

Dutchess County Department of Community & Family Services

Through the storm



Annual Report 2021

MISSION

*Assist and protect
vulnerable county
residents with the aim
of restoring each
individual to maximum
independence.*



2021 DCFS ANNUAL REPORT

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A MESSAGE FROM COUNTY EXECUTIVE MOLINARO



Friends,

Every year, the dedicated men and women of the Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services (DCFS) provide critical services and programs to more than 30,000 Dutchess County residents, with their vital work improving countless aspects of life for those they serve – from youth and adult protective services, to temporary assistance, foster care, and adoption. The department serves as a metaphoric umbrella for the County residents they serve, providing protection to our most vulnerable populations during their time of need.

One of Dutchess County Government's largest departments, DCFS often works with residents during their most difficult and trying times, when circumstances may seem dire and hope may seem lost. Undaunted, our DCFS staff works with these individuals and families in the most professional manner possible, offering the promise of a brighter future – again, serving as an umbrella to shield their clients until the proverbial storm passes.

In the pages of this annual report, you'll find the numerous accomplishments of this department over the past 12 months. More than statistics, though, each of these achievements represents actual Dutchess County residents – men, women, boys, and girls – whose lives have been greatly impacted for the better by the actions of DCFS employees. Each day, lives are changed by the staff of this department, and I personally thank every member of the department for their devotion to serving our community; they truly make a difference in the lives of the residents they serve.

As with most employees in every level of government, our DCFS staff often works in the background; you might not know their names or faces, but you see the fruits of their labor in a stronger and safer community we all call home. The pages that follow will provide you an in-depth look at the essential services and programs this department provides each day, as well as the passionate and caring men and women who deliver them. By reading this report, I'm confident you will come to share the same appreciation for the Department of Community and Family Services that I have, and you'll similarly beam with pride when you read the impact the department truly makes on its clients and Dutchess County, as a whole.

Marcus J. Molinaro
Dutchess County Executive

A MESSAGE FROM COMMISSIONER JAAR MARZOUKA



Have you ever found yourself singing a particular tune that comes to mind for no apparent reason? Maybe it is the rhythm, maybe it is the lyric. Maybe it is just a catchy tune or the words are symbolic of something so real.

"Singing in the Rain" is one of the classics. A favorite solo song and dance in the Hollywood musical that many of us are familiar with, but it is the lyrics which have come to mind lately and have taken a deeper meaning, sending a message of hope. The rain represents darkness and hardship. Lockwood, the main character, singing in the rain is an act of rebellion against the darkness. If you saw the movie, you might have noticed that as Lockwood starts to sing and dance, he begins to use the umbrella like a dancing baton rather than an object intended to keep him dry. The umbrella is his hope, his unbreakable optimism that tells him he's "gotta sing and dance" and no rain can stop him. It does not matter if he gets wet. Life is worth living because he loves. There is something similar about 2021 for the staff at the Department of Community and Family Services. It was the year when we found ourselves "singing in the rain" despite the persistence of the pandemic (i.e. the rain), as we continued our daily service to the most vulnerable in our community, armed with our goodwill (i.e. the umbrella). As you read our 2021 annual report, I hope that you will see how the compassion and goodwill of our dedicated staff have allowed us to bring hope to those we served and protected. And the next time it rains in your life, smile and remember that there are people who care, and sing the song of hope because we know that sunshine and rainbows always follow the rain.



Sabrina Jaar Marzouka, J.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

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DCFS ORGANIZATION

OUR MISSION:

Assist and protect vulnerable county residents with the aim of restoring each individual to maximum independence. We do this through the provision of:

- Temporary assistance and supportive services necessary to sustain vulnerable and disabled persons in a courteous, fair, and efficient manner.
- Protective services to children and adults at risk of being harmed.
- Services that will strengthen the family unit, promote positive youth development, encourage stability in living arrangements, and provide a nurturing environment.



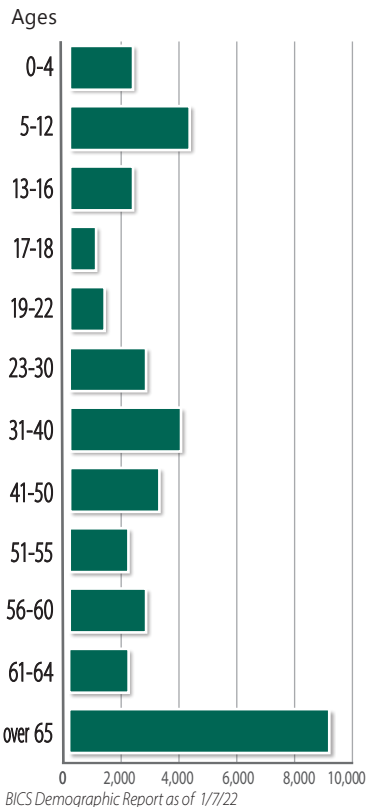
DCFS FACTS AT A GLANCE 2021

TOP MEDICAID PAYEES

Medicaid payments to local businesses in Dutchess County serve as an economic stimulus and multiplier.

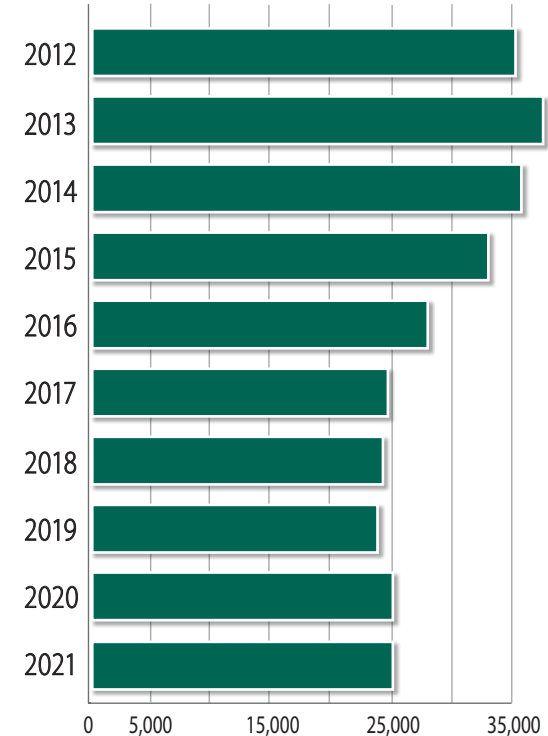
New York Catholic Health Plan	\$146,614,713
MVP Health Plan, Inc.	\$135,119,411
New York Quality Healthcare	\$28,825,713
Sullivan Co Chap NYSARC SPV	\$14,355,279
New Horizons Resources, Inc.	\$13,526,175
Health Advantage Plan	\$12,993,021
United Healthcare of NY, Inc.	\$12,833,924
Cardinal Hayes	\$12,736,962
Hamaspi Choice, Inc.	\$11,861,149
Westchester Medical Center	\$11,844,157

ACTIVE INDIVIDUALS



DCFS CASELOAD SNAPSHOT

Unduplicated cases. Does not include HEAP, Services, or Child Support cases—from WST002, 12/2021



TOP NON-MEDICAID VENDORS

Central Hudson	\$3,138,146.84
Hudson River Lodging- Plan G	\$3,133,958.24
Berkshire Farm Center	\$1,824,119.60
Community Housing	\$1,780,307.56
DC Probation	\$1,561,354.11
Astor Services for Children and Families	\$1,538,915.67
Family Services	\$1,317,109.33
Grace Smith House	\$979,683.36
Children's Home of Poughkeepsie	\$879,606.44
Rupson Corporation	\$873,460

ACTIVE CASES

Cases as of	12/31/20	12/31/21
SNAP	10,221	10,446
HEAP	2,332	2,334
Medicaid	8,813	9,418
Medicaid SSI	5,576	5,329
Family Assistance	421	348
Safety Net Assistance	513	475
Services (Adult/Children)	1,576	1,498

2021 MODIFIED BUDGET

	Appropriations	Revenues
Administration (salaries, fringe, materials, other)	\$40,353,565	\$24,076,196
Non-Secure Detention	\$1,550,400	\$739,000
Child Care Subsidy Appropriations	\$6,500,000	\$6,156,567
Services for Recipients	\$7,721,627	\$3,196,582
Medicaid - Local payments	\$118,025	\$100,000
Medicaid - MMIS Payments	\$38,710,620	\$0
Special Needs Adults/Family	\$351,955	\$5,000
Family Assistance	\$8,882,455	\$8,570,089
Foster Care	\$33,315,708	\$26,268,897
Juvenile Delinquents/PINS	\$250,000	\$750
State Training Schools	\$3,600,000	\$0
Safety Net	\$8,795,000	\$3,143,000
HEAP	\$701,546	\$701,546
Emergency Aid to Adults	\$250,000	\$132,500
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	\$0	\$0
Youth Administration	\$336,187	\$196,695
Youth Development/Delinquency Programs	\$0	\$0
Youth Services Unit	\$277,951	\$190,938
Youth Development Program	\$234,100	\$200,000
Youth Special Delinquency Programs	\$0	\$0
Youth Runaway & Homeless	\$133,075	\$75,068
Totals	\$152,082,214	\$73,752,828

2021 Commissioner's Office

The Commissioner's Office consists of the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner for Financial and Supportive Services, Deputy Commissioner for Services, Deputy Commissioner for Special Needs, Director of Administrative Services, Assistant to the Commissioner for Program Planning and Evaluation, Special Assistant to the Commissioner, Staff Development Director, and Confidential Administrative Assistants. The Commissioner's Office oversees the programs and operations of the department.



Theresa Giovannelli
Deputy Commissioner



Debra Bonnerwith
Deputy Commissioner



Sharon Avila
Confidential Administrative Assistant



Carol Domino
Confidential Administrative Assistant

ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2021

HIGHLIGHTS

- Our agency delivered services to more than 1 in 10 Dutchess County residents, reaching over 30,000 unduplicated individuals across all programs.
- Much of the delivery of services provided in 2021 continued to be affected by the pandemic. The Department took several steps to mitigate the situation and ensure that staff and clients were safe, and that service level was maintained.
- A phonebooth was installed in the reception area of the main office building to enable clients to chat with their workers without having to meet face-to-face.
- The Commissioner's Rapid Response team received 1,005 inquiries through the DCFS info email on the County's public website.
- NYS oversight agencies issued several waivers, including the requirement to hold face-to-face interviews with Temporary Assistance applicants, allowing telephone interviews instead. Other waivers affected the re-certification period, effectively extending the re-certification period for Medicaid and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients. The waivers helped ensure that SNAP benefits and Medicaid coverage that would have expired during the pandemic was reinstated so there was no gap in benefit or coverage for existing recipients.
- The Department was granted a NYS waiver to provide additional benefits under the Child Care Assistance Program due to COVID-19. These waivers were initially in place in March of 2020 and continued until July 2021. The waiver expanded the income eligibility standards to serve families with incomes up to 85% of the State Median Income and allowed the family share to be waived for those families impacted by COVID-19. In addition, starting 12/1/2021, new case authorizations for childcare assistance provide a 12-month eligibility period and certain families receiving childcare assistance will no longer have a family share.

