This 3 year strategic plan, covering years 2014-2017, is designed to be a guidepost, to inform decision-making, and provide a basic framework on which to build and improve the General Assistance program. Alameda County Social Services Agency is committed to working with clients, staff, the Board of Supervisors, key partners, and other stakeholders to create an environment in our Agency and our county where our vision for General Assistance can be achieved, and where clients have hope, dignity, and opportunity.
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General Assistance Program
Strategic Plan

STRENGTHENING THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND
The Alameda County Social Services Agency (SSA or Agency) promotes the economic and social well-being of individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities.

Annually, SSA assists one out of every five Alameda County residents (over 325,000 individuals), in areas that include employment, training, childcare, food assistance, financial assistance, child welfare, health coverage, senior services and homelessness prevention. SSA is the largest county agency, with a budget of over $700 million and more than 2,400 staff members. We administer over 40 programs and contract more than $85 million a year to 200+ community-based organizations. Overall, benefit programs contribute more than $300 million to the local economy through cash assistance and food assistance programs.

SSA is committed to being performance- and data-driven, both in the resources we contract out and in our internal policies and programs. As part of that commitment, SSA engaged Roots Community Health Center to conduct an independent, comprehensive evaluation of the General Assistance Program (GA) in 2013.

The Roots evaluation, Inside the Social Safety Net, was issued in June 2014 and offered a set of sweeping recommendations to improve and upgrade the GA mission, goals, processes, and outcomes. The Roots evaluation covered GA program eligibility requirements; the GA application process; a description of the GA population; benefits and services available to GA recipients; the efficacy of the GA program in addressing the needs and barriers clients are facing; and a scan of other counties to find best practices. There is broad agreement within SSA and the Department of Workforce and Benefits Administration (WBA) that the GA program as currently structured is in need of enhanced functionality and benefits to clients, clearer expectations of staff, and stronger community partnerships by which to achieve our goals.

In response to this need, between August and October 2014, the Agency developed this three-year Strategic Plan to serve as a blueprint for policy, systems, and programmatic changes in the GA program.

Using the Roots evaluation, the Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework, and feedback from staff, clients and advocates, the GA Strategic planning process allowed the Agency to do the following for the GA program:

- Create a Vision statement and a set of Values;
- Select and prioritize Goals and Performance Measures;
- Identify an Action Plan with key strategies and implementation tasks;
- Create an accountability and Monitoring Structure;
- Clarify data gathering requirements and outline a Data Development Agenda.

1 http://resultsleadership.org/what-is-results-based-accountability-rba/ and Trying Hard is Not Good Enough by Mark Friedman
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

This Strategic Plan is a blueprint that the Agency, specifically the Department of Workforce and Benefits Administration (WBA), will use as a tool for creating and implementing the detailed policy, systems, and programmatic changes needed for robust improvements to the GA program. The strategies proposed are ambitious in their breadth, detail, scale, and timeline. Our success in meeting our goals will depend on community partnerships, staff commitment, client participation, and the financial resources to allow us to strive for excellence. To facilitate those needed components, SSA recommends the following as our next steps:

1. Hire a project manager to oversee implementation.

2. Develop a detailed work plan for each strategic plan priority, including client services, staffing, operations, administration, contracting, partnerships, roles, and benchmarks.

3. Conduct a detailed cost analysis based on the work plan and work with the Board of Supervisors and County Administrator to identify funding for implementation.

4. Revisit work plan strategies and reduce/eliminate cost-prohibitive strategies.

5. Hire additional staff to support successful implementation, including
   a. Coordination of program changes, policy shifts, and partnerships.
   b. Data development, tracking, quality control, and analysis.
   c. Delivering enhanced services directly to clients.

6. Stagger implementation to leverage and improve upon existing efforts, contracts, and operations.
   a. Year 1 Focus:
      i. Meeting clients' basic needs by increasing/maintaining enrollment in safety net programs.
      ii. Successfully implementing new employment contracts serving GA clients.
      iii. Initiating changes to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Advocacy, new data system, and tracking.
      iv. Implementing and enhancing staff and client satisfaction initiatives.
      v. Building infrastructure (data, staffing, processes, and partnerships) to support program enhancements.
   b. Year 2 Focus:
      i. Continuing to implement policy and program changes, with focus on data tracking and analysis.
      ii. Enhancing, if necessary, staff and client satisfaction initiatives.
   c. Year 3 Focus:
      i. Increasing housing stability and ending homelessness with county partners.
      ii. Implementing or enhancing systems for comprehensive services referral, tracking, and follow-up.
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1 (FY 14/15)</th>
<th>Year 2 (FY 15/16)</th>
<th>Year 3 (FY 16/17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety Net/Basic Needs</td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Customer Service, Staff Satisfaction, Financial Stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Comprehensive Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Safety Net/Basic Needs
- Employment
- SSI
- Comprehensive Services
- Housing
- Customer Service, Staff Satisfaction, Financial Stability
Results Based Accountability (RBA) is a widely accepted and practiced method to plan and measure the effectiveness and impact of programs, service systems, and population-level interventions. RBA is simple, concrete, and creates a common language so that everyone can contribute. RBA is powerful because it starts with the “ends,” the result or goal we wish to see, and works backwards towards the “means.”

RBA is a new way of accounting for our work; it has been embedded into the Agency’s Contracts Process. The GA Strategic Planning process is the first major use of RBA with a client-serving department in the Agency.
Data Development Agenda: The Data Development Agenda is a plan for collecting new or better data needed to monitor and communicate performance.

Using Headline and Data Development Measures, staff used an RBA “Turn the Curve” process to ask:

- How are we doing now?
- What is the story behind the “baseline”?
- What partners have a role to play in doing better?
- What do we propose to do (action plan/strategies)?

Feedback from the Roots evaluation, staff and advocate surveys, and advocate focus groups was provided to inform staff responses to “what do we propose to do?,” without distinguishing the source. Client feedback was used to refine and strengthen recommendations. Thus the Action Plan proposed is drawn from multiple, diverse sources.

