



CLYDE L. REESE, III, ESQ.
COMMISSIONER

- ▶ Child in immediate danger, please call 911!
- ▶ Call local DFCS office to make a CPS Report!
- ▶ After-Hours (between 5:00 p.m. and 8:30 a.m.) call 1-855-GACHILD!

Apply for Childcare and Food Stamps:

www.compass.ga.gov

Renew Your Benefits:

www.compass.ga.gov

DFCS LEADERSHIP:

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Acting Division Director
404.651.8409

Kathy Herren
Acting Deputy Director
404.463.0419

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Field Operations Director
706.552.4400

Lynne Boring
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Office of Family Independence
404.651.8701

DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES (DFCS)

FACTS SHEET:

The primary goal of the Georgia Department of Human Services' (DHS), Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) is to assist and support families to ensure children are safe from abuse and families can become more self-sufficient.

The Division of Family and Children Services is made up of two primary bodies' of work: Child Welfare and the Office of Family Independence (OFI). Child Welfare encompasses Child Protective Services (CPS), Adoptions and Foster care. The Office of Family Independence oversees TANF, Food Stamps, Medicaid and other self-sufficiency and family support activities. The division has nearly 7,000 staff members. In SFY 2010, the division's budget was over \$1.5 billion, including \$345 in state funds.

Social Services/ Child Welfare

Case managers, located in 159 county DFCS offices, provide a wide variety of social services – including: family assessment services, child protective services (CPS) to abused and neglected children, treatment services to families involved with CPS, recruitment, placement and treatment services for children in foster care including location of adoptive homes when parental rights have been terminated.

In FY 2010:

- Child Protective Services workers investigated 26,339 reports of child maltreatment.
- At the end of SFY 2010 there were 7,065 children in foster care.
- 1,205 adoptions were finalized in the SFY 2010.

Since December 31, 2004 all case managers and supervisors are required to be certified in either CPS or Foster Care. New staff must undergo an initial assessment and complete an eight-week integrated classroom and field assessment program. The certification program requires the new employee to work under the direction of a mentor who signs off on various activities and competencies once each has been accomplished. To retain certification, staff must take 20 hours of continuing education annually.

Office of Family Independence (OFI)

The Office of Family Independence refers to all eligibility programs including Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) - formerly referred to as Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Family Medicaid, Aged, Blind and Disabled Medicaid (ABD) and Child Care. All OFI programs have an income-eligible component as well as other eligibility criteria such as an age requirement.

In FY 2010

- TANF benefits totaled more than \$51.4 million. A monthly average of 90,581 Georgians received TANF, totaling over 21,000 cases. Of these, 66 percent were children; the others were their adult caregivers.
- An average of 7,200 TANF recipients received employment services every month.
- There were approximately 1.4 million receiving Medicaid each month.
- SNAP benefits worth over 2.2 billion were issued. About 1.4 million low-income people received food stamps monthly.
- An average of 55,382 children received subsidized childcare each month, at a cost of \$17 million per month. Subsidized childcare allows low-income families to pay for day care on a sliding fee scale so they can work or train for employment.
- Twenty community action agencies and four local governments received about 18.1 million in federal funds to provide job skills training, transportation, housing and food.
- The Energy Assistance Program distributed \$84 million to 212,849 low-income households to help pay their home heating costs.

Adoption

The Adoption Unit is committed educating the public, private partners and DFCS field staff in regards to best practices in adoption and to facilitate and support the adoption of children in the permanent custody of DFCS. Recognizing that children deserve safe, loving and nurturing relationships with permanent families, DFCS and its partners will provide a continuum of available, accessible and effective services that enable and support the placement of children in adoptive families.

After School Services

Youth development practices delivered in afterschool and summer programs play a vital role in motivating youth to achieve success not only in schools, but in their personal lives as well. To address these needs, DHS funds afterschool and summer programs across the state of Georgia for youth ages 6 - 19 through two solicitation processes: a Request for Proposal (RFP) and Statement of Need (SON).

Child Protective Services

Child Protective Services (CPS) staff complete an assessment of a family based on reports of child abuse or neglect and provide services to protect the child and strengthen the family.

Emergency Food Assistance

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low income persons in Georgia, including the elderly, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost. In accordance with Federal law and U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

Energy Assistance

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) has limited funds available to pay for home heating and cooling costs for low-income eligible families including crisis. The program has three components:

1. Energy Crisis - Provided to low income households with disconnection notices or already disconnected.
2. Regular Home Energy Assistance - Provides financial assistance to households meeting certain income and other requirements.

3. Weatherization - Provides low-cost home energy conservation improvements to eligible households.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as food stamps, provides monthly benefits to low-income households to help pay for the cost of food. A household may be one person living alone, a family, or several unrelated individuals living together who routinely purchase and prepare meals together. Anyone may apply for food stamp benefits. The program helps households who have limited income and resources. Georgians are now able to apply for food stamps online with via COMPASS at www.compass.ga.gov.

Family Medicaid

The Family Medicaid is a program that provides health care coverage benefits to individuals that meet the requirements for income, resources and citizenship. Individuals may apply for Medicaid at any local DFCS office, by mail, telephone, fax, e-mail, or at designated agencies.

The Right from the Start (RSM) Medicaid program provides Medicaid coverage for eligible children under the age of 19, pregnant women and women who have breast or cervical cancer including precancerous conditions of the breast and cervix. RSM Outreach Project works closely with the PeachCare for Kids program, and makes referrals to the Georgia Partnership for Caring Foundation for those who are not eligible for Medicaid.

Subsidized Child Care Assistance

Subsidized child care in Georgia is provided through the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program to help low income families afford quality child care. The CAPS program is administered in all 159 Georgia counties through the county Department of Family and Children Services.

Families must be a resident of Georgia and apply for the CAPS program in the county where they live. The CAPS program can subsidize the cost of child care for children who are US citizens or legal residents and under age 13. The age can be extended to 18 if the child has special needs. All eligible families are served as long as funds are available.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), often referred to as welfare, is the monthly cash assistance program for low income families with children under age 18. Cooperation with Office of Child Support Services is a requirement of receiving TANF benefits. In order to be determined eligible to receive TANF benefits, a child under 18 must reside in the home and must be deprived of the care of at least one parent due to a variety of reasons including: continued absence from the home, death of the parent, physical or mental incapacity or if one parent has a recent connection to the work force and both parents are in the home. TANF is a program intended to prepare adult recipients for employment. There is work requirement for adults who are able to work and receive TANF.