- DCFS offered the annual Navigating the DCFS System workshop virtually to bring providers up to date on the various benefits available, with a particular focus on Temporary Assistance. Seventy-seven individuals representing 11 agencies attended the WebEx.
- DCFS also collaborated with The Mid-Hudson Valley Benefits Advisory Group hosted by Taconic Resources for Independence, Inc. (TRI) on May 21, 2021, and gave a presentation on Medicaid Eligibility & Application Process. Approximately 27 people attended.
- Adoption recruiter partnership with NYS Office of Children and Family Services, Children's Home of Poughkeepsie and the Wendy's Wonderful Kids Foundation continued. The recruiter worked with 9 children. The Department finalized a total of 13 adoptions in 2021.
- Our Youth Services Unit continued to promote the Path to Promise Initiative and hosted with the WorkForce Investment Board (WIB), the Annual Dutchess County Youth Summit. Staff was actively engaged in the development of the Youth Opportunity Center project, seeking to create a hub for county youths in the old YMCA site in the City of Poughkeepsie. The unit also worked with DAY ONE staff to solidify plans for the teacher apprenticeship pilot program to increase quality



of day care services and collaborated with Astor Services for Children & Families to secure funding for the READY4K program. In addition, we funded "Building Bridges" and "Community Mentoring" programs with Family Services SNUG to address gun violence in the City of Poughkeepsie.

- In 2021, with the Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet, Boston College and Poughkeepsie City School District (PCSD), DCFS implemented the City Connects pilot initiative at Poughkeepsie Middle School. The project allows the City Connects team to track all six grade students' progress in the four key areas: academics, social-emotional learning, family, and health, and helps develop individual plans to ensure every student's success.





William Sanchez
Special Assistant to Commissioner

FAIR HEARINGS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Fair Hearing and Quality Assurance unit represents DCFS in requested fair hearings, serves as liaison for NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance audits, and completes Child Care Subsidy audits for NYS Office of Children and

Family Services. This unit also ensures quality performance standards by compiling and tracking outcome data, including monitoring and visiting contracted agencies.

FAIR HEARING

The fair hearing process allows applicants and/or recipients to tell an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ), assigned by the New York State Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance Agency, why they think a decision made about their case is incorrect.

The Commissioner of OTDA assigns a designee from the Office of Administrative Hearings to review the findings of the hearing and to render a written decision based on the facts, rules and regulations that govern benefits issued by Medicaid, Temporary Assistance, SNAP, and Child Care.

CHILD CARE SERVICES

- Completed 49 Fiscal Child Care Audits (DCFS is in full compliance) for NYS Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS)

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

- Conducted 16 contract monitoring site visits/DCFS
- Conducted 4 contract monitoring site visits/ Division of Youth Services
- Completed 62 contract program desk reviews of self-evaluations

FAIR HEARING ACTIVITY	2021
Fair Hearings Requested	529
Fair Hearings Held	485
Appellant Defaults	80
Agency Decisions Affirmed	54
Agency Decisions Reversed	20
Agency Upheld Percentage	95%
Postponed/Pending	86
Other Agencies	78
Correct When Made	8
Appellant Withdrawals	199
Agency Withdrawals	8

The fair hearing process controlled by OTDA was altered since the pandemic. Dutchess County residents are expected to continue extended delays to hear the hearings as well as an extended delays for a written decision. The Office of Administrative Hearings is the division who has the oversight responsibilities of protecting the process. There's no clear indication of when the fair hearing process will return to normalcy. In Dutchess County we're working diligently with our residents and clients in an effort to support their needs of assistance.



Bridget Goddard
Assistant to the Commissioner
for Program Planning and
Evaluation

CONTRACTS, POLICY & PLANNING

The Assistant to the Commissioner for Program Planning and Evaluation develops all Department of Community and Family Services plans, prepares

funding applications for special programs, oversees the contracts, prepares and/or responds to requests for proposals and bids, and oversees the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General's Medicaid Compliance Audit Demonstration Project in Dutchess County.

CONTRACT ACTIVITY	2021
Adult Foster Care Services	1
Auditing	0
Credit Reporting	4
Child Care	3
Detention/Foster Care Institutions	40
Domestic Violence Services	8
Employment/Training/Transportation Services	10
SNAP Nutrition Education/HEAP	5
Genetic Testing	1
Homeless Prevention	8
Interpreter Services	1
Interdepartmental Services	8
Legal Services	2
Medical Exams/Services	4
Memoranda of Agreement	105
Preventive Services	27
Resource Parents	110
Service Agreements	26
Special Needs	8
Totals	371

Value of Contracts \$46,000,000+



ThinkDIFFERENTLY

Dutchess County's ThinkDIFFERENTLY initiative's purpose is to support and advocate for individuals and families with special needs. We promote local efforts for improving accessibility, fostering acceptance, and building inclusion.



Toni-Marie Ciarfella
Deputy Commissioner for
Special Needs

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND YEARLY STATISTICS

- Continued to collaborate with Dutchess Community College on the two-year job readiness program "Think Ahead" by going to a hybrid classroom system.
- Anderson Center for Autism's (ACA) Autism Supportive Environment trainings were provided to 8 businesses. In addition, many visual supports were developed and made available on the ThinkDIFFERENTLY website to assist families with the COVID vaccine, holiday tips and more!
- Expansion continued at www.thinkdifferently.net, which serves as a resource to local families. The website was visited 29,911 times, up 16.8% from last year.
- "Think Jobs" Round Table was held as a hybrid event in partnership with the Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board; 12 businesses and 16 providers attended.
- Cont'd regular meetings with agency provider meetings and included Dutchess County's 853 and private school communities.

- Organized and hosted over 25 COVID-19 vaccine PODs for special needs individuals living in congregate care settings around the county.
- Coordinated Vaccine outreach and discharges/returns for OMH, OASA, and OPWDD.
- Appointed to the SUNY Chancellor's Task Force for Accessibility.
- Appointed to Metro North's Accessibility Task Force.
- Participated as guest speaker for pre-service teaching students at Marist College to share the ThinkDIFFERENTLY initiative and services available in our community.
- Expanded community outreach at the Dutchess County Fair to a full week.

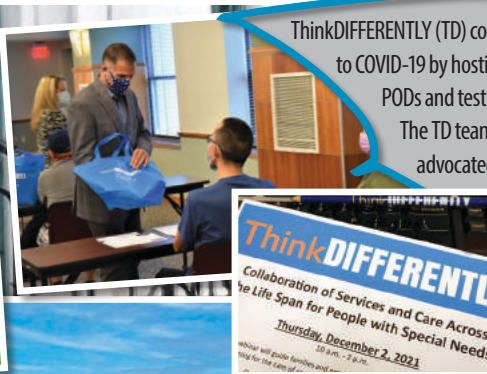


Congratulations to Kara Cerilli for having her photographs of ThinkDIFFERENTLY Thursday posted on the DC Fair Facebook Page!

ThinkDIFFERENTLY

hosted the following events:

- Dutchess County's 5th Annual "Collaboration of Services and Care Across the Life Span for People with Special Needs" virtually in December which was attended by 60 providers and families.
- The 1st Annual ThinkDIFFERENTLY Fitness & Field Day at Bowdoin Park, attended by over 350 people.
- ThinkDIFFERENTLY & DBCH partnered to host a full-day training featuring professionals speaking on both "Trauma in Childhood" and "Sexuality and Individuals Living with IDD". The virtual training was attended by 70 people.



ThinkDIFFERENTLY (TD) continued to respond to COVID-19 by hosting sensory-friendly vaccine PODs and testing sites for people of all abilities. The TD team listened, supported, encouraged, and advocated for inclusion and wellness during the second year of the pandemic. While virtual gatherings continued, TD reentered the community! Fitness & Field Day, a day of activities, games, animals & a free bagged lunch was attended by over 200 people at beautiful Bowdoin Park. TD was also present for the return of the Dutchess County Fair, sharing information all week and welcoming those of all abilities for ThinkDIFFERENTLY Thursday!

Commissioner's

- The Commissioner's Office continued to focus on homelessness. DCFS provided emergency shelter services at the temporary PODs located in the Law Enforcement Center and Jail campus, sheltering an average of 95 individuals per night. In addition, Dutchess County was allocated federal Emergency Rental Assistance funds to assist households that have experienced financial hardship due to COVID-19 and are at risk of homelessness or housing instability.



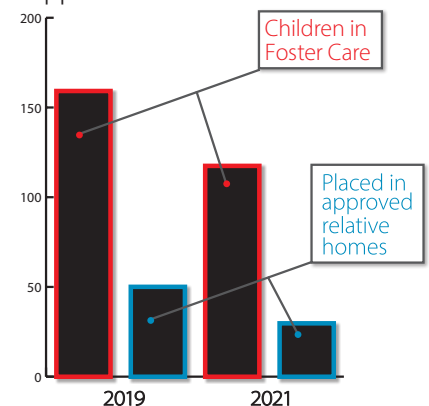
- The program helps with rental arrears, temporary current rental assistance, and assistance with unpaid utility bills. While the program is administered by the State, the Department spearheaded an extensive outreach effort to get the word out and assist both landlords and tenants with the application process. As of December 31, 2021, there were 2,429 applications from Dutchess County.



Commissioner Jaar-Marzouka speaks to new American citizens at a naturalization ceremony in the Dutchess County Legislature Chambers.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE DECREASED

- The number of children in Foster Care continued to decrease and the percentage of children placed in approved relative homes slightly decreased. As of December 31, 2021, there were 114 children in foster care, with 30.7% (35) of them placed in approved relative homes. As of December 31, 2019, there were 186 children in foster care, with 27% (50) of them placed in approved relative homes.



COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE SERVED ON THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES

- Agency Partner Grant
- Board member of the New York State Public Welfare Association (NYPWA)
- Chair of the NYPWA Deputy Commissioners' Leadership Network Steering Committee
- Criminal Justice Council
- Family Court Improvement Project
- Child Advocacy Center's Leadership Committee and Multidisciplinary Team
- Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies Region V Workgroup (COFCCA)
- Career Achievement Program Committee
- Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce's Headliner Award Committee
- Dutchess County's Domestic Violence Steering Committee
- Dutchess County's Human Trafficking Taskforce
- Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce Women's Leadership Alliance
- Office for the Aging's Advisory Board
- Recovery and Resiliency Consortium
- Removing Barriers to Care Committee
- Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Executive Committee
- Workforce Development Board
- Mount Saint Mary's Center on Aging and Policy – ProActive Caring Project's Steering Committee
- Youth Opportunity Union Advisory Committee

Office



- In 2021 the County Department of Community & Family Services (DCFS) and the Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board (DCWIB) provided six local families pre-owned vehicles after they completed the “Way to Work” program.

Started in 2001, the program is designed to help low-income Dutchess County residents get and keep a job, providing them reliable transportation to and from work. Qualified participants must come from a family that receives Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or whose family income is less than 200 percent of the poverty level.

DCFS’s approach to help transition residents to work is a multi-faceted one that includes work skills training, daycare for eligible families, and the “Way to Work” program provided under contract by the DCWIB. “Way to Work” provides vehicles from local used car dealers to eligible individuals and provides participants training – such as car care and defensive driving – as well as assistance in obtaining a learner’s permit or driver’s license. The program also offers driver experience training, car maintenance instruction, and auto repairs.

These vehicles help families obtain and retain employment, acquire jobs with more hours or higher pay, gain access to higher education to increase the recipients’ wage potential, or take their children to and from school.

