



VERMONT

**AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

Chris Winters, Commissioner

2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION



Our Vision: 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 Vermonters.

Department for Children and Families

~1,100 Employees

Family
Services
Division
(FSD)

Child
Development
Division
(CDD)

Office of Child
Support
(OCS)

Economic
Services
Division
(ESD)

Office of
Economic
Opportunity
(OEO)

Disability
Determination
Services
(DDS)

Family Services Division (FSD)

Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice

FSD's mission is to engage families, foster and kin caregivers, partner agencies and the community to increase safety and law abidance for the most vulnerable children and youth in Vermont

Aryka Radke, JD,
Deputy Commissioner

We achieve our mission by working with families to:

- Keep children and youth safe at home,
- Keep youth free from harmful behaviors,

And if that is not possible:

- Caring for children and youth in DCF or conditional custody and attending to their well-being, while working towards safe reunification.

And if that is not possible:

- Achieving other forms of permanency for children and youth in DCF or conditional custody by providing them with safe, supportive, lifelong connections, such as adoption or guardianship.

Family Services Division

Structure:

400+ Staff

\$148 million dollars for SFY24

12 District Offices

- Located throughout state
- 180 Family Services Workers plus other staff

2 State-wide Direct Service Units

- Centralized Intake: Child Protection Hotline and after-hours emergency response
- Residential Licensing and Special Investigations Unit

Central Office

- Leadership located; provides support to district offices, oversees policy and practice, manages budgets, grants and contracts, and maintains communication with federal partners.

Family Services Division

Primary Service Areas

- Operate a 24-hour Child Protection hotline (20,180 reports in 2023)
- Investigate and assess reports of abuse and neglect (4,040 investigations in 2023)
- Engage families to meet their goals to increase safety
- Seek court involvement when required to keep children and communities safe
- Support safe placements for children and youth
- License and regulate foster homes, residential treatment programs and child placing and adoption agencies
- Achieve permanency options that are in the best interest of the child/youth
- Supervise youth on probation and help repair harm caused by their behavior

Child Development Division (CDD)

Works with partners to provide Vermonters with affordable access to high-quality child care and child development services.

Janet McLaughlin, Deputy
Commissioner

Our Mission

CDD strives to improve the well-being of Vermont's children.

We do this by working in partnership with families, the early childhood and afterschool workforce, community organizations, and state and federal entities to increase statewide, client-centered access to developmentally-appropriate and equitable child development services.

Our Resources

60+ staff members

\$240M million dollars for SFY25

Statewide network of partners and programs

Child Development Division

CDD serves children and families through:

Children's Integrated Services

- Care Coordination
- Early Intervention
- Specialized Child Care
- Early Childhood and Family Mental Health
- Home Visiting

Child Care

- Child Care Licensing
- Child Care Financial Assistance
- Early Childhood and Afterschool Program Quality and Workforce Supports
- Head Start Collaboration Office
- Universal Prekindergarten (co-administer with AOE)

Child Development Division

CDD Reaches:

Children's Integrated Services

- 1,500+ children served monthly via 5,000+ referrals each year
- Hundreds of providers who serve:
 - Children under 3 with or at risk of disability or developmental delays
 - Pregnant and new parents in need of additional parenting and well-being supports
 - Children who have experienced or are at risk of abuse and maltreatment

Child Care

- 30,000+ children served by 1,000+ regulated Child Care, Preschool, and Afterschool Programs
- 7,500+ early childhood and afterschool professionals
- 9,000+ children receiving Child Care Financial Assistance

Office of Child Support (OCS)

Responsible for establishing parentage, and establishing, collecting, enforcing, and modifying child support and medical support orders for children who do not live with one or both parents.

Lisa Rivers, Director

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.

Studies show that receipt of child support

- Increases economic independence of parents
- Reduces child poverty
- Reduces reliance on public assistance benefits
- Encourages parents to exit and remain off public assistance
- Increases parental involvement of paying parents

Office of Child Support Programs

- OCS is a state program that is 66% federally funded
- We collect approximately \$40 million dollars benefiting over 14,000 families annually
- Statewide presence with 108 full-time employees
 - Five regional offices, delivering front-line services with an emphasis on helping parents navigate the court system
 - Central Office in Waterbury

OCS: Who We Serve and Our Partners

WHO WE SERVE

Parents who pay support

Parents who receive support

Guardians

Parents in other states who are seeking assistance through the Vermont court process

OUR PARTNERS

Economic Services

Family Services

Department of
Corrections

Vermont Judiciary

Employers

Hireability Vermont

Vermont
Association of
Business, Industry
and Rehabilitation

EAP

VT Network against
Domestic and
Sexual Violence

Economic Services Division(ESD)

Provides economic benefits to Vermonters in need. Provides 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.

