

# STATE FISCAL YEAR (SFY) 2025 BUDGET PRESENTATION

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Commissioner Chris Winters

February 2024



# Agency of Human Services, Department for Children and Families FY 2025 Governor's Recommend Budget

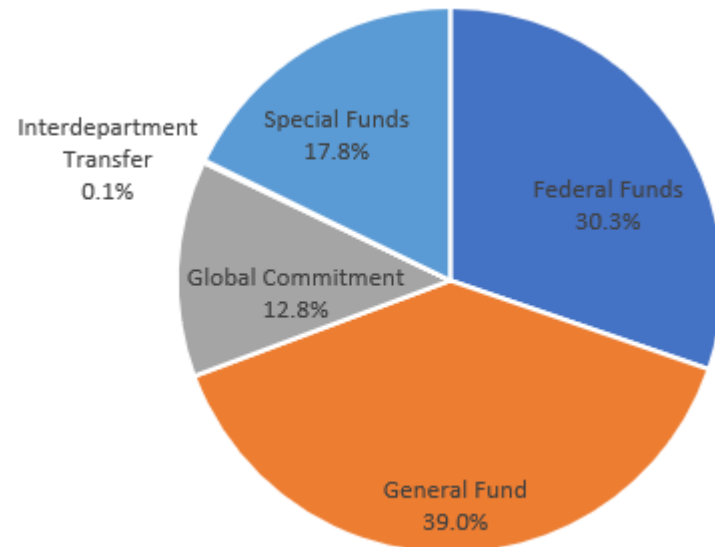
**MISSION:** The Department for Children and Families, as part of an integrated Agency of Human Services, fosters the healthy development, safety, well-being, and self-sufficiency of Vermonters.

We are passionate about prevention and will:

- Reduce poverty and homelessness;
- Improve the safety and well-being of children and families;
- Create permanent connections for children and youth; and
- Provide timely and accurate financial supports for children, individuals, and families.

DCF Base Budget Position Count: 980

General Fund	\$ 253,888,802
Special Fund	\$ 115,510,523
Inter-dept transfer	\$ 864,727
Federal Fund	\$ 196,765,124
Global Commitment	\$ 83,176,265
<b>Total FY 2025 Budget</b>	<b>\$ 650,205,441</b>



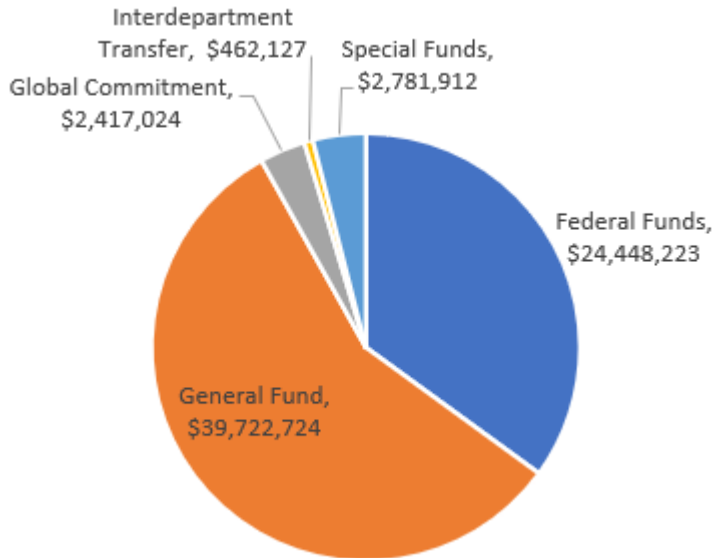
## Change to Base Appropriation

General Fund	Special Funds	Interdepartment Transfer	Federal Funds	Global Commitment	Grand Total
0.6%	0.0%	-1.9%	6.1%	12.8%	3.5%

## Agency of Human Services, Department for Children & Families

### Administration and Support Services (Admin)

This portion of the budget includes Personal Services and Operating Expenses for the Commissioner's Office, the Business Office, the Economic Services Division (ESD), Assistant Attorney Generals and IT services for the Department for Children and Families (DCF).



## FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

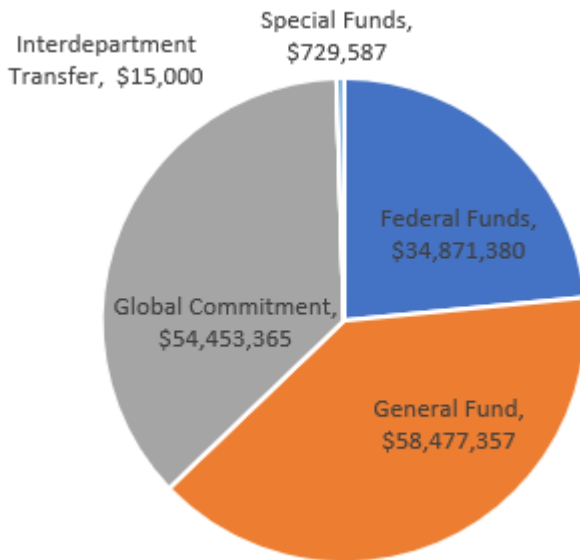
Pay Act & Benefit Adj:	\$2,242,365 / \$1,710,290 GF
Internal Service Funds:	\$374,694 / \$288,202 GF
Act 76 from CDD:	\$528,675 / \$453,159 GF
Revenue Adjustments:	(\$650,292) / (\$273,801) GF
ICAN Provisions:	\$402,040 / \$201,020 GF
General Assistance Housing IT:	\$32,400 GF
2-1-1 Call Center:	\$773,929 / (\$79,100) GF
Summer EBT Program:	\$600,000 / \$300,000 GF
<b>Total Base Changes:</b>	<b>\$4,303,811 / \$2,632,170 GF</b>

General Fund	Special Funds	Interdepartment Transfer	Federal Funds	Global Commitment	Grand Total
7.1%	0.0%	1.4%	3.9%	45.7%	6.6%

# Agency of Human Services, Department for Children & Families

## Family Services Division (FSD)

FSD works in partnership with families, communities and others to make sure children and youth are safe from abuse, their basic needs (e.g., food, clothing, shelter and health care) are met and youth are free from delinquent behavior. They also ensure families are supported to achieve these goals.

