

BUDGETARY DEFINITIONS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR USE BY FEDERAL AGENCIES IN
PROVIDING FISCAL, BUDGETARY, AND PROGRAM-RELATED DATA
AND INFORMATION TO THE CONGRESS¹

**BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES**

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FOREWORD

The *Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970*, as amended by Title VIII of the *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974*, provides in section 202(a)(1), that:

“The Comptroller General of the United States, in cooperation with the Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and the Director of the Congressional Budget Office, shall develop, establish, maintain, and publish standard terminology, definitions, classifications, and codes for Federal fiscal, budgetary, and program-related data and information. The authority contained in this section shall include, but not be limited to, data and information pertaining to Federal fiscal policy, revenues, receipts, expenditures, functions, programs, projects, and activities. Such standard terms, definitions, classifications, and codes shall be used by all Federal agencies in supplying to the Congress fiscal, budgetary, and program-related data and information.”

In accordance with this requirement we have prepared a glossary which includes the initial standard terms and definitions that are to be used by all Federal agencies in supplying necessary information to the Congress. The terms and definitions have been developed in cooperation with the Department of the Treasury, Office of Management and Budget, and the Congressional Budget Office. Suggestions and assistance were also obtained from various Congressional committees as well as a wide variety of individuals knowledgeable in the field.

This glossary is a compilation of those terms identified that are of significance and importance in the budget process. Additional terms are being reviewed and definitions being established to be included in a subsequent publication of the glossary. We expect to make periodic revisions in order to include additional terms and revisions in definitions to reflect changes in usage or clarification of meaning. Accordingly, we welcome any suggestions or recommendations for additional terms or revisions to definitions by users of this publication.

Comptroller General
of the United States

BUDGET DEFINITIONS

ACTIVITY

Any project, task, or process required to carry out a program. A combination of several activities such as research and development, training of personnel, and distribution of information may be elements in a particular program. Activities constituting a program vary with the nature and purpose of the program.

ADVANCE APPROPRIATION

An appropriation provided by the Congress for use in a fiscal year or more beyond the fiscal year for which the appropriation act is passed, e.g., the 1976 appropriation for use in fiscal year 1976 for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority contained in the *Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriation Act, 1975*, which was passed on August 28, 1974. Advance appropriations allow state and local governments and others sufficient time to develop plans with assurance of future Federal funding. An advance appropriation is sometimes mistakenly referred to as “forward funding” which permits an agency to obligated funds in the current year for programs that are to operate in subsequent fiscal years.

AGENCY

Any department, office, commission, authority, administration, board, Government-owned corporation, or other independent establishment of any branch of the Government of the United States.

AGENCY DEBT

See “[FEDERAL DEBT](#)”

AGENCY DEBT AUTHORITY

See “[BORROWING AUTHORITY](#)”

AGENCY MISSIONS

Those responsibilities for meeting national needs assigned to a specific agency. Agency missions are expressed in terms of the purpose to be served by the programs authorized to carry out functions or subfunctions which, by law, are the responsibility of that agency and its component organizations. (See section 201 of the Budget and Accounting Act, 1921, as amended.)

APPROPRIATION

An act of Congress that permits Federal agencies to incur obligations and to make payments out of the Treasury for specified purposes. An appropriation usually follows enactment of authorizing legislation. An appropriation act is the most common form of budget authority, but in some cases the authorizing legislation provides the budget authority. There are several types of appropriations that are not counted as budget authority, for example:

- Appropriation to liquidate contract authority – Congressional action to provide monies to pay obligations incurred against contract authority.
- Appropriation to reduce outstanding debt – Congressional action to provide monies for debt retirement.
- Appropriation for refund of receipts.

Appropriations are categorized in a variety of ways, such as by their period of availability (one-year, multiple-year, no-year), the timing of Congressional action (current, permanent), and the manner of determining the amount of the appropriation (definite, indefinite).

PERIOD OF AVAILABILITY

One-Year (Annual) Appropriation – An appropriation which is available for obligation only during a specified fiscal year and expires at the end of that year. This is the most common form of budget authority, e.g., Salaries and Expenses for the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Multiple-Year Appropriation – An appropriation which is available for a specified period of time in excess of one fiscal year, e.g., Aircraft Procurement, Army in the Department of Defense.

No-Year Appropriation – An appropriation which remains available or obligation for an indefinite period of time, usually until the objectives have been attained, e.g., Construction, General appropriation for the Army Corps of Engineers.

