



# Agency of Human Services Department for Children and Families **State Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Book and Annual Report**

This report contains an overview of the divisions and programs contained within the Department for Children and Families (DCF), highlights from the past year, statutory requirements for the Department's budgetary presentations, and an overview of requests within the Governor's State Fiscal Year 2027 Budget.

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# Message from the Commissioner

## Greetings, and thank you for taking the time to read this.

As Interim Commissioner, it's been my honor, privilege, and joy to learn about all the amazing programs and benefits that we administer at the Department for Children and Families (DCF). DCF is committed to child protection, we offer financial assistance and administer programs to address food insecurity and the homeless challenge in Vermont, but there is so much more happening within the department. We have so many accomplishments that we are excited to share! For instance, did you know that in the middle of the longest federal government shutdown in the history of the United States, our very own Office of Disability Determination Services (DDS), which is responsible for determining the medical eligibility of Vermonters applying for Social Security Disability benefits, had the fastest benefits processing rates in the country. An impressive feat.



During the same shut down our Economic Services Division team worked diligently to ensure that Vermonters we serve received benefits even though federal funds were frozen. The steadfast dedication to our mission was evident and we worked with our partners across the state to make sure basic needs were met. It was so heartwarming to bear witness to the collaboration. It was a mighty little state moment for me.

There are a lot of our accomplishments illustrated here, as well as challenges. We'll get to all of that, but I wanted to take a minute to introduce myself and let you know a little bit about my background and what I bring to the table as Commissioner.

Coming to DCF is a little like coming home for me. I began my career in public service 32 years ago with the Department of Corrections. After almost four years I moved to the Family Services Division of DCF for the next 17 years. I come most recently from the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA), where I spent the past ten years. Most recently serving as Deputy Commissioner, leading DVHA's clinical services, quality, data, oversight and monitoring, and special investigations work.

By training, I'm a Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor with a Master's in Social Work from the University of Vermont. I am also a Certified Public Manager with a Paralegal degree. I like to think that my training and background as a clinician brings a fresh



perspective to the role, and to many of the populations we serve at DCF. The issues facing many of the folks we serve are complex – for example substance use, combined with trauma, layered on top of an underlying mental health condition. While I don't claim that my background or credentials make me the only one capable of doing the job, I do think it helps, and I look forward to bringing my experiences to the table moving forward together.

So, with all of that in mind, I invite you to read this report. We've put a lot of work into it, and it's a great snapshot of what we've been up to this past year, and a look into where we're headed next.

Thank you,

Sandi Hoffman



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**Child Support Helpline:**  
1-800-786-3214

**ESD Benefits Call  
Center:**  
1-800-479-6151

**Report Child Abuse 24/7:**  
1-800-649-5285

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## About DCF

Our vision is that Vermont is a place where people prosper, children and families are safe and have strong, loving connections; and individuals have the opportunity to fully develop their potential.

Our Mission is to foster the healthy development, safety, well-being and self-sufficiency of all Vermonters.

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The Department for Children and Families (DCF) is a part of the Agency of Human Services, comprised of six divisions and with roughly 1,100 employees across the state. We provide benefits, services, and support to some 200,000 Vermonters every year, including children, youth, families, older Vermonters, and people with Disabilities.

## Divisions of the Department for Children and Families

<b>Child Development Division</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deputy Commissioner Janet McLaughlin</li></ul>	<b>Office of Child Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Director Lisa Rivers</li></ul>	<b>Disability Determination Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Director Jack McCormack</li></ul>
<b>Economic Services Division</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deputy Commissioner Miranda Gray</li></ul>	<b>Family Services Division</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deputy Commissioner Aryka Radke</li></ul>	<b>Office of Economic Opportunity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Director Lily Sojourner</li></ul>

This annual report and budget book will outline not only DCF's budget as presented in the Governor's State Fiscal Year 2027 Recommended Budget but will also provide a programmatic overview of the programs in DCF's six divisions.



# Submitted Legislative Reports

[PreKindergarten Education Implementation Committee Report](#)

[December 31 Monthly Housing Report](#)

[Raise the Age Progress Report](#)

[Performance Indicators for the Vermont Weatherization Assistance Program](#)

[January 31 Monthly Housing Report](#)

[Evaluation of Reach Up](#)

[Restaurant Meals Program Implementation Analysis by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#)

[February 28 Monthly Housing Report](#)

[Operational Costs of Residential Treatment for Youth Report](#)

[March 31 Monthly Housing Report](#)

[Raise the Age Progress Report](#)

[April 30 Monthly Housing Report](#)

[May 31 Monthly Housing Report](#)

[Universal Prekindergarten Report 2024](#)

[Child Protection in Vermont Report for 2024](#)

[June 30 Monthly Housing Report](#)

[Annual Report on Supplemental Child Care Grant Funds Distributed](#)

[July 31 Monthly Housing Report](#)

[General Assistance Emergency Housing Report](#)

[August 31 Monthly Housing Report](#)

[Changes to the Administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#)

[September 30 Monthly Housing Report](#)



[Report on Scholarships and Student Loan Repayment for Vermont's Child Care and Early Learning System](#)

[October 31 Monthly Housing Report](#)

[Act 154 Progress Report on Child Protection Registry Reform: Child Abuse and Neglect Substantiation Recommendations](#)

[Act 173 Progress Report on Access to Records by Individuals Who Were in Foster Care](#)

[November 30 Monthly Housing Report](#)

[Joint Report on Elevating the Status of Early Childhood Education](#)

[Supervised Visitation Programs Report](#)

[December 31 Monthly Housing Report](#)



# Child Development Division (CDD)

## Deputy Commissioner Janet McLaughlin

Janet McLaughlin has served as the Deputy Commissioner for the Child Development Division at the Department for Children and Families since March 2023. In this role, she has responsibilities for Vermont's child care system in early childhood education and afterschool settings, Children's Integrated Services and Universal Prekindergarten (in partnership with Agency of Education).

From 2016 to 2023, Janet worked at the intersection of programs and policy in Vermont's early childhood education system while serving as Chief Programs Officer, interim CEO, and Chief Operating Officer at Let's Grow Kids and as the Executive Director for the Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children (VTAEYC). She was the head of the Vermont Community Foundation's Food and Farm Initiative, a collaborative effort to fight hunger in Vermont while strengthening its local food system, from 2013 to 2016. From 2004 to 2013, Janet oversaw the growth of Cooking Matters, a food skills education program for low-income families, while at the national DC-based nonprofit Share Our Strength.

Janet serves on the Boards of the J. Warren and Lois McClure Foundation and Spectrum Youth and Family Services. She has a Master's of Public Administration with a specialization in Nonprofit Management from Syracuse University and her undergraduate degree is from Harvard University. Janet lives in Burlington and is an enthusiastic eater, novice ice hockey player, and mom of two energetic boys.

## Division Directors and Program Administrators

**Chris Case**, Director of Policy and Planning

**Karolyn Long**, Director of Operations

**Dawn Rouse**, Director of Statewide Systems

**Beth Maurer**, Director of Licensing

**Keith Williams**, Children's Integrated Services (CIS) Director

**Alejandra Lopez**, Data Analytics and Information Administrator

**Emily Hazard**, Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) Administrator

**Helen Mattheis**, Child Care Quality and Capacity Team Lead

**Terri Lavalette**, Business Application Support Unit lead



## About Child Development Division

### Our Mission

CDD strives to improve the well-being of Vermont's children. We do this by working in partnership with families, early childhood and afterschool program staff, community members, and state and federal entities to increase statewide, client-centered access to developmentally appropriate and equitable child development services.

### Our Vision

Vermont's children will receive the resources that they need to succeed; Vermont's families will be able to afford and access high-quality child development services; Vermont's child development workforce will receive the resources and support that they need to provide high-quality programming to the state's children.

## CDD Structure

The Child Development Division (CDD) works with partners to provide Vermonters with affordable access to high-quality child care and child development services.

CDD's offices are located centrally in Waterbury, though many of our 63 staff members travel throughout the state to work directly with child care facilities and our community partners.

The **Operations Unit** coordinates key CDD functions related to financial assistance, IT systems, and data management reporting is led by **Karolyn Long**, CDD's Director of Operations.

- The **Data team**, which performs data analytics and reporting for the division
- The **Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP)**
- The **Business Application Support Unit (BASU)**, which supports CDD's data system and software integration within the division

The **Child Care Licensing Unit** regulates Vermont's licensed child care programs to state and federal standards. The unit is led by **Beth Maurer**, CDD's Child Care Licensing Director. The Unit includes:

- **Field Licensing Specialists**, who perform the unit's site-based regulatory and investigatory work.
- **Child Care Business Technicians**, who help license new programs and ensure that child care professionals reflect Vermont's requirements for background checks and professional credentials.



The **Statewide Systems team**, which administers systems, supports, and services to Vermont child cares, the early childhood and afterschool workforce, young children, and their families. These teams are directed by **Dawn Rouse**, Director of Statewide Systems. The teams are:

- The **Child Care Quality and Capacity** team administers programs to improve quality and increase capacity of child care, including the STARS quality recognition and improvement system and programs supporting the early childhood and afterschool workforce.
- The **Children’s Integrated Services** teams coordinate multiple services for young children and their families, such as early intervention, through regional partners.

The **Shared Supports and Services Unit** provides internal support to CDD teams, including project management, cross-team and cross-agency grant management, policy development, administrative support, and communications services. This unit is led by **Chris Case**, CDD’s Director of Policy and Planning.

## CDD Programs

The Child Development Division provides many programs and services to Vermont children, families, and those who support them.

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### Children’s Integrated Services (CIS)

Children’s Integrated Services (CIS) are available to all families with children – from before birth, up until they turn 6 – that have a variety of specialized needs. CIS is available to support:

- A family’s health and well-being throughout pregnancy and the post-partum period.
- A child’s healthy growth with speech, language, movement, vision, and hearing – from birth to age 3.
- Finding quality child care that supports a child’s and family’s goals and needs.
- The positive social and emotional development of children – up to age 6.

CIS is implemented through bundled contracts with the state’s regional vendors. Each CIS region customizes its approach to service provision based on the expertise of area partners and the needs of its clients.

On average in 2025, 1682 Vermont families were enrolled in CIS, with that total number varying from month to month. The chart below describes the caseload of families that



each CIS region in the state serves. The “Clients” column indicates the number of number of clients that each regional team needs to average per month between 1/1/24 and 12/31/25 to pull down their full budget. The remaining columns reflect monthly regional caseloads, and the ten-month average caseload per region.

Region	Clients	Dec. 2024	Jan. 2025	Feb. 2025	Mar. 2025	Apr. 2025	May 2025	Jun. 2025	Jul. 2025	Aug. 2025	Sep. 2025	10 Mo Avg
Barre	189.4	198	188	171	171	172	194	182	187	150	163	178
Bennington	178.5	194	209	188	210	192	179	169	153	168	191	185
Brattleboro	143.0	151	146	136	155	160	163	173	160	162	139	155
Burlington	441.6	424	446	422	449	449	444	472	452	448	432	444
Hartford	128.2	142	146	137	135	137	146	135	149	134	121	138
Middlebury	94.9	96	111	96	107	104	107	87	99	97	101	101
Morrisville	124.6	119	118	109	113	118	113	109	105	102	105	111
NEK	142.3	118	108	113	116	111	103	106	104	105	118	110
Rutland	132.7	143	184	155	129	147	166	194	168	170	167	162
Springfield	105.3	103	103	99	101	90	97	88	102	105	95	98
VERMONT	1680.2	1759	1626	1626	1686	1680	1712	1715	1679	1641	1632	1682

Figure 1: Client caseloads in each Children's Integrated Services Region

Through regional care teams designed to streamline referral, evaluation and services coordination, CIS provides four core services.

### Early Intervention Services

These are services for infants and toddlers through age three with special needs. They may be experiencing developmental delays or have diagnosed conditions that have a high probability of resulting in developmental delays. Some of these services may include occupational and physical therapy, assistive technology, family training & counseling, nursing services, and service coordination, among other things.

### Specialized Child Care

Specialized Child Care serves three distinct populations: families who have open cases with DCF's Family Services, families experiencing significant stress, and children with special needs. SCC is offered through regulated child care programs that have 3 or



more STARS, are in good standing with CDD, and complete a set of specialized trainings.

Special Accommodation Grants are CDD-administered funds that allow approved Specialized Child Cares to better support a child or children's safe inclusion within their program. Grants provide financial support for up to 12 months.

### **Strong Families Home Visiting**

In close partnership with VDH, the Strong Families Vermont Home Visiting program offers families free, convenient, and flexible visits with a nurse or family support professional. Home visiting is offered to individuals at any point during a pregnancy, or until their child turns six, through the Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home Visiting (MECSH) program or the Parents as Teachers program.

### **Early Childhood and Family Mental Health**

These are services that utilize a family-centered approach to support a child's development and to reduce risks. The program performs clinical assessment, provides preventative treatment to address an event or detect challenges, performs consultation and education to improve the overall capacity of caregivers and professionals, and delivers direct treatment services, all to support the healthy social, emotional, and behavioral development of young children.

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## **Child Care Licensing**

The Child Care Licensing team provides the health and safety regulatory foundation for the rest of the division's work with child care programs. Vermont's child care system currently licenses spaces for over 33,000 children statewide for children in Registered or Licensed Family Child Care Homes, Center-Based Child Care and Preschool Programs, and licensed Afterschool Programs. Each of the license types could serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers, or school-age children, with the exception of Afterschool Program licenses which only serve children from Kindergarten through age 13.

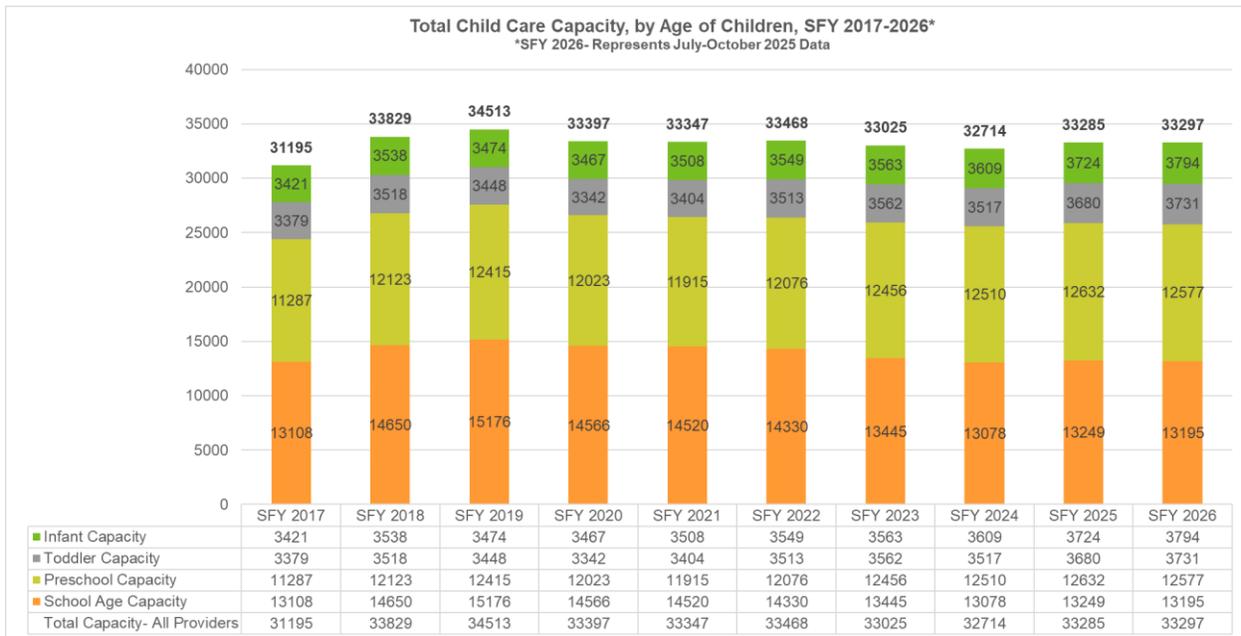


Figure 2: Total child care capacity, by age of children, state fiscal years 2017-2026

Collectively, the licensing team processes applications from child care programs, processes staff records, and conducts annual on-site compliance visits with all licensed and registered child care programs. Licensors regularly conduct complaint investigations, sometimes in partnership with FSD and AOE.

Child Care Licensing Regulations describe fundamental guidelines that Vermont child care facilities and programs are required to follow. These Rules, and the work of CDD’s 25-person Child Care Licensing Unit, ensure that children in care, early education and afterschool programs in Vermont are provided with positive growth and learning experiences.

CDD’s Licensing Regulations are currently being revised in preparation for promulgation in 2026. Revisions reflect updated state and federal guidance, best practices learned since the Rules were last revised, and input from the field.

## Child Care Financial Assistance

The Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) is a CDD program that reduces child care costs for eligible families. Many Vermont families qualify, including families that might not self-identify as being eligible for a benefit. As a result of Act 76 of 2023, CDD repeatedly expanded program eligibility from 2023 to 2025; currently, families making up to 575% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) qualify for assistance. The state



rates paid directly to child care programs on behalf of families through CCFAP also increase dramatically in 2023 and 2024.

Applications are processed by Community Child Care Support Agencies (CCCSAs) that CDD contracts with, and can be submitted through a variety of channels; a new online option was added in 2025, and has already been very well received and heavily utilized by Vermont families and child care providers.

To qualify for CCFAP, families must live in Vermont; have a qualifying reason for needing child care (the full list of accepted reasons is available to view at [DCF.Vermont.gov/Benefits/CCFAP](http://DCF.Vermont.gov/Benefits/CCFAP)); meet the program’s income guidelines, and apply their benefit through a child care, preschool, or afterschool care that is regulated by CDD. CCCSAs and Eligibility Specialists deliver guidance and technical assistance to applying families and child care providers.

The charts below reflects the average number of children receiving CCFAP over the last decade. After slow decline and a COVID-related dip, the number of children has increased dramatically since 2023.

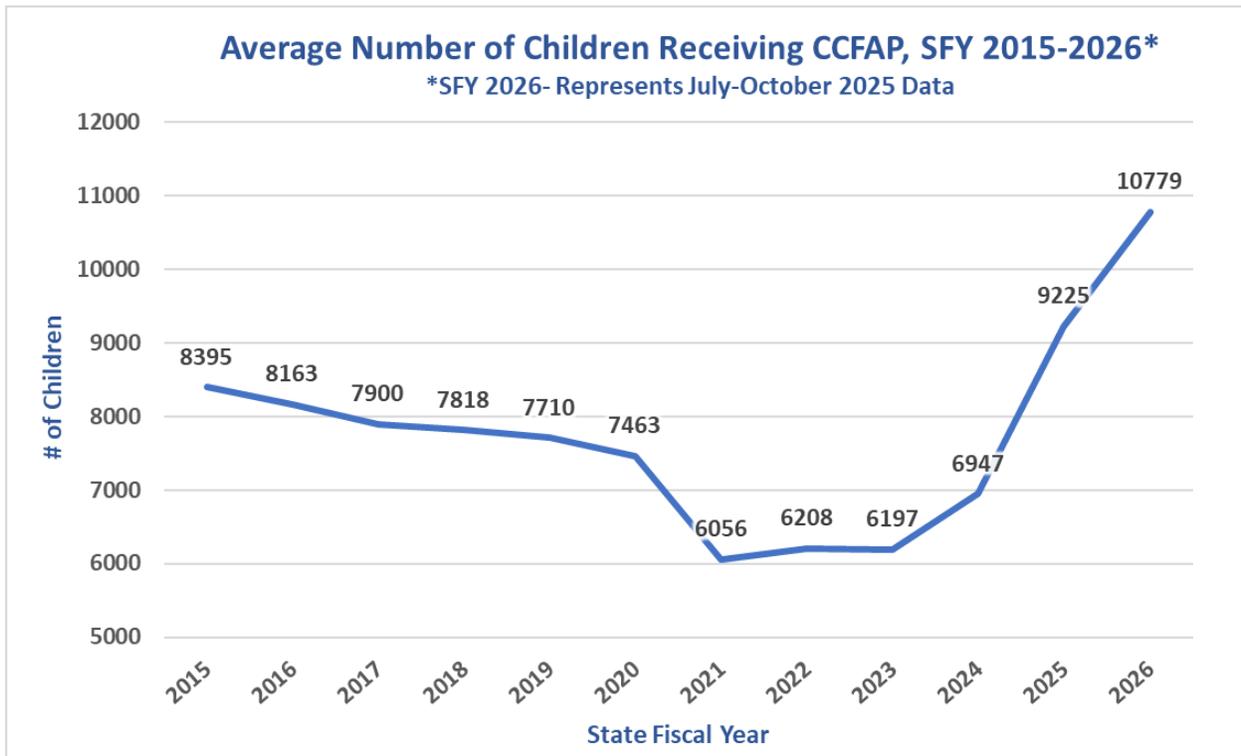


Figure 2: Average number of children receiving CCFAP between state fiscal years 2015 and 2026.



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## Universal Pre-Kindergarten

Vermont's Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) was established by Act 166 of 2014. Building on prior efforts, Act 166 expanded access statewide by requiring all public school districts to offer or contract for state-funded Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) for three-, four-, and five-year-old children not enrolled in kindergarten for a minimum of 10 hours per week for 35 weeks annually, at the prequalified program location of the family's choosing. To standardize quality, a statewide UPK prequalification process was established for all prekindergarten education programs, including Head Start, private centers, family child care home providers, and public school-operated programs, that included requirements related to staffing, assessments, curriculum, and monitoring.

UPK is jointly overseen by DCF's Child Development Division and the Agency of Education (AOE); this arrangement leverages the strengths, expertise, and systems at both the Agencies. Together, the teams work to set policy, support implementation, monitor compliance, and improve practice in service to Vermont's youngest students. CDD monitors UPK programs for compliance with childcare licensing regulations and the STARS quality system. CDD and AOE also coordinate to provide complementary support, guidance, and professional development to UPK program leaders and staff. Both agencies offer professional development, technical assistance and coaching designed to support individual UPK programs' continuous quality improvement.

Vermont is a national leader in providing access to high-quality prekindergarten (PreK) education in inclusive settings. The state boasts high enrollment, ranking second nationally for program participation among 3 and 4-year-olds. The high participation rates are paired with a strong commitment to quality, as Vermont meets 7 out of 10 of the NIEER benchmark standards. This investment has translated to positive child outcomes. Data indicates that children who participate in UPK program enter kindergarten more ready to learn than their peers who did not attend.

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## Vermont Head Start Collaboration Office

Vermont's Head Start Collaboration Office (VHSCO) is housed within CDD and funded by the federal Office of Head Start (OHS). The VHSCO supports coordination across Vermont's Head Start and Early Head Start system and partners with state and local agencies to strengthen policies and practices that benefit young children and families.

Vermont has seven Head Start/Early Head Start recipients that together serve approximately 1,250 children annually and bring about \$27–28 million in federal funding into the state each year. Services are targeted to families with the greatest need, with eligibility primarily based on income at or below the federal poverty level and priority given to children experiencing homelessness, foster care, disability, or other significant risk factors.



## Child Care Quality and Capacity

### STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS)

The STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) is the State of Vermont's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS) for childcare, preschool, and afterschool programs. Participation in STARS means that a program is striving beyond licensing regulations to meet higher quality standards, uphold professional practices, and commit to continuous quality improvement.

The Child Development Division (CDD) launched a revised STARS model on July 1 in July, 2023 with increased focus on positive outcomes for children, engagement of families, equitable opportunities for programs and providers to participate, and support for continuous quality improvement. STARS recognizes program's practices within three elements of quality: Adult-Child Interactions, Family & Youth Engagement, and Responsive Practices.

There are five levels in STARS. All registered and licensed childcare programs in good standing with Vermont childcare licensing are considered STARS level 1, and engagement at the consecutive levels is voluntary.

As part of the revised STARS model, CDD also launched the **System for Program Access to Resources for Quality Supports (SPARQS)** as a hub of direct resources and supports for educators across the state. SPARQS is administered through Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children and Vermont Afterschool. SPARQS supports a system of quality through providing direct supports, including the CLASS® assessment, mentoring, coaching and technical assistance and professional development opportunities at no charge to programs.

Programs that improve or renew their STARS ratings and/or attain Specialized Child Care Status are eligible to receive financial bonuses. These bonuses were expanded as a part of the Quality and Capacity Incentive Program within Act 76.

### Quality and Capacity Incentive Program

The Child Care Quality and Capacity Incentive Program supports child care providers in improving their program quality and increasing their program capacity. It does this by offering incentive payments to providers who:

- Improve their program quality ratings (STARS)
- Increase or maintain their infant and toddler care capacity
- Offer full-time and extended hours
- Offer Specialized Child Care
- Increase their professional credentials



Participating programs and/or educators may receive one-time recognition bonus or an annual payment to support improved program quality, expanded capacity, or other related achievements.

## Capacity Grants

CDD partners with Vermont Afterschool to offer the **Room For Me Grant Program**. These grants provide financial resources to new or existing regulated, center-based child care, afterschool programs, or family child care homes delivering afterschool and summer programming to help increase and/or maintain the availability of child care spaces throughout the State of Vermont.

CDD partners with First Children's Finance to offer the **Make Way for Kids Infant/Toddler Capacity Building Grant Program**. These grants provide financial resources to help programs increase and/or maintain the availability of infant and toddler child care spaces across the state.

To preserve access to child care for Vermont families, regulated child care providers can ask for **Extraordinary Financial Relief** if they are at risk of closing; unable to operate, open or expand as planned, or enrolling children from a program that is closing. Extraordinary Financial Relief is only given if families' access to child care is at risk. The program is intended to address unplanned or emergency needs.

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## Workforce Supports

The Child Development Division (CDD) funds numerous efforts to support members of the regulated child care workforce to achieve their educational goals and advance their credentials in ways that are accessible and affordable at various stages of their careers. Programs funded by CDD include:

- Northern Lights at CCV, the state's hub for the early childhood and afterschool workforce, verifies credentials and professional development as well as provides training and advising
- Vermont Association of Young Children offers a continuum of supports for early childhood educators:
  - T.E.A.C.H Early Childhood scholarships, a comprehensive scholarship that includes tuition, release time, and books for those seeing AA, BA, and AOE Educator Licensure
  - Vermont Early Childhood Education Registered Apprenticeship, a program that pairs in-program learning guided by a mentor with college-level coursework
  - Vermont Early Childhood Education Youth Apprenticeship, a training program for high school CTE students that includes training, college coursework, and paid internships



- Student Loan Repayment Assistance Program, funds for student loan payments for early childhood educators working in regulated child care
- Vermont Afterschool, the state's primary resource for afterschool and summer programs, offers professional development and training to those working with school-age children outside of the school day.

The Division also provides grants to support training and coursework for leadership development and advanced training like Early Childhood Educators Institute, the Program for Infants and Toddlers Certification, and the Early Childhood Leadership Institute. In addition, people working within regulated child care can access grants for specific courses and receive financial bonuses when they achieve new degrees and credentials.

These investments align with the state's understanding in the state of the need for preparation and training aligned with core knowledge and competencies of early childhood educators and afterschool staff.

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## Additional Key CDD Program Partners

**Building Bright Futures (BBF)** is established by statute, primarily under 33 V.S.A. § 4602, as the state's early childhood public-private partnership to create a strategic plan and advise the government on early care, health, and education for children from prenatal to age eight. It's charged with developing and monitoring the state's vision, identifying needs, and reporting to the Governor and legislature. The BBF Network includes Early Childhood State Advisory Council, twelve Regional Councils, and multiple Strategic Plan Committees.

In addition to providing state and federal funding, CDD staff members serve in leadership roles in BBF network and as members on BBF committees. BBF is a key partner in critical state initiatives, including the development and implementation of the federal Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five in Vermont.

**The Vermont Parent Child Center Network** provides collaborative leadership and support to the state's 15 Parent Child Centers to achieve the best outcomes for Vermont's children and families. Since 2024, CDD has provided state funds to all PCCs through a grant with the VPCCN.

Vermont's Parent Child Centers are community-based hubs that provide a range of services and programs to support families. They are partners in Vermont's systems of care for pregnant and parenting families with children under age six, and work to ensure that children thrive in safe, stable, and nurturing environments, and that parents have needed supports, information and resources.



# Office of Child Support (OCS)

## Director Lisa Rivers

Lisa Rivers became Vermont's Child Support Director in October 2022. She began her career in child support in 2007 and has held a range of leadership and operational roles, including Paralegal Supervisor, Field Regional Manager, and Deputy Director. Prior to joining OCS, Lisa worked as a restorative justice professional as well as a mediator, assisting families as they navigated divorce and separation.

OCS's mission is to promote the well-being of all families by strengthening their financial safety net. Lisa brings a systems-level perspective and a strong understanding of frontline operations to her role, with a focus on program accountability, effective use of resources, and policies that support family stability. She is committed to working collaboratively with agency and community partners to expand access, strengthen coordination, and deliver effective, family-centered child support services that respond to the evolving needs of the families OCS serves.

## OCS Deputy Directors

Amanda Nelson

Ashley Marsh

Cara Bogaczyk

Stefanie Williams

## Our Mission

The Vermont Office of Child Support promotes the well-being of all families by strengthening their financial safety net. We provide quality services and information to parents, caregivers, and community partners involved in the child support process.

## About the Office of Child Support

The Office of Child Support (OCS) manages the Vermont child support program under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act by establishing parentage, medical and child support orders, enforcing and modifying child support orders when necessary, and locating non-custodial parents. By collecting and disbursing child support payments, the program improves the financial condition of many children while avoiding and offsetting major expenditures by Vermont taxpayers for aid to needy families, social services, and health care.



Child support can be a complicated process, often requiring multiple steps and case actions. Examples of case actions include filing court actions, pursuing administrative collections, appearing in court, and processing employer wage withholding notices and payments.

OCS is a statewide program under DCF that is 66% federally funded. In Federal Fiscal Year 2024 (FFY24) OCS collected more than \$40 million benefitting more than 12,000 families annually.

**In FFY 2024, Vermont OCS collected \$2.35 in child support payments for every \$1 expended, making OCS one of the most cost-effective government programs.**

The Office has 108 employees, with five regional offices, plus one central office located in Waterbury.

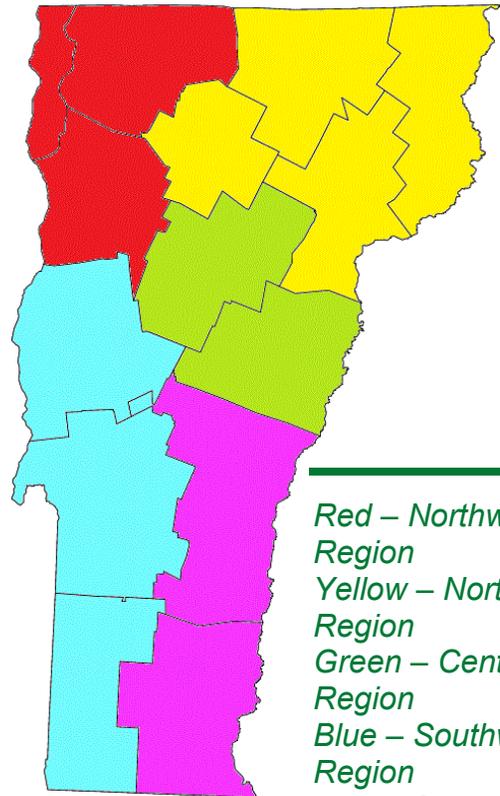
## Central Office

OCS’s central office in Waterbury consists of our Customer Service, Records Center, Intergovernmental, Intercept, Locate, Cash Receipts units, along with our Operations team that consists of OCS management, administrative staff, quality assurance and compliance staff, policy, training, project management, finance and data staff members who perform a variety of duties to support the organization.

## Regional Offices

OCS has five regional offices, located throughout the state that provide direct service to families who are navigating the child support process. The regions serve every county in the State and are located as follows:

- Central Region in Barre (serving Orange & Washington Counties)
- Northeast Region in St. Johnsbury (serving Caledonia, Essex, Lamoille, & Orleans Counties)
- Northwest Region in Burlington with a satellite office in St. Albans (serving Chittenden, Franklin, & Grand Isle Counties)



*Red – Northwest Region  
 Yellow – Northeast Region  
 Green – Central Region  
 Blue – Southwest Region  
 Pink – Southeast Region*



- Southeast Region in Springfield (serving Windham & Windsor Counties)
- Southwest Region in Rutland with a satellite office in Bennington (serving Addison, Bennington, & Rutland Counties)

## The National Picture – Vermont as a Top Performer

Vermont OCS is ranked as one of the top child support programs in the nation (no. 6), outperforming the national average for establishment of parentage, percent of cases with collections (both current support and arrearages), and percent of cases with obligations.