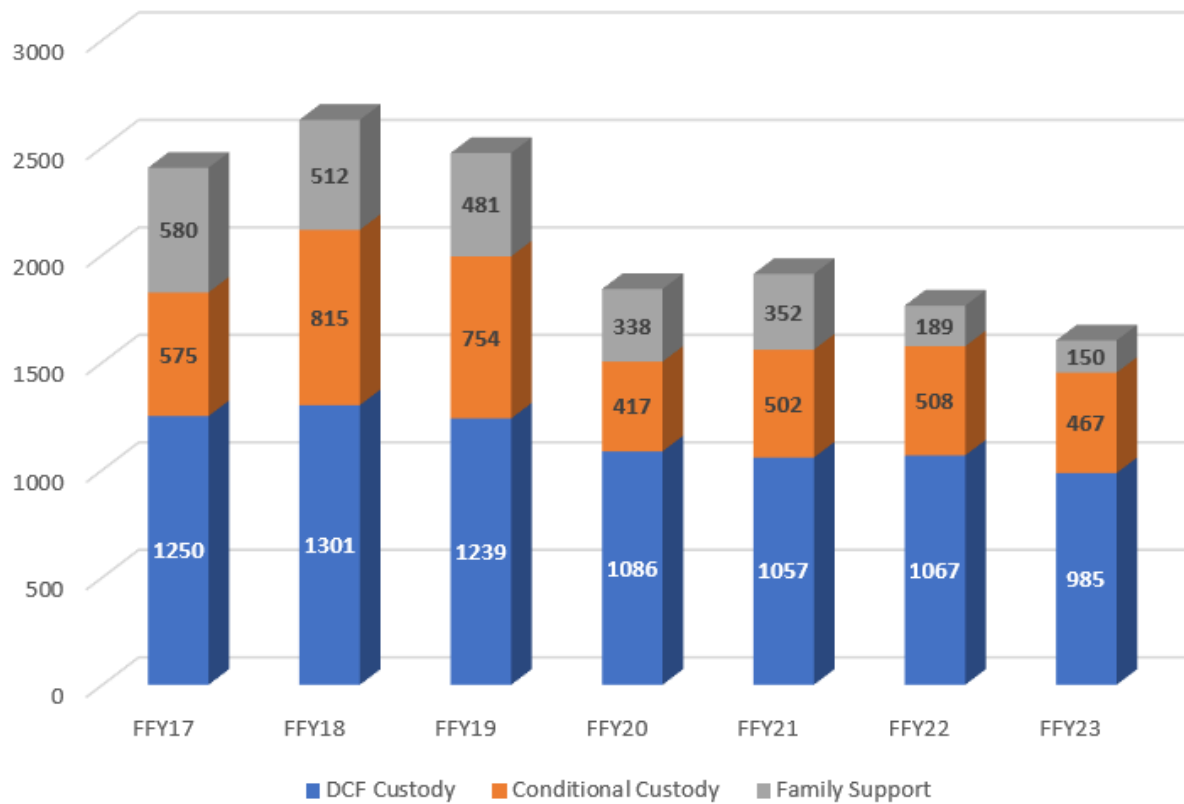


## FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Pay Act & Benefit Adj:	\$1,398,193 / \$1,261,951 GF
Internal Service Funds:	\$58,369 / (\$33,627) GF
Revenue Adjustments:	(\$22,735) / (\$823,161) GF
PNMI Changes:	\$3,950,607 / (\$1,835,027) GF
Sub-Care Caseload:	(\$839,841) / \$220,975 GF
Sub-Adopt Caseload:	(\$42,242) / (\$20,771) GF
Support & Stabilization:	\$1,454,664 / \$0 GF
<b>Total Base Changes:</b>	<b>\$5,957,013 / (\$1,229,660) GF</b>

General Fund	Special Funds	Interdepartment Transfer	Federal Funds	Global Commitment	Grand Total
-2.1%	0.0%	-60.3%	2.8%	13.0%	4.2%

## Caseload Count by Type of Agency Involvement Vermont, Statewide, 2017-2023

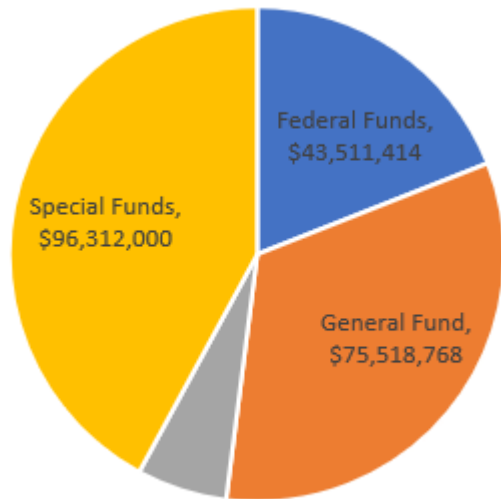


Data Note: data in FFY23 column is from 10/6/23, due to point in time reporting.

## Agency of Human Services, Department for Children & Families

### Child Development Division (CDD)

CDD improves the well-being of Vermont children by working with partners to provide Vermont families with access to high-quality child care (licensing, financial assistance, statewide systems) and child development services (Children's Integrated Services).



Global Commitment,  
\$13,503,763

## FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Pay Act & Benefit Adj:	\$337,701 / \$308,866 GF
Internal Service Funds:	(\$74,222) / (\$11,256) GF
Federal Fund Alignment:	(\$843,385) / \$0 GF
Revenue Adjustments:	\$0 / (\$341,992) GF
Act 76 to Admin:	(\$453,159) GF
Bright Futures Fund Redirect:	(\$33,000) / \$0 GF
Preschool Development Grant:	\$6,969,672 / \$0 GF
CCFAP Caseload:	(\$9,000,000) GF
<b>Total Base Changes:</b>	<b>(\$3,096,393) / (\$9,497,541) GF</b>

General Fund	Special Funds	Federal Funds	Global Commitment	Grand Total
-11.2%	0.0%	16.3%	2.6%	-1.3%

# Act 76 – Key Fiscal Elements (Dates)

## Child Care Financial Assistance:

- July 2, 2023 – Eliminated tiered reimbursement based on STARS, increased rates for all programs to what had been 5-STARS levels
- December 17, 2023 – Increased reimbursement rates to programs by 35%, established State rate rather than Capped rate
- April 2024 – Eligibility extends to 400% FPL, weekly family share for families under 175% FPL eliminated
- July 2024 – Rates for registered Family Child Care Homes will increase by 50% of the difference between the licensed and registered rates
- October 2024 – Eligibility extends to 575% FPL