TIMING OF CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

Current Appropriation

See definition for “[CURRENT AUTHORITY](#)” under “[BUDGET AUTHORITY](#)”.

Permanent Appropriation

See definition for “[PERMANENT AUTHORITY](#)” under “[BUDGET AUTHORITY](#)”.

DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT

Definite Appropriation – An appropriation that is stated as a specific sum, or not to exceed a specific sum, in the legislation making it available.

Indefinite Appropriation – An appropriation of an unspecified sum of money, the specific amount of which is to be determined by subsequent circumstances, such as all or part of the receipts from certain sources, e.g., social security taxes.

(NOTE: These designations are equally applicable to other forms of budget authority and can be combined in various ways such as “current, multiple-year, definite appropriation” or “permanent, indefinite appropriation”.)

AUTHORITY TO SPEND DEBT RECEIPTS

See “[BORROWING AUTHORITY](#)”

AUTHORIZATION (AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION)

Basic substantive legislation enacted by Congress which sets up or continues the legal operation of a Federal program or agency either indefinitely or for a specific period of time or sanctions a particular type of obligation or expenditure within a program. Such legislation is normally a prerequisite for subsequent appropriations, or other kinds of budget authority to be contained in appropriation acts. It may limit the amount of budget authority to be provided subsequently or may authorize the appropriation of “such sums as may be necessary”; in a few instances budget authority may be provided in the authorization (see “[BACKDOOR AUTHORITY](#)”).

BACKDOOR AUTHORITY

A term generally used to denote legislation enacted outside the normal appropriation process that permits the obligation of funds. The most common forms of backdoor authority are borrowing authority (authority to spend debt receipts) and contract authority. In other cases, (e.g., interest on the public debt) a permanent appropriation is provided that becomes available without any current action by the Congress. Entitlement authority may sometimes take the form of backdoor authority, since the enactment of the basic benefit legislation may, in effect, mandate the subsequent enactment of the appropriations to pay the statutory benefits. Section 401 of the *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974* specifies certain limits on the use of backdoor authority. Examples of accounts that have backdoor authority are the Federal-aid highways trust fund, the Environmental Protection Agency’s construction grants, and the Social Security trust funds.

BORROWING AUTHORITY

Statutory authority (substantive or appropriation) that permits a Federal agency to incur obligations and to make payments for specified purposes out of borrowed moneys. Section 401 of the *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974* limits new borrowing authority (except for certain instances) to the extent or amount provided in appropriation acts. Borrowing authority, also called “Authority to Spend Debt Receipts”, may be either of two types:

Public Debt Authority – The authority to obligate and spend amounts borrowed from the Treasury that in turn are derived from the sale of public debt securities.

Agency Debt Authority – The authority to obligate and spend amounts derived from the sale of agency debt securities, assumption of mortgages, loans, etc.

BUDGET AMENDMENT

A proposal, submitted to the Congress by the President after his formal budget transmittal but prior to completion of appropriation action by the Congress, that revises previous requests, such as the amount of budget authority.

BUDGET AUTHORITY

Authority provided by law to enter into obligations which generally result in immediate or future outlays of Government funds. The authority to insure or guarantee the repayment of indebtedness incurred by another person or government is usually not considered to be budget authority. The basic forms of budget authority are: appropriations, contract authority, and borrowing authority. Budget authority may be classified by the period of availability (one-year, multiple-year, no-year), by the timing of Congressional action (current or permanent), or by the manner of determining the amount available (definite or indefinite).

PERIOD OF AVAILABILITY

One-year (Annual) Authority – Budget authority that is available for obligation only during a specified fiscal year and expires at the end of that time.

Multiple-year Authority – Budget authority that is available for a specified period of time in excess of one fiscal year.

No-year Authority – Budget authority that remains available for obligation for an indefinite period of time, usually until the objectives have been obtained.

TIMING OF CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

Current Authority – Budget authority enacted by Congress in or immediately preceding the fiscal year in which it becomes available.

Permanent Authority – Budget authority that becomes available as the result of previously enacted legislation (substantive legislation or prior appropriations act), and does not require current action by the Congress. Authority created by such legislation is considered to be “current” in the first year in which it is provided and “permanent” in succeeding years. It is possible to distinguish between “fully permanent” (such as interest on the public debt) and “conditionally permanent” where authority expires after a set period of time (such as general revenue sharing).

DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT

Definite Authority – Authority which is stated as a specific sum at the time the authority is granted. This includes authority stated as “not to exceed” a specified amount.

Indefinite Authority – Authority for which the amount is not stated, but is to be determined by subsequent circumstances such as an appropriation of all or part of the receipts from a certain source.

BUDGET DEFICIT

The amount by which the Government’s budget outlays exceed its budget receipts for any given period. Deficits are financed primarily by borrowing from the public.

BUDGET OUTLAYS

See “[OUTLAYS](#)”

BUDGET RECEIPTS

Monies received by the Federal Government from the public that arise from:

- The exercise of governmental or sovereign power (consisting primarily of tax revenues, but also including

receipts from premiums on compulsory social insurance programs, court fines, certain license fees, and the like).

- Premiums from voluntary participants in Federal social insurance programs (such as deposits by states for unemployment insurance and for social security for their employees) that are closely related to compulsory social insurance programs.
- Gifts and contributions

Excluded from budget receipts are “**OFFSETTING RECEIPTS**” (see separate definition), which are counted as deductions from budget authority and outlays rather than as budget receipts.

BUDGET SURPLUS

The amount by which the Government’s budget receipts exceed its budget outlays for any given period.

BUDGET UPDATE

A statement summarizing amendments to or revisions in budget authority requested, estimated outlays, and estimated receipts for a fiscal year that has not been completed. The President may submit updates at any time but is required by the *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974* to transmit such statements to the Congress by April 10 and July 15 of each year, beginning in 1976.

BUDGET YEAR

The fiscal year for which the budget is being considered; the fiscal year following the current year. (See also “**CURRENT YEAR**” and “**PAST YEAR**”)

BUDGETARY RESERVES

Portions of budget authority set aside under authority of the Antideficiency Act (31 U.S.C. 665), as amended by the *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974*, for contingencies or to effect savings whenever savings are made possible by or through changes in requirements or greater efficiency of operations. Section 1002 of the *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974* restricts the establishment of budgetary

reserves and requires that all reserves be reported to the Congress. (See “[DEFERRAL OF BUDGET AUTHORITY](#)”.)

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET

A resolution passed by both Houses of Congress, but not requiring the signature of the President, setting forth, reaffirming, or revising the Congressional Budget for the United States Government for a fiscal year. There are two such resolutions required preceding each fiscal year. The first required concurrent resolution, due by May 15, establishes the Congressional Budget. The second required concurrent resolution, due by September 15, reaffirms or revises it. Other concurrent resolutions may be adopted at any time following the first required concurrent resolution.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET

The budget as set forth by Congress in a concurrent resolution on the budget. These resolutions shall include:

- (1) The appropriate level of total budget outlays and of total new budget authority;
- (2) An estimate of budget outlays and new budget authority for each major functional category; for contingencies, and for undistributed intragovernmental transactions based on allocations of the appropriate level of total budget outlays and of total new budget authority;
- (3) The amount, if any, of the surplus or deficit in the budget;
- (4) The recommended level of Federal revenues; and
- (5) The appropriate level of the public debt.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Legislation enacted by the Congress to provide budget authority for specific ongoing activities in cases where the regular fiscal year appropriation for such activities has not been enacted by the beginning of the fiscal year. The continuing resolution usually specifies a maximum rate at which the agency may incur obligations, based on the rate of the prior year, the President's Budget request, or an appropriation bill passed by either or both Houses of the Congress.

CONTRACT AUTHORITY

A form of budget authority under which contracts or other obligations may be entered into prior to an appropriation. Contract authority does not provide funds to pay the obligations and thus requires a subsequent appropriation or the realization of revenues to liquidate the obligations. To avoid double counting, appropriations to liquidate contract authority are not considered as budget authority. The *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974* limits new contract authority (except in certain instances) to the extent or amount provided by appropriation acts.

CONTROLLABILITY

The ability of the Congress or the President under existing law to control outlays during a given fiscal year. "Relatively uncontrollable" usually refers to spending that cannot be increased or decreased without changes in existing substantive law. Such spending is usually the result of open-ended programs and fixed costs, such as social security and veterans' benefits, but also includes payments due under obligations incurred during prior years.