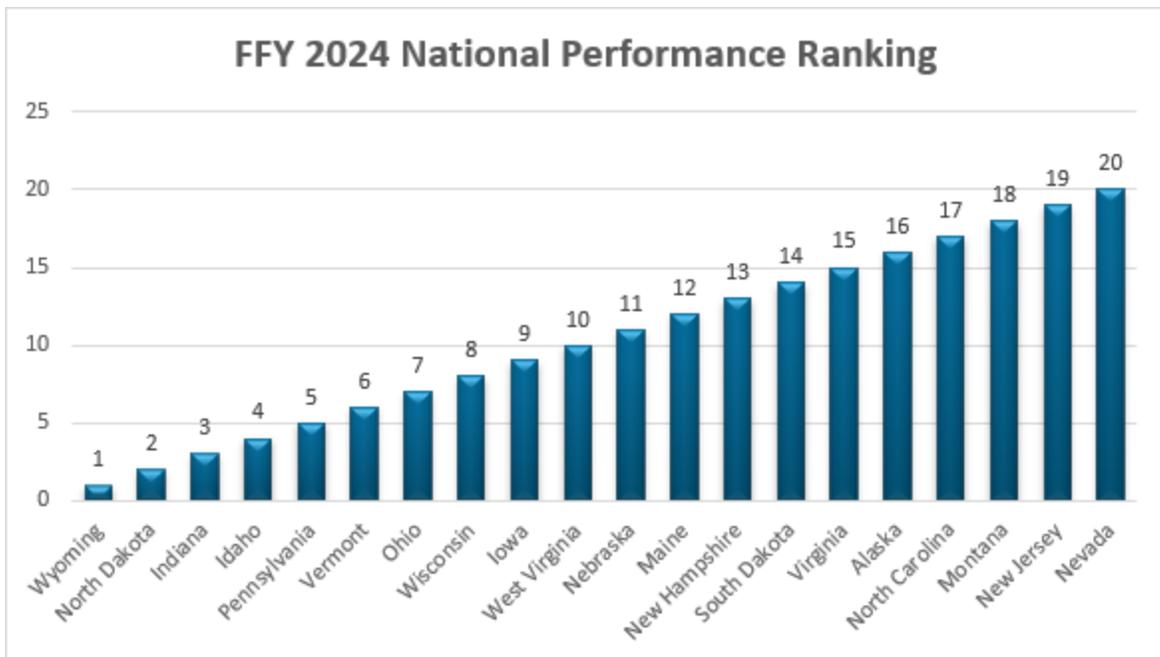


Figure 3: National child support program rankings.

Collecting the full amount of child support due on every case is, of course, a goal for OCS. Understanding, however, that not all cases will receive a collection, OCS tracks how we perform compared to other states in the country. Vermont collects on 74% of our cases, compared to the national average of 65%. While we are leaders nationally, we will continue to seek improvements to our program until we collect every dollar due to the families we serve.



Figure 4: Percentage of child support cases with collections for federal fiscal year 2024

## How do we do it?

### Regional Offices

Our regional offices are responsible for providing direct services to customers, including individual case management, assistance with filing motions with the court, and attendance at court events. Each region is comprised of:

- **Regional Manager** who oversees the day-to-day operations of the region,
- **Regional Attorneys** who provide legal oversight and guidance,
- **Child Support** and **Paralegal Supervisors** who provide training and support to Paralegals and Child Support Specialists who provide direct services to customers with case management and assistance through court process, and
- **District Office Coordinators (DOC)** who perform various administrative and customer service tasks.

Child Support Specialists (CSS) manage an average caseload of approximately 450 cases each. CSSs monitor cases for compliance and respond to the needs of the customer. CSSs draft court filings, coordinate agreements, and often participate in Case Manager Conferences with parents prior to a hearing being set in order to negotiate child support obligations that are satisfactory to all parties. Such conferences often result in parents entering into stipulations without having to hold a hearing before the Family Court Magistrate.

If agreements are not met, or when payment of child support needs to be enforced, Paralegals and Attorneys participate in hearings before the Magistrate or Family Court Judge. Rule 10 of the Vermont Rules for Family Proceedings allows a duly qualified non-attorney employee of the Office of Child Support to appear before a Magistrate. While our staff attend court events with customers, they do not provide legal advice or representation.



District Office Coordinators (DOCs) provide administrative support to the regional offices, accepting child support payments made in the region, coordinating service of process for litigants required to appear for court events, and much more.

Staff in our regional offices file more than 200 filings in the Family Division of the Vermont Superior Court each and every month.

**Central Office**

**OCS Customer Service Unit (CSU)** is available to respond to customer phone calls and emails Monday through Friday, 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM. In addition, OCS provides a 24-hour automated telephone system and a web-based parent portal that offers payment information, arrears balances, upcoming court events, and other important resources. CSU handles an average of 1,500 calls each month and will expand services in 2026 to include live chat, providing an additional convenient option for customers.

CSU ensures families have timely access to information and support regarding their child support cases through multiple communication channels. By providing responsive, accurate, and convenient customer service, the unit helps parents stay informed, facilitates payments, and strengthens compliance with child support obligations, ultimately supporting the financial stability of Vermont children and families.

**Records Center Unit** processes all applications received by OCS, including public applications and referrals from the Economic Services Division for individuals receiving cash public assistance. The unit also enters court orders into the ACCESS system, enabling garnishment orders and accurate tracking of child support obligations, and manages documents and requests from other states’ child support agencies.

These functions ensure that child support orders are processed efficiently, obligations are accurately tracked, and families receive timely support, while reducing delays and minimizing the need for court intervention.

Records Center Activities 2025	Results
Application Processing	Processed 2,605 applications for child support services (936 non–public assistance applications from the public and 1,669 public assistance applications referred by the Economic Services Division)
Order Entry	3,785 child support orders were entered on to the ACCESS system
Obligation Termination	Determined and updated termination dates for 762 child support cases



Records Center Activities 2025	Results
Interstate Requests	Processed 167 requests from other state child support agencies to establish or enforce child support orders

**Intergovernmental Unit** manages more than 2,600 cases in which at least one parent resides outside Vermont, working closely with regional offices and child support agencies from other states to establish and enforce support orders. The unit also provides staff training and guidance and reviews system data to ensure accurate federal reporting.

These efforts ensure that child support obligations are effectively enforced across state lines, help secure timely financial support for Vermont children, and maintain compliance with state and federal requirements while reducing delays and administrative errors.

**Intercept Unit** utilizes a range of administrative enforcement remedies to collect child support for Vermont families. These remedies include bank levies; trustee processes, such as those applied to insurance settlements; non-renewal of professional licenses; passport denials; lottery and tax intercepts; property liens; and administrative arrears repayment wage garnishment orders. Administrative remedies are used when an obligor has not met their child support obligation but has identifiable assets that can be applied toward support.

Administrative enforcement allows OCS to collect child support efficiently and cost-effectively without requiring court intervention in every case. By leveraging existing assets—such as settlements, benefits, and liens—OCS ensures that support owed to children is collected even when obligors are not voluntarily compliant. These tools reduce strain on the court system, promote accountability, and deliver timely financial support to Vermont families while maximizing federal performance outcomes.

Category	2025
Bank Levies	\$19,481.26
Worker's Compensation Settlements	\$111,871.62
Personal Estates	\$27,949.25
Personal Injury Settlements/Work bonuses	\$29,472.56
Social Security Disability Retroactive Awards	\$99,828.45



Category	2025
Unclaimed Property	\$9,522.06
Settlements to avoid administrative action	\$12,255.19
Passport Denial Settlements	\$53,615.73
Lottery	\$11,286.75
Federal and State Tax Collections (Collected in 2025, but not necessarily disbursed)	\$2,264,289.97
Property Liens	\$90,077.64
<b>Total Collections</b>	<b>\$2,729,650.48</b>
Arrears Repayment was added Administratively (Number of cases)	70

Figure 5: Amount and categories of assets collected for the purposes of child support in 2025

**Locate Unit.** Locate services are a critical function within OCS, helping to establish and enforce child support orders when a parent’s whereabouts is unknown. Using advanced investigative tools and systems in collaboration with partners such as the Department of Public Safety and DMV, the Locate Unit manages an average of 636 active cases, adding 119 new cases each month and successfully locating an average of 113 parents monthly.

These efforts ensure that child support obligations can be enforced, provide timely financial support to Vermont children, reduce delays in case resolution, and minimize the need for prolonged court involvement.

2025	Cases into locate	Cases in locate at end of month	Located Cases
January	67	581	109
February	94	587	96
March	67	537	127
April	92	527	114



2025	Cases into locate	Cases in locate at end of month	Located Cases
May	156	593	85
June	185	640	138
July	167	671	149
August	119	670	129
September	115	590	103
October	201	769	119
November	60	734	96
December	106	736	91
<b>TOTALS</b>	1429		1356
<b>Average:</b>	119	636	113

Figure 6: Overview of 2025 cases where OCS attempted to locate parents for the purposes of establishing and enforcing child support orders.

**Cash Receipts Unit** is responsible for the processing of all child support payments received—money in and money out and everything that goes along with those transactions.

During FFY 2025, total child support collections totaled \$41.6 million, with 68.6 percent representing IV-D current support, underscoring the program’s focus on providing timely, ongoing financial support to families. IV-D arrears accounted for 21.6 percent of collections, reflecting continued efforts to ensure past-due support is paid to children. OCS also collected over \$4 million for approximately 2,400 “Non-IV-D” cases, where the agency receives and disburses payments for families not enrolled in OCS services. These results highlight OCS’s commitment to directing child support payments to families efficiently while maintaining program integrity and compliance with federal requirements.



Collection Category	Total Collections	TANF Portion	Non-TANF Portion	Share of Total Collections
IV-D Current Support	\$28,522,586	\$995,239	\$27,527,347	68.60%
IV-D Arrears	\$8,972,282	\$4,308,668	\$4,663,614	21.58%
Non-IV-D (Current & Arrears)	\$4,082,073	--	\$4,082,073	8.82%
<b>TOTAL COLLECTIONS</b>	<b>\$41,576,941</b>	<b>\$5,303,907</b>	<b>\$36,273,034</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>

**Operations team** includes OCS management, administrative staff, quality assurance and compliance staff, policy and training specialists, project management, finance, and data personnel, all of whom perform a wide range of duties to support the organization. By coordinating administrative functions, ensuring program compliance, providing policy guidance and staff training, managing projects, and overseeing financial and data operations, the team enables OCS to operate efficiently, maintain accountability, and deliver timely, effective services to Vermont families.

## Office of Child Support 2025 Highlights

**OCS turns 50!** The national child support program celebrated its 50-year anniversary on January 4, 2025. Vermont was the first state to celebrate this milestone by holding an open house at the state complex in Waterbury. There were various exhibits on display that showed the history and impact of the program over time. Several state leaders, including Agency of Human Services Secretary Samuelson and then DCF Commissioner Winters, spoke at this event that was attended by former and current OCS employees, our agency and statewide partners, and a representative from the federal office of child support. OCS has evolved over the years from being solely a recovery program involving only families who receive cash public assistance to a program that provides supports to any parent involved in a child support matter, either as a payor of support or a recipient.

**Collaborations for higher efficiency.** The Judiciary and OCS collaborated to improve the efficiency of service of process in cases where OCS provides services and has filed a motion with the Court. Previously service of process was arranged by the Court,



however under a pilot program authorized by Administrative Rule 50, arranging for service shifted to OCS, leveraging OCS’s locate resources and case familiarity. Although this change increased OCS workload, the pilot demonstrated significant efficiency gains, was expanded statewide, and a permanent amendment to the Rule is now being sought.

**Safely pursuing Child Support.** It is a goal for OCS to assist all parents/guardians with safely pursuing child support. We know for some families that it is not a given due to issues of family violence. To address these concerns OCS has formed a taskforce team of staff members who work collaboratively with Economic Services Division, community partners such as DV networks and law enforcement, as well as our federal partners to address concerns, identify processes, provide access to training and resources to staff, etc.

Vermont has been deemed a leader throughout the country in our efforts to provide this support to families. We are very proud of the work this team is accomplishing.



*For the past several years, the DV Team has promoted Purple Thursday which is held each year during Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October to raise awareness for this important topic and support survivors of all types of abuse. We encourage our staff to share pictures wearing their purple!*

**Helping parents find and keep employment so they can meet their child support obligations.** The Work4Kids program is a partnership between the Office of Child Support, HireAbility Vermont, Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and the Judiciary. Parents who are experiencing barriers to finding or keeping employment work with EAP and HireAbility to address those barriers. In 2025, 170 parents were

referred to this program.

Also in 2025, OCS and Department of Labor (DOL) began exploring further collaboration opportunities to assist even more parents in finding gainful employment. OCS and DOL look forward to kicking off the RISE (Resources, Income, Skills & Employment) program in 2026!



## Customer Focus

A strategic goal of the Office of Child Support (OCS) is to incorporate family feedback to improve service delivery. To support this goal, OCS conducted a Family Input Study to gather direct customer feedback on their experiences. In response, OCS developed process maps outlining key court-related steps, created a standardized template to assist customers in organizing and submitting unreimbursed medical expenses, and piloted a proactive customer intake process to welcome new customers and connect them with available resources. The intake pilot received strong customer ratings, and OCS plans to implement the process statewide in 2026. In recognition of this work, the OCS Family Input Study Team received the State of Vermont Annual Improvement Award.

Also, in 2025, OCS launched a customer newsletter to keep subscribers informed about available resources, community events, and program updates. Customers may subscribe through their service application or via the OCS website. In 2026, the newsletter will include information on a new live chat service and expanded payment options, including Venmo, PayPal, and Apple Pay.

OCS is committed to ensuring that services and resources are accessible to all Vermonters. The program is actively updating its language access processes and reviewing public-facing materials to ensure compliance with accessibility standards.

Together, these initiatives reflect OCS's ongoing commitment to customer-centered service delivery. By actively seeking feedback, improving communication, expanding access to services, and reducing barriers to engagement, OCS continues to strengthen its ability to meet the needs of Vermont families and improve outcomes for those it serves.

## System Modernization

OCS currently operates on a case management system that is more than 40 years old. As other divisions transition away from the State's mainframe infrastructure, OCS has been directed to prioritize system modernization to ensure continuity of operations, data security, and effective service delivery. Modernization of the child support system is eligible for 66 percent federal financial participation, reducing the State's share of costs. The first required step in acquiring a new system, following the appropriation of funding, is completion of a federally mandated feasibility study. OCS anticipates procuring a vendor to conduct this study in 2026.

In summary, the Office of Child Support continues to advance initiatives that strengthen program effectiveness, improve customer experience, and modernize critical infrastructure. Through collaboration with partners, responsible stewardship of state and federal resources, and a sustained focus on service delivery, OCS remains committed to supporting Vermont families and ensuring the child support program operates efficiently, equitably, and in compliance with federal and state requirements.



# Office of Disability Determination Services (DDS)

## Director Jack McCormack

Jack has a long history of effective leadership in the Social Security disability program, starting his career with the New Jersey DDS in 1991 before transferring to the Vermont DDS in January 2002. Jack has held a variety of roles in the disability program, including Adjudicator, Hearings Officer, Trainer, Quality Specialist and Assistant Director, eventually becoming DDS Director in August 2021. Jack is an active board member of the National Council of Disability Determination Directors (NCDDD), serving as regional representative and chairperson of the policy/quality committee, working directly with leaders in SSA.

Jack has a Bachelor of Art degree in Communication from Seton Hall University. He graduated from the Vermont Public Manager program in 2012 and received Disability Hearings Officer certification in 2002 from the University of Pacific/McGeorge School of Law.

## Our Mission

The Office of Disability Determination Services strives to provide all applicants with disability determinations that are accurate, prompt, cost-effective, thorough and fair with consideration of each applicant's unique situation.

## About the Office of Disability Determination Services

The Office of Disability Determination Services (DDS) is responsible for determining the medical eligibility of Vermonters applying for Social Security disability benefits (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and State Medicaid benefits through Green Mountain Care.

The Vermont DDS is a national leader in accuracy, timeliness, and public service, including during the recent federal government shutdown.

The DDS is part of a unique federal-state partnership to administer the Social Security disability program. DDS is a state office under DCF and is nearly 100% federally funded. SSA funds the cost of DDS operations and controls budget, workload and staffing. SSA rules govern all case processing decisions. DDS must meet specific performance standards established by SSA.



The Vermont DDS is centrally located in one Waterbury office.

## Office of Disability Determination Services 2025 Highlights

DDS is proud of many of its outcomes from the past year. A partial list of some of our accomplishments may be found below.

### Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2025 DDS Outcomes

- Initial case processing time of 79.3 days, second lowest in nation (National average = 190 days)
- Disability decisions for 6,488 Social Security claims and 254 State Medicaid claims
- Initial decisional accuracy = 99% (among Top 10 states)
- Presumptive disability (PD) rate = 50.6%, highest in nation
- (PDs provide the most vulnerable Vermonters applying for SSI with provisional benefits pending a final determination)

### FFY2026 Highlights:

- During the federal government shutdown in the fall of 2025, Vermont DDS had the fastest benefits processing time of any state SSA office in the country, despite a lack of federal support due to the shutdown.
- Vermont DDS was able to bring its initial case processing time down to 70.5 days (see graph below for trend).
- Our initial performance accuracy was 99% for filed claims.

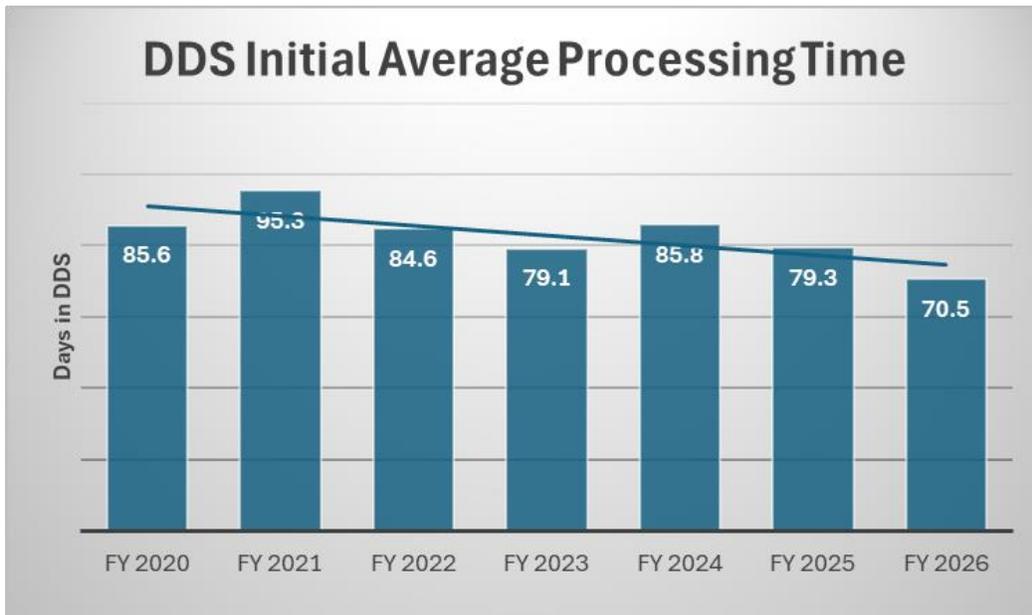


Figure 7: Disability Determination Services initial average processing time - FY2020 through FY2026

## DDS Programs

### Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)

SSDI provides monthly benefits to individuals who have disability that stops or limits their ability to work. To qualify for SSDI, individuals must have enough work history, meet the medical criteria and be insured. The program also provides Medicare coverage after receiving SSDI for 24 months

### Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

SSI provides monthly benefits to individuals with little or no income and resources who have disability. To qualify for SSI payments, a person must meet the income and resource guidelines and medical criteria. Children under age 18 may qualify for SSI if they meet the applicable disability, blindness, income and resource requirements.



## State Medicaid for the Aged, Blind and Disabled

Provides Medicaid benefits to Vermonters through Green Mountain Care, including Disabled Children's Home Care (Katie Beckett) benefits. Individuals must meet the medical criteria for disability, and disabled children must meet the Level of Care criteria for DCHC/Katie Beckett benefits.

# Economic Services Division (ESD)

## Deputy Commissioner Miranda Gray

Miranda Gray is the Deputy Commissioner for Vermont's Agency of Human Services, Department for Children and Families, Economic Services Division (ESD), a role she has held since February 2023. In this position, Miranda provides strategic leadership for programs that strengthen Vermont families and communities through economic stability, access to basic needs, and opportunities for long-term success.

Before stepping into her current role, Miranda served as Deputy Commissioner for the Department's Child Development Division, where she advanced initiatives supporting early childhood development and family well-being.

Miranda has been with the State of Vermont for more than 18 years, serving in a range of positions within the Economic Services Division and the Reach Up Program. Her career began at the Orange County Parent Child Center, where she worked as a Family Support Worker and later as a contracted Reach Up Case Manager, experiences that continue to ground her approach in empathy, collaboration, and community partnership.

A graduate of the Snelling Center for Government's Vermont Leadership Institute, Miranda also holds a bachelor's degree in psychology. In her current role, Miranda has guided the Economic Services Division through a period of significant challenge and change, including Vermont's response to statewide flooding, multiple Executive Orders, and major program updates to the General Assistance program. She has also overseen the Division's implementation of federal law changes that significantly affected the 3SquaresVT program and its community partners, as well as the Division's response to the longest federal government shutdown in U.S. history, which impacted multiple ESD programs and the Vermonters who rely on them.

Miranda describes her career as dedicated to supporting Vermonters and their families. She remains deeply committed to advancing equitable, person-centered systems that help individuals and communities thrive.



## **Division Directors and Program Administrators**

**Melissa Bocash**, Reach Up Administrator

**Mark Eley**, General & Emergency Assistance Director

**Richard Giddings**, Fuel and Utility Assistance Program Director

**Andy Lange**, Economic Benefits Director

**Monika Madaras**, Director of Communications & Legislative Affairs

**Suzanne Shibley**, Workforce Development Director

**Nicole Tousignant**, Economic Benefits Director

**Leslie Wisdom**, Food and Nutrition Program Director

### **Our Mission**

To provide high quality service while administering programs to improve economic well-being for Vermonters.

### **Our Vision**

Vermonters thrive with a sense of independence and connection to their communities.

## **About Economic Services Division**

Economic Services Division (ESD) provides economic benefits to Vermonters in need. We provide a safety net for individuals and families who may be experiencing unemployment, underemployment, single parenthood, aging, disability, the death of a family member or other life-changing events.

ESD has seen the most frequent and most rapid changes of any DCF division over the past several years. ESD is home to the General Assistance Emergency Housing program (the “hotel/motel” program) which saw rapid growth during the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the end of federal funding after the pandemic, the program has shifted size and scope several times, though continues to serve as safety net emergency housing for Vermonters in need.

ESD administers these programs from its Central Office in Waterbury and its twelve District Offices scattered throughout the State.

There are approximately 150 staff in Central Office and approximately 185 staff in the District Offices. ESD also contracts with approximately 200 agencies, non-profits, and



businesses who support our programs with outreach, education, case management and client services.

## Central Office

Located in Waterbury, ESD Central Office provides support to the District Offices (described in more detail in their own section below), and also includes administrative program teams, training, administrative services, quality control, fraud investigation, an application & document processing center, as well as our benefits service call center.

## Regional Offices

District Offices are open from 7:45am to 4:30pm, Monday through Friday where Vermonters can go to apply in person for economic benefits. There are twelve district offices throughout the state. A list of offices and towns that they serve are posted on the DCF website: <https://dcf.vermont.gov/esd/contact/districts>

ESD has twelve district offices throughout the state that serve different districts.

- Barre
- Bennington
- Brattleboro
- Burlington
- Hartford
- Middlebury
- Morrisville
- Newport
- Rutland
- Springfield
- St. Albans
- St. Johnsbury



## Call Centers

ESD has two call centers. One specifically for General Assistance Emergency Housing and the other is for all other ESD programs. Vermonters may choose to apply for assistance in person at a district office or over the phone.



## Economic Services Division Programs

### Food and Nutrition Program

The Food and Nutrition Program supports Vermonters in meeting their nutritional needs. [3Squares Vermont](#) is the largest program in this portfolio. It administers the federally funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food benefits to eligible households in the state.

In most cases, the state determines eligibility and issues the 3Squares Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card to participants, but the federal funding flows directly to the recipient – funding does not pass through the state. However, the Cashout 3Squares program allows for elderly and disabled Vermonters to receive their SNAP benefits as cash. For that section of the population, those SNAP federal dollars do pass through the state's budget. In SFY25, ESD issued \$104 million of regular 3Squares benefits and \$47 million of cashout benefits, to support 38,889 households with 64,094 individuals, approximately 1/10 of Vermont's population.

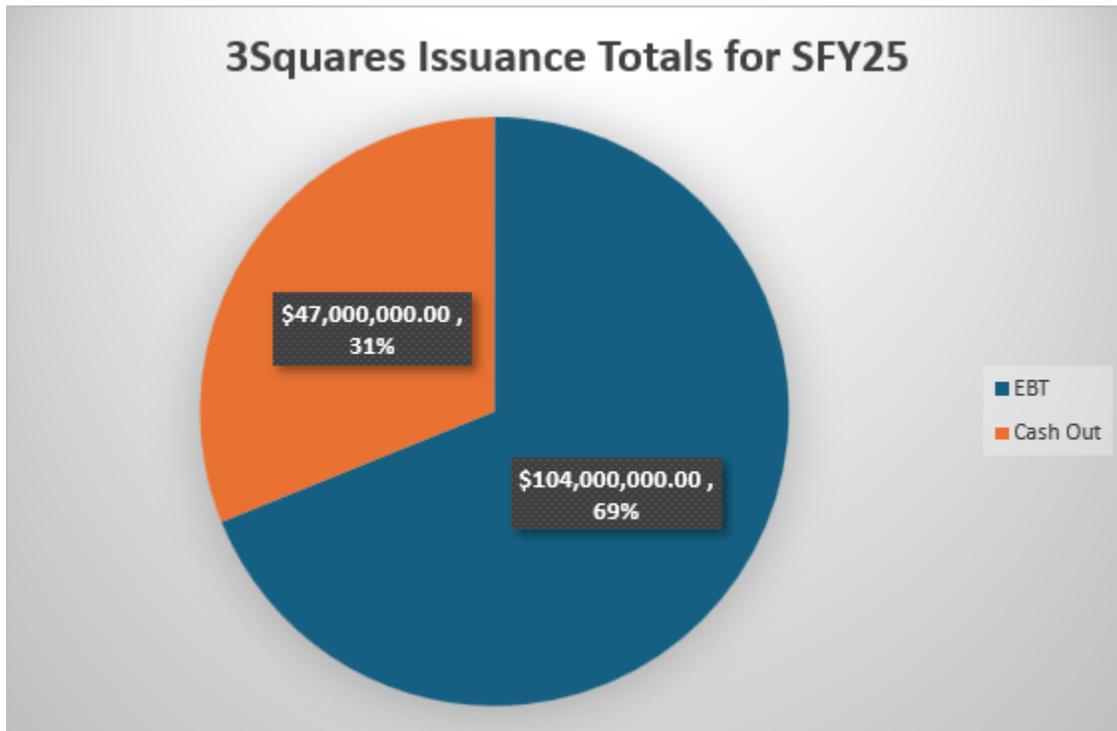
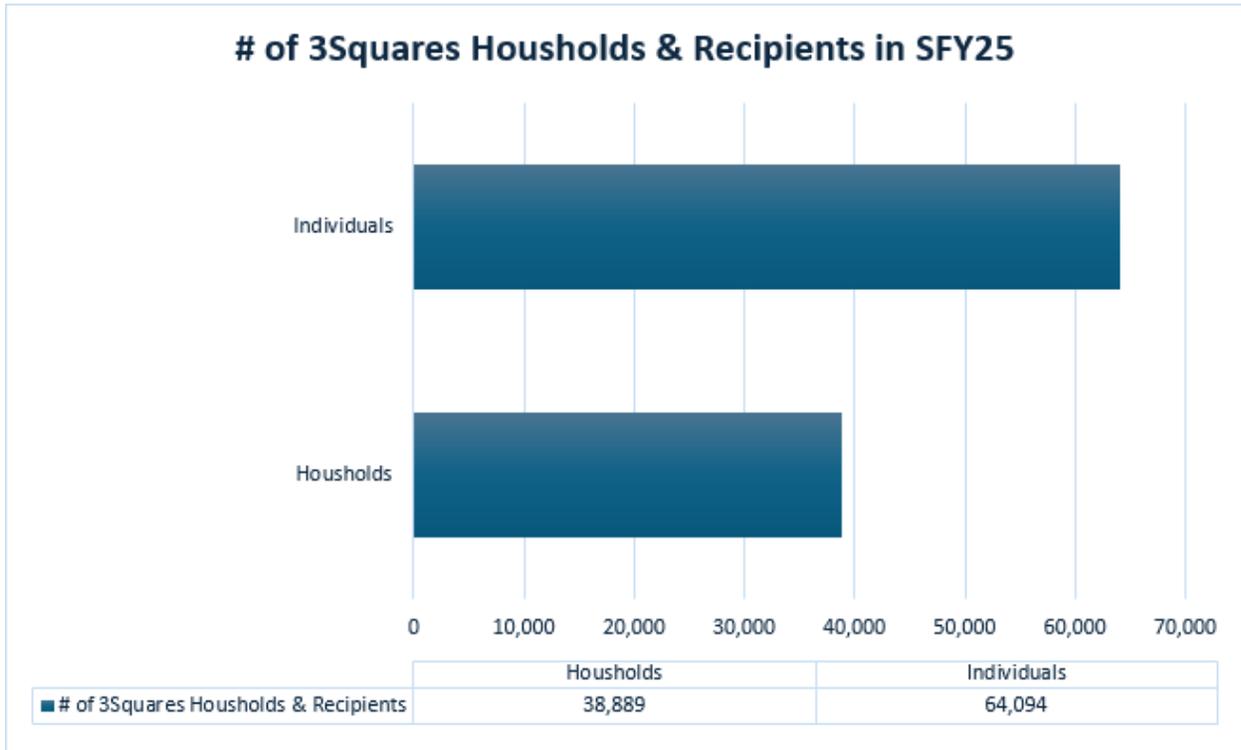


Figure 8: Funds issued for 3SquaresVT in State Fiscal Year 2025



[Summer EBT](#) is a new program that helps families purchase groceries over summer breaks when school meals are not provided to children in school. This is a separate program from SNAP, with its own federal rules and law. In the summer of 2025, the second year of the program, the Summer EBT program supported over 34,000 children during their summer breaks, totaling \$4 million.

[The Individual Career Advancement Network](#) (ICAN) is Vermont’s SNAP Employment and Training Program, funded through a mix of state and federal dollars. This program offers free employment and training support to Vermonters who receive 3SquaresVT Benefits, but do not receive other benefits, such as Reach Up, Reach First or Reach Ahead (details on those programs can be found further down). The ICAN program provides support in gaining new job skills and work experience, obtaining industry certifications, and connecting with employers who are hiring. It also provides training on job landing skills such as resume writing and interviewing, among other things. In FFY25, 540 individuals participated in the ICAN program.

The [Farm to Family](#) program provides coupons for income-eligible households to purchase fresh produce at farmers markets and farm stands. This benefit not only supports household access to nutritious, locally grown food for 3SquaresVT households, but also supports Vermont’s vibrant farmers market and farm stand culture. In the summer and fall market season of 2024, 43 markets and 20 farm stands participated in the program, and \$95,000 in vouchers were redeemed through the Farm-to-Family program. Final data from the 2025 market season is not yet available.



3SquaresVT program and the availability of federal benefits were impacted by the federal government shutdown that started October 1 and ended November 12, 2025, the longest shutdown in the history of the United States.

For the first time in the history of the SNAP program, benefits were not available at the start of the month on November 1. The State of Vermont issued state-funded emergency benefits on November 7 to support Vermont households experiencing food and economic insecurity. After the federal government reopened, ESD issued regular, federally funded, full November 3SquaresVT benefits on November 14, 2025.