Table 1: Summary of GA Planning Consultative Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vision</th>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
<th>Action Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GA Client Focus Groups</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBA Staff Meetings and Surveys</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBA/GA Managers Structured Planning Meeting</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA Advocates Focus Group and Survey</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roots Recommendations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Action Plan for each goal was categorized by the Policy Office, with input from WBA leadership, into the following levels of change:

- **Internal Policy Change** refers to GA policies and regulations that the Agency—with approval from the Board of Supervisors and adequate funding—can implement.

- **System Level Changes** require partnerships and long-term collaboration with county agencies, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders.

- **Programmatic Changes** refer to changes in operations or administration of the GA program and include workflow, training, and process improvements.

- **Data Development Agenda** are data collection and analysis tasks needed in order to implement and/or gauge the effectiveness of the other changes.
Alameda County General Assistance
Strategic Planning Process

- Reviewing the Roots Evaluation
- Articulating the Vision, Values, & Goals for the GA Program
- Identifying Performance Measures
- Determining How We “Turn The Curve”
- Developing Action Plans
- Implementing Change
- Monitoring and Communicating Progress
- Evaluating Performance

NOTE: Items shaded in grey have been completed
VISION, VALUES AND GOALS

Vision Statement

The General Assistance program offers quality, comprehensive services that meet clients’ basic needs and support paths to self-sufficiency. Staff members work in partnership with the community to invest in our General Assistance clients so that they have hope, dignity, and opportunity.

Values

- **Accountability**: Staff, clients, and the Agency are held to high standards of personal responsibility for their conduct and obligations and to the effective use of public resources.
- **Communication**: We strive for open, clear, consistent, and accurate communication with clients, staff and the public.
- **Confidence and Empowerment**: We are clear and purposeful; we create an environment where staff and clients can succeed.
- **Customer Service**: We actively promote a customer-first attitude, and we strive to meet customers’ needs in terms of services, facilities, and accessibility.
- **Partnership and Teamwork**: We believe in the value of teamwork and partnership within our organization and our community.
- **Resourceful**: We are resourceful problem solvers who regularly seek solutions to challenges big and small.
- **Respect and Compassion**: We treat others as we wish to be treated and strive to understand others’ perspectives and circumstances.

Goals

1. Clients are connected to safety net programs and comprehensive services that meet basic needs and promote well-being.
2. Eligible candidates moved to Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
3. Employable clients find employment with livable wages and benefits.
4. Clients have stable housing.
5. Clients receive excellent customer service and feel supported, respected, and empowered.
6. Staff members feel supported, confident, and that they are making a difference.
7. GA program maintains adequate and stable funding.
GOALS, PERFORMANCE MEASURES, AND ACTION PLANS

**Goal 1:** Clients are connected to safety net programs and comprehensive services that meet basic needs and promote well-being.

Staff, clients, and advocates all identified the need for increased referral to and support of services to GA clients that meet basic needs, support well-being, and remove barriers to housing and employment. Initially, SSA will focus on safety net services, particularly given eligibility changes and enrollment efforts prompted by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Ultimately the Agency will implement improved screening tools, partner with community-based organizations to offer clients a “warm handoff” to referral services, and track the success of these efforts.

**INITIAL HEADLINE MEASURES**

- The number and % of GA clients who are assessed and referred to services by type
- % of clients who have a “medical home” and access to health services

**DATA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

- The number and % of GA clients who are assessed and referred to services by type
- % of clients who have a “medical home” and access to health services

**STORY BEHIND THE “BASELINE”**

We need to create a better outreach program in order to encourage our customers to use these resources . . . . I feel that our GA customers just are not aware of many of the programs that are offered.

— SSA Staff Member

Staff had the opportunity to identify issues that are hindering the Agency’s ability to fully connect GA clients to safety net services. The predominant concern is the need for more Social Workers to assist clients. Additional impediments include the high caseload volume, which limits quality time that can be spent on warm referrals and follow-up, and the lack of a structured referral process and procedure to track clients.

![Graph showing % of GA Clients on Medi-Cal and CalFresh](image)

2 The percent of GA clients on Medi-Cal and CalFresh is based upon internal analysis of our program caseload data captured in CalWIN. Please note that LIHP, which ended 12/2013, were automatically flipped to Medi-Cal but are not captured in the numbers here (they are captured in the MEDS not CalWIN system). These individuals will not be captured until their renewals are processed.
PARTNERS WHO HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY

**Government Agencies**
- Health Care Services Agency (HCSA) & Behavioral Health Care Services (BHCS), Probation, Child Support Enforcement, Violence Prevention Initiative

**Community-Based Organizations**
- Resource and referral agencies, housing providers, and health and mental health providers

**EFFORTS UNDERWAY**
- Large scale Medi-Cal enrollment efforts
- Opportunity to build off of the new CalWORKs appraisal, a client assessment tool
- Redesigned GA application packets
- New Career and Employment Center contracts, which include serving GA clients
- Agency research and pursuit of a platform to track contractor data

“[SSA] should collaborate and connect to different programs. Sometimes you stumble onto services that I didn’t know were there for me . . . I would like things brought into the light instead of wondering should I give up.”

— SSA GA Client

**ACTION PLAN**

**Phase 1: Immediate (Year 1)**

**INTERNAL POLICY**: Enhance supportive services for GA clients. Provide case management especially for clients with mental health concerns or disabilities.

**SYSTEMS LEVEL**: Build on existing efforts to connect GA clients to Medi-Cal & HealthPAC.

**PROGRAMMATIC**: Focus on benefit enrollment and retention. Engage in planning and identify essential components needed to improve clients’ ability to connect to comprehensive resources.
ACTION PLAN CONT’D…..

**Short-term (Year 2)**

**INTERNAL POLICY**: Identify an appraisal tool & improved mental health screening tool.

**SYSTEMS LEVEL**: Build robust system partnerships to connect clients to comprehensive services and address legal barriers of GA clients.

**PROGRAMMATIC**: Create relevant program materials, up to date referral guides, improved processes and training to facilitate clients’ connection to comprehensive services.

