



NASSAU COUNTY
Department
of
Social
Services

Edward P. Mangano, County Executive
John E. Imhof, PhD, Commissioner

**Annual
Report
2016**



Nassau County Legislature

1550 Franklin Ave. Mineola, NY 11501

516-571-6200

***Norma L. Gonsalves, LD 13
Presiding Officer***

Kevan Abrahams, LD 1

Siela A. Bynoe, LD 2

Carrié Solages, LD 3

Denise Ford, LD 4

Laura Curran, LD 5

C. William Gaylor III, LD 6

Howard J. Kopel, LD 7

Vincent T. Muscarella, LD 8

Richard J. Nicoletto, LD 9

Ellen W. Birnbaum, LD 10

Delia DeRiggi-Whitton, LD 11

James Kennedy LD 12

Laura Schaefer, LD 14

Dennis Dunne, Sr., LD 15

Arnold W. Drucker, LD 16

Rose Marie Walker, LD 17

Donald N. MacKenzie, LD 18

Steven D. Rhoads LD 19



I. Message from the County Executive



A Message from Nassau County Executive Edward P. Mangano:

In presenting the 2016 Annual Report of the Nassau County Department of Social Services to the residents and public servants of Nassau County, I am indeed proud to note that year after year DSS continues to demonstrate itself as one of the most innovative and progressive social services agencies in the nation. As a longtime public servant I most certainly understand the many challenges facing all government agencies today and, in this regard DSS and its entire dedicated staff perform an extraordinary job each and every day addressing the needs of individuals and families throughout our county.

Whether it be receiving special grant awards and accolades for the range and excellence of its children’s services; protecting vulnerable adults through our guardianship programs; processing and completing thousands of public assistance applications monthly within state and Federal mandates; providing shelter for homeless individuals and families; receiving consistently outstanding audit findings from our State oversight agencies; and utilizing the latest advances in information technology for enhanced management operations and constituent services, DSS and its dedicated staff are committed to improving the lives of all Nassau County residents.

We are fortunate to have such a dedicated team of public servants who – along with our DSS Advisory Council, Task Force on Family Violence and DSS Volunteers –each and every day give our residents the message “We care, and we’re here to help.”

The 2016 DSS Annual Report illustrates the breadth and scope of DSS programs and services. It is with pride and appreciation that I thank each and every one of our DSS employees and volunteers on behalf of Nassau County’s 1.3 million residents.

Sincerely,

Edward P. Mangano



II. Message from the Commissioner

I am pleased to present the Department's Annual Report which describes our programs and services, and highlights our accomplishments during 2016.

While applications for assistance across our benefits programs are decreasing, our caseloads are still high compared to pre-recession levels. This is attributable to the double digit growth in applications and caseloads we experienced during the recession period starting in 2008. We anticipate that caseloads will eventually drop significantly as applications for assistance continue to decline. One area of continued concern is the increase in the homeless population we house nightly in emergency housing. Since 2014 we have seen a 60% increase in the number of individuals in emergency housing (about 700 to 1,150 individuals nightly). About half of these individuals are children. To address this concern we have restructured and reached out to resources in our community. We are working hard to help these families and individuals find permanent housing.

Summarized here are selected program statistics from 2016:

- Day care services were provided for a monthly average of 5,800 children in 4,300 working families
- DSS administered 89,600 Medicaid only cases for over 125,400 individuals, or 9% of Nassau's population
- Approximately 18,300 applications for temporary assistance were processed
- Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps) benefits were provided to almost 36,000 Nassau families and 39,000 HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) benefits were provided Nassau households
- Child Protective Services investigated/assessed 5,650 reports of child abuse and neglect
- DSS helped over 32,600 families obtain and retain child support
- Almost 200,000 registered visitors came to the DSS building in Uniondale, while overall DSS assisted nearly 300,000 Nassau residents.
- \$22.7 million identified in Social Services savings for 2016 from uncovering welfare waste, fraud and abuse;
- Since January 2011, Nassau taxpayers have been spared a total of \$134.2 Million in welfare waste, fraud and abuse;
- The amount of total security deposits paid to landlords was reduced from \$1.86 million in 2010 to just over \$75,631 in 2016 by replacing a cash security deposit with a surety agreement

But statistics alone never tell the whole story. Hundreds of job seekers were able to find employment at the Mega Job Fair held in 2016, which attracted 300 employers and 8,000 job seekers to the Nassau Community College.

In Children's Services, the Family Assessment Response (FAR) program diverted a number of families from traditional child abuse and neglect investigations to a more family centric approach by engaging families in meetings to help identify areas of concern and work towards a solution, while reducing protective services intakes and recidivism. Our CPS staff has been recognized by New York State for its groundbreaking efforts in reducing racial inequity in our foster care system.

As a collegial relationship with all sectors of our community partners remains a priority of DSS Administration, we have sustained our ongoing relationships with nearly 100 agencies representing the not-for-profit, educational, law enforcement, judicial, and health and human service sectors throughout Nassau County.

By far, the greatest resource we have is our staff, as DSS boasts almost 900 trained, motivated and professional employees. Throughout 2016, DSS staff in all program areas received many compliments for their dedication and service to Nassau residents. Some of these sentiments are captured in our Resident Feedback section – please take a look to see what your neighbors are saying about DSS staff. I think you'll agree that our entire DSS staff is second to none when it comes to customer service.

Finally, we could not present this report without acknowledging with great appreciation the unconditional support and encouragement of County Executive Edward P. Mangano. The County Executive cares deeply about all of Nassau's children, adults and seniors. Year after year he has consistently committed himself to supporting our programs and initiatives for Nassau's most vulnerable residents.

Thank you for taking the time to read our 2016 Annual Report and please feel free to visit us on our County website at www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/DSS/index.html.



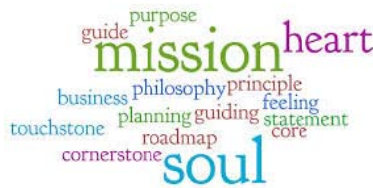
Table of Contents

I.	Message from the County Executive.....	2
II.	Message from the Commissioner.....	3
III.	Mission Statement	4
IV.	DSS Facts and Figures	5
V.	DSS Advisory Council	6
VI.	Empire Justice Lawsuit	7
VII.	Lobby	8
VIII.	Customer Service.....	10
IX.	Emergency Services.....	10
X.	Domestic Violence	11
XI.	Fraud Investigations.....	12
XII.	Public Assistance	13
XIII.	SNAP (formerly Food Stamps)	15
XIV.	Housing and Homeless Prevention.....	16
XV.	Employment	18
XVI.	DCAP	20
XVII.	Behavioral Health Unit	21
XVIII.	Employment Job Fair	22
XIX.	Medical Assistance	23
XX.	Children and Family Services	24
XXI.	Child Protective Services.....	24
XXII.	Services to Children	29
XXIII.	Adult Services.....	35
XXIV.	Nassau County Re-entry Task Force	37
XXV.	Child Support Enforcement	38
XXVI.	Medical Services.....	39
XXVII.	Child Care	40
XXVIII.	Human Resources	42
XXIX.	Information Technology Systems	44
XXX.	Quality Management, Research and Planning	46
XXXI.	Office Services.....	47
XXXII.	Staff Development	48
XXXIII.	Legal Services.....	49
XXXIV.	Language Access Plan	50
XXXV.	Community Outreach Services	50
XXXVI.	Volunteer Services.....	51
XXXVII.	Employees of the Month in 2016	53
XXXVIII.	Resident Feedback and Kudos to DSS Staff.....	55
XXXIX.	Nassau County DSS and the New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA)	56
XL.	Audits and Reviews.....	57
XLI.	DSS Celebrates	58
XLII.	Commissioners in Department History.....	60
XLIII.	In Memoriam	61