Miranda Gray,
Deputy Commissioner

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.

12 District Offices

Approximately 350 staff located in 12 district offices across the state

- ~350 staff scattered throughout the state
- Co-located with other AHS district Offices
- Program eligibility staff and Reach-up case managers located at district offices

Central Office

- Includes operations, program teams, training, administrative services, quality control, fraud, process and performance, business application support unit

ESD Benefits Service Center (BSC) Call Center

Application & Document Processing Center (ADPC)

Economic Services Division

Programs

3SquaresVT (SNAP)

- Helps eligible Vermonters to stretch their food budgets and put three healthy meals on their tables every day. Program also provides support with employment and training, farm to table, and nutrition education.

General and Emergency Assistance (GA/EA)

- Helps eligible individuals and families meet their emergency and basic needs. This includes personal needs, room and board, fuel, utilities, medical, dental, prescriptions, medical supplies, burial costs, and housing. The Vermont Rental Assistance Program is a part of GA and provides a short-term rent subsidy.

Fuel Assistance (LIHEAP)

- Helps eligible Vermonters heat their homes by paying part of their home heating bills. Crisis heating assistance, water and wastewater assistance, and a utility discount assistance are also available.

Reach Up (TANF)

- Helps stabilize families experiencing deep poverty by providing case management, financial assistance, and support services. Childcare assistance, employment services, and post secondary education is also provided.

Essential Person Program (EP)

- 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.

Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)

Partners with community organizations, private sector, government agencies and others on solutions to solve poverty

Lily Sojourner,
Director

- Administers grant programs – often core funding for organizations
- Provides training and technical assistance
- Identifies and develops resources for communities
- Focuses on results and performance accountability
- Promotes approaches informed by evidence and research to improve policy and practice

Office of Economic Opportunity

Programs

Community Action

Agencies (Core Funding)

Homeless Assistance

- Emergency Shelter and Services
- Homelessness Prevention
- Rapid Re-housing
- Coordinated Entry
- Family Supportive Housing
- Permanent Supportive Housing (starting 2025)

Disaster Response & Recovery

Weatherization Plus

- Home Weatherization, incl Multi-Family
- Plus: Heat Pumps, Efficient Stoves, Home Repair, Asbestos Remediation
- Emergency Heating System Repair & Replacement

Financial

Empowerment

- Micro Business Development Program
- Financial Coaching

Office of Economic Opportunity

By the Numbers

17 staff administer more than **\$75m in funding** to Vermont organizations from **15 federal and other funding sources** to support more than **60+ community partners** who reach more than **80,000 low-income Vermonters annually**

Reports:

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

Office of Disability Determination Services (DDS)

Provides applicants with accurate medical eligibility decisions as quickly as possible, as governed by Social Security federal statutes, regulations, and policy.

Jack McCormack, Director

Our Mission

To provide all applicants with accurate disability determinations that are completed in a timely manner, and with full, fair, and compassionate consideration of each applicant's situation and respect and concern for the individual's well-being and legal rights.

- DDS is regularly a national leader in accuracy, timeliness, and public service.
- DDS regularly meets its workload & service goals within federal budget limits.

Disability Determination Services

Location & Staffing

One State Office in Waterbury staffed with:

- Disability Adjudicators
- Medical Consultants
- Disability (Technical) Specialists
- Other Supporting Staff (Fiscal, Professional Relations, IT)

Disability Determination Services

DDS Determinations

DDS employees work for a federal program

- SSA rules govern the work
- SSA funds all DDS operations, salaries and benefits, case costs, and indirect costs
- SSA controls DDS budget, workload volume, and staffing
- SSA closely monitors DDS performance against national standards

In Federal Fiscal Year 2024, DDS achieved successful outcomes

- Determinations on 6,817 Social Security disability claims and 217 Medicaid disability claims
- Processed claims in an average of over 85.8 days – the fastest state in the nation (*National DDS average was over 186.2 days*)
- Initial case decisional accuracy of 98.5%, ranking DDS among the top 10 offices in the nation

Thank you!

Contact:

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