COST-BASED BUDGETING

Budgeting in terms of costs to be incurred, i.e., the resources to be consumed in carrying out a program regardless of when the funds to acquire the resources were obligated. Cost-based budgeting, in addition to reflecting the obligational requirements for the program, presents the costs of what is planned to be accomplished. Obligation-based budgeting is expressed in terms of obligations to be incurred regardless of when the resources acquired are to be consumed. In those instances where activity levels are presented on a cost basis in the Appendix to the President's Budget, an adjustment must be made to relate them to obligations and budget authority.

CURRENT SERVICES BUDGET

A budget that projects estimated budget authority and outlays for the upcoming fiscal year at the same program level and without policy changes as the fiscal year in progress. To the extent mandated by existing law, estimates take into account the budget impact of anticipated changes in economic conditions (such as unemployment or inflation), beneficiary levels, pay increases, and benefit changes. The *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974* requires that the President submit a current services budget to the Congress by November 10 of each year.

CURRENT YEAR

The fiscal year in progress. (See also “[BUDGET YEAR](#)” and “[PAST YEAR](#)”)

DEBT HELD BY THE PUBLIC

See “[FEDERAL DEBT](#)”

DEBT SUBJECT TO STATUTORY LIMITATION

See “[FEDERAL DEBT](#)”

DEFERRAL OF BUDGET AUTHORITY

Any action or inaction by any officer or employee of the United States which temporarily withholds, delays, or effectively precludes the obligation or expenditure of budget authority, including the establishment of reserves under the Antideficiency Act (see “[BUDGETARY RESERVES](#)”). Under section 1013 of the *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974*, the President is required to report each proposed deferral to the Congress in a special message. Deferrals may not extend beyond the end of the current fiscal year and may be overturned by the passage of an impoundment resolution by either House of Congress. (See also “[IMPOUNDMENT](#)” and “[RESCISSION](#)”.)

DISBURSEMENTS

In budgetary usage, gross disbursements represent the amount of checks issued, cash, or other payments made less refunds received. Net disbursements represent gross

disbursements less income collected and credited to the appropriation or fund account, such as amounts received for goods and services provided. (See also “[OUTLAYS](#)”).

ENTITLEMENT AUTHORITY

Legislation that requires the payment of benefits to any person or government meeting the requirements established by such law, e.g., social security benefits and veterans’ pensions. Section 401 of the *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974* places certain restrictions on the enactment of new entitlement authority.

EXPENDITURES

A term generally used interchangeably with outlays. (See “[OUTLAYS](#)”) At one time, the term was used to describe one form of outlays, the other being “net lending”. This usage is now obsolete. The term has a somewhat different usage for budget execution and accounting purposes (see OMB Circular A-34).

FEDERAL DEBT

Federal debt consists of public debt and agency debt.

Public Debt – That portion of the Federal debt representing borrowing by the Treasury Department and the Federal Financing Bank (except its borrowings from the Treasury).

Agency Debt – That portion of the Federal debt arising when a Federal agency authorized by law, other than Treasury or the Federal Financing Bank (FFB), borrows funds directly from the public. To avoid double-counting, when a Federal agency borrows funds from Treasury or the FFB, the transaction is not included in Federal debt; the Treasury or FFB borrowing required to obtain the money to lend to the agency is already part of the public debt. Agency debt may be incurred by agencies within the Federal budget (such as the Tennessee Valley Authority) or by off-budget Federal agencies (such as the Postal Service). Debt of Government-sponsored, privately owned enterprises (such as the Federal National Mortgage Association) is not included in the Federal debt.

There are three basic concepts or tabulations of Federal debt: gross Federal debt, debt held by the public, and debt subject to statutory limit.

Gross Federal Debt – The sum of all public and agency debt issues outstanding.

Debt Held by the Public – That part of the Gross Federal debt held by the public. (The Federal Reserve System is included in “the public” for this purpose.) Debt held by Government trust funds (e.g., Social Security Trust Fund), revolving funds, and off-budget Federal agencies is excluded from debt held by the public.

Debt Subject to Statutory Limit – Defined by the *Second Liberty Bond Act of 1917*, as amended. At present virtually all public debt but only a small portion of agency debt is included in debt subject to statutory limit.

FEDERAL FISCAL POLICY

Federal Government policies with respect to taxes, spending, and debt management intended to promote the nation’s economic goals particularly with respect to employment, gross national product, price stability, and equilibrium in balance of payments. The budget process is a major vehicle for determining and implementing Federal fiscal policy.

FEDERAL FUNDS

Funds collected, owned, and used by the Federal Government for the general purposes of the Government. There are four types of Federal fund accounts: General funds, special funds, public enterprise (revolving) funds, and intragovernmental funds. Each of these is discussed in a separate entry. (See also “[TRUST FUNDS](#)”).