## Payments Directly to Programs:

- Act 76 Readiness Payments being distributed for over 775 programs; \$17.4M committed to date; all funds should be distributed by March 2024
- \$10M Quality and Capacity Incentive program for SFY25 in design

# Act 76 – Key Fiscal Elements (\$)

## SFY2024 Status and Projection:

- Average Biweekly Payroll: July – December 2023 = \$2,863,293
- Average Biweekly Payroll Projection: January – June 2024 = \$4,150,461 midrange
  - ~ 45% average increase; 35% rate increase + ~ 30% utilization new 350%-400% FPL eligibility group
  - ± \$6M range dependent on final utilization level in all eligibility groups (± ~ \$450k/payroll)
- Mid to High Projection Gross = \$91M - \$97M
- \$111M Current CCFAP Spending Authority (\$63M gross base + \$48M Act 76)

## SFY2025 Projection:

- \$4M CCFAP Administrative Costs
  - \$1,080,328 Salaries, Benefits and Operating (11 FTE)
  - \$167,600 IT/System Needs
  - \$2,000,000 Community Child Care Support Agencies (CCCSAs)
  - \$266,707 Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council
  - \$485,365 CCFAP Consultation, Implementation Support, and Outreach
- \$10M Quality and Capacity Incentive program
- High Average Biweekly Payroll Projection: \$6.5M; \$325 weighted weekly; \$16,915/child
  - 10,022 projected average average full-time equivalent enrollment
  - VARIABLE: at this rate ± 1,000 enrollment = ± \$16.9M
- Mid to High Projection Gross = \$152M - \$170M
- \$179M CCFAP Beginning Gross Base (\$63M base + \$50M GF + \$80M SF - \$14M)



# Child Care Financial Assistance State Rates

Effective December 17, 2023

The State rates are the maximum amount the State will pay to a child care provider on behalf of a family receiving child care financial assistance. The State will pay the State Rate regardless of the provider rate agreement. For more detailed information about payments, which includes examples, please see our fact sheet.

Licensed Center		State Rate	Registered Home		State Rate
Infant	Full Time	\$471	Infant	Full Time	\$304
	Part Time	\$258		Part Time	\$166
	Extended Care	\$640		Extended Care	\$413
Toddler	Full Time	\$443	Toddler	Full Time	\$285
	Part Time	\$243		Part Time	\$157
	Extended Care	\$602		Extended Care	\$386
Preschool	Full Time	\$439	Preschool	Full Time	\$284
	Part Time	\$240		Part Time	\$155
	Extended Care	\$597		Extended Care	\$385
School age	Full Time	\$371	School age	Full Time	\$270
	Part Time	\$204		Part Time	\$149
	Extended Care	\$505		Extended Care	\$367

## Important Definitions

### Authorized Hours of Care:

Full Time Weekly—26 to 50 hours a week

Part Time Weekly—1 to 25 hours a week

Extended Care—more than 50 hours a week

### Child's Age

Infant—birth up to 24 months old

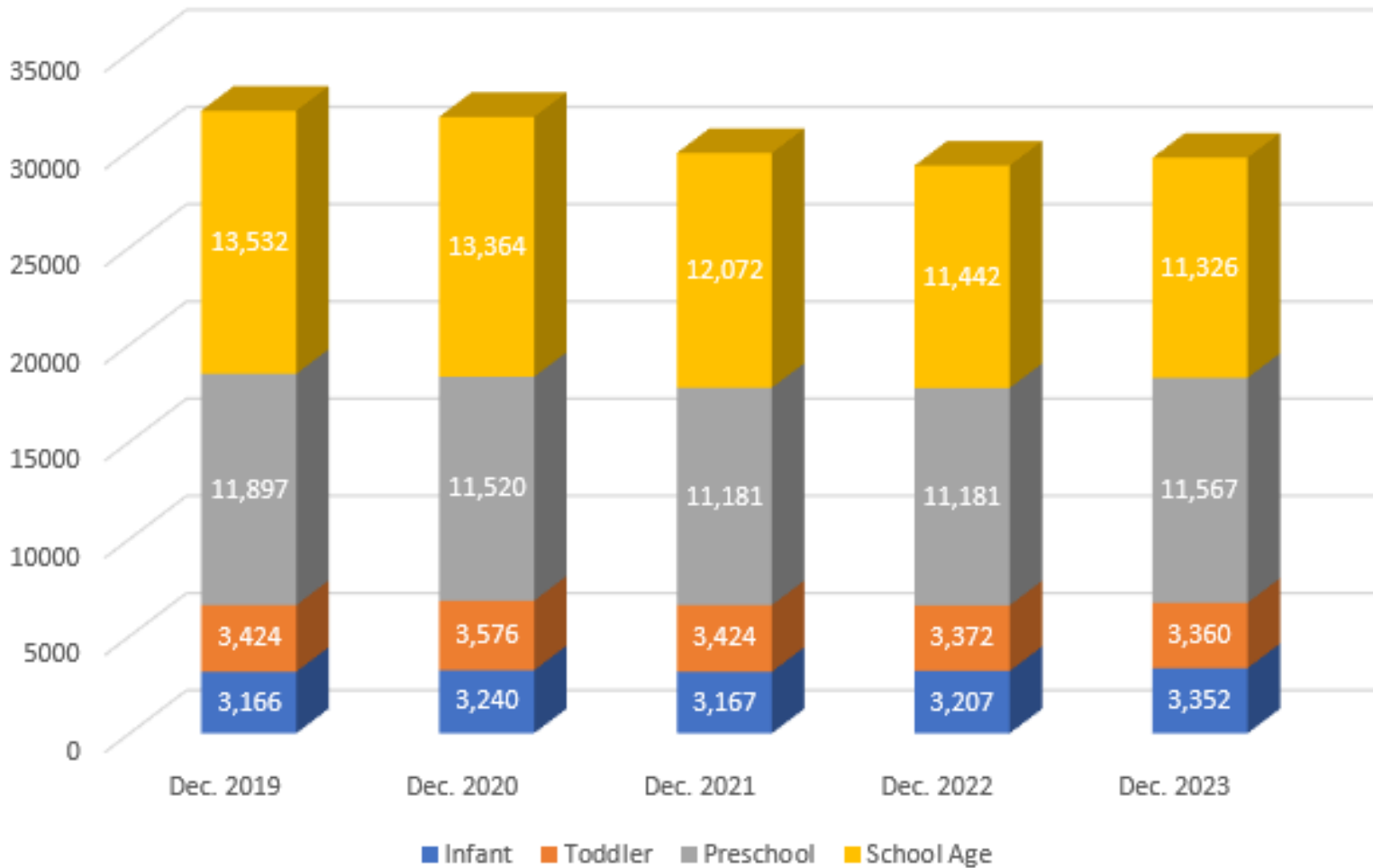
Toddler—2 up to 3 years old

Preschool—3 up to 5 years old

School age—5 up to 13 years old (19 if child has special needs)



