Federal grants to states are about 30 percent higher overall, after adjusting for inflation, than they were in 2008, when the recession began. Federal stimulus aid to states resulted in a spike during and immediately after the recession. That aid was almost entirely phased out by 2013, but total grants to states remain above prerecession levels. Medicaid increases are the main drivers of this upward trend, while funding for other programs, such as education and transportation, is declining. (See “Federal Spending Decisions Affect State Budgets.”)

Federal Grants to States Continue to Rise
Percentage change from federal fiscal year 2008, adjusted for inflation

Notes: Data reflect budget authority and include funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The recession period is shaded. Federal Funds Information for States, the source of the data, says its database accounts for more than 90 percent of federal funds going to state and local governments.

Source: Pew’s analysis of data from Federal Funds Information for States, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and National Bureau of Economic Research
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