



**AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES**



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## **SFY 2024 Budget Presentation**

Presented by: Dr. Harry Chen, Interim Commissioner

February 2023

# Agency of Human Services, Department for Children and Families FY 2024 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.

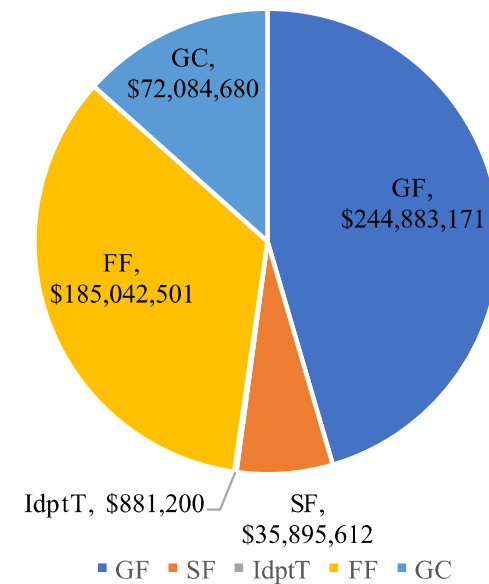
DCF Position Count: 1,046

Funding Sources:

Fund Source	Amount
General Fund	\$ 244,883,171
Special Fund	\$ 35,895,612
Tobacco	\$ 0
Inter-dept transfer	\$ 881,200
Federal Fund	\$ 185,042,501
Global Commitment	\$ 72,084,680
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 538,787,164</b>

- 41% Increase to General Fund
- 3.3% Increase to Global Commitment

Governor's Recommend DCF SFY24 Budget



# DCF FY24 Major Initiatives

FSD

PNMI  
Inflationary  
Factor  
  
Youth  
Development  
Program

CDD

Child Care  
Expansion  
  
Children  
Integrated  
Services

ESD

GA  
Emergency  
Housing  
Program

RU

Reach Ahead  
2-Year Pilot  
  
Funding for  
Act 133

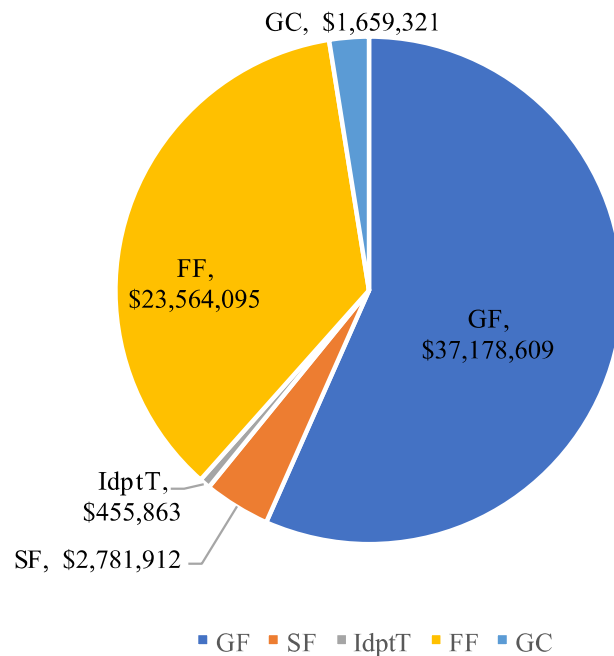
## FY 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

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

#### DCF Administration and Support Services

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).

#### Administrative & Support Services



Pay Act & Benefit Adj: \$1,732,148 (\$967,240 GF)

Retirement Rate Increase: \$722,364 (\$381,377 GF)

Administrative Position for Child Care Proposal:  
\$111,601 for position and associated operating  
(\$88,055 GF)

Travel Savings: **-\$199,674 (-\$128,117 GF)**

Refugee Cash Assistance Program: \$100,000 (\$0 GF)

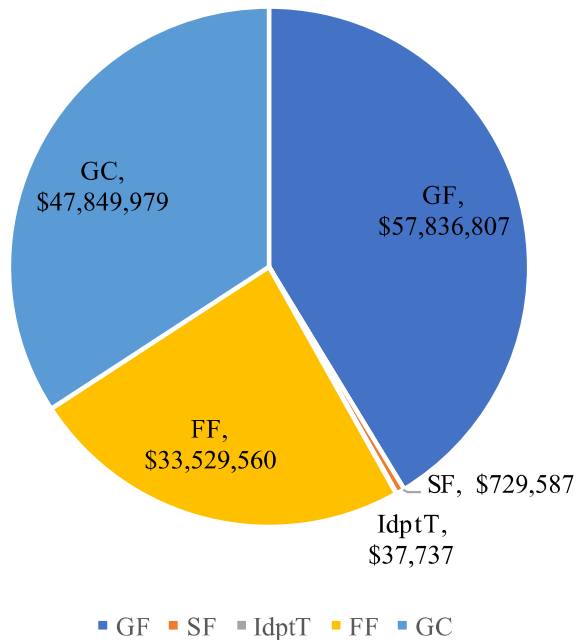
- Federal Benefit to help eligible adult refugees who do not have minor children with 12 months of cash assistance (Families supported through RUP)
- Typically 1/3 of Refugees register for the program
- Estimated 108 Recipients in FFY23

**Agency of Human Services,  
Department for Children & Families  
Family Services  
FY 2024 Governor's Recommended**

**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.

Family Services Division



**FY 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS**

Pay Act & Benefit Adj: \$1,424,497 (\$882,881 GF)

Retirement Rate Increase: \$472,631 (\$317,315 GF)

Crisis Staffing Contract: \$688,288 (\$688,288 GF)

Vacancy Savings increased to 3.5%: **-\$286,154 (-\$134,893 GF)**

Temporary Staff Conversion: **-\$11,151 (-\$2,658 GF)**

- Elimination of 15 Centralized Intake & Emergency Services (CIES) Temps: **-\$501,961 (-\$119,583 GF)**
- 5 New Permanent CIES Positions: \$490,540 (116,925 GF)

Travel Savings: **-\$231,795 (-\$167,788 GF)**

Conversion of Contracts from GF to GC:

- Balanced & Restorative Justice (BARJ) –leveraged Federal Funds to increase contracts by \$297,053 of GC
- Lund Substance Abuse - \$1-to-\$1 GF to GC conversion

PNMI System of Care Rate Adjustment & Stabilization:

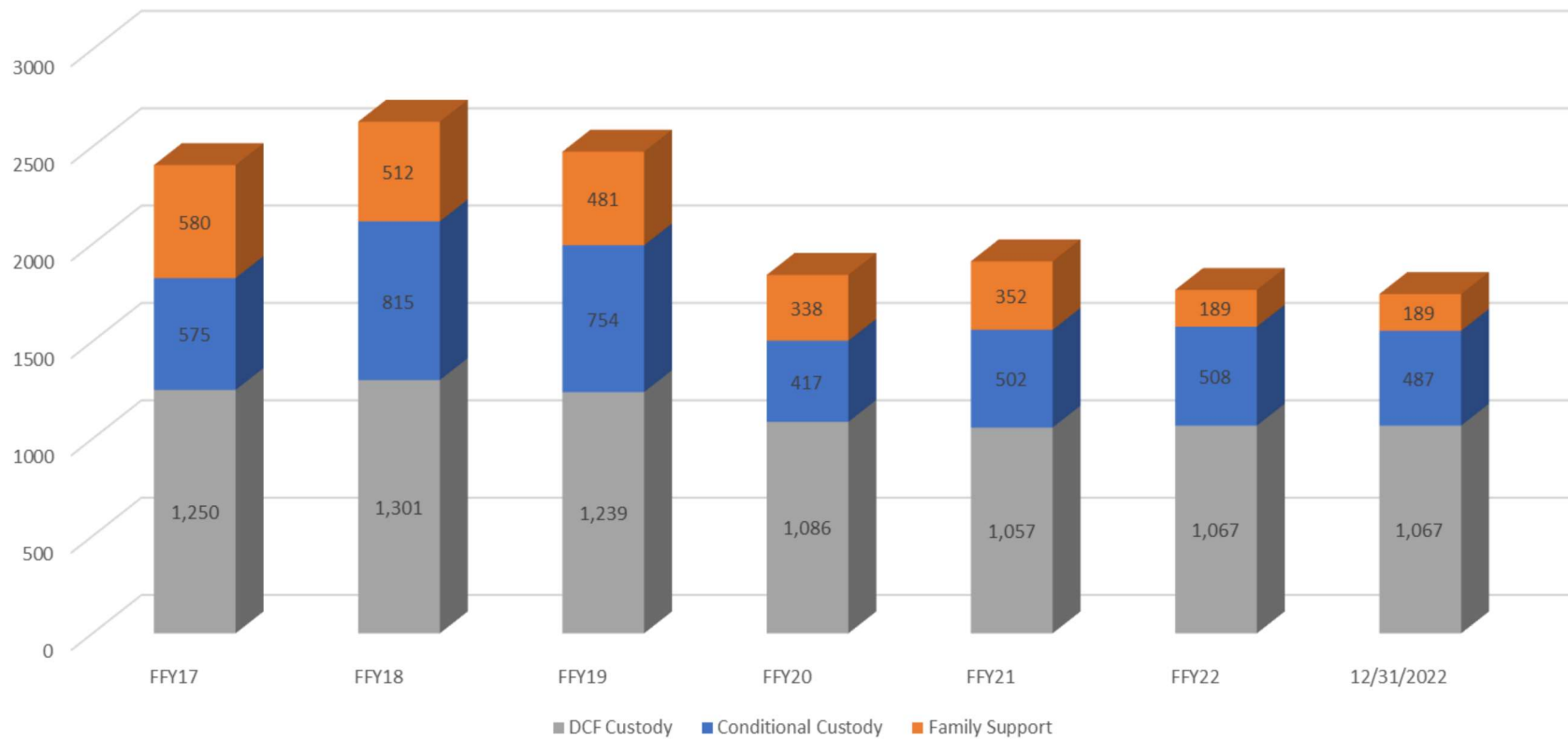
\$1,900,000 net increase:

- This includes a \$1.9M increase for inflation adjustment & \$2.85M GF to GC conversion for stabilization supports

Caseload adjustments to align with prior year trends:

- **-\$256,473** for Subsidized Adoptions (**-\$125,449 GF**)
- 187,528 for Subsidized Care (**-\$170,754 of GF**)

Caseload Count by Type of Agency Involvement

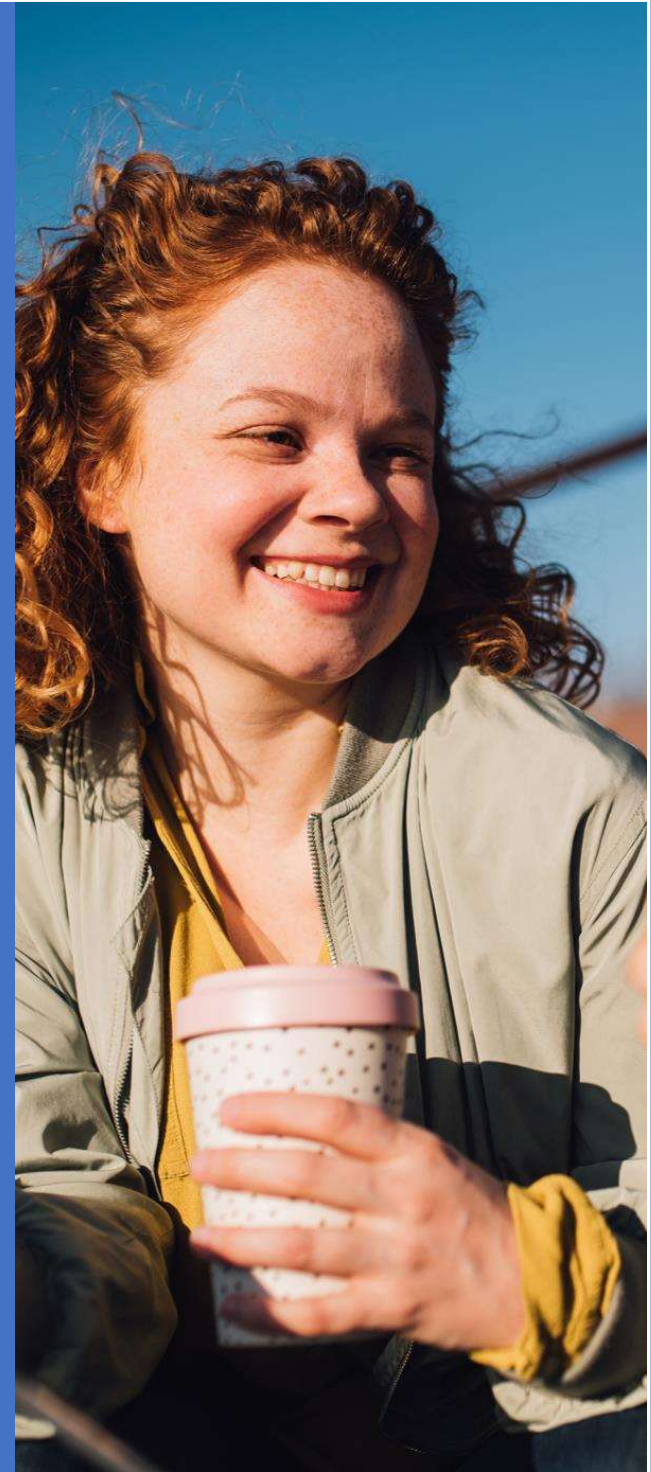


# Youth Development Program (One-time funding)

Funding to support DCF-FSD's transition and aftercare services through the statewide Youth Development Program (YDP) supporting youth aging out of the foster care system.

The last two years YDP received one-time federal pandemic relief funds that are coming to an end. The \$1,000,000 will sustain the program at the same level for another 2-years.

Eight local non-profit agencies will use the funding to provide independent living stipends to youth and case management staff.

