

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 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 process applications and reviews for service programs within the State/Federal standards of promptness.
- 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>FY08 Actual</u>	<u>FY09 Original</u>	<u>FY10 Approved</u>	<u>Change 09 to 10</u>
Personnel	\$ 10,156,971	\$ 10,886,115	\$ 11,174,751	2.7%
Operation	11,476,850	7,606,792	7,607,595	0.0%
Capital	58,894	37,271	11,800	(68.3%)
Total	\$ 21,692,715	\$ 18,530,178	\$ 18,794,146	1.4%

Personnel Complement	154	154	168 *	14
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* Does not include 9 complement III positions.

Social Services (cont'd)

Performance Measures				
	F08	FY09	FY10	Change 09 to 10
Workload Measures				
Clients Entering Employment	483	532	575	43
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	357	394	426	32

- To make certain required foster care administrative reviews 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 personnel component increased by \$288,636 or 2.7 percent from the FY2008-09 approved budget. The increase is associated with salary adjustments as well as increased costs for VRS and hospitalization.

The operating and capital components had a net decrease of \$24,668 or 0.3 from the FY2008-09 approved budget. The total departmental reduction in operating and capital was \$37,046, which was offset by an increase of \$12,378 added to the department budget for increasing costs of vehicle leases and the heating utility.

The Department of Social Services provides critical services to County residents within legally binding timeframes. Social Services 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, Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), General Relief, Long-Term Care, and the State and Local Hospitalization Program.

The Department has experienced significant increases in the number of cases for their primary

Budget Highlights

The Department's budget for FY2009-10 is \$18,794,146, which represents an increase of \$263,968 or 1.4 percent over the previous approved budget. The Department anticipates collecting \$14,348,600 in revenue from State and Federal governments, which represents 76.0 percent of the total funding amount. State and Federal revenue estimates, when compared to the current fiscal year, have decreased by 0.2 percent overall. This decrease is estimated based on State budget reductions including the reduction in funding for the General Relief Program.

Social Services (cont'd)

benefit programs, which are Medicaid, TANF, and the Food Stamp program. A comparison of May 2005 versus May 2006 statistics reveals that the caseloads for these programs increased by 6.5 percent.

The caseloads increased another 1.0 percent comparing May 2006 to May 2007, and the increase from May 2007 to May 2008 was 6 percent. The increase from May 2008 to October 2008 is nearly 6.7 percent and is reflective of the deteriorating economic conditions during the period. Overall, the Department anticipates these caseloads will increase by 7 percent by May 2010, and another 5 percent by May 2011. If economic conditions do not improve and county population increases moderately the increases may be larger.

Total caseload for these three programs has increased by 101.3 percent when comparing May 2001 to October 2008.

Welfare reform has been successful in the past in moving people from public assistance to work. In FY2007-08, 483 clients became gainfully employed

with 74 percent of them maintaining those jobs for 90 days or longer. The forecast for FY2009-10 suggest that there will be significantly more clients the department needs to assist with entering employment due to the economic downturn.

Also the increasing unemployment rate will make the process of finding employment for these individuals more difficult. However the percentage of them maintaining those jobs for 90 days or longer is expected to remain at approximately 74.0 percent.

Also impacting the Department's anticipated workload in FY2009-10 are family issues involving drug, alcohol, mental illness, family violence, criminal behavior, and economic issues. This assumption is based on continued growth in total population and the changing demographics of the County. These problems require intensive services, inter-agency coordination, and often require an array of services both within the Department and within the community. The most significant change will be evident in the increasing number of youth, senior citizens and female-headed households with children that require assistance in these areas.