**DATA**: Develop protocols and mechanisms to track referral information in CalWIN.

**Medium-term (Year 3)**

**INTERNAL POLICY**: Implement an appraisal tool & improved mental health screening tool. Prioritize and customize services for two target populations (prison reentry and transition age youth).

**SYSTEMS LEVEL**: Connect clients to comprehensive services and address legal barriers of GA clients by leveraging robust system partnerships.

**PROGRAMMATIC**: Implement tools and processes to facilitate clients’ connection to comprehensive services. Make programmatic improvements and changes based on feedback from clients and staff.

**DATA**: Improve Agency’s ability to track referrals, clients across contracts & GA clients’ access to primary care.
Goal 2: Employable clients find employment with livable wages and benefits.

SSA recently made significant investments in improving and expanding employment services contracts, as well as in a major revamp of employment programs. The changes offer more tailored services to the needs and skill levels of clients; a more consistent, supportive relationship with Agency staff; and more innovative strategies to engage employers. These changes form the basis for the Agency’s initial strategies to address the employment needs of our GA clients. SSA will leverage contracts, reform processes, and relationships with stakeholders (the Workforce Investment Boards, workforce organizations, employers, community colleges, etc.) to improve client outcomes in employment. This may also require some changes to Agency and county policies in order to promote increased participation in employment programs. Long term, SSA will focus on removing barriers to employment and reducing reentry into the GA program.

HEADLINE MEASURES

Participants may include current or former GA clients as well as CalFresh only clients. For context, the number and percentage of employable GA clients has declined considerably over the last 4 years. In May 2014, there were approximately 1,750 employable GA clients.

In July 2011, participation of GA clients in employment services became voluntary.

In July 2011, participation of GA clients in employment services became voluntary.

DATA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

✓ % of employable GA clients who exit with employment

✓ % of GA clients who re-enter the program within a 2-year period

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3 The number of CalFresh only and GA clients who participate in employment services is based upon the number of CalFresh Employment and Training (CFE&T) participants placed in an employment component as found on the Stat 47 report available at [http://www.cdss.ca.gov/research/PG359.htm](http://www.cdss.ca.gov/research/PG359.htm)
Much like stable housing, employment is an issue impacted by the national and regional economy. While unemployment is falling, many wages are too low to cover basic needs in the high-cost Bay Area, despite increases to the state minimum wage. Workers with limited skills, limited work history, or other barriers to employment—as varied as criminal records and lack of transportation—face a particularly challenging situation. The Agency does not have resources with which to serve the GA population seeking employment. As a county-funded program, GA lacks state and federal funding for work supports (e.g., transportation, child care, books and supplies) available to CalWORKs clients. Low participation by GA clients in employment programs prevents SSA from drawing down sufficient CalFresh Employment and Training funding that could be used for improvements and work supports. The Agency also acknowledges that the three-month time limit for employable clients is a narrow window in which to provide meaningful employment assessment, training, and placement. The major overhaul of internal practice, partnerships, and contracted services is the Agency’s most recent substantial commitment to improvement.

PARTNERS WHO HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY

Government Agencies
• Workforce Investment Boards, Employment Development Department

Community-Based Organizations
• Community colleges, adult schools, vocational and employment programs

Other Partners
• Employers; collaborative tables targeting re-entry, transition age youth, and workforce development

EFFORTS UNDERWAY
• New SSA Career and Employment Center (CEC) contracts that serve GA clients
• SSA enhanced contract monitoring process
• CalWORKs program expansion at the state level that allows more flexibility in employment services
• Alameda County Youth Transitions Partnership, a multi-systems planning effort of public agencies and community based partners convened by SSA, to promote success in education and employment for transition age youth in Alameda County.

“I think having options that are more vocational would be more beneficial. Like an apprenticeship, internships where you develop legitimate skill sets at the end, would be more successful and satisfying.”

– SSA GA Client
Phase 1: Immediate (Year 1)

INTERNAL POLICY: Explore policy changes to improve engagement of GA clients in workforce programs, including incentives and mandatory participation. Explore resources for potentially employable, and marginally employable clients who may need intensive support.

SYSTEMS LEVEL: Continue and deepen collaboration with system level partners to create opportunity for GA clients.

PROGRAMMATIC: Support the implementation of the Career & Employment Center contract. Closely monitor performance of employment related services and contracts.

DATA: Track if clients maintain employment, wages & hours; track reentry into the GA program.

Phase 2: Short-term (Year 2)

INTERNAL POLICY: Prioritize employment services & educational activities for two target populations (prison reentry & transition age youth). Expand subsidized employment programs for GA clients if funding sources can be identified.

SYSTEMS LEVEL: Expand opportunities for GA clients and address barriers to employment by leveraging robust system partnerships (e.g. record expungement, assistance with child support orders, GED, transportation).

PROGRAMMATIC: Implement programmatic supports to connect GA clients to supportive services to address barriers to employment. Pilot innovative strategies such as an “Integration Team” to act as a liaison between client, employer, and SSA.

Phase 3: Medium term (Year 3)

PROGRAMMATIC: Implement programmatic changes based upon evaluation of employment related services, pilots and contracts as well as client and staff feedback.
Goal 3: Eligible candidates are moved to SSI.

The Agency is committed to supporting the enrollment of our eligible GA clients into Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI). SSI program support, while perhaps just sufficient to meet very basic needs, offers clients a more stable, long-term support than GA can provide. SSI enrollments also allow the county to recoup costs and serve more clients. SSA has an internal SSI Advocacy unit and contracts with community partners to provide additional advocacy and support to clients applying for SSI. These efforts will be systematically evaluated to promote more effective and expeditious transitions.

INITIAL HEADLINE MEASURES

![Graph showing the number of SSI/SSDI approvals by month for GA clients represented by SSA or SSA funded SSI Advocate.](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014 (until August 2014)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Development Agenda

☑ % of unemployable clients who are approved for SSI/SSDI by pathway (SSA internal unit, SSA contracted advocate, other)

☑ Average time it takes to be assigned to an advocate

STORY BEHIND THE BASELINE

SSI Advocacy is an area where the Agency and its partner contractors are seeing some success. While the SSI Advocacy model is promising, there is limited capacity to serve all potentially SSI eligible clients, and if clients are discontinued from GA, the internal Advocacy process is disrupted. SSA has a “queue” of over 1,150 potentially eligible clients waiting too long to be assigned an advocate. This waiting process prevents the clients from accessing the full benefits SSI may offer and the Agency forgoes the opportunity to be reimbursed. In the past, the Agency had a strong relationship with the Social Security Administration, but recent changes in staffing in that agency weakened the connection.

