

UTILITY BILL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Program Update

- January 2026



Program Overview

Program Purpose: Provides temporary utility bill assistance to NBU customers experiencing significant financial hardship

Administration: NBU contracts with the New Braunfels Food Bank to accept applications and determine assistance for electric, water, and wastewater usage charges

- **Eligibility:** Residential customers with an active NBU account
- **Income Threshold:** Originally $\leq 250\%$ Federal Poverty Level (FPL); adjusted to 150% FPL in January 2026 to maintain program sustainability
- **Qualifying hardship:** Financial distress due to events such as job loss, disability, or loss of a primary income earner
- **Customer Assistance:** Customer can apply for up to \$500 per fiscal year, per customer as funds remain available

Federal Poverty Limit by Family Size

Family Size	Base Federal Poverty Limit	150% FLP	250% FPL
Individual	\$15,650	\$23,475	\$39,125
Family of 2	\$21,150	\$31,725	\$52,875
Family of 3	\$26,650	\$39,975	\$66,625
Family of 4	\$32,150	\$48,225	\$80,375

Mission

Strengthening our community by providing resilient essential services



Vision

Be a trusted community partner dedicated to excellence in service



Core Values

Safety, Team, Integrity, Culture, and Stewardship

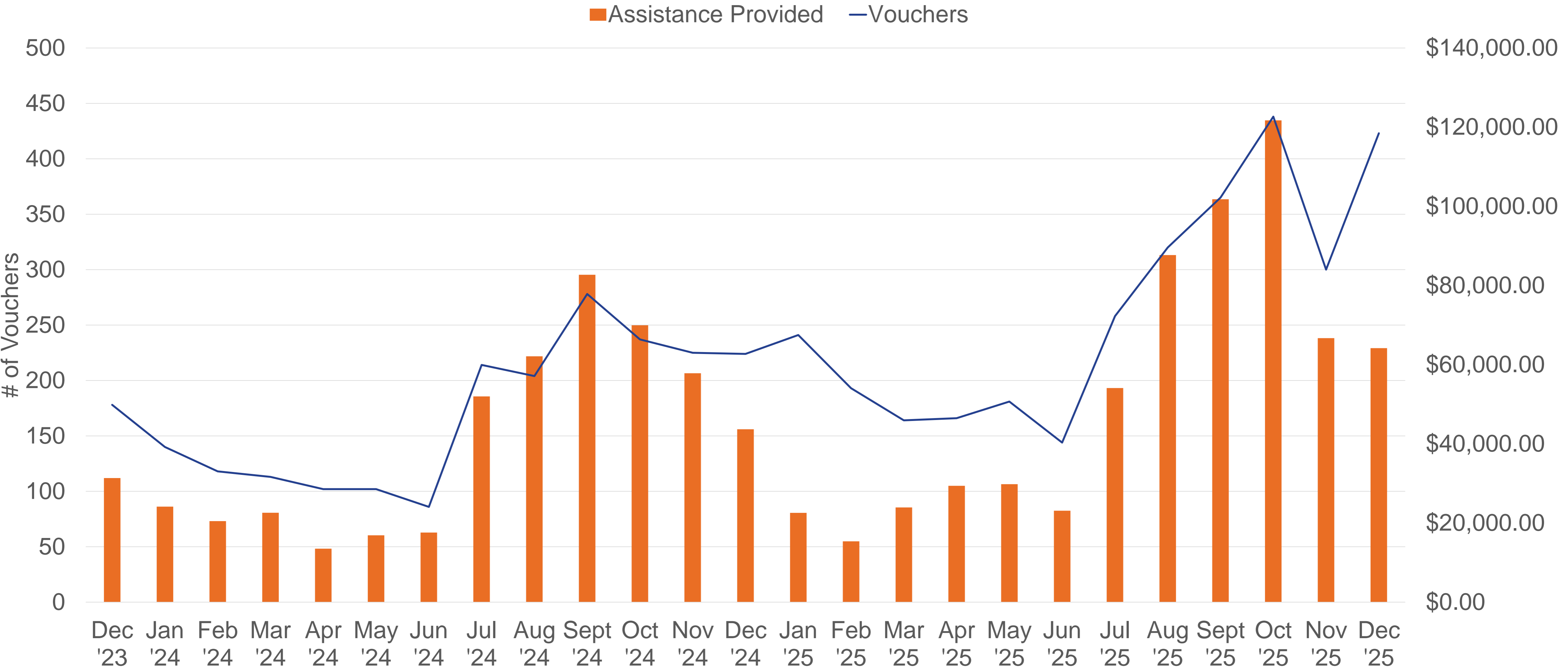
History of Program

- **Program consolidation:** Combined the Utility Bill Assistance and Low-Income Discount (water/wastewater only) programs into a single, streamlined structure
 - One administering contract (New Braunfels Food Bank)
 - One application process
 - One consolidated budget to maximize distribution capacity
- **Prior funding structure (2021-2023):** Partnered with Comal County Cares to deploy ARPA funds
- **Recent budget actions:**
 - Added \$100,000 in March FY2025
 - Added \$100,000 in December FY2026
 - Funding adjustments ensured program continuity through each fiscal year