DSS Annual Report



John E. Imhof, PhD
Commissioner, DSS



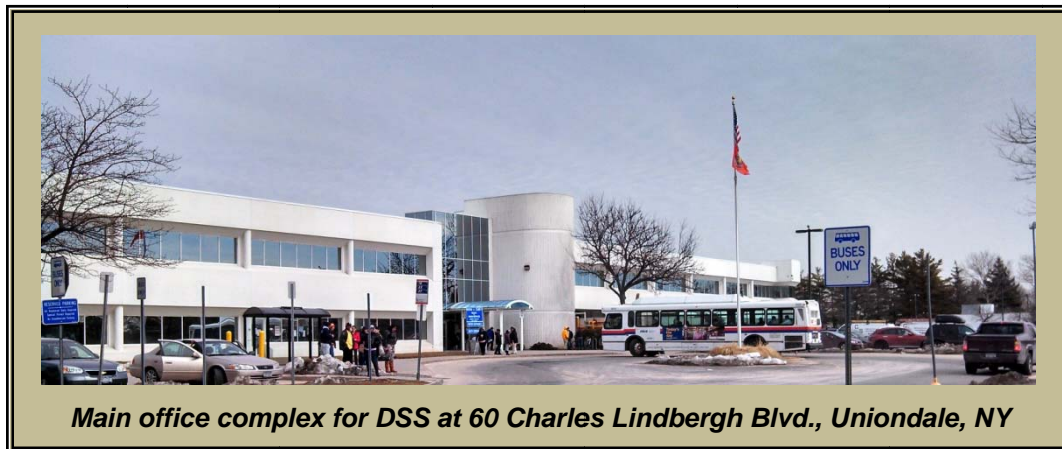
Paul Broderick
Deputy Commissioner, DSS

III. Mission Statement



The Nassau County Department of Social Services is committed to strengthening and preserving families by providing financial assistance and services to residents of Nassau County in accordance with state and federal regulations and laws. DSS is dedicated to providing quality service and maintaining the dignity and respect of those we serve. Specifically, the Department is responsible for:

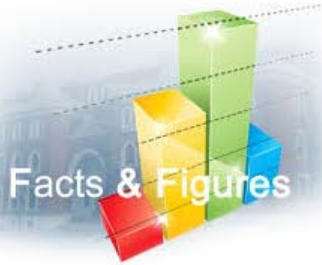
- Providing aid to eligible recipients through the Family Assistance, Safety Net, Day Care, Employment, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly called food stamps), Medicaid and Home Energy Assistance Programs.
- Establishing an initial child support obligation of a legally responsible individual through the Family Court, collecting support payments, enforcing and modifying existing support orders.
- Protecting children, adults and families by enforcing the mandates of New York State Social Services Law.
- Providing the Department's services without regard to age, race, gender, disability, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity.



Main office complex for DSS at 60 Charles Lindbergh Blvd., Uniondale, NY

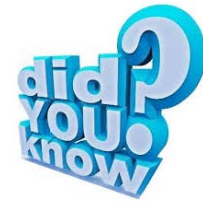


IV. DSS Facts and Figures



Applications

Totals for	2015	2016
Family Assistance	4,764	4,444
Safety Net Assistance	11,835	11,494
SNAP	22,043	20,935
Medicaid	18,852	19,154
Day Care	4,764	3,846



Active Cases

Figures as of:	12/31/2015		12/31/2016	
	Cases	Individuals	Cases	Individuals
Family Assistance	2,441	5,662	2,040	4,619
Safety Net Assistance	3,967	6,092	3,313	5,212
Medicaid (MA)	81,618	131,116	69,718	105,528
Medicaid (MPE)	265	265	295	295
Medicaid SSI	20,300	20,315	19,548	19,560
SNAP-NPA (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program - Non Public Assistance)	34,255	53,138	32,221	49,286
HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program)	2,516	4,319	2,298	3,949
Services (Includes Day Care)	5,779	16,689	5,572	15,996
Unduplicated Individuals		190,197		164,538



2015 - 2016 Budget Comparison

	2015	2016	% Change
Administration	\$ 67,451,273	\$ 65,742,720	-3%
Medicaid	\$ 235,725,135	\$ 237,423,889	1%
Family Assistance	\$ 26,481,821	\$ 24,955,607	-6%
Safety Net Assistance	\$ 41,390,308	\$ 39,771,380	-4%
HEAP	\$ 299,684	\$ 353,985	18%
Burials	\$ 189,598	\$ 218,415	15%
Foster Care	\$ 12,804,881	\$ 11,818,295	-8%
Children in State Custody	\$ 3,264,025	\$ (1,279,291)	-139%
Juvenile Delinquents/PINS	\$ 2,513,815	\$ 2,264,992	-10%
Non Secure Detention	\$ 575,000	\$ 575,000	0%
Adoption Subsidies	\$ 4,585,553	\$ 4,655,815	2%
Adoption Fees	\$ 82,800	\$ 109,201	32%
Homemaker Services	\$ 304,101	\$ 135,484	-55%
Prevention/Protective Services	\$ 6,740,091	\$ 6,128,895	-9%
Independent Living	\$ 278,814	\$ 284,400	2%
Special Education	\$ 15,319,566	\$ 15,224,658	-1%
Day Care	\$ 60,944,364	\$ 60,848,145	0%
Total	\$ 478,950,829	\$ 469,231,590	-2%



V. DSS Advisory Council

New York Social Services law requires local districts to have an Advisory Council and Nassau County has one of the most active councils in the entire state. The purpose of the Council is to advise the Commissioner concerning programs and policies pertaining to public assistance, medical care and services to children, families and adults. The Council also identifies service gaps in the community, assists the Department in publicizing available programs and helps to educate constituents, service providers and public officials regarding the Department's

policies. Currently there are over 70 members representing hospitals, schools, service providers, non-profit agencies, faith based organizations, and recipients of services. In addition to 3 active sub-committees, the Advisory Council holds two public forums annually. The Public Forum held in October 2015 addressed DSRIP, the main mechanism New York State is using to implement Medicaid Redesign Team's Waiver Amendment. The Council also organized two resource fairs held in October 2015, attended by over 200 staff, to heighten staff's awareness of resources available in the community.

Executive Committee of the DSS Advisory Council



Having a hard time making ends meet? Check your eligibility for economic supports at:
myBenefits.ny.gov

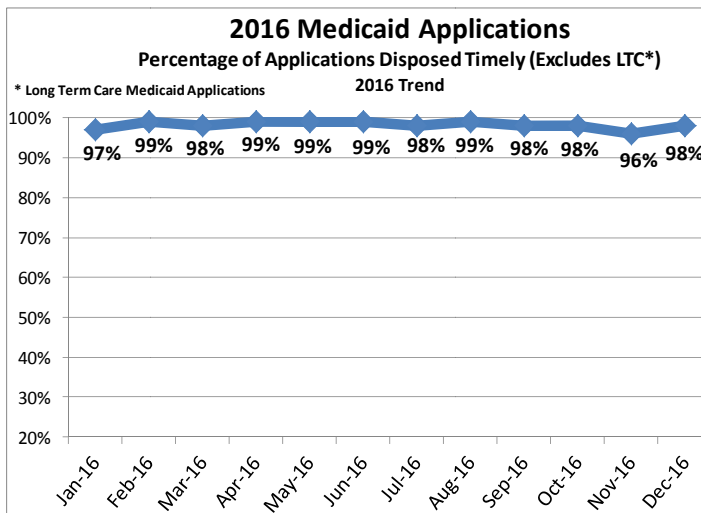
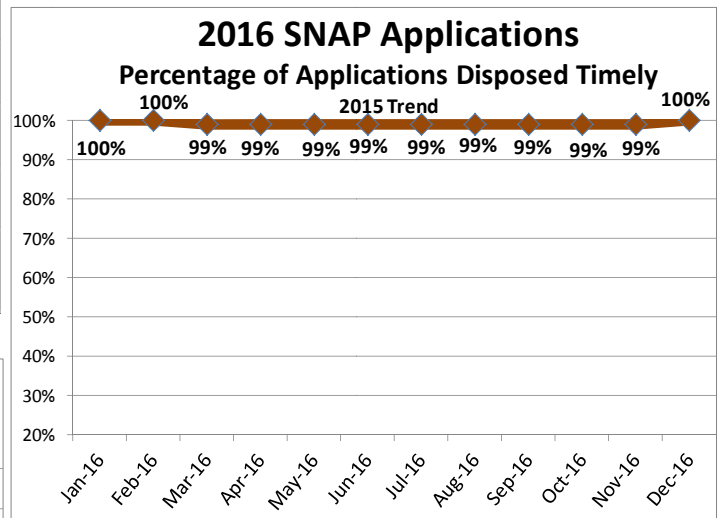
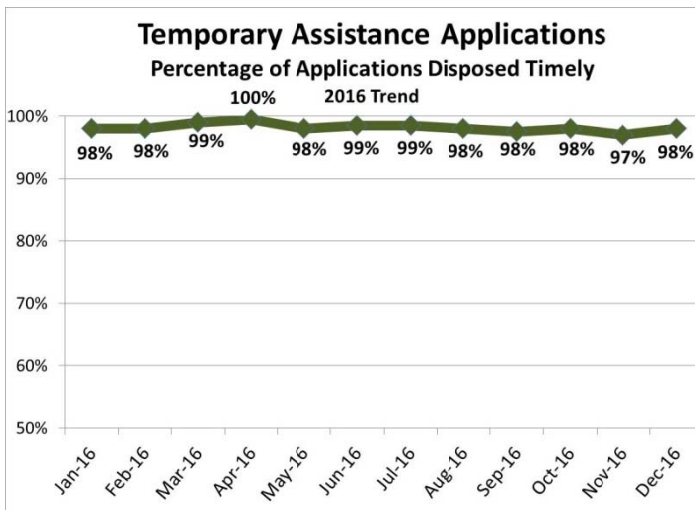