## Reported Child Care Capacity: Age Group



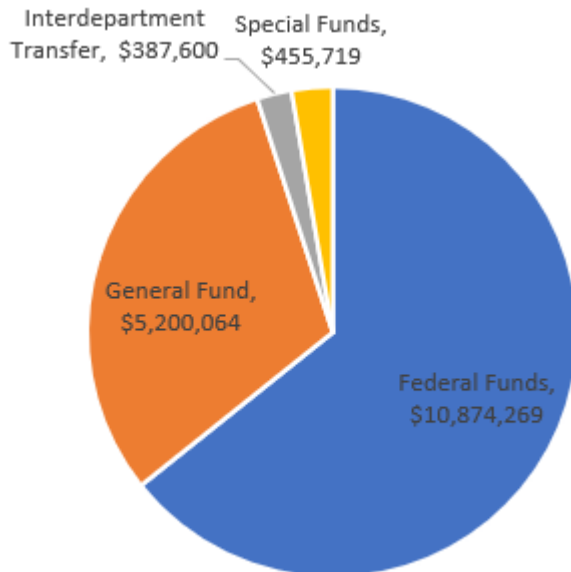
Data on reported capacity is self-reported by child care programs

## Agency of Human Services, Department for Children & Families

### Office of Child Support (OCS)

OCS improves children's economic security by:

1. Establishing, enforcing and modifying child support orders for children who do not live with both parents.
2. Collecting, recording and distributing child support payments through the OCS Registry.



## FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Pay Act & Benefit Adj: \$759,218 / \$288,286 GF

Internal Service Funds: \$32,594 / \$11,583 GF

Total Base Changes: \$791,812 / \$299,869 GF

General Fund	Special Funds	Interdepartment Transfer	Federal Funds	Grand Total
6.1%	0.0%	0.0%	4.7%	4.9%

In FFY 2023, OCS

- Over 14,000 child support cases serving more than 14,000 children
- Collected and disbursed \$41 million in child support payments

Child Support is a key economic support for Vermont children.

## Agency of Human Services, Department for Children & Families

### Aid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled (AABD)

This program provides a financial supplement to recipients of federal SSI who are over 65, disabled or blind and do not have sufficient income to provide a reasonable subsistence needed for their well-being as defined in 33 V.S.A. Chapter 13. It also funds the Essential Person Program by providing cash assistance to household members whose care is essential to an aged or disabled person in the home.

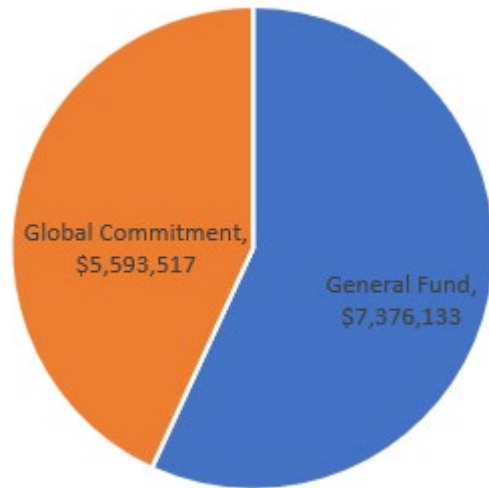
## FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Personal Needs Allowance: \$750,000 / \$0 GF

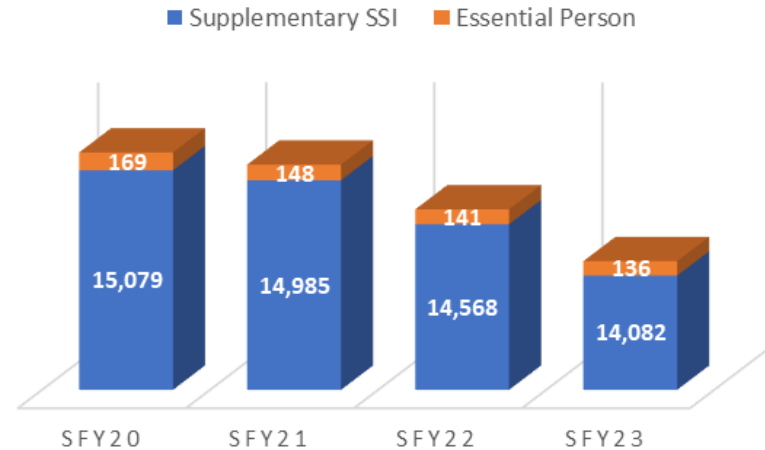
SSI Supp. Caseload: (\$463,674) / (\$157,200) GF

Total Base Changes: \$286,326 / (\$157,200) GF

Global		
General Fund	Commitment	Grand Total
-2.1%	8.6%	2.3%



### AABD CASELOAD AVERAGES



Agency of Human Services,  
Department for Children &  
Families

**3SquaresVT**

Is the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) which provides low-income households better access to a healthy diet while supporting American agriculture.



**FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS**

Total Base Changes

\$0 / \$0 GF

3SquaresVT- In November 2023 there were 39,869 households with 67,737 individuals receiving benefits. Over \$13 million in 3SquaresVT food benefits are issued every month.

3SNAP- Cash benefits for food for households where all household members are 65 or older and/or receive SSI.

ICAN- Individual Career Advancement Network helps participants with job search, training, education, job retention and employment/training related reimbursements.