The families selected to receive the vehicles were chosen based on specific program guidelines, including their work-related need for transportation. In addition, they have all displayed the perseverance and commitment necessary to continually move forward toward financial independence. For every family that receives a car and avoids temporary assistance, Dutchess County saves \$1,614 a month; within a year, that savings equals the cost of a new car.

Among the recipients is a single mother of two sons, who works full-time to support her family, and create a better future for her children. Despite working a full-time job, it is difficult for this family to make ends meet. Reliable transportation will give this mother of two the opportunity to choose different shifts, to look for promotions, grocery shop as a family and properly bring her children to school. A vehicle isn’t just transportation for this family, but a chance to live a happier life.



ABOVE & BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY TEAM (ABCD)



In the 12 years that ABCD has been striving to improve the workplace and taking on initiatives to serve, the past two years have been the most challenging. Despite this, the ABCD Team continued to meet and set goals. We beat all previous records for our "Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty" (CROP) initiative and almost doubled our \$1,500 goal. In 2021, our CROP Walk Team more than doubled in size of members, effort, and outcome. Through bake sales and raffles, we collected \$2,931 for the local DCIC CROP Walk. This was achieved through the volunteer efforts of our staff who donated their time, energy, cooking or baking talent to help raise money for the CROP Walk. A portion of the funds

raised was awarded to Dutchess Outreach, Community Action Agency, Beulah Baptist Soup Kitchen, St. Paul's Episcopal Church Food Pantry, and the Fishkill Food Pantry. The ABCD Summer Fitness Challenge continued to promote a healthier lifestyle by inspiring many to get out and move.

The Bright Stars program remained active under the leadership of the ABCD Team. Nominations were reviewed and individuals were selected for the monthly recognition award throughout the year.

A new community project was undertaken in the Summer of 2021 which resulted in great success. ABCD chose to help Hope on A Mission (HOAM). HOAM is a street ministry serving homeless, addicted women & men on the streets of Poughkeepsie through relationships of unconditional love and support. ABCD obtained a wish list from HOAM and collected donations of items which HOAM was then able to provide to individuals in need in our community.

YOUTH FINANCIAL LITERACY & COMPUTER TRAINING PROGRAM



In August 2021, DCFS held two full days of training for our Youth Financial Literacy and Computer Skills Training Program. We served 8 local youth ages 14 to 18. DCFS partnered with Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board to coordinate the program. All participants came

from families who receive public assistance or foster care services through DCFS. Participants must achieve

satisfactory attendance and satisfactory grades in school to qualify for the program. The program is funded through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program and the Foster Care Block Grant. At the successful completion of the program, each participant earns a laptop and printer. There were 5 trainers from the One Stop Career Center & Workforce Investment Office. They trained the youth in: financial literacy; Microsoft programs such as Excel, MS Word, and PowerPoint; job readiness including job search, cover letter and resume writing, business marketing and held mock job interviews. As of this year, the DCFS summer computer training program has served 276 youth. This program has been recognized as a best practice for youth job preparation at the New York Public Welfare Association conference.

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION 2021

Employee Appreciation Day was held on November 10, 2021 and was an apple harvest themed event. Employees were appreciated for their hard work and commitment with freshly picked apples, M&Ms (You make a difference, "M"ore and "M"ore each day), and small DCFS tote bags containing an annual report and some office supplies. Individuals were also congratulated for Years of Service Milestones, and the Commissioner's Hero Awards.

thank you



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Created in 2010, the Leadership Development Program is based on the needs and interests of the staff to explore leadership topics and to develop their leadership skills. Each year of the program begins with an Achievement Awards event recognizing the work completed in the previous year.

The first subsequent session is a brainstorming meeting during which members generate ideas for future topics and then rate or prioritize the topics. From the brainstorming session, topics are selected and slated for the year. Volunteer members step forward to research and provide an hourlong

presentation on the selected topics. Members' presentations are reviewed and approved prior to their scheduled session to the group. At the Achievement Awards event and once or twice a year, guest speakers from our community are invited to share their knowledge on the topic of leadership. Sessions are attended by member participants. Occasionally sessions are open to all interested staff at DCFS.

One credit is earned for each session a member participant attends. If a member researches a topic and provides a presentation to the group, they earn an additional credit hour. After every 8 credit hours earned, the employee receives a certificate of completion for a Level at the next Achievement Awards Event. The event is held once a year and always features a keynote guest speaker. There are approximately 10 presentations per year averaging 1 per month. Attendance at each session is not mandatory, however, employees must sign up in order to earn credit hours.

Other requirements include: after completing Level 3, participants must present in order to earn a Level 4 certificate; after Level 5, a participant must co-present with another participant in order to achieve Level 6. Participants are expected to present at least once per Level after Level 5.



In 2021, we had one guest speaker and 5 staff persons present the following topics: "The Art of the Pivot" by guest speaker Donna Johnson-Klonsky; "Managing Stress & Anxiety" by Kara Cerilli (ADM) and Marsha Thomas (CPS); "Schackleton as a Leader"

by Monique Brennan (AFS) and Tom Tait (CPS), "Ayurveda in the Workplace" by Wendy Baur (AFS); "The Quiet Leader" by Carol Domino (ADM). In addition, a brainstorming session was held to determine future topics.

Our 11th Annual Achievement Awards was held February 24th. The session was held in person and via Webex with approximately 40 staff persons in attendance. Sheriff Kirk Imperati was our guest speaker and gave a personal perspective on leadership which was greatly appreciated by the department.

At the event, certificates of achievement were given to:

Level II Jeannine Guerra (Medicaid)
Darla Steinhauer (Reception)
Tom Tait (CPS)

Level III Monique Brennan (AFS)

Level IV Marsha Thomas (CPS)

Level VI Wendy Baur (AFS)

Level VIII Kara Cerilli (ADM) and
Carol Domino (ADM)

2021 Staff Development/Human Resources



Ted Starzyk
Director of Staff Development
and Human Resources

The Director of Staff Development is responsible for ensuring that the Department of Community and Family Services' workforce receives the training that is necessary to provide objective, competent and professional services to our customers. In Dutchess County, the Staff Development Division also encompasses the human resources and payroll functions.

Ted Starzyk is the Director of Staff Development and Human Resources. The Staff Development and Human Resources Unit provides on-going personal and career development for DCFS staff members.

This includes conducting needs assessments and planning for the delivery, scheduling and attendance of staff training programs that meet local, state, and federal mandates. We have contracts with Adelphi University and SUNY Empire College which includes Dutchess Community College. The goal of these programs is workforce professionalism and promotional advancement within the civil service system.

PERSONNEL ACTIONS COMPLETED

New Employment Interviews Conducted	60
New Employees Hired	34
Promotions and Reassignments Processed	40
Leaves of Absence Processed	31
Separations from Dutchess County Service	33

TRAINING HOURS COORDINATED

Temporary Assistance/Intake	361
Services (Adult, Children, Youth)	1,218
Medicaid	1,083
SNAP	194
Child Support	125
Special Investigations	7
HEAP	35
Total	3,023



COVID-19 continued to impact Staff Development in 2021. Although many employees returned in-person from working at home, some safety measures still remained. These included limited capacity of staff in training rooms, encouragement of mask wearing in public spaces and social distancing. Staff were also offered immunizations on-site; many took advantage of this opportunity. To maintain payroll, staff who worked from home continued to e-mail their timesheets. All in all, Staff Development forged ahead on the road to "normalcy" by ensuring payroll, training and hiring continued to happen.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2021

2021 BRIGHT STARS

The ABCD Committee chooses Bright Star employees from those nominated by their peers. The Committee, made up of members from various units, examines and makes recommendations to the Commissioner on the monthly award recipient/s.

JANUARY



Jose Robles
Temporary Assistance

FEBRUARY



Cheryl DeGroat
Adult Services

MARCH



Jamie Jackson
Temporary Assistance

APRIL



Christine Avampato
Medicaid

MAY



Jessica Williams
Accounting

JUNE



Christine Nastasi
Medicaid

JULY



Andrea Swart
Child Welfare

AUGUST



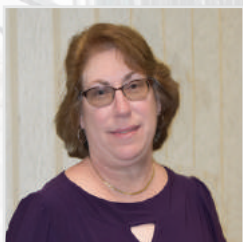
Kelly Wonderly
SNAP

SEPTEMBER



Nicole Singleton
Adult Services

OCTOBER



Kathy Molina
Child Welfare

NOVEMBER



Susan Lambert
Child Support

DECEMBER



Nyila Thrasher
SNAP

YEARS OF SERVICE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND FAMILY SERVICES



Joanne Sinagra
35 YEARS

Lisa Owens
Ann Marie Piccone



Linda Giuliani
30 YEARS

Wendy Baur



Barbara Ingram
25 YEARS

Monique Aiello
Laura Skojec
Ted Starzyk



Valencia Jalil
20 YEARS

Ann Brady
Lissette Mason
Queen Murray
Karin Ruparelia



Melrose Lewis
15 YEARS

Nicole Cusimano
Kevin McDonald
Joan Mendelson
Kristin Paraszti

Alice Remy
Shanika Selman
Jacquelyn Sessa
Vanessa Stuart
Andrea Watson



Sarah Menegio
10 YEARS

Amanda Dunlop
Karla Friedle
Stacey Parrella
William Sanchez
Marcia Wiley

5 YEARS



Jose Robles

Sharon Boshart
Maureen Brierton
Catey Catalan
Toni-Marie Ciarfella
Tenniel Colley-Wellington
Jenna Cort
Allyson Hitsman
Andrea Hooper

George Kwant
Barbara Lara
Diane Linnell
Justyce Michelle-Cashdollar
Yvelise Ramos
Linda Rivera
Blaise Sackett
Beth Simmons

Shonda Slater
Nancy Tomaszewski
Morgan Valentin
Kayleigh VanKleeck
Kkimberly Vasco
Teresa Vasnaik
Angel Villani
Debora Yebouet

Employee Generosity

The **Accounting Unit** donated 10 bags of clothing and boots for **Hope on a Mission** which helps those that are in recovery stay warm and cared for. The collection was organized by **Pam Highbridge** (ACCT).

The **Administration Team** collected toys which were donated by staff for the **31st Annual Salvation Army Toy Drive**.

Andrea Watson (AFS), **Barbara Ingram** (CW), **Denise Griffin** (AFS), and **Stephanie Perry** (AFS) coordinated the annual **Salvation Army 'Angel Tags' Collection** and received clothing, toys, and games for 70 children.

Andrea Watson (AFS), **Cheryl DeGroat** (AFS), and **Denise Griffin** (AFS) managed the **DCFS Elizabeth Ann Karlson/Jennifer Bixby Food Pantry**.

Children's Services organized another successful Foster Care Picnic at Bowdoin Park. The children enjoyed the games, arts & crafts and a visit from a New Hamburg fire truck. Several staff members from various divisions volunteered at the picnic.

The **Child Support Unit** held their annual collection of hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves for **Grace Smith House**.

Deputy Commissioner, Theresa Giovanniello, and the **ABCD Team's CROP (Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty) Walk Team at DCFS** raised \$2,930 to help fight hunger. Staff created unique raffle gift baskets, and sold and purchased Gertrude Hawk fundraising chocolates.

The **ABCD Team** also collected numerous hygiene items such as drawstring backpacks, band-aids, ointment, antiperspirant, and toothbrushes for **Hope On A Mission** and assisted founder **CaraMia Bacchiochi** with loading the donations into her truck.

Margaret Holzberger (ACCT) hung **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** ribbons in front of DCFS in support of "advocacy, education, support and public awareness so that all individuals and families affected by mental illness can build better lives."

The **Medicaid Unit** volunteered with the **John Flowers Foundation**, and shopped, wrapped, and delivered about \$800 in holiday gifts and a decorated/lighted Christmas tree to a single mother and her three children. In addition, **Lara Weisman**, boxed and delivered complete Thanksgiving dinners to eight families in Dutchess and Orange Counties.

The **Staff Development Team** coordinated the **Anemones Bouquet Fundraiser** and the **Holiday Wreath Fundraiser** to support **Mental Health America of Dutchess County**.

Temporary Assistance collected a variety of items such as gloves, toothpaste, deodorant, and snacks for the individuals staying at the PODS shelter.

ThinkDIFFERENTLY held a Fitness & Field Day at Bowdoin Park. Hundreds came from around the county to participate in the field games, visit the nutrition stations & collect information from our

community providers! All participants went home with a finisher medal and a delicious bagged lunch! **Deputy Commissioner for Special Needs, Dr. Toni-Marie Ciarfella**, and her assistant **Sandi Pierson**, helped to coordinate the event.

Tom Tait (CPS) and **Monique Brennan** (AFS) volunteered at a local Emergency Housing Shelter's holiday party for residents and their children.



2021 Administrative Services



Peter Simon
Director of
Administrative Services

The Director of Administrative Services helps develop and present the annual budget and is responsible for the supervision and coordination of the fiscal and operating functions. The following units are overseen by the Director: Accounting, Central File, Reception, Purchasing, Welfare Management System and Computer Information Services. The Director of Administrative Services serves as the agency's Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) Officer.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Received and processed 19,872 calls at the switchboard (those callers who did not use the main menu options and chose the "operator")
- Completed 320 building work orders
- Processed payments/vouchers for
 - * 5 travel orders
 - * 60 cases for state auditors
 - * 86 DCFS contracts totaling \$16,518,540
 - * 16 Youth Services contracts totaling \$307,690
 - * 6 Think Differently contracts totaling \$133,893



The fight against COVID-19 continued throughout 2021. The analogy that comes to mind is a MASH unit in the midst of a war. Understaffed, supplies limited, and a constant state of emergency. Many people can step up when the going gets tough, but what happens when the going stays tough? The DCFS support team not only raised their level of performance, but kept up that level of production as the battle continued. I thank each and everyone of our dedicated staff for adapting and overcoming.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2021



Brian Napoleon
Director of Budget and Finance

ACCOUNTING

- Maintained accounts for 206 clients in receipt of Supplemental Security Income who need help managing their money. Deposits of \$1,405,678 and issuance of 7,249 checks totaling \$1,305,396 occurred on behalf of these clients.
- Collected over \$73,900,000 in state and federal reimbursements on DCFS expenses
- Arranged and paid for 122 indigent burials in the amount of \$250,801

ACCOUNTING TRANSACTIONS PROCESSED IN 2021

Services	Number	Amount
Title IV-D Assistance	1,900	\$164,000
Family Assistance	11,900	\$4,849,000
Adult Care and Emergency Assistance	200	\$193,000
Safety Net Assistance	17,000	\$7,789,000
Medical Assistance	100	\$19,000
Emergency Aid to Families	100	\$29,000
Title XX Services for Recipients	400	\$604,000
Non-Title XX Services for Recipients	10,700	\$8,959,000
Foster Care and Adoption Assistance	14,300	\$11,576,000
Child Care Assistance	8,200	\$5,056,000
Independent Living Program	500	\$74,000
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)	6,800	\$298,000
Total	72,100	\$39,610,000



The impact of COVID-19 on the Accounting Unit continues to be tremendous and is most evident in how the unit is staffed. Increased staff turnover, absences, and difficulty in filling vacancies related to COVID-19 make meeting the needs of the unit harder and harder each day with less experienced staff in fewer numbers than before COVID-19. In spite of it all, the Accounting Unit continues its unflappable approach to meeting the need of our clients, our vendors, and our coworkers.

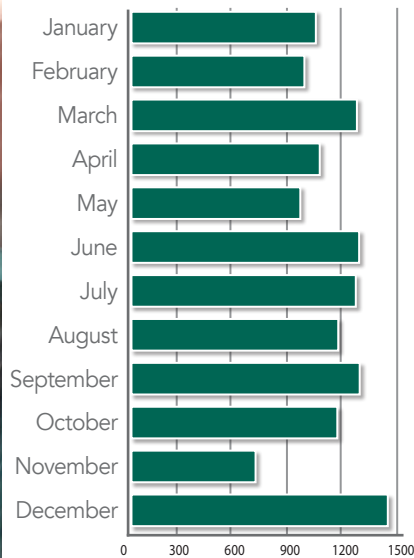
Administrative

RECEPTION

Reception is responsible for accepting program applications and receiving supporting documents as well as registering visitors.

NUMBER OF CLIENT TRANSACTIONS IN RECEPTION

(Poughkeepsie and Satellite Offices)

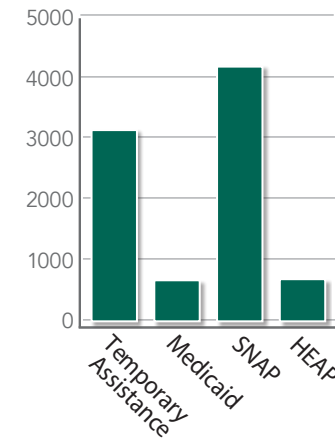


Total Transactions 13,060

My Full View tracking system data

APPLICATIONS/ DOCUMENTS DROPPED OFF

My Full View tracking system data

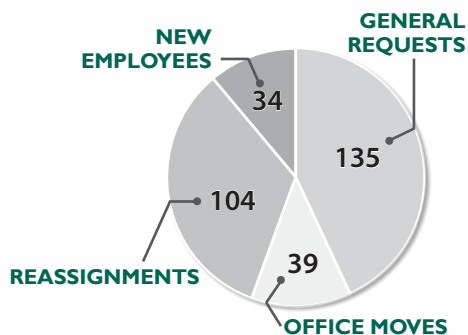


Services

COMPUTER INFORMATION SERVICES

- Participation in thin client trial to evaluate on-site use of VDI.
- Assisted with pilot and rollout of Connections transition from Citrix to VMWare.
- Began transition to laptop deployment to facilitate future WFH needs.
- Locally implemented MATS solution for more efficient WMS permissions and controls.
- Assisted with local impact testing for numerous routing and core equipment changes in ITS infrastructure.

EMPLOYEE CHANGE REQUESTS



CENTRAL FILE

- Assigned 4,528 new case numbers.
- Managed USPS and interoffice mail for entire DCFS staff.
- Processed 117,203 pieces of outgoing US Mail (not including inter-office mail).
- Prepared and imaged documents for the following units: Medicaid, Temporary Assistance, SNAP, HEAP, and satellite offices.
- Received 193 kiosk transactions.
- Recorded 8,366 incoming voter registration forms (forms included in benefit application packets).
- Processed 139 Print Shop orders including forms, business cards and specialty orders.
- Filled 5,750 supply orders.
- Maintained 837 items for the supply room inventory.



CIS's largest problem in 2021 was hardware.

Acquisition was complicated due to international supply chain problems, and equipment ordered could take several months to arrive. Often the models for peripherals we had budgeted for were not available, requiring us to make due with fewer more expensive models, or get creative with other manufacturers. It was tricky to ensure that every unit was capable of operating remotely while also maintaining security.

Cleaning up and tightening permissions was a large task, as the requirement for units to cover for each other during covid created an access mess and blurred a lot of lines as to what team members from different units should be able to get to.

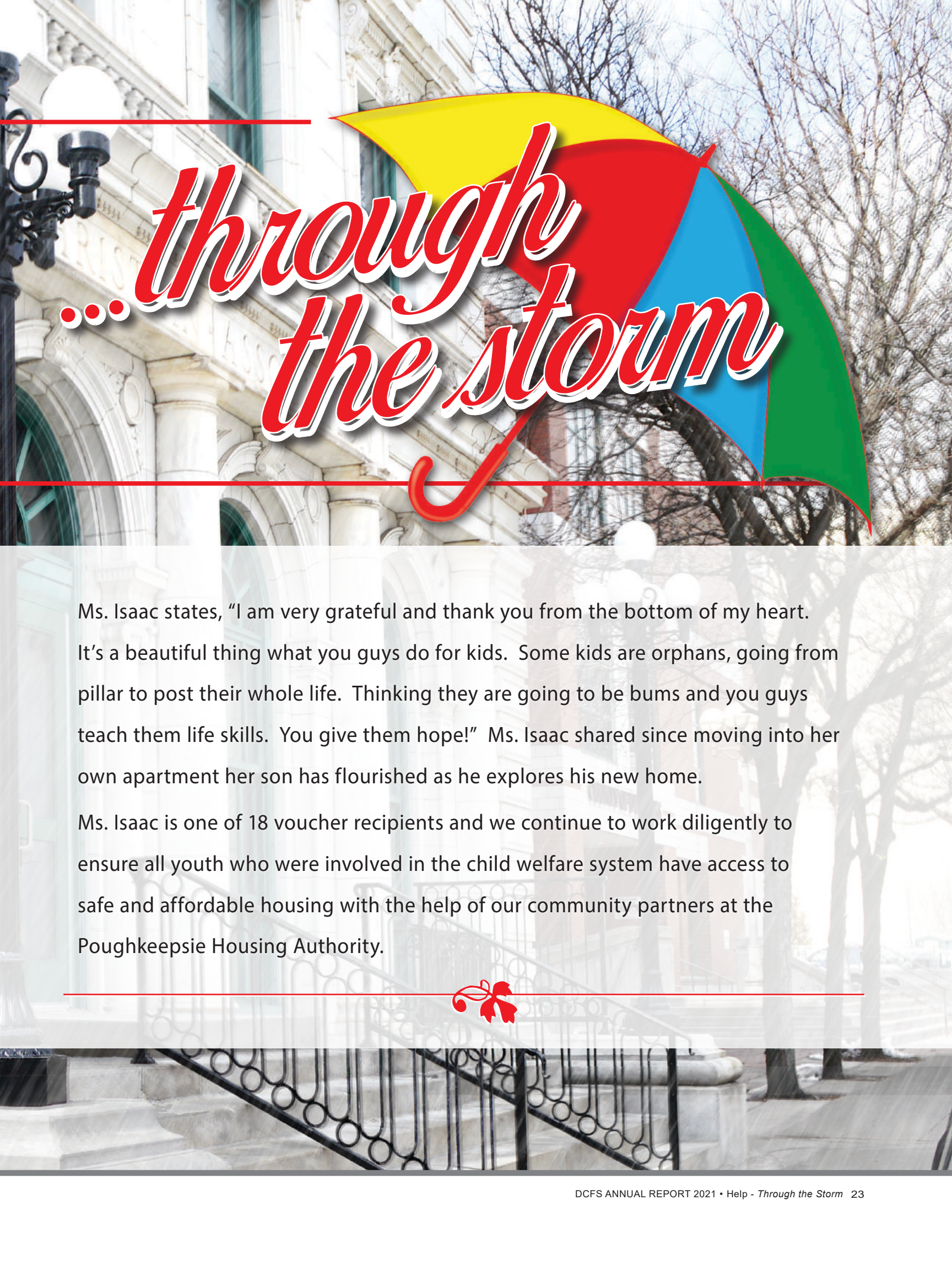




Help



The Department partnered with the Poughkeepsie Housing Authority on the Foster Youth to Independence Initiative. This initiative provided Tenant Protection Vouchers to young adults ages 18-24 years old who experienced foster care and were at risk of homelessness. Ms. Isaac was the first voucher recipient to move into her apartment with her young child.



...through the storm

Ms. Isaac states, "I am very grateful and thank you from the bottom of my heart. It's a beautiful thing what you guys do for kids. Some kids are orphans, going from pillar to post their whole life. Thinking they are going to be bums and you guys teach them life skills. You give them hope!" Ms. Isaac shared since moving into her own apartment her son has flourished as he explores his new home.

Ms. Isaac is one of 18 voucher recipients and we continue to work diligently to ensure all youth who were involved in the child welfare system have access to safe and affordable housing with the help of our community partners at the Poughkeepsie Housing Authority.



2021 Adult Services



Tracy Connelly
Director of Adult Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) serves adults (age 18 and older) who, due to physical or mental impairments, are unable to protect themselves from abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, or other harm and have no one who can assist them responsibly. This mandated service is available to all adults regardless of income and resources. Adult Services also provides Housing Services, Family Type Home Program administration, Foster Family Home for Adults inspections, and Domestic Violence Liaison assessments.

Case Managers investigate and assess safety and risk to adults residing in the community and assist in obtaining services to strengthen their ability to live in the community for as long as possible with the least restrictions. Adults have the right to make their own decisions, including whether to accept or refuse the services that Adult Protective provides. Services are voluntary except in cases of extreme need when the adult lacks capacity to make reasonable decisions on their own behalf.

- In 2021, DCFS received 750 Adult Protective Services referrals, of which 528 (70%) were for individuals age 60 or older. At intake, 22% of cases had at least one risk factor indicating abuse or neglect from others. Adults who are age 60 and older comprised 76% of the cases which alleged abuse or neglect from another person. Financial exploitation was noted in 115 of all abuse cases for all age groups. Homelessness for vulnerable adults increased from 16% of cases in 2020, to 17% in 2021. Mental illness was indicated as a suspected impairment in 50% of all APS referrals.
- In 2021, we saw a decrease in requests for temporary housing assistance. This may have been partially due to interventions related to COVID-19, such as the eviction moratorium, quarantine placements, and individuals sheltering in place. Temporary housing cases decreased by 7% in 2021, from 555 in 2020 to 518 in 2021. The number of single individuals provided temporary housing increased by 9% and the number of families decreased by 32%.
- In 2021, the average length of stay in temporary housing was 14 weeks for families and 15 weeks for single individuals. The overall length of stay in temporary housing was 15 weeks, the same as in 2020. The overall cost of providing temporary housing decreased by 13.5% from 2020 to 2021 (per Cognos temporary housing payment report).
- Affordable housing options for families and individuals continued to be an obstacle for county residents with income deficiencies and/or mental and physical impairment. We submitted a shelter supplement plan for families for state approval. The goal is to secure and maintain permanent housing; thereby reducing the cost and length of stay in temporary housing.
- With the assistance of an Administration for Community Living (ACL) APS Grant, APS was able to purchase PPE for staff (including a safety car divider and car seat covers), cleaning products for clients, laptops and headsets for staff, APS outreach materials for Elder Abuse awareness during community events. It also allowed APS to pay overtime

when necessary for staff who continued to make home visits and meet with clients in person during the Covid 19 pandemic.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2021

PRESENTATIONS GIVEN TO THE PUBLIC AND PARTNERING AGENCIES

- Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Team (E-MDT)
- Congregation Schomre Israel Lunch and Learn Program
- Housing Presentations to Mental Health America, Vassar Brother's Hospital, Family Services
- Lexington Center for Recovery and Sun River Health

COMMUNITY EVENTS

- Office for the Aging Senior Picnics

DUTCHESS COUNTY COMMITTEES/TEAMS

Meetings were conducted via telephone or virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Council of Aging Serving the Elderly (CASE)
- Long-Term Care Council
- Coalition for the Homeless (Webster House Shelter for Single Persons)
- Housing Consortium Meetings
- Mental Health Dependency and Providers Group
- New York Division of Parole, Dutchess County Probation and Department of Behavioral and Community Health (DBCH)
- Enhanced-Multi-Disciplinary Team (E-MDT)
- DBCH Mental Health Sub-committee
- Behavioral Health 24-Hr Services Stakeholders Meetings
- Community Solutions Meetings
- Greater Poughkeepsie CCT Meetings

In-service presentations offered to APS staff included an overview of New Rent Laws of 2021 by Legal Services of the Hudson Valley and Mobile Crisis Overview.

ADULT SERVICES	2020	2021
PSA Cases		
PSA Referrals	682	750
PSA Assessments	467	473
PSA Open/Ongoing	406	347
Representative Payee	119	69
Guardianship	35	30
Emergency Housing Cases/Households	555	518
Total Persons Served in Emergency Housing	870	744
Licensed Family Type Homes	14	15
Domestic Violence Screenings	115	106

Statistics from Cognos and Adult Services Automated Project (ASAP)

TEMPORARY SHELTER EXPENDITURES

Year	Amount	Stay in Weeks
2012	\$2,511,476	15.4
2013	\$2,168,106	*N/A
2014	\$2,212,208	*N/A
2015	\$1,540,523	9.1
2016	\$2,181,981	11.9
2017	\$2,493,962	12.7
2018	\$3,738,726	12.0
2019	\$6,082,441	13.0
2020	\$6,312,314	15.0
2021	\$5,461,802	15.0

Statistics from Cognos and Adult Services Automated Project (ASAP) *Stay in weeks figure not available in 2013 and 2014.

Miss Watson, First and foremost, thank you so much for your wonderful thoughtfulness. Your note was touching as it was kind. You are a very special person, and my brothers and I wanted you to know we immensely appreciate all that you did to help and assist our family, and our Mom.

The name Miss Watson in our household is synonymous with kindness and helpfulness. Losing our Mom was difficult — she was a force in our lives and watching her fade was heartbreaking. She is now reunited with our Dad and suffering no longer.

I appreciate your taking the time to write the note you did.

In a world that sometimes seems callous and uncaring, we are reminded of the good that exists, expressed through the good work and good deeds of people like you.

THANK YOU!

COVID-19 home testing kits were given to clients. Adult Protective workers continued to accept referrals, conduct assessments and home visits, hold virtual and telephone contact with clients and coordinate services with other providers, many of which no longer offered in person services and struggled with staffing their programs. Housing workers continued to meet homeless clients' needs, to minimize stays in emergency housing and transition clients to longer term housing.



2021 Children's Services



Colleen Mahoney
Director of Children's Services

The Children's Services Division provides a wide array of services to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of Dutchess County children. Services are provided directly by staff members in the division and through contracts with many public and private community agencies. Services address issues including, but not limited to, substance abuse, mental illness, developmental disabilities, domestic violence, sexual abuse, medical needs, and childcare. Contracts for a continuum of foster care services are also maintained, from foster home care through institutional care.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2021

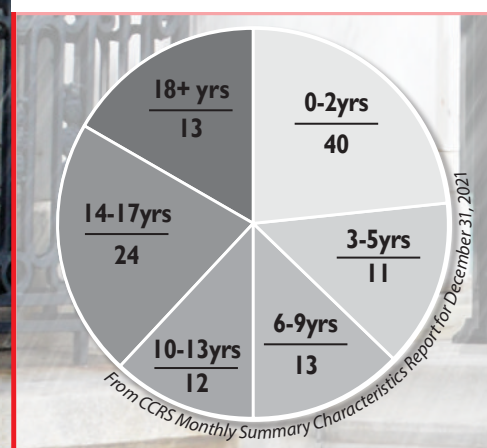
CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Child Protective Services (CPS) investigates reports of alleged child abuse or maltreatment received through the State Central Register (SCR) 24 hours per day, seven days per week. CPS participates in the Multidisciplinary Investigative Team at the Child Advocacy Center, to conduct investigations with law enforcement regarding allegations of sexual abuse and serious physical abuse of children.

CPS CASE SUMMARY	2020	2021
Reports investigated by CPS	2,100	2,868
Abuse Petitions	13	6
Neglect Petitions	213	207
Termination of Parental Rights	48	51
Surrender Petitions Filed in Family Court	24	20
Foster Care Review Permanency Hearings	182	170
Investigations from Child Advocacy Center	236	283
Indicated	54	64
Unfounded	182	219
Pending	0	0

Dutchess County and NYS Office of Court Administration databases and logs, 2021

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE BY AGE



FOSTER CARE

The Foster Care unit ensures safe nurturing temporary care for each child, with the goal of returning the child to family if possible, adoption if the family cannot be reunited, preparation for living independently, or discharge to another resource as appropriate for each child. Whenever possible, children can be placed with relatives as foster parents.

- Opened 15 new foster parent homes and 11 new relative foster parent homes.
- Trained 19 new relative and non-relative foster families in Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (MAPP), Caring for Your Own, and/or Deciding Together.
- Held Orientation Meetings to 68 people on a one-to-one basis via phone due to the pandemic.
- Discharged 7 foster children to subsidized guardianships with relatives through KinGAP.
- Placed 5 children in direct custody of relatives.
- Organized annual foster family picnic in August with a variety of activities and foods.
- Conducted Parent-to-Parent meetings, to develop positive relationships between birth parents and foster parents.
- Foster Youth to Independence Initiative provided Section 8 vouchers to 9 eligible youth, 8 of which were able to secure housing.
- Conducted extensive outreach to over 400 eligible youth through phone calls, letters and in person for the Chafee Direct Cash Assistance Award for young people ages 18 to 23, if they were in foster care at age 14 or older.

- Partnered with Project Hope in August to provide training to foster parents about returning to school during a pandemic. The trainers discussed how the troubling behaviors can emerge as a result of the pandemic and provided psychoeducation and tools to identify and address; as well as some general information and self-care for caretakers during the pandemic. Participants received backpacks filled with school supplies, a \$25 Staples gift card, colored pencils, and adult coloring options for FP self-care.
- Worked with a contract agency, Fostering Hope Together, to receive the Redlich Horowitz COVID-19 Technology grant. The grant provided funding to purchase tablets to ensure children in foster care maintained virtual connections with relatives during the pandemic when in-person visits were unable to occur.

- The Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of NY (AFFCNY) provided a two-day virtual workshop, *Resiliency: What It Is and How to Build It to Foster, Adoptive and Custodianship Families*. This training provided families with skills to help children who have experienced trauma build resiliency to have better long-term outcomes.
- The Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of NY (AFFCNY) provided another training, *Kin First: The Follow the Love Approach to Finding a Permanent Parent for Every Youth on the Verge of Aging Out*. This training was provided to DCFS and contract agency staff, and identified strategies to recruit lifetime parents for youth aging out of foster care.
- Provided Family Team Meetings to 26 CPS, 13 Foster Care, and 67 Preventive families.

- Referred 5 families to the Coached Family Visitation program with Mental Health America.
- Received a CAPTA/CARA Grant that allowed for a co-located Public Health Nurse to work with young children in families who have been impacted by substance use.
- Co-located domestic violence, substance abuse, guardian and adoption services, and a Wendy's Wonderful Kids worker working within the Children's Services division.
- Received 142 preventive referrals in 2021. 117 families were offered and received preventive services. 23 families declined services, 2 referrals were withdrawn, and 4 were duplicate referrals.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges to Children's Services. Children's Services staff continued to perform their duties in person and virtually. For the first half of 2021, in office staffing was maintained at 50% to allow for social distancing and mitigation efforts. We continued to see a reduced number of CPS reports, foster care placements, and preventive services referrals. Meetings and trainings were conducted utilizing virtual platforms as necessary to ensure that our services remained intact.



Children's

ADOPTION

Children available for adoption may be surrendered for adoption by their parents or may be freed for adoption through a Family Court decision to terminate parental rights. Often our foster parents become adoptive parents.

CHILDREN IN CARE	2020	2021
Foster Homes	82	113
Institutions	18	10
Group Homes	5	3
Group Residence	1	0
Agency Operated Boarding Homes	4	2
Supervised Independent Living	4	1
Approved Relative Foster Homes	41	37
Other	3	8
Total	158	174

From December 31, 2021 CCRS in Care Summary Report

ADOPTION ACTIVITY	2020	2021
Children Discharged To Adoption	16	18
Children with adoption as a goal at year end	51	38

From December 31, 2020 CCRS in Care Summary Report

OPEN FOSTER HOMES (as of 12/31/2021)

68	Foster/adoptive Homes
25	Kinship Homes

2021 JUVENILE JUSTICE PLACEMENTS	Pre-Dispositional Placements	Non-Secure Detention	Secure Detention	Foster Care
Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS)	4	N/A	N/A	3
Juvenile Delinquents (JD)	N/A	18	13	3 DCFS 5 OCFS
Juvenile Offender (JO)	0	0	0	
Adolescent Offender (AO)	0	0	3	

Dutchess County Data, CCRS and JDAS system

OUR COMMUNITY SERVICE CONTRACTS INCLUDE:

AGENCY	SERVICE
Abbott House	Homebased preventive services for families at risk of having their children placed in foster care
Astor Services for Children and Families	Crisis intervention waiver services, homebased preventive services, forensic evaluations and the Enhanced Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (ECCSI)
Berkshire Farm Center and Services for Youth	Homebased preventive services for families at risk of having children placed in foster care and non-secure detention
Child Abuse Prevention Center	Child Advocacy Center, Supportive Parenting Programs, and Community Education
Department of Behavioral and Community Health	Co-located Public Health Nurse Co-located staff who can perform drug/alcohol screens and assessments as necessary
Grace Smith House	Two domestic violence liaisons provide direct client services, training and consultation regarding domestic violence issues
JFC Consulting	Medical consultation on child abuse and maltreatment cases
Lexington Center for Recovery	Co-located staff who can perform drug/alcohol screens and assessments as necessary
Mental Health America	Coached family visitation and court appointed special advocates
Office of Probation and Community Corrections	Preventive services for youth involved in the juvenile justice system, to avoid the need for detention or out-of-home placement
Westchester Institute for Human Development	Child sexual abuse medical examinations
Youth Advocate Program	Intensive preventive services to prevent out of home placement for juvenile justice involved youth and to youth discharged home from residential care.



Services

HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE / SAFE HARBOUR



The mission of the Dutchess County Task Force Against Human Trafficking is to prevent human trafficking by working collaboratively to raise knowledge and awareness in our county, to identify potential victims and to provide comprehensive trauma informed services. The task force is responsible for the county-wide response to trafficking.

Safe Harbour is a partnership between DCFS, NYS Office of Children and Family Services, and the Dutchess County Task Force Against Human Trafficking whose responsibility is to identify trafficked or at-risk youth and offer prevention and intervention services. Safe Harbour works with youth up to the age of 21 whether or not they are involved with Child Welfare. Both initiatives are spearheaded by DCFS staff member, David Garcia, Dutchess County's Safe Harbour Coordinator and are listed in the referral directory at the National Human Trafficking Hotline. We currently have 22 organizations on our task force.

SAFE HARBOUR COORDINATOR

- Assists in identifying victims of labor and sex trafficking and coordinating trauma informed services.
- Provides case management for youth up to the age of 21, who are suspected of being trafficked or are at high risk of being exploited.
- Access to services to support the immediate safety needs of youth (food/clothing/shelter).
- Provides presentations to youth on various topics including Human Trafficking, Internet Safety, Sexting and Sextortion.
- Facilitates Prevention Education Programs for high school and middle school youth.
- Assists families with referrals to supportive services.
- Provides community and professional presentations on Human Trafficking.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Received referrals on 32 at-risk youth, two of which were confirmed as victims of human trafficking.
- Conducted a virtual HT 101 presentation to the Dutchess County Youth Council.
- Provided a virtual Human Trafficking and Safe Harbour presentation to Child Welfare staff.
- Conducted 3 virtual trainings to new victim advocates at Family Services.
- Gave a presentation on Human Trafficking to participants and staff at ITAP.
- Conducted a virtual presentation on Safe Harbour to Astor Leadership.
- Conducted a virtual presentation on Safe Harbour and Human Trafficking to the Arlington High School 9th grade social workers, guidance counselors, and principals.
- Facilitated the LOVE146 Not a Number curriculum to two youth groups.
- Presented information on Safe Harbour at the Enhanced Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (ECCSI) System of Care Training (virtually).

FOR MORE INFORMATION
E-MAIL
HumanTrafficking@Dutchessny.gov
VISIT THE WEBSITE <https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/Community-Family-Services/Human-Trafficking.htm>



2021 Youth Services



Karmen Smallwood
Director of Youth Services

The Division of Youth Services' mission is to ensure every youth has a fair and equal opportunity to attain his/her full potential by providing and encouraging services which strengthen family life and by supporting families in their essential function of nurturing the youth's overall development.

Youth Services administers New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) funding to support the community in providing services that promote positive youth development, decrease juvenile delinquency, and increase public awareness of youth issues.

The Division also provides free, confidential, short-term support services for youth ages 4 to 21. Youth are referred by schools, family, law enforcement, and others to receive help dealing with personal, family, or school difficulties.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2021

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Hired a Youth Programs Analyst to manage OCFS grants and serve as the Runaway and Homeless Youth Services Coordinator for Dutchess County.
- Dutchess County Youth Board and Coordinating Council awarded OCFS funding to 18 totaling \$278,762.
- Dutchess County Youth Board and Coordinating Council awarded scholarships to a Poughkeepsie High School student and a Dutchess Community College student.
- Helped with the first Strengthening Families Forum for former and prospective participants to come together to learn about the program. Dutchess County Department of Behavioral and Community Health and Astor Services for Children and Families provided information about Project Hope, COVID-19 resources and community supports. Four families enrolled; three families successfully completed the seven week in-person Strengthening Families program.
- Developed an online grant submission and review process for OCFS Youth Develop Program, and Runaway and Homeless Youth Act funding.
- Provided supportive services for 127 children/youth.
71 of these cases were closed;
70 clients achieved at least one goal.

- Conducted 16 workshops (212 youth and 26 adults attended).
 - Names of workshops conducted (Identifying Feelings, Healthy Relationships/Selfie Skills, Humankind).
- Distributed approximately 200 book bags to children donated by Fostering Hope Together at the National Night Out event held in Poughkeepsie on August 3rd.

DUTCHESS COUNTY YOUTH COUNCIL

- 48 Youth Council students enrolled.
- 10 individuals/agency representatives conducted presentations during Youth Council meetings discussing various issues from human trafficking to wellness activities.
- Piloted the "Spirit Run" book club for ten students involved in the Dutchess County Youth Council and the Green Teen Programs. This initiative was inspired by the book titled "Spirit Run" by Noe Alvarez which highlights a young man's journey of identity and self-acceptance through a 6,000-mile run through North America. Students participated in weekly "read aloud" sessions while discussing their reactions to the content. After completing the book, students participated in virtual discussion on January 28, 2021.



Path to promise

FOR EVERY CHILD

The Path To Promise is a multi-year effort to ensure all young people in Dutchess County, from birth to age 19, have the assets they need to achieve their full potential as they grown into young adults.

To learn more about Path to Promise, visit the Dutchess County website at: www.pathtopromise.net

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Filled vacant Youth and Community Engagement Specialist position.
- Launched pathtopromise.net. There were 6,737 page views and 973 users. The website was awarded 1st Place for the Best of New York Award for Best Application Serving the Public. The award was announced on October 19th during the NY Virtual Digital Government Summit by Jack Mortimer, VP Government Technology.
- Launched the Youth Opportunity Union website (the-You.org) to provide information and updates pertaining to the County's state-of-the-art youth facility.
- Partnered with the Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board and Dutchess Community College to organize the Annual Youth Summit for 150 youth held on August 5th at Dutchess Community College's Fishkill campus.
- Collaborated with the Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet, Poughkeepsie City School District and Boston College Lynch School of Education to launch the City Connects pilot initiative at Poughkeepsie Middle School to provide individualized support services for 6th grade students.
- Partnered with Astor Services for Children and Families to launch the READY4K pilot program for 372 families enrolled in the Head Start program. The READY4k Core curriculum includes literacy, math, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and/or health information delivered via text messages to families enrolled in program.
- Collaborated with Family Service's SNUG program to offer "Bridging The Gap" and "Community Mentor" initiatives addressing gun violence in the City of Poughkeepsie.



- Joined Dutchess County BOCES Main Advisory Council to develop career and technical education programs in Dutchess County.
- Inducted into the Harvard EdRedesign Lab's By All Means Peer Learning Cohort to receive support for local cradle-to-career efforts. This includes access to national experts, local consultants, and a network of leaders from across the country to develop and implement cross-sector systems of opportunity for children, youth, and families.
- Collaborated with the Boys and Girls Club of Poughkeepsie and Newburgh, the Boy Scouts of America, Pathfinder FC, and the Dutchess County Public Transit Department to organize a 6-day summer sports, camping and educational enrichment program for 70+ youth.
- Conducted a Path To Promise presentation and participated in strategic planning sessions on October 15th with Geoffrey Canada, founder, Harlem Children's Zone and Paul Reveille, founder, of Harvard's EdRedesign Lab, and their colleagues along with members, City and County officials, and members of the 35 Montgomery Street Coalition.

2021 Child Support Services



Kevin McDonald
Social Welfare Manager II
Child Support

The New York State Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE), within New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, is the agency responsible for administering the child support program through all the local social services districts.

The Child Support Division works closely with Dutchess County Family Court to establish and administer child support under the New York State program. Upon request, services are provided to custodial parents, noncustodial parents, and minors under twenty-one years of age.

SERVICES CAN INCLUDE

- Establishment of child support and/or spousal support.
- Location of absent parents through a variety of computer matches available within state and federal systems.
- Establishment of paternity for those receiving public assistance (Medicaid recipients/ applicants are required to cooperate with child support to establish paternity and obtain medical support.)
- Modification petitions for change in circumstances, and cost-of-living adjustment of court orders.
- Medical benefit executions requiring enrollment of dependents in third party health insurance.
- Support collection and monitoring of payments until disbursement of monies associated with that order become the responsibility of the NYS Central Collection Agency.
- Enforcement of court orders.
- Income executions when a noncustodial parent is employed.
- Collection of arrears from federal and state tax refunds, OTB and lottery winnings, and bank accounts.
- Suspensions or denials of New York State driver's or professional licenses.
- Initiation of violation proceedings in Family Court.
- Referrals to the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance's program for collection and seizure of assets, which targets individuals with child support payments over four months in arrears.

Dear Andrew,
Some appreciation for your hard work that was shared with us.
Thank you for everything that you do daily. I have no doubts that you assist many more individuals who are simply not reaching out to let us know how you are helping them.
I hope you know how much we appreciate you and how happy we are to have you on the DCFS team.
Keep up the good work!



ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2021

CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS

- Collected \$28,575,167 in child support (Of this amount, \$27,915,423 benefited families that did not have an active Temporary Assistance case.)
- Due to restrictions of personnel in Family Court, onsite DNA samples were unable to be taken during 2021. A total of 98 samples were collected at offsite locations.
- Processed 3,677 Family Court petitions

CHILD SUPPORT ACTIVITY	2020	2021
Child Support Cases Open	8,335	7,753
Children Open in Support Cases	7,529	6,836
Children Open Born Out of Wedlock	4,410	4,071
Children Open with Paternity Established	4,169	3,854
Children Open with Paternity Resolved	94.5%	94.7%
Children Needing Paternity Determination	256	226
Cases with Collections during Year (FFY 10/20 - 9/21)	5,843	5,498
Interstate Cases with Collections during Year	308	304
Cases Open Where Medical Support is Ordered	5,588	5,124
Cases with Arrears Due during Year (FFY 10/20 - 9/21)	6,452	5,912

From NYS OCSE DCFS-157 Report 12/20, Statistical Trends Report 12/20 and Child Support Monthly Report 12/21

CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS	
Year	Amount Collected
2012	\$31,366,315
2013	\$30,876,366
2014	\$30,415,090
2015	\$30,110,004
2016	\$30,149,458
2017	\$29,324,983
2018	\$29,490,300
2019	\$29,905,140
2020	\$30,538,171
2021	\$28,575,167



As the pandemic persisted, staffing continued to fluctuate during parts of the year with vacancies, staff working remotely, and in the office. Our staff worked together assisting each other and covering caseloads to ensure that all services were provided to our consumers. With pandemic related benefits ending during the year, staff sought out to ensure that payments remained being collected for the families we serve. Their efforts led to a higher percentage of current collections being received over the previous year.



2021 Medicaid Services



Christine Nastasi
Social Welfare Manager II
Medicaid

Medicaid is a program for people who can't afford to pay for medical care. The Medicaid program provides services through membership in care plans as well as fee for service Medicaid. It is funded through federal, state and county appropriations. There are four plans to choose from in Dutchess County: MVP, Fidelis, Wellcare, and United Healthcare.

To qualify for the Medicaid program, applicants must meet income requirements and may have resource requirements depending on the program. Eligibility rules are based on the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). The gross household countable income of a client must not exceed the prescribed percentages of the FPL to be eligible.

Locally, we process applications for individuals over 65 years old, disabled adults with Medicare, and disabled children with the Children's Consolidated Waiver. We also serve consumers who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). All others must apply directly with the New York State Department of Health.

MEDICAID SERVICES

- Participated in the ThinkDIFFERENTLY Conference "Dutchess County's Collaboration of Services and Care Across the Life Span for People of All Abilities."
- Initiated 8 projects for the consolidated 1915c Children's Waiver from NYSDOH to LDSS. This involved contracting and setting up the procedure for Environmental and Vehicle Modification. These include 2 Bathrooms, 1 Ramp, 1 Generator, 2 Stair Gliders, 1 Patio, and 1 Vehicle.
- On May 21, 2021, Medicaid collaborated with The Mid-Hudson Valley Benefits Advisory Group hosted by Taconic Resources for Independence, Inc. (TRI) and gave a presentation on Medicaid Eligibility & Application Process.

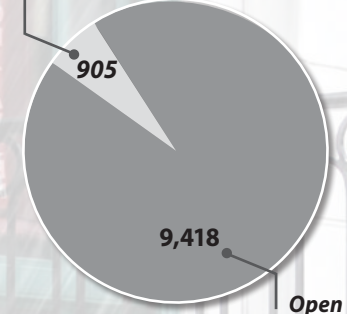
MEDICAID MMIS (MEDICAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM) - GROSS SHARES

2012	\$386,632,150
2013	\$429,748,115
2014	\$457,109,963
2015	\$508,395,860
2016	\$542,058,647
2017	\$567,472,254
2018	\$604,607,576
2019	\$636,438,529
2020	\$664,392,812
2021	\$683,486,262

MRP2190-R0019 report

CASE TYPE COMPARISON

Open Chronic Care Cases



12/21 WST002 and COGNOS reports

ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2021

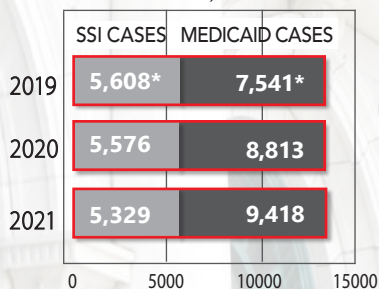


MEDICAID TRANSACTIONS

	2020	2021
Applications Registered	3,589	2,781
Cases Opened/Reactivated/ Open-Closed	4,103	2,808
Cases Closed	2,965	2,498
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	24,267	22,826
Recertifications	1,591	280
Denied	1,336	1,270
Closed Case Maintenance/Forced Deletion	86	121
Total Transactions	34,348	29,803

From WMS WST003

MEDICAID CASES as of DECEMBER 31, 2021



*Corrected from 2019 Annual Report
From WST002

MEDICAL EXPENDITURES BY PROVIDER* PROVIDER TYPE

	2020	2021	%Change
Hospital Inpatient Services	\$25,630,729	\$25,010,429	-2.4
Hospital Outpatient Services	\$4,025,853	\$3,578,009	-11.1
Skilled Nursing Facilities	\$78,314,564	\$73,819,848	-5.7
Intermediate Care Facilities	\$17,624,432	\$19,366,805	9.9
Clinics	\$11,547,718	\$18,753,727	62.4
Hospice	\$1,758,612	\$1,844,763	4.9
Physicians Services	\$2,022,238	\$2,273,144	12.4
Dental Services	\$348,417	\$226,325	-35.0
Other Practitioners Services	\$2,798,776	\$2,531,593	-9.5
Child Care Institutional Medical Per Diem	\$1,367,071	\$664,888	-51.4
Personal Care Services	\$4,554,890	\$4,181,164	-8.2
Home Health Services	\$263,750	\$579,805	119.8
Assisted Living Services	\$7,742,471	\$7,857,404	1.5
Long-Term Home Health Care Waived Services	\$8,557,566	\$9,120,668	6.6
Home and Community Based Waived Services	\$110,677,977	\$107,769,383	-2.6
Rehabilitation and Therapy	\$135,430	\$126,063	-6.9
Mental Hygiene Restorative Rehabilitation	\$8,237,645	\$10,113,183	22.8
Drugs and Supplies	\$5,486,131	\$5,307,509	-3.3
Eye Appliances and Durable Medical Equipment	\$329,351	\$375,202	13.9
Prepaid Care	\$340,821,470	\$369,737,932	8.5
Case Management	\$10,196,372	\$9,269,687	-9.1
Health Insurance Premiums	\$1,826,570	\$2,386,688	30.7
Medical Transportation	\$12,963,957	\$13,048,542	0.7
Lab and X-Ray Services	\$464,318	\$541,786	16.7
Other	\$434,135	\$116,427	-73.2
Total	\$658,130,444	\$688,600,975	4.6

From 12/2021 NYSDOH MARS MRP1010-R001



Ms. Frye was so nice
and caring. She reached
out to me to keep
communication open.

Medicaid staff continued working remotely for half the year which was a challenge. NYSDOH easements have continued and no one can lose coverage and can attest to most eligibility criteria. We trained new staff on a current process that is different from pre-COVID-19. We continued to use alternative training methods that include "mock" work to simulate real work. The concern remains how DOH will expect us to handle all the work when the easements end.



2021 SNAP/HEAP Services



Joanne Sinagra
Social Welfare Manager II
SNAP/HEAP

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Services (Satellite offices are included in this division.)

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

SNAP helps low-income working people, seniors and the disabled put healthy food on the table. SNAP benefits are issued electronically monthly. SNAP eligibility is based on household income, household size, and other factors.

For fast, easy and confidential service, which is available 24 hours a day, visit: www.mybenefits.ny.gov.

You can check to see if you are eligible, apply for SNAP/HEAP benefits and track your application. You can also apply at all Dutchess County Community Action and DCFS locations. Seniors may apply at Dutchess County Office for the Aging.

- NYS oversight issued waivers, were extended during 2021. This included relaxed interview and recertification interviews, as well as certain reporting requirements.
- The SNAP maximum benefit allotment was extended during 2021.

SNAP TRANSACTIONS	2020	2021
Applications Registered	9,331	8,215
Cases Opened/Reactivated/Open-Closed	6,330	6,152
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	98,955	164,218
Recertifications	4,634	5,514
Denied	3,740	3,200
Closed Case	6,046	5,540
Closed Case Maintenance	92	107
Total Transactions	*119,797	184,731

*From WMS WST003 *Updated from the published 2020 annual report*

SNAP CASES AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2020

2012	12,802	2017	10,680
2013	13,087	2018	10,353
2014	12,892	2019	10,385
2015	12,142	2020	10,221
2016	11,146	2021	10,446

From WMS WST002

Mr. Tissiera was so empathetic, making calls on my behalf, and promptly calling me back.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2021

HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (HEAP)

HEAP assists low income people pay the cost of heating their homes. Eligibility is based on household income. Program components include: Regular, Emergency, Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement, Heating Equipment Clean and Tune, and Cooling Component.

Through a contract with the Community Action Partnership of Dutchess County, DCFS continued to fund a full-time HEAP Packager. The Packager helps identify and work with low-income, energy vulnerable families who would benefit from weatherization and other energy-related services.

- NYS received \$535 million under the American Rescue Plan. These funds were issued to HEAP eligible households throughout the state that had utility arrears with their utility providers.

FUEL DEPOT

Community Action Partnership of Dutchess County is our contractor that administers the Emergency Fuel Program. Households accessing the emergency fuel depot are required to apply for HEAP benefits. The emergency fuel depots are located throughout Dutchess County and operate after 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday and weekends through HEAP season.

SATELLITE OFFICES

EASTERN DUTCHESS GOVERNMENT CENTER

The EDGC Satellite Office is on County House Road - 3rd Floor, Millbrook, New York.

It accepts all financial program applications (Temporary Assistance, SNAP, Medicaid, and HEAP). The eligibility worker is responsible for determining eligibility and then maintains the case for ongoing services.

Due to the size and staffing of this office, the EDGC office operates on an appointment only schedule. This location is not equipped to take care of housing emergencies.

If an individual or family find themselves needing this type of service, they are referred to the main office in Poughkeepsie.

During the past year SNAP/HEAP continued to experience an extraordinary number of applications. This year was also challenging as we welcomed staff back into the office. The constant high volume of applications being received never slowed down. Staff continued to carry on even though they were outnumbered by the volume of applications.

