



DORCHESTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES



Positively Impacting Our Community ANNUAL REPORT FY 2015



Department of
Human Resources

Message from the Director



I'm pleased to present the Dorchester County Department of Social Services (DCSS) 2015 annual report. This has been a transformative year for us. It has brought continued progress, a recommitment and dedication to serving our communities most vulnerable with a helping hand and the support to achieve self sufficiency.

As I head into my second year as DCSS Director, I'm reminded of our increased focus on customer service that led to reduced customer waiting and customer complaints. I'm also reminded of our community partnerships and expanded programs and services that provided assistance to those affected by unemployment, disability and other life challenges. Over the last twelve months, we estimate a community reinvestment of customer benefits and supports of approximately \$35 million dollars. However, this work could not be achieved without the collective effort of every staff, community partner, and invested stakeholder.

In the upcoming months you can expect us to continue to vigorously strive to move forward the department's vision and mission with the highest level of quality service. We will continue working to keep every child and youth brought to our attention safe, while providing assistance to those in need and creating opportunities on the path to employment.

We're optimistic about the year ahead and with your support and partnership; we hope to positively impact the lives of children, youth and families we serve.

Warm Regards,

Nicholette Smith-Bligen, LICSW, Director

Vision

We envision partnering with the community and residents of Dorchester County to empower and strengthen vulnerable individuals and families to self sufficiency, independence, health and wellbeing.

Mission

We will respectfully assist families and individuals of Dorchester County with a safety net of services to help them maintain, and/or enhance their quality of life; and to prevent abuse, neglect, and the exploitation of the community's most vulnerable.

FY 2015 Social Services Board Members

Dr. James Bell, Chair

Rick Price, County Councilman

Reverend Charles Cephas

Susan Wingate

James Pinkett

Jessica Dukes

Chief Daniel Dvorak

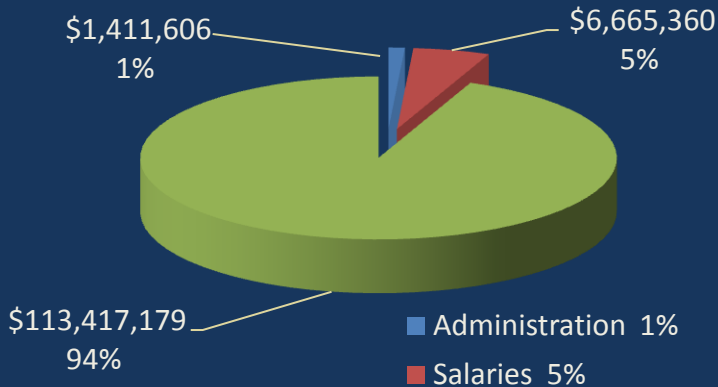
Brandon Hesson



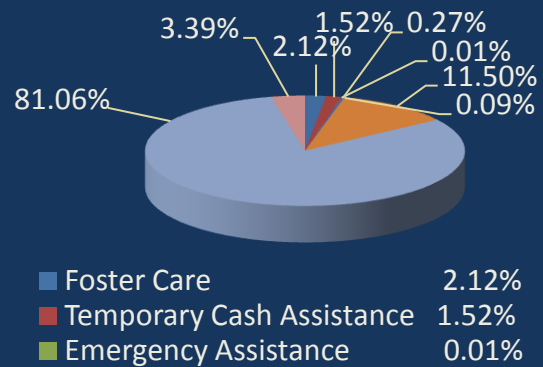
Administration & Personnel

- ❖ \$35 million dollars in customer spending from benefits annually reinvested back into Dorchester County.
- ❖ Promoted 7 staff (8%) meeting goal of 5%
- ❖ Employed 112 staff

OPERATING COSTS FY 2015



ASSISTANCE EXPENDITURES FY 2015



Family Investment Administration

- ❖ Placed 110 TCA recipients in jobs
 - Thirty-three (33) were full time
 - Avg. salary was \$8.82
 - Sixty-five (65) employers hired TCA customers during the fiscal year.
- ❖ We provided transportation to 83 customers through Delmarva Community Transit.
- ❖ Issued 118 photo ID cards to enable customers to obtain employment.
- ❖ The Employability U life skills training program provided job readiness services 247 persons.

Job Placements

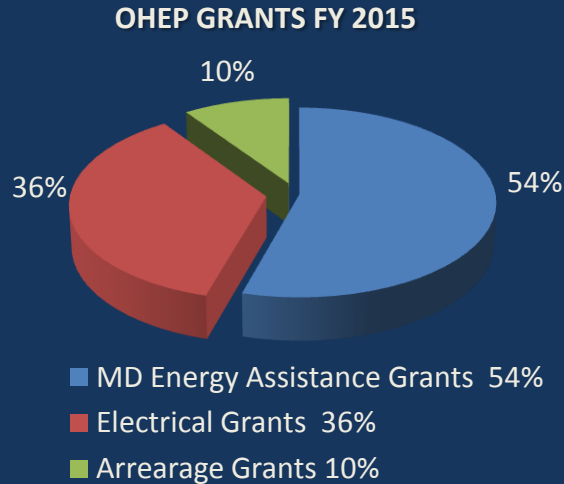
Key Accomplishments:

1. We placed 4th in the state in achieving our job placement goal (167% of goal).
2. Achieved 56% work participation rate. The state goal was 50%.



Energy Assistance

- ❖ We provided assistance to 2,628 Dorchester County households totaling \$2,576,313, through Maryland Energy Assistance Programs (MEAP) and Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP). In many cases, this avoided energy cutoffs.



Organizational Development & Work Opportunity Program

- ❖ Initiated W.O. (work opportunity) customer in-service group meetings, smart banking, and former TCA customer inspirational stories.
- ❖ Work participation rate for fiscal year 2015 was 57% which is above the state requirements of 50%.