Farm to Family- Helps income-eligible Vermonters to buy locally-grown fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers' markets. Eligible applicants get one \$30 book of coupons per year (seniors get a \$48 booklet). The program's goal is to change food shopping and eating habits and build the consumer base for local farmers markets.

SNAP Education- Teaches people how to make their 3SquaresVT dollars stretch, shop for and cook healthy meals and stay physically active.



# Summer EBT

- Benefits are \$40/month, \$120/summer for eligible school aged children.
- Estimated 30,000-35,000 children will be eligible.
- Benefits are federally funded; administrative costs are 50% federally funded

## Needs for implementation for 2024:

- Approval from USDA to enroll late
- Flexibility in USDA's current rules

## Funding Requested:

- SFY24 One-time           \$1,000,000 / \$500,000 GF
- SFY25 Admin. Base       \$600,000 / \$300,000 GF

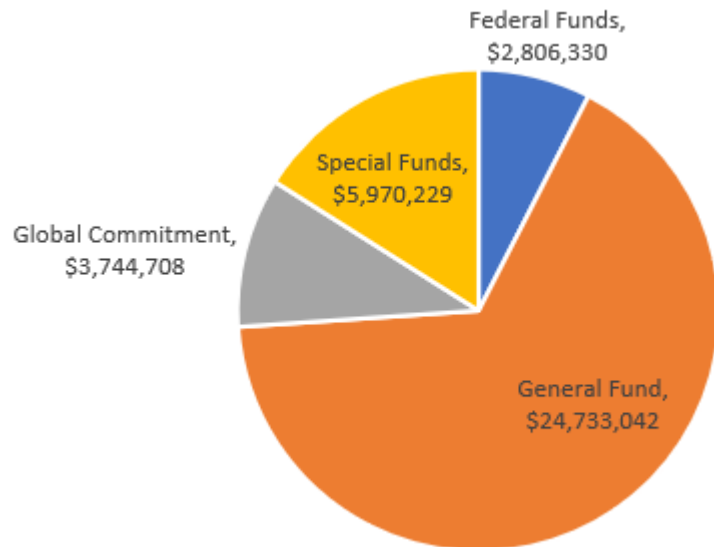
## Agency of Human Services, Department for Children & Families

### Reach Up

Reach Up joins families on their journey to overcome obstacles, explore opportunities, improve their finances and reach their goals.

Services include:

- Educational/employment supports
- Case management services
- Monthly cash payments to pay for necessities



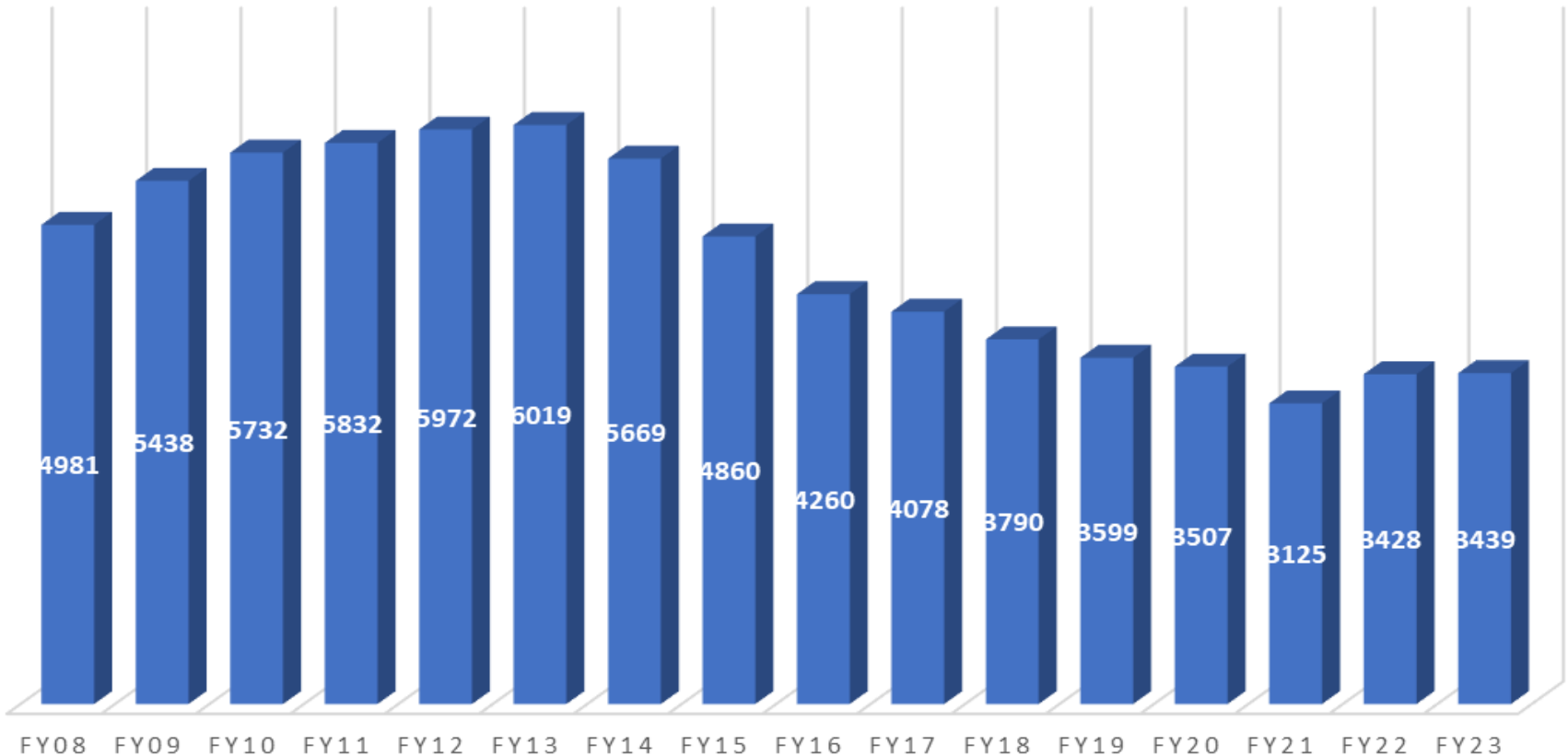
## FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Internal Service Funds:	(\$6,812) GF
Act 133 Annualization:	\$142,285 GF
PNMI Changes:	\$1,068,918 / \$155,828 GF
Revenue Adjustment:	\$0 / \$725,000 GF
<u>Reach Up Caseload:</u>	<u>\$482,872 GF</u>
Total Base Changes:	\$1,687,263 / \$1,499,173 GF