VI. Empire Justice Lawsuit

In March 2010, after several years of economic recession characterized by high unemployment rates and 20% yearly growth in Nassau residents applying for assistance, the Empire Justice Center and National Center for Law and Economic Justice, Inc. (collectively referred to as EJ) filed a class action suit on behalf of individuals seeking assistance against the county, claiming that the county did not process applications for Temporary Assistance (TA), Food Stamps (SNAP) and Medicaid (MA) on a timely basis. In 2011 the County and plaintiffs agreed to enter into a stipulation and order of settlement. In 2013, the court appointed a Special Master to review the efforts of DSS in meeting its obligations under the stipulation. In August 2015, EJ acknowledged that DSS met the performance standard for SNAP. By October 2015, DSS had demonstrated that it was in full compliance with all other provisions of the parties' stipulation and order of settlement. In June 2016, Judge Feuerstein of the Eastern District of New York So Ordered the parties' stipulation and order of dismissal deeming DSS in compliance and dismissing the lawsuit, thereby releasing DSS from any and all monitoring provisions and/or requirements under the 2011 Stipulation and Order of Settlement.

Application Processing Performance

In 2016 (and before) over 97% of applications for assistance have been processed timely. Often exceeding the goal with 99% and 100% processing performance!



VII. Lobby

The Department of Social Services is the largest of the Nassau County agencies located in the HHS Building at 60 Charles Lindbergh Boulevard in Uniondale, NY (60 CLB). Other agencies that receive visitors include the Office of Mental Health, Chemical Dependency and Developmental Disabilities Services; Office for the Aging; Office of Youth Services; Office for the Physically Challenged; and the Health Department.

Lobby Status Tracking System

The HHS building registers anywhere from 1,000 to 1,700 visitors per day. To manage the daily visitors to the building, the County employs an HHS Visitor Status Tracking System. The Status Tracking System monitors the progression of visitors from the time they enter the building to the time they leave,

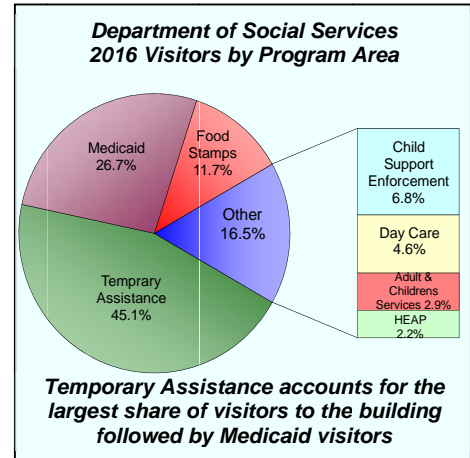
and through each of the services from which they received assistance. Visitors register with the Community Service Representatives at our Welcome Desk where they are logged into the Status Tracking System database. In this way our clients are served in an efficient and timely manner.

During 2016, over 200,000 visitors



to HHS were served at 60 CLB, completing over a quarter of a million activities.

The Lobby Status Tracking System provides management with up-to-the-minute information



on the traffic flow in the lobby.

This information allows management to make daily adjustments in staff assignments to best meet the service needs of our clients. The Status Tracking System also provides data that is used to analyze monthly and yearly traffic cycles as well as longer term traffic patterns and trends. This information is used to help optimize staffing requirements to service our clients on an ongoing basis.



Panoramic views of the lobby at 60 Charles Lindbergh Blvd.

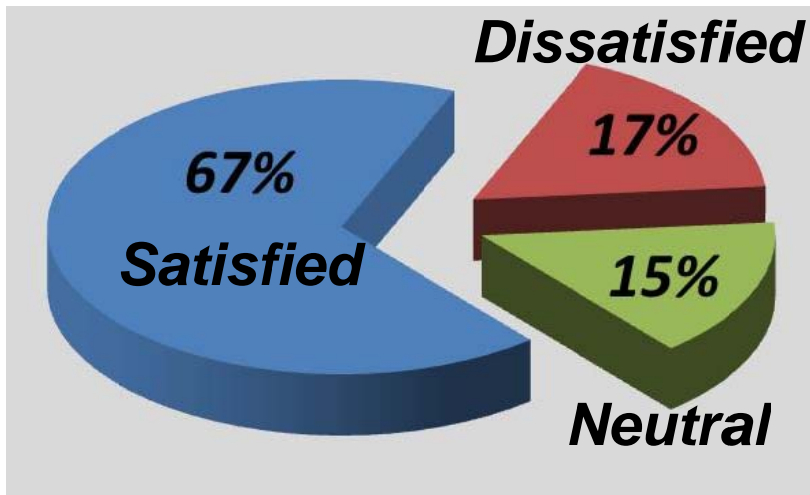


2016 Highlights

Members of the Department of Social Services, Central Nassau Guidance Center and Long Island University (LIU) Post Campus collaboratively developed The Nassau County Health and Human Services DSS **Customer**

Satisfaction Survey for persons applying or receiving benefits from the Department of Social Services. The data collected measures client satisfaction with DSS policies, procedures, and service delivery protocols. The resulting information will be shared with the Nassau County Commissioner of Social Services

with the intent of identifying client service needs, and to gather feedback on existing procedures used to obtain benefits or services. This information may also be used to make changes in or to come up with alternatives to enhance service delivery to better serve DSS constituents.



7 in 10 people leaving DSS after their visit to the 60 CLB office reported that they were satisfied with the services they received on that day.



VIII. Customer Service

DSS can sometimes be a challenge to navigate.



The Department maintains a Customer Service unit that responds to calls from clients, advocates, family members,

government officials and the community.

Customer Service answers questions and resolves issues directly or forwards the information to the appropriate staff for response and resolution.

The Customer Service staff is available to answer calls during regular business hours **Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.** at **516-227-7474**.

The general DSS information number, **516-227-8519** can be accessed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Legislative staff and government officials can call **516-227-7471** to speak to an Administrative Assistant. A signed release is required to share information regarding constituents or specific case information. Telephones are answered **Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.**

In addition to the Customer Service unit, New York State maintains a website (www.mybenefits.ny.gov), where residents can explore the services for which they may be eligible.

IX. Emergency Services

In addition to providing services Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., the Department maintains an emergency services program that operates from **4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays**, and continuously on weekends and holidays. Emergency services can be reached at **516-573-**

8626 and includes referrals to emergency temporary housing, referrals to New York State for suspected child abuse, emergency fuel arrangements, referrals to appropriate community agencies (if warranted), domestic violence intervention and hotline

information and housing through **WARM BED**, a seasonal program available in the winter months (**1-866-WARMBED**). Several of these programs have income eligibility guidelines which are explained by the emergency service staff responding to calls.