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## General & Emergency Assistance

The General Assistance program assists eligible individuals and families with emergency and basic needs. This includes Emergency Housing, personal needs allowance, room and board benefits, fuel, utilities, medical, dental, prescriptions, medical supplies, burial costs, and housing. The Vermont Rental Assistance Program is administered by the General Assistance team and provides a short-term rental subsidy to eligible households.

### Emergency Housing

The [Emergency Housing](#) program provides temporary housing in emergency situations to individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and whose household contains a vulnerable member (as defined by rule). This program has seen many changes over the last few years as it has been used to adapt to changing health and socio-economic conditions in the state. Updates about the program are frequently posted on DCF'S Addressing and Preventing Unsheltered Homelessness website.

<https://dcf.vermont.gov/Addressing-and-Preventing-Unsheltered-Homelessness>

### Personal Needs Allowance

The General Assistance program assists eligible Vermonters with a small cash benefit, issued on a 4-week basis. The program provides a small rental or mortgage assistance payment, room and board payments, and room rent payments. Eligible applicants must have an emergency need; additionally, eligible applicants must have barriers to employment or children in their household. The expenditure in fiscal year 2025 was \$613,136.

### Burial Program

The Burial Program pays for the burials of Vermonters, or those who die in Vermont, without sufficient known assets to pay for burial. In fiscal year 2025, the GA program assisted with 752 burials, at a cost of \$834,458.



## Vermont Spay Neuter Incentive Program (VSNIP)

[VSNIP](#) helps eligible Vermonters afford to have their dogs and cats spayed or neutered. VSNIP is funded by a \$4 fee added to the cost of getting a dog license in VT. In SFY25, the program provided services to 97 dogs and 332 cats, at a cost of \$347,386.

## Vermont Rental Subsidy

The Vermont Rental subsidy program provides a short-term rental subsidy to eligible Vermont households. As of the close of fiscal year 2025, approximately 60 households had an active VRS voucher, while approximately 100 households were on the waitlist. Due to a decrease in available federal housing vouchers, DCF extended the term of VRS vouchers beyond the typical 12 months, at a cost of \$598,072.

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## Fuel Assistance (Low Income Heating Emergency Assistance Program - LIHEAP)

LIHEAP helps eligible Vermonters heat their homes by paying part of their home heating bills. This program is also used for Crisis Fuel assistance, weatherization, furnace repair and replacement and fuel tank repair and replacement. The fuel team also administers the Energy Assistance Program which provides a utility discount off eligible Vermonters' monthly residential utility bills.

[Fuel assistance](#) benefits are typically issued out once a year in mid-November to eligible households. This past year we provided an average seasonal fuel benefit of \$1,167 to 16,296 households.

[Crisis heating assistance](#) is administered by Community Action Agencies and can help eligible Vermonters during a heating crisis during the winter months. This past year the 5 agencies served 2,646 Households.

[Energy Assistance Program](#) provides a discount off eligible Vermonters' monthly residential utility bills. This program is offered through Green Mountain Power and Vermont Gas and has been in place for a decade. Eligible households can receive a 25% discount from Green Mountain Power, and a 20% discount from Vermont Gas on their monthly bills.

This past year Washington Electric Co-op and Vermont Electric Cooperative started a similar program using solar credits. In the coming year (2026), Vermont Public Power Supply Authority (VPPSA) plans to start a similar program.



## Reach Up (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families - TANF)

The Reach Up Program's mission is "We join families on their journey to overcome obstacles, explore opportunities, improve their finances, and reach their goals." Our vision is "Families are empowered, connected and thriving."

The [Reach Up](#) program began July 1, 2001, provides cash benefits to Vermont families to help meet their needs while they work towards achieving short- and long-term goals that will enable them to financially support minor, dependent children. The Reach Up program provided household income for a monthly average of 3,228 Vermont families, including 6,266 Vermont children. This income, along with the coaching provided by Reach Up case managers and career coaches from Vermont Association of Business Industry and Rehabilitation, helped provide the fundamental building blocks for long-term success.<sup>1</sup>

[Post Secondary Education](#) implemented July 1, 2001, provides coaching and advisory support to student parents who are pursuing a 2- or 4-year degree. It also provides cash assistance grants to help students purchase books, transportation and help with child care costs. An average of 18 students per month participated in the PSE program during FFY24. This number has been steadily decreasing over the last decade. One reason for this may be that participants are accessing post-secondary education through the Reach Up program instead, since Act 133 of January 1, 2024, allows Reach Up participants to access a broader range of activities that benefit them.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Between 1991 and 1993, Vermont developed the Welfare Restructuring Project (WRP) to reform the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program. In 1993, the state received federal approval to implement WRP, which officially began on July 1, 1994. This program required recipients of cash assistance to work or perform community service after a certain period to promote self-sufficiency. In 1996, the U.S. Congress replaced AFDC with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant, which allowed states flexibility in designing welfare programs but imposed participation requirements and funding limitations. Vermont's TANF program, known as Reach Up, was established by the Vermont General Assembly in 2000. Reach Up officially began on July 1, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Act 147 of 2000 established July 1, 2001, as the start date for the PSE program. This program is entirely state funded, providing greater operational flexibility. As a "solely state-funded program," it uses state funds that do not contribute to the state's maintenance-of-effort requirement under TANF.

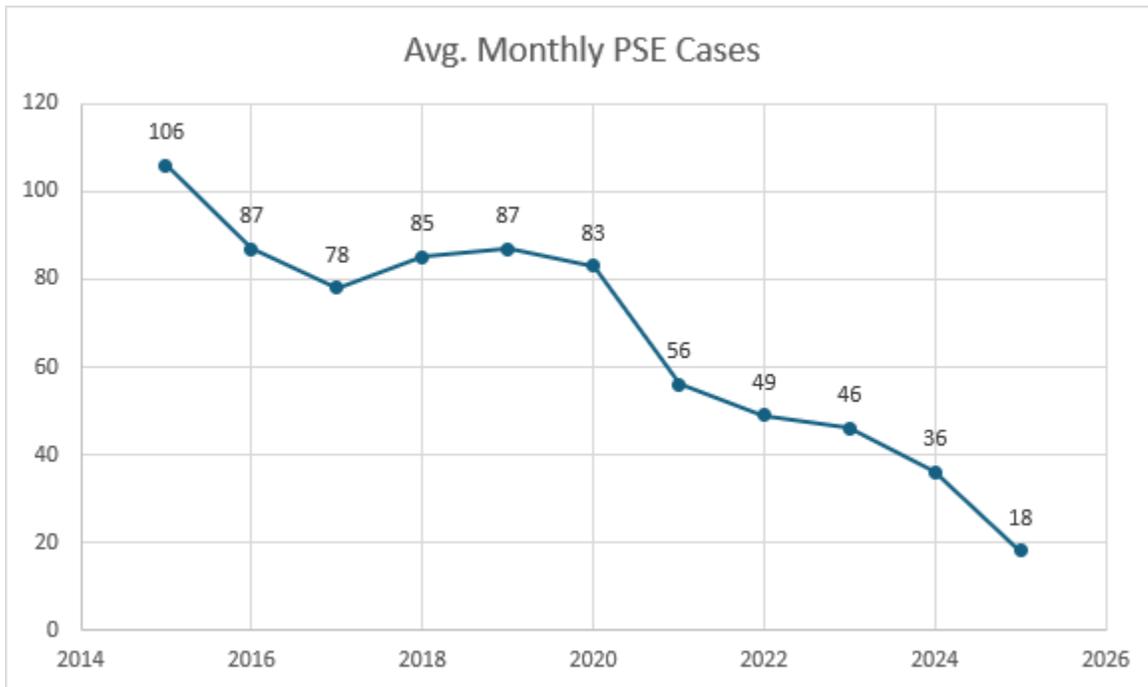


Figure 9: Average number of Post Secondary Education cases per month, state fiscal year 2014 - 2024

[Reach First](#) began April 1, 2008, and is part of the Reach Up family of programs. Reach First can help a family get through temporary, short-term financial crisis and avoid the need for longer-term assistance. Participants receive monthly case management and career coaching that helps them return to or increase employment. An average of 15 participants receive Reach First benefits each month.<sup>3</sup>

[Reach Ahead](#) established October 1, 2008, provides transitional assistance and job support for a smaller segment of families, including coaching, support services, childcare subsidy and food benefits. Eligible families receive monthly food benefits of \$50 for 12 months and \$5 for 12 months. Reach Ahead is a 24-month cumulative lifetime limit. An annual monthly average of 403 participants receive Reach Ahead benefits.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Act 30 of 2007 specifies that the Reach First program, established in Section 1, must be implemented by April 1, 2008. Reach First is a TANF diversion program that offers short-term financial assistance to families in crisis. By providing lump-sum cash payments, it helps families avoid long-term dependency on welfare.

<sup>4</sup> The implementation date for Reach Ahead, as outlined in Act 30 of 2007, states: "Reach Ahead, established in Section 18, must be implemented for families exiting the Reach Up program as specified in 33 V.S.A. § 1203(1) by October 1, 2008." The Reach Ahead program will operate as a distinct state initiative designed to support families with working parents or caretakers who meet the TANF participation



## Essential Person Program

The [Essential Person Program](#) provides monthly cash assistance to help cover the expenses of having someone live with and provide essential care for Vermonters who are blind, have a disability or are 65 and older so they can stay in their homes.

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

The AABD program provides state supplementary payments to Vermont residents who receive the federal Supplemental Security Income, the amount of which varies dependent on the individual's living arrangements.

## ESD Budget Structure

ESD's budget, unlike the other divisions of DCF, is compartmentalized by program area. It is composed of 6 different appropriations, listed below, with varying levels of complexity.

**Admin (3440010000):** DCF's first Dept ID is the administrative appropriation that provides funding for staff, operating and administrative grants for ESD, the commissioner's office, the business office and DCF's ADS needs.

- This appropriation is supported by a wide range of federal funding, including SNAP Admin, Summer EBT Admin, Medicaid Admin, and LIHEAP Admin all utilized to support ESD administrative costs.
- Expenses associated with ESD's 299 budgeted positions located in district offices and Waterbury State Office Complex are charged to this appropriation, as well as costs associated with some of their grant programs, including: the SNAP E&T, ICAN, and Farm to Family programs among other things.

Units within Admin Appropriation	SFY26 Base Budget
ESD Admin	49,823,653
Business Office	6,516,656

rate criteria. A "separate State program" utilizes state funds that contribute to the state's maintenance-of-effort requirement under TANF.



Units within Admin Appropriation	SFY26 Base Budget
Commissioner's Office	6,584,145
IT	11,476,146
<b>Total</b>	<b>74,400,600</b>

**Aid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled (3440050000):** The first of the ESD programs broken out into a separate Dept ID is the AABD program.

- This program (described above) is supported by Medicaid Global Commitment investment funds and state General Funds.
- Only the benefits that are paid to Vermonters and the administrative costs paid to the federal government to distribute the funding on our behalf are paid out of this appropriation.

**General Assistance (3440060000):** The General Assistance (GA) appropriation provides funding to support the Emergency Housing Program as well as the PNI and Support Services programs (described above).

- While there is a very small amount of TANF funding that supports this work (\$11K), most of the costs are funded through General Fund. A few of the support service allowable programs are Medicaid eligible (dental, physicians), so there is a small amount of investment GC to support this program as well.
- There is a small amount of base funding in the budget for the emergency housing program (\$7.5M), but most of the funding to support this work in SFY26 is in one-time appropriations.

**3Squares Vermont (3440070000):** The 3Squares Vermont appropriation contains funding to cover the costs of the 3SquaresVermont Cashout and Summer EBT programs, as the federal benefits for these programs flow through the state.

- This appropriation is 100% federally funded, and it contains only the costs of the benefits for the relevant programs (no administrative costs).

**Reach Up (3440080000):** The Reach Up Dept ID funds the Reach Up, Reach Ahead and Reach First programs, as well as the Lund Pregnant and Parenting Program and support Services provided to Reach Up households to help them achieve their employment and educational goals.



- This appropriation is mostly funded with State General Funds. This results from the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) “swap”, where the DCF gives TANF funding to the Tax Department to use to cover EITC costs, and the Tax Department gives DCF state funds to use for child care and Reach Up costs. This swap, while complicated, allows the state to claim an additional \$8.5M of eligible State TANF Maintenance of Effort (MOE), which results in positive benefits for Reach Up recipients, including the reduction of the work participation rate requirements.

**LIHEAP (3440090000):** The LIHEAP Dept ID funds the large seasonal energy assistance program, in which DCF provides federal LIHEAP funding to fuel dealers to support eligible households’ fuel expenses for the winter. There is also a smaller crisis fuel program administered out of the LIHEAP appropriation to provide benefits to households experiencing a crisis that have exhausted their regular seasonal benefits.

- This appropriation is funded through a combination of LIHEAP federal funds and state fuel tax special funds. There are no general funds budgeted for any LIHEAP programs.

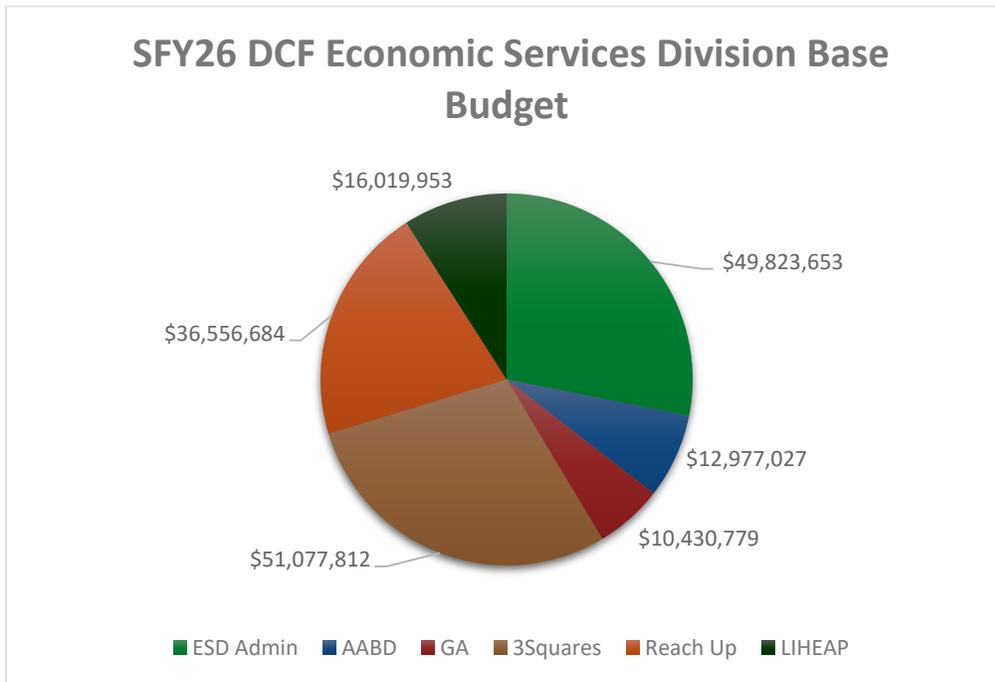


Figure 10: ESD base budget for State Fiscal Year 2026

## Division Highlights

This past spring, the Economic Services Division (ESD) partnered with the nonprofit Vermont Parks Forever to provide all ESD Benefit Program recipients with free access



to Vermont State Parks for the 2025 park season. Through this partnership, more than 28,000 park visits were made possible, helping Vermonters enjoy the state's natural resources and outdoor spaces.

## Family Services Division (FSD)

### Deputy Commissioner Aryka Radke, JD

Appointed by Governor Phil Scott in 2021, Aryka leads the division responsible for Vermont's child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Since joining FSD, Aryka has advanced statewide efforts to strengthen family well-being and safety through restorative practices, trauma-informed care, and culturally responsive approaches. She has championed initiatives to support and retain the child welfare workforce, modernize information systems, and deepen collaboration across state and community partners to better serve children, youth, and families.

Nationally, Aryka serves on the Executive Advisory Group of the National Partnership for Child Safety and on the Executive Committee of the New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors, contributing to regional and national efforts to improve safety, accountability, and learning in child welfare systems.

Originally from Chicago, Aryka holds a Bachelor of Science in Education and Social Policy from Northwestern University and a Juris Doctor from the University of Chicago Law School. Her prior public service includes leadership and adjudicatory roles with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the Social Security Administration, and as Vice Chief Administrative Law Judge for the Industrial Commission of Arizona.

Outside of work, Aryka enjoys time with her husband and two daughters, attending sporting events, playing board games, and traveling.

### Division Directors and Program Administrators

**Tyler Allen**, High End System of Care Director

**Alma Alvarado**, Workforce Development Director

**Lindsay Barron**, Director of Policy & Planning

**Lindy Boudreau**, Adolescent Services Director

**Brenda Gooley**, Director of Operations

**Heather McLain**, Revenue Enhancement Director



## About Family Services Division

The Family Services Division is the statutorily mandated state agency responsible for overseeing the state's child protection and juvenile justice systems. The child protection system investigates reports of child abuse and neglect, collaborating closely with families to ensure children's safety and well-being at home. If a child's safety cannot be reasonably assured, FSD works with the judicial system to secure appropriate safety measures and placement of children in foster and kinship care homes.

The way that Family Services Division is constructed – serving as both the child protection and juvenile justice entity for Vermont – is unique among states. Nowhere else in the country does one entity oversee both child welfare and juvenile justice issues. We like to think that this gives us a unique approach; especially to juvenile justice. While it is important for youth to be held accountable for their crimes, it's equally important for youth to be offered the opportunity to grow past their circumstances so that they can become more than a crime they committed.

FSD strives to ensure that Vermont's children and youth are living free from abuse and neglect, in resilient families that are supported and valued by their communities. FSD's mission is to engage families, foster and kin caregivers, partner agencies, and the community to increase safety and law abidance for Vermont children and youth.

### Our Mission

We engage families, foster and kin caregivers, partner agencies, and the community to increase safety and law abidance for Vermont children and youth. We achieve our mission by:

**Safely stabilizing and preserving families;**

- And if that is not possible;

**Safely caring for, and reunifying, children and their families;**

- And if that is not possible;

**Safely supporting the development of permanency and lifelong connections for children and youth.**



## Our Vision

Vermont’s children and youth live free from abuse, neglect and delinquency – in resilient families that are supported and valued by their communities.

## Our Values

We value equity, inclusion and justice. We believe in the diversity of thoughts, beliefs, and experiences and embrace all people and their human differences.

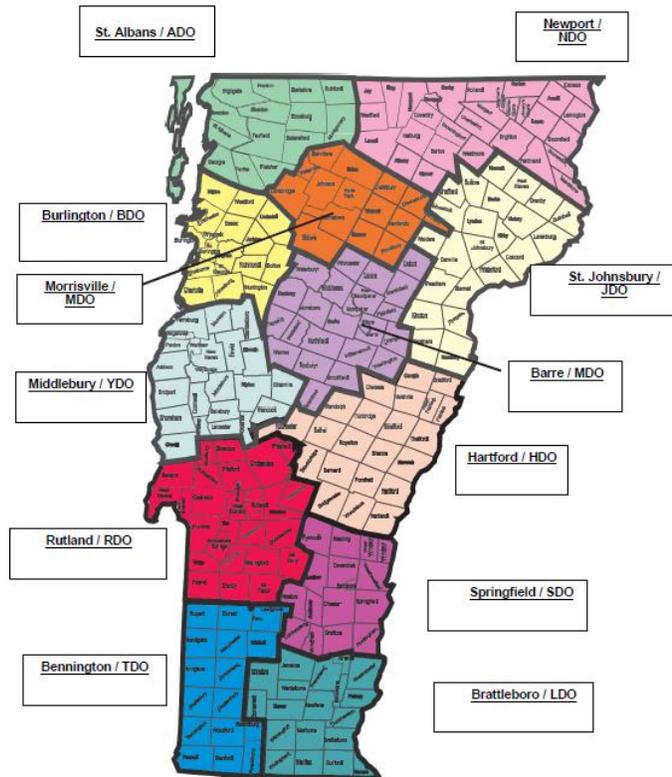
Relationships are built on trust, collaboration and communication. We strive to resolve conflict in a way that strengthens connections and repairs and restores relationships.

## District Offices

FSD operates through 12 district offices, serving all 14 counties in the state. Across these offices, 180 Family Services Workers (FSWs) provide direct support to children, youth, and families.

Each district office includes administrative support, supervisory roles, case aides, and resource coordinators who collaborate with recruitment and retention specialists to assist foster and kinship caregivers. Each office also has a district director, who oversees the daily operations of the office. Staffing levels in each district office vary, depending largely on the population size and jurisdictional needs of the area.

- Barre
- Bennington
- Brattleboro
- Burlington
- Hartford
- Middlebury
- Morrisville
- Newport
- Rutland
- Springfield
- St. Albans
- St. Johnsbury





## **Central Office**

Located in Waterbury, FSD's Central Office, where division leadership resides, provides support to the districts, oversees policy and practice development, manages financial aspects of the division (budgets, grants and contracts), and maintains communication with Federal partners.

The Central Office of FSD consists of various units and specialized positions that work in tandem with the district offices. Together, the districts and central office support the efforts to serve children and families.

Central Office is also home to two statewide direct service units; Centralized Intake & Emergency Services (CIES), and the Residential Licensing & Special Investigations Unit (RLSI).

**The Centralized Intake and Emergency Services (CIES)** unit operates a 24/7 call center responsible for handling reports of potential child abuse and neglect. When a report is made to the hotline, CIES reviews it according to policies and statutes to determine whether it meets the criteria for intervention by the Family Services Division. If the report does not meet these criteria, it is not accepted for intervention. Additionally, the CIES unit manages after-hours emergencies and conducts checks of the child protection registry.

CIES is comprised of 53 positions. These include the director, two assistant directors, 16 supervisors and senior Family Service Workers (FSWs), 33 FSWs, as well as administrative support.

**The Residential Licensing & Special Investigations Unit (RLSI)** has a special responsibility for the care of children and youth in state custody who reside in foster and kinship care homes. The regulation of facilities that care for these children and youth enhances the quality and safety of care. Likewise, when it is suspected that a child may have been abused or neglected in substitute care, a comprehensive response is essential to ensure their safety, as well as the safety of other children and youth in that setting.

In addition to licensing and regulating substitute care settings for Family Services Division, RLSI also serves as the investigative arm for DCF's Child Development Division when allegations of child abuse or neglect arise in those settings. RLSI partners with CDD's licensing division to conduct investigations. In all investigations, if the findings merit law enforcement involvement or criminal investigation, RLSI partners with law enforcement and cooperates with those investigations.

RLSI consists of three teams: the North Team, the South Team, and a pair of staff members, a Family Services Worker (FSW) and a senior FSW who handle investigations and support licensing for regulated settings in Vermont, such as residential treatment facilities and group homes. The South Team covers the Barre,



Middlebury, Rutland, Hartford, Springfield, Brattleboro, and Bennington district office jurisdictions. The North Team covers the Burlington, Morrisville, Newport, St. Albans, and St. Johnsbury district office jurisdictions. The unit also includes administrative support, two supervisors, and a director who oversees the 11 FSWs.

The Central Office consists of various teams, each with distinct responsibilities tied to their roles within Family Services.

## Family Services Division Programs and Units

### Policy and Planning

The Policy and Planning Team provides statewide leadership in policy development, system improvement, and legislative and federal compliance. The team supports the development, implementation, and continuous refinement of policies and practices that guide prevention, child safety, foster and kinship care, permanency, and post-permanency services. The Policy and Planning Leadership Team consists of six members: the Director of Policy and Planning, two Policy and Planning Managers, the Quality Assurance Administrator, the System of Care Director, and the Director of Communications and Legislative Affairs. Together, this leadership team oversees and supports multidisciplinary units that provide statewide guidance, consultation, oversight, and technical assistance, detailed below:

Unit/Team	Positions	Responsibilities
System of Care (SOC)	6	The SOC team is responsible for the support, placement, and permanence of children in custody. This team includes the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Administrator.
Quality Assurance (QA)	6	The QA team ensures compliance with data and reporting requirements, supports data-driven decision-making, and collaborates on system enhancements.



Unit/Team	Positions	Responsibilities
Staff Safety	2	The Staff Safety Unit, comprised of the Staff Safety Manager and a Staff Safety Specialist, provides statewide consultation, crisis response, and training to district staff.
Domestic Violence Unit	5	The Domestic and Sexual Violence Unit provides consultation and support to district staff and families.
Child Safety	2	The Child Safety Team provides case consultation, coordination, and support for district staff.
Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) & Tribal Relations	.5	FSD's part-time ICWA Coordinator provides coordination and support with federal and state recognized tribes.

## Adolescent Services Unit

The Adolescent Services Unit plays a crucial role in supporting older youths in foster care and those involved with the juvenile justice system. This team is tasked with ensuring that youths receive the necessary support to transition smoothly into adulthood and out of foster care. Additionally, they assist district staff in managing the care, treatment, and accountability of youths on juvenile probation and those with youthful offender status. The unit consists of six staff members, each with distinct roles aimed at supporting the juvenile population effectively.

## High End System of Care

The High-End System of Care (HESOC) team interfaces with the Specialized Services Unit, as both teams primarily serve the same population of children and youth in the Department's custody. The HESOC team is responsible for supporting children and youth at the point of emergency who cannot be placed in a community foster home,



have disrupted from or who are waiting for a higher level of care. The HESOC team is comprised of the Unit Director, who oversees all HESOC work and development and the Specialized Services Unit, and a HESOC Staffing Coordinator, who is charged with coordinating staffing locations and individualized youth needs, staff/contractor coverage, and the general day-to-day operations of the HESOC. The HESOC team manages three cohorts of support staff that includes: contracted staff, volunteer respite foster staff, and the interdepartmental Child and Adolescent Transitional Staffing (CATS) team.

## **Specialized Services Unit**

The Specialized Services Unit (SSU) is responsible for assisting district offices with the placement of children who may have increased needs for support in their placements, such as medical complexities, significant mental health needs, the detention population, developmental disabilities, and more. The SSU is comprised of four team members, all of whom have differing responsibilities, and many of which are primarily responsible for the coordination of specialized in state, and out of state placements for children. The SSU monitors residential contracts, conducts site visits, develops contracts with out of regional programs, attends child specific treatment meetings, supports discharge planning, and manages the milieu of in state programs. The manager of the unit engages in high level conflict resolution between Family Services and residential agencies, is a member of the State Interagency Team (SIT) and supports the Family Services Management Team with Vermont's System of Care.

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## **Revenue Enhancement**

The Revenue Enhancement Unit (REU) of the Family Services Division is responsible for securing resources for children and families and for the operation of the Division. REU works in close collaboration with our district offices, the other units within the Central Office, the Family Services Management Team, the DCF Business Office, the Office of Child Support, DVHA, and the Federal government.

The Revenue Enhancement Unit is responsible for three interlocking areas of focus:

**Budgeting and Federal Programs:** Ensures that the funding supporting the operation of the Division is being used according to Federal rules and guidelines, manages the budget of the Division, is responsible for the accurate operation of the RMTS, ensures Federal funding opportunities are fully maximized.

**The Revenue Team:** Secures resources for individual children in custody through Title IVE determinations, enrolling children/youth in Medicaid, securing Social Security benefits, and child support. This team is also responsible for assisting with genetic testing.



**Coordination with the DCF Grants and Contracts Unit:** Secures resources for children and families through the procurement, creation, and monitoring of agreements for services and support across the state.

## Division Highlights

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### Restorative Justice

The Family Services Division is committed to supporting and elevating restorative justice work and practices throughout the division. This work is being implemented statewide through different initiatives, outlined below.

#### **Restorative Justice Certificate Program at Vermont Law and Graduate School**

For the fifth time, FSD has offered a unique opportunity for DCF-FSD and BARJ staff to pursue a Professional Certificate in Restorative Justice (PCRJ). DCF-FSD in collaboration with the Vermont Law School is offering this opportunity to family services workers/BARJ case managers and supervisory staff. The Professional Certificate in Restorative Justice allows recent college graduates and early and mid-career professionals to learn about restorative justice and how it applies to the field of child protection/youth justice. People who work in the child and family protection/youth justice field need an understanding of the legal environment in which they work as well as how to support and devise creative responses for children and families through challenging times. The Professional Certificate in Restorative Justice provides the opportunity to gain an understanding of restorative justice responses to harm and the ways that restorative responses to family circumstances can build on family strengths and keeps families unified to the extent consistent with the child and family's best interests.

#### **Restorative Justice Contracts**

FSD is currently contracting with Paul Nixon, Jennifer Llewellyn and Gale Burford to do an exploration of restorative practices within FSD. It has been a true privilege to have the chance to capitalize on their expertise to explore opportunities to incorporate restorative practice and principles into our work with those we serve, our external partners and each other. We have a two-year contract which began in October 2024. This is a three-phase contract, details include:

In Phase 1, the contractor will evaluate current policies, procedures, and practices to identify opportunities for restorative work. This includes reviewing current practices, recent evaluations, audits, performance data, and leadership culture, as well as assessing legislative and strategic priorities. A review process will be designed to be inclusive and restorative, along with a self-assessment tool and evaluation model for FSD. In Phase 2, the contractor will engage staff and stakeholders through meetings



and workshops, consult with community members, and establish a Restorative Advisory Panel. They will map partnerships, work with state contractors, and engage practitioners to improve restorative practices. Throughout Phases 1 and 2, the contractor will provide updates and interim reports. In Phase 3, a strategic planning process will be established to implement restorative practices, supported by learning formats for FSD staff, including online learning, workshops, professional supervision, coaching, and group supervision to foster change and improvement.

FSD is also contracting with Marc Wennberg, Jon Kidde, and Kim Friedman to support the Woodside Restorative Process (WRP). This is a multi-year, voluntary restorative process that invites present and former FSD staff and other Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center vested parties to engage in dialogues about their experiences, impacts, learning, repair, and accountability.

Currently the project team is conducting a series of individual listening sessions with Woodside impacted parties. The team will continue to conduct additional sessions through the fall as well as form a representative Advisory Team (AT). The AT will both help guide the project and develop recommendations that emerge through the restorative dialogues.

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## Legislative Implementations

### **Act 154- Child Protection Registry Reform**

Act 154 (H.661) of 2024 is an act relating to child abuse and neglect investigation and substantiation standards and procedures. The intent of the act is to modernize and improve FSD's response during child safety interventions. In FSD's efforts to protect children from abuse and neglect, Act 154 (H.661) of 2024 also tasks us with ensuring investigations are thorough, unbiased, based on accurate and reliable information weighed against other supporting or conflicting information, and adhere to due process requirements.

This reform was built on research, data, and careful planning by FSD and key stakeholders. This reform is about safety, fairness, and opportunity, shaping a system that safeguards children, supports families, and strengthens Vermont communities.

After the Act's passage, FSD developed key reform recommendations that were incorporated into Act 154. These reforms included:

- Creating "internal findings" as an alternative to substantiation that results in name placement on the Child Protection Registry.
- Establishing a centralized substantiation review process to promote consistency and reduce bias.
- Expanding timeframes for Commissioner's Registry Review to ensure thorough, high-quality decisions.



To date, FSD has begun using the preponderance of the evidence standard in substantiation decisions, created a draft policy regarding the recording of interviews, expanded timeframes for appeals, increased efforts surrounding the notification of substantiation decisions, submitted the [Act 154 Progress Report on Child Protection Registry Reform](#), and created practice guidance and support for the field in applying the new evidence standard and findings frameworks for substantiations. FSD engaged with stakeholders through a series of six stakeholder meetings, to collectively discuss, decide, and support the enactment of the requirements mandated in Act. 154.

Act 154 represents one of the most significant reforms to Vermont's child protection system in decades, and our shared efforts are still unfolding. Over the coming months, FSD will continue to refine Vermont's approach in anticipation of a presentation on our efforts to the legislature in 2026.

### **Act 173- Access to Records by Individuals Who Were in Foster Care**

On June 12, 2024, H. 644 (Act 173) was passed into law, providing access to records for individuals formerly in foster care. As of November 2025, FSD had fully processed over 34,000 pages of client records that included over 185,000 redactions and digitized an additional 7,000 pages. The total page count for a single record has ranged from nine pages to just under 4,400 pages. These pages reflect an individual's personal story of their time in foster care, and the availability of these records to support their healing, knowledge, and growth, was made possible through Act 173.

In anticipation of Act 173's enactment, FSD engaged in planning meetings with the DCF Commissioner's Office (General Counsel and Communications staff), Trial Court Operations for the Judiciary, the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA), and the Agency of Digital Services (ADS) to develop an implementation plan. FSD also hired a part-time temporary employee to begin processing records requests. This employee has been designated as a DCF Records Liaison and is the point person for Act 173 records requests. They have since been re-classified into a full-time permanent position, to continue to support the timely dissemination of records to individuals who were in foster care.

