



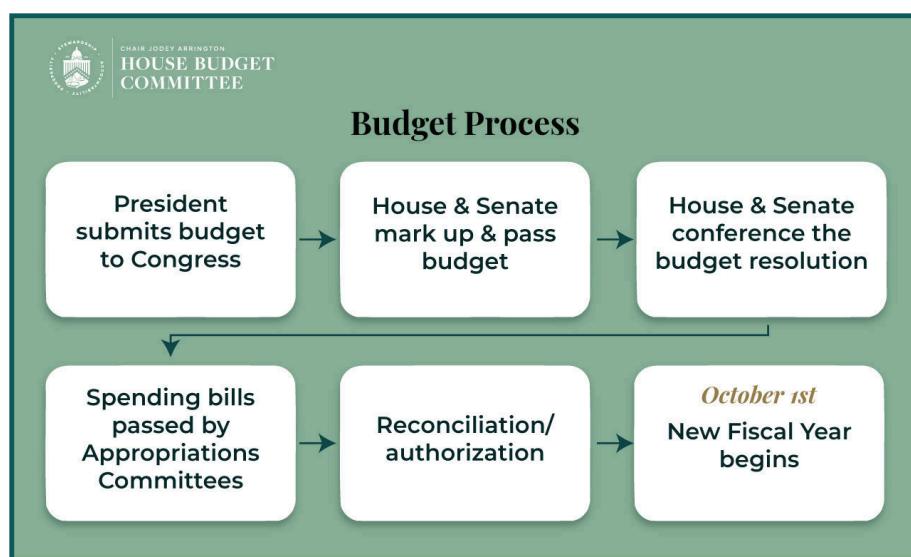
## COMMUNITY EXPLAINER | September 20, 2025

# How the 2026 Federal Budget Can Protect AANHPI Community Mental Health Services and Programs

Congress has **less than two weeks** to finalize the federal budget and allocate funding for federal agencies, including those that provide community mental health programs and services. Below, the National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association offers a Community Explainer on the appropriations process, where the 2026 appropriations budget currently stands, and how community members can take action to advocate for mental health programming and support Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) communities. Please note that developments are quickly occurring, so please be sure to check trusted news sources for the most accurate, up-to-date information.

## WHAT IS THE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The appropriations process is how the federal government provides discretionary funding for federal agencies, the programs agencies provide, and the staff that run these agencies and programs. Federal government spending is held by Congress (the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate) and must go through the lawmaking process for funding to be approved and distributed to federal agencies. Appropriations typically happen on an annual basis, in which funding amounts are established in advance of the next federal government's fiscal year (i.e., fiscal year [FY] 2026 is from October 1st, 2025 through September 30th, 2026).



The President begins appropriations by submitting a budget proposal for the upcoming fiscal year. Then, members of the House and Senate appropriations subcommittees draft appropriations bills for their subcommittees' specific federal agencies. For example, the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, has responsibility over setting funding for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) agencies such as the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Members of Congress then go through rounds of negotiations discussing these appropriations bills. When Congress agrees on the bills, they are sent to the President for final approval.

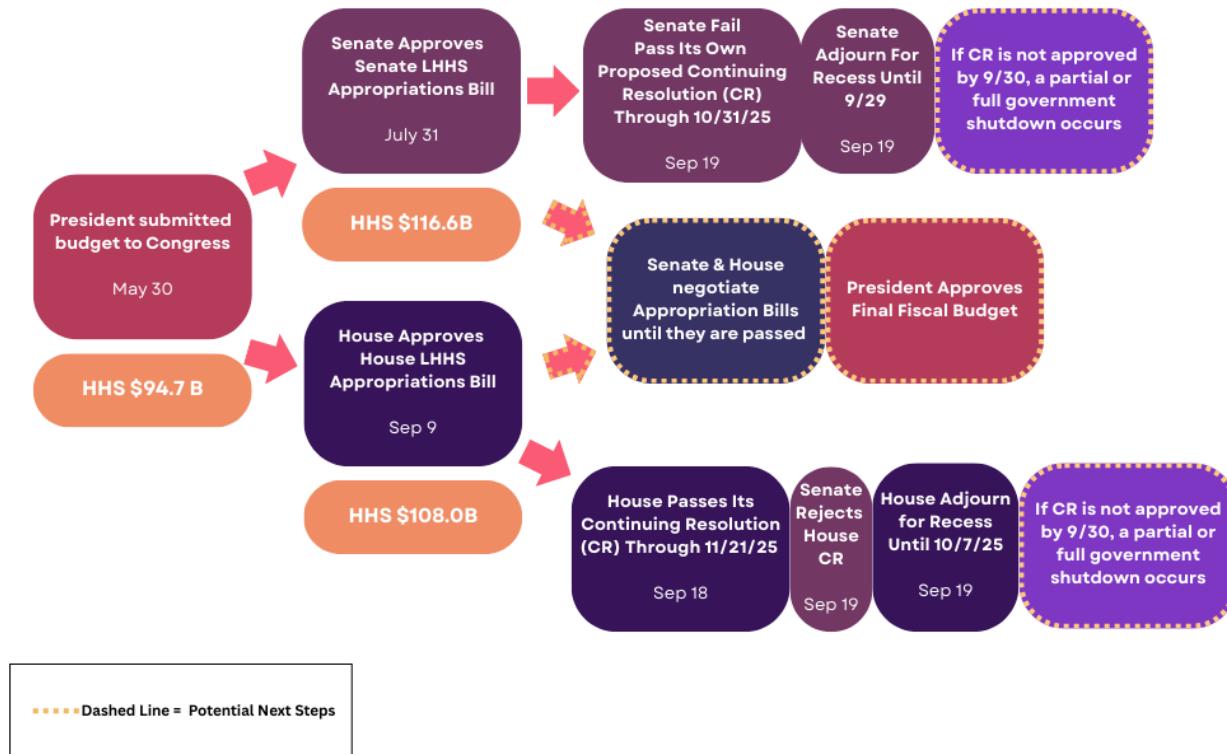
If appropriations do not get passed before the start of the next fiscal year (October 1), Congress can pass a continuing resolution which extends funding at the prior year's fiscal budget levels; if a continuing resolution does not get passed in time, a partial or full government shutdown could happen, resulting in the interruption of certain federal programs and services.