FEDERAL INTRAFUND TRANSACTIONS

See “[OFFSETTING RECEIPTS](#)”.

FISCAL YEAR

Any yearly accounting period without regard to a calendar year. The fiscal year for the Federal Government through fiscal year 1976 begins on July 1 and ends on June 30. Beginning with fiscal year 1977, fiscal years for the Federal Government will begin on October 1 and end on September 30. The fiscal year is designated by the calendar year in which it ends, e.g., fiscal year 1977 is the fiscal year ending September 30, 1977.

FOREIGN CURRENCY ACCOUNT

An account established in the Treasury for foreign currency that is acquired without payment of United States dollars primarily in payment for commodities (such as through the *Agricultural Trade Development Assistance Act*, P.L. 480). These currencies may be expended without charge to dollar appropriations. They may be available for obligation without further Congressional action or Congress may appropriate these foreign currencies. (See also "[SPECIAL FOREIGN CURRENCY PROGRAM APPROPRIATION](#)").

FORWARD FUNDING

The practice of obligating funds in one fiscal year for programs that are to operate in a subsequent year.

FULL-EMPLOYMENT BUDGET

The estimated receipts, outlays, and surplus or deficit that would occur if the economy were continually operating at a rate defined as being at full capacity (traditionally defined as a certain percentage unemployment rate for the civilian labor force).

FUNCTION (FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION)

The *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974* requires the Congress to estimate outlays, budget authority, and tax expenditures for each function. The functional classification is a means of presenting budget authority, outlay, and tax expenditure data in terms of the principal purposes which Federal programs are intended to serve. Each account is generally placed in the single function (e.g., national defense, health) that best represents its major purpose, regardless of the agency administering

the program. Functions are generally subdivided into narrower categories called subfunctions.

GENERAL FUND

The fund credited with all receipts not earmarked by law for a specific purpose and from general borrowing. It is used for the general purposes of the Government through various general fund accounts.

GROSS FEDERAL DEBT

See “[FEDERAL DEBT](#)”

GUARANTEED LOANS

Loans for which the Federal Government guarantees in whole or in part the repayment of principal and/or interest.

IMPOUNDMENT

Any action or inaction by an officer or employee of the United States that precludes the obligation or expenditure of budget authority provided by the Congress. (See “[DEFERRAL OF BUDGET AUTHORITY](#)” and “[RESCISSION](#)”).

IMPOUNDMENT RESOLUTION

A resolution of the House of Representatives or the Senate disapproving a deferral of budget authority set forth in a special message ordinarily transmitted by the President. Passage of an impoundment resolution by either House of Congress has the effect of overturning the deferral and requires that such budget authority be made available for obligation.

INTRABUDGETARY TRANSACTIONS

See “[OFFSETTING RECEIPTS](#)”

INTRAFUND TRANSACTIONS

See “[OFFSETTING RECEIPTS](#)”

INTRAGOVERNMENTAL FUNDS

Federal funds that facilitate financing of transactions within and between Federal agencies. There are two types of intragovernmental funds:

Intragovernmental Revolving Funds are funds, credited with collections from other agencies and accounts, that are authorized by law to carry out a cycle of intragovernmental business-type operations.

Management Funds (including working funds) are funds authorized by law in which moneys from two or more appropriations are merged in order to carry out a common purpose or project, but not involving a cycle of operations.

INTRAGOVERNMENTAL TRANSACTIONS

See “[OFFSETTING RECEIPTS](#)”

LAPSED FUNDS

Unobligated budget authority that by law has ceased to be available for obligation because of the expiration of the period for which it was available.

MISSION

See “[AGENCY MISSION](#)”

NATIONAL NEEDS

Those Federal functions which describe the end purposes being served by budget authority, outlays, and tax expenditures without regard to the means that may be chosen to meet those purposes. National needs, in current budgetary usage, may be assumed to be synonymous² with “Function”.

NEW OBLIGATIONAL AUTHORITY

This term is now obsolete and has been replaced by the term “Budget Authority”. (At one time the term was used to distinguish one of two types of budget authority, the other being “Loan Authority” which is also obsolete.)

² *Sic.* So in original.

OBJECT CLASSIFICATION

A uniform classification identifying the transactions of the Federal Government by the nature of the goods or services purchased (such as personnel compensation, supplies and materials, equipment) without regard to the agency involved or the purpose of the programs for which they are used.

