



SFY26 Department for Children and Families Budget Presentation

Presented by Chris Winters, Commissioner
January 2025

Dept. for Children & Families 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

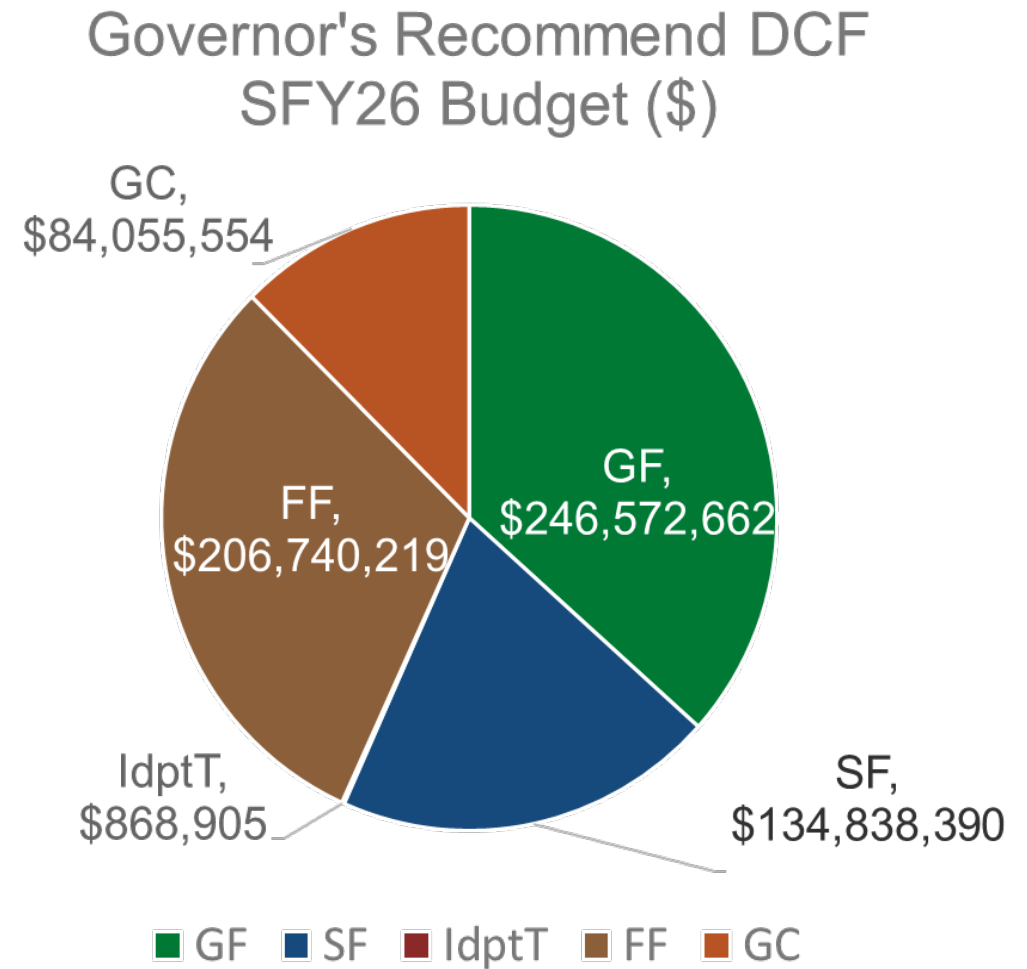
DCF Positions in Base Budget: 989

Agency of Human Services – Dept. for Children and Families FY 2026 Governor's Recommend Budget

Fund Source	Amount
General Fund	\$246,572,662
Special Funds	\$134,838,390
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$868,905
Federal Fund	\$206,740,219
Global Commitment	\$84,055,554
Total	\$673,075,730

Changes to the SFY25 base appropriation:

- 3.5% Decrease to General Fund
- 1.0% Increase to Global Commitment
- 3.3% Increase to Total Budget



DCF's Largest Federal Funding Sources

DCF Federal Funding Sources – Over \$10M in SFY25:

- Title IV-D – OCS
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Admin - ESD

DCF Federal Funding Sources – Over \$20M in SFY25:

- Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) - ESD & OEO
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) - ESD, CDD, and FSD
- Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) - CDD
- Title IV-E - FSD
- Medicaid/Global Commitment – FSD, ESD, CDD, OEO
- SNAP Benefits – ESD

Highlights: DCF Initiatives and Adjustments in SFY26

Caseloads

- Subsidized Adoptions & Substitute Care
- Child Care Financial Assistance
- Reach Up, General Assistance (GA), Aid for the Aged Blind and Disabled (AABD)

Revenue

- Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFAP) Fund Swap
- Random Moment Time Study (RMTS)
- IV-E Revenue Replacement

Initiative

- Children's Integrated Services (CIS) Consolidation
- Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) expansion
- Transportation Contract Adj

Other

- Pay Act & Benefit Adj
- Internal Service Fund
- Private Non-Medical Institution(PNMI) Inflation Adj

SFY26 Proposed One-Time Appropriations



ESD General Assistance: SFY26

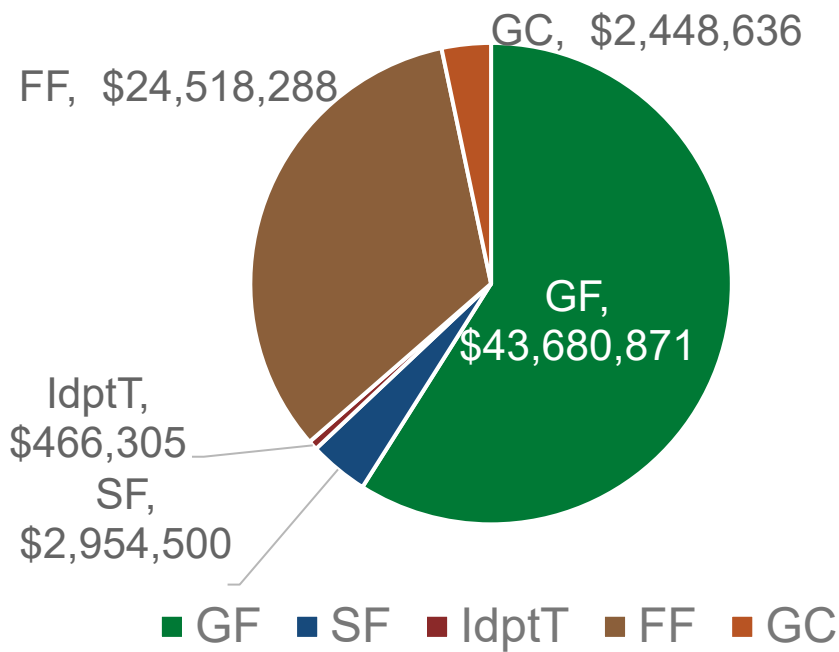
- Emergency Housing Program Continuance: \$30.5M

Office of Economic Opportunity:

- Community Shelter Expansion: \$2M

Administration & Economic 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).



