Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) grants are a critical source of basic income for low-income seniors and people with disabilities. SSI/SSP uses federal (SSI) and state (SSP) dollars to provide modest monthly grants that help 1.3 million Californians pay for housing, food, and other necessities.

Policymakers made deep cuts to the state’s SSP portion to help close budget shortfalls. By mid-2011, the state had cut maximum monthly SSP grants to the lowest levels allowed by federal law: from $568 to $396 for couples and from $233 to $156 for individuals. SSP grants remain at these diminished levels today.

Due to state cuts, SSI/SSP grants no longer lift individuals out of poverty. The state’s SSP portion would have to increase by more than $90 per month – to $248 – to bring the total SSI/SSP grant for individuals up to the 2015 federal poverty line.

Source: Department of Social Services and US Department of Health and Human Services

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