Warmbed Emergency Winter Shelter Program for the Homeless to Begin Thanksgiving Eve
With cold weather approaching in the coming weeks, Nassau County Executive Edward P. Mangano today announced that WARBED, Nassau County's Emergency Shelter Relief Program for homeless individuals and families during the winter months, will be activated Wednesday, November 23rd, 2016 beginning at 4:45 p.m.



X. Domestic Violence

The Department has developed a safe, secure interviewing area for applicants or recipients who are victims of Domestic Violence. The Department helps ensure a victim’s ability to remain safe and access services to move towards self-sufficiency. This may include access to emergency shelter at a secure location.

The Department also plays a major role in the County Executive’s Family Violence Task Force (FVTF) which brings many of the county’s not-for-profit and governmental resources together to focus on family violence policy issues and help raise public awareness of this social problem. DSS Commissioner John Imhof serves as the chairperson of the task force.

The 2016 annual Task Force on Family Violence conference was held on April 15th at Long Island University Post. Through grant funds, the FVTF held a free all-day conference which included a continental breakfast and lunch. There were more than 200 people in attendance. Lanyards and pad folios were also distributed with the Task Force motto, “Violence is not the answer.”



Nassau County Family Violence Task Force



If you are a victim of family or domestic violence please call the 24hr hotline at (516) 542-0404...

Domestic Violence Community Resource Directory For all emergencies please dial 911

24/7 DV and Sexual Assault Hotline	(516) 542-0404	Nassau County Family Court	(516) 493-4000
The Safe Center, LI	(516) 465-4700	Nassau County Adult Protective Services	(516) 227-8472
Circulo de la Hispanidad, Inc. - Crisis Intervention	(516) 889-2849	NC Office for the Aging (HELP-LINE)	(516) 227-8900
Child Abuse/Maltreatment Hotline (Albany)	(800) 342-3720	NC Department of Mental Health (HELP-LINE)	(516) 227-TALK
Mandated Reporters	(800) 635-1522	NC Crime Victims Assistance Program	(516) 573-8207
Hispanic Counseling	(516) 538-2613	Spouse Abuse Group Education (SAGE)	(516) 935-6858
NC District Attorney’s Office	(516) 571-4967	Department of Social Services General Information	(516) 227-8519
NYS Spanish Domestic Violence Hotline	(800) 942-6908		





XI. Fraud Investigations



The Department maintains an Office of Investigations (DSS-OI). Within the Office of Investigations there are three units: Special Investigations, Contract Investigations and Liens and Recovery. The

Liens and Recovery Unit is tasked with recovering money by filing liens on client owed assets. The Special Investigations and Contract Investigations units work with the Department's benefits program areas and other government agencies to investigate potential waste, fraud and abuse to ensure that taxpayer dollars are utilized to help families and individuals who are truly in need of support.

Examples of fraud:

- Falsely reporting that a parent is absent from the household
- Falsely reporting that a child is in the household
- Intentionally failing to report a change in the household composition
- Intentionally failing to report earnings from employment
- Intentionally failing to report monies from unemployment, disability and social security

- Intentionally failing to disclose bank accounts
- Intentionally failing to disclose marital status

In 2016 the Office of Investigations has recovered \$22,706,264.71 in recipient and provider fraud, waste and abuse. This includes \$454,527.90 in restitution from District Attorney's office cases; \$10,352,074.82 from liens and recoveries and \$11,899,661.99 in cost avoidance.

Since 2014 this office has recovered \$75,066,216.27 in recipient fraud waste and abuse. This includes \$1,714,308.23 in restitution from District Attorney's office cases; \$26,447,273.05 from liens and recoveries and \$46,904,634.99 in cost avoidance.

\$3.3 Million in Criminal Fraud has been detected referred and recovered through the District Attorney's Office in the last three years.

Office of Investigations joined with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) whereby fugitives with Felony warrants who receive SNAP (Food Stamps) can have their benefits terminated as well as face arrest, further protecting taxpayer's money and removing felons from the streets.



October 6, 2016

Social Services Investigations Unit Continues To Successfully Root Out Welfare Fraud & Abuse

Nassau County Executive Edward P. Mangano today announced that since January of 2013, the County Department of Social Services (DSS) Office of Investigations has uncovered a total of \$85.4 million in welfare fraud and abuse. Last year marked another successful year for DSS in its continual crack down on those individuals attempting to defraud Nassau County taxpayers.

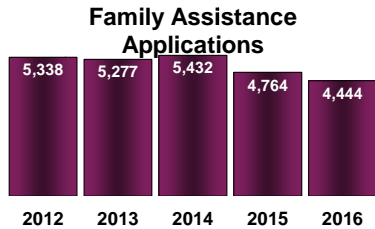
"Be warned! Our social service investigators are hard at work protecting taxpayers," said County Executive Mangano. "Our investigations team remains vigilant to all forms of attempted abuse and will identify those who try and defraud the system."

Department of Social Services Commissioner Dr. John Imhof added, "The overwhelmingly vast majority of individuals who require and qualify for DSS assistance faithfully comply with application requirements. Regrettably, there are those who seek to acquire benefits through criminal means and our capacity to apprehend welfare cheats is stronger than ever. The annual and cumulative cost savings to our residents are a testament to the dedication and tenacity of all our staff in making certain only the neediest receive the services they require."



XII. Public Assistance

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Family Assistance is a federal program administered by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). Nassau County is the local district that

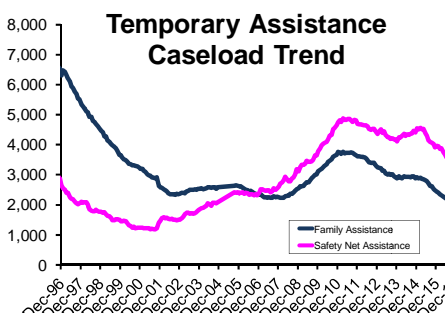


provides cash assistance to needy families in Nassau that include a minor child living with a parent (including families where both parents are



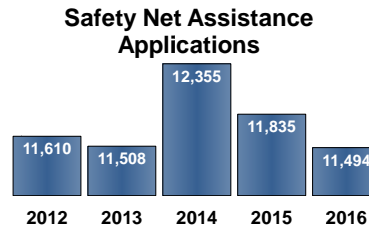
in the household) or a caretaker relative. Family Assistance operates under federal Temporary

Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) guidelines. Under TANF, eligible adults are limited to receiving benefits for a total of 60 months in their lifetime, including months of TANF-funded assistance granted in other states. Once the five year limit is reached, the household is ineligible to receive any more TANF benefits, which in part explains the increases in Safety Net Assistance in New York State (see SNA). The months need not be consecutive, but rather each individual month in which TANF-funded benefits are received is



included in the lifetime count. The counting of this 60-month limit began in December, 1996. Parents and other adult relatives who can work must be working or involved in work-like activities after receiving family assistance benefits for two years, or sooner if the local department of social services decides they can work earlier.

Safety Net Assistance (SNA) was established under the New York State Welfare Reform Act of 1997 to replace the Home Relief program. This program provides assistance to individuals and families who either do not qualify for the federal TANF program or whose TANF benefits have run out. Benefits are provided as cash for 24 months. After 24 months benefits may continue as non-cash payment (vouchers or payments are made directly to vendors).



Those who are not eligible for other assistance programs may be eligible for SNA, including:

- Single adults
- Childless couples
- Children living apart from any adult relative
- Families of persons abusing drugs or alcohol
- Families of persons refusing drug/alcohol screening, assessment or treatment
- Persons who have exceeded the 60-month TANF limit on assistance
- Individuals and families who are eligible for temporary assistance, but who are not eligible for federal reimbursement



Other Public Assistance Programs Include:

Emergency Assistance to Adults (EAA) provides assistance to individuals in receipt of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) who are facing emergency situations such as homelessness, utility or fuel emergencies or other items of need.

Emergency Assistance to Families (EAF) provides assistance to families to meet emergency situations that are sudden, not foreseen and beyond their control. Such needs may include but are not limited to, homelessness, fuel needs and utility shut off. The household must include a minor child who is without immediately accessible resources to meet their needs.

Emergency Safety Net Assistance (E-SNA) provides assistance to persons not eligible for recurring public assistance benefits, EAA or EAF. The individual or family must present an emergency need and be without immediately available income or resources to meet the emergency. The income standard for E-SNA is 125% of the Federal Income Poverty Line.



Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded program designed to help low-income households meet the high cost of home energy. Both those who pay separately for heating costs and households whose heat is included in their rent may be eligible for a one time regular benefit. Additionally, households with a heating emergency may also be eligible for an emergency benefit and and/or a Heating Equipment Repair/Replacement (HERR) benefit. The HEAP year generally begins in mid-November and closes in mid-March or when the program funding is exhausted. A cooling component that assists medically needy households with the purchase of air conditioners may also be available during the warmer months. Most benefits are paid directly to the heating/utility vendor. Applications for regular HEAP may be submitted online through myBenefits.ny.gov.



2016 Highlights

Since January 2016, both PSEG and National Grid have had Consumer Advocates available in the DSS lobby on a weekly basis. So far, 1032 customers were assisted in various ways including deferred payment agreements, account holds, reduced rate applications, referrals and general inquiries. In addition to providing information and assistance to customers, they are also available to respond to questions from HHS Staff. This collaboration has enhanced the working relationship between DSS and the utilities as well as streamlining the services received by our mutual customers.

Having a hard time making ends meet? Check your eligibility for economic supports at: myBenefits.ny.gov



XIII. SNAP (formerly Food Stamps)

SNAP benefits help low-income households by supplementing their monthly food budget. Eligible households use an electronic benefit card and PIN (personal ID number) to access their benefits at the supermarket checkout counter the same way a debit card is used. There are many supermarkets throughout



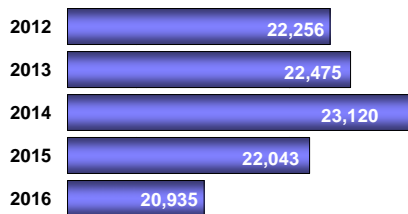
Nassau County where clients can use their benefit card. Many TANF and SNA recipients receive Food Stamps as part of their overall public assistance grant.

- In July 2016, the SNAP Gross Income Test (GIT) was increased from 130% to 150% of the federal poverty level (FPL) for working families with no day care costs and no aged or disabled household members. Raising the GIT was estimated to deliver to 750,000 low-income working New Yorkers approximately \$688.5 million in additional federal SNAP benefits annually.
- The SNAP caseload is down in 2016 to about 32,500. The decrease is primarily due to the implementation of ABAWD (Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents) regulations. The waiver for NYS was rescinded effective January 1, 2016. Therefore, it no longer benefits recipients to close their Temporary Assistance cases and apply for Non-TA SNAP in order to avoid employment requirements, since work rules now apply to and are enforced in both programs.
- Fair Hearing Log – A comprehensive analysis of SNAP fair hearing activity was completed in 2016. Clients are entitled to a fair hearing in front of an Administrative Law Judge when they believe their SNAP benefits were denied or incorrectly calculated. The study demonstrated that the eligibility or amount of SNAP benefit determined by DSS was correct 90% of the time.
- FAX Log – SNAP receives several hundred faxes each day. Applicants/recipients regularly call to determine if their faxes have been received. In order that there be efficiency and accountability, clerks log in all received faxes noting the date, case number and worker prior to distributing. This simple procedure has cut down on calls, misfiles, improper closings/denials, and workday interruptions.

2016 Highlights



Non-Public Assistance SNAP Applications



- According to the USDA in November 2016, New York State received two (2) awards: Best Payment Accuracy and Most improved Payment Accuracy. The bonus to the state was \$12,097,336.



XIV. Housing and Homeless Prevention

Housing and Homeless Prevention is coordinated by DSS and the Nassau County Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD). It works to:

- Assist individuals and families that are homeless or threatened with the loss of stable housing
- Provide emergency shelter
- Move people as quickly as possible to transitional and permanent housing

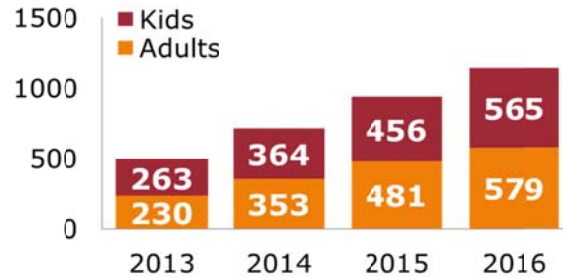
The SPOT (Shelter Placement Online Tracking) software program continues to manage almost all emergency housing needs. The SPOT system works as a “reservation” system for all emergency shelter placements (motels and shelters) so when clients are placed in emergency housing DSS knows what shelters/motels are available and the type(s) of accommodations offered. It allows the department to keep better track of all our emergency shelter assets to better plan for future needs.

Continuing Crisis

Since 2013, the number of residents in emergency housing increased by 132%. Children comprise 49% of the individuals in emergency housing in 2016. The lack of

affordable housing and population density are contributing factors.

Number of Individuals In Emergency Housing

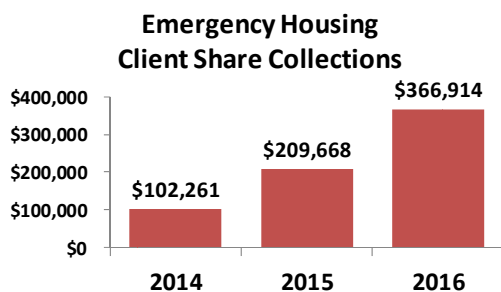


Leveraging Community Resources

In 2016 DSS reached out to many other governmental and community agencies to help address the needs of residents in emergency housing. One of the most productive relationships has been with the Continuum of Care (CoC) run by the Long Island Coalition for the Homeless. In 2017, all emergency shelter operators will work more closely with the CoC to find permanent housing for homeless residents.

Other Notable Emergency Housing Accomplishments in 2016:

The SPOT system is continually enhanced to provide additional utility to our workers. In 2015 SPOT was modified to help workers collect the



client share of emergency housing costs. By regulation, clients with income must contribute to their emergency housing costs. The SPOT system displays the share amount when the client comes in to have their emergency housing reauthorized. This enhancement improved collection of the client share by 259% since 2014. From \$102 thousand in 2014 to \$209 thousand in 2015 and \$366 in 2016. This represents significant savings to Nassau taxpayers.

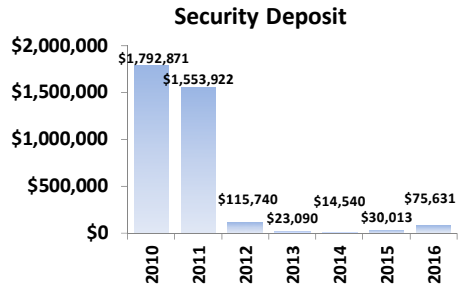




The SPOT system was also incorporated into a new application built for Emergency Night Services. This allowed Emergency Night Service workers to find out where shelter space is available for residents that may find themselves homeless.

Security Deposit

The department decreased expenditures on cash security deposits by 99% since 2010 by



implementing a security agreement for clients seeking housing. Under the security agreement, landlords are issued a surety for security deposits instead of issuing cash. With the surety agreement landlords can claim up to two months' rent for damages and unpaid rent once the tenant vacates the property. In 2010, DSS spent \$1.8 million in cash security deposits and in 2016 this amount was reduced to just over \$75,000.

Perspectives *Stories about the people we serve*

Ms. M came to DSS with her 2 year old daughter in February 2016. At the time, she was unemployed and was removed from her apartment by the Town of Hempstead after it was deemed unfit for occupancy. Ms. M initially struggled while in homelessness. After three months in Emergency Housing, Ms. M was arrested with a DWI and lost custody of her daughter. Four months later Ms. M gained custody of her daughter back and was placed in a women and children's shelter where she thrived. Throughout her time in the women and children's shelter, Ms. M completed her drug and alcohol program, parenting classes, and attended weekly meetings to assist her in finding permanent housing (which were held by the shelter). A few months later, Ms. M was employed full time and assisting other women in the shelter with their goals. Ms. M is now out of homelessness, employed full-time, and living in an apartment with her daughter. She is also currently a volunteer at the previous women and children's shelter she lived in while in Emergency Housing.



