Safety-Net Sector

- America’s safety-net is woven with programs that help people meet basic needs
- Social workers are in key position to refer or inform clients of appropriate programs
- Universal programs are for most Americans (e.g. unemployment insurance)
- Means-tested programs have specific eligibility criteria (e.g. Social Security Income)

### Income-Enhancing Programs

- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Family (TANF)** provides financial assistance and services to families
- **General Relief/Assistance (GR/GA)** serves destitute single adults or couples without children
- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** serves elderly and disabled individuals who meet criteria
- **Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)** is a universal benefit for those who have paid into Social Security (requirement to pay in can be waived if disabled before age 22)
- **Unemployment Insurance (UI)** provides 36% of the average weekly wage to those laid off
- **Worker’s Compensation** serves workers who sustained injuries on the job
- **Minimum Wage and Living Wage Policies** ensure a decent standard of living for workers

### Job-Related Programs

- **The Job Corps** provides vocational training for low-income youth (ages 16-24)
- **Workforce Investment Act of 1998** created a delivery system for workforce education and career pathway programs for vulnerable populations, such as youth in poverty
- **Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (FEEOC)** investigates and protects worker’s rights
Safety-Net Sector

Nutrition Enhancing Programs

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps people to meet their basic food needs

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides nutritious foods for women throughout pregnancy and six months postpartum, as well as for children up to the age of five

Child Nutrition Act of 1966 subsidizes schools to provide meals to children

Shelter Enhancing Programs

Continuum of Care (COC) is a network of coordinated community-based programs that alleviate homelessness

Public Housing is a program that federally funds homes for low-income individuals, including seniors

Asset-Creating Programs

Social Security serves individuals after they retire; provides approximately 40% of what they earned

Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) are savings accounts for low-income populations to increase financial assets. Nonprofit agencies match the person’s deposit as well as provide financial counseling

Adapted from: