

Black-Plumeau Consulting, LLC
PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

October 29, 2015

Ms. Karolyn White
Vermont Department for Children and Families
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, VT 05676-1201

***Subject:* Updated Forecast of Reach Up and Reach Ahead Caseloads**

Dear Karolyn:

Based on an updated analysis of Reach Up and Reach Ahead entries and exits, the Reach Up caseload is expected to continue declining through SFY 2017. We forecast a caseload averaging approximately 4,375 cases in SFY 2016 and 3,836 in SFY 2017. With substantial program changes implemented just in July 2015, the Reach Ahead program's future caseload is difficult to project at this point. However, based on our best assumptions about the portion of Reach Up cases that will become eligible for Reach Ahead each month and how long cases will remain in the program, we expect the Reach Ahead caseload to average 534 in SFY 2016 and 581 in SFY 2017. This forecast is substantially higher for the Reach Ahead caseload than prior forecasts due to the requirement imposed in July 2015 that all eligible cases be enrolled in Reach Ahead.

This forecast is based on an average, seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate of 3.2% for 2016 and 2.9% for 2017—projections prepared by Vermont economist Tom Kavet in July 2015. This forecast assumes that neither the Reach Up or Reach Ahead programs will undergo future policy changes that alter the rate at which cases enter and exit the caseload.

The Reach Up caseload forecast is based on caseload data from July 1984 through September 2015 and on historical unemployment rate estimates from the Vermont Department of Labor. These data are input to a model that consists of a series of statistical analyses. The analyses

predict future caseloads based on the historical effect of Vermont unemployment rates and seasonality on monthly rates of entry to and exit from the state’s Reach Up caseload.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Rob McIntyre who led this analysis with any questions about this letter or related issues.

Sincerely,



Leslie Black-Plumeau

Cc: Robert McIntyre

	Reach Up				Reach Ahead	
	Actual Caseload	Caseload Forecast Range			Actual Caseload	Caseload Forecast
		Point	Lower	Upper		
Jan-15	5030				438	
Feb-15	4951				407	
Mar-15	4906				390	
Apr-15	4830				399	
May-15	4796				433	
Jun-15	4725				452	
Jul-15	4683				462	
Aug-15	4638				480	
Sep-15	4539				496	
Oct-15		4458	4385	4576		508
Nov-15		4364	4306	4500		514
Dec-15		4340	4214	4412		534
Jan-16		4304	4187	4389		546
Feb-16		4305	4151	4356		552
Mar-16		4286	4147	4357		565
Apr-16		4237	4125	4340		574
May-16		4200	4077	4295		578
Jun-16		4148	4038	4260		595
Jul-16		4063	3987	4211		596
Aug-16		4008	3907	4132		597
Sep-16		3952	3853	4080		599
Oct-16		3878	3791	4035		595
Nov-16		3815	3720	3967		586
Dec-16		3802	3658	3909		579
Jan-17		3769	3641	3897		576
Feb-17		3797	3607	3867		575
Mar-17		3793	3628	3893		575
Apr-17		3748	3620	3891		571
May-17		3722	3574	3848		564
Jun-17		3681	3547	3826		555
Average SFY 2016		4375	4233	4442		534
Average SFY 2017		3836	3711	3963		581