[In November of 2025, FSD submitted the Act 173 Progress Report on Access to Records by Individuals Who Were in Foster Care](#) to the Vermont Legislature. This report outlines the current processes for expanding records to individuals who were in foster care.

Requestors shared a range of feedback during the first year of implementation, including:

- "Thank you so much for your quick reply! (Only Vermont would respond that quickly!)"



- “The letter I received from the orphanage did cover a lot of the same information about me. I am not shy anymore. Once I left the orphanage, I found my voice.”
- “We all know that the foster care system has always been a difficult one and my experience in it was no different than what was typically expected of the 60’s. I managed to survive it because I had an incredible state social worker, [name removed] who believed in me and believed me as a young innocent child struggling in a tough world. If she had not been in my life, I would not have had such an amazing life these past 50 years!! I owe my life to her.”
- “Thank you so much for all you are doing to access my records. I appreciate it.”

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## Decreasing Custody Entrance Data

Over the past year, FSD has observed a continued decrease in the number of children and youth entering state custody. In February 2025, the number of children in the DCF custody reached an all-time low of 885. At the height of the opioid epidemic in 2016, Vermont had 1,375 children and youth in DCF custody. As of January 21, 2026, this number has further decreased to 774. This continued decrease represents the efforts made to engage in preventative, family preservation work by the families of the children we serve, the community, and Department staff.

# Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)

## Director Lily Sojourner

Lily Sojourner has served as the Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity since 2023, after joining the Office in 2020. Ms. Sojourner has held other roles within the Vermont Agency of Human Services since 2010.

### Our Mission

The Office of Economic Opportunity partners with community organizations, government agencies and others to increase the self-sufficiency of Vermonters, strengthen Vermont communities, and eliminate the causes and symptoms of poverty.

## About the Office of Economic Opportunity

The Office works by administering federal and state funds that support organizations implementing weatherization, housing/homelessness, and other anti-poverty programs. We focus on funding that leads to strong results for Vermont communities, and promote approaches informed by evidence and research to improve policy and practice. We provide training and technical assistance.



OEO has a staff of 21 based centrally in the Waterbury State Office Complex that administers more than \$60 million in funding to Vermont organizations from multiple federal and other funding sources to support more than fifty community partners. That funding reaches tens of thousands of low-income Vermonters annually through a variety of programs.

## Office of Economic Opportunity Programs

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### Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP)<sup>i</sup>

The Housing Opportunity Grant Program, commonly referred to as HOP, provides funding for community providers to serve Vermonters experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The primary goals of the Housing Opportunity Grant Program remain to:

- Decrease the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness;
- Shorten the length of time people experience homelessness;
- Reduce the number of individuals and families returning to homelessness; and
- Prevent people from becoming homeless.

Housing Opportunity Grant Program funding is awarded to support one of more strategies:

- Emergency Shelter
- Homelessness Prevention: Services
- Rapid Re-housing: Services, Rental Assistance
- Flexible Client-Based Financial Assistance
- Coordinated Entry / Assessment & Housing Navigation
- Transitional Housing
- Homeless Management Information System
- Statewide Domestic & Sexual Violence Service Coordination
- Statewide Training & Technical Assistance

In State Fiscal Year 2026, OEO has awarded over \$36 million in federal and state funding to 40 non-profit organizations across Vermont. A majority of the program's funding supports emergency shelter operations. Current allocations are captured below:

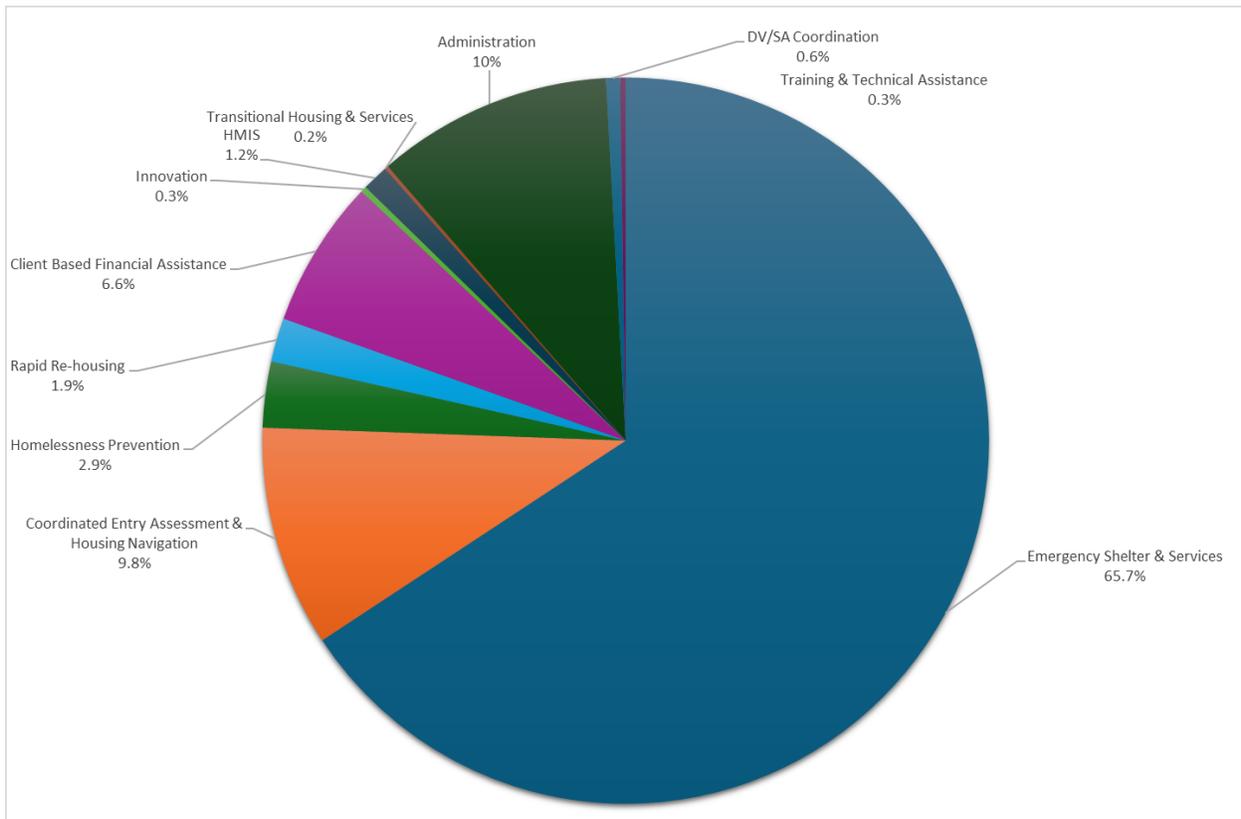


Figure 11: SFY2026 Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP) funding allocations. 65.7% of funding was allocated to emergency shelter and services in SFY26.

Program [reports](#) and [award summaries](#) are available on the OEO website.

## Extreme Cold Weather Shelter Program

OEO and the Agency of Human Services are administering a new program this winter, utilizing one-time state funds, to provide emergency shelter capacity to Vermonters experiencing homelessness on the coldest nights. Vermont Interfaith Action is the designated Program Administrator, partnering with the State for the SFY2026 winter season. There are seven projects operating across the state in Barre, Bennington, Brattleboro, Burlington, Montpelier, Newport, and Rutland. These shelters create a combined capacity for over 200 individuals.

The Emergency Cold Weather Shelter Program (ECWSP) will operate between December 1, 2025, and April 1, 2026. Shelter activation is based on weather, when the National Weather Service is forecasting cold weather at or below -10°F, including wind chill; as well as confirmation that local emergency shelter or motel capacity is insufficient and that the shelter provider is able to safely operate. As resources allow,



there is the option for individual shelter projects to operate between -10°F and 0°F if operating will not deplete resources that would inhibit safe operation during more severe cold weather (-10°F ) throughout the entirety of the operational period.

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## Family Supportive Housing (FSH)

The Family Supportive Housing (FSH) program is a statewide service and a key part of Vermont's efforts to address family homelessness. The program, funded with a combination of Medicaid and state general funds, works to reduce both the incidence and duration of family homelessness in Vermont by helping families with minor children secure and maintain affordable housing. Through intensive, home-based case management and coordinated services, FSH supports families in transitioning out of homelessness and building long-term stability. The programs include family-centered case management services where the family works one-on-one with a service coordinator to develop and achieve goals developed by the family around stable housing needs. FSH providers also partner with landlords to increase housing access and work closely with local affordable housing agencies.

### **FSH Partners across the AHS Districts:**

- Barre – Family Center of Washington County
- Bennington – Sunrise Family Resource Center
- Brattleboro – Winston Prouty Center
- Burlington – Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS)
- Hartford – Upper Valley Haven
- Middlebury – John Graham Housing & Services
- Morrisville – United Way of Lamoille County
- Newport – Northeast Kingdom Community Action
- Rutland – Homeless Prevention Center
- Springfield – Springfield Supported Housing Program
- St. Albans – Pathways Vermont
- St. Johnsbury – Northeast Kingdom Community Action

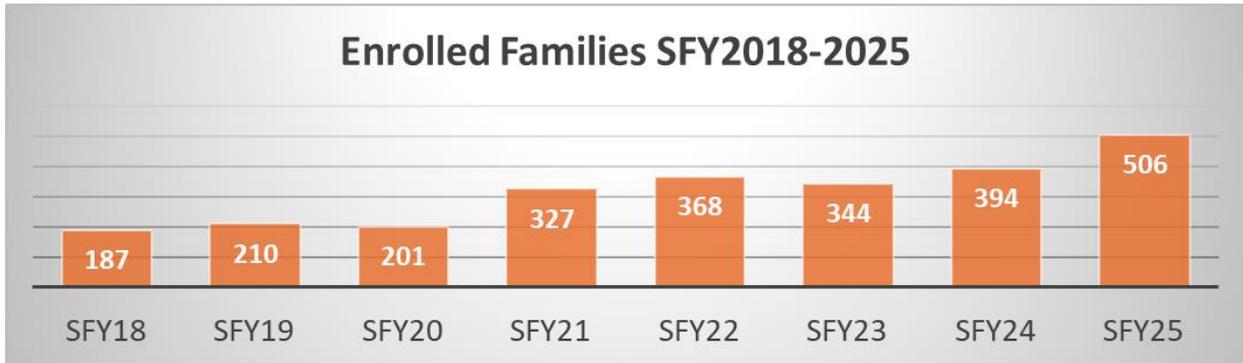


Figure 12: Families enrolled in the Family Supportive Housing Program, SFY2018-2025.

## Permanent Supportive Housing Assistance

The Permanent Supportive Housing Assistance (PSHA) Medicaid Benefit is a new program that launched mid-way through State Fiscal Year 2025. It is an evidence-based intervention proven to be effective in reducing homelessness, preventing emergency department use and hospitalization, reducing healthcare costs, and improving overall health and wellbeing for individuals with complex needs. Vermont's program, authorized by Vermont's Global Commitment to Health 1115 Demonstration Waiver, is intended to support services that help Vermonters with complex health and social needs to successfully transition into and maintain residency in permanent housing.

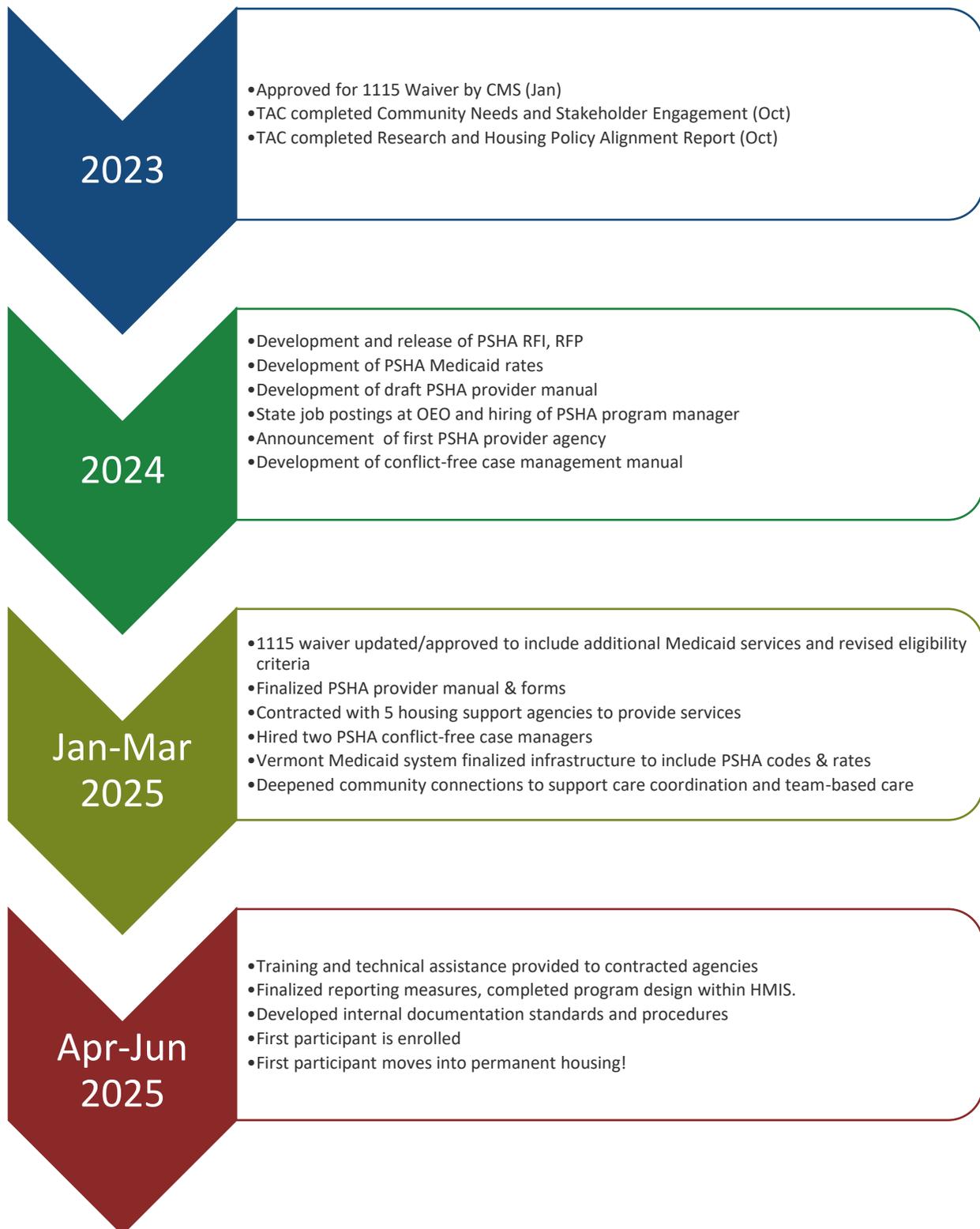


Figure 13: PSHA rollout timeline, 2023-June 2025



Benefits available through the Program are based on health needs and risk-based eligibility criteria and fall into the following three categories:

**Pre-Tenancy Support Services** – Pre-tenancy support services are a set of services that assist Participants with finding and securing permanent housing.

**Tenancy Sustaining Services** – Tenancy sustaining services are a set of services that support Participants’ ability to meet their obligations as tenants and maintain their tenancy.

**Community Transition Assistance** – Community transition assistance aids Participants with funding the one-time services, goods, expenses, and modifications necessary for them to successfully move into housing and establish a basic household.

Currently the program can support for 106 participants and is available regionally across the following AHS Districts:

- Barre – Capstone Community Action
- Brattleboro – Groundworks Collaborative
- Burlington – Burlington Housing Authority & Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity
- St. Albans – Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity
- St. Johnsbury – Northeast Kingdom Community Action

## Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

The Community Services Block Grant is a federally funded block grant to support services that alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty. Community Action Agencies provide CSBG funded services and activities including housing, nutrition, utility, and transportation assistance; employment, education, and other income and asset building services; crisis and emergency services, and community asset building initiatives, among other things. OEO provides administration and oversight of the funds in Vermont.





Vermont's five Community Action Agencies are:

- BROC Community Action
- Capstone Community Action
- Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity
- Northeast Kingdom Community Action
- Southeastern Vermont Community Action

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## Asset Building Programs

The Office administers two asset building programs, funded with state general funds, through Vermont's Community Action Agencies.

Since 1988, the Micro Business Development Program has provided training, education, and technical assistance to help Vermonters with low incomes start or grow their own small businesses. Business ownership offers an important pathway to economic self-sufficiency for Vermonters with low incomes who may struggle with barriers to traditional employment.

The Vermont Financial Coaching Program provides financial coaching to Vermonters with low incomes. The Program helps participants establish strong financial habits and access financial tools that help build savings, manage credit, and set a budget. The Program aims to improve the financial future of Vermonters with low incomes by giving participants the knowledge, skills and tools that enable navigation of, and success in, the financial world.

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## Home Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

The Home Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) provides no-cost, whole-home energy retrofit to income-eligible Vermonters to save energy, reduce costs, improve health, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Office administers the program with state (special fund) and federal funding supporting five regional and one statewide provider:

- BROC Community Action
- Capstone Community Action
- Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity
- Northeast Employment and Training Organization
- Southeastern Vermont Community Action
- 3E Thermal, statewide multi-family provider



OEO monitors and provides training and technical assistance. This includes extensive quality assurance and quality control through inspection and monitoring of at least 10% of all weatherized units, as well as daily monitoring and oversight via the statewide, web-based data management system. Efficiency Coaching and the One Touch Referral program are important pieces of the weatherization process. Coaching enhances the focus on client education and behavior change. One Touch is a web-based referral services to and from other home, health, and human services partner programs. Both help remove barriers to weatherization and maximize the benefits of the Program to households.

Program [reports](#) are available on the OEO website.

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## Emergency Heating System Grant Program (EHS GP)

The Emergency Heating System Grant Program (EHS GP) is administered by OEO and services are provided by the five Weatherization Assistance Program agencies. It is funded with a combination of state special funds and federal funds. The goal is to restore safe heat by providing emergency heating system repair and replacement to income eligible households. The program operates on an emergency basis from November 1 through April 30, with some off-season services provided as funding allows.

# Business Office

## Chief Financial Officer Megan Smeaton

Megan Smeaton has been the DCF CFO for the past three years, having previously served as the DCF Director of Financial Analytics for two years before that. Megan enjoys working with the extremely knowledgeable and passionate staff of the Business Office, who are dedicated to serving Vermonters every day with their operational expertise.

Megan came to DCF in 2020, bringing eight years of experience working in public sector finance in New York City, including serving as the Deputy Executive Director for Early Childhood Finance for the NYC Department of Education, overseeing a budget of more than \$1 billion for the Universal Pre-K, 3-K, Head Start and EarlyLearn Initiatives in the five boroughs. Megan earned a Master of Arts in International Political Economy from the University of Chicago and a B.A. in Economic Development from McGill University.

When she is not wrestling budget spreadsheets, she is usually found with her nose stuck in a book (although these days it tends to be reading *Elephant & Piggie* to her toddler). She hopes that through reviewing this budget book and learning more about



the Department for Children and Families, legislators and the public can recognize the incredible amount of work, expertise and dedication that goes into operationalizing the many complex programs that DCF administers.

## **Business Office Leadership**

The Units within the DCF Business Office are led by Financial Directors who bring incredible knowledge and historical experience to their work and take great pride in leading teams of passionate and hard-working staff:

**Ed Dwinell**, Director of Financial Analytics/Deputy CFO (21 years with AHS)

**Amy Choquette**, Director of Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable and EBT Services (22 years with AHS)

**Patricia Hendee**, Senior Agreement Advisor and Audit Compliance Director (10 years with AHS)

**Jillian Niggel**, Special Projects Director (10 years with AHS, 2025 DCF employee of the year)

**Melanie Rutledge**, Co-Director of Grants & Contracts (30 years with AHS)

**Melanie Smit**, Co-Director of Grants and Contracts (21 years with AHS)

## **Business Office Mission**

The Business Office (BO) is charged with the execution of financial operations across the department. The DCF Business Office aims to efficiently and accurately provide DCF divisions and offices with operational resources to comply with State and Federal rules and regulations across all DCF programs for the benefit of Vermonters. The Business Office strives to provide:

- Informative communication that aids effective decision-making.
- Transparent and efficient human-centered services.
- Teamwork and collaboration with partners and colleagues through streamlined processes and continuous improvement.

## **Business Office Units and Structure**

The Business Office is comprised of 47 staff across four units who oversee all operational functions for the Department, including reviewing and executing agreements, processing payments and revenue recoupments, projecting budgetary impacts, and allocating costs across funding sources, among many other



responsibilities. The Business Office staff are technical experts who work within DCF's various systems, including VISION, VANTAGE, SSMIS, CDDIS, and ACCESS.

## **Grants & Contracts Unit**

The Grants and Contracts Unit (GCU) is the newest unit within the Business Office. It was created in January 2022 through a consolidation of grants and contracts positions that were previously allocated across various divisions and offices. The goal was to create one unified approach to agreement creation, management, and oversight throughout DCF. Because it was a newly formed unit, composed of people with different templates and interpretations of grant and contract administration, it has been an ongoing process of change management, practice alignment, and role determination. The structure of the unit has stabilized, and we have a better understanding of the responsibilities within the unit and across the department when it comes to agreement management, but continuous improvement never ends, and we are always looking for ways to improve and streamline processes and communication.

The GCU is composed of two sub-units: Development and Monitoring (D&M) and Quality Assurance and Reporting (QA&R). D&M manages the process of writing agreements before handing them off to the QA&R side of the team, who does the quality assurance review, routes for execution, reviews purchase orders once agreements are executed and manages the agreement closeout process. All agreements, including grants, contracts and MOUs, except those managed by OEO, are drafted and negotiated by the D&M Agreement Managers within the GCU, in close collaboration with program managers in relevant divisions. All DCF agreements and invoices (including OEO agreements) require review and approval by the QA&R team, who then routes and monitors the agreement for signature as well as post execution functions like payment processing and annual reporting of expenditures.

## **Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, and EBT/Medicaid Services Unit**

Our Accounts Payable/Accounts Receivable (AP/AR) has a broad mandate to ensure that the funds going out and coming in are processed accurately, timely, and in compliance with state payment accounting policies. AP/AR has three sub-teams, each tasked with specific responsibilities to support this mandate.

- The Accounts Payable Team is tasked with creating and processing Vision Vouchers for payments off purchase orders. They are also responsible for ensuring our interfaces between VISION and other systems (CDDIS & SSMIS) are processed smoothly and manually entering data from NIC and ACCESS into VISION, our state system of record. Members of this team enter and approve direct supplier payments, review and process purchasing card (P-Card) payments, and enter Transfer of State Funds (TSF) transactions in VISION.



- The EBT & Medicaid Team is responsible for printing and mailing out all Vermont EBT Cards daily. They also process Medicaid payments to suppliers through the Gainwell System.
- The Accounts Receivable Team collects funds for individuals that are over paid for SNAP and ReachUp benefits. The Business Office also collects the Premium Payments for the Pharmacy programs.

## **Analytics Unit**

The Analytics team is also composed of two sub-units: the Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) team and the Budget team. Budget is tasked primarily with projecting expenses that will hit in each of the Department's 13 main Dept IDs and 1x appropriations, while CAP's main responsibilities include monitoring, allocating costs to, reporting on, and projecting the revenue that the state will claim from federal partners and state special funds. These two groups work together to code invoices, enter accounting adjustments in VISION, support divisions on funding questions, and generally track all dollars that come in and go out of our department.

## **Special Projects Unit**

Finally, there is a small Special Projects Unit within the Business Office. This unit was created in 2020 to provide the resources necessary to address one-off, complex, and time-consuming issues that arise. Some of the work that this unit is focused on includes:

- Tracking, projecting, and reporting on one-time pandemic era funding sources (ARPA-SFR)
- Tracking and projecting housing program costs
- Resolving complex fiscal questions, such as cash balance reconciliations
- Supporting FSD with the development of their Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS)
- Developing and overseeing our subrecipient monitoring processes

Overall, the Business Office represents nearly fifty dedicated and knowledgeable operations and technical experts that manage an incredible volume of very complex functions throughout the department. Megan is very proud to represent this team during budget testimony, and she looks forward to answering your questions during the upcoming legislative session.



# Governor's Recommended Budget: State Fiscal Year 2027

## Required Reporting

[Act 27 of 2025 \(Sec. E.300.1\)](#) requires the Department to report on the following information regarding the development of residential beds for youth:

- (1) *the basis for the projected number of beds per facility to create 41 new beds for youth in high-end facilities under the Departments for Children and Families, of Mental Health, and of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living for inpatient, psychiatric residential, stabilization, and treatment services, including projected reductions in out-of-state placements;*
- (2) *the status of capacity at lower level residential and crisis facilities and their capabilities in preventing higher level needs if investments would enable full capacity use; and*
- (3) *a projected five-year operating budget across the Agency and departments for full utilization of the new high-end system components as currently planned, including:*
  - (A) *costs to the Department of Vermont Health Access' budget; and*
  - (B) *how these costs will impact the overall budgets for lower-level, community-based, prevention, and other services needed to prevent escalation to higher levels of care.*

Representatives from DCF have been meeting regularly with representatives from the Department of Mental Health, Department of Aging and Independent Living, and Department of Vermont Health Access to continue gathering data on the current system of care, including the proposed in-state Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility, and managing ongoing changes to the system of care. Because there have been very recent changes to the system of care, the multi-departmental group is still finalizing the data that is requested in Act 27.

[Act 27 of 2025 \(Sec E.316.1\)](#) requires the Department to report on the following budgetary inflation pressures for service providers:

*Annually, as part of its budget presentation, the Department shall inform the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare the cost of adding a one percent increase over the previous fiscal year's funding for community-contracted direct service providers.*



**FSD Contracted Service Providers:**

<b>Program</b>	<b>1% Increase</b>
BARJ	23,983
Child and Family Support	62,977
CFS Enhanced	1,950
IV-E Independent Living	9,879
Post Permanence	8,449
COMPASS (formerly PSSYF)	14,046
Intensive Family Based Service & Specialized Intensive Family Based	14,544
Specialized Intensive Family Based Services	30,933
Transportation	56,112
Abusive Head Truma & Nurturing Parent	4,170
Supervised Visits/Supported Family Time	928
Child Abuse Prevent/Treatment (CAPTA) or child Abuse & Neglect	845



Program	1% Increase
Miscellaneous Grants	1,967
Misc Grant - Service Agreement	750
Evaluation & Counseling	3,540
Youth Development-GC	4,410
Youth Development - GF	11,168
Raise the Age Youth Justice	2,398
Sub Care-Spec Contracted	20,192
Sub Care-Spec Therapeutic	32,572
Sub Care-Emer Short Term	43,744
Sub Care-In St Basic Gr Care	19,704
Sub Care-In St Intensive	89,061
Sub Care-Independent Living	207
Foster Care Extension Support	1,891
Sub Care - Spec ACE (Odin/Turtle Rock)	19,990



Program	1% Increase
Sub Care - (Families First/Banyon House/VPI)	8,736
	489,144

Funding Splits					
FF	GF	GC	IDT	SF	Total
-	162	23,821			23,983
	-	62,977			62,977
62	1,888				1,950
	9,879				9,879
		8,449			8,449
196	2,437	11,413			14,046
136	1,267	13,141			14,544
		30,933			30,933
8,543	47,569	-	-	-	56,112
-	2,954	1,066	150	-	4,170



Funding Splits					
FF	GF	GC	IDT	SF	Total
14	914	-	-	-	928
	845				845
496	1,471				1,967
	750				750
	3,540				3,540
		4,410			4,410
	11,168				11,168
	2,398				2,398
3,080	15,663	1,449			20,192
78	6,353	26,141			32,572
-	6,990	36,754			43,744
-	3,673	16,031			19,704
-	13,810	75,251			89,061
-	207				207



Funding Splits					
FF	GF	GC	IDT	SF	Total
	1,891				1,891
-	2,807	17,183			19,990
	8,736				8,736
12,605	147,372	329,019	150	-	489,146

**CDD Contracted Service Providers:**

Program	1% Increase
Child Care Referral & Eligibility	32,526
Children's Integrated Services	189,299
<b>Total</b>	<b>221,825</b>

Funding Splits					
FF	GF	GC	IDT	SF	Total
-	32,526	-	-	-	32,526
81,561	102,580	5,158	-	-	189,299
81,561	135,106	5,158	-	-	221,825



## Introduction to the Budget

The sections below provide context on the SFY27 Governor’s Recommended budget for the Department for Children and Families. The next two sections provide details of where changes are being recommended and the context behind those changes.

The Governor’s Recommended budget for DCF totals over \$710.6M, representing a 4.7% increase over the SFY26 budget as adopted. The budget includes caseload adjustments, agreement pressures, revenue adjustments to align with current federal and economic environmental conditions, administrative efficiencies, programmatic cuts to meet budget pressures, and personal services and ISF funding pressures, among other things. This budget also includes a comprehensive \$31.4M Housing Initiative (\$21.2M Base; \$10.2M 1x), designed to create additional shelter capacity and better coordination for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Funding Source	SFY26 AS Passed	Proposed Adj	SFY27 DCF Total Gov Rec
General Fund	252,110,116	35,935,860	\$ 288,045,976
Special Fund	134,838,390	(8,878,074)	\$ 125,960,316
Inter-Dept Transfer	868,905	160,698	\$ 1,029,603
Federal Fund	206,740,219	6,424,804	\$ 213,165,023
Global Commitment	84,387,554	(1,954,997)	\$ 82,432,557
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 678,945,184</b>	<b>\$ 31,688,291</b>	<b>\$ 710,633,475</b>

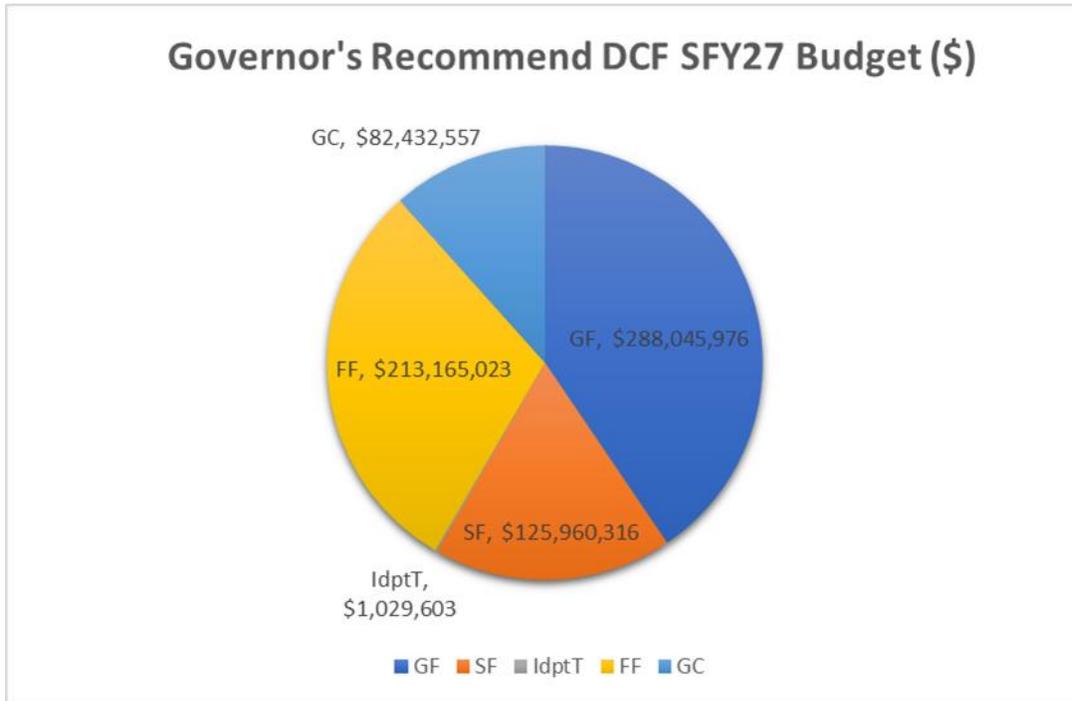


Figure 14: Governor's Recommended SFY27 budget for DCF as broken down by funding streams.

DCF's budget is composed of 13 base Departmental Appropriations (Dept IDs) and 45 one-time appropriations that provide the funding for the work of divisions and offices. Below is a summary of the budget of each of DCF's base appropriations and explanations of the changes that are being proposed.