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4 The number of SSI/SSDI approvals per month was provided by Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (BHCS) on October 14, 2014. These numbers include only SSA clients represented by a SSA or SSA funded SSI Advocate. It is important to note that BHCS funded SSI Advocates also represent many GA clients not captured here. In addition, GA clients who secure SSI/SSDI independently are not captured here.

5 Note that the year is the calendar not fiscal year.
PARTNERS WHO HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY

Government Agencies
• Social Security, CA Disability Determination Service, Behavioral Health Care Services

Community-Based Organizations
• Service providers and advocates

EIFFORTS UNDERWAY
• SSA implementation of performance-driven contracts and improved contracts management process

ACTION PLAN

Phase 1: Immediate (Year 1)

INTERNAL POLICY: Ensure eligible clients maintain benefits to avoid disruption in SSI advocacy. Provide case management, especially for GA clients with mental health concerns and disabilities.

SYSTEMS LEVEL: Reestablish agreements with Social Security Administration to improve SSI Advocacy process.

PROGRAMMATIC: Explore a database system to replace SMART. Define a clear structure of governance & oversight for SSI Advocacy. Improve instructions for 90-2 Form & implement provider training.

DATA: Align new database system with external contractors and BHCS.

Phase 2: Short-term (Year 2)

PROGRAMMATIC: Replace SMART. Make programmatic improvements and changes to SSI Advocacy based on data. Increase capacity for SSI advocacy.

DATA: Ensure data of internal unit & external contractors are gathered and reported systematically to track clients & efficiently allocate resources.

Phase 3: Medium term (Year 3)

PROGRAMMATIC: Make programmatic improvements and changes to SSI Advocacy based on data.

DATA: Ensure data of internal unit & external contractors are gathered and reported systematically to track clients & efficiently allocate resources.
Goal 4: Clients have stable housing.

Housing is a substantial challenge for GA clients and a basic need that many in the Bay Area struggle to fulfill. SSA is committed to supporting housing solutions for all of our clients, while recognizing that systems-level solutions are critically needed. SSA commits to internal policy changes and programmatic efforts that remove barriers to housing, empower clients, and increase participation in housing supports. Long term, the Agency strives to be part of innovative solutions that address housing access, affordability, and stability.

INITIAL HEADLINE MEASURES

The number of GA clients receiving the supplemental housing allowance continues to rise. In October 2014, 370 clients received the allowance. For context, approximately 1,000 GA clients are currently represented by a county funded SSI advocate.

DATA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

- % of GA clients who transition into stable housing
- % of clients who are homeless

STORY BEHIND THE BASELINE

From the most recent recession and foreclosure crisis to the tech boom causing ripple effects in the rental market, access to affordable, stable housing is a challenge for many people in Alameda County, including Agency staff, and particularly for the clients SSA serves. Staff members identified these and other macro-level challenges again and again as a “reality check” for this goal. Many in the GA population are also particularly hard to house, with mental health and substance abuse conditions creating barriers to stable housing. The quantity of immediate and emergency shelter and transitional housing available to GA clients is limited. At the same time, some Agency policies, such as lowering the grant amount of homeless individuals with no rental obligation, in the past have contributed to this lack of stability. Recent internal policy changes—including the repeal of that policy so that homeless clients are now eligible for the full grant amount—are the Agency’s first step on the difficult road to achieving this goal.

---

6 The number of GA clients receiving the supplemental housing allowance is based upon an internal analysis of financial data.
PARTNERS WHO HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY

**Government Agencies**
- Community Development Agency, Board of Supervisors, Housing & Community Development, Public Housing Authorities, US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

**Community-Based Organizations**
- EveryOne Home, affordable housing providers

**EFFORTS UNDERWAY**

- **Policy Change**
  - Optional “vendor pay” for landlords (except in the case of mental incapacity).
  - Optional, rather than mandatory, landlord verification of a client’s living situation, as well as the housing cost.
  - Elimination of the “good cause” determination for refusing a shelter bed (CHASS bed). Clients who accept or decline a shelter bed will still receive the full grant.
  - Elimination of the basic need grant that did not provide a housing supplement

- **Supplemental Housing Allowance for SSI pending clients**
- **County “Homelessness Table” convened by SSA Agency Director Lori Cox**
- **CalWORKs housing supports tied to employment**
- **Support the efforts of the Alameda County Youth Transitions Partnership, a multi-systems planning effort of public agencies and community based partners convened by SSA, to address and prevent homelessness among former foster youth in Alameda County.**

**ACTION PLAN**

**Phase 1: Immediate (Year 1)**

**INTERNAL POLICY:** Implement optional landlord verification.

**SYSTEMS LEVEL:** Continue to support existing county efforts including participation at the Homeless Table; efforts to create and connect clients to permanent, stable housing; and exploration of rapid rehousing opportunities.

**PROGRAMMATIC:** Engage in planning to improve SSA shelter contracts. Facilitate maximum participation in the GA Housing Subsidy Program.

**DATA:** Identify mechanism and training needed in order to track housing status of GA clients in CalWIN. Determine sustainability of the GA Housing Subsidy.
Phase 2: Short-term (Year 2)

SYSTEMS LEVEL: Continue to support existing county efforts including participation at the Homeless Table; efforts to create and connect clients to permanent, stable housing; and exploration of rapid rehousing opportunities.

PROGRAMMATIC: Continue to partner with contractors to monitor and evaluate SSA shelter contracts. Facilitate maximum participation in the GA Housing Subsidy Program.

DATA: Enter and track housing status of GA clients in CalWIN.

Phase 3: Medium term (Year 3)

SYSTEMS LEVEL: Consider a county-wide or regional "collective impact" strategy to address homelessness.