XV. Employment

Federal and State welfare reform legislation mandate that all employable individuals on public assistance engage in one or more work activities:

- Job Search
- Work Experience
- Employment
- Vocational Education
- Community Service



Nassau County DSS's Employment Unit administers the work activities.

The Employment Unit is composed of six areas:

1. **Family Assistance (FA)** provides assistance to single parents who are required to engage in work activities. The FA Employment Staff worked closely with the contracted vendors NADAP and EOC and in-house WEP Unit. The common goal is to assist clients to move from temporary assistance to work by providing supportive services for client participation. The FA Employment staff also conciliates and sanctions those clients who are non-compliant. FA Employment staff along with vendors EOC and NADAP all work together to assist the client to become self-sufficient and be able to sustain that sufficiency.



2. **Safety Net (SNA)** – The SNA Unit provides supportive services for single individuals and two parent families to engage in work activities. They also sanction non-compliant clients which can lead to full case closures.
3. **Job Development** – The Job Developers conduct weekly job search classes and

assist individuals to obtain employment. They conduct a series of JRT workshops to prepare individuals for job fairs. The Job Developers and JRT staff play an integral role in the job fair.

4. **Conciliation/Fair Hearing** - EAC provides administrative support for the Conciliation process for those clients who are non-compliant. Employment staff participates in both the conciliation process and Fair Hearings. The Fair Hearing unit has an impressive record of being affirmed in 95% of the decisions which result in employment and benefit sanctions.
5. **ABAWD** (Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents) – The ABAWD unit monitors compliance with SNAP rules for clients that receive Non PA SNAP.
6. **WEP (Work Experience Program) Services** – The WEP Services unit assigns clients enrolled in the Work Experience Program (WEP) to work at various work sites at local nonprofit organizations and community agencies throughout the county. The purpose of the WEP program is to create a simulated work environment for the client and enhance their job skills. Prior to 2016, this service was outsourced. In 2016, Nassau County DSS Employment Unit began to administer it internally.

The Nassau County Department of Social Services Employment Unit helps public assistance recipients obtain employment, job counseling and employment related training. The DSS Employment Unit provides a direct service to local employers by conducting pre-employment activities such as client assessments and employee screening. Employers who hire DSS clients are eligible for tax credits.

To accommodate the needs of our constituents and to address current state and federal program mandates, the Employment Unit continues to have performance based contracts with two community based organizations that provide various employment related services to the TANF



and Safety Net population and enroll them in various work activities. The use of performance based contracts has improved the overall performance of the Employment Unit.



2016 Highlights

Employment

- The Job Development/JRT Units hold daily groups for supervised job search. They recruited the following companies to meet with the clients and talk about their employment openings:
 1. Stericycle
 2. Lowes
 3. People Care
 4. Tempositions
 5. DHS
 6. Home Depot
 7. Better Home
 8. Fedex
 9. Walmart

These companies participated in the County Executive's Job Fair and later came to DSS to speak to the clients about open positions within their companies.
- DSS Employment staff also met with Northwell Health to plan and implement a Barracks to Business workshop to inform and hire veterans. The event was covered by Fios and other media. Nassau County CE Ed Mangano introduced the collaboration between Nassau and Suffolk counties to improve veteran employment.
- DSS Employment staff also helped other job fairs by recruiting employers for their events, which included the Long Beach Job Fair, Tech Job Fair and Abilities Job Fair.
- Nassau Community College staff met with Employment staff to plan the URGENT program, which is a training and employment program designed to hire women in nontraditional employment in the Energy field.

- Employment supervisors met with vendors EOC and NADAP to discuss 2017 direction and new programs. Regular monthly meetings were held throughout the year with these vendors.
- Planning for the 2016 Summer Youth Employment Program began in March with a meeting for professional staff involved in recommending participants. Ultimately, there were 52 participants for the summer program, an increase of 14 from the previous year. Participants were provided work sites with the Nassau County Parks Department and the Nassau County IT Department in various locations. Participants were required to attend a workshop each week that provided a skills base for future employment. The program ran from the end of June through mid-September.

Perspectives

Stories about the people we serve

Client M.G. had been unemployed for two and a half years. M.G. and her three sons ages 5, 9, and 15 were living (doubled-up) in a 2-bedroom home with her mother.

DSS referred M.G. to Career Paths TANF Employment Services. M.G. completed an Initial Assessment and an Individualized Employment Plan where she shared her hope of furthering her education in the field of Social Work. Supervised Job Search activities led to a temporary, part-time, assignment as an Administrative Assistant. At the conclusion of the temporary job she resumed Supervised Job Search and also participated in the Displaced Homemakers Program and Job Readiness Training.

The client's 9 year old son had behavioral issues and she was often times called 3-4 times a week to pick him up from school. M.G. was referred to BOCES and their psychiatrists, counselors and social workers. Her son successfully enrolled in BOCES and his behavior improved.

A job lead resulted in a full-time Administrative Assistant position. The team at Career Paths TANF Employment Services also assisted client in moving a step forward with her career goals by introducing her to an online Social Work school. Career Paths TANF Employment Services once again transitioned a client from Welfare to Workforce.

- The Employment staff is also working with veterans to help them obtain employment. They are given preference in their job search. The Veteran Employment Task Force met several times throughout the year with the purpose of addressing veteran employment issues. Employment staff attended several



Veteran Stand Downs in Hempstead and Freeport.

Safety Net and WEP Programs

- 823 recipients entered into Part-Time or Full-Time Employment
- 1,519 referrals to Work Experience Program
- 6 new Work Experience Program sites developed
- Approximately 187 placements in vocational and educational training programs
- The Employment unit finalized its transition plan to administer the Work Experience Program (WEP) internally, as opposed to the previous method of outsourcing this task to an outside contracted vendor. As of January 1, 2016 the WEP program has been administered in-house.

Family Assistance

- In 2016, the Family Assistance (FA) staff worked closely with the contracted vendors NADAP and EOC, as well as the in-house WEP Unit. Our common goal is to assist welfare recipients to go from welfare to work. As we work together we are helping welfare recipients quickly obtain employment and the education and work experience necessary to gain the types of employment opportunities that lead to permanent economic self-sufficiency.
- In 2016, the FA welfare examiners maintained caseloads averaging 175 cases each. Case maintenance involves referring clients to vendors and the issuance of supportive services, i.e., childcare, transportation allowance and clothing referrals, etc. which removes barriers to engaging in employment activities. The welfare examiners also process conciliations and prepare fair hearing folders to be presented in a fair hearing. They conduct conciliations, fair hearings and Three Step Orientation classes which are held once a week.
- Throughout 2016, the FA staff continued to work on audits, both in-house and state. The state audits involved approximately 178 case audits divided between the nine welfare examiners. In June, 2016, the state conducted a re-review of the Nassau case review. The New York State representative of OTDA noted considerable improvement in

the district's assessment procedures since the review conducted in 2015.

- FA staff continues conducting the Management, Compliance and Support interviews for clients who have been on a sanction for a year or more. The purpose of the interviews is to review how the clients are managing while being on a sanction, why the case remains in sanction status and if the client is receiving support elsewhere while on the sanction. As a result of these interviews in 2016, nine cases remained sanctioned, eight cases reported employment and income was budgeted or case closed for excess income, seventeen cases complied and sanction was removed and thirty-three cases were closed. We will continue to conduct the Management, Compliance and Support interview for 2017.
- The FA staff participated in the Nassau County CE Mega Job Fair in October, 2016, the Tech Job Fair and on-site Job Fairs and programs presented such as the URGENT Program. Many opportunities were provided to our clients this year with many clients obtaining employment and participating in programs that led to employment.

XVI. DCAP

The Disabled Client Assistance Program (DCAP) process identifies people receiving benefits in Nassau who are disabled and eligible to receive disability benefits from the Social Security Administration. This process represents significant savings to Nassau taxpayers.

- Interim Assistance reimbursement year to date total = \$1,323,575.53
- Aid to Disabled category approvals = 455
- Requests for Aid to Disabled category from Medical Directors = 305
- DCAP referrals for SSI/SSD in 2016 = 186
- SSI applications sent to SSA in 2016 = 103
- SSI approvals from DCAP cases in 2016 = 80



XVII. Behavioral Health Unit

- The Behavioral Health Unit designates Credentialed Alcohol And Substance Abuse Counselors (CASACs) to conduct drug and alcohol assessments of Temporary Assistance applicants as part of the employability process.
- The Behavioral Health Unit CASACs all hold advanced degrees and licensure beyond the CASAC designation.
- Clients in need of drug and alcohol treatment are referred to OASAS (Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse) licensed treatment programs under a DSS treatment mandate.
- Clients in need of treatment are deemed either employable with treatment as part of their employment plan or temporarily unemployable. The employment unit monitors the treatment of those found employable. DCAP and Behavioral Health monitor those found unemployable until they become employable.

require treatment. The percentage of those in treatment requiring inpatient treatment has



also risen. The BHU staff believes that this is the result of the more complex cases they are seeing of clients with co-occurring disorders, more legal issues and more intractable substance use disorders. It may also be related to LOCADTR (A new web-based tool to determine the most appropriate Level of Care for Alcohol and Drug Treatment Referral) more accurately guiding staff to the appropriate levels of care, or to an increase in legal mandates to treatment.

- The implementation of the LOCADTR effective April 1, 2016, along with changes in our monitoring of those in treatment has given DSS more control over the levels of care clients receive and the length of time they remain in inpatient treatment. Clients are being deemed employable earlier in treatment as DSS has more control over the determination via the change in monitoring. Staff are also identifying clients who are noncompliant earlier in the process, which allows staff to either sanction the clients or to get them back into the agency to refer them to treatment again. Facing a sanction, some are more compliant.

Perspectives

Stories about the people we serve

CN is a 29 year old single female who was mandated to a long term inpatient program by her probation officer after a drug conviction. She entered the program in September 2015. CN has a history of mental health issues and substance use disorder. When CN came to DSS in May 2016, she appeared impaired despite being in an inpatient program. Upon review of her treatment updates, BHU saw issues in her treatment. A call was made to the treatment agency which resulted in a dialogue between the agencies regarding the proper direction of the client's care. This included a telephone conference in July 2016 and follow up telephone calls on a monthly basis to closely monitor the client's progress. The client improved to the point where effective November 1st, she was discharged to her own housing in Queens and was referred for outpatient treatment.

2016 Highlights

- For calendar year 2016, the Behavioral Health Unit screened 406 clients who did not require further assessment or did not require treatment. The unit assessed 1,680 clients who were sent to treatment. Of those requiring treatment, 287 were sent to inpatient and 1,393 were sent to outpatient treatment.
- These figures represent an increase in the percentage of those being screened who do



XVIII. Employment Job Fair

In October, DSS hosted the County Executive's 9th Mega Job Fair at Nassau Community College in Garden City. Over 3,000 people and 250 companies attended the Job Fair. DSS Volunteer Services was also present with its Dress to Impress room, providing appropriate interview clothes for job seekers. There also were computers to help veteran applicants with their resumes or to assist with applying for jobs online. The veterans had a special time from 9AM-10AM to interview with employers before the general visitors were admitted. Surveys have been sent out to provide feedback and we are in the process of receiving and evaluating them to determine how many job seekers actually obtained employment as a direct result of the Job Fair.

Nassau County Executive **ED MANGANO** invites you to a

MEGA JOB FAIR

October 28th, 2016

Veterans Admission starts at 9:00am
General Admission 10:00am-2:00pm

at the
NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE GYM
 1 Education Drive • Garden City
FREE PARKING & ADMISSION

C.A.S.A. 516-572-0750
Department of Social Services 516-227-8656



NASSAU COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ED MANGANO
www.nassaucountyny.gov

Follow Ed Mangano on Facebook, Twitter and www.nassaucountyny.gov.
 Please download the NassauNow App for iPhone and Android.
 The place to find local jobs is www.nassauworks.com.



Sponsored by
LONG ISLAND'S K98.3
 NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE
 makes you feel good



Perspectives *Stories about the people we serve*

I had the opportunity to assist a young woman Mrs. K who attended the Job Fair last year and was preparing for a job interview. She called me and told me she had been homeless with young children and needed a job, but had no clothing.

We arranged to meet at our Eisenhower office where I have the "Dress to Impress" program. I was able to assist her with lovely business attire and she later called me to tell me she got a job. With that I invited her to come back to get some additional clothing.

A few months later we began our Holiday Program and I called her and asked if we could have her family adopted for the holidays. She was overjoyed. We were able to provide the family with lovely gifts and the family had a joyous holiday. She told me her job was going well and she moved into permanent housing. Today she is employed, she has housing and her children are doing exceptionally well. I think this is truly a success story. With help and kindness from the community Mrs. K. was able to move forward.

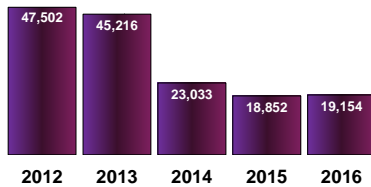
The Social Services Volunteers of Nassau County, Inc. assisted at the Mega Job Fair with the Dress to Impress room. The volunteers were able to provide business appropriate clothing for many people attending the job fair. They received wonderful feedback and a few of the people who were helped came back to say they obtained jobs for the holiday season. Also, the volunteers were happy to be able to assist many jobless veterans with clothing needs.



XIX. Medical Assistance

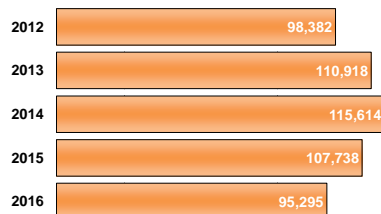
Medicaid (MA) provides assistance to Nassau County residents who do not have the means to pay for medical care. Individuals who are eligible include those in receipt of SSI (Supplemental Security Income), Public Assistance and those who meet New York State’s eligibility criteria.

Medicaid Applications



The number of MA (Medicaid) applications has decreased due to the state takeover of several types of MA applications. Although the state has taken responsibility for some MA application types, they have yet to take over the undercare (case maintenance) responsibility for these types that already exist. As a result, applications handled have decreased and so have the number of cases maintained by Nassau.

Medicaid Average Monthly Caseload



At the end of 2016, the department carried a caseload of 89,561 Medicaid cases insuring 125,383 individuals, or 10% of Nassau County’s total population.

In October of 2013, the State began the takeover of processing Medicaid applications as part of the Affordable Care Act (Obama Care). The state planned to fully take over a large proportion of the Medicaid cases in 2015 and 2016.

Medicaid Pays for the Following:

- In-Patient Care in Hospitals
- Out-Patient Care at Hospitals

- Physician Services
- Clinic Services
- Pharmacy
- Skilled Nursing Home Care
- Long Term Home Health Care
- Personal Care Aides
- Child Teen Health Program
- Mental Health Counseling Services
- Family Planning Services
- Medical and Health Insurance Premium
- Non-Emergency Medical Transportation
- Assisted Living Program

2016 Highlights

The New York State Department of Health (DOH) delayed its goal of moving Medicaid Cases from the County to the Health Benefit Exchange, resulting in higher than expected caseloads. The Medicaid Unit continues to receive daily reports from the Health Benefit Exchange of individual cases requiring either application or renewal processing and works closely with them to ensure that all clients receive the appropriate coverage, without any interruption or delay.

Consumers entering a nursing home for long term placement are now required to remain in or enroll in a managed long term care plan. The intent is to provide consumers with a person centered Plan of Care and Case Managers to meet specific needs.



XX. Children and Family Services

Children and Families

Children and Family Services is comprised of two main operating units; Child Protective Services and Services to Children. Children and Family Services has three primary functions: 1) Investigative and Protective Services for Children, 2) Preventive and Rehabilitative Services, and 3) Support Services. Children and Family Services operates under the authority of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS).