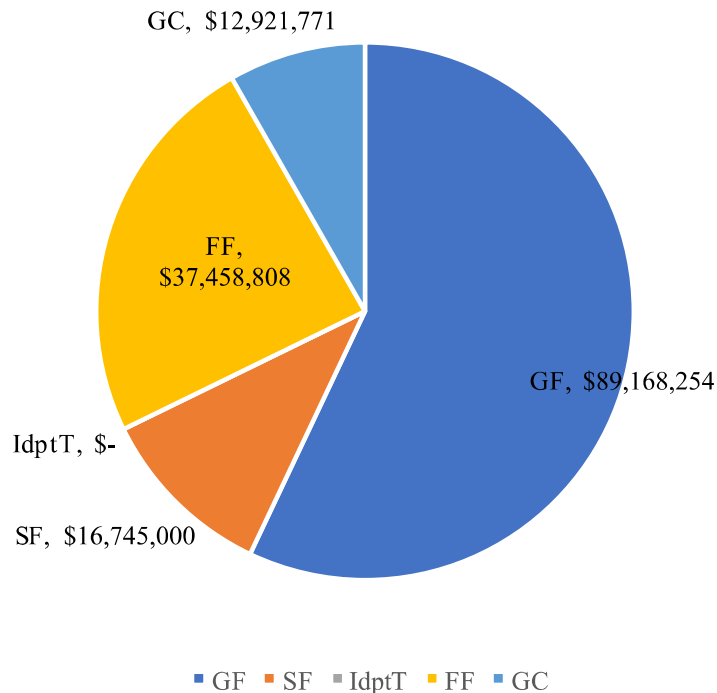


**Agency of Human Services,  
Department for Children & Families  
Child Development  
FY 2024 Governor's Recommended**

**Child Development Division (CDD)**

CDD improves the well-being of Vermont children by developing and administering a continuum of high-quality, comprehensive child development and family support services that promote health and well-being, school readiness and foundations for lifelong success

Child Development Division



**FY 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS**

Pay Act & Benefit Adjs.: \$202,884 (\$90,367 GF)

Retirement Rate Increase: \$66,731 (\$31,095 GF)

Operating Savings: **-\$59,755 (-\$27,799 GF)**

**Child Care Initiative:**

- 5 New Positions + Operating: \$527,072 (\$486,522 GF)
- Equity CCFAP Payments: \$4,968,544 (100% GF)
- School Age Capacity: \$6,962,587 (100% GF)
- CCFAP 400% Expansion: \$41,494,292 (100% GF)
- Eligibility & Referral Contracts: \$2,000,000 (100% GF)

DCF no longer pass through for Children's Tax Check Off funds (per Act 179): **-\$65,000 (\$0 GF)**

CIS Utilization Increase: \$950,830 (\$174,000 GF)

Remove Baseline America Rescue Plan Act Stabilization Funds: **-\$13,230,000 (\$0 GF)**





# Child Care Expansion Initiative

High quality child care is a critical component of the early childhood system and for stable and supported families. The proposed expansion will expand services to over 4,600 children. The proposal includes:

## CCFAP 400% Expansion (\$41.5M)

Increasing CCFAP to 400% FPL. This investment would mean a family of three with an annual income of \$92,120 would qualify for assistance.

(NOTE: Split between these first two programs on the Ups/Downs inaccurately attributed too much to the 400% Expansion. This slide shows the correct allocation)

## Equity CCFAP Payments (\$4.9M)

Establishing that CCFAP payments are not tied to STARS ratings. Ensures the state is paying the same rate on behalf of a family regardless of where they live or the number of STARS.

## School Age Capacity (\$7M)

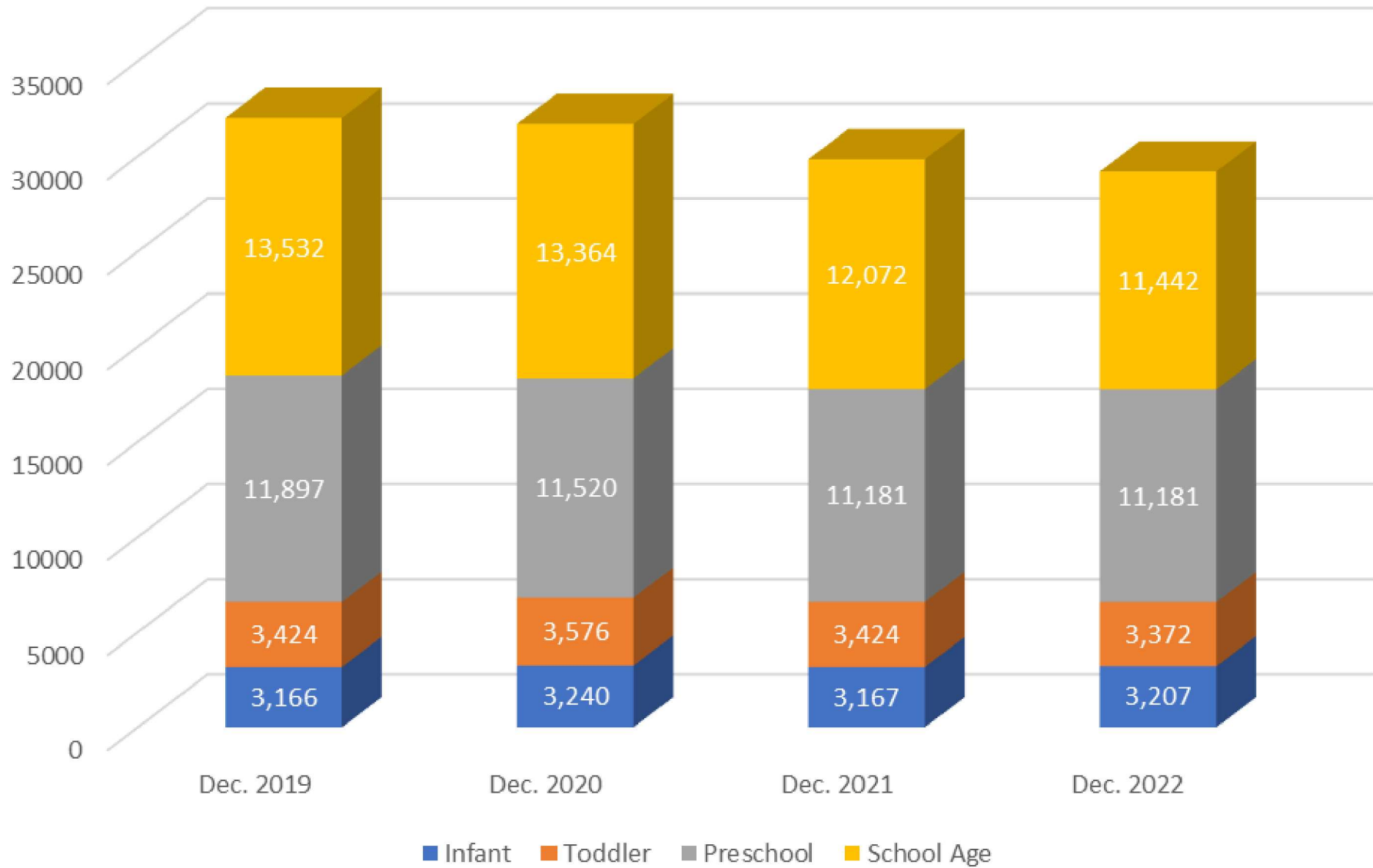
Serving over 5,500 more school-age youth in afterschool and summer programs that will accept CCFAP

## Eligibility & Referral Contracts: (\$2M)

Increasing the Community Child Care Support Agency contract to ensure the system can support the increased caseload

