

Proposed IHSS Cuts: How does Alameda County Compare?

A [new policy analysis](#) by UCLA's Center for Health Policy Research describes how California's low-income frail seniors have nowhere to turn in the face of proposed cuts to long-term care services. The report is chilling as it outlines the current situation and zeroes in on nine counties to illustrate the consequences of the proposal to eliminate In-Home Supportive Services for 87% of all current clients statewide.

Alameda County was not one of the nine included in the report. In the analysis of impact from proposed IHSS cuts, how do we compare?

Data from the nine counties show that 87% of IHSS recipients age 65+ with cognitive impairments would lose all of their paid caregiver hours. Similarly, 94% of those living alone, 90% of those who can't shop for food without help, and 89% of those age 80+ would lose all their IHSS hours. These characteristics are predictors of institutionalization.

Of the approximately 17,600 IHSS recipients in Alameda County, 15,394 would lose all paid caregiver hours under the Governor's proposal. These are the IHSS recipients whose functional index score is under 4 on a scale of 1 – 4.99. They include:

- ▶ 6,422 adults with disabilities
- ▶ 330 children
- ▶ 8,642 elders.

Having a FI score under 4 does not mean that you can get by successfully on your own. The Alameda County elders who would lose in-home care under the Governor's proposal include:

- ▶ 4,475 who are age 80 or older
- ▶ 3,184 who live alone
- ▶ 7,782 who cannot shop for food without help
- ▶ 7,404 who cannot do laundry without help
- ▶ 6,916 who cannot do housework without help
- ▶ 3,578 who need help transferring (from bed to wheel chair, for instance)
- ▶ 1,099 who cannot bathe without help
- ▶ 5,905 who need some help or a lot of help to bathe
- ▶ 674 who need help eating
- ▶ 380 who need help breathing

Impact on Families

The UCLA report describes how many families have no caregiving reserves. In Alameda County, IHSS funding helps 9,088 family members to provide caregiving services to elders, disabled adults and children. This income makes it possible for them to forgo other paid employment, and also provides them with health insurance.

Alternatives and Options?

The UCLA report counts only 20,000 available nursing home beds and a similar number of residential care beds in California to accommodate several hundred thousand people. In Alameda County, we don't have a count of how many of the total 13,000 beds are available, but almost certainly it isn't enough.