



COVID-19 Federal Resource Guideline Series: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Block Grants

What needed activities and services do SAMHSA Block Grants provide or pay for?

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the agency within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that leads public health efforts to improve behavioral health. Its mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on communities across the nation. SAMHSA provides grant funding through two block grants: the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant ([SABG](#)) and the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant ([MHBG](#)). SAMHSA also provides homelessness-specific grants and resources through several programs.

- **Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant** resources are intended to target pregnant women/women with dependent children and IV drug users, and provide services for tuberculosis and early intervention for HIV/AIDS. Comprehensive primary prevention targeting those sub-populations as well as the general public are a focus and must include: information sharing, education through structured learning, alternative opportunities to alcohol and other drugs, problem identification and referral for first-time users, a community-based process for ongoing activities/technical assistance, and strategies to influence the population's use of drugs and alcohol.
- **Community Mental Health Block Grant** resources are targeted towards adults with serious mental illnesses and children (up to the age of 18) with serious emotional disturbances. Grantees must ensure that their community health centers provide services including screening, outpatient, emergency health services, and day treatment. Grantees also have a mental health planning council composed of representatives from several communities, including consumers of mental health services.

Who is eligible for SAMHSA Block Grant funding?

The SABG and MHBG provide non-competitive, formula grants and technical assistance to all 50 states per an annual application. Funds are awarded to the grantee and then distributed to local government actors, eventually reaching sub-recipients including community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations.

What funds are available?

Total funding in FY20 for SABG is \$1.86 billion and \$722.6 million for MHBG. In response to COVID-19, SAMHSA has released an [emergency grant](#) totaling \$110 million.

Where can you find more information?

SAMHSA maintains a comprehensive [resource page](#) on its block grants which includes summary data reports, FAQs, applications and other documentation on each block grant. Visit their [contact page](#) in order to identify each grant's specific state authorities who oversee the related programs in their territory.

SAMHSA also maintains a page on [Homeless Programs and Resources](#) that contains information on each of its homelessness-specific grant programs and services as well as related resources.