## WHERE DOES THE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS CURRENTLY STAND?

### FY26 Appropriations

Departments of Labor, Health, and Human Services, and  
Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS)



### 1. On July 31st, the Senate approved a bill proposing FY25 HHS funding levels - \$116.6B

The Senate bill rejects the President's Budget Request which included massive funding cuts and reorganization of several organizations including SAMHSA into an Administration for Healthy America. **Rather than cutting HHS' federal funding, the Senate's proposed budget would provide level funding for HHS programs, in which federal funding amounts for FY 2026 would be the same as FY 2025.**

### 2. On September 9th, the House approved a bill proposing an 6% decrease (\$6.9B) from FY25 HHS levels - \$108.0B

This House bill includes funding to enact the reorganization of several agencies into an Administration for a Healthier America and eliminates or reduces more than 100 programs across HHS, Department of Labor, Department of Education, and other related agencies.

The following HHS agencies and select offices received funding cuts:

- Health Resources and Services Administration (-\$880M/-11%)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (-\$1.7B/-19%)
- National Institutes of Health (-\$456M/-1%)
- Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (-\$298M/-4%)
- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (-\$369M/-100%)
- Office of Minority Health (-\$30M/40% decrease)



### **3. On September 19th, both the Senate and House Appropriations Committees' proposed Continuing Resolutions failed to pass on the Senate Floor, as Republicans and Democrats remain at an impasse over government funding and each side holds firm to its priorities.**

If passed by Congress, the House continuing resolution (CR) would fund the federal government through Nov. 21, 2025 and proposes to extend mandatory funding for health programs. The Senate continuing resolution would fund the federal government through October 31, 2025 and contain a number of significant health policy provisions, including a one-month extension of the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Demonstration program, a repeal of many of the Medicaid reforms that were included in the One Big, Beautiful Bill Act, and an extension of Affordable Care Act premium tax credits.

That said, both CR proposals have failed to pass and Congress has adjourned for recess. The Senate returns September 29 and the House returns October 7, after the September 30 deadline. A government shutdown is increasingly likely.

### **WHAT'S AT STAKE IF CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT PASS THE HOUSE VERSION OF THE FEDERAL BUDGET FOR HHS AND RELATED AGENCIES?**

If Congress and the President pass the recent version of federal budget from the Senate Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, this would:

- Cut Office of Minority Health funding by 40%
- Eliminate the following SAMHSA Mental Health Programs:
  - Mental Health Awareness Training
  - Minority AIDS
  - Consumer and Family Network Grants
  - Mental Health System Transformation
  - Project LAUNCH
  - Mental Health Crisis Response Partnership Program
  - Homelessness Prevention
  - Mental Health Criminal and Juvenile Justice Programs
  - Homelessness Technical Assistance
  - Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment
  - Treatment Systems for Homeless
  - Peer Support Technical Assistance Center
  - Interagency Coordinating Committee to Prevent Underage Drinking

### **HOW DOES THIS IMPACT NAAPIMHA?**

NAAPIMHA is a grantee of SAMHSA's Mental Health Awareness Training Program, a program that will be eliminated in the current House funding bill. Eliminating this grant would defund roughly 3,000 organizations currently facilitating free mental health awareness training nationwide. With this grant, NAAPIMHA has trained over 500 Mental Health First Aiders and Achieving Whole Health Wellness Coaches serving AANHPI communities. Without this grant, NAAPIMHA cannot offer these free community trainings.

View NAAPIMHA's FY2026 Appropriations Request for a breakdown of our priority requests.



## HOW CAN COMMUNITY MEMBERS RESPOND?



Contact your Congressional representatives, especially those on the House Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, and ask them to take action by:

- Releasing a similar appropriations bill as the Senate Subcommittee to protect HHS funding.
- If you are a program participant of SAMHSA or other agency mental health programs, like the Mental Health Awareness Training Program, explain the importance of having these programs in place. Call Script Template: [www.tinyurl.com/MHATscript](http://www.tinyurl.com/MHATscript)



**Conduct a personal assessment of accessible, available, culturally-relevant mental health resources and supports in your area.** If the federal budget for FY 2026 leads to significant funding cuts for federal mental health programs and services, there will be an increasing need among community members to access local mental health resources.

- NAAPIMHA is committed to working alongside our community partners and communities to continue offering mental health training, programs, advocacy, and referrals to support despite federal funding cuts. Efforts are underway to build-out our own AANHPI Mental Health Resource Directory and maintain close connection and organizing with our networks. Please reach out to [community@naapimha.org](mailto:community@naapimha.org) to see how you and/or your organization can align efforts.
- Become aware of and connect to local mental health resources and share with your networks. Create intentional spaces for sharing information and offering support to those most impacted.



**Invest in AANHPI-serving mental health organizations like NAAPIMHA.** Donate to NAAPIMHA's \$10K Matching Campaign to invest in our mental health trainings and programs: [www.givebutter.com/NAAPIMHA25](http://www.givebutter.com/NAAPIMHA25)

Learn more: [www.naapimha.org](http://www.naapimha.org)

NAAPIMHA is a 501c3 nonprofit organization eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions. EIN: 84-1605911