Demand & Funding Pressure

- **Participation surge:** Voucher demand up ~50% year-over-year
 - YoY: 944 (Aug–Nov 2024) → 1,418 (Aug–Nov 2025)
- **Community-wide trend:** Food Bank serving significantly more households
 - 7,000 → nearly 12,000 neighbors served monthly
- **Funding impact:** Current funding levels are insufficient at today's participation rates
- **Key drivers:** Inflation, reduced federal assistance, rising housing and food costs
- **Who's impacted:** growing numbers of working households and seniors struggling with housing and food costs
- **Bottom line:** Without program changes, funds will continue to be depleted earlier each year

Monthly Assistance Trends – Program Totals



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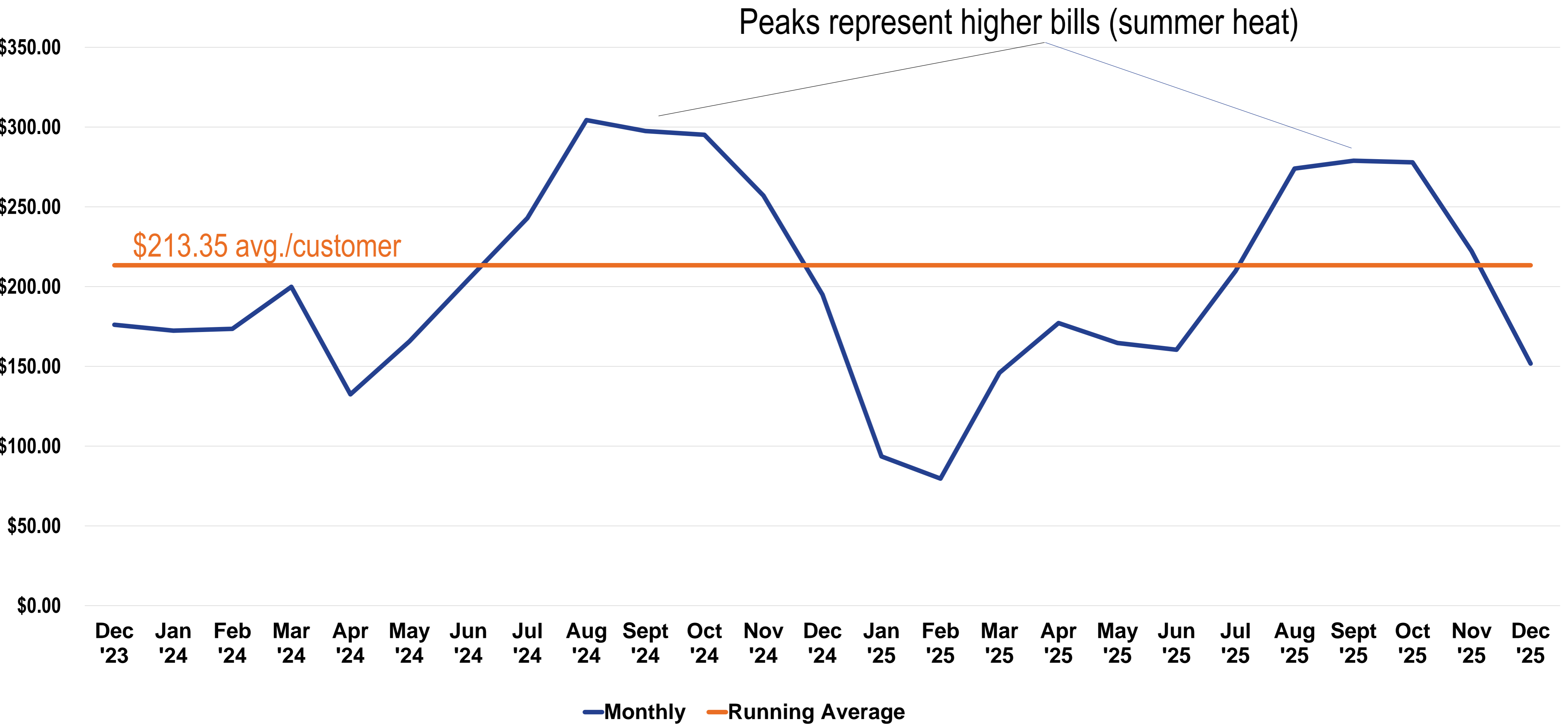
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Monthly Assistance Trends – Customer Payouts



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Utility Bill Assistance Budget since FY19

Increase due to low-income discount program

PROGRAM YEAR	APPROVED/ PROPOSED BUDGET*	ADMIN FEE (15%)
FY 2019	\$225,000	\$33,750
FY 2020	\$225,000	\$33,750
FY 2021	\$250,000	\$37,500
FY 2022	\$415,600	\$62,340
FY 2023	\$415,600	\$62,340
FY 2024	\$441,000	\$66,150
FY 2025	\$465,600	\$69,840
FY 2026	\$496,000	\$74,400

* Approved/ Proposed Budget includes the Admin Fee.

