

SOCIAL SERVICES

Description

The Department of Social Services focuses on providing an array of services to children, families, and individuals who are in need of human-based services including financial assistance. The financial assistance and social services programs provided by the Department assists individuals and families in meeting their basic human needs; increases their capacity to function independently; and provides protection for the elderly, disabled, and abused or neglected children. Funding that support these efforts is provided by Federal, State, and County governments as well as through Community Partnerships.

The Department helps those who cannot provide for themselves financially on a temporary or longer basis in order to obtain the basic necessities of life and adequate health care. The financial assistance programs provide temporary cash assistance and employment-related services to enable families with children to become self-supporting. These programs also include medical and health-related services for certain individuals and families with low incomes.

The Department is also responsible for the protection of the community's children and adults from abuse and neglect. Social work staff engages in various local, state, and/or federal initiatives that will support and preserve families. When these efforts are no

longer viable options and/or the courts remove the child or children from their caretaker, foster care services are provided. When children are unable to return to their own families, adoption services are provided.

The Department of Social Services works towards the prevention and reduction of inappropriate institutional care of foster care children; the disabled and elderly by making home and community-based services available. Through the use of varied program funds and community resources, the Department also works with clients to become or to remain economically self-supporting. These efforts are supported via job training and other employment related activities.

Objectives

- To process applications and reviews for benefit programs within State/Federal standards of promptness.
- To offer and/or provide social work services and interventions as prescribed by State/Federal standards.
- To guarantee all foster parent applicants will receive orientation and training prior to the placement of a child.

Annual Fiscal Plan

<u>Description</u>	<u>FY09**</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY10</u> <u>Original</u>	<u>FY11</u> <u>Approved</u>	<u>Change</u> <u>10 to 11</u>
Personnel	\$ 10,820,642	11,174,751	\$ 10,944,361	(2.1%)
Operation	11,614,771	7,607,595	7,511,401	(1.3%)
Capital	71,249	11,800	8,300	(29.7%)
Total	\$ 22,506,662	\$ 18,794,146	\$ 18,464,062	(1.8%)
 Personnel Complement	 168	 168	 168 *	 0

* This count does not include complement III positions that total 8 after the elimination of one vacant complement III position.

**FY2008-09 actuals include American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding of \$108,473.

Social Services (cont'd)

Performance Measures

	FY09	FY10	FY11	Change 10 to 11
Workload Measures				
Clients Entering Employment	545	575	600	25
Efficiency Measure				
Food Stamp Application Timely Processing	97%	97%	97%	0%
Abuse Investigations Initiated within 72 hours	92%	92%	92%	0%
Effectiveness Measure				
Fraud Prosecution Rate	100%	100%	100%	0%
Customer Appeals Sustained	99%	99%	99%	0%
Clients Maintaining Employment after 90 days	436	460	480	20

- To make certain required foster care administrative responsibilities and judicial hearings will be held in compliance with State/Federal rules.
- To initiate investigations on all valid adult and child abuse complaints within seventy-two hours.
- To ensure all cases closed in the Adult Protective Services program will result in the client living in a safe situation.
- To provide job registrants with employment or education/training leading to employment.
- To ensure employed clients will maintain employment for 90 days.
- To successfully prosecute all cases where payment fraud is evident.

The operating component had a net decrease of \$96,194 from the FY2009-10 approved budget. The decrease is due to the County-wide adjustments for travel, tuition, telecommunications, a 20 percent reduction in technology replacement, reductions in motor pool and various targeted reductions. Specifically travel decreased by \$38,865; telecommunications decreased by \$22,032; tuition decreased by \$13,500; technology replacement decreased by \$1,566; automotive/motor pool decreased by \$6,180 and various accounts were reduced by \$14,051 in order to meet the department's targeted expenditure reductions.

It is important to note that the FY2008-09 actuals totaling \$22,506,662 includes \$108,473 in ARRA federal stimulus funding.

The Department of Social Services provides critical services to County residents within legally binding timeframes. The Department operates in three governmental environments - federal, state, and local.

The Department provides services to all socio-economic groups and is usually the last resort for people. Service programs provided by Social Services include the following: Adult/Child Protective Service, Foster Care, Adoptions, Child Day Care, Adult Services, Custody Investigations, Home Studies, and Intake/Emergency Needs. Benefits administered by the Department include Medicaid; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) formerly the Food Stamp program; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), General Relief, and Long-Term Care.

Budget Highlights

The Department's approved budget for FY2010-11 is \$18,464,062, which represents a decrease of \$330,084 or 1.8 percent over the previous approved budget. The Department anticipates collecting \$14,348,600 in revenue from State and Federal governments, which represents 77.7 percent of the total funding amount.

The personnel component decreased by \$230,390 or 2.1 percent from the FY2009-10 approved budget. The decrease is due to the elimination of one vacant position and budgeting \$251,181 for vacancy savings, which is partially offset by increased VRS costs and hospitalization.

Social Services cont'd

The Department has experienced significant increases in the number of cases for their primary benefit programs, which are Medicaid, TANF and SNAP. A comparison of May 2008 versus May 2009 reveals that the combined caseloads increased by 10 percent. In FY2009, a review of individual programs reflects a ten percent increase in TANF caseloads; an 18 percent increase in SNAP caseloads; and, a 10 percent increase in Medicaid caseloads. Total caseloads for these three programs have increased by 109 percent when comparing May 2000 to May 2009. The Department anticipates these caseloads will increase another 5 percent by May 2010 if economic conditions do not improve.

Welfare reform has been successful in the past in moving people from public assistance to work. In FY2008-09, 545 clients became gainfully employed with 80 percent of them maintaining those jobs for 90 days or longer. Based on the increase of TANF caseloads, the forecast for FY2010-11 suggest that there will be significantly more clients the department needs to assist with entering employment. The increasing unemployment rate will make the process of finding employment for

these individuals much more difficult.

Also impacting the Department's anticipated workload in FY2010-11 are state mandated child welfare initiatives that will require more intensive services to address issues that place children at risk of entering the foster care system or reduce the likelihood of the child returning to his or her family once placed in foster care. Issues involving substance abuse, mental illness, family violence, criminal behavior, and/or economic challenges will also require the strengthening of inter-agency coordination, and an array of services both within the Department and within the community. In FY2009, a 20 percent reduction in the number of children entering the foster care system was accomplished. There was also a 52 percent decrease in the number of children living in an institutional setting. In FY2007, six foster care youth were permanently placed in an adoptive home, compared to FY2009 when ten foster care youths were permanently placed in an adoptive home that represents a 66 percent increase. These types of intensive service accomplishments must be maintained as many are directly linked to the reimbursement rates established by the State.