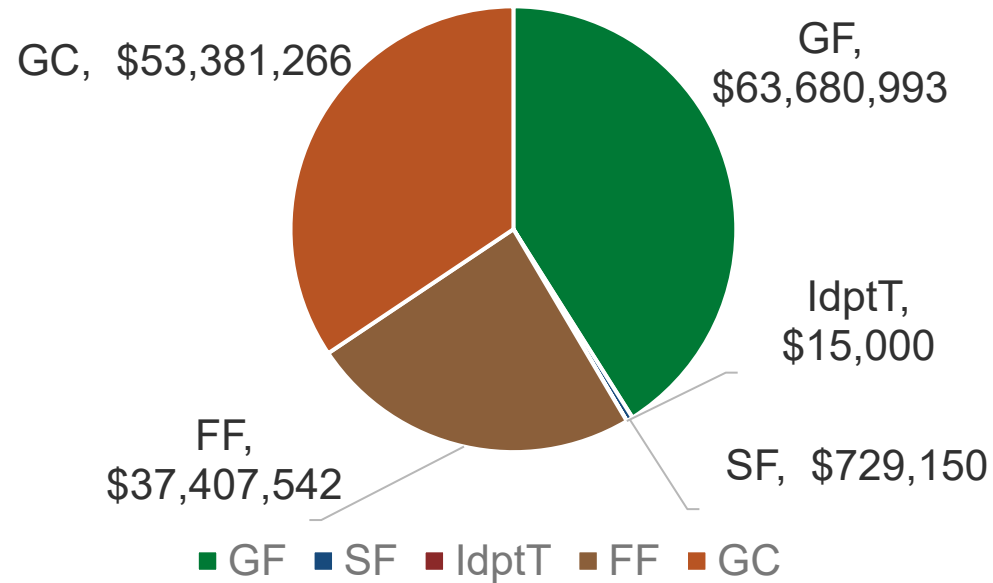
Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$43,680,871
Special Fund	\$2,954,500
Inter Departmental Funds	\$466,305
Federal Funds	\$24,518,288
Global Commitment	\$2,448,636
Total	\$74,068,600

SFY26 Summary & Highlights:

- Pay Act & Benefit Adj (+\$2,679,156 GF)
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Revenue Realignment (DCF Net Neutral) – Also in FSD and CDD
- Internal Service Funds (+\$221,507 GF)
- Transfer of Child Nutrition Plan Program to AOE (-\$45,000 GF – State Net Neutral)

Family Services Division

FSD works in partnership with families, communities and others to make sure children and youth are safe from abuse, their basic needs are met and youth are free from delinquent behavior. They also ensure families are supported to achieve these goals.

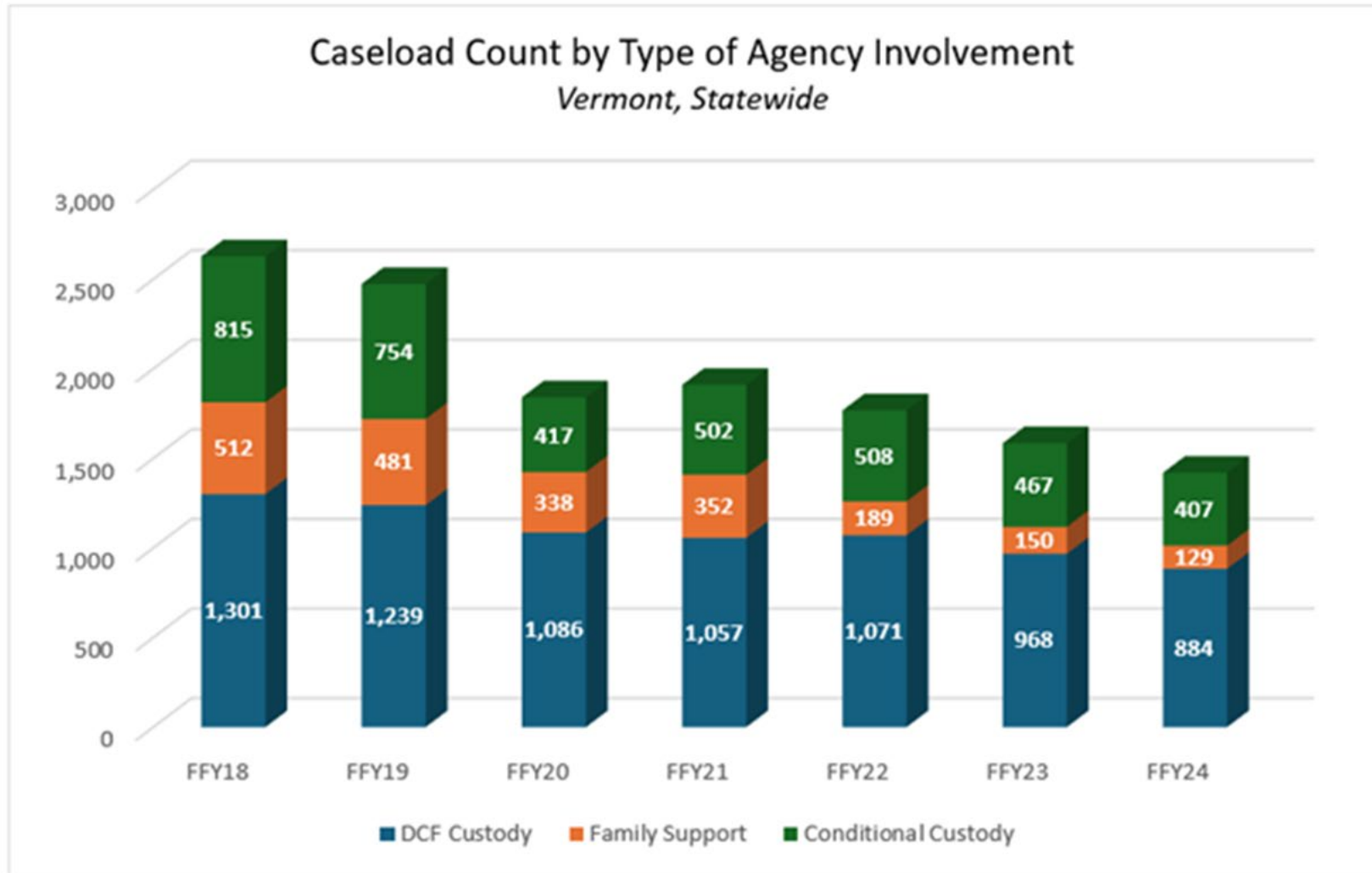


SFY26 Summary & Highlights:

- Pay Act & Benefit Adj (+\$3,053,260 GF)
- Internal Service Funds (+\$136,933 GF)
- RMTS Revenue Shift (+\$2,732,488 GF)
- IV-E Revenue Realignment (+\$525,00 GF)
- Transportation Contracts (+\$2,340,969 GF)
- Caseload Adjustments (-\$902,535 GF)
- PNMI Inflation Factor (+\$149,993 GF)

Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$63,680,993
Special Fund	\$729,150
Inter Departmental Funds	\$15,000
Federal Funds	\$37,407,542
Global Commitment	\$53,381,266
Total	\$155,213,951

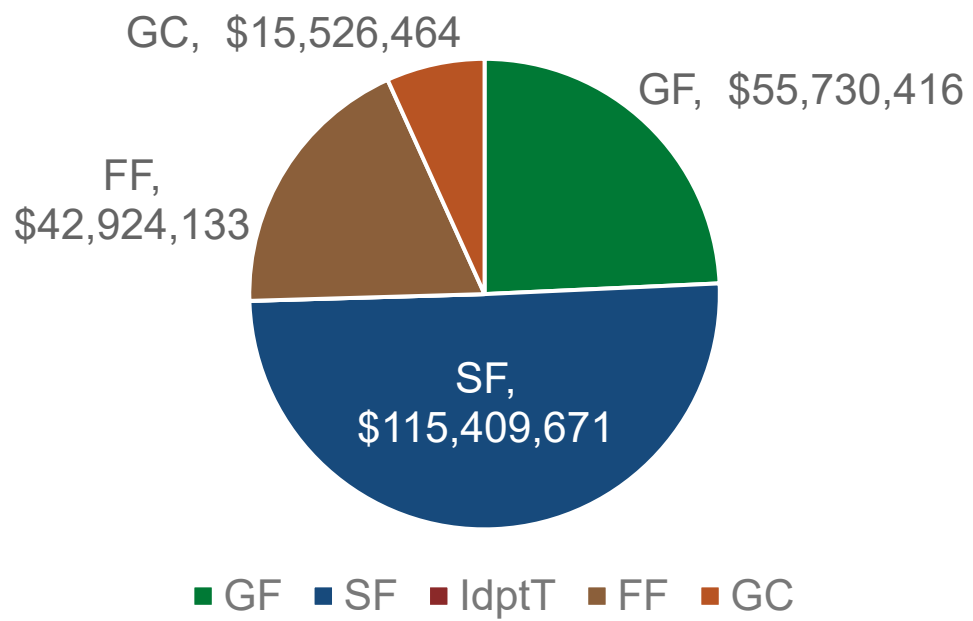
FSD Caseload Over Time



Data Source: FSD Quarterly Management Reports - DCF Custody; AHS Report Catalog - CCO Report and Fullcaseload Report
Data Note: Point in time data; custody data as of 9/30/xx; CCO and Family Support data as of date report closest to 9/30/xx is run. Family Support cases are a family count, meaning more than one child may exist.