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FY2026 Utility Bill Assistance Snapshot



Average Voucher
\$240.11

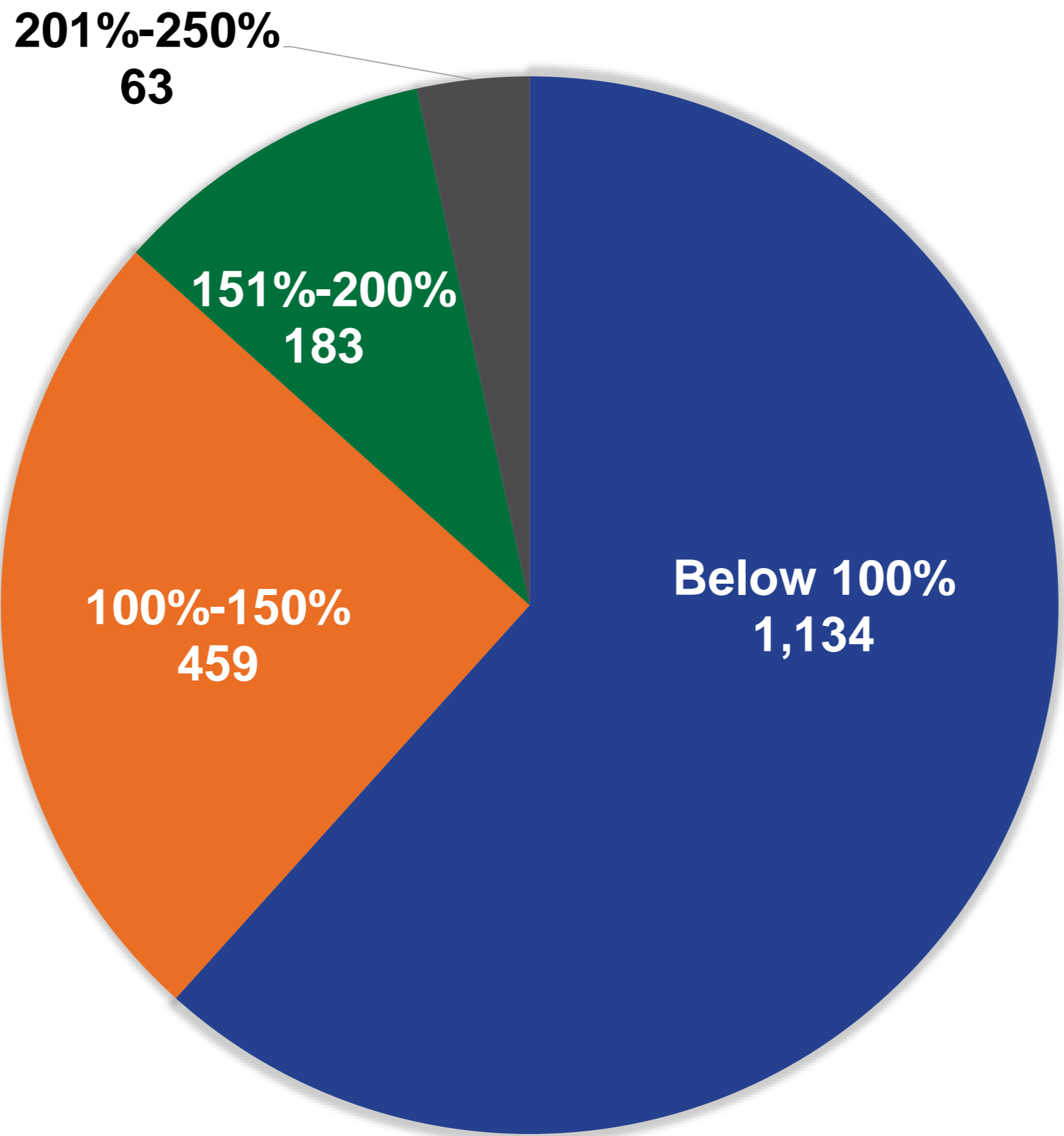


Vouchers
1,841



Total Assistance
Provided
\$442,041.11

Poverty Level Ratios



Single Parent
42%



Family
20%



Senior Led
22%

*Data current as of 12/31/25.

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Future of Program

- **Remainder of FY26**
 - The budgeted program funds were exhausted in December 2025
 - In December 2025, NBU infused an additional \$100k with the expectation of program continuity through the remainder of the fiscal year
- **NBU Commitments**
 - Staff to continue to work with the New Braunfels Food Bank to maximize program for FY26
 - Begin pursuing revisions to current agreement for long-term program sustainability
 - Will return to NBU Board at a future meeting to present findings and proposals

Questions?

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