General Fund	Special Funds	Federal Funds	Global Commitment	Grand Total
6.5%	0.0%	-20.5%	32.2%	4.7%

# Reach Up - Monthly Caseload

**HISTORIC AVERAGE MONTHLY CASELOADS  
(REACH FIRST, REACH UP AND PSE HOUSEHOLDS)**

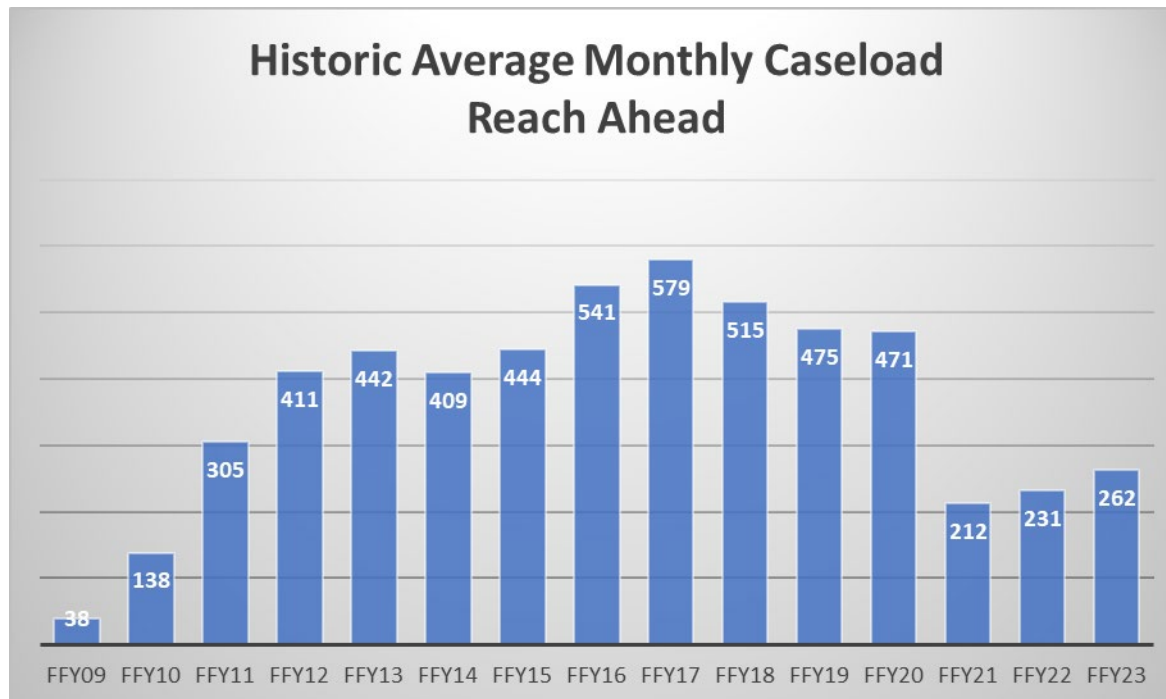




# Reach Ahead Pilot

The Reach Ahead Pilot started in July 2023. Since then, the caseload size has increased each month. In January 2024, 385 families were receiving the benefit, which is 127 more families than in January 2023.

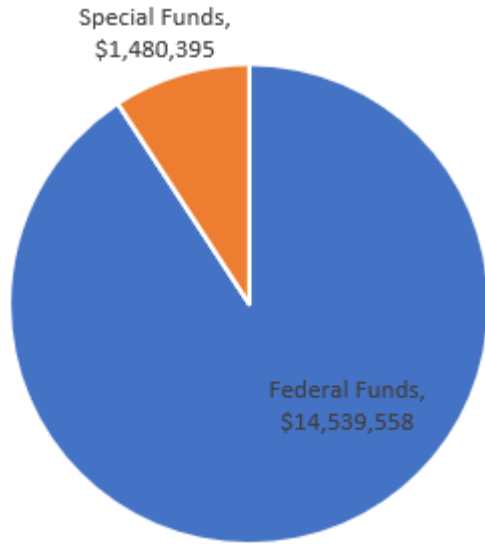
On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, the first incentive payments for \$750 were issued to 137 families. By the end of January, those families will be receiving a survey to help the Department understand how the incentives were applied and if they are helping in job retention.



Agency of Human Services,  
Department for Children & Families

**Home Heating Fuel Assistance (LIHEAP)**

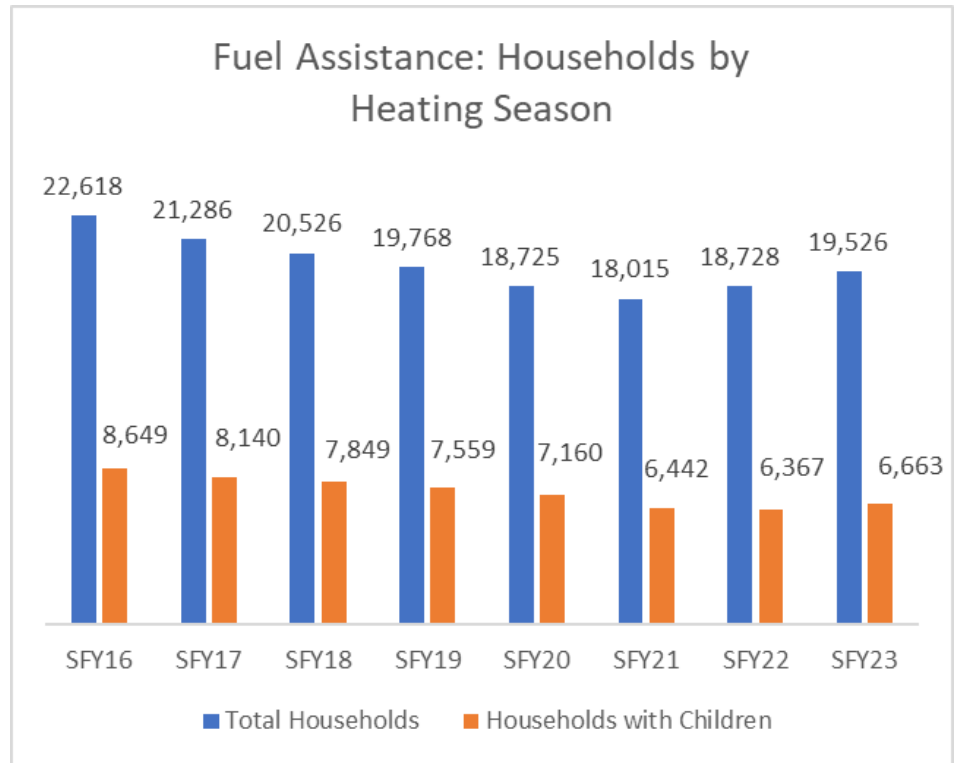
DCF's Fuel Assistance Program has two components: Seasonal Fuel Assistance operated by the Economic Services Division (ESD) and Crisis Fuel Assistance operated by the state's five community action agencies.



**FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS**

Total Base Changes

\$0 / \$0 GF



## Agency of Human Services, Department for Children & Families

### Emergency/General Assistance (GA)

GA provides emergency financial assistance to eligible individuals and families. This may include help paying for:

- Personal needs and incidentals (PNI)
- Housing
- Fuel & utilities
- Medical
- Burial costs



## FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Security for hotels/motels: \$839,184 GF

Support Services Caseload: (\$45,190) / (\$5,762) GF

PNI Caseload: (\$63,316) GF

Total Base Changes: \$730,678 / \$770,106 GF

General Fund	Federal Funds	Global Commitment	Grand Total
7.7%	0.0%	-13.8%	7.1%

One-time (GA): \$16,500,000

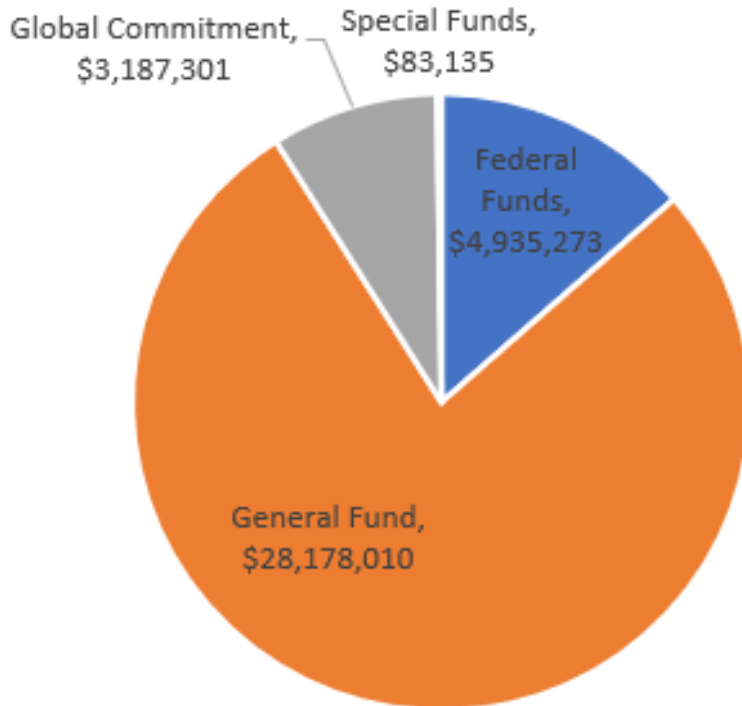
Base (GA): \$7,500,000

Total: \$24,000,000

## Agency of Human Services, Department for Children & Families

### Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)

OEO administers funds to help organizations address poverty through community initiatives and direct services in the areas of financial capability, homelessness assistance, and community services. This includes core federal funding for Community Action Agencies and homeless shelter and service providers.



## FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Pay Act & Benefit Adj:	\$53,834 GF
Internal Service Funds:	\$9,808 GF
Permanent Supportive Housing:	\$760,000 / \$0 GF
<u>Shelter Bed Expansion (HOP):</u>	<u>\$7,172,174 GF</u>
<b>Total Base Changes:</b>	<b>\$7,995,816 / \$7,235,816 GF</b>

General Fund	Special Funds	Federal Funds	Global Commitment	Grand Total
34.6%	0.0%	0.0%	31.3%	28.2%

More on OEO grant programs:

<https://dcf.vermont.gov/oEO/resources/reports>

# Addressing Homelessness

## FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

### General Assistance Housing Program

- 28 days for households who are eligible based on meeting vulnerable or categorical requirements.
- Hybrid Adverse Weather Condition for those with children, disability or for people age 65+.

### Shelter Expansion Plan

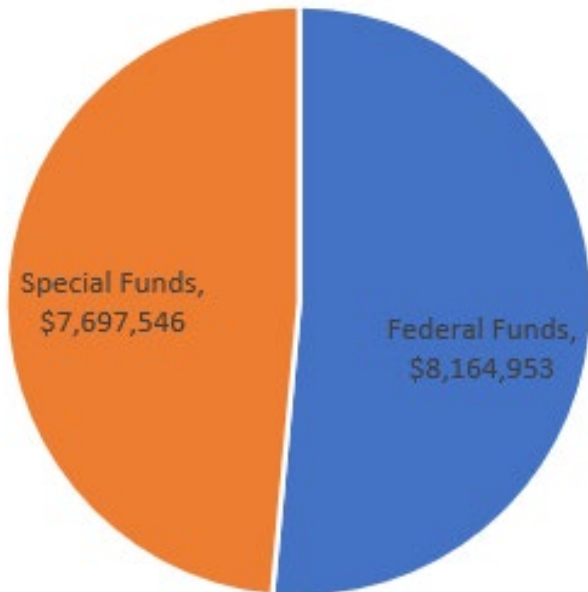
- Maintain expanded shelter capacity created with one-time funds (Montpelier, St. Johnsbury, Brattleboro, Burlington) and fund capacity currently in development (Brattleboro, Hartford, Rutland). Approximately 180 beds.

### Permanent Supportive Housing Medicaid Benefit

- The benefit will expand pre-tenancy and tenancy sustaining services for eligible households.
- <https://humanservices.vermont.gov/our-work/programs-services/housing-stability>

### OEO Weatherization Program

The Low-Income Home Weatherization Assistance Program reduces energy costs for low-income families by improving the energy efficiency and comfort of their homes while ensuring their health and safety. The Home Weatherization Assistance Program fund provides state funding for weatherization through a fuel tax on all non-transportation fuels sold in the state that needs to be renewed this legislative session.



## FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Pay Act & Benefit Adj:	\$48,936 / \$0 GF
Internal Service Funds:	(\$1,025) / \$0 GF
<u>Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Grant:</u>	<u>\$3,309,867 / \$0 GF</u>
Total Base Changes:	\$3,357,778 / \$0 GF

Special Funds	Federal Funds	Grand Total
0.6%	68.2%	26.9%

Fuel Tax extension requested through 2029  
Sec. E.324.1 33 V.S.A. § 2503

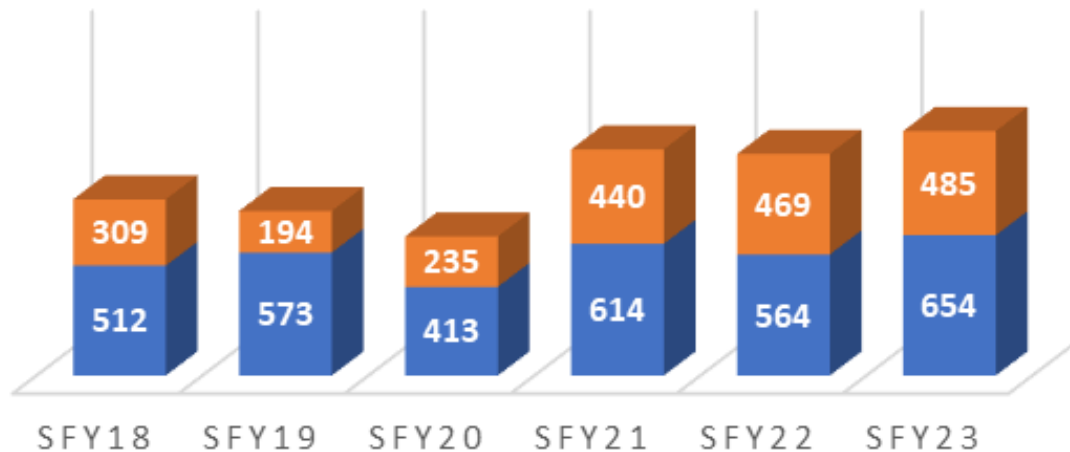
The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) provides funding through SFY28, which will support the recent growth of the program as ARPA funds wind down.

# Home Weatherization Assistance Program: Household Impact

1,139 households weatherized in SFY23

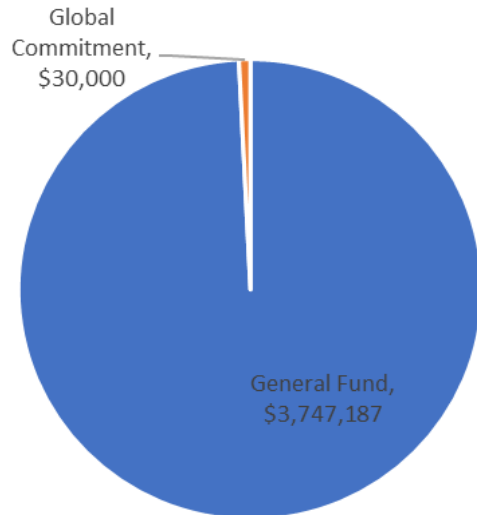
## LOW INCOME WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM

■ Single Units ■ 2+ Units



### Secure Residential Treatment Facility (SRTF) Program

DCF is developing a state-of-the-art short term, secure crisis stabilization and treatment facility, that will provide holistic, trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate care for justice involved youth here in Vermont. The issues leading to a youth needing this level of care include: destructive or assaultive behaviors, a mental health crisis, a placement disruption, or concerns of risk to self or others, or the likelihood of going on run. The purpose of the short-term placement is to give the youth the opportunity, time and space to de-escalate, and to provide a clinical assessment and understanding of their needs moving forward.



## FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Internal Service Funds: (\$111,372) GF

General Fund	Global Commitment	Grand Total
-2.9%	0.0%	-2.9%

DCF has outlined the plan for secure residential treatment facility in our Act 160 Report – [DCF Proposed High-End System of Care Plan](#)

Development of the permanent secure stabilization and treatment setting will be executed and funded as a design-build to lease arrangement with a purchase option.

### Available Resources

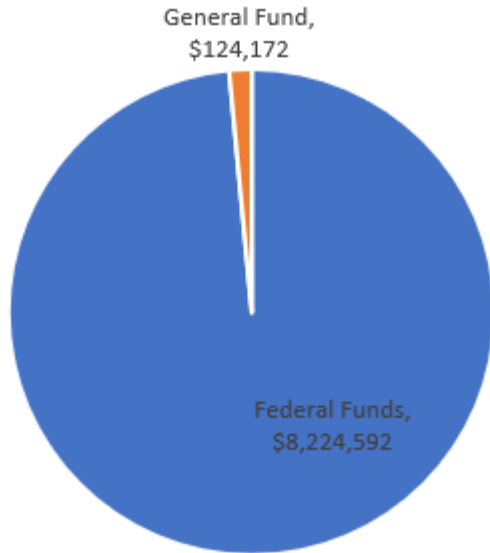
SFY2023 Carryforward: \$5,056,060 GF  
 1x Dept: \$4,626,506 GF



# Agency of Human Services, Department for Children & Families

## Office of Disability Determination Services (DDS)

DDS provides applicants with accurate medical eligibility decisions as quickly as possible, as governed by Social Security federal statutes, regulations and policy, with full and fair consideration of each applicant's situation and respect and concern for the individual's well-being and legal rights.



## FY 2025 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Pay Act & Benefit Adj:	\$379,907 / \$5,479 GF
<u>Internal Service Funds:</u>	<u>(\$7,272) / (\$103) GF</u>
Total Base Changes:	\$372,635 / \$5,376 GF

General Fund	Federal Funds	Grand Total
4.5%	4.7%	4.7%

- DDS processed 6,250 cases in FFY 23
- DDS achieved an initial case processing time of 79.1 days in FFY 23 (fastest in nation)
- In FFY 23, Vermont's decisional accuracy on initial claims was 99.4% (#1 in nation)