

Getting Down to Basics

Housing, food, clothing, transportation—these are things that most people take for granted. Consider, for a moment, a person in recovery from a serious health condition—mental health or substance use disorders—people who, because of their illness, may not have these basic needs met. Imagine how difficult it would be to do the hard work of recovery when the stressors of lacking basic needs comes into play.

That is precisely why DMHAS began the **Basic Needs Program (BNP)**. It provides **critical recovery supports** for General Assistance (GA) recipients who are engaged in behavioral health treatment. Treatment providers work with individuals to request BNP supports that enhance the applicant's recovery plan. The BNP is an easily accessible, person-centered approach to helping GA recipients stay in treatment and promoting recovery, independence and stability.

- ✘ BNP receives over **12,134 applications** from **6,513 unduplicated individuals** annually.
- ✘ Recovery Specialists distribute vouchers to applicants at **13 centers around the state**.
- ✘ Applications can contain **multiple requests for support**.
- ✘ Applicants are **notified within 1.5 days** of the outcome of their requests, on average.



Of the requests received annually:

- 34% are for housing
- 15% are for transportation
- 12% are for personal care
- 2% are for food & other basic items

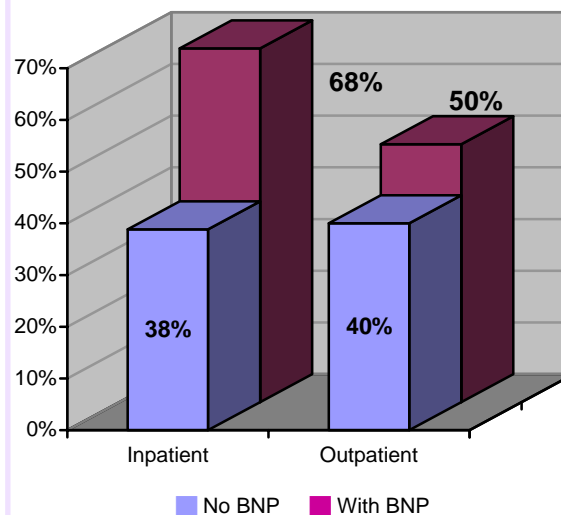
"I was at the end of my rope and the Basic Needs Program, and all the people who administer it, were nothing short of saving my life."

Dennis M.



BNP gives a hand up to people in recovery. It provides integral recovery supports throughout every stage of the treatment and recovery process.

People Who Successfully Connect to Lower Level of Care With BNP and without BNP FY06



BNP provides for:

- Independent housing
- Security deposit escrow
- Shelter payments
- Utilities
- Transportation from one treatment setting to another
- Bus transportation for job search
- Food
- Clothing
- Personal Care
- Phone cards, haircuts and other supports needed to return to work

Research has repeatedly demonstrated that overall treatment outcomes are better the longer a person stays in treatment. One goal of the BNP is to transition individuals from acute care (e.g. detoxification or inpatient care) to less restrictive, yet clinically appropriate levels of care (e.g. partial hospital, outpatient, etc.). Increasing connections to care contributes to longer overall lengths of stay in treatment with fewer readmissions back to more intensive levels of care. As seen above, the BNP ensures improved connections to lower levels of care.