Appropriation	SFY27 Budget
Admin	\$ 81,234,385
FSD	\$ 159,596,100
CDD	\$ 233,829,726
OCS	\$ 18,595,697
AABD	\$ 12,895,646
GA	\$ 3,255,792
3Squares	\$ 53,077,812
RUP	\$ 32,490,768



Appropriation	SFY27 Budget
LIHEAP	\$ 20,730,395
OEO	\$ 63,851,361
Wx	\$ 16,898,248
SRTF	\$ 4,773,832
DDS	\$ 9,403,713
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 710,633,475</b>

The first of DCF’s appropriations (ADMIN – B.316 – 3440010000) provides the funding for the Business Office, Commissioner’s Office, the Department’s Agency of Digital Service (ADS) needs, and administrative support for the Economic Services Division. ESD’s programmatic budgets each have their own appropriation (AABD, GA, 3SquaresVT, Reach Up and LIHEAP). FSD and OEO also have two appropriations each, while CDD, OCS and DDS have budgets that are consolidated into one appropriation each.

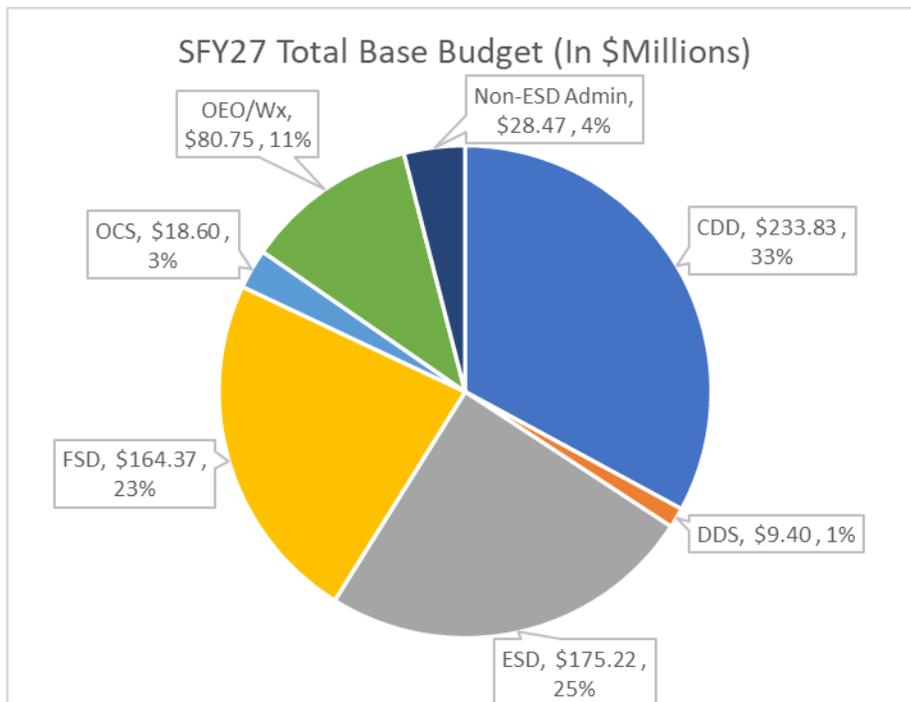


Figure 15: DCF base budget by program area.



## Summary of SFY27 Governor’s Recommended (Gov Rec) DCF Budget

### **ADMIN – B.316 – 3440010000**

Admin is composed of four sub-budgets: Commissioner’s Office, Business Office, ESD Admin, and IT costs. ESD Admin includes salaries for all ESD staff and operating funds as well as an assortment of grants (mostly SNAP related). Below is the breakout by sub budgets as well as major operating buckets:

#### **Admin SFY27 Gov Rec Budget by Funding Source**

Funding Source	Proposed Budget
General Fund	\$ 55,488,099
Special Fund	\$ 2,695,360
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ 627,003
Federal Fund	\$ 20,162,623
Global Commitment	\$ 2,261,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 81,234,385</b>



**SFY27 DCF Admin Gov Rec Budget by Sub-Budget and Major Operating Bucket**

Admin Sub-Budget	Staff	Contractual	Operating	Grants	Total
Commissioner's Office	6,052,786	185,145	430,143	189,900	6,857,974
Business Office	6,143,379	178,874	347,402	-	6,669,656
ADS	-	460,000	14,480,563	-	14,940,563
ESD	40,122,622	1,335,659	6,060,765	5,247,147	52,766,192
<b>Total</b>	<b>52,318,787</b>	<b>2,159,678</b>	<b>21,318,873</b>	<b>5,437,047</b>	<b>81,234,385</b>

**SFY27 Gov Rec Proposed Changes to Admin Budget by Sub-Budget and Major Operating Bucket**

Admin Sub-Budget	Staff	Contractual/3rd Party	Operating	Grants	Total
Commissioner's Office	256,479	-	17,350	-	273,829
Business Office	134,212	-	18,787	-	153,000
ADS	-	-	3,464,417	-	3,464,417
ESD	3,477,802	-	(58,134)	(477,128)	2,942,539



<b>Total</b>	<b>3,868,493</b>	-	<b>3,442,420</b>	<b>(477,128)</b>	<b>6,833,785</b>
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### Family Services Division (FSD) – B.317 – 3440020000

FSD’s budget is divided between two appropriations: Family Services and Secure Residential Treatment Facilities. The first of these appropriations is B.317, containing the vast majority of the Family Services Division’s budget. All expenses other than those associated with secure treatment of youth in DCF custody are budgeted for in this appropriation. There is a large GC component to the FSD budget, as medical treatment of youth in DCF custody is Medicaid eligible. We also have significant federal funding to support the work that FSD does, including Title IV-E, which is an entitlement grant allowing for some additional federal revenue to be earned as costs increase.

#### SFY27 FSD Gov Rec Budget by Funding Source

Funding Source	Proposed FSD Budget
General Fund	\$ 68,250,578
Special Fund	\$ 729,150
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ 15,000
Federal Fund	\$ 37,280,968
Global Commitment	\$ 53,320,404
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 159,596,100</b>



**SFY27 FSD Gov Rec Budget by Major Operating Bucket**

Major Operating Bucket	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 FSD Gov Rec Base
Salaries & Fringe	47,934,751	3,911,623	51,846,374
Contractual/other PS	1,240,402	-	1,240,402
Operating	5,497,038	111,641	5,608,679
Substitute Care & Subsidized Adoptions	66,159,663	1,399,551	67,559,214
Grants Out	34,382,097	(1,040,666)	33,341,431
<b>Total</b>	<b>155,213,951</b>	<b>4,382,149</b>	<b>159,596,100</b>

**Child Development Division (CDD) – B.318 – 3440030000**

CDD’s budget is all in one appropriation, making it one of DCF’s largest appropriations. The budget in CDD provides funding to support CDD’s staffing and operating, beneficiary programs such as Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP), and agreements for a variety of services, including Children’s Integrated Services (CIS), Child Care Referral & Eligibility services, family support agreements, and capacity and quality support agreements, among other things. CDD’s budget is composed of several funding sources, as outlined below, including several special funds, the largest of those being the Child Care Special Fund, which is funded through a state payroll tax. This special fund was new in SFY25, so we are still gathering data to be able to understand and project revenue more accurately.



**SFY27 CDD Gov Rec Budget by Funding Source**

Funding Source	Proposed CDD Budget
General Fund	\$ 70,164,506
Special Fund	\$ 106,679,803
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ -
Federal Fund	\$ 42,948,970
Global Commitment	\$ 14,036,447
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 233,829,726</b>

**SFY27 CDD Gov Rec Budget by Major Operating Bucket**

Major Operating Bucket	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 Gov Rec CDD Base
Salaries & Fringe	6,419,107	516,262	6,935,369
Contractual/other PS	144,700	-	144,700
Operating	783,604	234,369	1,017,973
CCFAP	172,551,961	-	172,551,961



Major Operating Bucket	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 Gov Rec CDD Base
Grants Out	55,228,766	(2,049,043)	53,179,723
<b>Total</b>	<b>235,128,138</b>	<b>(1,298,412)</b>	<b>233,829,726</b>

### Office of Child Support (OCS) – B.319 – 3440040000

The Office of Child support is funded entirely out of appropriation B.319, and it is comprised of staffing and operating costs only, as OCS does not administer any grants. The OCS budget is 66% federally funded through Title IV-D, but it does include a small amount of special funds. These special funds are generated through child support collections and registry fees.

#### SFY27 OCS Gov Rec Budget by Funding Source

Funding Source	Proposed OCS Budget
General Fund	\$ 5,841,149
Special Fund	\$ 453,110
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ 387,600
Federal Fund	\$ 11,913,838
Global Commitment	\$ -
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 18,595,697</b>



**SFY27 OCS Gov Rec Budget by Major Operating Bucket**

Major Operating Bucket	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 Gov Rec OCS Base
Salaries & Fringe	13,762,182	656,045	14,418,227
Contractual/other PS	424,090	-	424,090
Operating	3,738,844	14,536	3,753,380
Grants Out	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,925,116</b>	<b>670,581</b>	<b>18,595,697</b>

**Aid for Aged, Blind and Disabled (AABD) – B.320 – 3440050000**

AABD is an ESD programmatic appropriation. This budget in B.320 funds benefits for the Essential Persons Program and the State Supplementary SSI program. It also includes contracted costs for the federal government to administer the State Supplement SSI payments on our behalf.

**AABD Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Fund Source:**

Funding Source	Proposed AABD Budget
General Fund	\$ 7,452,643
Special Fund	\$ -



Funding Source	Proposed AABD Budget
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ -
Federal Fund	\$ -
Global Commitment	\$ 5,443,003
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 12,895,646</b>

**SFY27 AABD Gov Rec Budget by Expense Type:**

Expense Type	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 Gov Rec AABD Base
Salaries & Fringe	-	-	-
Contractual/other PS	2,558,460	53,305	2,611,765
Operating	-	-	-
AABD Benefits	10,418,567	(134,686)	10,283,881
Grants Out	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,977,027</b>	<b>(81,381)</b>	<b>12,895,646</b>



## General Assistance (GA) – B.321 – 3440060000

The General Assistance appropriation includes funding for a broad array of programs designed to support households experiencing instability with regards to housing and other basic needs.

### GA Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Fund Source

Funding Source	Proposed GA Budget
General Fund	\$ 3,054,218
Special Fund	\$ -
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ -
Federal Fund	\$ 11,098
Global Commitment	\$ 190,476
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,255,792</b>

### SFY27 GA Gov Rec Budget by Expense Type:

Expense Type	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 Gov Rec GA Base
Salaries & Fringe	-	-	-
Contractual/other PS	15,000	-	15,000
Operating	-	-	-



Expense Type	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 Gov Rec GA Base
Emergency Housing Benefits	8,000,000	(7,450,963)	549,037
Grants Out	2,415,779	275,976	2,691,755
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,430,779</b>	<b>(7,174,987)</b>	<b>3,255,792</b>

### 3SquaresVT – B.322 – 3440070000

The 3Squares appropriation is 100% federally funded and provides the budget for Vermont’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Cashout Program. This is a program that provides cash food benefits to elderly and disabled Vermonters. This appropriation also includes funding for the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Program. This is a program that provides supplemental food benefits to eligible households with school age children to support the cost of lunches when school is not in session.

#### 3Squares Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Fund Source:

Funding Source	Proposed 3Sq Budget
General Fund	\$ -
Special Fund	\$ -
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ -
Federal Fund	\$ 53,077,812
Global Commitment	\$ -



<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 53,077,812</b>
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**3Squares Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Expense Type:**

Expense Type	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 3Sq Gov Rec Base
Salaries & Fringe	-	-	-
Contractual/other PS	-	-	-
Operating	-	-	-
3Squares Benefits	51,077,812	2,000,000	53,077,812
Grants Out	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,077,812</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>53,077,812</b>

**Reach Up (RUP) – B.323 – 3440080000**

The Reach Up Program is another one of ESD’s programmatic appropriations, and it is Vermont’s Temporary Assistance to Needy Family (TANF) Benefits Program. This appropriation is composed mostly of TANF eligible beneficiary payments, although it does also contain a variety of agreements to support this same population. It also contains a contract with Lund for Vermont’s Pregnant and Parenting Residential Treatment program.

**RUP Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Fund Source:**

Funding Source	Proposed RUP Budget
General Fund	\$ 17,904,212



Funding Source	Proposed RUP Budget
Special Fund	\$ 6,106,068
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ -
Federal Fund	\$ 4,953,062
Global Commitment	\$ 3,527,426
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 32,490,768</b>

**RUP Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Expense Type:**

Expense Type	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 RUP Gov Rec Base
Salaries & Fringe	-	-	-
Contractual/other PS	-	-	-
Operating	23,821	-	23,821
RUP Benefits	27,741,149	(3,325,591)	24,415,558
Grants Out	8,791,714	(740,325)	8,051,389



<b>Total</b>	<b>36,556,684</b>	<b>(4,065,916)</b>	<b>32,490,768</b>
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**Low Income Heating & Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) – B.324 – 3440090000**

ESD administers the state’s LIHEAP program out of Appropriation B.324. This appropriation provides funding for fuel and energy assistance to eligible Vermonters. It is funded using a combination of federal LIHEAP funding and a small amount of State special funds.

**LIHEAP Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Fund Source:**

Funding Source	Proposed LIHEAP Budget
General Fund	\$ -
Special Fund	\$ 1,480,395
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ -
Federal Fund	\$ 19,250,000
Global Commitment	\$ -
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 20,730,395</b>

**LIHEAP Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Expense Type:**

Expense Type	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 LIHEAP Gov Rec Base
Salaries & Fringe	-	-	-



Expense Type	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 LIHEAP Gov Rec Base
Contractual/other PS	-	-	-
Operating	-	-	-
LIHEAP Benefits	15,969,953	4,710,442	20,680,395
Grants Out	50,000	-	50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,019,953</b>	<b>4,710,442</b>	<b>20,730,395</b>

### Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) – B.325 – 3440100000

OEO’s budget is broken out between two appropriations. The first – B.325 – is perhaps somewhat confusingly called OEO. The other – B. 326 – is called Weatherization. The OEO appropriation contains staffing and operating costs for the non-weatherization portion of OEO’s budget, as well as funding for a wide variety of agreements designed to support Vermonter’s in accessing shelter, supportive housing, and economic supports. The budget below represents significant investments in shelter programs throughout the state as part of the governor’s Housing Initiative. For more information, please see the Housing Initiative portion of the narrative.

#### OEO Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Fund Source:

Funding Source	Proposed OEO Budget
General Fund	\$ 55,005,140
Special Fund	\$ 83,135



Funding Source	Proposed OEO Budget
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ -
Federal Fund	\$ 5,139,585
Global Commitment	\$ 3,623,501
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 63,851,361</b>

**OEO Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Expense Type:**

Expense Type	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 OEO Gov Rec Base
Salaries & Fringe	1,373,401	495,832	1,869,233
Contractual/other PS	3,024	-	3,024
Operating	159,458	28,773	188,231
Grants Out	39,165,356	22,625,517	61,790,873
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,701,239</b>	<b>23,150,122</b>	<b>63,851,361</b>



## Weatherization (Wx) – B.326 – 3440110000

The Weatherization appropriation is the other half of the Office of Economic Opportunity. This appropriation includes the staff and operating for administration of Weatherization related grants and a substantial granting budget. This appropriation is funded through a combination of the Weatherization Fuel Tax Special Fund and Federal Funds.

### Weatherization Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Fund Source:

Funding Source	Proposed Wx Budget
General Fund	\$ -
Special Fund	\$ 7,733,295
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ -
Federal Fund	\$ 9,164,953
Global Commitment	\$ -
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 16,898,248</b>

### Weatherization Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Expense Type:

Expense Type	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 Wx Gov Rec Base
Salaries & Fringe	471,549	(25,546)	446,003
Contractual/other PS	27,288	-	27,288



Expense Type	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 Wx Gov Rec Base
Operating	275,322	1,750	277,072
Grants Out	15,147,885	1,000,000	16,147,885
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,922,044</b>	<b>976,204</b>	<b>16,898,248</b>

### Secure Residential Treatment Facility (SRTF) – B.327 – 3440120000

The SRTF Appropriation is FSD’s other programmatic appropriation, containing funding for secure treatment as part of the High-End System of Care (HESOC). DCF has been working towards contracting an in-state Secure Treatment Facility for five years, and while this goal has not yet been achieved, DCF is now operating a 4-bed temporary secure treatment facility (Red Clover) and a 3-bed short-term treatment and stabilization facility (West River Haven) in SFY27. We plan to utilize the base funding to support ongoing contracts and grants as well as the West River Haven contract (as this is intended to be a permanent facility). We propose utilizing 1x funds for Red Clover, as this continues to a 1x need for FSD until Green Mountain Youth Campus is in operation.

#### SRTF Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Fund Source:

Funding Source	Proposed Budget
General Fund	\$ 4,743,832
Special Fund	\$ -
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ -
Federal Fund	\$ -



Funding Source	Proposed Budget
Global Commitment	\$ 30,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,773,832</b>

**SRTF Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Expense Type:**

Expense Type	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 Gov Rec Base
Salaries & Fringe	-	-	-
Contractual/other PS	258,100	-	258,100
Operating	38,775	95	38,870
Grants Out	3,476,862	1,000,000	4,476,862
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,773,737</b>	<b>1,000,095</b>	<b>4,773,832</b>

**Disability Determination Services (DDS) – B.328 – 3440130000**

The Office of Disability Determination Services is the final appropriation within DCF’s base budget. The budget for DDS is 98% federally funded and is entirely composed of personal services, contractual services and operating costs.

**DDS Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Fund Source:**



Funding Source	Proposed DDS Budget
General Fund	\$ 141,599
Special Fund	\$ -
Inter-Dept Transfer	\$ -
Federal Fund	\$ 9,262,114
Global Commitment	\$ -
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 9,403,713</b>

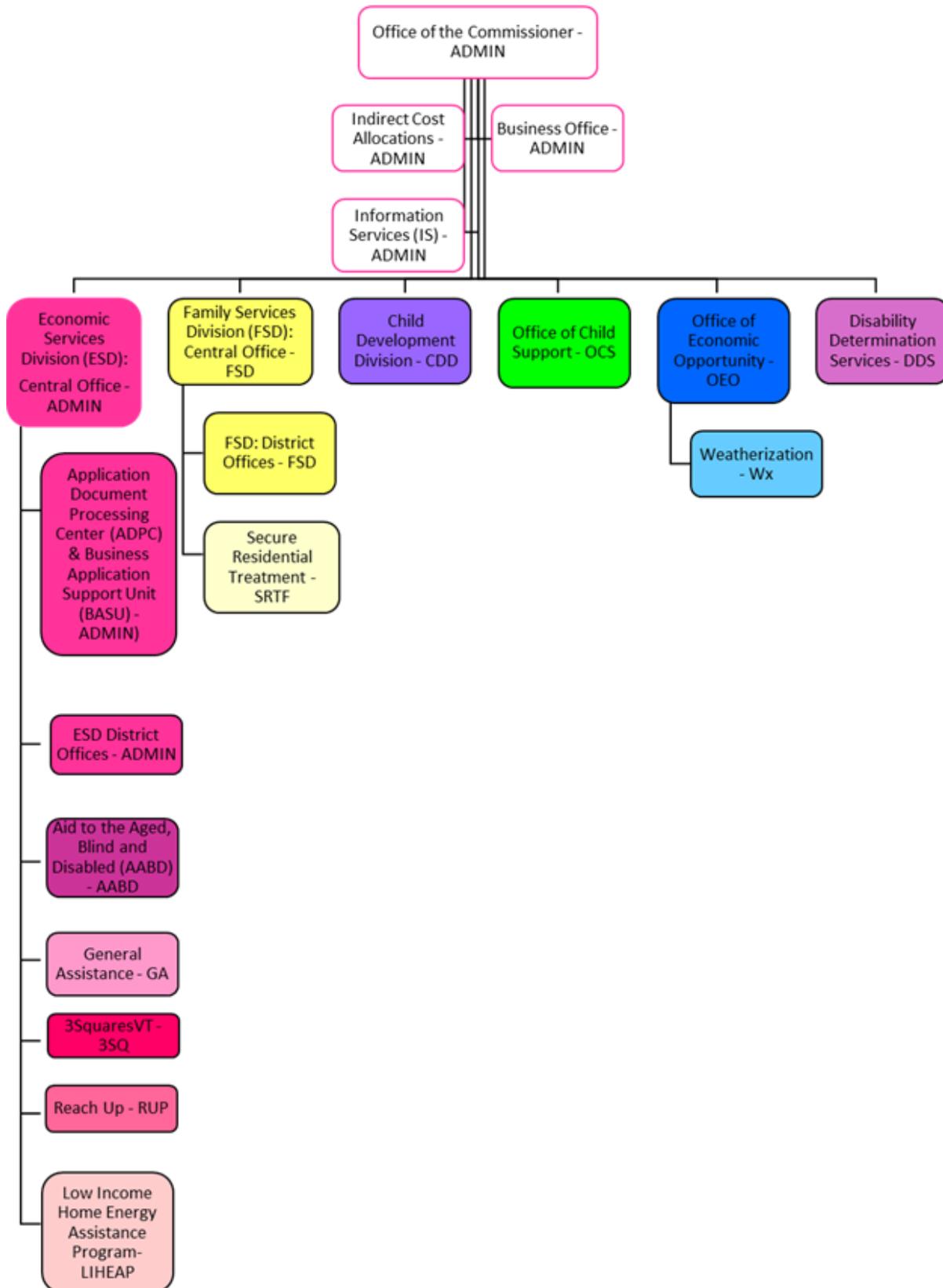
**DDS Gov Rec SFY27 Budget by Expense Type:**

Expense Type	SFY26 Base Budget	SFY27 Gov Rec Changes	SFY27 DDS Gov Rec Base
Salaries & Fringe	6,650,476	448,865	7,099,341
Contractual/other PS	1,671,694	-	1,671,694
Operating	495,934	136,744	632,678
Grants Out	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,818,104</b>	<b>585,609</b>	<b>9,403,713</b>



## SFY27 Budget Narrative

The following section provides line-item explanations of changes made to each of the appropriations in the Governor's Recommended SFY27 Budget. On the next page is a visualization of the DCF structure, including the divisions and various offices and their programs.





The dollar amounts listed in the narrative lines below represent overall changes to the budget line in question. For net \$0 adjustments, we have also provided the GF impact. More granular details on funding sources for any of the line items below can be found in the AHS budget document submissions and Adaptive reports.

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## ADMIN – B.316 - 3440010000

### Personal Services

- Salaries & Wages (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$959,561
  - Costs associated with the annualization of pay act and benefit rate adjustments for state employee salaries. This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.
- Health Insurance (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$467,056
  - Costs associated with the increased health care premiums for DCF staff. This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.
- Retirement (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$273,327
  - Costs associated with the retirement rate for state employees. This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.
- All Other Employee Payroll Related Fringe Benefits: \$67,995
  - Costs Associated with Fringe Benefits not otherwise listed separately (life insurance, Dental, Long-Term Disability). This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.
- VT Family & Medical Leave Insurance Premiums: \$3,782
  - Costs associated with FMLI benefits for DCF employees. This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.
- Child Care Contribution: \$4,378



- Costs associated with the Child Care Payroll Tax. This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.
- Workers' Compensation Insurance Premium: \$5,226
  - DCF's portion of the change to the Workers Compensation internal Services fund budget for SFY27. Allocated across DCF appropriations based on where spending was over budget in SFY25. This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Revenue Realignment: DCF Net Neutral
  - Realigning TANF earnings and GF between FSD, Admin and Reach Up to align with TANF State Plan
- Temp Staffing Cut: **(\$52,626)**
  - Elimination of two temp positions. One position in the commissioner's office and one grants & contracts position in the business office.
- Reach First Admin Cut: **(\$100,000)** GF
  - One vacant Case Manager position would be eliminated due to the elimination of the Reach First program in the Reach Up appropriation.
- Revenue True Up (Non-SNAP) - Personal Services: Net \$0 / **(\$187,239)** GF
  - This aligns revenue to reflect the reality of what revenue is used in which buckets (Personal Services, Operating, and Grants).
- SNAP Admin Federal Share Change: Net \$0 / \$2,851,364 GF
  - Due to the loss of 25% of federal SNAP Admin funding for eligible PS expenses because of federal bill HR 1, there are significant state funded pressures for the admin appropriation.
- **(Housing Initiative)** Limited-Service Positions (21 FTE): \$2,239,794
  - See Housing Initiative section of the narrative (following this section) for more details. Funding to support 21 Limited-Service Positions.



## Operating

- Fee-for-Space Internal Services Fund (ISF): \$41,971
  - DCF's portion of the change to the Fee-for-Space Internal Services Fund budget for SFY26. Allocated across DCF appropriations based on where spending was over budget in SFY25. This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.
- Insurance other than Employee Benefits ISF: \$56,744
  - DCF's portion of the change to the Insurance Other than Employee Benefits Internal Services Fund budget for SFY26. Allocated across DCF appropriations based on where spending was over budget in SFY25. This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.
- Insurance – General Liability ISF: **(\$73,119)**
  - DCF's portion of the change to the Insurance - General Liability Internal Services Fund budget for SFY26. Allocated across DCF appropriations based on where spending was over budget in SFY25. This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.
- VISION/ISD ISF: \$16,475
  - DCF's portion of the change to the VISION/ISD Internal Services Fund budget for SFY26. Allocated across DCF appropriations based on where spending was over budget in SFY25. This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.
- ADS Allocated Charge: \$2,810,927
  - DCF's portion of the change to the ADS Allocated Internal Services Fund budget for SFY26. Allocated across DCF appropriations based on where spending was over budget in SFY25. This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.
- Human Resources Services ISF: \$108,345
  - DCF's portion of the change to the Human Resources Internal Services Fund budget for SFY26. Allocated across DCF appropriations based on



where spending was over budget in SFY25. This will appear in other appropriations too, although the description will not be repeated to avoid making this narrative unnecessarily long and repetitive.

- Maintenance & Operation costs for Integrated Eligibility & Enrollment (IE&E) Noticing Solution: \$600,233
  - The new Noticing Solution for IE&E is expected to go live in SFY27. This will require maintenance and operation (M&O) funding moving forward. This is the DCF portion of the costs of operating the new system.
- Income Verification System: \$50,000
  - ESD has been using a federally provided Earnings Verification System - EVS - to verify income for program eligibility but the feds are no longer providing the system free of charge. ESD must procure a new method of verifying income and estimates the need to be \$50K. This represents the estimated annual cost to contract with an external Earnings Verification System (EVS) vendor under a pay-as-you-go model. Under this model, Quality Control (QC) and the Fraud and Claims Unit (FACU) are charged per hit, and \$50,000 is a conservative estimate based on anticipated annual usage. Continued access is necessary to support federally required QC activities and fraud investigations and to protect the state from increased financial and compliance risk.
- Revenue True Up (Non-SNAP): Net \$0 / \$490,105 GF
  - This aligns revenue to reflect the reality of what revenue is used in which buckets (Personal Services, Operating, and Grants), representing a reduction in allocated special funds and Medicaid to operating expenses and an increase in GF and IDT.
- SNAP Admin Federal Share Change: Net \$0 / \$1,032,373 GF
  - Due to the loss of 25% of Federal SNAP Admin funding for eligible operating expenses because of federal bill HR 1, there are significant state funded pressures for the admin appropriation.
- ESD VOIP Reduction: **(\$121,251)**
  - ESD plans to eliminate the usage of personal desk phones, as staff have access to other methods (State cell phones, office phonelines, TEAMS calls, etc....) to contact each other and contact Vermonters as needed.
- ESD Office Supplies Cut: **(\$30,000)**



- ESD plans to realize administrative efficiencies in office supply purchases.
- Fleet Vehicle Cut: **(\$17,905)**
  - This eliminates fleet vehicles used for two of the AAGs, as this is not something that the department is required to provide to the AAGs as part of the MOU for services.

## Grants Out

- SNAP Admin Federal Share Change: Net \$0 / \$654,064 GF
  - This reflects the impact on the loss of 25% of the federal SNAP Admin funding for eligible grant expenses.
- SNAP Education Program Elimination: **(\$437,128)**
  - The federal government, as part of HR 1, eliminated the SNAP Education program. While the state did not provide any match for this program, it did grant out the federal funding to partner entities, who were responsible for providing the state 50% match. This reflects the removal of the federal funding that was budget for this program.
- 211 Hour Reduction: **(\$332,000)**
  - This reduces the hours of operation for the 211-emergency housing call center from 24/7 to 8am-11 pm. Between the hours of 11 pm and 8am hotels do not accept placements anyways, so the only thing that the call center staff are able to tell callers is to call back in the morning.
- *(Housing Initiative)* Natural Disaster Sheltering Options: \$292,000

## Total ESD Funding Changes:

- GF: \$11,807,228
- GC: **(\$519,336)**
- Other Revenue Sources: **(\$4,454,107)**
- Total: \$6,833,785



## FSD – B.317 - 3440020000

### Personal Services

- Salaries & Wages (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$1,261,081
- Health Insurance (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$587,302
- Retirement (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$687,996
- All Other Employee Payroll Related Fringe Benefits: \$185,279
- VT Family & Medical Leave Insurance Premiums: \$8,858
- Child Care Contribution: \$10,589
- Workers' Compensation Insurance Premium: \$72,752
- TANF Revenue Realignment: DCF Net Neutral
  - Realigning TANF earnings and GF between FSD, Admin and Reach Up to align with TANF State Plan
- Revenue True Up - Personal Services: Net \$0 / (\$2,449,948) GF
  - This aligns revenue to reflect the reality of what revenue is used in which buckets (Personal Services, Operating, and Grants).
- Social Worker Class Action: \$1,097,766
  - Cost impact of class action for Social Workers that resulted in a one pay grade increase in SFY25.

### Operating

- Fee-for-Space Internal Services Fund (ISF): \$31,928
- Insurance – General Liability ISF: \$85,641
- VISION/ISD ISF: (\$90,134)
- Human Resources Services ISF: \$84,206
- Revenue True Up - Operating Expenses: Net \$0 / \$2,304,557 GF



- This aligns revenue to reflect the reality of what revenue is used in which buckets (Personal Services, Operating, and Grants).

## Grants Out

- Private Non-Medical Institution (PNMI) Inflation Factor: \$1,087,474
  - Funding to provide rate adjustments to the PNMI providers to align with inflationary impact on service costs. The inflation factor was added to the PNMI rules when they were updated in 2024.
- Northwestern Counseling & Support Services (NCSS) DS Transfer from CDD (DCF Net Neutral, BAA Item): \$435,988
  - Funding was transferred from DMH in the SFY26 base budget, but it was mistakenly placed in the CDD appropriation last year. It is being moved to FSD where it belongs.
- Transportation contract pressures (BAA item): \$1,000,000
  - FSD's transportation contracts have come in substantially over budget the past few years because of the Federal requirements that FSD transport children/youth in custody to school, therapy, parent/child contact, and other locations. This has created a budget deficit problem for FSD. We attempted to right size this in SFY26 base budget, but the pressure continued to rise throughout SFY25's legislative session. This adjustment is to right size the transportation budget to align with the contract values. The relatively limited number of potential providers and the need for DCF to provide these services has resulted in increased costs with little bargaining power.
- Substitute Care Caseload & Utilization: **(\$619,234)**
  - Caseload pressures based on trends from last three years as well as known changes to the system compared to the analysis done for SFY26 Budget Build. This builds in an assumption that with the changes for inflation and new rules, the amount of Extraordinary Financial Relief (EFRs) requests paid to PNMI programs will decrease.
    - ♣ Youth Aging Out: Caseload increases by +1/month; Cost Per Case (CPC) increases by +\$6/month
    - ♣ Independent Living: Caseload (3)/month; CPC +\$45/month
    - ♣ Standard Foster Care: Caseload (49)/month; CPC +\$30/month



- ♣ Instate Residential: Caseload level; CPC **(\$1,846)**/month
- ♣ Out of State Residential: Caseload level; CPC +\$3,717/month
- ♣ Specialized FC: Caseload (27)/month; CPC +\$167/month
- ♣ Emergency Short Term Care: Caseload +2/month; CPC (\$542)/month
- Subsidized Adoption Caseload & Utilization: \$931,311
  - Caseload pressures based on trends from last three years as well as known changes to the system vs. SFY26 Budget Build Estimates.
    - ♣ Subsidized Adoptions: Caseload +83 cases/month; Cost per Case (CPC) (\$7)/month
    - ♣ Permanent Guardianship: Caseload +2/month; CPC +\$26/month
    - ♣ Non-Recurring: Caseload +1 avg/month (varies widely by month); CPC stable
- Post Permanence Program - 25% Reduction: **(\$293,866)**
  - Reduction in funding to support services provided to families joined by adoption and permanent guardianship. This would limit the eligible population served by these contracts to only those families whose adoption was facilitated by DCF. This would represent a loss of services to families who adopted a child through private adoptions. Funding would be decreased for NFI, Lund and Easter Seals.
- Nurturing Parent Program – 50% Reduction: **(\$194,373)**
  - This reduces by 50% the program that provides parenting classes to eligible households. These funds are administered by Prevent Child Abuse Vermont. This program represents primary prevention services to families.
- Post Adoption Consortium Program Cut: **(\$200,000)**
  - Elimination of funding that supports post adoption events organized and hosted by a consortium of providers who specialize in working with families joined by adoption or guardianship, including Lund, Easter Seals, and NFI. Only \$2K was utilized in SFY25, so the programmatic impacts of the cut will be minimal.



- Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) After Care Cut: **(\$1,260,000)**
  - Elimination of funding for after care services for youth exiting residential programs, which is a requirement to implement the Families First Prevention Services Act (but has not been able to be established). This was meant to provide services to youth for at least 6 months after they exit a residential placement and is one of several requirements of FFPSA that prevents DCF from drawing down more than 14 days of IV-E revenue for children in residential care. The larger issues are the requirement to have a judicial review of all residential placement and case tracking that is not possible without the CCWIS system. Eliminating this funding won't lead to a loss of federal revenue and since this service has not been implemented, it won't result in elimination of existing services either.
  
- FFPSA Prevention Services Cut: **(\$528,415)**
  - Elimination of funding that would be used as state match to access Federal prevention services funds through the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). The goal of prevention services is to keep children with their families and out of state custody. Vermont has not been able to meet the many requirements of FFPSA to be eligible to draw down the FFPSA prevention funds, including the requirement to track cases and services that is impossible using the current SSMIS case management system. At this time, pursuing this funding using the current would put the state at risk of inappropriately drawing down federal prevention funds. Even with the elimination of these funds, DCF is still looking to expand evidence-based prevention services.

Total Funding Changes:

- GF: \$4,569,585
- GC: **(\$60,862)**
- Other Revenue Sources: **(\$126,574)**
- Total: \$4,382,149



## CDD – B.318 - 3440030000

### Personal Services

- Salaries & Wages (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$361,461
- Health Insurance (Classified & Exempt Employees): **(\$29,903)**
- Retirement (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$104,122
- All Other Employee Payroll Related Fringe Benefits: \$73,118
- VT Family & Medical Leave Insurance Premiums: \$2,019
- Child Care Contribution: \$1,599
- Workers' Compensation Insurance Premium: \$3,846
- Revenue True Up - Personal Services: Net \$0 / **(\$620,431)** GF
  - This aligns revenue to reflect the reality of what revenue is used in which buckets (Personal Services, Operating, and Grants).

### Operating

- Fee-for-Space Internal Services Fund (ISF): \$3,830
- VISION/ISD ISF: \$245,539
- Revenue True Up - Operating Expenses: Net \$0 / **(\$118,817)** GF
  - This aligns revenue to reflect the reality of what revenue is used in which buckets (Personal Services, Operating, and Grants).
- Travel Savings: **(\$15,000)**
  - Operating savings to be realized through reduced employee travel.

### Grants Out

- Revenue Realignment – Grants: Net \$0 / \$698,991 GF
  - This aligns revenue to reflect the reality of what revenue is used in which buckets (Personal Services, Operating, and Grants).



- Child Care Revenue Adj (SF to Tax Dept): Net \$0 / \$2,500,000 GF
  - All the Special Fund for the Child Care tax revenue was placed in DCF last year - this adjusts the available SF to account for the admin needs of the Tax Department.
- NCSS DS Technical Correction (DCF Net Neutral, BAA Item): **(\$410,829)**
  - Funding was transferred from DMH to DCF for NCSS in two lines in last year's budget: for CIS bundled services and for DS waiver funding. However, the dollar amounts were reversed mistakenly. This corrects the amounts for the two transfers in the base budget.
- NCSS Children's Integrated Services Technical Correction (DCF Net Neutral, BAA Item): \$410,829
  - Funding was transferred from DMH to DCF for NCSS in two lines in last year's budget: for CIS bundled services and for DS waiver funding. However, the dollar amounts were reversed mistakenly. This corrects the amounts for the two transfers in the base budget.
- NCSS DS Transfer to FSD (DCF Net Neutral, BAA Item): **(\$435,988)**
  - Funding was transferred from DMH in the SFY26 base budget, but it was mistakenly placed in the CDD appropriation last year. It is being moved to FSD where it belongs.
- Child Care Special Fund Shortfall: Net \$0 / \$6,242,955 GF
  - Due to projected revenue shortfall from the Child Care Payroll Tax Contribution Fund, we need to backfill the state economists' projected decrease in SF revenue with general funds.
- Strengthening Families Program Cut: **(\$1,110,000)**
  - Elimination of grant program for family supports in child care programs; targeted to sunset as funds weren't equitably distributed and additional funds for child care available via Act 76 of 2023 investments.
- Child Care Capacity Grants Reduction: **(\$100,000)**
  - Reduction to grants to support start up and expansion; \$900K remains; state will supplement if additional federal funds are available, for example from the PDG B-5 2026 grant.
- Emergency Financial Relief Utilization Cut: **(\$122,933)**



- Reduction of funding to support emergency needs for child care providers at risk of closure. The remaining budget is aligned with what was disbursed in recent years. This leaves \$156K remaining in this budget line.
- Child Care Eligibility Agreement Efficiencies: **(\$100,000)**
  - Reduction in funding to grants with 12 Community Child Care Support Agencies (CCCSAs) based on usage since the budget was doubled in SFY24. \$2.5M remains in this budget line.
- Children's Trust Fund Program Cut: **(\$180,122)**
  - Elimination of contribution to CTF's annual grantmaking program for a variety of child serving programs; federal funds have not been available for several years and this removes that spending authority.

### **Total Funding Changes:**

- GF: \$8,896,636
- GC: **(\$1,490,017)**
- Other Revenue Sources: **(\$8,705,031)**
- Total: **(\$1,298,412)**

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## **OCS – B.319 - 3440040000**

### **Personal Services**

- Salaries & Wages (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$334,797
- Health Insurance (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$264,582
- Retirement (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$86,252
- All Other Employee Payroll Related Fringe Benefits: **(\$24,646)**
- VT Family & Medical Leave Insurance Premiums: **(\$30)**
- Child Care Contribution: \$1,459
- Workers' Compensation Insurance Premium: **(\$6,369)**



## Operating

- Fee-for-Space Internal Services Fund (ISF): \$10,735
- Insurance – General Liability (ISF): **(\$7,900)**
- VISION/ISD (ISF): \$33,793
- Human Resources Services (ISF): \$2,908
- Judiciary Cooperative Agreement State Contribution Reduction: **(\$25,000)**
  - Reduction in match GF provided to the Judiciary to offset their IV-D eligible family court costs, as DCF as the oversight needs of the Cooperative Agreement have changed considerably over time.

## Total Funding Changes:

- GF: \$242,480
- GC: \$0
- Other Revenue Sources: \$428,101
- Total: \$670,581

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## AABD – B.320 - 3440050000

### Personal Services

- Payment Admin Caseload Adjustment (BAA item): \$53,305
  - The state has an agreement with the Feds to process our AABD payments on our behalf - the cost per payment has increased, causing financial pressures for DCF.

### Grants Out

- Benefit Caseload Adjustment (BAA item): **(\$134,686)**
  - The total projected cost of beneficiary payments for the AABD program is estimated to be lower than budgeted. For SFY26, we are projecting 13,497 payments per month at an average of \$58 per payment. We had



budgeted based on a projection of 13,708 cases/month at \$58 per payment. Projection is based on SFY25 actuals and prior year trends

## Total Funding Changes:

- GF: (\$17,729)
- GC: (\$63,652)
- Other Revenue Sources: \$0
- Total: (\$81,381)

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## GA – B.321 - 3440060000

### Grants Out

- Social Security Specialist Agreement Cut: (\$139,171)
  - Elimination of VABIR agreement that provides support to GA eligible households in applying for social security benefits. Analysis of data did not demonstrate that there was a substantial increase in applications for and approval by SSA because of this agreement.
- Support Services Caseload Adjustment (BAA item): \$447,956
  - Increase to the GA Support Services budget based on trends from prior years (includes decrease in dental costs and increases in burials, abortions, and physicians)
- Personal Needs and Incidentals (PNI) Caseload Adjustment (BAA item): (\$32,809)
  - Reduction to PNI budget based on trends from prior years (Groceries, Room & Board, Home/Rent, and Room). Analysis needs to be done on this program to understand the crossover between populations in various housing programs and how that impacts the PNI utilization as we move towards a new version of the housing initiative.
- **(Housing Initiative)** General Assistance Transition Plan: (\$7,450,963)
  - Funded with 1x appropriation in SFY27



## Total Funding Changes:

- GF: (\$7,134,939)
- GC: (\$40,048)
- Other Revenue Sources: \$0
- Total: (\$7,174,987)

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## 3Squares – B.322 - 3440070000

### Grants Out

- 3 Squares Regular Benefit caseload pressures (BAA item): \$2,000,000
  - SNAP benefits pass directly from the federal government to beneficiaries for all people who receive food-only benefits on cards. However, for those individuals who receive cash benefits on their cards, which is limited to elderly and disabled populations, the federal funding passes through the state. Since this is an entitlement program, we have needed to request additional spending authority the past few years to be able to issue the benefits for eligible Vermonters. We are building this base pressure into our budget moving forward.

## Total Funding Changes:

- GF: \$0
- GC: \$0
- Other Revenue Sources: \$2,000,000
- Total: \$2,000,000

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## RUP – B.323 - 3440080000

### Grants Out

- Caseload Adjustment (Consultant Low): (\$3,325,591)



- This is an adjustment to the Reach Up budget to align with our consultant's low-range projection based on her July numbers and prior year's average cost per case. Average Monthly RUP cases of 2,863 at \$699 CPC (budgeted at 3,269 cases per month at \$686 CPC). Reach Ahead is projected at 349 cases per month \$50 CPC (budgeted at 380 cases/month at \$135 CPC)
- Reach First - Program Cut: **(\$108,360)**
  - Elimination of the Reach First program, which provides short-term targeted support for households as part of a diversion strategy to stabilize household needs before they need full Reach Up benefits. We can absorb the costs of this program within the Reach Up budget. Average of 15 cases per month at an average cost per case of \$928 for up to 4 months.
- Pregnant & Parenting - Bed Reduction: **(\$217,282)**
  - This reduces the maximum number of DCF contracted beds at Lund by 3 beds to a total of 23 beds available. Lund has not had more than 22 beds utilized at one time for over a year.
- Social Security Agreement Cut: **(\$148,111)**
  - Elimination of VABIR agreement that provides support to RUP eligible households in applying for social security benefits. Analysis of data did not demonstrate that there was a substantial increase in applications for and approval by SSA because of this agreement.
- Reach Up Housing Agreement Cuts: **(\$266,572)**
  - Elimination of grants to provide housing case management and supports to Reach Up households. Housing case management is already available through other venues within DCF, making this a duplication of services.
- TANF Revenue Realignment (BAA item, DCF net-neutral): Net Neutral Adj
  - Realigning TANF earnings and GF between FSD, Admin and Reach Up. We are reducing the amount of TANF used for FSD casework. The positions that were hitting TANF are not allowed to be included in Maintenance of Effort (MOE) calculations, so this will result in less MOE available to the state to buy down our work participation rate. However, we received feedback from the legislature last year that they want to see more federal funding (and less state funding) in the Reach Up program, so we incorporated these changes into our TANF State Plan.



## Total Funding Changes:

- GF: (\$6,131,205)
- GC: (\$217,282)
- Other Revenue Sources: \$2,282,571
- Total: (\$4,065,916)

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## LIHEAP – B.324 - 3440090000

### Grants Out

- LIHEAP Fuel Benefits: \$4,710,442
  - Federal spending authority needed to align with our annual LIHEAP award. We have been addressing this through ERRs in prior years.

## Total Funding Changes:

- GF: \$0
- GC: \$0
- Other Revenue Sources: \$4,710,442
- Total: \$4,710,442

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## OEO – B.325 - 3440100000

### Personal Services

- Salaries & Wages (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$63,717
- Health Insurance (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$1,045
- Retirement (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$18,674
- All Other Employee Payroll Related Fringe Benefits: \$4,042
- VT Family & Medical Leave Insurance Premiums: \$243



- Child Care Contribution: \$287
- Workers' Compensation Insurance Premium: 10,141
- Housing LTS Position Transfer from ESD with funding from HOP (751411 & 751414) (DCF net-neutral, BAA item): \$269,812
  - Two of the LTS housing positions funded with 1x funds in ESD were transferred to OEO to support expanded programming. These will be funded utilizing GF from the HOP budget (net neutral transfer within OEO). Additional staffing is needed to support expanded shelter operations and services for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. These are critical roles that ensure program safety and integrity as well as maintain compliance with federal requirements and ensure access to federal funds.
- Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) LTS Position Backfill: \$127,871
  - This limited service position had been funded with ERAP funding, like the two positions above, it will be funded utilizing GF from the HOP budget. Additional staffing is needed to support expanded shelter operations and services for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. These are critical roles that ensure program safety and integrity as well as maintain compliance with federal requirements and ensure access to federal funds
- Fee-for-Space Internal Services Fund (ISF): \$2,531
- Insurance – General Liability ISF: \$5,631
- VISION/ISD ISF: \$20,611

## Grants Out

- Annualization of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Community Transition Supports: \$436,200
  - Permanent Supportive Housing was partially funded in the SFY26 base with additional funding coming from 1x appropriations. The remaining funding to serve all the existing households for a full year is needed now that the one-time appropriations have been fully utilized.
- **(Housing Investments)** Cold Weather Shelter (shift from 1x to Base): \$1,300,000
  - See Housing Initiative for more information.



- **(Housing Investments)** Base impact of 1x Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) shelter expansion investments: \$6,200,000
  - See Housing Initiative for more information.
  - OEO has been working on standing up new shelters throughout the state with one time funding. However, base funds are needed to operate these shelters moving forward.
- Funding Adjustment for HOP LTS Positions (DCF net-neutral, BAA item): **(\$269,812)**
  - Net neutral transfer of funds from the grants out line to personal services to provide the funding for limited-service housing positions that are necessary to support the growing HOP program in OEO.
- ERAP LTS Position Backfill (DCF net-neutral): **(\$127,871)**
  - Net neutral transfer of funds from the grants out line to personal services to provide the funding for limited-service positions that were previously funded with ERAP, but whose work remains necessary despite ERAP funding ending.
- **(Housing Initiative)** Family Specific Sheltering Option: \$7,884,000
- **(Housing Initiative)** Medically Vulnerable Sheltering Option: \$2,628,000
- **(Housing Initiative)** Substance Use Recovery: \$1,200,000
- **(Housing Initiative)** Case Management Enhancements: \$1,275,000
- **(Housing Initiative)** Domestic Violence Sheltering Option: \$500,000
- **(Housing Initiative)** Rental Assistance: \$1,400,000
- **(Housing Initiative)** Natural Support Connections: \$200,000

### **Total Funding Changes:**

- GF: \$22,692,666
- GC: \$436,200
- Other Revenue Sources: \$21,256
- Total: \$23,150,122



## Weatherization – B.326 - 3440110000

### Personal Services

- Salaries & Wages (Classified & Exempt Employees): **(\$1,019)**
- Health Insurance (Classified & Exempt Employees): **(\$20,218)**
- Retirement (Classified & Exempt Employees): **(\$295)**
- All Other Employee Payroll Related Fringe Benefits: **(\$1,793)**
- VT Family & Medical Leave Insurance Premiums: **(\$270)**
- Child Care Contribution: **(\$3)**
- Workers' Compensation Insurance Premium: **(\$1,948)**

### Operating

- Fee-for-Space Internal Services Fund (ISF): \$1,363
- VISION/ISD ISF: \$387

### Grants Out

- Annual Department of Energy (DOE) Adjustment: \$1,000,000
  - Federal spending authority needed to align with our annual DOE award. We have been requesting spending authority via ERR for the past few years, so this is to align the budget with the current federal award.

### Total Funding Changes:

- GF: \$0
- GC: \$0
- Other Revenue Sources: \$976,204
- Total: \$976,204



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## SRTF – B.327 - 3440120000

### Operating

- VISION/ISD ISF: \$95

### Grants Out

- Secure Treatment Facility Operations – Windham West River Haven: \$1,000,000
  - After SFY26, DCF will have fully utilized all 1x funding and carry forward for secure treatment facilities. As we do not yet have a permanent secure residential treatment facility in place, we will continue to use Red Clover in SFY27. We are also working to finally open a temporary facility in Windham in SFY27. The operating need for these two facilities combined is over \$8M, but our base budget for SFY27 is only \$3.7M. Additional funding is requested in 1x appropriations to support the short-term facility needs until we have a permanent facility.

### Total Funding Changes:

- GF: \$1,000,095
- GC: \$0
- Other Revenue Sources: \$0
- Total: \$1,000,095

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## DDS – B.328 - 3440130000

### Personal Services

- Salaries & Wages (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$201,263
- Health Insurance (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$136,931
- Retirement (Classified & Exempt Employees): \$57,962
- All Other Employee Payroll Related Fringe Benefits: **(\$474)**



- VT Family & Medical Leave Insurance Premiums: \$737
- Child Care Contribution: \$895
- Workers' Compensation Insurance Premium: \$4,669
- Physician Temp Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA): \$46,882
  - Cost impact of a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) provided to Physicians who are temp employees for DDS to ensure DDS can recruit and retain their services. DDS currently has 13 of these temp Medical Consultants on payroll

## **Operating**

- Insurance other than Employee Benefits ISF: \$1,000
- VISION/ISD ISF: \$12,555
- ADS Allocated Charge: \$122,085
- Human Resources Services ISF: \$1,104

## **Total Funding Changes:**

- GF: \$11,043
- GC: \$0
- Other Revenue Sources: \$574,566
- Total: \$585,609

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## **1x Requests – Non-Housing Initiative Related**

- Secure Residential Treatment Temporary Facility: \$4,000,000
  - Funding to continue to operate the Red Clover temporary facility before the Green Mountain Youth Campus is built and operational. The Red Clover facility is a temporary facility, so this request is tied to 1x funding as DCF continues to work to resolve complications around contracting for a new permanent facility.



## Governor's Housing Initiative

This year as part of the Governor's Recommended budget, DCF is proposing a new Housing Initiative, designed to address the Housing Crisis in Vermont in a nuanced way, utilizing data on what works best to support households throughout the continuum of housing needs and to target the populations most adversely impacted by the housing crisis individually, rather than in a one-size fits all approach. As part of this initiative, AHS proposes investing more heavily in shelter and service options for targeted populations in the long term, with SFY27 and SFY28 as transition years. Hotels and motels will play a key role during this transition and may be utilized in the future but in a safer and more targeted way. Understanding that expansion of shelter capacity takes time, DCF does not propose eliminating the hotel/motel program in SFY27 but rather proposes utilizing 1x appropriations as the state transitions to a shelter focused approach to housing supports. The sections below outline the components of the initiatives. All the funding has been allocated to DCF, but DCF has worked closely with AHS, DAIL, DMH and VDH on developing this proposal and plans to continue to work closely on administering the funding with our partners across the agency.

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### Shelter Expansion Funding Components

#### Office of Economic Opportunity

- Family Specific Sheltering Option: \$7,884,000
  - Base Appropriation to DCF OEO
  - This represents a base investment in emergency sheltering for families. While we work to find space and providers for family shelters, we recognize that this will need to utilize the hotel/motel emergency housing approach through ESD for part/all of SFY27. It is the intention of the department to have family shelters established to support this population in future years, which is why the funding has been appropriated to the OEO base budget.
  - Case management and care coordination services will be available onsite for these households.
- Domestic Violence & Sexual Violence (DV/SV) Sheltering Option: \$500,000
  - Base Appropriation to DCF OEO
  - OEO will work with a statewide coordinator of shelter and housing services for those experiencing DV/SV to further address their emergency



housing needs. This will focus on expanding the current practice of DV/SV providers managing motel rooms as an option for survivors (as needed based on safety needs, shelter capacity).

- Shelter Planning and Start-Up Investments: \$6,000,000
  - 1x Appropriation
  - DCF needs to invest \$11M in shelter development and start-up costs to ensure we can meet our plan to move towards a shelter-focused approach in SFY28. We are requesting \$6M in this budget, as we believe we will have at least \$5M of surplus funding due to underutilization of and administrative savings in the SFY25 Emergency Housing Program. This will allow grants to providers for building acquisitions, renovations, and other one-time costs necessary to plan and develop a shelter that meets the needs of the state.

## **Disabilities Aging and Independent Living**

- Medically Vulnerable Sheltering Option: \$2,628,000
  - Base Appropriation to DCF OEO
  - This provides funding for housing, services, and case management for eligible households. With the need to address an increasing volume of complex care needs among Vermonters, the rapidly aging population and the chronic housing shortage, it is essential that the continuum of care include statewide shelter capacity that can meet the needs of adults, including the medically vulnerable to support their health and safety. With this funding, DAIL plans to develop two specialized shelters, one in the north and one in the south, to provide the level of care needed for medically vulnerable Vermonters now and into the future. In addition to the traditional onsite support provided in shelter, this specialized program will ensure that personal care attendants, skilled nursing care and mental health supports are available onsite. The program may utilize hotel/motel rooms or shelter options with support services as determined by the successful bidder of a competitive procurement process.
  - Administered via MOU with DAIL and DAIL competitive procurement

## **Vermont Department of Health & OEO**

- Substance Use Recovery Sheltering Option: \$1,200,000
  - Base Appropriation to DCF OEO



- OEO and VDH will jointly administer a portion of these funds to support shelter services for eligible households. These funds will support continued capacity for recovery-oriented emergency shelter beds in the state that were established via one-time funding in SFY26.
- Administered via MOU with VDH and OEO administered HOP Grants

## Vermont Emergency Management & ESD

- Natural Disaster Sheltering Options: \$292,000
  - Base Appropriation to DCF Admin
  - Funding to provide temporary shelter/housing in hotel/motels for households who have been impacted by natural disasters. This will be administered in collaboration with the AHS Emergency Management team (who are actively providing case management to these households).

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## Emergency Housing Hotel/Motel Transition

### ESD/Admin

- Limited-Service Positions (21 FTE): \$2,239,794
  - Base Appropriation to DCF Admin
  - Funding to support 21 Limited-Service positions to provide eligibility determinations, direct services and administration in support of this initiative in a variety of capacities. These positions already exist within the DCF budget and have been funded with 1x GF appropriations in the last few years. We are asking for base funding as part of the housing initiative to continue to staff and support DCF's emergency housing programming.

### General Assistance

- General Assistance Transition Plan: **(\$7,450,963)**
  - Base Adjustment to DCF General Assistance
  - The Housing Initiative that DCF has put forth as part of the Governor's Recommended Budget prioritizes shelter funding and expansion. Consequently, DCF proposed converting the base funding for the hotel/motel program in SFY27 to 1x, allowing additional base funding to be



invested in other components of the housing environment. This retains limited funding for contracted hotel rooms in ESD's base GA appropriation.

- General Assistance Program: \$15,183,809
  - 1x Appropriation to DCF
  - This appropriation funds emergency housing (in hotel/motels) for eligible households in the Temporary Emergency Housing and Accountability Program (maximum rooms of 325 per night outside of AWC). It also accounts for a return to pre-pandemic rules for a Weather Dependent Adverse Weather Conditions program to be operated between December 1, 2026 and March 31, 2027. One-time administrative costs to support the ESD contracted call center are also funded as part of this appropriation.

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## Wrap Around and Support Services

### Office of Economic Opportunity

- Case Management Enhancements: \$1,275,000
  - Base Appropriation to DCF OEO
  - AHS will coordinate this funding to increase staffing capacity on the ground to allow for regular and structured onsite staffing hours that people in hotels could predict and access as needed. It also creates capacity to do Health Related Social Needs and Coordinated Entry screenings and connect people to services and benefit programs. Additionally, it can provide onsite housing application assistance and navigation and serve as a central contact for service providers to connect with for coordinating onsite provision of services.
- Rental Assistance: \$1,400,000
  - Base Appropriation to DCF OEO
  - OEO will administer a program that provides rental assistance to families with minor children and people with complex health needs who are experiencing homelessness to support their ability to find and maintain housing.
- Natural Support Connections: \$200,000



- o Base Appropriation to DCF OEO
- o OEO will incorporate this direct financial assistance to support individuals' access natural supports as a housing solution into the Housing Opportunity Grant Program.

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## Other Base Housing Investments:

### Office of Economic Opportunity

- Extreme Cold Weather Shelter (shift from 1x to Base): \$1,300,000
  - o Base Appropriation to OEO
  - o Base funding needed to maintain the extreme cold weather shelter program as part of system of shelter options. Seasonal cold weather shelters will continue to be an eligible activity under the Housing Opportunity Grant Program, augmented by these shelters during nights that meet the extreme cold weather temperature threshold.
- Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) shelter expansion investments: \$6,200,000
  - o Base Appropriation to OEO
  - o OEO has been working on standing up new shelters throughout the state with one time funding. However, base funds are needed to operate these shelters moving forward.

## Position Changes and Vacancy Savings

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### Vacancy Savings

Vacancy savings are an important and difficult part of the budgeting process. Below is a chart showing the amount of vacancy savings that DCF has budgeted for in SFY26 vs. the amount that we are projecting for each of the appropriations that include staff based on data through November 2025. Using this data from the first five months of SFY26, we are projecting that our vacancy savings in total will be higher than the total amount that was budgeted. However, this can vary significantly throughout the year, making YTD actuals an imperfect proxy for the year end totals. In the smaller offices/divisions, filling one vacancy or losing one staff member can swing the vacancy



saving actuals significantly. Furthermore, the amount of GF savings realized from vacancy savings vary significantly based on the position that is vacant. The numbers below are gross totals for vacancy savings (not GF).

Office/Division	Total Budgeted Positions	Avg Vacancies/ Month	SFY26 Budgeted Vacancy Savings	Projected SFY26 Vacancy Savings	SFY27 Vacancy Savings Budget
Business Office	43	4	(286,900)	(508,834)	(286,186)
Commissioner's Office	36	4	(293,177)	(379,040)	(292,447)
ESD	319	14	(1,968,786)	(1,363,678)	(1,963,884)
FSD	386	37	(1,453,084)	(2,784,208)	(1,493,039)
CDD	55	5	(1,061,968)	(505,976)	(1,066,213)
OCS	107	6	(451,614)	(644,338)	(451,614)
OEO	14	3	(6,760)	(122,681)	(6,719)
Wx	3	0	(8,899)	-	(8,899)
DDS	41	8	(192,609)	(846,063)	(192,609)



Office/Division	Total Budgeted Positions	Avg Vacancies/ Month	SFY26 Budgeted Vacancy Savings	Projected SFY26 Vacancy Savings	SFY27 Vacancy Savings Budget
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,004</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>(5,723,797)</b>	<b>(7,154,818)</b>	<b>(5,761,610)</b>

\*This table uses data through November 2025

As indicated in the table, DDS has one of the larger overages due to the federal government’s hiring freeze which has prevented DDS from filling vacancies. However, 98% of the vacancy savings are federal, resulting in very little impact on state funds.

## Position Changes

The only position changes proposed in the SFY27 Governor’s Recommended Budget are associated with DCF’s response to the housing crisis. In the Admin appropriation, DCF requests to retain 21 limited services positions that are supporting the housing initiative for the next year. These positions currently include:

- 9 Benefit Payment Specialists
- 3 Senior Benefit Payment Specialists
- 1 Benefit Payment Assistant Admin
- 1 Fair Hearing Specialist
- 2 Bill Payers
- 1 Bill Payer Supervisor
- 3 ESD Supervisors
- 1 Economic Services Call Center Director

In addition to the positions for ESD, DCF proposes changes to several positions in the OEO appropriation. These changes include the transfer of two limited-service positions from ESD to OEO and backfilling of 1x Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) federal funds for a limited-service position with GF funding. The two positions moving from ESD to OEO are positions specifically linked to the housing initiatives and were previously funded with one-time emergency housing GA appropriations. DCF is



requesting that the positions be funded utilizing Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) general funds moving forward. Additional staffing is needed to support expanded shelter operations and services for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. These are critical roles that ensure program safety and integrity as well as maintain compliance with federal requirements and ensure access to federal funds

## Grants Out

DCF provides a wide range of services to Vermonters. Many of these are administered via grants or contracts and are captured in the “grants out” portion of the budget. The work that goes into procuring and administering agreements never ends, with a constant stream of agreements being executed, amended, and closed throughout the year. As of December 1, 2025, DCF had 929 active agreements, with many agreements routing for execution by 1/1/26. Below is a summary of the types of services that are provided via grants in each of the divisions and offices. This is not an exhaustive list of all our agreements, as providing such a list would require more space that we have available to us and would immediately become outdated. This overview is intended to provide information regarding the types of services intended for granting and the funds that have been budgeted to support this work.

It is worth noting that a significant portion of our grants are funded with federal dollars. This means that SFY26 has been a particularly difficult year to administer grants, as the government shutdown caused delays in grant issuance due to funding uncertainty and simultaneous needs for emergency agreements and emergency financial requests (EFRs) to address gaps in services while the Federal Government was shut down.

### Admin Grants Out

Grants Out in Admin are mostly related to SNAP funded agreements. It also includes funding for Vermont’s 211 contract. A portion of the Housing Initiative is also being allocated to the Admin Grants appropriation. This will be administered through an MOU with Vermont Emergency Management to operate a hotel/motel pool for households experiencing homelessness due to natural disasters.

Admin Program	Agreement Type(s)	SFY26 Base	SFY27 Gov Rec	SFY27 Gov Rec Change
Individual Career Advancement Network (ICAN)	MOUs & Grants	2,853,026	2,853,026	-



Admin Program	Agreement Type(s)	SFY26 Base	SFY27 Gov Rec	SFY27 Gov Rec Change
Information & Referral	Contract	1,638,029	1,306,029	(332,000)
Other/Miscellaneous Grants	Contracts & Grants	133,735	133,735	-
Refugee Supports	MOU	180,000	180,000	-
SNAP Admin Services	MOUs & Grants	1,109,385	672,257	(437,128)
Housing Initiative	MOU	-	292,000	292,000
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>5,914,175</b>	<b>5,437,047</b>	<b>(477,128)</b>

## FSD Grants Out

FSD administers over \$100M through their grants out budget. This funding is used for grants to subrecipients, contracts for services, as well as payments made via our Foster Care Payrolls (direct payments to foster parents).

Program	Agreement Type(s)	SFY26 Base	SFY27 Gov Rec	SFY27 Gov Rec Change
Access & Visitation	Grants	200,002	200,002	-



Program	Agreement Type(s)	SFY26 Base	SFY27 Gov Rec	SFY27 Gov Rec Change
Adoption Wrap Around Supports	Grants	1,633,466	1,139,600	(493,866)
Child & Family Support	Contracts	6,905,867	6,905,867	-
Child Abuse Prevention Supports	Grants	503,746	309,373	(194,373)
Evaluation & Counseling	FC Expense Vouchers	551,755	551,755	-
Families First Prevention Services Act	Contracts	3,937,986	2,149,571	(1,788,415)
Foster Parent Support	FC Expense Vouchers	1,366,886	1,366,886	-
Independent & Transitional Living	Grants & Contracts	5,781,302	5,781,302	-
Intensive Family Based Services	Contracts	951,576	951,576	-
Justice and Youth Intersections	Grants & Contracts	2,802,069	2,802,069	-



Program	Agreement Type(s)	SFY26 Base	SFY27 Gov Rec	SFY27 Gov Rec Change
Other/Miscellaneous Grants	Grants & Contracts	1,480,158	1,916,146	435,988
Specialized Intensive Family Based Services	Contracts	2,092,030	2,092,030	-
Subsidized Adoptions	Foster Care Payroll	20,944,921	21,876,232	931,311
Substitute Care	Contracts & Foster Care Payroll	44,071,165	44,539,405	468,240
Training	Grants & Contracts	2,589,262	2,589,262	-
Transportation	Contracts	4,729,569	5,729,569	1,000,000
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>100,541,760</b>	<b>100,900,645</b>	<b>358,885</b>

## CDD Grants Out

CDD administers a combination of grants, contracts and benefits through the grants out section of its appropriation.



