

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 assist individuals and families in meeting their basic human needs; increase their capacity to function independently; and provide protection for the elderly, disabled, and abused or neglected children. Funding to support these efforts is provided by the Federal, State, and County governments as well as through community partnerships.

The Department helps those who cannot provide for themselves financially to obtain the basic necessities of life, including 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. Family services workers engage in various local, State, and 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, the goal for the child is adoption.

A goal of the Department of Social Services is to reduce the number of children in institutional placements. Another goal is to make home and community-based services available to assist the disabled and elderly. Through the use of varied program funds and community resources, the Department works with clients to become or to remain economically self-supporting. These efforts are accomplished via job training, other employment related activities, and other supportive services.

FISCAL YEAR 2024 SUMMARY

Annual Fiscal Plan

<u>Description</u>	<u>FY22 Actual</u>	<u>FY23 Original</u>	<u>FY24 Approved</u>	<u>Change 23 to 24</u>
Personnel	\$ 15,799,532	\$ 18,767,238	\$ 19,512,007	4.0%
Operation	7,023,431	7,072,944	7,078,543	0.1%
Capital	44,430	37,460	31,860	(14.9%)
Total	<u>\$ 22,867,393</u>	<u>\$ 25,877,642</u>	<u>\$ 26,622,410</u>	<u>2.9%</u>
Personnel Complement *	213	213	213	0

* - Total does not include five Complement III positions

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	Performance Measures			Change
	FY22	FY23	FY24	23 to 24
Workload Measures				
Family Foster Home Recruitment	30	35	35	0
Efficiency Measures				
SNAP Application Timely Processing	97%	97%	97%	0%
CPS Complaints Initiate Within Timeframe	83%	90%	90%	0%
Effectiveness Measures				
Fraud Prosecution Rate	100%	100%	100%	0%
Customer Appeals Sustained	99%	99%	99%	0%

OBJECTIVES

- To process applications and reviews for benefit programs within State and Federal standards of promptness.
- To offer and/or provide family 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.
- To make certain required foster care administrative responsibilities and judicial hearings will be held in compliance with State and Federal rules.
- To initiate investigations on all valid adult and child abuse complaints within policy timeframes.
- To ensure all ongoing cases closed in the Adult Protective Services program will result in the provision of accepted services to assist the client with living in a safe situation.
- To provide job registrants with employment, education, or training that will lead to employment.
- To ensure employed clients will maintain employment for more than 90 days.
- To successfully prosecute all cases where payment fraud is evident.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Department’s approved budget for FY24 is \$26,622,410, which represents an increase of \$744,768, or 2.9%, from the FY23 approved budget. This budget will be supported by State and Federal revenues and the General Fund transfer, which is budgeted to total \$6,900,182 in FY24, and represents 25.9% of total funding. The Department anticipates collecting \$19,655,907 in revenue from State and Federal governments, which is 73.8% of total funding. The Department also anticipates receiving \$66,321 from other local sources, which is 0.3% of the total budget.

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The entirety of the increase in expenditure requirements for FY24 is in the personnel component of the budget, which is 4.0% higher than the FY23 approved budget. This budgetary growth is due to wage scale increases and associated benefit costs more than offsetting turnover savings and the restructuring of the TANF Hard To Serve Program, which removed two complement III positions.

The operating and capital outlay components of the budget are \$7,078,543, and \$31,860, respectively. The capital outlay budget has decreased by \$5,600, while the operating allocation increased by \$5,599.

CASELOAD HIGHLIGHTS

The Department of Social Services provides critical services to County residents within legally binding timeframes. These services are rendered to all socio-economic groups and are often the last resort for residents of Henrico County. Programs provided by Social Services include: Adult/Child Protective Services, Adult Services, Foster Care, Adoptions, Child Day Care, Employment Services, Custody Investigations, Home Studies, and Information and Referral Services. Benefits administered by the Department include Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), General Relief, Refugee Assistance, and Long-Term Care.

The Services Division persevered and had some successes despite continued workforce challenges and caseloads that have increased in volume and complexity.

Child Protective Services (CPS) Investigations saw a slight increase in caseload from FY21 to FY22, but operated at 50% staffing for many months in 2022. Currently, CPS has seen an increase in caseload of approximately 6% year-to-date from this time period in FY22, which is 20 families reported for suspected child abuse and neglect.

Family Preservation Services serves children and families at high and very high risk for abuse/neglect and out of home placement. Family preservation services has seen a 6.6% increase in families served year-to-date from this time period in FY22, operating with a staff shortage of 20-40% in 2022.

As of December 2022, the department was serving 132 youth in foster care, the highest number of youth served since August of 2021 with a 20% vacancy rate in the workforce. Many youths entering care have significant emotional, behavioral and mental health needs that require residential treatment

Approximately 22% of foster care youth are currently placed in approved kinship foster homes which allows children to remain with natural supports when they can no longer safely remain at home. The department hit a statewide high of 32% of foster care youth in kinship placements in FY22, with a number of those youth ultimately returning home or being adopted by their relatives.

Henrico Social Services had 28 adoptions finalized in FY22, a 133% increase from FY21 and the highest number in the central region and 8th highest in the state.

Adult Protective Services saw a 31% increase in investigations from FY21 to FY22 and were operating at a reduced staff capacity of 20% most of that time period.

Child Care subsidy saw an increase in caseload of 77.8% between FY21 and FY22. Year-to-date, there has been an increase of 57.9% with staff vacancies throughout this time period. The department has recently reallocated two positions to this team to better meet the capacity to serve children in this early childhood education initiative.

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In FY22, Social Services experienced a 12.9% increase in the number of cases for the Medicaid Program. The SNAP Program noted a 6.9% caseload increase during FY22, while the TANF program experienced a 8.9% increase in cases during that fiscal year. The Department anticipates the TANF caseloads to remain steady in FY23, while SNAP caseloads are estimated to increase 5.0%, and Medicaid caseloads are projected to increase by 10.0%. Medicaid cases continue to be protected under the Federal Public Health Emergency. It is anticipated that the Health Emergency will end in April, and all Medicaid cases will be subject to review for current eligibility.

Continued need for foster care residential placements is an ongoing concern. In many cases these youth come into foster care with significant emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs. Some of those needs are met through the Children's Services Act, which is located in another section of this document.

In FY22, 156 different children received adoption subsidies, up from 140 in FY21, an 11.4% increase.

It is noted that the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has added strains on the department and has resulted in creative ideas and new methods used to meet the need of clients. Leadership and staff will continue to seek out ways to best serve the community in this time of crisis.