PROGRAMMATIC: Implement programmatic changes based upon systems-level collective impact strategy.

DATA: Identify measures to understand the housing stability of GA clients.
Goal 5: Clients receive excellent customer service and feel supported, respected, and empowered.

The Agency is committed—as articulated in our Vision, Values, and Goals for the GA program—to improving the customer experience for our GA clients. While efforts are underway that will benefit all SSA clients, there is a need for more specific attention to the needs of the GA population. Planned improvements range from physical space (e.g., the lobby experience) to processes (e.g., screening and referral) to access for those with special needs (e.g., mental health concerns or disabilities). The Agency values client feedback and commits to creating regular input opportunities for our customers.

DATA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA
✓ % of GA clients who respond positively to a survey (e.g., “I was treated well”)

STORY BEHIND THE BASELINE

I see that clients who have outside support - or at least a supportive Eligibility Technician - are in the office less often, are less frustrated, and are more likely to have time to pursue education, work, and other opportunities.

– SSA Staff Member

GA clients are coming to SSA at crisis points in their lives. They have very few resources and are coping with extremely challenging circumstances. In focus groups, clients indicated that they come to SSA seeking compassion, respect, encouragement, and support. Clients are seldom aware of all of the resources that are available to them. The Agency has made significant changes to the GA program in recent years, and the climate has often been one of scarcity. This has resulted in a culture in which staff members have not felt able to freely share resources and help clients access all of the benefits for which they are eligible. GA clients’ cases can be particularly complex, caseloads are high, and clients feel the effect of caseload “balancing” when they are shuffled from worker to worker. Changes to the structure of the program will provide a more empowering experience for clients.

PARTNERS WHO HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY

Social Services Agency
- Office of Public Affairs, Information Services Division (ISD), Planning, Evaluation and Research Unit (PERU)

Community Members and Organizations
- Clients, community-based organizations
EFFORTS UNDERWAY

- Plans for GA staff training on guidelines, best practices, and cultural competence
- SSA existing waiting room survey
- Public Affairs Community Ambassador Program and waiting room improvements
- ISD installation of additional “kiosks” in some of the SSA waiting rooms
- Opportunity to build off of new CalWORKs screening and assessment tool
- Eastmont office warm hand-off model for transitioning clients to next worker
- Parent Voices project to include client voice in CalWORKs administration is a demonstrated model that may be replicable for GA

ACTION PLAN

Phase 1: Immediate (Year 1)

**INTERNAL POLICY:** Eliminate "good cause determination" for declining a CHASS bed. Implement optional "vendor pay" for landlords.

**PROGRAMMATIC:** Identify improvements to training, processes, program materials, and the lobby experience to better address the needs of GA clients and provide enhanced customer service.

**DATA:** Develop systems to elicit client feedback through surveys and focus groups.

Phase 2: Short-term (Year 2)

**INTERNAL POLICY:** Identify an appraisal tool & improved mental health screening tool.

**PROGRAMMATIC:** Create relevant program materials, enhancements to the lobby experience, up to date referral guides, improved processes, and training to better address the needs of the GA clients and provide enhanced customer service. Consider adding additional "Greeters" to better meet the needs of our GA clients. Develop clear communication plan for program changes to clients, staff, and the community.

**DATA:** Collect client feedback through surveys and focus groups to monitor customer service and gather feedback on program improvements.

Phase 3: Medium term (Year 3)

**INTERNAL POLICY:** Implement an appraisal tool & improved mental health screening tool.

**PROGRAMMATIC:** Implement programmatic changes and pilot innovative strategies based upon evaluation of employment related services and contracts as well as client and staff feedback.
Goal 6: Staff members feel supported, confident, and that they are making a difference.

Overwhelmingly, staff members who touch the GA program tied their job satisfaction to the ability to make a positive impact in clients’ lives. Staff requested more resource and referral information, training, specialized services for clients, and more time to give clients the attention they deserve. Staff satisfaction and client satisfaction are inextricably linked, and the Agency is committed to providing the resources that staff members need to do their jobs well, so that both staff and clients have what they need to succeed.

DATA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA
% of WBA staff who feel they make a difference in the lives of GA clients

STORY BEHIND THE “BASELINE”
The “story” of GA staff satisfaction mirrors that of the goal around client customer service. Caseload volume, workload, and program instability contribute to frustration and ambivalence about opportunities for success. In addition, hiring, training, and system updates have not always kept up with program changes and expectations. Staff members need time, skills, and tools to do their jobs well; the Agency has often lacked sufficient human and financial resources to provide these at the level the program deserves. A renewed focus on quality and a cultural shift toward client empowerment will contribute to staff success.

PARTNERS WHO HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY

Social Services Agency
- Staff, Human Resources, Training and Consulting Team, Office of Public Affairs, ISD, Labor

Government Agencies
- Behavioral Health Care Services & Health Care Services Agency, Probation

Other Partners
- Labor, community-based organizations, resource and referral agencies

EFFORTS UNDERWAY
- Plans for GA staff training on guidelines, best practices, and cultural competence
- Resource “blue book” available
- Eastmont office model of meetings between Social Worker units and Eligibility Technician units
ACTION PLAN

Phase 1: Immediate (Year 1)

**INTERNAL POLICY:** Provide program stability to the GA program and commit to only implementing the policy changes set in the GA strategic plan.

**PROGRAMMATIC:** Identify improvements to training, processes, program and referral materials to better address the needs of GA clients and support staff success. Identify improvements to the lobby experience that benefit all clients including GA clients. Communicate to staff regularly on the implementation of the GA strategic plan and solicit feedback on improvements and adjustments. Provide opportunities for staff to come together and share resources & information.

**DATA:** Develop systems to elicit staff feedback through surveys and focus groups to elicit client feedback through surveys and focus groups.

Phase 2: Short-term (Year 2)

**PROGRAMMATIC:** Develop a strategy to establish optimum workload and productivity levels considering client, staff and Agency needs. Create relevant program materials, enhancements to the lobby experience, up to date referral guides, improved processes and training to better address the needs of the GA clients and support staff success.

