohio's Future (AOF) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan coalition of over 500 state and local health and human services policy, advocacy and provider organizations that strive to strengthen families and communities through public funding for health, human services, and early care & education.

We work to empower and support nonprofit organizations in the critical work they do, especially as it relates to lifting up the most vulnerable among us.

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Agenda

FY2022-2023 State Operating Budget Outlook

Federal Actions on HHS Issues

State Actions and Frame on HHS Issues

AOF 2021 Budget and Policy Initiatives

Questions will be taken at the end of our presentation through the chat box

<https://www.advocatesforohio.org/webinars>



Presenters: AOF Executive Committee

Steve Wagner, AOF Co-Chair
Executive Director, Universal Health Care Action Network (UHCAN) Ohio

Susan Jagers, Executive Director, Ohio Poverty Law Center

Dr. Tracy Najerá, Executive Director Children's Defense Fund-Ohio

Tara Britton, AOF Co-Chair, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy, The
Center for Community Solutions

Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, Executive Director, Ohio Association of Foodbanks

Gina Wilt, Advocacy Director, Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in
Ohio (COHHIO)



State Operating Budget Outlook

Governor DeWine's budget proposal expected to be released Monday February 1

State revenues are not as dire as once predicted. According to OBM:

- GRF non-auto sales and use tax collections in December totaled \$920.3 million and were \$41.9 million (4.8%) above the estimate.
- Across the first half of the fiscal year, revenues are now \$251.1 million (5.2%) above estimate; actual revenue has exceeded estimate in five of these months.
- According to Moody's Analytics, as of January 8, 2021, the national Back-to-Normal Index was at 74.4%, while Ohio's index was 4.6 percentage points ahead at 79.0%.



Not out of the woods yet...

- Unemployment Insurance: Ohio, along with most other states, has been borrowing from the federal government since June 2020 to pay out unemployment insurance claims. Hundreds of millions of dollars must be paid back.
- Increased enrollment in Medicaid
- Federal relief dollars (CARES Act, Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021) held to strict guidelines-cannot be used to plug budget holes.
- Governor DeWine signaled he will not hesitate to use the state's Budget Stabilization (Rainy Day) Fund: \$2.7 Billion



Governor DeWine Requests to President Biden

- More vaccines
- Strategy to vaccinate seasonal and migrant workers
- National television, radio, and social media campaign on the merits of the vaccine and mask-wearing
- Provide \$350 billion to state and local governments and greater flexibility to spend
- Extend the temporary increased federal Medicaid support (eFMAP) and create a step-down process tied to the gradual process of economic recovery
- Significant federal investments in public health infrastructure
- Flexible resources to address the lack of (and barriers to) broadband access for over one million Ohioans



AOF's Approach to State Budget

The coronavirus pandemic and resulting economic collapse did not hit all Ohioans equally. Recovery efforts and resources should be targeted to vulnerable populations: women, low and no-income and Black and Brown families.

Increases in basic needs assistance and investments in work supports for Ohioans and their families, that last the duration of the economic fallout—not just the public health crisis.

A **balanced approach** to the state budget should **examine current tax expenditures and new revenue opportunities** to solve Ohio's most pressing needs.

Equity should be an explicit consideration in constructing the budget. Ohio should **allocate resources and services to at-risk populations.**



Medicaid and Health Coverage

Federal Actions

- Public Health Emergency (PHE) Extension through 2021, predictability
 - eFMAP and MOE extension (\$300M/quarter for Medicaid programs)
 - Governor DeWine asked Biden Administration for an “off-ramp” for eFMAP
 - Special ACA Marketplace enrollment: February 15-May 15
 - CMS will revisit Medicaid and ACA demonstrations and waivers that decrease coverage or “undermine the programs”-Implications for Medicaid work requirements

State Actions

- 300,000+ new Medicaid enrollees over the past year
 - Continuous enrollment
- Managed care procurement process and implementation



AOF Budget & Policy Priority

Maintain Medicaid eligibility without barriers or cuts so that Ohioans seeking health care and mental health and addiction treatment can continue to access vital services during these multiple public health and economic crises.



Broadband Access & Affordability

There are currently over 1 million Ohioans without access to broadband; missing out on distance learning, telehealth, work search opportunities, job training, assistance programs

Federal Actions

- FCC Changes
- 2021 Federal COVID Relief Bill: \$50 subsidy for low-income households

State Actions

- \$50M CARES Act dollars to support Broadband access and device access for distance learning
- Senate Bill 8: Ohio Residential Broadband Expansion Grant Program, focus on access
- Public/Private partnerships initiated by Broadband Ohio



AOF Budget & Policy Priority

Increase access to broadband to help all low-income families afford high-speed internet access and incentivize internet service providers to update and improve their networks in low-income areas so all Ohio families and businesses have the ability to participate in education, telehealth and Ohio's economy.



TANF and Basic Needs Assistance

Federal Actions

TANF: President Biden's emergency relief plan includes \$1 billion in new TANF funds

- Investment could help states increase monthly TANF grants, help TANF recipients with increased expenses and improve access
- Help states avoid the cuts and punitive policies, like harsher sanctions and stricter time limits, that many implemented after the Great Recession

SNAP: Biden Administration will significantly increase federal food assistance for millions of hungry families among executive actions intended to stabilize the deterioration of the economy

- Will increase the value of P-EBT benefits by 15%. Instead of \$5.86 per child per day, families would receive around \$6.74 per day
- Directed the USDA to consider beginning the process of revising the Thrifty Food Plan to better reflect the modern cost of a healthy basic diet



AOF Budget & Policy Priority

Support the immediate, emergency needs of low-income children and families by investing in the core components of the TANF program including emergency assistance, work supports (PRC), food, housing, income-support, and child care and ensure unspent TANF dollars are reinvested into sustainable core programs to increase the security of low-income families and expand job training and work opportunities.



TANF and Basic Needs Assistance

Proposed State Actions

TANF

- Reallocate unspent TANF dollars on direct services for children and families with low-income
- Allocate \$50M from TANF funds for one-time emergency assistance through the Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) program. One-time payments of \$500 to 100,000 families
- Increase basic OWF cash grant by a minimum of \$100 a month

Food Assistance

- Allocate \$45 million per year in the biennium to address food insecurity and direct state dollars to Ohio families who need it most.
 - \$30 million to support food purchases and \$12 million (\$1 million/month) toward non-food essential items that can't be purchased with SNAP, such as personal hygiene items and household cleaning items.



AOF Budget & Policy Priorities

We also pledge to elevate and support the following policy proposals championed by our partner organizations:

- **Allocate additional state emergency rental, mortgage and utility assistance** to help families affected by the pandemic remain in their own homes with adequate food, running water, and functioning electricity.
- **Make the state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) refundable** to reward work and make a difference for low-income families who in turn, spend the money in their community on basic necessities.
- **Maintain and expand home and community-based services and supports across all populations and systems** and increase access to quality providers in all communities.
- **Expand eligibility for publicly funded child care from 130% FPL to 200% FPL.**



Questions?

Next Webinar: Friday February 12, 10:30am-Executive Budget Review

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