OBLIGATIONS

Amounts of orders placed, contracts awarded, services rendered, or other commitments made by Federal agencies during a given period which will require outlays during the same or some future period. (General instructions to Federal agencies are contained in OMB Circular A-34.)

OFF-BUDGET FEDERAL AGENCIES

Agencies, federally owned in whole or in part, whose transactions have been excluded from the budget totals under provisions of law, e.g., the Federal Financing Bank. The fiscal activities of these agencies are not included in either budget authority or outlay totals, but are presented in the Budget Appendix as "Annexed Budgets".

OFFSETTING RECEIPTS

All collections and deposits into receipt accounts which are offset against budget authority and outlays rather than reflected as budget receipts in computing budget totals. Under current budgetary usage, cash collections not deposited into receipt accounts (such as revolving fund receipts, refunds, and reimbursements) are deducted from outlays at the account level. These items are not considered "offsetting receipts" and are not included in compilations of offsetting receipts.

Offsetting receipts are generally deducted at the budget function or subfunction level; any offsetting receipts deducted at the function or subfunction level are also deducted from agency budget authority and outlays. In three cases – (1) employer share, employee retirement; (2) intragovernmental interest received by trust funds; and (3) rents and royalties from the Outer Continental Shelf lands – the deductions, referred to as UNDISTRIBUTED OFFSETTING

RECEIPTS, are made from budget totals rather than being offset by function and subfunction and by agency.

Offsetting receipts are subdivided into two major categories: proprietary receipts from the public and intragovernmental transactions.

Proprietary Receipts From The Public – Those collections from the public deposited in receipt accounts which arise from the conduct of business-type activities.

Intragovernmental Transactions – All collections or deposits into receipt accounts in which the payment is made by a Federal agency.

Intragovernmental transactions may represent either RECEIPTS FROM OFF-BUDGET FEDERAL AGENCIES where a payment comes from a Federal agency whose funds are excluded from the budget totals, or INTRABUDGETARY TRANSACTIONS where both the paying and the receiving accounts are within the budget. Intrabudgetary transactions in turn are further subdivided into three groups:

Interfund Transactions, where the payment is from a Federal to a trust fund or vice versa.

Federal Intrafund Transactions, where both the paying and receiving accounts are Federal funds.

Trust Intrafund Transactions, where both the paying and receiving accounts are trust funds.

OPEN-ENDED PROGRAMS

Entitlement programs for which eligibility requirements are determined by law, e.g., Medicaid. Actual obligations and resultant outlays are limited only by the number of eligible persons who apply for benefits and the actual benefits received.

OUTLAYS

Checks issued, interest accrued on the public debt, or other payments, net of refunds and reimbursements. Total budget outlays consist of the sum of the outlays from appropriations and funds included in the unified budget, less offsetting receipts. Off-budget Federal agencies are not included in the unified budget and, for purposes of the budget, they are treated as private entities.

PAST YEAR

The fiscal year immediately preceding the current year; the last completed fiscal year. (See also “[BUDGET YEAR](#)” and “[CURRENT YEAR](#)”)

PRESIDENT’S BUDGET

The budget for a particular fiscal year transmitted to the Congress by the President in accordance with the *Budget and Accounting Act of 1921*, as amended. Some elements of the budget, such as the estimates for the legislative branch and the judiciary, are required to be included without review by the Office of Management and Budget or approval by the President.

PROGRAM

An organized set of activities directed toward a common purpose, objective, or goal undertaken or proposed by an agency in order to carry out responsibilities assigned to it.

PROPRIETARY RECEIPTS FROM THE PUBLIC

See “[OFFSETTING RECEIPTS](#)”

PUBLIC DEBT

See “[FEDERAL DEBT](#)”

PUBLIC DEBT AUTHORITY

See “[BORROWING AUTHORITY](#)”

PUBLIC ENTERPRISE (REVOLVING) FUNDS

Federally owned funds that are credited with receipts, primarily from the public generated by and earmarked to finance a continuing cycle of business-type operations.

REAPPROPRIATION

Congressional action to restore or extend the obligational availability, whether for the same or different purposes, of all or part of the unobligated portion of budget authority which otherwise would lapse.