**DATA:** Collect staff feedback through surveys and focus groups to monitor satisfaction and gather feedback on program improvements.

Phase 3: Medium-term (Year 3)

**PROGRAMMATIC:** Implement strategy for optimum workload and productivity levels.

**DATA:** Collect staff feedback through surveys and focus groups to monitor satisfaction and gather feedback on program improvements.
Goal 7: GA program maintains adequate and stable funding.

The GA program is charged with and committed to serving and maintaining the highest level of service to vulnerable members of our community. Many of their situations are complex, tied to inequities in the resources and larger systems (housing, unemployment, health care) in our region. The Agency acknowledges the need for policy, system, and programmatic improvements to the GA program; all of these changes require resources, and we seek partnership with county leadership to realistically allocate resources in relation to our commitments.

INITIAL HEADLINE MEASURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Change in County General Fund Support of the GA Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GA Payments (%) Change (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30.49M 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$34.46M 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$28.86M -16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$18.81M -35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$24.48M 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$26.65M 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$27.4M 3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DATA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

✓ % of required funding secured

STORY BEHIND THE “BASELINE”

GA is a 100% county-funded program. The program is more closely linked to fluctuations in the local economy and the county budget than any of the other programs SSA offers. Fiscal prudence is appropriate in order to ensure program sustainability, yet in times of increased need, program improvements, or reform, the Agency and county must make investments that support the program’s success. These investments may take the form of direct client benefits, staffing for program administration, and contracts. The stability and long-term commitment of these investments are the keys to successful implementation of a refreshed GA program. Cutting back on our investment in clients is contributing to program churning and to other long-term costs to the county (e.g., emergency room visits, incarceration). Investing in GA clients is fiscally prudent in the long-run.

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7 Net County costs reflect actual costs of the GA program based upon an internal analysis of SSA financial data.
PARTNERS WHO HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY

Social Services Agency
- SSA Executive Team and Finance

County Leadership
- Board of Supervisors and County Administrator

EFFORTS UNDERWAY
- Cost analysis of current/proposed policy changes
- Roots Evaluation
- Strategic Planning Process

ACTION PLAN

Phase 1: Immediate (Year 1)
PROGRAMMATIC: Conduct a thorough cost analysis of the policy changes, program improvements, and strategies recommended in the GA Strategic Plan. Ensure the program is adequately funded and leverage resources effectively.

Phase 2: Short-term (Year 2)
PROGRAMMATIC: Ensure the program is adequately funded and leverage resources effectively.

Phase 3: Medium-term (Year 3)
PROGRAMMATIC: Ensure the program is adequately funded and leverage resources effectively
MEASURING PERFORMANCE

To better understand the outcomes of clients and measure the impact of the changes recommended in this GA Strategic Plan, staff members have identified critical areas where the Agency should invest in improved data collection, tracking, and reporting.

Headline Measures

Key performance measures were identified after consultation with staff members who perform analytical functions related the General Assistance program and also during the facilitated meetings with SSA staff. These “headline measures” are the most important measures for which SSA currently has good data. Headline measures identified include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headline Measure</th>
<th>Related Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of GA clients receiving Medi-Cal and CalFresh</td>
<td>Clients are connected to safety net programs and comprehensive services that meet basic needs and promote well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of GA and/or CalFresh clients who participate in employment services</td>
<td>Employable clients find employment with livable wages and benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of SSI applications approved per year</td>
<td>Eligible SSI candidates are moved to SSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of SSI pending clients who receive the supplemental housing allowance</td>
<td>Clients have stable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% increased funding to support GA program goals and strategic plan</td>
<td>GA program maintains adequate and stable funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESOURCES IDENTIFIED:

Key staff and immediate resources needed to report, monitor, and take action on the headline measures include:

- **GA project manager** to monitor performance and partner with staff to take action on the Headline Measures.

- **Agency Executive Team (AET)** to identify and provide protected staff time to build reports, review systems, and generate reports. Staff will likely be from the Information Services Division (ISD), Planning Evaluation and Research Unit (PERU), Finance, and Workforce and Benefits Administration (WBA).

Data Development Agenda

Although these Headline Measures provide some insight into outcomes for GA clients, it is clear that new or better data is needed to monitor performance, understand outcomes, and communicate progress. An important component of the GA Strategic Plan is identifying information gaps and establishing a Data Development Agenda.
RESOURCES IDENTIFIED:
During the GA Strategic Planning process, an ad hoc Data Workgroup was formed and included a cross-section of Agency staff from Policy, PERU, ISD, and WBA to scope out the immediate resources needed for each Data Development Agenda Item. Data on the measures below are currently not available, and there are funding implications for most of the recommendations below. Although each requires further analysis to fully determine the complexity, costs, and data collection/reporting mechanisms, the following immediate resources were identified.

- **WBA Department Executive Team (DET):** Determine the parameters and establish the reporting and monitoring structure.
- **QA QIP:** The GA Workgroup (as a subgroup of the GA QIP) will determine the data collection processes, establish how data will be extracted, and build systems for data reporting and tracking.
- **Finance:** Conduct a thorough cost analysis.
- **TACT, Social Workers, and WBA Staff:** Develop and participate in training on new or improved data collection processes.
- **WBA Eligibility Technicians, Employment Counselors, Clerical, Social Workers, and Contractors:** Responsible for accurate and complete data entry.
- **ISD, PERU, and WBA Staff:** Create ongoing data reports.
- **WBA Managers:** Monitor data entry and address data integrity issues.

The following table outlines the data development items and the estimated level of resources (staff time, funding, technology and data systems, etc.) needed to collect and report on that item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Development Item</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Estimated Level of Resources Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of GA clients who are assessed and referred to services by type (substance abuse treatment, health, mental health, DV services)</td>
<td>Clients are connected to safety net programs and comprehensive services that meet basic needs and promote well-being</td>
<td>Medium/High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of GA clients w/ a medical home</td>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of employable GA clients who exit with employment</td>
<td>Employable clients find employment with livable wages and benefits</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of GA clients who retain employment for 180 days</td>
<td></td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of GA clients who re-enter the program</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of unemployable clients who secure SSI/SSDI by pathway (SSA internal SSI Advocacy unit, SSA contracted advocate,</td>
<td>Eligible candidates are moved to SSI</td>
<td>Depends on strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MONITORING AND COMMUNICATION PLAN

Successful implementation of the Strategic Plan will require an infrastructure with clear communication, roles and responsibilities, and deliverables. Where collaborative tables exist, SSA will build upon those efforts. Where no formal structures are in place, the Agency is committed to creating and supporting such bodies.