Child Development Division

CDD improves the well-being of Vermont children by working with community partners to provide Vermonters with affordable access to high-quality child care and child development services.



SFY26 Summary & Highlights:

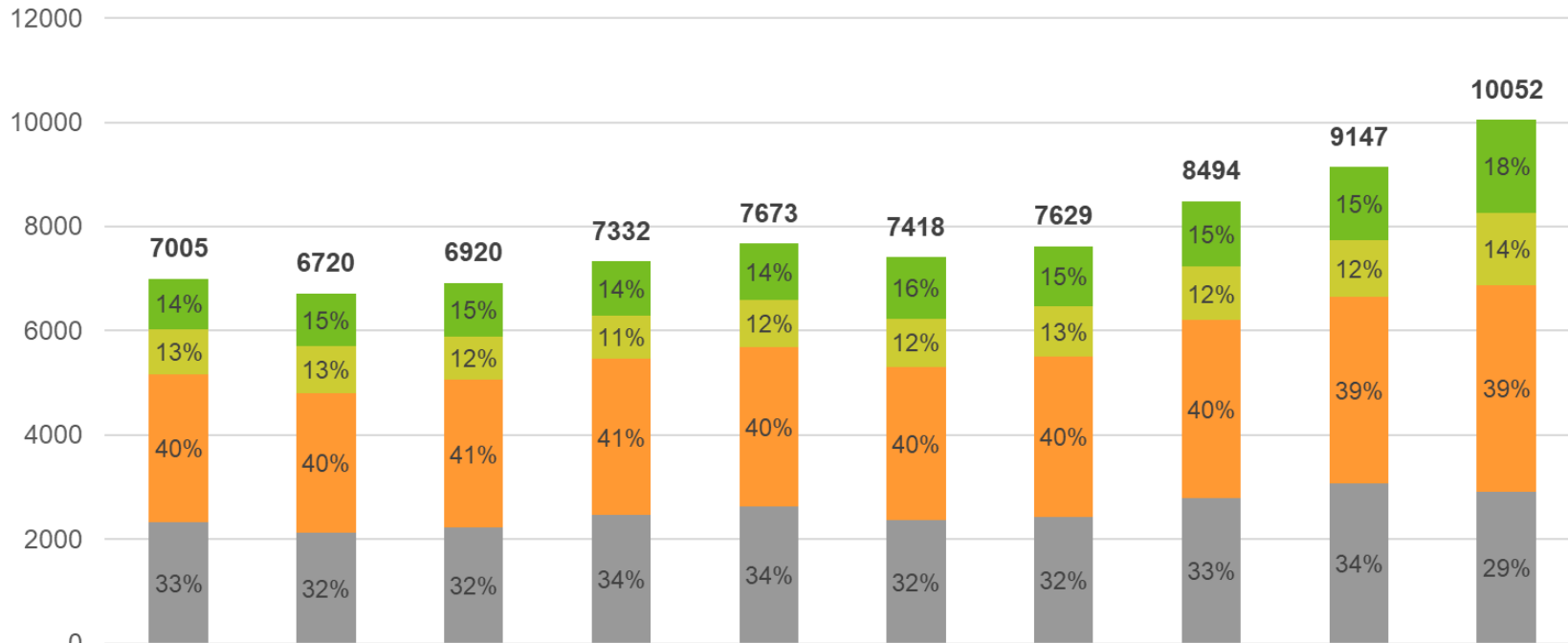
- Pay Act & Benefit Adj (+\$506,651 GF)
- CIS Consolidation - AHS Net Neutral
- CIS Caseload Adj (+393,208 GF)
- CCFAP Caseload Savings (-\$3,501,972 GF)
- CCFAP Revenue Shift (-\$19,000,000 GF; +\$19,000,000 SF)

Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$55,730,416
Special Fund	\$115,409,671
Inter Departmental Funds	\$0
Federal Funds	\$42,924,133
Global Commitment	\$15,526,464
Total	\$229,590,684

Children Served by Child Care Financial Assistance

July 2023 to December 2024

Average Number of Children Participating in CCFAP by Age Group SFY- Q1-2023-Q2-2025



42% increase in the average number of children participating in Child Care Financial Assistance each quarter since July 2023.

Infants and toddlers show the greatest increase in participation, 85% and 57% respectively, since Act 76 implemented.

Child Care Financial Assistance Participation over Time

Average Number of Children Receiving CCFAP, SFY 2017-2025*

*SFY 2025- Represents July-December 2024 Data



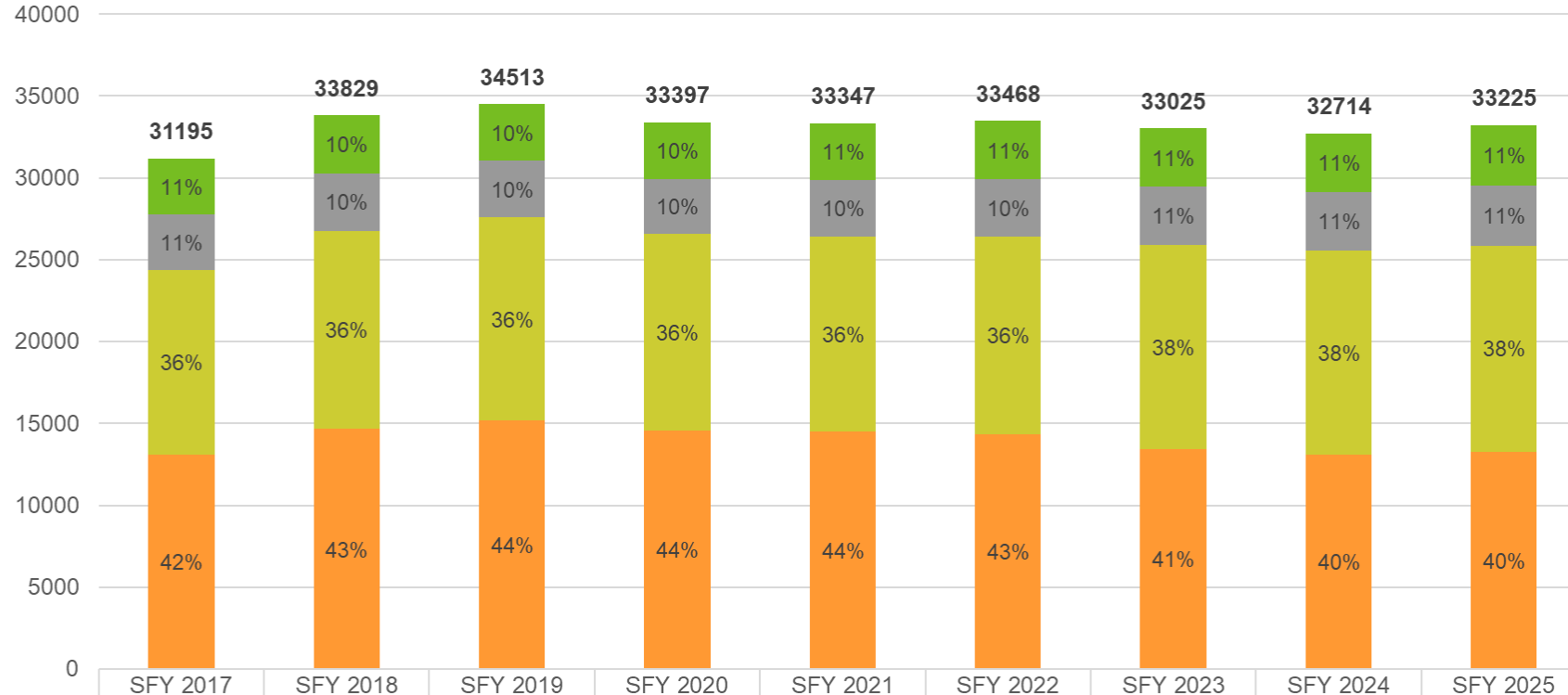
CCFAP participation has increased significantly from previous years.

CCFAP participation has recovered from the COVID-related drops.

Child Care Capacity in Vermont Over Time

Total Child Care Capacity, by Age of Children, SFY 2017-2025*

*SFY 2025- Represents July-December 2024 Data



The number of licensed child care spaces declined slowly from SFY2019 through SFY2024.

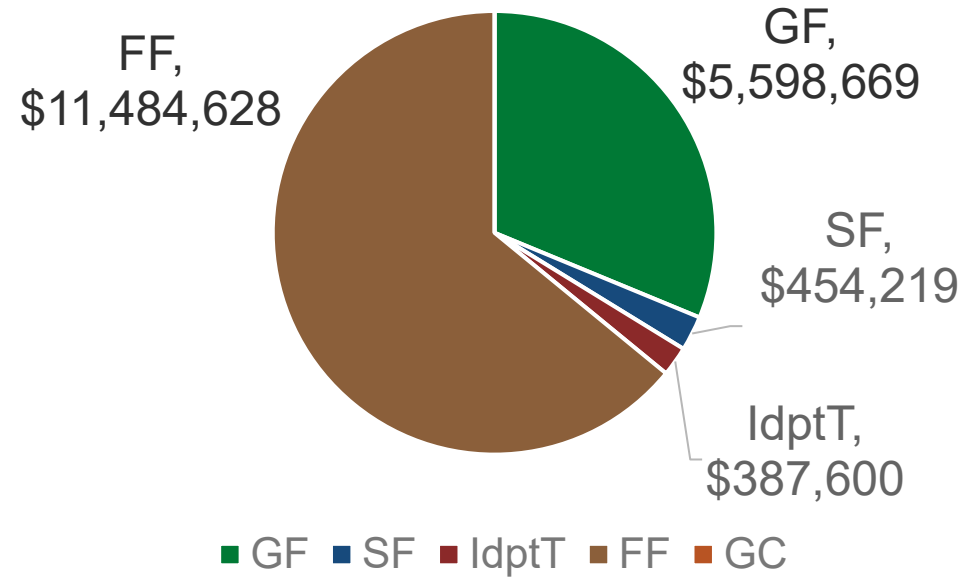
The net increase in licensed child care spaces was 511 in SFY25.

	SFY 2017	SFY 2018	SFY 2019	SFY 2020	SFY 2021	SFY 2022	SFY 2023	SFY 2024	SFY 2025
■ Infant Capacity	3421	3538	3474	3467	3508	3549	3563	3609	3706
■ Toddler Capacity	3379	3518	3448	3342	3404	3513	3562	3517	3649
■ Preschool Capacity	11287	12123	12415	12023	11915	12076	12456	12510	12583
■ School Age Capacity	13108	14650	15176	14566	14520	14330	13445	13078	13287
Total Capacity- All Providers	31195	33829	34513	33397	33347	33468	33025	32714	33225

Office of Child Support

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.

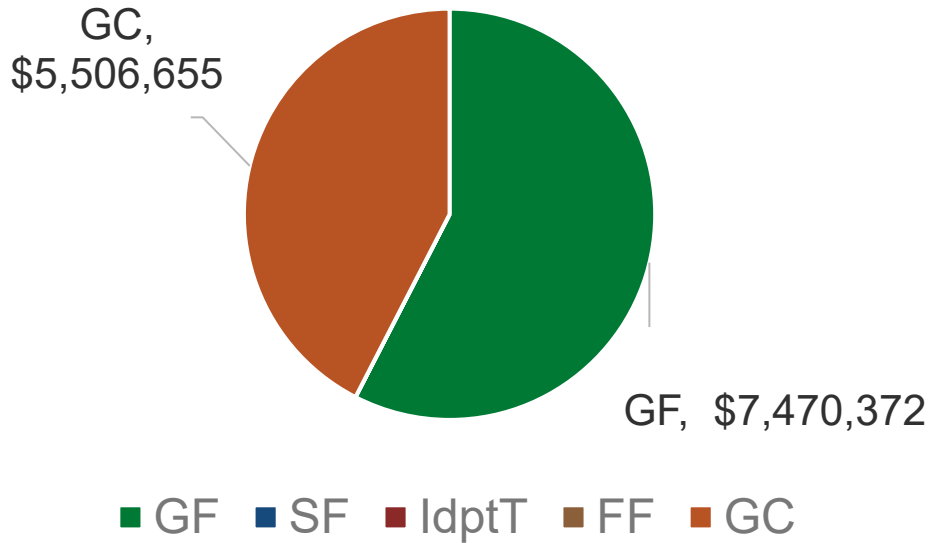


Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$5,598,669
Special Fund	\$454,219
Inter Departmental Funds	\$387,600
Federal Funds	\$11,484,628
Global Commitment	\$0
Total	\$17,925,116

SFY26 Summary & Highlights:

- Pay Act & Benefit Adj (+\$387,621 GF)
- ISF Adjustments (+\$10,984 GF)

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.

Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$7,470,372
Special Fund	\$0
Inter Departmental Funds	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0
Global Commitment	\$5,506,655
Total	\$12,977,027

SFY26 Summary & Highlights:

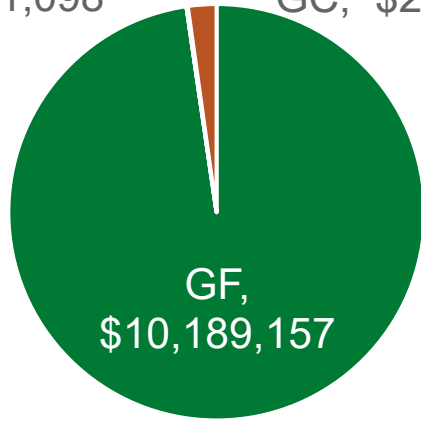
- Administrative Cost increase (+\$306,254 GF)
- Caseload Adjustments (-\$212,015 GF)

AABD Average Caseloads

We continue to see decreasing benefit caseload numbers, while the Essential Persons program has plateaued after years of decreasing caseload.

State Fiscal Year	Benefit Caseload	Essential Persons
SFY19	15,236	176
SFY20	15,079	169
SFY21	14,985	148
SFY22	14,568	141
SFY23	14,082	136
SFY24	13,737	148

FF, \$11,098 GC, \$230,524



■ GF ■ SF ■ IdptT ■ FF ■ GC

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

Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$10,189,157
Special Fund	\$0
Inter Departmental Funds	\$0
Federal Funds	\$11,098
Global Commitment	\$230,524
Total	\$10,430,779

SFY26 Summary & Highlights:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Service Caseload (+\$102,129 GF) • Personal Needs Issuance (PNI) Caseload Adjustments (-\$180,875 GF) • Emergency Housing Security (-\$339,184)



SFY26 Emergency Housing 1x Appropriation

The budget proposes one-time funding to continue to operate the Emergency Housing Program according to current rules.

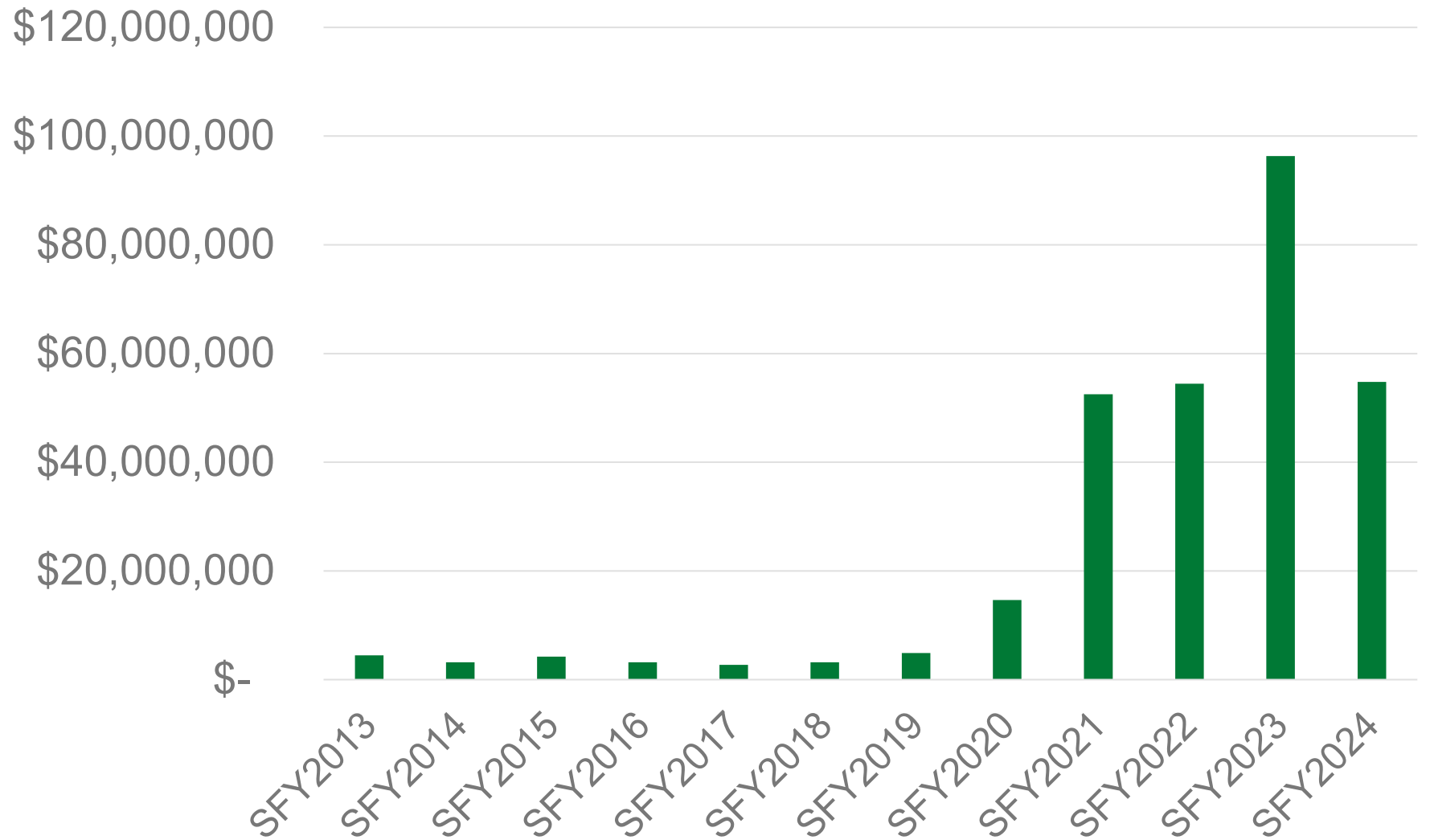
- \$30.5M GF

Households Served:

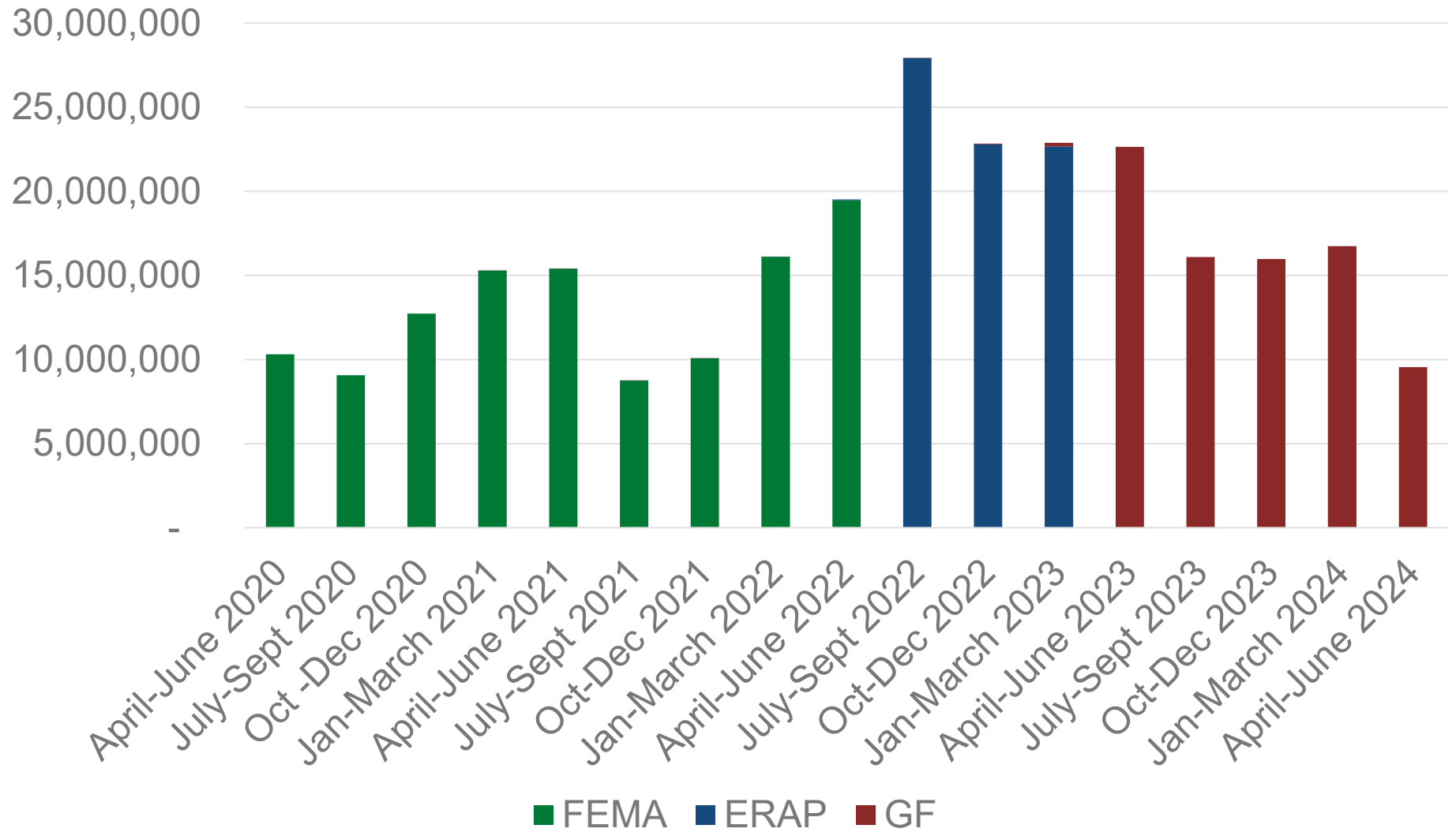
- 1,100 Outside of Adverse Weather Conditions (AWC)
- No Cap during AWC other than availability of rooms
- 80-day cap per household

Hotel/ Motel Costs Over Time

Emergency Housing Costs over Time



Post Pandemic Quarterly Hotel/Motel Costs



Hotel/
Motel
Costs
Since
Pandemic

3 Squares Vermont



■ GF ■ SF ■ IdptT ■ FF ■ GC

3Squares VT is the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) which provides low-income households better access to a healthy diet while supporting American agriculture.

SFY26 Summary & Highlights:

- Summer EBT Federal Revenue Adj
- Benefit Caseload Federal Revenue Adj

Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$0
Special Fund	\$0
Inter Departmental Funds	\$0
Federal Funds	\$51,077,812
Global Commitment	\$0
Total	\$51,077,812

Reach Up

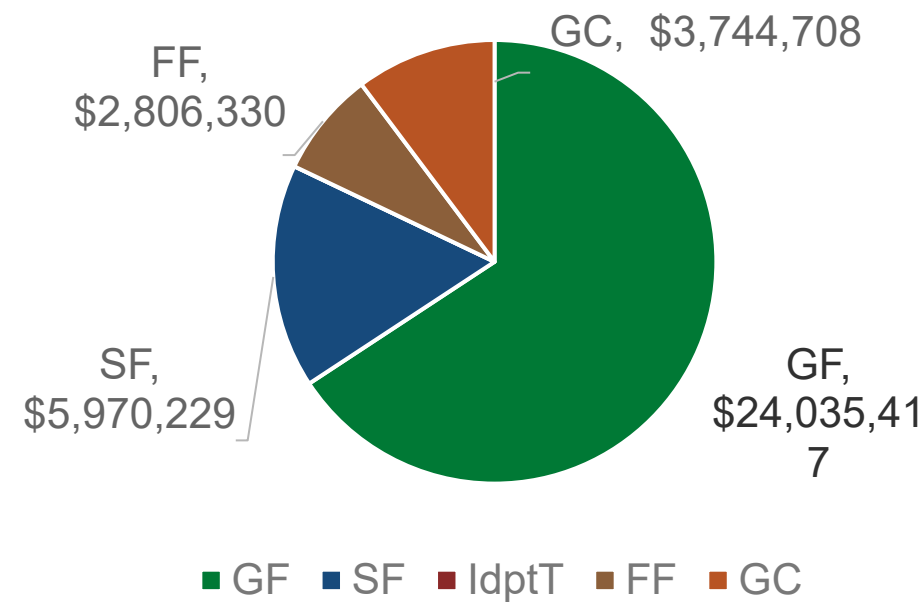
Reach Up helps eligible parents gain job skills and find work so they can support their minor, dependent children.

Services include:

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

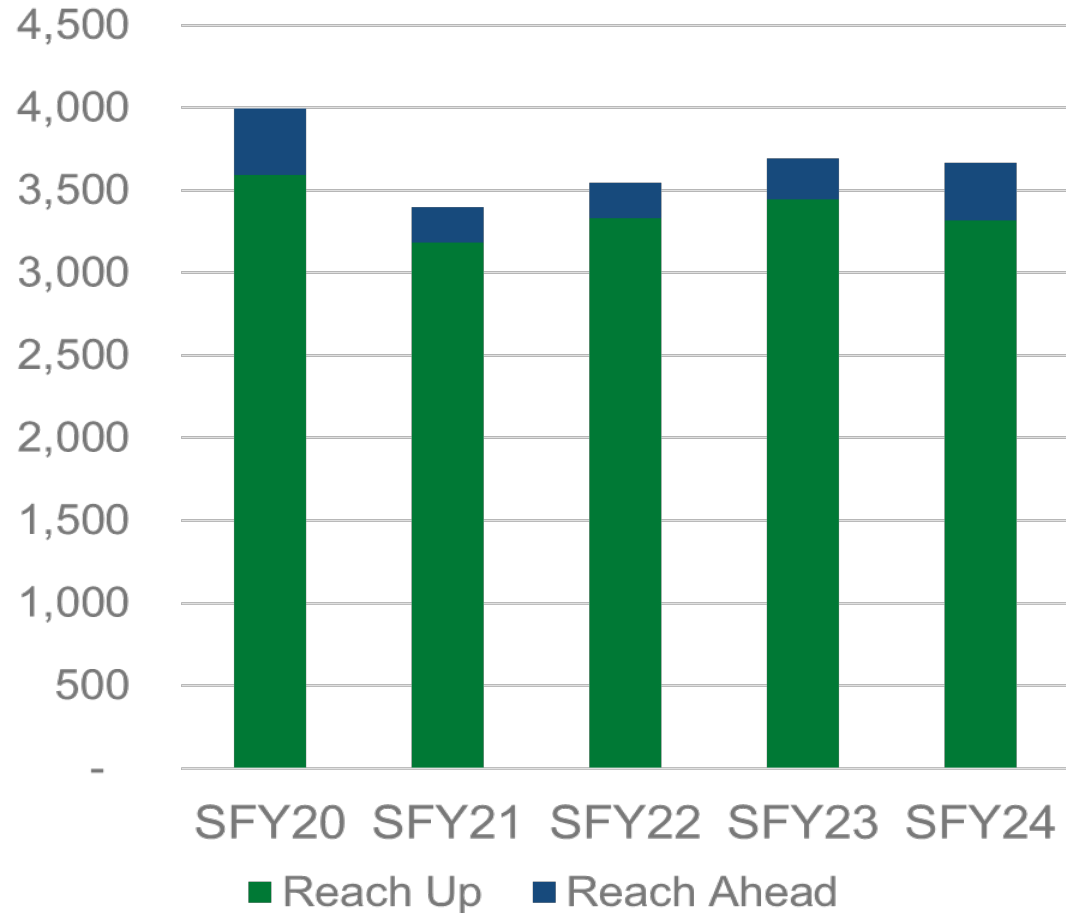
SFY26 Summary & Highlights:

- Caseload Adj (-\$697,625 GF)



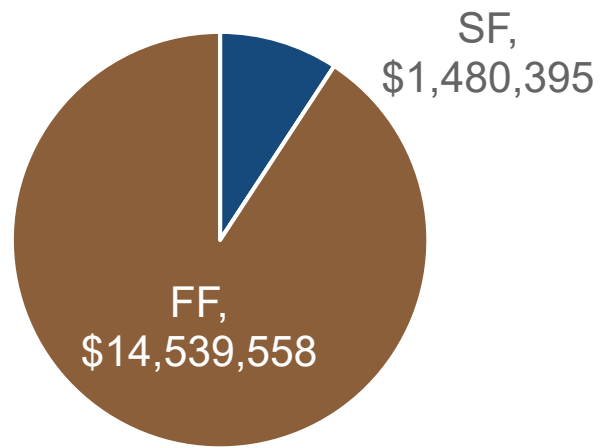
Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$24,035,417
Special Fund	\$5,970,229
Inter Departmental Funds	\$0
Federal Funds	\$2,806,330
Global Commitment	\$3,744,708
Total	\$36,556,684

Reach Up Average Monthly Caseload



Year	Reach Up Caseload (Avg/Month)	Reach Ahead Caseload (Avg/Month)
SFY20	3,592	402
SFY21	3,185	216
SFY22	3,329	220
SFY23	3,445	249
SFY24	3,316	349

Low Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)



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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.

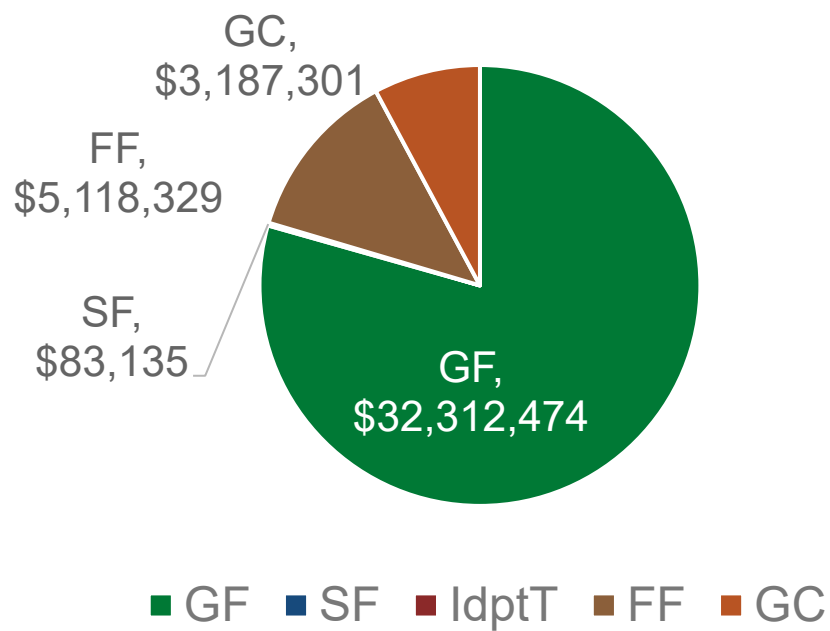
SFY26 Summary & Highlights:

- No Adjustments

Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$0
Special Fund	\$1,480,395
Inter Departmental Funds	\$0
Federal Funds	\$14,539,558
Global Commitment	\$0
Total	\$16,019,953

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.



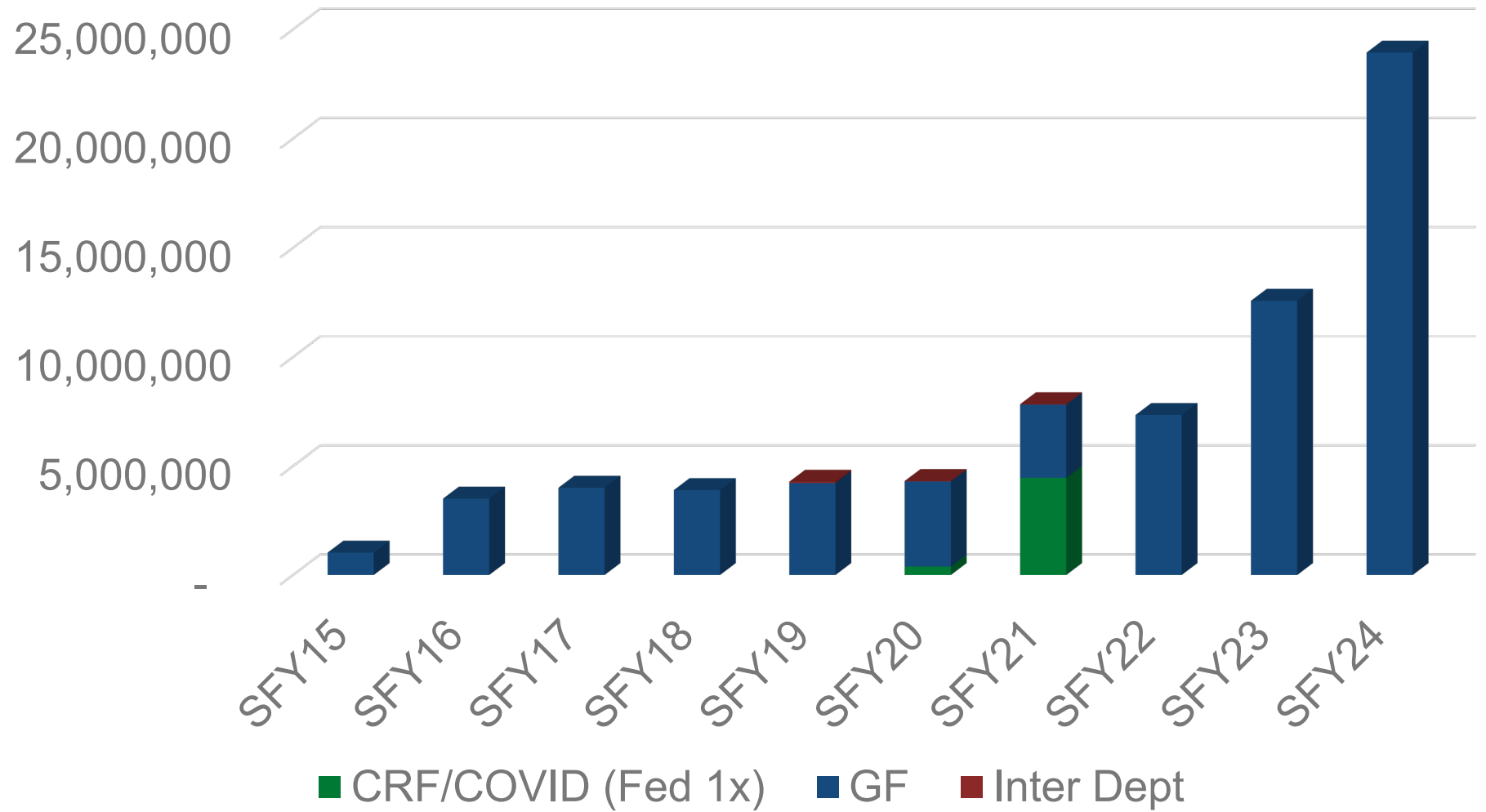
Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$32,312,474
Special Fund	\$83,135
Inter Departmental Funds	\$0
Federal Funds	\$5,118,329
Global Commitment	\$3,187,301
Total	\$40,701,239

SFY26 Summary & Highlights:

- Pay Act & Benefit Adj (+\$278,825 GF)
- ISF Adjustments (+\$50,978 GF)
- Adjustment to Fund Shelter Expansion Position (DCF Net Neutral)
- Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) Expansion (+\$3,352,820)

Growth in the HOP Expenses

HOP Expenses by Fund Source





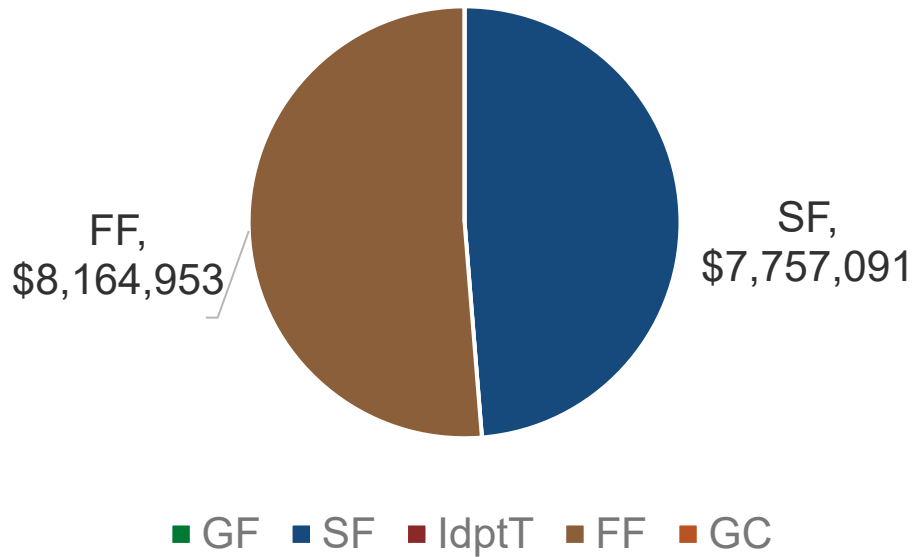
Shelter Expansion Increased Base & 1x Funding

Increase to the base funding for homeless assistance (\$3.3M HOP Awards):

- **It is estimated that this will maintain shelter capacity for approximately 85 households.**

1x Funding to support start up costs to continue to build shelter capacity across the state.

OEO Weatherization



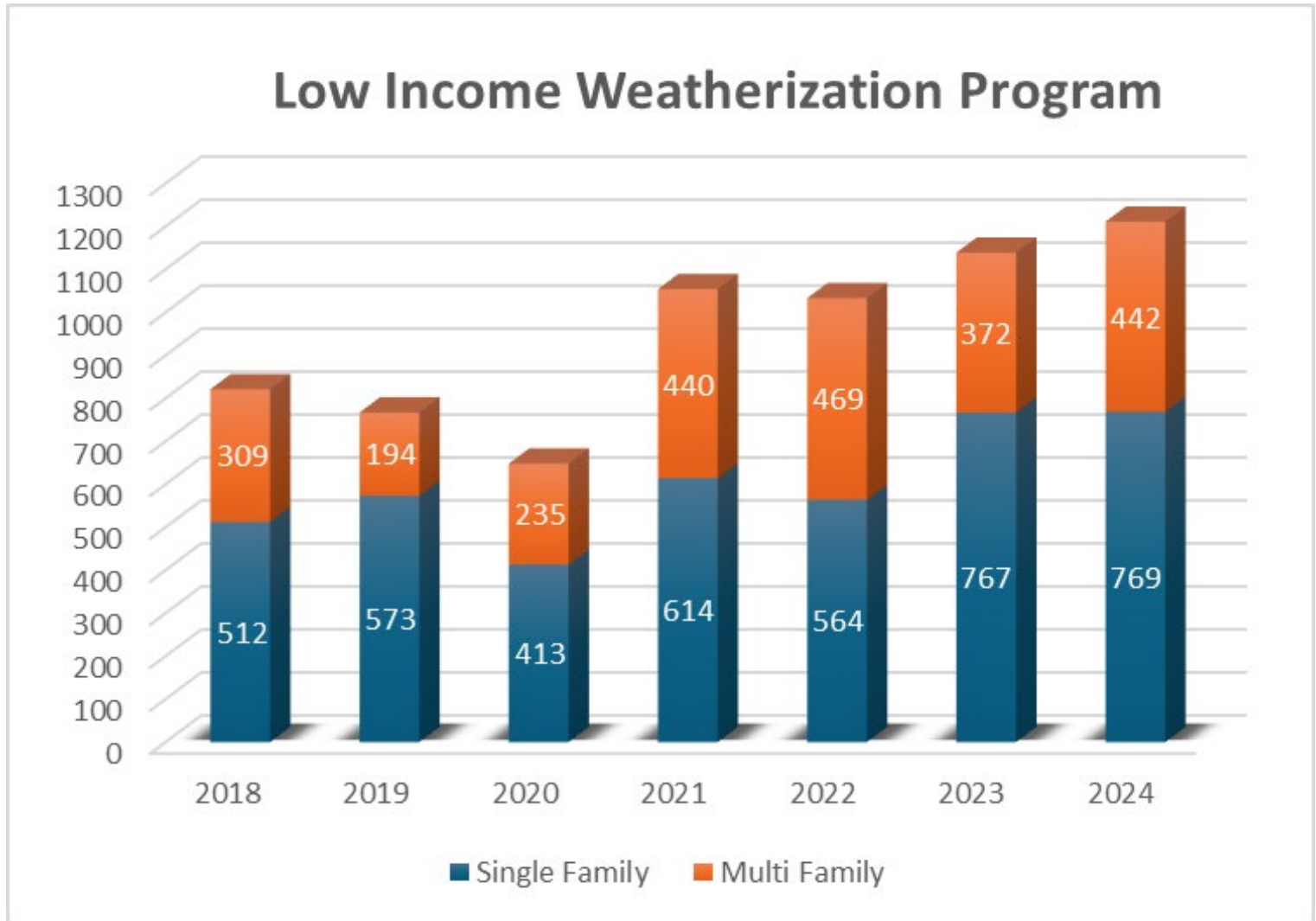
The Low-Income Home Weatherization Assistance Program reduces energy costs for low-income families by improving the energy efficiency and comfort of their homes while ensuring their health and safety. The Home Weatherization Assistance Program fund provides state funding for weatherization through a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

Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$0
Special Fund	\$7,757,091
Inter Departmental Funds	\$0
Federal Funds	\$8,164,953
Global Commitment	\$0
Total	\$15,922,044

SFY26 Summary & Highlights:

- Pay Act & Benefit Adj (+\$0 GF)
- ISF Adjustments (+\$0 GF)

Home Weatherization Assistance Program: Household Impact

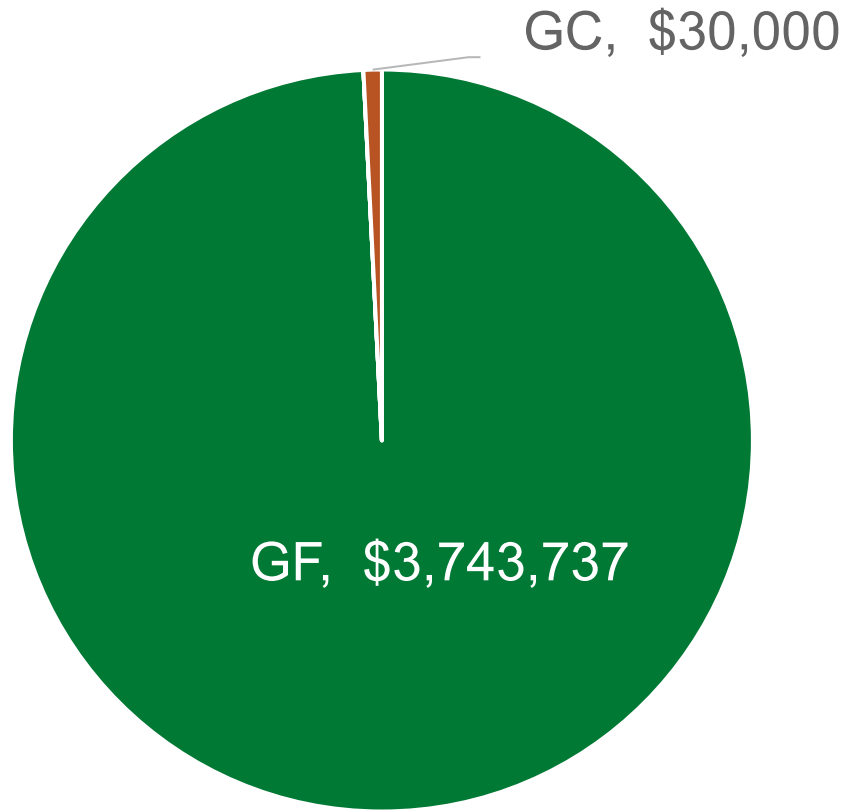


Secure Residential Treatment Facility

SFY26 Summary & Highlights:

- Pay Act & Benefit Adj (+\$0 GF)
- ISF Adjustments (-\$3,450 GF)

Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$3,743,737
Special Fund	\$0
Inter Departmental Funds	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0
Global Commitment	\$30,000
Total	\$3,773,737

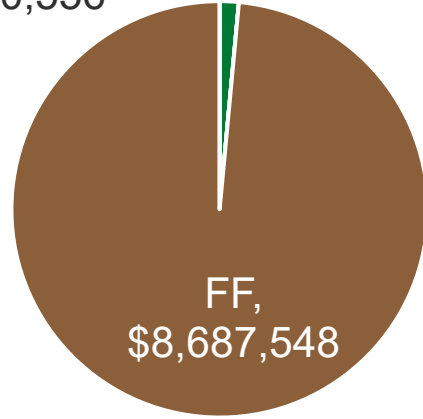


■ GF ■ SF ■ IdptT ■ FF ■ GC

Disability Determination Services

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.

GF, \$130,556



■ GF ■ SF ■ IdptT ■ FF ■ GC

Fund Source	SFY26 Budget
General Fund	\$130,556
Special Fund	\$0
Inter Departmental Funds	\$0
Federal Funds	\$8,687,548
Global Commitment	\$0
Total	\$8,818,104

SFY26 Summary & Highlights:

- Pay Act & Benefit Adj (+\$6,374 GF)

DDS: A National Leader



DDS Outcomes

- Average Initial Case Processing Time = 82.4 days (FFY 25 to date)
 - National Average Processing Time = 191.4 days (FFY 25)
- Initial Decisional Accuracy = 98.6% (FFY 25)
- Processed 6,817 SSA claims & 217 State Medicaid claims (FFY 24)