Program	Agreement Type	SFY26 Base Budget (\$)	SFY27 Gov Rec (\$)	SFY27 Proposed Change (\$)
Child Care Financial Assistance	Benefit	172,551,961	172,551,961	-
Child Care Referral & Eligibility	Contract	3,352,561	3,252,561	(100,000)
Children's Integrated Services	Grants & Contracts	18,756,873	18,929,916	173,043
Family Supports	Grants	8,139,750	7,029,750	(1,110,000)
Miscellaneous	Grants	688,420	508,298	(180,122)
Capacity & Quality Supports	Grants	24,291,162	23,459,198	(831,964)
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>227,780,727</b>	<b>225,731,684</b>	<b>(2,049,043)</b>

## OCS Grants Out

OCS does not administer any funding for grants.



## AABD Grants Out

The grants-out budget in AABD is entirely benefits. It is comprised of SSI State Supplementary and Essential Persons benefits.

Program	Agreement Type	SFY26 Base Budget (\$)	SFY27 Gov Rec (\$)	SFY27 Proposed Change (\$)
SSI Supplementary	Benefits	9,504,417	9,369,731	(134,686)
Essential Persons	Benefits	914,150	914,150	-
<b>Total AABD Grants Out</b>		<b>10,418,567</b>	<b>10,283,881</b>	<b>(134,686)</b>

## GA Grants Out

The GA grants budget is a combination of benefits and grants. It includes base budget funds for the hotel/motel program (emergency housing), as well as caseloads for PNI and Support Services, among other smaller programs.

Program	Agreement Type	SFY26 Base Budget (\$)	SFY27 Gov Rec (\$)	SFY27 Proposed Change (\$)
Emergency Housing	Benefits	5,663,653	-	(5,663,653)
Personal Needs & Incidentals	Benefits	798,189	765,380	(32,809)
GA Support Services	Benefits	828,472	1,276,428	447,956



<b>Emergency Solutions Grants</b>	Grants	3,125,465	1,198,984	(1,926,481)
<b>Total GA Grants Out</b>		<b>10,415,779</b>	<b>3,240,792</b>	<b>(7,174,987)</b>

### 3Squares Grants Out

The grants-out budget in 3Squares is entirely SNAP benefits. It is comprised of Summer-EBT benefits and 3Squares VT Cashout Benefits. No grants are issued out of this appropriation.

Program	Agreement Type	SFY26 Base Budget (\$)	SFY27 Gov Rec (\$)	SFY27 Proposed Change (\$)
Summer EBT	Benefits	5,400,000	5,400,000	-
3Squares VT Cashout	Benefits	45,677,812	47,677,812	2,000,000
<b>Total 3Squares Grants Out</b>		<b>51,077,812</b>	<b>53,077,812</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>

### RUP Grants Out

The Reach Up budget is primarily benefits, but it does include some agreements that provide support for the Reach Up eligible population.



Program	Agreement Type	SFY26 Base Budget (\$)	SFY27 Gov Rec (\$)	SFY27 Proposed Change (\$)
Case Management	Grants & MOUs	719,408	304,725	(414,683)
Individual Career Advancement Network (ICAN)	Grants	978,612	978,612	-
Other/Miscellaneous Grants	Grants	231,474	231,474	-
Reach Up Benefits	Benefits	27,741,148	24,307,198	(3,433,950)
Residential Treatment	Contract	4,440,974	4,223,692	(217,282)
Transportation	Grants & MOUs	1,131,245	1,131,245	-
Wrap Around RUP Supports	Benefits	1,165,001	1,165,001	-
Youth Development	Grants	125,000	125,000	-
<b>RUP Grants Out Total</b>		<b>36,532,862</b>	<b>32,466,947</b>	<b>(4,065,915)</b>



## LIHEAP Grants Out

The LIHEAP budget is almost entirely beneficiary payments, with only small amounts budgeted for outreach agreements.

Program	Agreement Type	SFY26 Base Budget (\$)	SFY27 Gov Rec (\$)	SFY27 Proposed Change (\$)
Fuel Assistance	Benefits	1,300,000	1,300,000	-
Energy Assistance	Benefits	14,669,953	19,380,395	4,710,442
Fuel Outreach	Grants	50,000	50,000	-
<b>Total</b>		16,019,953	20,730,395	4,710,442

## OEO Grants Out

The Office of Economic Opportunity is primarily a grant management program, which results in significant funding budget in the grants out portion of the budget.

Program	Agreement Type	SFY26 Base Budget (\$)	SFY27 Gov Rec (\$)	SFY27 Proposed Change (\$)
Community Services Block Grant Agreements	Grants	3,509,776	3,509,776	-



Program	Agreement Type	SFY26 Base Budget (\$)	SFY27 Gov Rec (\$)	SFY27 Proposed Change (\$)
Family Supportive Housing	Contracts	3,086,351	3,086,351	-
Housing Opportunity Program (HOP)	Grants	30,631,959	39,734,276	9,102,317
Permanent Supportive Housing	Contracts	760,000	1,196,200	436,200
Continuum of Care Support Services	Grants	513,630	513,630	-
Financial Development Programs	Grants	663,640	663,640	-
Extreme Cold Weather Shelters	Grants	-	1,300,000	1,300,000
Housing Initiative Supports	MOU	-	1,275,000	1,275,000
Housing Initiative Shelters	MOU & Grants	-	10,512,000	10,512,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>39,165,356</b>	<b>61,790,873</b>	<b>22,625,517</b>



## Weatherization

The Weatherization program provides grants to community organizations to do weatherization work for eligible populations. The office also oversees a grant program to provide emergency heating solution supports.

Programs	Agreement Type	SFY26 Base Budget (\$)	SFY27 Gov Rec (\$)	SFY27 Proposed Change (\$)
Emergency Heating System Grants	Grant	750,000	750,000	-
Weatherization Grants	Grant	14,397,885	15,397,885	1,000,000
<b>Total WX Grants Out</b>		<b>15,147,885</b>	<b>16,147,885</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>

## SRTF

The Secure Residential Treatment Facility does have a grants-out budget, but all agreements issued out of this section of the budget are contractual services. SFY27 represents a transitional year, moving away from crisis spacing and crisis staffing agreements, as we now have a temporary secure facility (Red Clover) and a permanent short-term stabilization facility (West River Haven) operating in the state. The table below does not include 1x funding requests to support the costs of the Red Clover facility in SFY27.

Details	Agreement Type	SFY26 Base	SFY27 Gov Rec Base	Base Change
Secure Treatment Facility Agreements	Contracts	1,289,183	4,300,000	3,010,817



Details	Agreement Type	SFY26 Base	SFY27 Gov Rec Base	Base Change
Crisis Space Agreements	Contracts	1,000,000	48,000	(952,000)
Crisis Staffing Agreements	Contracts	1,139,000	128,862	(1,010,138)
Other Contracts	Contracts	48,679	-	(48,679)
<b>Total SRTF Grants Out</b>		<b>3,476,862</b>	<b>4,476,862</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>

## DDS

DDS does not administer any funding for grants.

## Carry Forward Funds

The chart below shows the total amount of carry forward that DCF received approval for during the SFY25 closeout process. This does not include funds tied to rolled purchase orders (POs). Rolled POs are expenses that have been incurred in SFY25 but have not yet been invoiced/paid. For these expenses, we roll the encumbrance to ensure that the funding is available once the invoice arrives. This is necessary due to the closeout timeline, but since it is committed funds, it has not been included here.

Appropriation	Description	Appropriation Type	2026 Carry Forward
3440040000	DCFS - Child Support Services	Base	493,738



Appropriation	Description	Appropriation Type	2026 Carry Forward
3440120000	DCFS - Secure Res. Treatment	Base	1,336,084
3440130000	DCFS - DDS	Base	26,562
3440892208	DCF-BFIS Replacement	One-Time	2,177,616
3440892310	DCF-Reach Up IT	One-Time	500,000
3440892315	DCF-Temp Secure Youth Facility	One-Time	4,391,877
3440892317	DCF-Housing Transition	One-Time	1,422,633
3440892413	DCF-Program Adj Position Costs	One-Time	325,000
3440892418	DCF-Summer Electronic Benefit	One-Time	500,000
3440892505	DCF-GA Emergency Housing	One-Time	11,120,629
3440892506	DCF-Child Welfare Info System	One-Time	7,544,186
3440892509	DCF-OCS Mainframe Transition	One-Time	340,000



Appropriation	Description	Appropriation Type	2026 Carry Forward
<b>Total DCF Non-PO Carry Forward</b>			<b>30,178,325</b>

It is too early in the year to be able to accurately assess the amount of funding that may be available for carry forward in each of our dept IDs. Much of that depends on the budget process.

## Caseload Trends

An important and complex part of the budgeting process is the projection of caseloads. The directions that caseloads move in can significantly impact our budget and closeout picture. Below is information on historical caseloads that DCF drew on as part of budget projections.

### FSD Caseloads

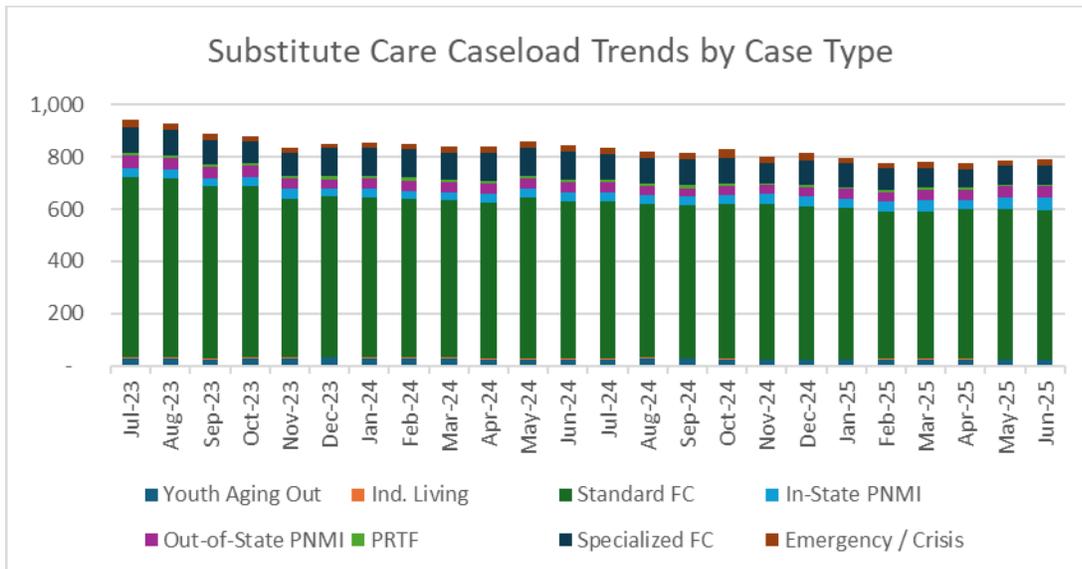
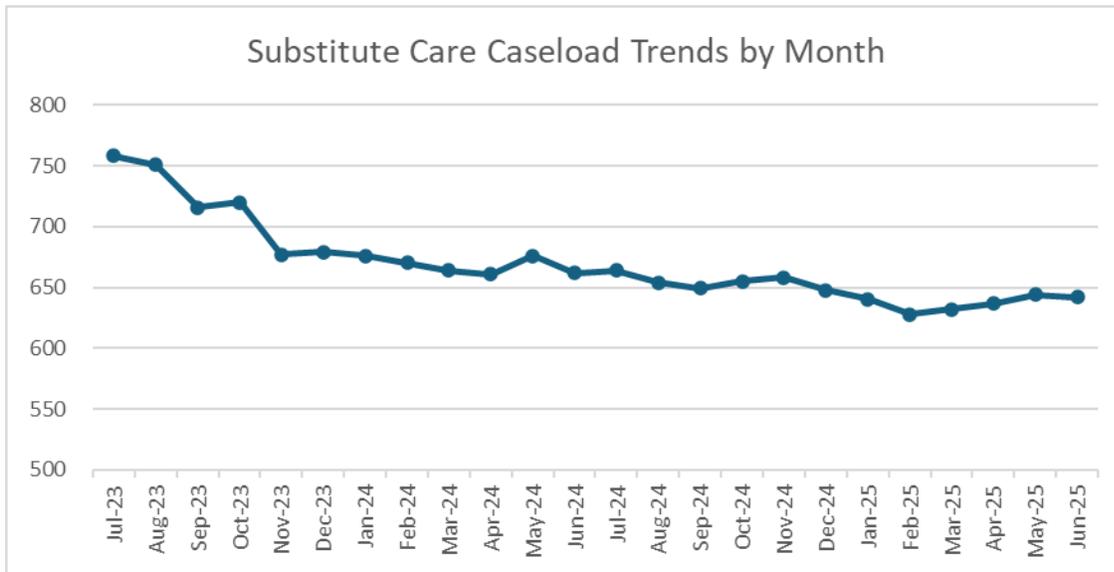
FSD has two types of caseloads that we adjust our budget for each year – Substitute Care (SubCare) and Subsidized Adoption (SubAdopt). Below are the trends we have seen over the past two years for each.

Substitute Care Caseloads have been decreasing steadily over the past few years. This represents fewer youth in DCF custody. Substitute Care consists of the following types of care:

- Youth Aging Out
- Independent Living
- Standard Foster Care
- In-State Permanent Non-Medical Institutions (PNMI)
- Out-of-State PNMI
- Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF)
- Specialized Foster Care

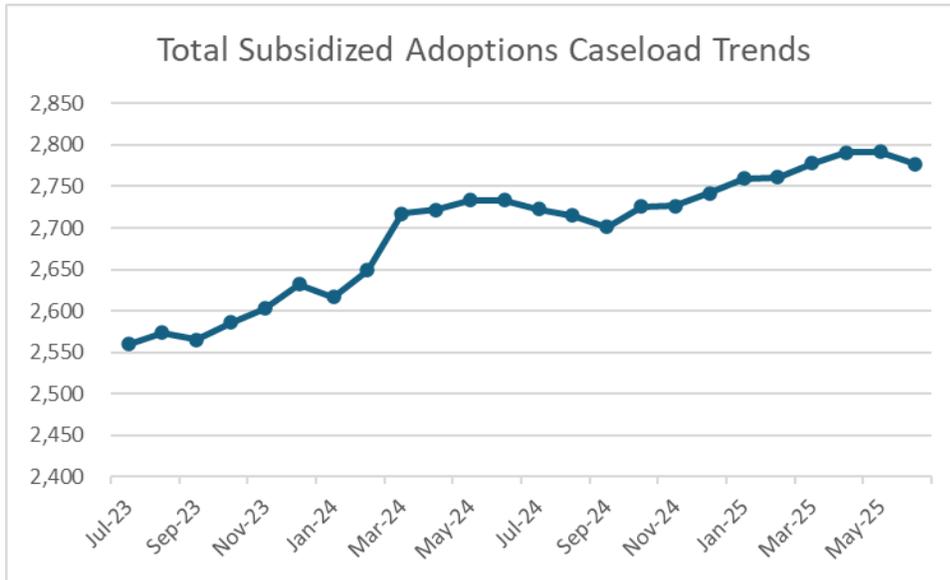


- Emergency & Crisis Care



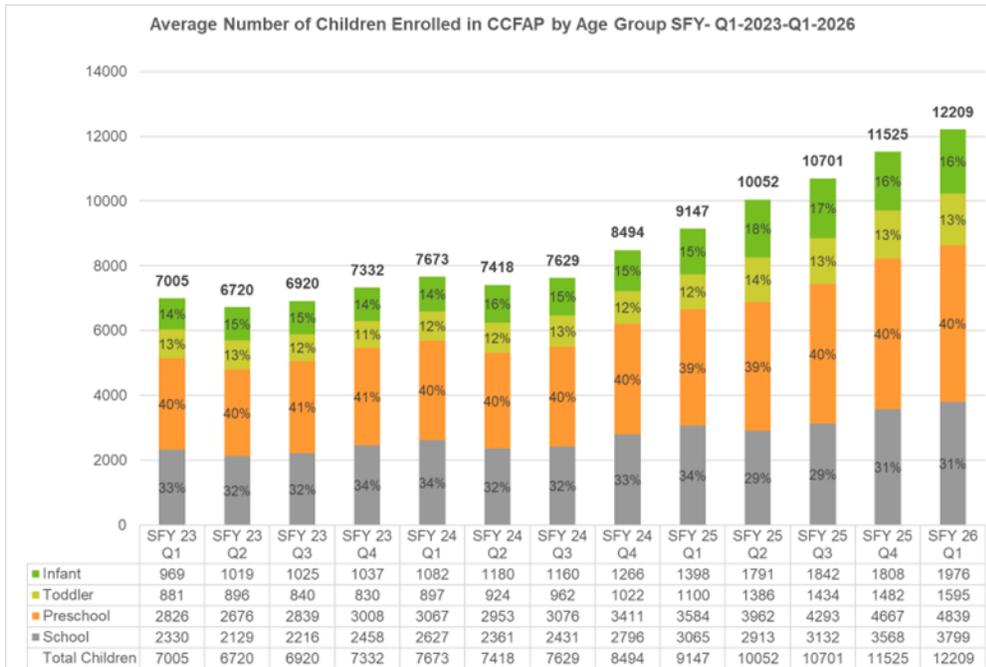
Subsidized Adoptions have been increasing over the past few years. This represents more youth who have found permanent placements. Subsidized Adoption includes the following case types:

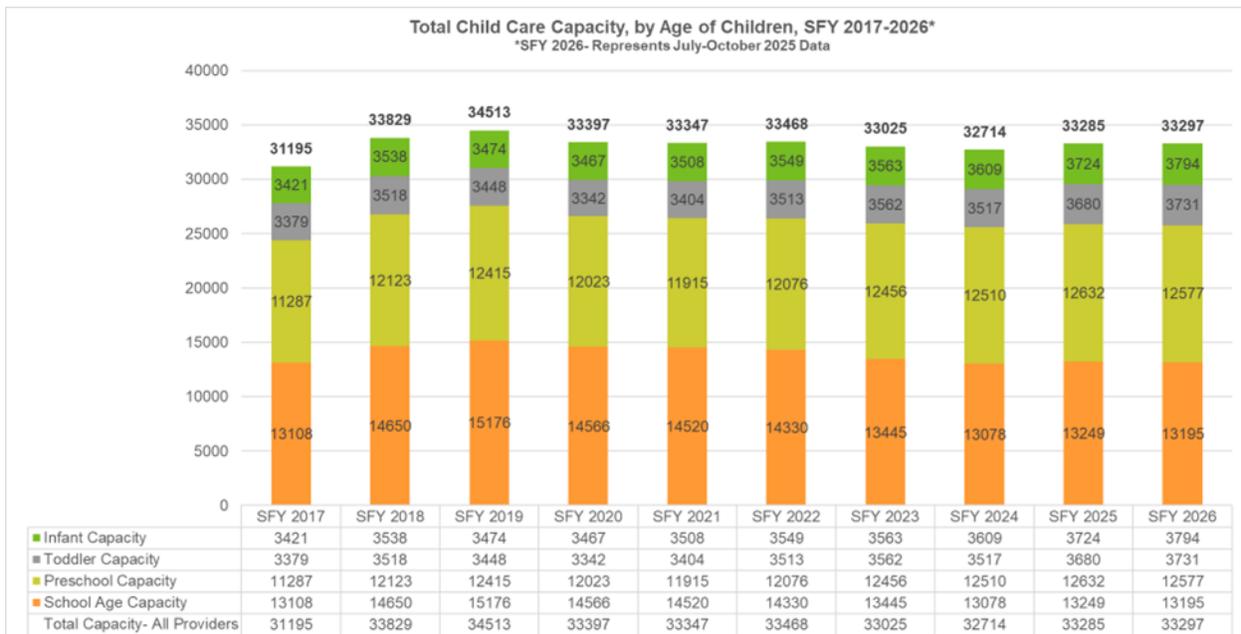
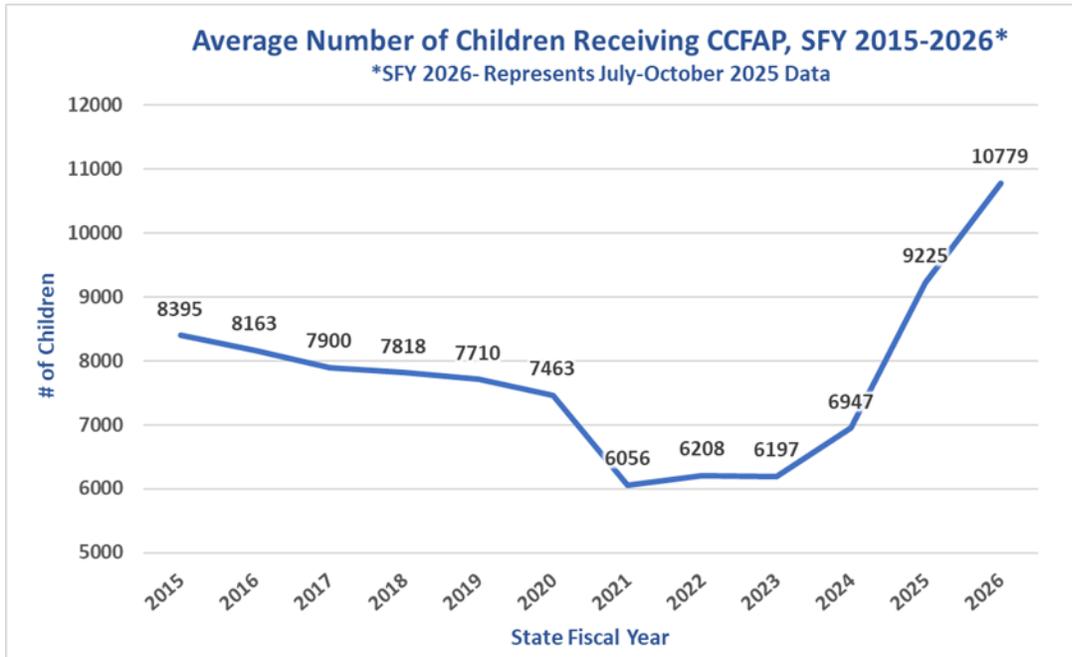
- Subsidized Adoptions
- Permanent Guardianship
- Non-Recurring



## CDD Caseloads

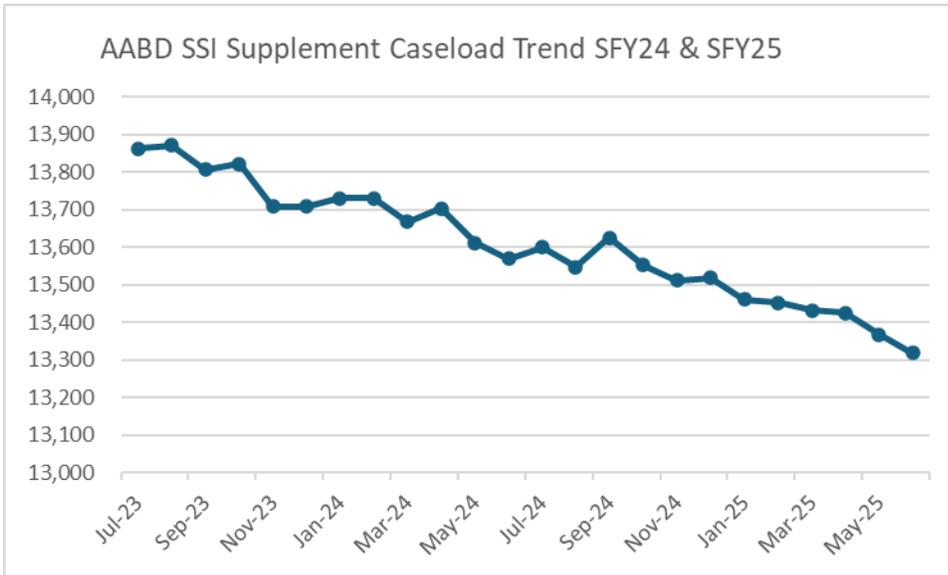
We continue to see increase caseloads in the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP), as more families learn about the benefits of the program and enroll and more child care slots are opened throughout the state. The charts below show these trends in a variety of ways.



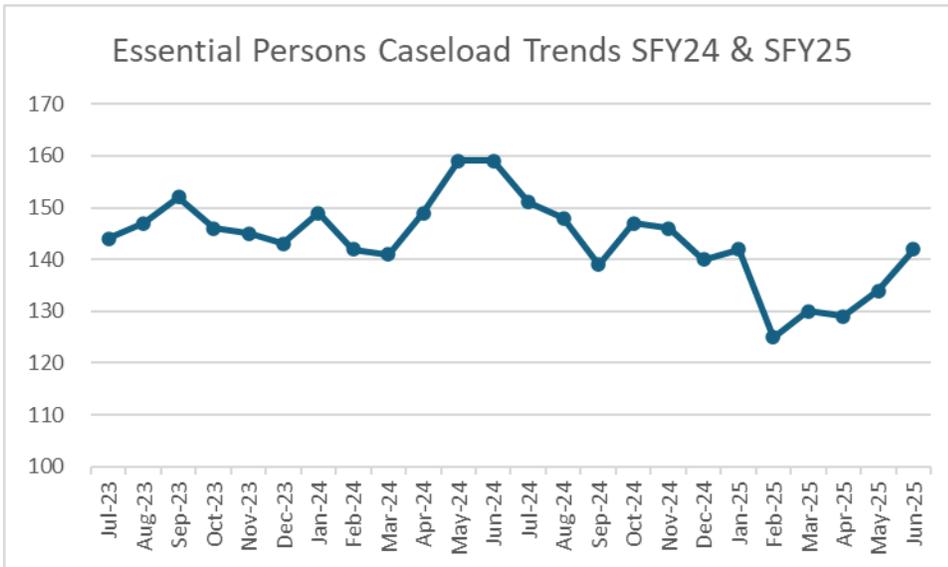


## AABD Caseloads

The caseload for AABD State Supplementary SSI payments has been steadily trending downward over the past two state fiscal years. The average monthly caseload dropped from 13,733 in SFY24 to 13,484 in SFY25.



The Essential Persons program, while fluctuating more, has also seen a decrease in caseload over the past two years, with the average monthly caseload dropping from 148 in SFY24 to 139 in SFY25.

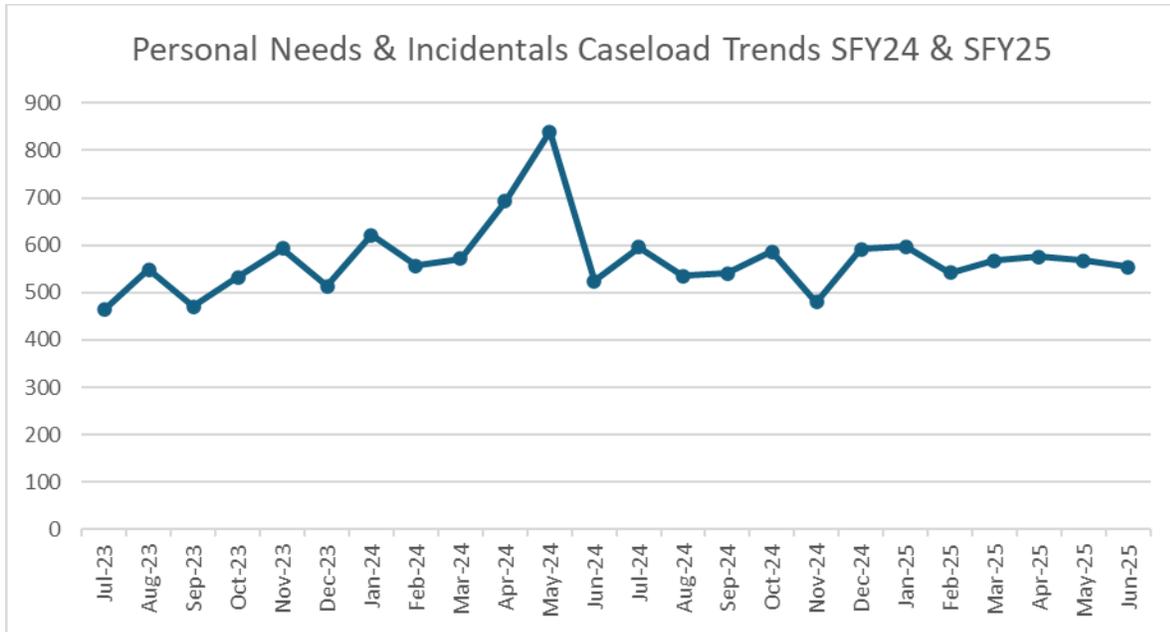


## GA Caseloads

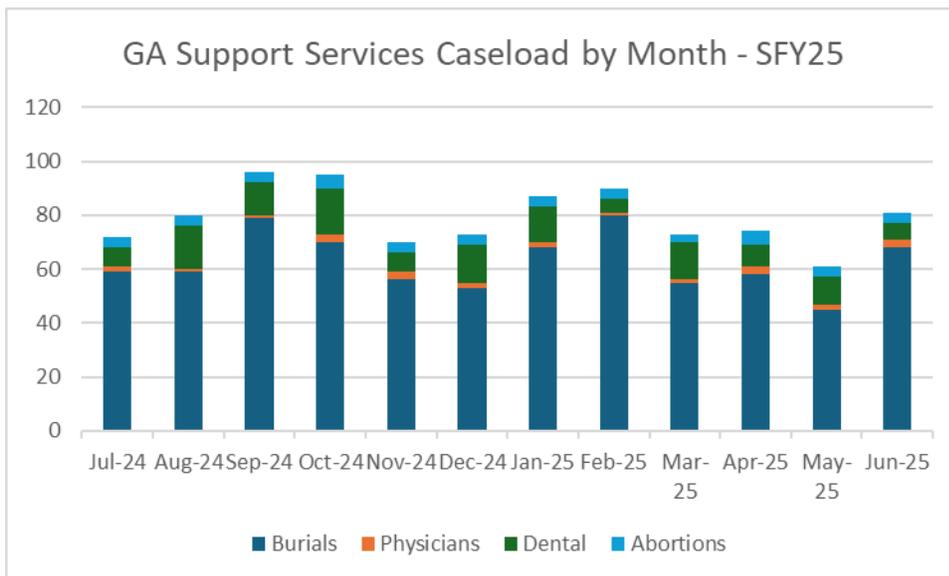
There are several caseloads to report on in the General Assistance Appropriation, including Support Service, Personal Needs & Incidentals (PNI), and Emergency Housing.



*PNI:* PNI fluctuates from month to month, but overall, it has plateaued over the past year.



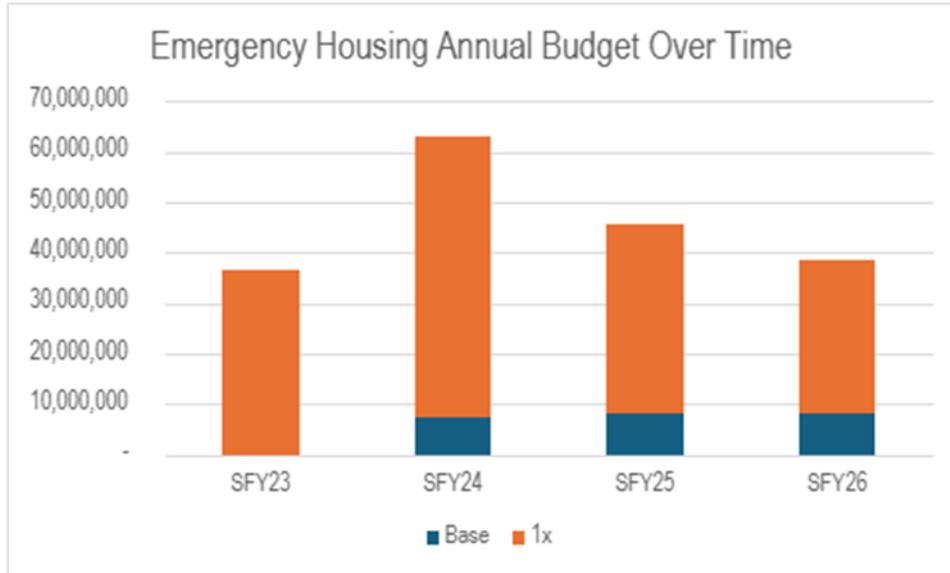
*Support Services:* GA Support Services provides one-off financial support for burials, physicians, dental emergencies, and abortions. Given the one-time nature of these benefits, the total expenses fluctuate from month to month.



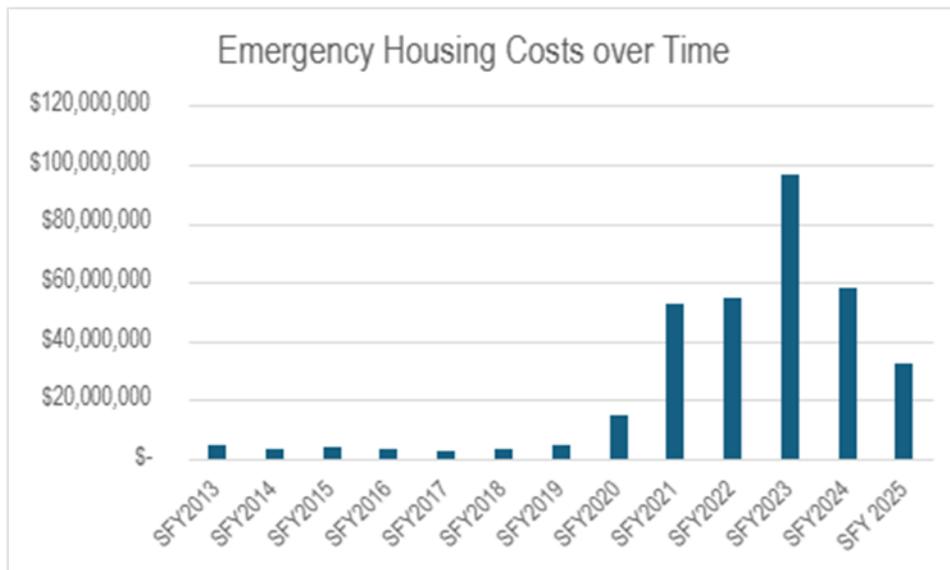
*Emergency Housing:* The Emergency Housing program is by far the largest caseload that is supported by the GA budget, although most of the funding that supports this

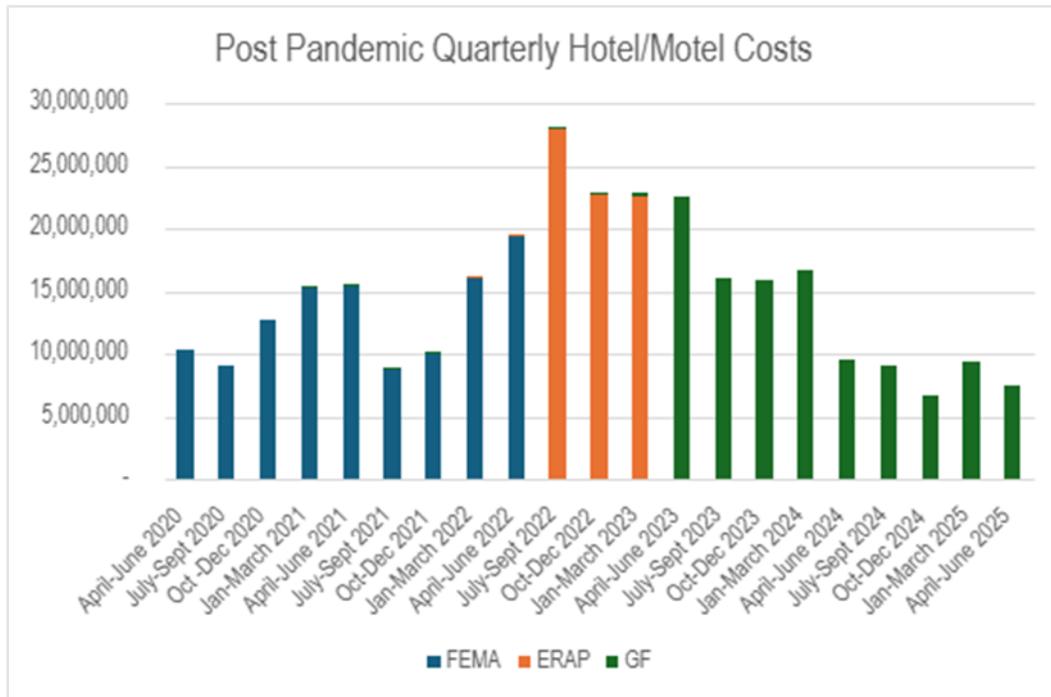


caseload is allocated to one-time appropriations, as indicated by the Annual Budget chart below.



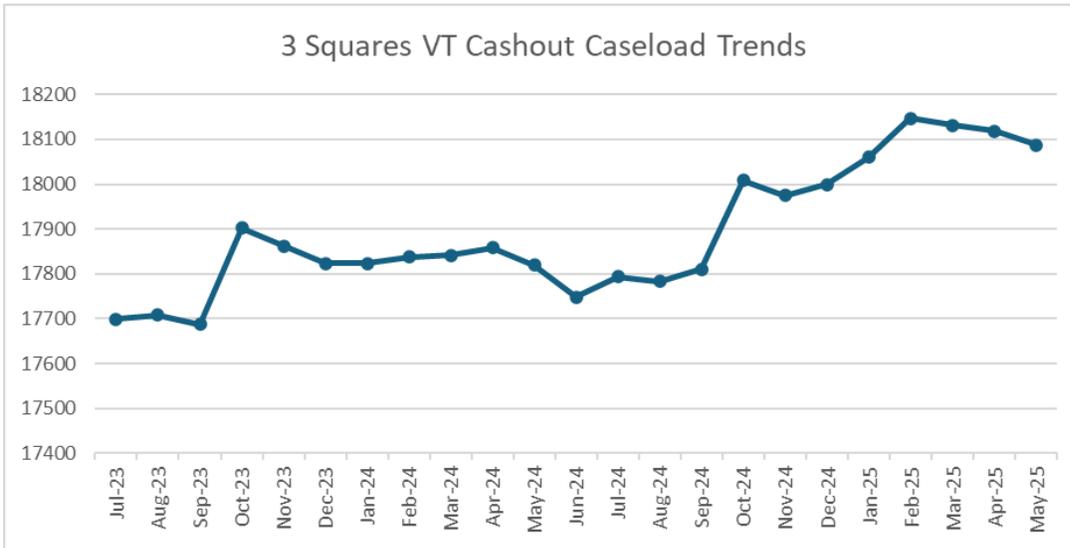
Caseloads for the Emergency Housing Hotel/Motel program in GA have been decreasing since the post-pandemic peak in SFY23 as the program eligibility and parameters have been adjusted each year. The charts below show the caseload trends over time:





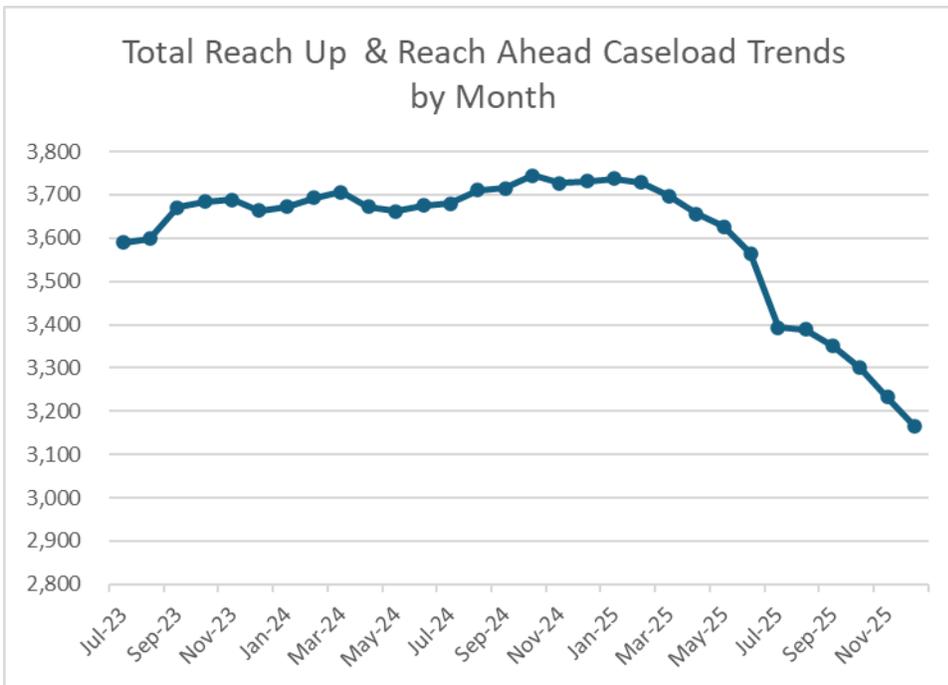
### 3Squares Caseloads

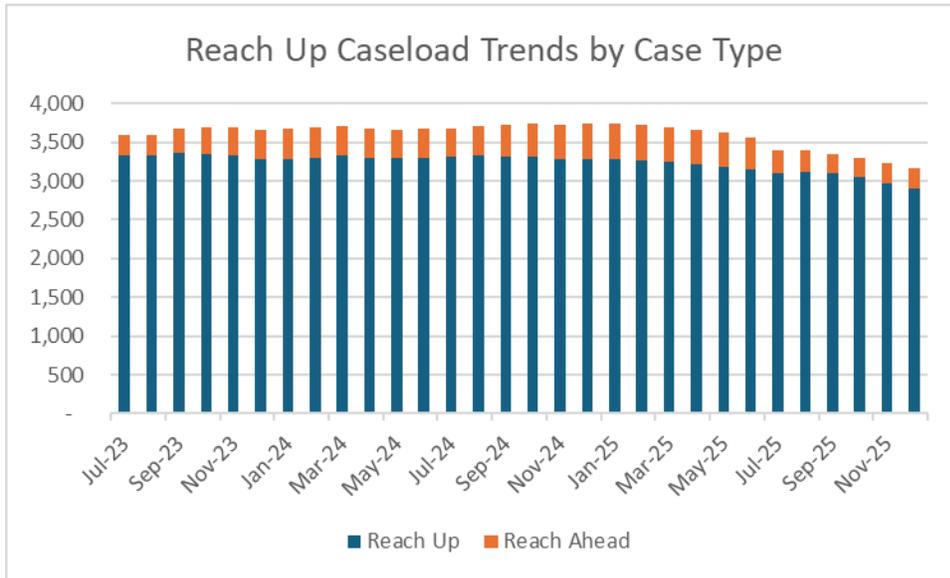
The only benefit funding for the 3SquaresVT program that passes through the DCF budget is for the Cashout population. This program enables elderly and disabled Vermonters to receive their SNAP food benefits as cash (either on an EBT card or via direct deposit into their bank account). The caseloads for this program have continued to increase over the past year, as aligns with Vermont’s aging demographics.



## Reach Up Caseloads

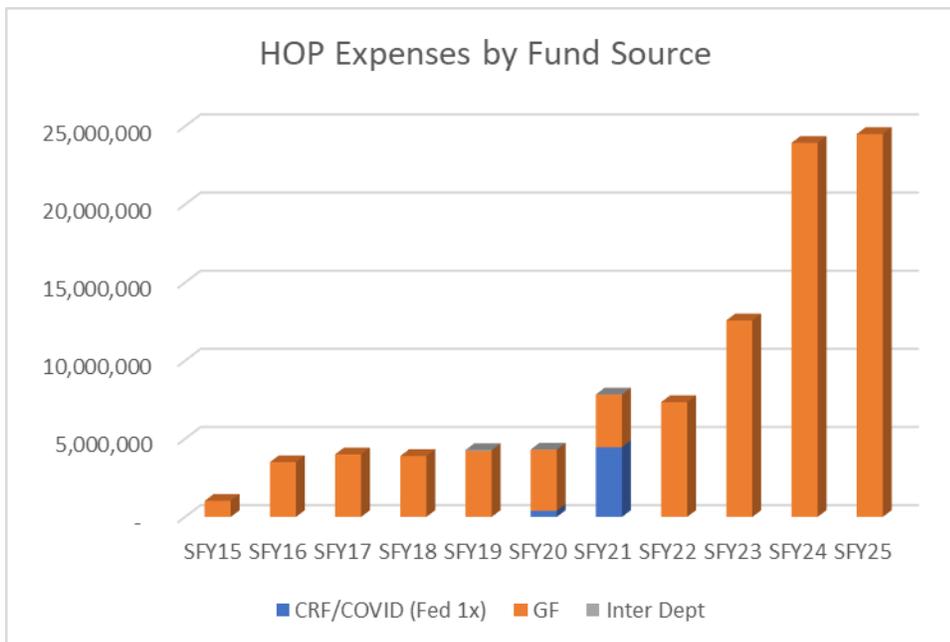
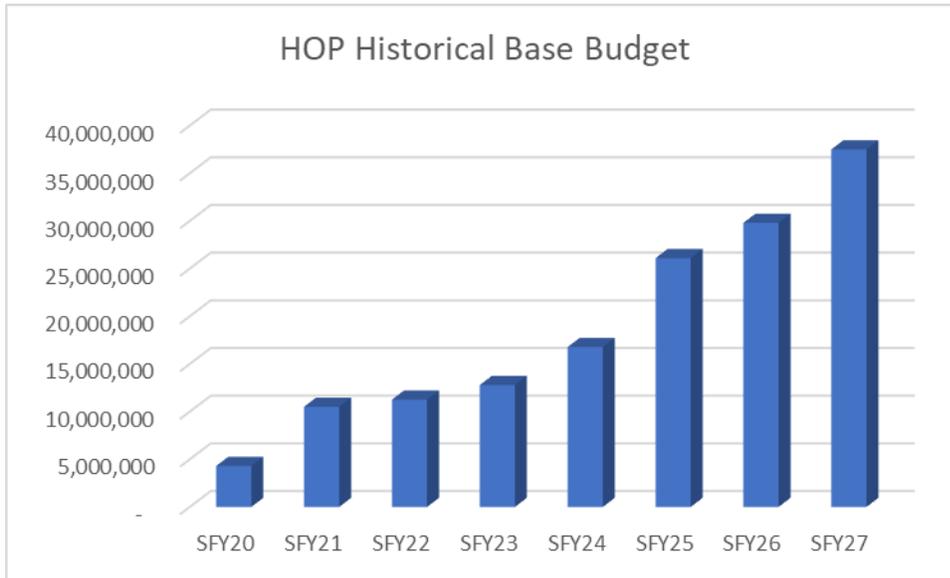
The Reach Up caseload has been decreasing over the past year. This contrasts with the projected increase in caseload that we used for last year’s budget, resulting in projected budget savings.





## OEO Caseloads

The Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) in OEO has been one of DCF's fastest growing programs over the past five years. This program has been very successful in creating shelter capacity throughout the state to address the housing crisis, and OEO received much positive feedback from advocates on the effectiveness of its administration of program during last year's legislative session. Below are a few charts to demonstrate the growth in the HOP program and to help frame the context for some of our budget proposals. As you can see, the total funding spent on the HOP program increased from \$4.3M in SFY20 to \$24.5M in SFY25. That represents a 568% growth in HOP expenditure over five years.



## Federal Funds

### DCF's SFY25 Federal Receipts

DCF has a very complex budget, with more than 70 federal funding sources that support programs across all our divisions and offices, with multiple active awards for each funding source. The DCF Business Office processes one of the most complex cost allocation plans (CAPs) in the state at the end of each quarter to allocate indirect



costs and overhead across our state and federal funding sources. Below is a summary of all the federal receipts, grouped into major buckets, that DCF drew down in SFY25:

Federal Awards	Sum of SFY25 Earnings
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)	59,922,769
Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)	35,277,909
IV-E	25,867,779
Low Income Heating & Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)	24,629,634
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)	15,941,501
IV-D	10,284,723
Pre-School Development Grant (PDG)	7,846,222
Social Security	7,723,966
Summer EBT	7,096,817
Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)	5,738,982



Federal Awards	Sum of SFY25 Earnings
Dept. of Energy (DOE) Weatherization Assistance (WAP)	5,541,094
Medicaid	5,290,491
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	4,178,279
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA – Part C)	2,602,723
Other Miscellaneous*	1,345,699
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	994,513
Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)	753,202
Continuum of Care (COC)	634,496
IV-B	629,956
<b>Total</b>	<b>222,300,754</b>

\*Other Miscellaneous includes CHIP, CBCAP, JJDP, Head Start, CAPTA, and FFPSA



## Changes in Federal Funding

Given the many changes in federal policy over the past year, it is impossible to project which federal funding sources may or may not see changes in the allotments to Vermont in the coming years. To some extent, there are always fluctuations in federal allotments, so not all changes are noteworthy. However, we have seen some changes over the past year that are worth calling out:

- H.R. 1 changes to SNAP, including the elimination of the SNAP Educational Program (SNAP Ed) and a reduction in the federal cost share of administrative costs from 50% to 25% starting October 1, 2026. It is projected that this will result in a loss of \$5.1M of SNAP Admin federal funds that will need to be backfilled with general funds to continue administering the SNAP programs. This will be higher in SFY28, when all four quarters will need to be funded at a 75% state share. The full impact of H.R. 1 cannot be fully known at this time, though. The bill requires states with a payment error rate of 6% or greater to cover a portion of SNAP benefits with state funds. Vermont is one of the few states with an error rate below this threshold for the last year officially verified, and ESD is working hard to ensure that Vermont can maintain this level of excellence.
- Vermont’s current three-year Preschool Development Grant (PDG) award is ending on December 30, 2025. DCF was recently awarded \$12.7M of PDG funds for calendar year 2026.

## ARPA-SFR Update

DCF has been appropriated \$55.1M of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (ARPA – SRF). These funds are 100% obligated and as of 09/30/2025 were 84% expended. Funding has supported Microbusiness Recovery Assistance, the Vermont Foodbank, Weatherization programs and staffing for the Emergency Housing Program. More information on the ARPA-SFR program can be found [here](#).

Program	Obligated	Expended
Microbusiness Recovery Assistance	\$ 2,496,818	\$ 2,496,818
Vermont Foodbank	\$ 8,000,000	\$ 8,000,000
Weatherization programs	\$ 44,000,000	\$ 35,032,373



Program	Obligated	Expended
Emergency Housing	\$ 600,000	\$ 600,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 55,096,818</b>	<b>\$ 46,129,191</b>

## Single Audit Findings

The findings from the 2024 Single Audit can be found here with corrective action plans available [here](#).

## Special Fund Operating Statements

As previously stated, DCF has a complex budget, with many different funding sources, including 12 different special fund appropriations. For these funds, DCF must ensure that expenses are aligned with the revenue earned, rather than appropriations. Below is a table describing the different special funds that DCF utilizes to fund expenditures and what was earned in the past two SFYs in each fund.

Special Fund	Name	Description	SFY24 Earned	SFY25 Earned
21181	Child Care Payroll Tax	Cash receipts collected via the child care payroll tax by the Department of Taxes and are closed at the state level. These receipts are reserved for the use of child care related expenses, as well as DCF and TAX admin costs associated with the collection of these funds and implementation of the Act 76 programs.	-	58,357,625



Special Fund	Name	Description	SFY24 Earned	SFY25 Earned
21235	Home Weatherization Assistance	Cash receipts from a heating fuel tax collected by the Department of Taxes and are closed out at the statewide level. These receipts are reserved for use on home weatherization projects, including efficiency in home heating for low-income residents, and fuel benefits in the LIHEAP program above the 150% poverty level including admin costs.	10,555,923	11,468,965
21560	Public Assistance Recoveries	Cash receipts from Reach Up recipients who received an overpayment of public assistance benefits.	12,031	7,978
21570	Food Stamp Recoveries	Cash receipts from Reach Up recipients who received an overpayment of food stamp benefits.	137,575	204,966
21721	Child Support Collections	Cash receipts from a combination of child support collections and registry fees.	422,691	428,146
21764	Education Medicaid Reimbursement	Cash receipts from Medicaid reimbursements received under Title 16, Chapter 101, Subchapter 001, Section 2959a Education Medicaid Receipts. These receipts	1,712,000	1,712,000



Special Fund	Name	Description	SFY24 Earned	SFY25 Earned
		are available for administrative costs related to the collection, processing, and reporting of education Medicaid reimbursements and statewide programs.		
21809	Social Security	Cash receipts from Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments for children in custody. Accounts Payable processes the collections and refunds collections processed in error. At the end of the year, revenue is transferred to offset federal or general fund expenditures in FSD.	580,470	773,980
21810	Parental Child Support	Cash receipts from child support collections for children in custody. OCS transfers these receipts to FSD.	22,629	15,499
21870	Misc. Special Revenue	Cash receipts from Green Mountain Power (GMP) and Vermont Gas Systems (VGS) for the administration of the Energy Assistance Program and are closed out at the statewide level. The receipts from GMP and VGS are restricted for use as reimbursement to DCF	249,429	234,042



Special Fund	Name	Description	SFY24 Earned	SFY25 Earned
		for program administration and assistance.		
21903	Earned Income Tax Credit & OCS Disregard	Cash receipts from two sources. The first source is from the Department of Taxes for federal Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) that were provided to qualifying families. This arrangement is the result of Act 65 Sec. 139 Maintenance of Effort; Funding; Earned Income Tax Credit from the 2007 legislative session. The second source is Reach Up child support collections. By federal law, families who receive temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) benefits are required to sign over to the State their rights to child support. Receipts from both sources are restricted to fund TANF block grant eligible expenditures.	19,543,203	21,389,842
21965	Animal Spay/Neutering Fund	Cash receipts from dog license fees collected by the State Treasurer and are closed out at the statewide level. These receipts are restricted to support the	257,382	252,718



Special Fund	Name	Description	SFY24 Earned	SFY25 Earned
		Vermont Spay and Neutering Incentive Program (VSNIP). This fund was transferred from the Agency of Agriculture in SFY12 (Act 57).		
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>33,502,227</b>	<b>94,853,738</b>

## Acronyms

[A](#) | [B](#) | [C](#) | [D](#) | [E](#) | [F](#) | [G](#) | [H](#) | [I](#) | [J](#) | [K](#) | [L](#) | [M](#) | [N](#) | [O](#) | [P](#) | [Q](#) | [R](#) | [S](#) | [T](#) | [U](#) | [V](#) | [W](#) | [X](#) | [Y](#) | [Z](#)

### A

AAA ..... Area Agency on Aging

AABD ..... Aid to the Aged, Blind, & Disabled

ABAWD ..... Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents

ACCESS ..... The computer software system used by DCF and DVHA to track program eligibility information as well as economic services and child support activity

ACE ..... Additional Crisis Expenditure

ACF ..... Administration for Children & Families

ADPC ..... Application Document Processing Center

AHECs ..... Area Health Education Center



AHS..... Agency of Human Services

ARA..... American Relief Act

ARPA ..... American Rescue Plan Act

ASU..... Adolescent Services Unit

**B**

BAM ..... Business Account Manager

BASU ..... Business Analytics Support Unit

BARJ ..... Balanced and Restorative Justice

BBF..... Building Bright Futures

BFIS ..... Building Bright Futures Information System

BGS..... Buildings and Ground Services

BO..... Business Office

BPS..... Benefits Programs Specialist

**C**

CANS ..... Child Adolescent Needs and Strengths

CAP ..... Cost Allocation Plan

CAPTA ..... Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act

CAS..... Cost Allocation Services

CATS..... Child and Adolescent Transitional Staffing

CBCAP ..... Community Based Child Abuse Prevention

CC..... Child Care

CCDBG ..... Child Care Development Block Grant

CCDF ..... Child Care Development Fund

CCFAP ..... Child Care Financial Assistance Program



CCTHRT ..... Care Coordination Transitional Housing Resource Teams  
CCWIS ..... Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System  
CDD ..... Child Development Division  
CE ..... Coordinated Entry  
CECH ..... Clinicians Enhancing Child Health  
CFDA ..... Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance  
CHINS ..... Children in Need of Services  
CHIP ..... Children’s Health Insurance Program  
CIES ..... Centralized Intake and Emergency Services  
CIR ..... Critical Incident Report  
CIS ..... Children’s Integrated Services  
CIT ..... Central Information Technology  
CJA ..... Children’s Justice Act  
CMS ..... Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (formerly HCFA)  
CPU ..... Central Processing Unit  
CRRU ..... Commissioner’s Registry Review Unit  
CRU ..... Cash Receipts Unit  
CSBG ..... Community Services Block Grant  
CSNet ..... Child Support Network  
CSP ..... Coordinated Service Planning  
CSU ..... Child Safety Unit  
CWS ..... Child Welfare Services

**D**

DAIL ..... Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living



DBA..... Database Administrator  
DCF..... Department for Children and Families  
DCM..... Disaster Case Management  
DDS..... Disability Determination Services  
DHHS..... Department of Health & Human Services (United States)  
DMH..... Department of Mental Health  
DO..... District Office  
DOC..... Department of Corrections  
DOE..... Department of Education  
DOE..... Department of Energy  
DOH..... Department of Health  
DOJ..... Department of Justice  
DPS..... Department of Public Safety  
DSHP..... Designated State Health Programs  
DSR..... Delivery System Reform  
DUALS..... State Demonstrations to Integrate Care for Dual Eligible Individuals  
DS..... Developmental Services  
DV..... Domestic Violence  
DVHA..... Department of Vermont Health Access

**E**

E&E..... Eligibility and Enrollment  
E&T..... Employment and Training  
EA..... Emergency Assistance  
EBT..... Electronic Benefit Transfer



ECFMH ..... Early Childhood and Family Mental Health  
EDI ..... Electronic Data Interchange  
EDRS ..... Electronic Disqualified Recipient System  
EFT ..... Electronic Funds Transfer  
EI..... Early Intervention  
EIP ..... Emerging Infections Program  
EITC ..... Earned Income Tax Credit  
ELC ..... Early Learning Challenge  
ELC ..... Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity  
EP ..... Essential Person  
EPA ..... Environmental Protection Agency  
ERAP ..... Emergency Rental Assistance Program  
ESAP..... Elderly Simplified Application Project  
ESD..... Economic Services Division  
ESD CO ..... Economic Services Division Central Office  
ESG..... Emergency Solutions Grant  
ETV ..... Education Training Vouchers  
F2F ..... Farm to Family

**F**

FAMIS ..... Financial Accounting and Management Information System  
FFP ..... Federal Financial Participation  
FFPSA..... Families First Prevention Services Act  
FFTA ..... Family First Transition Act  
FFY ..... Federal Fiscal Year



FGC..... Family Group Conferencing  
FITP ..... Family Infant Toddler Program  
FMAP ..... Federal Medicaid Assistance Participation  
FMLA..... Family Medical Leave Act  
FMNP ..... Farmers' Market Nutrition Program  
FNS ..... Food and Nutrition Services  
FPL..... Federal Poverty Level  
FPLS ..... Federal Parent Location Services  
FSCO ..... Food Stamp Cash Out  
FSH..... Family Supportive Housing  
FSD ..... Family Services Division  
FSP ..... Family Safety Planning  
FSW ..... Family Services Worker  
FTE ..... Full Time Equivalent

**G**

GA..... General Assistance  
GA-EH.....General Assistance-Emergency Housing (The Hotel/Motel Program)  
GC..... Global Commitment for Health (1115 Waiver)  
GF ..... General Fund  
GMP ..... Green Mountain Power, Inc.

**H**

HC..... Health Care  
HCBS ..... Home and Community Based Services  
HESOC.....High End System of Care



HHS..... Health and Human Services  
HIPAA ..... Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act  
HMIS ..... Housing Management Information System  
HOP ..... Housing Opportunity Grant Program  
HOPE.....Helping Our Peers Excel  
HR..... Human Resources  
HRP..... High Risk Pregnancy  
HSB..... Human Services Board  
HUD ..... Department of Housing and Urban Development  
HWAP ..... Home Weatherization Assistance Program

**I**

IAPD..... Implementation Advance Planning Document  
IAPDU ..... Implementation Advance Planning Document Update  
ICAN..... Individual Career Advancement Network  
ICJ..... Interstate Commission on Juveniles  
ICPC..... Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children  
ID..... Identification  
IDEA..... Individuals with Disabilities Education Act  
IDT ..... Interdepartmental Transfer  
IE..... Integrated Eligibility  
IEE ..... Integrated Eligibility & Enrollment  
IJA.....Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

**J**

JJ.....Juvenile Justice



JJDP..... Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

JJU..... Juvenile Justice Unit

**L**

LGK..... Let's Grow Kids

LIHEAP ..... Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

LIT..... Local Interagency Team

LTC ..... Long-Term Care

**M**

M&O ..... Maintenance & Operations

MBDP..... Micro Business Development Program

MCO..... Managed Care Organization (Investments)

MES ..... Medicaid Enterprise System

MMIS..... Medicaid Management Information System

MOE ..... Maintenance of Effort

MOU..... Memorandum of Understanding

MPRS..... Motions, Petitions and Requests

**N**

NOA ..... Notice of Award

NOFO..... Notice of Funding Opportunity

**O**

OCS ..... Office of Child Support

OCSE..... Office of Child Support Enforcement

OCYFA..... Office of the Child, Youth, and Family Advocate

ODG ..... Office of the Defender General



OEO ..... Office of Economic Opportunity  
OIG..... Office of Inspector General  
OOJJP..... Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention  
OSERS..... Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

**P**

PADS ..... Payment and Delivery Systems  
PCAP ..... Public Assistance Cost Allocation Plan  
PCG ..... Public Consulting Group, Inc.  
PDG ..... Preschool Development Grant  
PERM..... Payment Error Rate Measurement  
PIE ..... Payer Initiated Eligibility  
PNI.....Personal Needs & Incidentals  
PNMI ..... Private Non-Medical Institution  
PQA..... Prior Quarter Adjustment  
PSGP ..... Prevention Services Grant Program  
PSH.....Permanent Supportive Housing

**Q**

QA..... Quality Assurance  
QC..... Quality Control  
QCIP.....Quality and Capacity Incentive Program  
QHP ..... Qualified Health Plan

**R**

RCA..... Refugee Cash Assistance  
REU..... Revenue Enhancement Unit



RLSI ..... Residential Licensing and Special Investigations  
RMTS ..... Random Moment Time Study  
RRHI ..... Rapid Resolution Housing Initiative  
RU ..... Reach Up Program  
RUCM ..... Reach Up Case Manager  
RUS..... REACH Up Supervisor  
RTA..... Raise the Age

**S**

SA ..... Substance Abuse  
SACWIS ..... Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System  
SAMHSA ..... Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
SCHIP ..... State Children’s Health Insurance Plan  
SDM ..... Security Device Manager  
S-EBT.....Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer  
SFY ..... State Fiscal Year  
SNAP ..... Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
SOC ..... System of Care  
SRT.....Special Response Team  
SRTF..... Secure Residential Treatment Facility  
SSA..... Social Security Administration  
SSBG ..... Social Services Block Grant  
SSDI.....Social Security Disability Income  
SSF ..... Solely State Funded  
SSFP ..... Solely State Funded Program



SSI ..... Supplemental Security Income  
SSMIS ..... Social Services Management Information System  
SSN..... Social Security Number  
SSNRI ..... Social Security Number Removal Initiative  
SV ..... Sexual Violence

**T**

TANF ..... Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Reach Up in VT)  
TCM ..... Targeted Case Management

**U**

UVM ..... University of Vermont  
UVMHC..... University of Vermont Medical Center

**V**

VABIR ..... Vermont Association of Business, Industry and Rehabilitation  
VAL ..... Vermont Adult Learning  
VCAB ..... Vermont Citizens Advisory Board  
VCIC..... Vermont Crime Information Center  
VDH..... Vermont Department of Health  
VDOL ..... Vermont Department of Labor  
VHC..... Vermont Health Connect  
VHHIS ..... Vermont Household Health Insurance Survey  
VISION ..... Vermont's Integrated Solution for Information and Organizational  
Needs – the statewide accounting system  
VOCA..... Victims of Crime Act  
VPPSA..... Vermont Public Power Supply Authority



VR..... Vocational Rehabilitation  
VSNIP ..... Vermont Spay and Neuter Incentive Program  
VT-TIES.....Vermont Integrated Eligibility Systems

**W**

WAP ..... Weatherization Assistance Program  
WEC..... Washington Electric Cooperative Inc.  
WIC ..... Women Infants and Children  
WPR..... Work Participation Rate  
WTF ..... Weatherization Trust Fund  
Wx..... Weatherization

**Y**

YASI..... Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument

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<sup>i</sup> The federally awarded Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry Assessment & Navigation funds are included in this section.