Existing Tables

WBA DET MEETINGS
PURPOSE: The WBA DET will function as a steering committee for the GA Strategic Plan. The DET will guide implementation and resolve issues.

Examples of the DET’s role:

- Approve changes to the GA strategic plan.
- Address roadblocks to the success of the GA strategic plan.
- Provide additional resources to implement the plan.
- Recommend significant improvements to policies, processes, trainings, services, or tools.
- Communicate progress, successes, and major concerns.

FREQUENCY: WBA DET meetings take place, at a minimum, three times a month. Regular status updates from the GA project manager and a review of issues on an as-needed basis will facilitate monitoring and continuous improvement.
SSI ADVOCACY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Purpose: The Committee is focused on establishing better relationships with stakeholders, evaluating the success of advocacy efforts, improving the quality and success rate of applications, and coordinating efforts between SSA and BHCS. The Committee includes representatives from BHCS, SSA (WBA and PERU), Alameda Health Consortium, Social Security Administration, State Disability Determination Services, and contracted SSI advocates.
FREQUENCY: Quarterly

ADVOCACY TABLE
PURPOSE: Advocates meet with Andrea Ford to discuss problems with individual cases and clients, review rules and regulations, and recommend changes to policies and procedures.
FREQUENCY: Bi-monthly

SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD COMMITTEE
PURPOSE: Alameda County Social Services Board Committee provides oversight to the Agency’s policies, programs, and services. Agency Director Lori Cox is committed to reporting to the Social Services Committee quarterly on reform efforts and program development related to the GA Program.
FREQUENCY: Monthly

VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVE
PURPOSE: The Violence Prevention Initiative is focused on preventing and reducing violence throughout Alameda County and includes representatives from various county agencies (Social Services, Public Health, Probation, Behavioral Health Care Services, Sherriff, CAO, etc.) and is supported by the Prevention Institute, Urban Strategies Council, and Hill & Company Communications. System leaders at this table strive to leverage expenditures in a way that reduces violence through direct services and through coordination with other jurisdictions as well as business partners. County agencies are focused on improved communication, resource allocation, and capacity building.
FREQUENCY: Monthly

HOMELESSNESS TABLE
PURPOSE: Agency Director Lori Cox chairs this table to discuss issues related to homelessness with systems leaders. Examples of topics discussed include evaluating our current homeless shelter system and aligning resources to ensure sustainable funding for housing programs.
FREQUENCY: Monthly

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PURPOSE: The Legislative Council engages staff across departments, including WBA, in our legislative process and informs SSA’s positions with the expertise and experience of staff. The Legislative Council is the venue to raise policy issues and recommend changes at either the state or federal level or propose state legislation.
FREQUENCY: Monthly
CONCLUSION

There is broad agreement within SSA and the Department of Workforce and Benefits Administration (WBA) that the General Assistance (GA) program as currently structured is in need of enhanced functionality and benefits to clients, clearer expectations of staff, and stronger community partnerships by which to achieve our goals.

This plan is designed to be a guidepost, to inform decision-making, and provide a basic framework on which to build and improve the GA program. The proposed changes will require strategic collaboration, unified vision, and leadership. The benefits of improved outcomes for clients and an enhanced environment for staff will make it worth the effort.