Eastern Dutchess Government Center (EDGC)



Beacon Center



BEACON CENTER

The Beacon Center satellite office is located in the Southern County Office Building, 223 Main Street, Beacon, NY 12508.

This office services SNAP and HEAP customers. If consumers need to relay or submit information to a different DCFS office, they may utilize the Beacon site to drop off their documents.



2021 Temporary Assistance Services



Christian Jones
Social Welfare Manager II
Temporary Assistance

Temporary Assistance Intake determines eligibility and screens all applicants for domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and any other physical or psychological barriers to employment. The Temporary Assistance unit works with employable individuals, persons with barriers and child-only cases focusing on employment as a priority while promoting self-sufficiency and personal responsibility.

Includes EMPLOYMENT & CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAMS

Due to the pandemic, NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) waived the requirement to hold face-to-face interviews with Temporary Assistance applicants, allowing us to conduct telephone interviews instead.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE

Family Assistance provides benefits for families with children. Cash benefits are limited to five years in a recipient's lifetime. After five years, a Family Assistance case may continue to receive benefits if an adult is disabled and cannot work, or by applying for assistance through Safety Net.

SAFETY NET ASSISTANCE

Safety Net Assistance provides benefits for basic living expenses for single adults and childless couples or families who have used up their 5-year limit of Family Assistance.

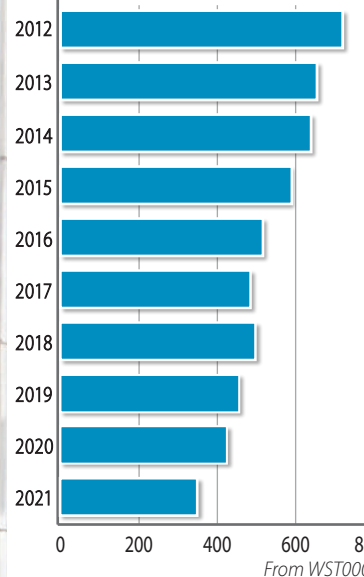
Cash benefits are limited to two years including any cash benefits received through Family Assistance. After two years, the non-case Safety Net Assistance voucher system provides benefits.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TRANSACTIONS

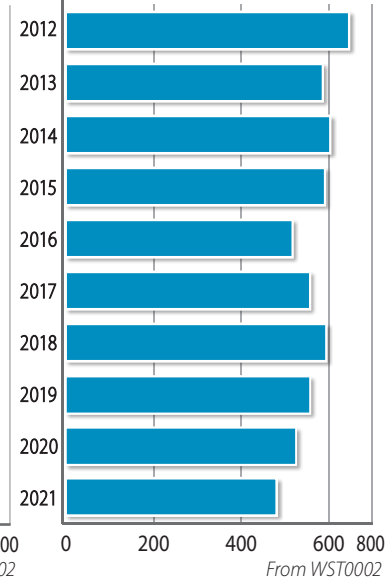
	2020	2021
Applications Registered	4,300	4,354
Cases Opened/Reactivated/ Open-Closed	2,270	2,359
Cases Closed	1,507	1,346
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	12,857	12,642
Recertifications	1,001	1,043
Denied	2,590	2,599
Closed Case Maintenance	178	146
Total Transactions	20,403	20,135

From WST0003

FAMILY ASSISTANCE CASES AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021



SAFETY NET CASES AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021



ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2021



EMPLOYMENT UNIT

The Employment unit assists able-bodied clients attain self-sufficiency and helps those who are incapacitated obtain necessary treatment and rehabilitation services. Staff conduct an assessment with each individual and work with them to develop an individualized employment plan.

- Through our partnership with the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce: 48 TANF and/or Safety Net recipients participated in the Workforce Connections Program; 14 became employed.
- Through our partnership with Dutchess County BOCES: 26 individuals completed the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) intake assessment; 9 were enrolled in Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes and/ or the High School Equivalency program; 18 individuals enrolled in other training programs such as Certified Nurse's Assistant (CNA) and Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC) and 14 completed their training.
- Through our partnership with Exodus Transitional Community, a re-entry program serving formerly incarcerated individuals, involving comprehensive job seeking, job retention, job training and career planning, 8 participants became employed at an average of 33 hours per week and an average hourly wage of \$13.36.
- Through a partnership with DCWIB, the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) engaged 161 eligible youth including homeless, low income and foster care youth, with 7 receiving Temporary Assistance.
- The "Way to Work" program, (formerly Community Solutions for Transportation) administered by the Workforce Investment Board for DCFS, assists low-income families. 112 eligible Dutchess County residents

were assessed for transportation needs and offered instruction in financial literacy, 6 participants were eligible and received preowned vehicles. Additionally, 3 individuals received their learner's permit and are working toward obtaining their NYS driver's license.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

The Child Care Subsidy program is designed to help low-income families meet their child care needs. Eligibility is based on income. The Child Care Subsidy unit processes applications, monthly payments to providers and works with the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam Counties, which is contracted to provide inspection of child care providers and assist clients in locating a child care provider.

- The Department was granted a NYS waiver to provide additional benefits under the Child Care Assistance Program due to COVID-19. The waiver expanded the income eligibility standards to serve families with incomes up to 85% of the State Median Income and allowed the family share to be waived for those families impacted by COVID-19.
- Provided services to 614 families and 1,023 children.

COVID-19 created many difficult challenges for the Temporary Assistance division. Despite this, the pandemic also gave us the unique opportunity to be more creative, innovative, and to work together more closely as a team. We've maintained operational continuity through tough times and staff shortages. We also took opportunities to improve morale by keeping staff safe in their work environments, maintaining open lines of communication, and showing compassion and support.



2021 Special Investigations Unit



Theresa Giovannello
Interim Supervisor of
Special Investigations

Special Investigations unit is responsible for public assistance program integrity and investigates possible welfare fraud, assists with eligibility determination, and recovers overpayments/repayment of assistance where appropriate.

COST AVOIDANCE FOR PROGRAM INTEGRITY

Initiatives	Description	Number of Application Denials, Case Closings or Grant Reductions	Estimated Cost Avoidance
Front End Detection System (FEDS)	Detecting fraud at application	198	\$2,187,636
Intentional Program Violations (IPV)	Disqualification sanctions for those found guilty	7	\$14,010

From NYS OTDA Cost Avoidance Program Calculations

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT ACTIVITY

	2020	2021
Completed Investigations	636	114
Confessions of Judgment	140	41
Value of Repayment Agreements Signed	\$255,005	\$144,773
SNAP Disqualifications	9	4
Value of SNAP Disqualifications	\$13,018	\$10,418
TA Disqualifications	3	3
Value of TA Disqualifications	\$13,027	\$21,898
Duplicate Case Reviews	252	311
Incarcerated Case Reviews	35	30

PARIS and Prison Match Reports

COLLECTION ACTIVITY

	2020	2021
Lottery Intercepts	\$19,057	\$20,829
Fees (parking, guardian, adoption, home study, phone, postage, confessions of judgment, copies and subpoenas)	\$8,737	\$8,835
Cash Collections (TANF, SN, MA, Services, SNAP, SN-SSI and CSE Repayments)	\$6,979,649	\$7,661,056

From Cash Management System

Safety precautions established due to COVID-19 have changed the way the Special Investigations Unit conducted day-to-day operations. All Front End Detection interviews were conducted via phone or behind plexiglass in the dedicated interview rooms. In addition, due to consistent increased volume in SNAP applications, the SIU investigators were periodically reassigned to assist the SNAP unit. Field visits resumed and were conducted on an as-needed basis, with safety measures taken to protect both the investigator and the applicant/recipient.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2021

2021 Legal Services



Susan Flynn
Bureau Chief

The Legal Unit at DCFS handles cases involving adult protection, child abuse and /or neglect, foster care, and termination of parental rights. It also prosecutes support collection cases and offers legal advice to the various divisions and represents DCFS in Family Court cases and in related matters in other court and legal forums.

This unit is active with these innovative programs:

Permanency Hearing Part; Domestic Violence PART for Article 10 Abuse and Neglect cases; Regularly scheduled pre-trial conferences and discovery; Dutchess County Child Advocacy Center, and Dutchess County Court Improvement Project for Abused and Neglected Children. DCFS, with the Legal Unit, continues to participate in collaborative systems:

- Weekly CPS review of cases with attorney/s.
- Weekly court case conferences with attorney/s.
- Weekly foster care case review with Foster Care Unit.
- Bi-weekly Child Advocacy Center meetings.
- Child Advocacy Center with concomitant interaction among the District Attorney's Office, County Attorney's Office, Child Protective Services, Office of Probation and Community Corrections, law enforcement, mental health agencies, victim services and medical service providers.

LEGAL STATISTICS		2021
Child Protective Reports		2,868
Support Cases		7,753
Private Support Referrals		16
Fair Hearings		
Medicaid		53
Child Welfare		85
Collection and Resource Cases		43
Adult Protective Cases		66

LEGAL DISPOSITIONS	2020	2021
Child Abuse Petitions	13	6
Child Neglect Petitions	213	207
Termination of Parental Rights	48	55
IVD Paternity	97	149
IVD Support	3,054	3,342
IVD Interstate Support (UIFSA)	94	104
Permanency Hearings	182	170

In 2021, the Legal Unit returned to full court operations. Our preliminary appearances, conferences, hearings and trials took place either virtually, in person or in a hybrid format. Most of the courts have been able to clear any backlog from the limitations imposed on the court system during 2020.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2021

Community

As COVID-19 restrictions relaxed this summer; children, youth and families enjoyed many outdoor activities with the DCFS team.

In the Spring, the ThinkDIFFERENTLY Team hosted Adaptive Archery at Bowdoin Park; while Youth Services held a Dutchess County Youth Council Year-End Celebration also at Bowdoin Park.

The Summer brought more fun and excitement with the ThinkDIFFERENTLY Fitness & Field Day and the Dutchess County Fair Day; and the annual Foster Care Picnic.



Outreach!



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND FAMILY SERVICES SATELLITE LOCATIONS

Beacon Center
223 Main Street
Beacon, NY 12508
845.838.4800

Child Advocacy Center
35 Van Wagner Road
Poughkeepsie, New York 12603
845.486.5112

Eastern Dutchess Government Center
131 County House Road
Millbrook, New York 12545
845.677.5532

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS

Dutchess County
www.dutchessny.gov

Dutchess One Stop Career Center
www.dutchessonestop.org
845.473.9000

Health Plan Marketplace
www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov

Apply for/track TA, SNAP,
and HEAP benefits.
www.mybenefits.ny.gov

NYDocSubmit
(mobile app to submit documents)

New York State Office of Temporary
and Disability Assistance
www.otda.state.ny.us
518.473.1090

New York State Office of Children
and Family Services
www.ocfs.state.ny.us
518.473.7793

HOTLINE NUMBERS

Report alleged child abuse or neglect
Main Hotline 800 342 3720
Mandated Reporter Hotline
800.635.1522

Report Fraud
Medicaid 877 873 7283
SNAP 800 424 9121
Welfare 800.367.4448

Report alleged adult abuse or neglect
844.697.3505
Rape Crisis/Crime Victim
845.452.7272



Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services
60 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601
www.dutchessny.gov
DCFSinfo@dutchessny.gov
phone: 845.486.3000 fax: 845.486.3090