## 5 New Positions + Operating: (\$527K)

## Reported Child Care Capacity: Age Group



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

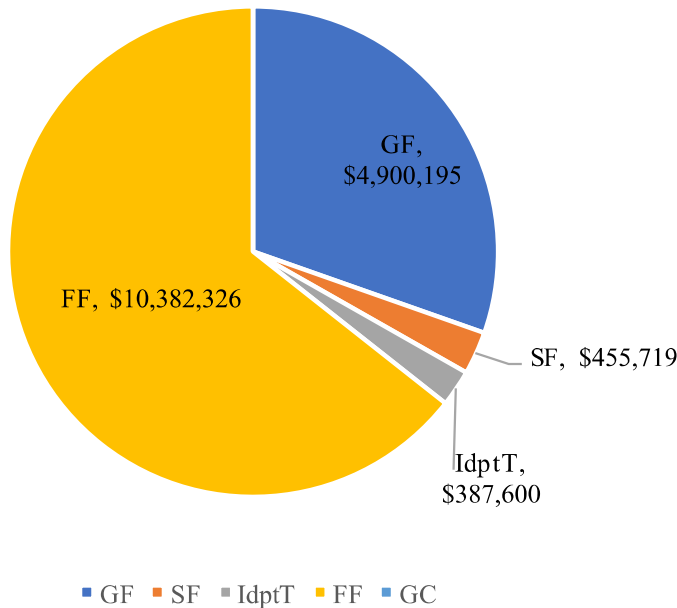
Agency of Human Services,  
 Department for Children & Families  
 Office of Child Support  
 FY 2024 Governor's Recommended

**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.

Office of Child Support



**FY 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS**

Pay Act & Benefit Adj: \$315,932 (\$119,521 GF)

Retirement Rate Increase: \$188,700 (\$71,422 GF)

Travel Savings: **-\$40,126 (-\$12,278 GF)**

In FFY 2021, OCS

- Over 15,000 child support cases serving 16,000 children
- Collected and disbursed \$45 Million in child support payments

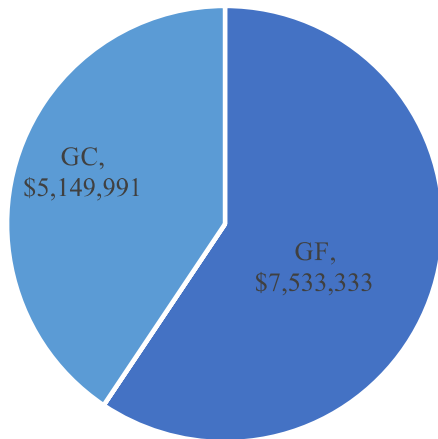
Child Support is a key economic support for Vermont children.

**Agency of Human Services,  
Department for Children & Families  
Aid to the Aged, Blind & Disabled  
FY 2024 Governor's Recommended**

**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.

Aid to the Aged, Blind & Disabled



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**FY 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS**

Aid to Aged, Blind and Disabled (AABD)

SFY	Average Caseload
2015	16,036
2016	15,956
2017	15,841
2018	15,631
2019	15,236
2020	15,079
2021	14,985
2022	14,568
2023 (through December)	14,200

Agency of Human Services,  
Department for Children & Families  
General Assistance  
FY 2024 Governor's Recommended

**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 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS**

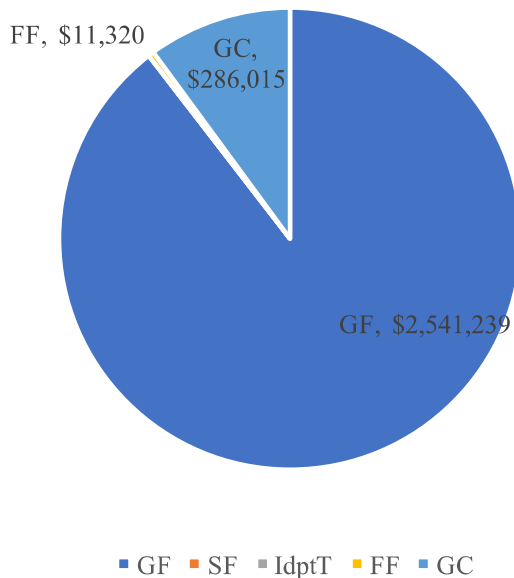
The General Assistance program meets many needs of Vermonters, including housing through the General Assistance Emergency Housing program.

The majority of GA Emergency Housing program is currently paid for through federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERAP) funding that requires no matched state funds and is not captured within our SFY24 base budget.

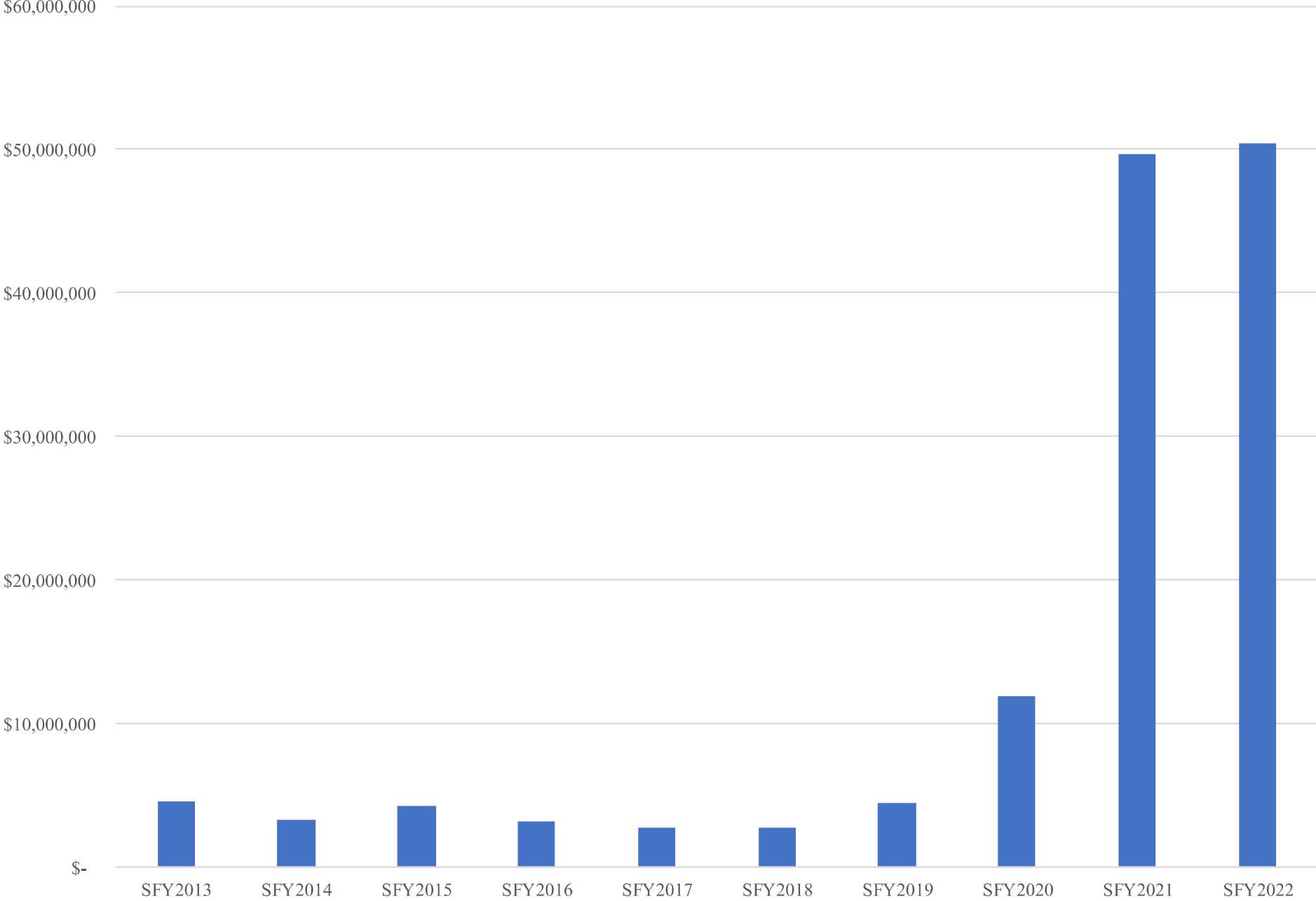
ERAP funding will run out before the end of SFY23, at which point GF 1x funding will support households that are eligible for Emergency Housing Program.

The SFY24 proposed budget includes 1x funding to support our Emergency Housing Program as well as the DCF Adverse Weather Conditions (AWC) policy. These funds are not captured in the GA Dept ID budget.

General Assistance



# Emergency Housing Hotel/Motel Stays

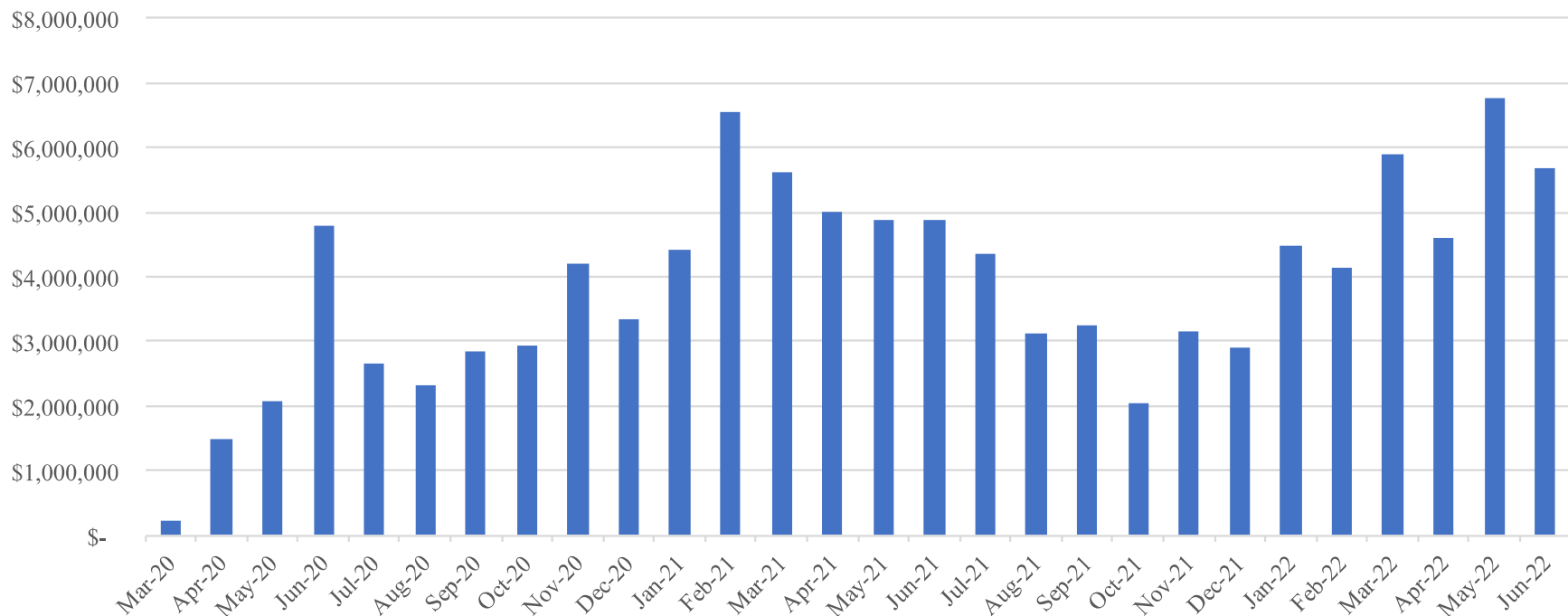


# DCF Emergency & Transitional Housing Program Data

Program	Households	Adults	Children
Transitional Housing (Occupancy Agreements)	1307	1595	453
GA Emergency Housing	494	597	168
Provisional Housing	10	12	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,811</b>	<b>2,204</b>	<b>621</b>

\*Data from January 13, 2023

Monthly Hotel/Motel Payment – Since the Start of the Pandemic

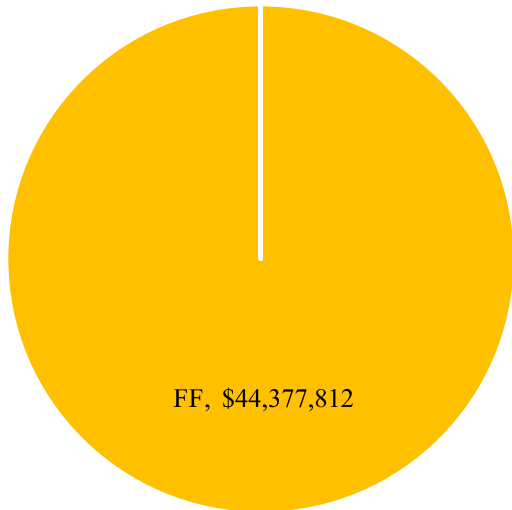


Agency of Human Services,  
Department for Children & Families  
3 Squares Vermont  
FY 2024 Governor's Recommend

**3SquaresVT**

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

3Squares Vermont



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**FY 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS**

Since March 2020, Vermont has issued maximum allotment payments to Vermonters receiving 3SquaresVT benefits. The extra payment have been authorized by the federal government to help households through the pandemic. To date, Vermont has issued over \$175 million in emergency maximum allotments.

The federal 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act ends emergency maximum allotments with the February 2023 benefit month. Beneficiaries will receive their last payment mid-March.

DCF is issuing a mass mailing to beneficiaries, a press release, has additional information on Benefits Service Phone Line, and working with community partners regarding the change.



**Agency of Human Services,  
Department for Children & Families  
Reach Up  
FY 2024 Governor's Recommended**

**Reach Up**

Reach Up helps eligible parents gain job skills and find work so they can support their minor, dependent children.

Services include:

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

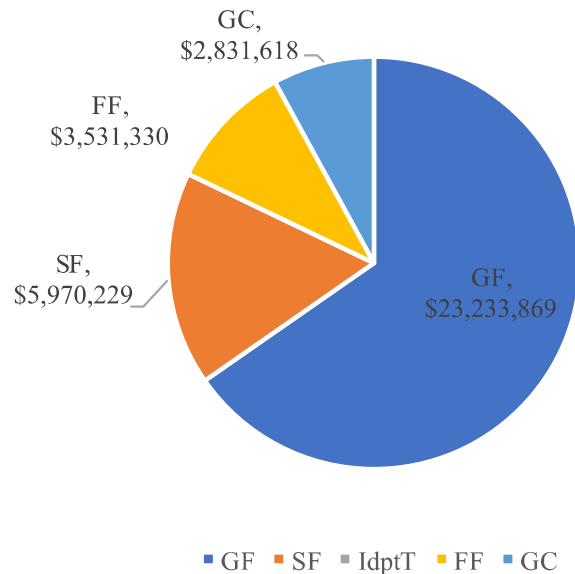
**FY 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS**

Caseload Adjustment: \$8,395,739

Reach Up Bill Financial Impact (Act 133 – Prorated for 1/2 year): \$142,285 (\$127,890 GF)

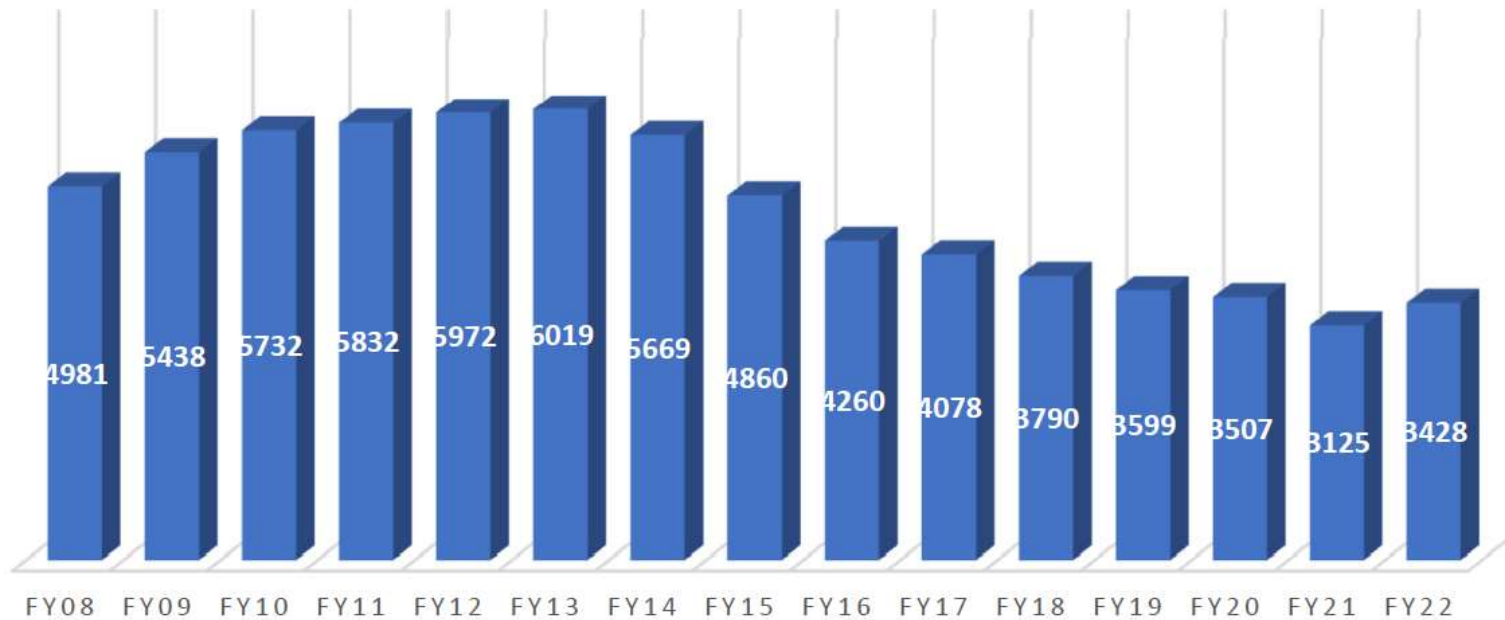
Reach Ahead Pilot: \$2,000,000 (1x GF)

Reach Up



# Reach Up - Monthly Caseload

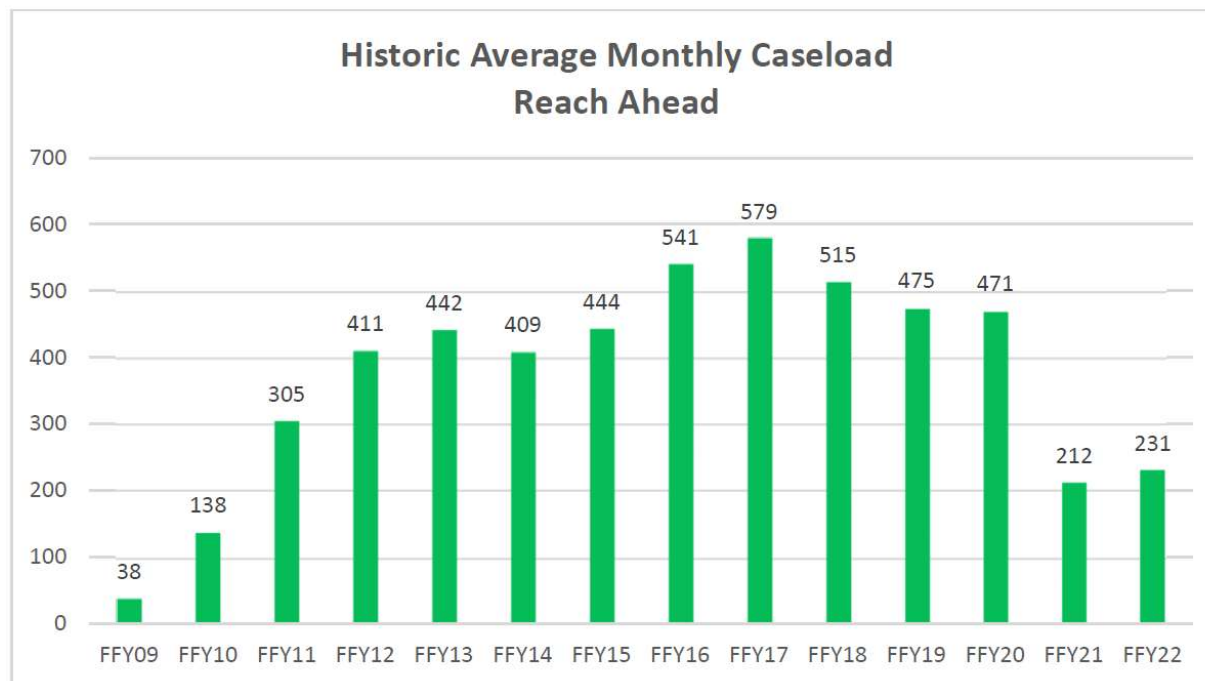
**HISTORIC AVERAGE MONTHLY CASELOADS  
(REACH FIRST, REACH UP AND PSE  
HOUSEHOLDS)**



# Reach Ahead Pilot

Entering the workforce is associated with additional costs to the new employee, such as transportation, work supplies, child care costs, and more. The Reach Ahead pilot would ensure that families exiting Reach Up into Reach Ahead have access to supports to the successful transition.

1. Increase the eligibility window for families to enroll in the program after leaving Reach Up or PSE from 6 to 12 months.
2. Increase the food benefit to \$100 in the first six months, and \$50 in the following 18 months
3. Offer incentive payments for staying employed and enrolled in Reach Ahead: \$750 at six months, \$1000 at twelve months, \$1000 at 18 months, and \$1000 at 24 months.
4. Compare outcomes for those who participated in the pilot program to those who participated in the previous Reach Ahead program.
5. 3 Limited Service Positions

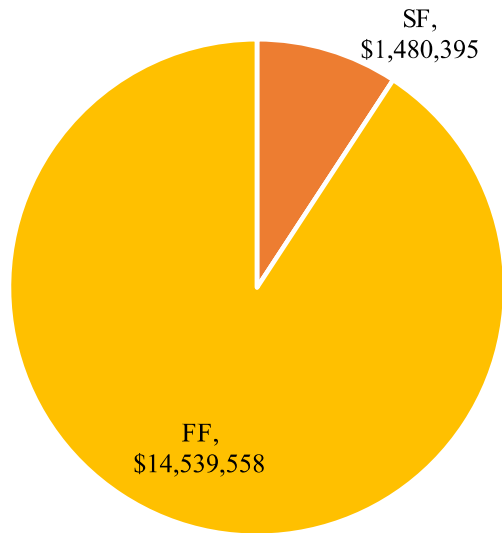


**Agency of Human Services,  
Department for Children & Families  
LIHEAP  
FY 2024 Governor's Recommended**

**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.

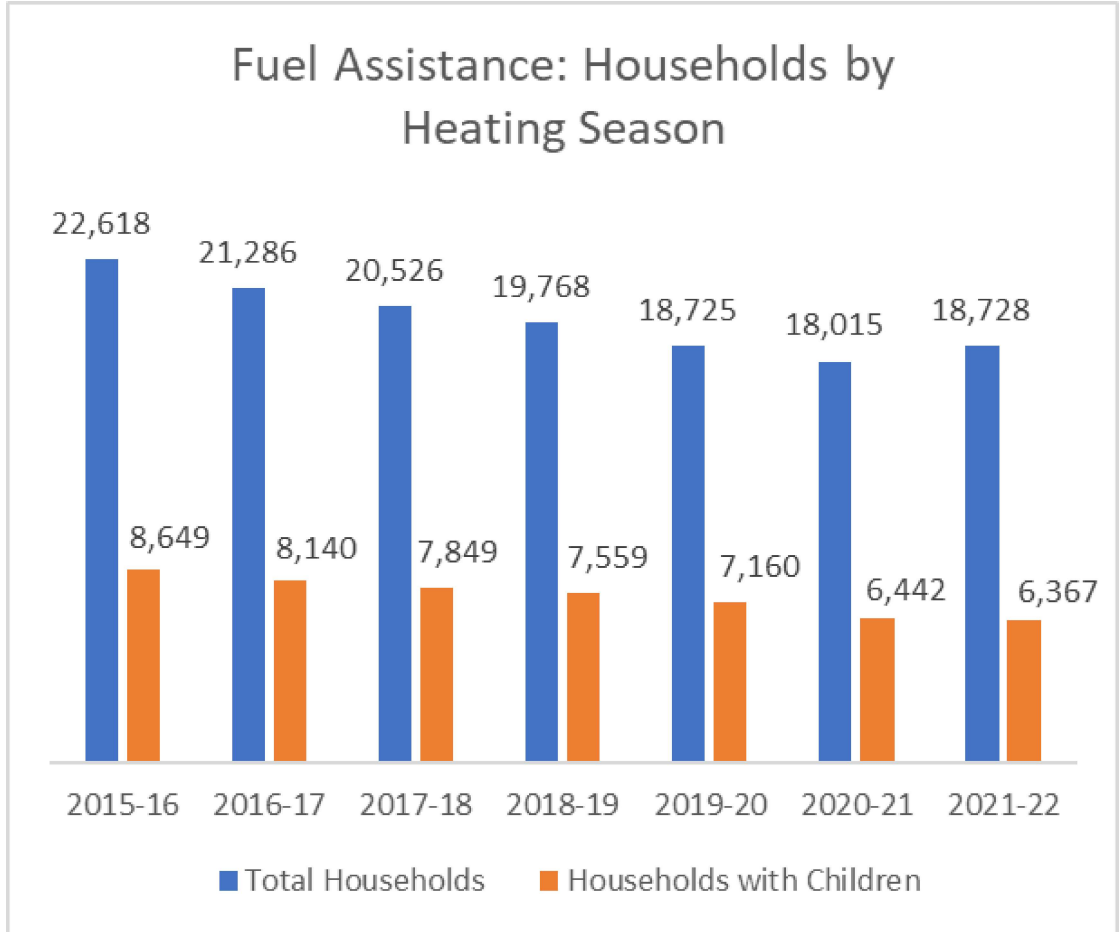
**FY 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS**

Home Heating Fuel Assistance/LIHEAP



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Fuel Assistance: Households by Heating Season



## FY 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

### Agency of Human Services, Department for Children & Families Office of Economic Opportunity FY 2024 Governor's Recommended

#### 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.

Pay Act & Benefit Adj: \$23,950 (12,219 GF)

Retirement Rate Increase: \$8,051 (\$3,341 GF)

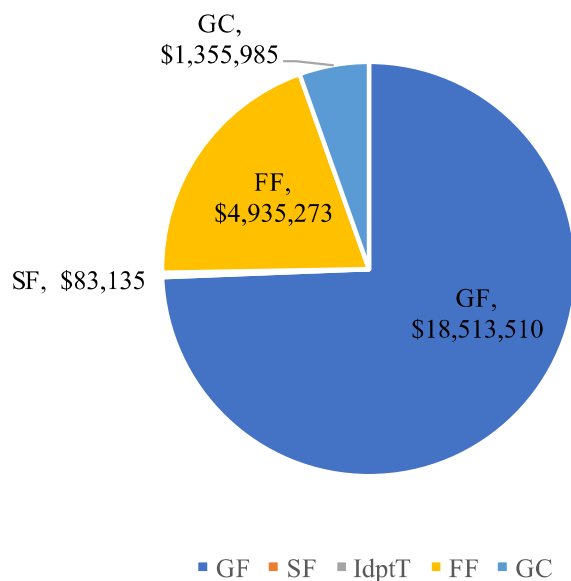
Housing Opportunity Grant Program -  
Emergency Shelter Expansion funds for  
Operating & Services: \$3,750,000 GF  
(in addition to SFY22 \$8.1M base increase for  
the Housing Opportunity Grant Program)

Shift of \$170,301 to community action agencies  
for financial coaching in place of Vermont  
Matched Savings

More on OEO grant programs:

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

Office of Economic Opportunity



Agency of Human Services,  
Department for Children & Families  
Weatherization - FY 2024  
Governor's Recommended Budget

FY 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Pay Act & Benefit Adj: \$30,374 (\$0 GF)

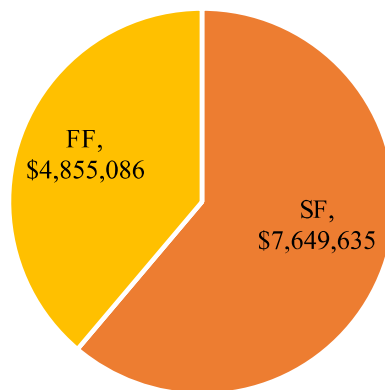
\$49m in additional ARPA SFR appropriated for Home Weatherization Assistance Program to be obligated through SFY24 and used through SFY 26 in a 1x Dept ID.

