

## Update: Some Changes to FY 2019 Budget at Final Vote

By DCFPI Staff

The fiscal year (FY) 2019 Local Budget Act, which sets the budget for DC agencies for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2018, receives two votes in the DC Council before becoming law. The DC budget for FY 2019, adopted this Tuesday on second vote, includes important investments for DC residents, but fails to ensure that all residents have the resources they need to be successful in our growing city.

Please read our analysis of the budget, which received its first vote on May 15: [Approved DC Budget: District Investments Should Match the City's Needs](#).

Important changes made to the budget this Tuesday, at the second vote, including the following:

### Affordable Housing

*No major changes to affordable housing in the second vote.*

### Homeless Services

- **Family Homelessness:** The Council found \$1 million in one-time funds for family Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) to partially offset the \$6.6 million in ongoing funding they reprogrammed from RRH at first vote. These funds were used to increase the number of vouchers in two long-term family affordable housing programs: Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Targeted Affordable Housing (TAH). PSH provides affordable housing coupled with intensive case management services. TAH helps residents pay rent after their Rapid Re-Housing ends or when they no longer need the intensive services provided by PSH, but still need affordable housing.

### Health Care

- **Smoking Cessation:** The Council added \$1 million to fund smoking cessation programs offered through the Department of Health on a recurring basis. This funding comes through a portion of revenues generated by a \$2 [increase in the District's tobacco tax](#). The tax increase is anticipated to reduce youth smoking by 20 percent and prevent 2,000 smoking-caused deaths.<sup>1</sup>
- **Behavioral Health:** The budget allocates \$200,000 in one-time funding to the Department of Behavioral Health for a rate analysis and development of a Medicaid waiver focused on substance abuse disorders. Medicaid waivers allow states to “waive” certain Medicaid program requirements to test new ideas or provide care for individuals who may otherwise be ineligible. The funding will be matched with about \$90,000 from the federal government.
- **Maternal Health:** The Council included \$200,000 in one-time funding to support patient-centered maternal care for Medicaid-eligible expecting mothers in the District. The grant is intended to improve prenatal outcomes.

## Early Childhood & PreK-12 Education

- **Birth-to-Three in DC and Home Visiting:** The budget allocates a \$1.3 million investment toward key components of pending “Birth-to-Three in DC” legislation, which would begin to build a truly comprehensive support system for early childhood development in the District. As part of that effort, the Council increased the amount of new, recurring dollars for home visiting services up to \$710,566 on a recurring basis. Home visiting services improve outcomes for low-income parents of young children and pregnant mothers by teaching skills like nutrition and stress management, connecting families with community resources, and helping parents create a safe home environment that supports early learning. The Council also adjusted another component of the “Birth-to-Three” legislation, changing \$100,183 from one-time funding to recurring dollars for the Office of the State Superintendent of Education to develop a competitive salary scale for early educators and publish other critical studies in the legislation.

## Jobs & Training

- **DC Career Connections:** The Council cut a total of \$950,000 from DC Career Connections (DC-CC) at the first vote, but restored \$550,000 in funding at the second vote, leaving the program with \$4.4 million for FY 2019. This is a small decrease from the \$4.8 million proposed by the Mayor. DC-CC is a work readiness program, specifically targeted to youth aged 20 to 24, that started in FY 2017. It provides up to nine months and 40 hours per week of work experience, skills training, and individualized coaching and support for employment.

## Other

- **Arts:** The Council added yet another \$1 million to the Commission on the Arts, Humanities and Creative Economy, further building on the dramatic increases [adopted at first vote](#).

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<sup>1</sup> American Cancer Society – Cancer Action Network, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids & Tobacconomics, “New Revenues, Public Health Benefits & Cost Savings From A \$2.00 Cigarette Tax Increase In the District of Columbia,” Updated January 10, 2018.