Key Accomplishments:

1. Organizational development and training spear headed Council on Accreditation (COA) application process with the kick off activity September 2015.
2. Spear headed year long Employee Wellness Program.
3. Facilitated training for staff Ethics, LGBTQ, and Human Trafficking.

CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

Child Protective Services

- ❖ Conducted 318 CPS Responses to reports of child abuse
 - 190 (28%) CPS Responses were assigned (IR) Investigative Response
 - 128 (19%) CPS Responses were assigned (AR) Alternative Response
 - 350 (52%) calls of reports of child abuse were screened-out as not meeting qualifying requirements to be considered child abuse.
- ❖ There were no child fatalities.
- ❖ Alternative Response was implemented April 1, 2014.

Key Accomplishments:

At the 2015 Place Matters Award Ceremony, our services department was awarded 3 out of the 9 awards given out at ceremony. We received the CPS Investigation Open Less than 60 Days, Alternative Response Open Less than 60 Days, and Number of Children Exiting to Adoption Awards.

In-Home Services

- ❖ 126 families and 300 children served.
- ❖ Of the families served, 92.8% remained stabilized.
- ❖ A total of 299 or 99.6% of the children remained in their homes as a result of services provided by the In-Home service staff.

Adoption Services

- ❖ 4 adoptions finalized

Out of Home Care

- ❖ Foster Care: 31 children in out of home placement



ADULT SERVICES

Program Outcomes and Goals

Adult Protective Services

Adults are safe from abuse/neglect/exploitation.

- ❖ 100% (144 of 144) SSTA cases were safely maintained in the community.
- ❖ 100% (111 of 111) Senior Care cases had no confirmed incidents of abuse/neglect/or exploitation within the last six months.
- ❖ 96.4% of Adults who are at risk of nursing home placement were maintained in the community and remained at home.

Project Home

Adults are safe, protected and healthy in the least restrictive environment.

- ❖ 100 % (14 of 14) of Project HOME residents maintained a stable placement throughout the year. Surpassed projected goal by 25%.
- ❖ 100 % (14 of 14) of Project HOME residents had no confirmed cases of abuse / neglect / exploitation within the last six months, which is 3% higher than set goal.
- ❖ 100 % (2 of 2) of new Project HOME placements improved functioning within six months. Achieved 25% higher than projected goal.
- ❖ 100 % (42 of 42) of HIV Case Management customers were able to remain in their home. This result exceeded expected goal to achieve by 25%.
- ❖ 100 % (31 of 31) of HOPWA recipients had stable housing throughout the entire fiscal year, surpassing set goal.
- ❖ Adult crisis needs were fully met and FY16 goal is to continue to fully meet their crisis needs.
- ❖ 100% of Project HOME-HIV customers utilities remained turned on and there were no evictions.
- ❖ 100 % (13 of 13) of HOPWA recipients maintained employment or received cash benefits that enabled them to be self-sufficient.

Social Services to Adults

Adults, with supportive services, are able to reside in the least restrictive environment.

- ❖ 100 % (144 of 144) of SSTA cases were safely maintained in the community.

Senior Care

Adults are safe, protected, and healthy in the least restrictive environment.

- ❖ 100 % (111 of 111) of Senior Care cases had no confirmed incidents of abuse / neglect / or exploitation within last six months.
- ❖ 96.4 % (107 of 111) of Adults who are at risk of nursing home placement were maintained in the community and remained home.

Adults, with supportive services, are able to reside in the least restrictive environment.

- ❖ 81.98% (91 of 111) received gap-filling funds.
- ❖ 27% received IHAS services.



Child Support Enforcement

Dorchester Co. Child Support performed case maintenance and management for 2284 active cases through the reporting period.

- ❖ Disbursed total of \$4,054,083.00 in CS payments (current support & arrears) for SFY 2015.
- ❖ Current support distributions totaled \$2,939,158.00 for SFY 2015.
- ❖ Arrears support distributions totaled \$1,114,925.00 for SFY 2015.
- ❖ Paternity was established for 1,845 of 1,857, or 98.49%, of caseload.
- ❖ Court Orders were established for 2,143 of 2,284, or 93.83%, of active caseload.

Key Accomplishments:

- ❖ Improved in (3 of 4) federal performance criteria during FY15.
- ❖ Total distributions improved by \$ 296,912.00 from the previous reporting period despite a static caseload size.
- ❖ One of the top four improved counties in FFY 2014 for the state as related to the four federal performance measures and total collections.

SPECIAL AGENCY HOSTED COMMUNITY EVENTS

1st Annual Family Fun Fest:

- More than 500 children and families from across Dorchester County (ages ranging from 2 months to 81 years of age) attended DSS's 1st Family Fun Fest. The event was a day long opportunity for family engagement through family activities, dancing, games, food and prizes; that also brought together community partners, leaders and county officials making the event a great success.



Back to School Backpack Drive:

- Child & Family Services held a Back to School Backpack Drive, where sixty-seven (67) children received backpacks and certificates for haircuts to help prepare them for their first day back to school.

5th Annual Help, Hope and Housing Resource Day:

- Our agency partnered with Community Services Providers of Dorchester County to hold our 5th Annual Help, Hope and Housing Resource Day (HHRD).
- We were able to successfully communicate valuable information to individuals and families, receiving many positive comments from attendees, staff and community members regarding the value of the programs and information shared. Attendees were particularly grateful to have a "one stop shop" where they could have their needs addressed. Many attendees also expressed appreciation for the time that the exhibitors spent answering their questions.





Dorchester County
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Positively Impacting the Community

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For more information regarding the content of this report,
or about Dorchester County Department of Social Services,
please call our main office at 410-901-4100