RECEIPTS FROM OFF-BUDGET FEDERAL AGENCIES

See "[OFFSETTING RECEIPTS](#)"

REIMBURSEMENTS

Sums received by the Government for commodities sold or services furnished that are authorized by law to be credited directly to specific appropriation and fund accounts. These amounts are deducted from the total obligations incurred (and outlays) in determining net obligations (and outlays) for such accounts.

RESCISSION

A legislative action which cancels budget authority previously provided by Congress prior to the time when the authority would otherwise have lapsed.

RESCISSION BILL

A bill or joint resolution which provides for cancellation; in whole or in part, of budget authority previously granted by the Congress. Rescissions proposed by the President must be transmitted in a special message to the Congress. Under section 1012 of the *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974*, unless Congress approves a rescission bill within forty-five days of continuous session, the budget authority must be made available for obligation.

REVOLVING FUND

A fund established to finance a cycle of operations through amounts received by the fund. There are three types of revolving funds: public enterprise, intragovernmental, and trust revolving funds.

SPECIAL FOREIGN CURRENCY PROGRAM APPROPRIATION

An appropriation made available to incur obligations for which payments must be made only in U.S. owned foreign currencies that are declared in excess of the normal requirements of the United States by the Secretary of the Treasury. The appropriation is made in general fund dollar amounts which are credited to the account or fund generating the currency, or to miscellaneous receipts of the Treasury, as appropriate. The appropriated dollars are thereby exchanged for excess foreign currency (held in Treasury foreign currency fund accounts) that is used to make the necessary payments. (See also "[FOREIGN CURRENCY ACCOUNT](#)").

SPECIAL FUNDS

Federal funds credited with receipts that are earmarked by law for a specific purpose, e.g., Land and Water Conservation Fund of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Department of Interior generally, if the purpose of the fund is to carry out a continuing cycle of business-type operations, it will be classified as a public enterprise fund rather than a special fund.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION

An appropriation enacted as an addition to a regular annual appropriation act. Supplemental appropriations provide additional budget authority beyond original estimates for programs or activities (including new programs authorized after the date of the original appropriation act) for which the need for funds is too urgent to be postponed until the next regular appropriation.

TAX EXPENDITURES

Losses of tax revenue attributable to provisions of the Federal tax laws which allow a special exclusion, exemption, or deduction from gross income or which provide a special credit, preferential rate of tax, or a deferral of tax liability.

TAX EXPENDITURES BUDGET

An enumeration of revenue losses resulting from "Tax Expenditures" under existing law for each fiscal year. Section 601 of the *Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974* requires that estimated levels of tax expenditures be presented in the President's Budget.

TOTAL OBLIGATIONAL AUTHORITY

The sum of: All budget authority granted (or requested) from the Congress in a given year, plus amounts authorized to be credited to a specific fund, and the balances of unused budget authority from previous years which remain available for obligation. In practice, this term is used primarily in discussing the Department of Defense budget, but could be applied to other agencies' budgets as well.

TRANSITION QUARTER

The 3-month period (July 1 to September 30, 1976) between fiscal year 1976 and fiscal year 1977 resulting from the change from a July 1 through June 30 fiscal year to an October 1 through September 30 fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 1977.

TRUST FUNDS

Funds collected and used by the Federal Government for carrying out specific purposes and programs according to terms of a trust agreement or statute, such as the social security and unemployment trust funds. Trust funds are administered by the Government in a fiduciary capacity and are not available for the general purposes of the Government. Trust fund receipts that are not anticipated to be used in the immediate future are generally invested in interest bearing Government securities and earn interest for the trust fund. A special category of trust funds called TRUST REVOLVING FUNDS is used to carry out a cycle of

business-type operations, e.g., Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. (See “[REVOLVING FUND](#)”)

TRUST INTRAFUND TRANSACTIONS

See “[OFFSETTING RECEIPTS](#)”

TRUST REVOLVING FUNDS

See “[TRUST FUNDS](#)” and “[REVOLVING FUND](#)”

UNDISTRIBUTED OFFSETTING RECEIPTS

See “[OFFSETTING RECEIPTS](#)”

UNIFIED BUDGET

The present form of the budget of the Federal Government, in which receipts and outlays from Federal funds and trust funds are consolidated. When these fund groups are consolidated to display budget totals, transactions which are outlays of one fund group to the other fund group (interfund transactions) are deducted to avoid double counting. The fiscal activities of off-budget Federal agencies are not included in the unified budget. (See “[OFFSETTING RECEIPTS](#)” and “[OFF-BUDGET AGENCIES](#)”)