Additional \$17m from the Department of Energy Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to expand low-income Weatherization through SFY27.

**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.

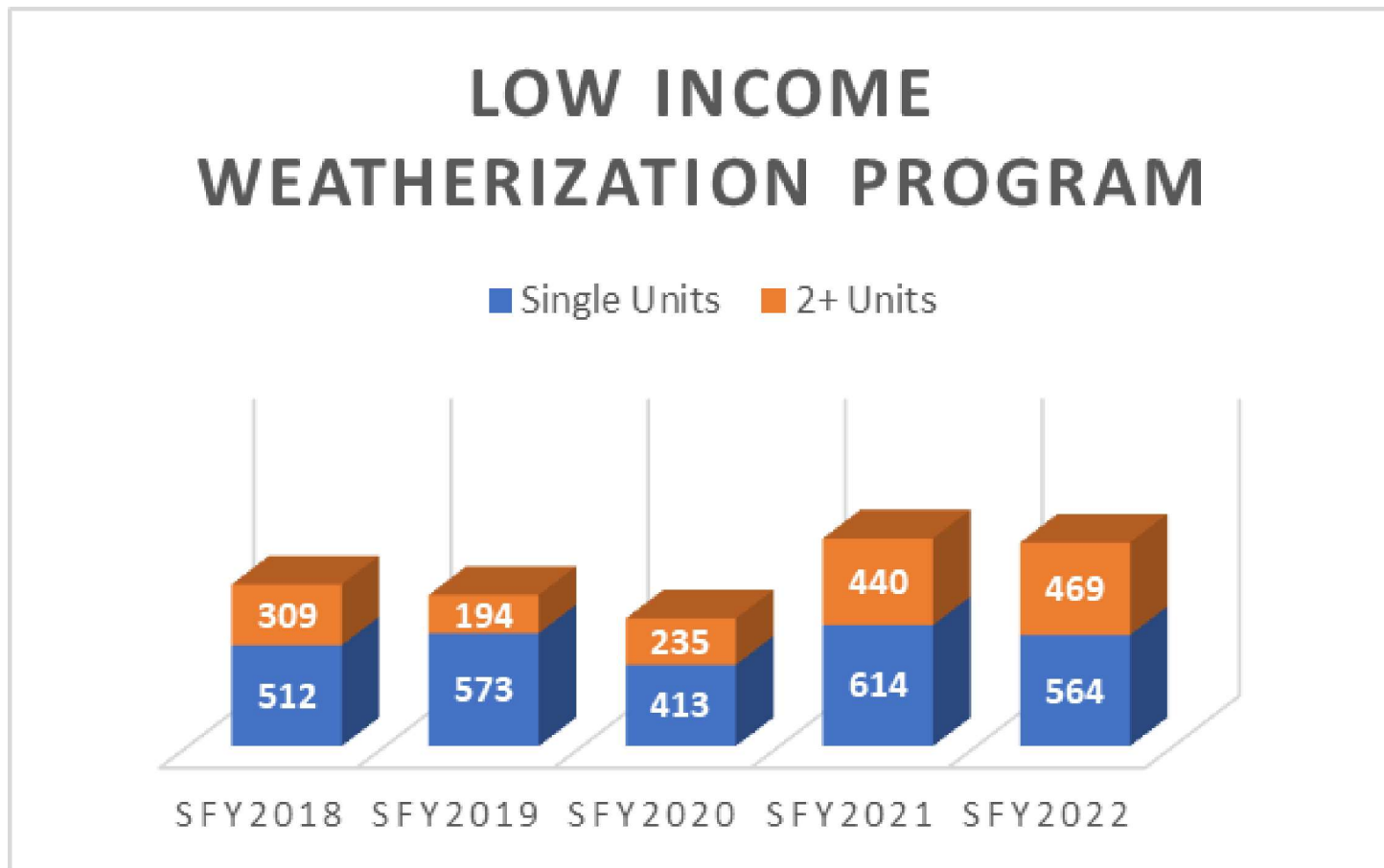
Weatherization



■ GF ■ SF ■ IdptT ■ FF ■ GC

# Home Weatherization Assistance Program: Household Impact

Number of households weatherized in SFY22 (July 1, 2021 thru June 30, 2022): 1,033 households



## FY 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

# Agency of Human Services, Department for Children & Families Secure Residential Treatment - FY 2024 Governor's Recommended Budget

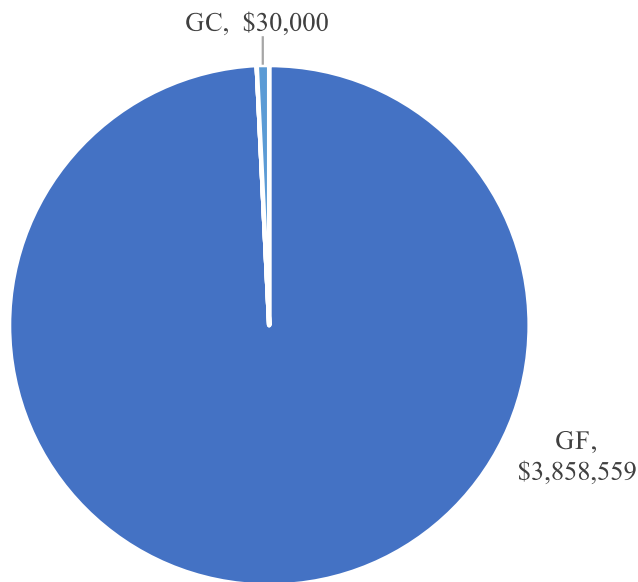
## Secure Residential Treatment Facility (SRTF) Program

Operating Savings: **-\$291,556 GF**

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

In addition, the SFY23 BAA includes \$4.6M (1x) funding

Secure Residential Treatment Facility



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**Agency of Human Services,  
Department for Children & Families  
Disability Determination Services  
FY 2024 Governor's Recommended**

**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 2024 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS**

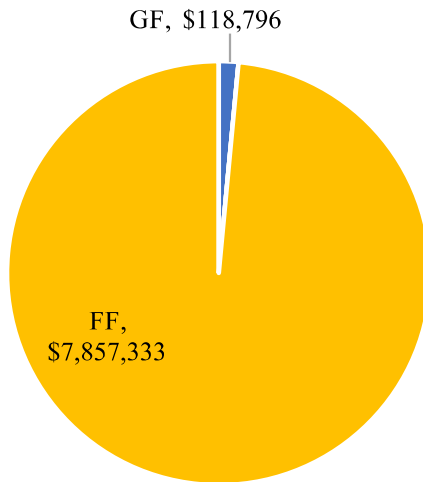
Pay Act & Benefit Adj: \$161,107 (\$1,969 GF)

Retirement Rate Increase: \$54,171 (\$715 GF)

DDS processes approximately 7,000+ initial disability applications each year.

In FFY 2022, Vermont's case decisional accuracy rate was in the top five offices in the nation with a 98.6% accuracy.

Disability Determination Services



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