The challenges faced by GA clients are numerous and complex, embedded in the larger socioeconomic context of Alameda County and the San Francisco Bay Area. SSA is committed to working with clients, staff, the Board of Supervisors, key partners, and other stakeholders to create an environment in our Agency and our county where our vision for GA can be achieved, where clients have hope, dignity, and opportunity.
### Internal Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Plan Goal Addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide case management especially to clients with mental health concerns and disabilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#1 Clients are connected to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritize services for prison reentry population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#3 Eligible candidates are moved to SSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance supportive services for GA clients</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#1 Clients are connected to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritize services for transition age youth (18 – 24)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#2 Employable clients find employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/ identify and implement an appraisal tool and improved mental health screening tool.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#1 Clients are connected to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore policy changes to encourage GA client engagement in workforce programs, including incentives and mandatory participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#2 Employable clients find employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand subsidized employment and county employment opportunities to GA clients if funding can be identified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#2 Employable clients find employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure eligible clients maintain benefits in order to prevent disruptions in SSI advocacy</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#3 Eligible candidates are moved to SSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simplify the program so that all GA clients are eligible for a grant amount up to $336 (eliminate the basic needs grant)</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#4 Clients have stable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliminate the &quot;good cause&quot; determination for declining a CHASS bed.</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#5 Clients receive excellent customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional &quot;vendor pay&quot; for landlords (except in the case of mental incapacity).</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#5 Clients receive excellent customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide program stability to the GA program and commit to only implementing the policy changes set in the GA strategic plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#6 Staff feel supported and confident</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### System Level Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Plan Goal Addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner with other agencies and organizations in an interdisciplinary effort to assist with child support orders, criminal record expungement, restitution orders, liens, levies, driver license suspensions and other legal barriers for GA clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#1 Clients are connected to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve connecting clients to Medi-Cal and HealthPAC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#2 Employable clients find employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate with community based organizations, housing orgs/agencies, mental health, nutrition, health care, probation, and food banks to connect clients to resources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#1 Clients are connected to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equip staff with up-to-date referral resources including substance abuse treatment, housing, mental health services, primary care providers, nutrition, anger management, coping and dealing with trauma, domestic violence, life skills, legal, and employment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#1 Clients are connected to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue and deepen collaboration with other system level partners and stakeholders to remove barriers and create opportunity for GA clients.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#6 Staff feel supported and confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with Social Security Administration to reestablish agreements to better the SSI Advocacy process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#3 Eligible candidates are moved to SSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider a County-wide or regional &quot;collective impact&quot; strategy to specifically address homelessness including the participation of OHA, HUD, GSA, HCBA, BHCS, and other stakeholders. Build upon existing county efforts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#4 Clients have stable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore an support investment into transitional and long-term housing strategies throughout the County.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#4 Clients have stable housing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Programmatic Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Plan Goal Addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create processes, protocol and training for activities to transition clients to the next worker (warm handoff)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#1 Clients are connected to services</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#5 Clients receive excellent customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop culturally, linguistically, and situationally relevant program materials based on GA participants’ demographic data.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#1 Clients are connected to services</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#5 Clients receive excellent customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support the implementation of the Career and Education Center (CEC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>#2 Employable clients find employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closely monitor performance of all employment-related services and contracts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#2 Employable clients find employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect clients to education and GED classes and provide supportive services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#2 Employable clients find employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot innovative strategies such as an “Integration Team” that will serve as a liaison between the client and the Agency, employers, schools, CBOs, and/or other programs suitable for the client.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>#2 Employable clients find employment</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#5 Clients receive excellent customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define clear structure of governance and oversight for SSI Advocacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>#3 Eligible candidates are moved to SSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace SMART with a new database system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#3 Eligible candidates are moved to SSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make programmatic improvements and changes to SSI advocacy based on data and metrics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#3 Eligible candidates are moved to SSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase capacity for SSI advocacy, including internal staffing with dedicated GA workers assigned to cases and adequate clerical support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#3 Eligible candidates are moved to SSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement provider training to facilitate a uniform understanding of the definition of “unemployable” and the proper completion of the 90-2 Form.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#3 Eligible candidates are moved to SSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate maximum participation in the GA Housing Subsidy Program to the fullest extent possible for unemployable clients likely to receive SSI.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#4 Clients have stable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate shelter contracts, develop minimum standards and assure adequate geographic redistribution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#4 Clients have stable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reevaluate SSA role and staffing based on systems conversations to support housing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#4 Clients have stable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore housing supports to GA clients participating in employment programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#4 Clients have stable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider establishing “Greeters” at each site to assist with client navigation and ensure clients with disabilities are properly accommodated in a discrete manner.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#5 Clients receive excellent customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review lobby experience for clients and ways to improve customer service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#5 Clients receive excellent customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide WBA staff with consistent and comprehensive training, led by a content expert and directly addressing the needs of staff to better serve the GA clients</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#5 Clients receive excellent customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a clear communication plan for program changes to clients, staff, and the community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#5 Clients receive excellent customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate to staff regularly on the implementation of the GA strategic plan and solicit feedback on improvements and adjustments</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#6 Staff feel supported and confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and implement a strategy to establish optimum workload and productivity levels, considering client, staff and Agency needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#6 Staff feel supported and confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide opportunities for staff to come together and share resources, success stories, learn about each other roles, and troubleshoot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#6 Staff feel supported and confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct a thorough cost analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#7 GA maintains adequate, stable funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure program is adequately funded and leverage resources effectively</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#7 GA maintains adequate, stable funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Data Development Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Plan Goal Addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Track clients across our contracts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#1 Clients are connected to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure resource and referral information is captured in CalWIN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#1 Clients are connected to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track access to primary care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#1 Clients are connected to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track if clients obtain and maintain employment, wages and hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#2 Employable clients find employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track client re-entry into the GA program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#2 Employable clients find employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure data of internal SSI advocacy unit and SSI Advocacy external contractors are gathered and reported systematically to track clients and efficiently allocate resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#3 Eligible candidates are moved to SSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enter and track the housing status of GA clients into CalWIN.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#4 Clients have stable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify measures to understand the housing stability of clients</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#4 Clients have stable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine the impact of optional vendor payments on housing stability of clients</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#4 Clients have stable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine the sustainability of funding given recent policy changes (i.e. ACA implementation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#4 Clients have stable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicit client feedback via customer satisfaction surveys at each stage of the GA process, as well as periodic GA focus groups to monitor the customer service experience.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#5 Clients receive excellent customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey staff on satisfaction measures and gather feedback on program improvements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#6 Staff feel supported and confident</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 2: Abbreviations and Acronyms Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-2 Form</td>
<td>Clinicians complete this form to establish the presence of a disability. The 90-2 determines the employment status of GA clients.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAF</td>
<td>Agency Administration &amp; Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAMS</td>
<td>Adult, Aging &amp; Medi-Cal Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACA</td>
<td>Affordable Care Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AET</td>
<td>Agency Executive Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BHCS</td>
<td>Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOS</td>
<td>Alameda County Board of Supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CalWIN</td>
<td>California Welfare Information Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CalWORKs</td>
<td>California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPI</td>
<td>Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community-Based Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEC</td>
<td>Career &amp; Education Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFS</td>
<td>Children &amp; Family Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHASS</td>
<td>Community Housing and Shelter Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DET</td>
<td>Department Executive Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FQHC</td>
<td>Federally Qualified Health Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>General Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSA</td>
<td>Alameda County General Services Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCD</td>
<td>Alameda County Housing and Community Development Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCSA</td>
<td>Alameda County Health Care Services Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRS</td>
<td>Alameda County Human Resource Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUD</td>
<td>Housing &amp; Urban Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISD</td>
<td>Information Services Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHA</td>
<td>Oakland Housing Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERU</td>
<td>Planning, Evaluation &amp; Research Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS</td>
<td>Program, Planning, and Support?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QIP</td>
<td>Quality Improvement Panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
<td>Alameda County Social Services Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMART</td>
<td>Service Management Access and Resource Tracking system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNAP</td>
<td>Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSI</td>
<td>Supplemental Security Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TACT</td>
<td>Training &amp; Consulting Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBA</td>
<td>Workforce &amp; Benefits Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEX/CS/VTR</td>
<td>Work Experience, Community Services and Vocational Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIB/WIA</td>
<td>Workforce Investment Board/Workforce Investment Act</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>