2016 Highlights

Disproportionate Minority Representation



As one of five original New York State counties to apply for and be awarded a grant for a Disproportionate Minority Representation (DMR), DSS has continued to refine and enhance its DMR program. Currently, DSS is partnering with OCFS to provide Race Equity training to all Child Welfare staff. This training was completed in 2016.



XXI. Child Protective Services

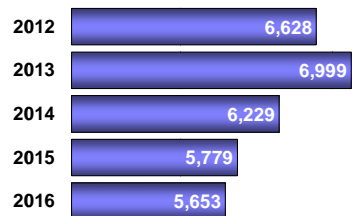
Child Protective Services (CPS) is responsible for investigating all allegations of child abuse and neglect received from the New York State Central Registry. In 2016, the average number of CPS reports received daily was 24, each requiring a safety assessment, and referral to the FAR program or a full investigation. On average, 78% of reports are unfounded – a figure which has changed little over the past few years.

Who Can Make a Report?

Anyone can make a report if they he or she is suspicious that a child under 18 years of age is being neglected or abused. The source of the report is kept confidential and can be anonymous unless an individual is a mandated reporter. 911 should always be called if a real emergency exists.



**Child Protective Services
Annual Total Intakes (Reports)**



What Happens After a Report Is Made?

The investigation of a report begins within 24 hours and is a fact-finding process that includes interviewing, observing, and information gathering. Its purpose is to protect the child, determine the validity of the allegations, evaluate



any condition of abuse or maltreatment that was not reported, and determine the services necessary to ensure the protection of the child and reduce the degree of future risk to the child.

The investigation includes a safety assessment of all children in the home, whether or not they are actually named in the report. The final step in an investigation is the determination of whether the report is "indicated" or "unfounded". If some credible evidence of abuse or maltreatment exists, the report is indicated and the family is offered appropriate services. If no credible evidence of abuse or maltreatment is found, the report is unfounded and sealed. The final determination must be made within 60 days.

Allegations fall into the following four categories below:

1. **Physical abuse** takes place when a child is hit, punched, slapped, whipped, beaten or burned and injuries such as abrasions, bruises, lacerations, bleeding, burns, or fractures occur. The physical injury is not accidental and it causes or creates a substantial risk of death, or serious or protracted disfigurement or protracted impairment of physical or emotional health or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ.
2. **Neglect** takes place when a parent who is financially able, or offered financial means or other means to meet a child's health and safety needs, does not provide basic care such as food, clothing, shelter, education, medical care, medication, or adequate supervision.
3. **Sexual abuse** takes place when a child is touched by a parent or caretaker for the purpose of gratifying sexual desire; when the child is encouraged or forced to

touch the parent or caretaker for the purpose of gratifying sexual desire; when a child is engaged or attempted to be engaged in sexual intercourse or deviant sexual intercourse; forced or encouraged to engage in sexual activity with other children or adults; exposed to sexual activity or exhibitionism for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of another; permitted to engage in sexual activity which is not developmentally appropriate and results in the emotional impairment of the child; or used in a sexual performance such as a photograph or video tape.

4. **Emotional abuse** takes place when a parent or caretaker's pattern of behavior has a harmful effect on the child's emotional health or well-being. The effect can be observed in the child's abnormal performance or behavior and there is substantial impairment in the child's ability to function normally due to the parent or caretaker's conduct. For example a child who is repeatedly isolated, frightened, embarrassed, belittled, or threatened manifests symptoms of impact such as aggressive

Reporting Child Abuse

**To report Child Abuse or Neglect Call:
1800-342-3720
Mandated Reporters Should Call
1800-635-1522
For information about reporting child
abuse and neglect please call
516-227-8133**

or self-destructive behavior, inability to think and reason, inability to speak and use language appropriately, extreme passive behavior, extreme social withdrawal, psychosomatic symptoms, or severe anxiety. A mental health professional is called upon to assess the child to determine that the child's impairment is causally linked to the acts or omissions of the parent or caretaker.



Nassau County receives and investigates reports of abuse or maltreatment 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. The New York State Central Registry transmits all reports to the Nassau Child Protective Services Program Office located at 60 Charles Lindbergh Blvd., Uniondale, NY daily between the hours of 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM. After 6 pm, reports are received through our Emergency Services unit.



Safe Harbour Project

Nassau County established the Safe Harbour Project through funds received through the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. The project was established to address the needs of sexually exploited children in the Child Welfare System and to provide short term safe placement, crisis intervention and other appropriate services as needed.

A sexually exploited child refers to any person under the age of 18 who has been subject to sexual exploitation because he or she is a victim of sexual trafficking or the crime of compelling prostitution.

As Human Trafficking is a relatively new and emerging issue, emphasis is being made to raise public awareness in the community and amongst social service providers, schools, legal, law enforcement, medical professionals and county residents. The Department is also aware that social service and mental health providers may not be adequately trained to respond to child victims of trafficking and may not have established policies and protocols to serve the population appropriately. Resources may not be well coordinated. In order to meet the needs of this population, we set out to:

1. Identify commercially sexually exploited youth
2. Train staff and contract agencies
3. Educate the public
4. Establish a central point for referrals and service delivery

2016 Highlights

Family Assessment Response (FAR)

October 2016 marks four years since Nassau County launched its initial FAR (Family Assessment Response) Units. In 2016, the FAR program received 1,145 new intakes, an increase over last year; further reducing the number of families involved with traditional CPS investigations.

When Nassau County receives a report from the State Central Registry regarding child safety concerns, a decision is made to either initiate a traditional CPS investigation or engage the family in a Family Assessment Response. The decision is based upon stated guidelines and the families' willingness to engage in services.

Perspectives

Stories about the people we serve

The client's case was called into the State Central Registry (SCR) for allegations of educational neglect. The client resides with her mother, step-father, younger sister and her 4 children, ages 7, 6, 5 and 3 months old respectively. The client had a FAR case about 6 months prior and said she would rather have her case in the FAR unit than an investigative one. The client stated that aside from her 6 year old son's excessive absences from school, he had a tendency to become physically aggressive and the client realized the importance of her son going for a psychiatric evaluation. She stated that her frustrations often led to her smoking marijuana. The client was not employed but found it difficult at times to look for employment because she had to care for her children. Within two weeks a subsequent case was called into the SCR with allegations of inadequate guardianship, lack of supervision and client's drug/alcohol misuse. The client agreed to accept a referral for preventive services, daycare and drug/alcohol counseling. Prior to the caseworker closing the case, it was discovered that the client and her family were going to be evicted from their home unless they were able to pay rent arrears in the amount of \$8000. The workers were able to meet with the client's public assistance worker. The Department agreed to pay for the arrears which would enable the client and her family to remain stabilized in the home.

FAR does not focus on the incident with allegations of Abuse or Neglect, but rather focuses on engaging the families as partners to help identify and work through the concerns



which have been identified. The goals of FAR are:

1. *Help keep children safe*
2. *Empower Families*
3. *Provide needed services*
4. *Help families to identify their strengths*
5. *Reduce the number of cases coming into CPS*
6. *Reduce the recidivism of cases*

Family Engagement

When CPS believes there is a family problem or issue that may or may not have the potential to lead to a removal of one or more children, the worker engages the family and available resources for a Family Meeting. The meeting is to discuss alternatives to placing children into Foster Care, to secure other resources and develop plans to help stabilize the immediate crises in the family. The goal is to empower families, keeping children safe and reducing the number of Foster Care placements. In 2016, 1,145 Child Protective Services (CPS) investigations were diverted to the FAR (Family Assessment Response) program saving investigative and legal resources as well as eliminating a formal CPS investigation.

BASSICS/KEYS

CPS and Services to Children participated in a pilot project from the State BASSICS (Building a Sustainable Support System in Child Welfare Supervision). The model is geared to provide staff with the necessary skills needed to perform their job from a framework of support, education and guidance. Although the pilot project has ended for the BASSICS program, CPS and Services to Children continues to be committed to practicing the BASSICS Model of formal one-on-one supervision with the staff along with regularly scheduled meetings.



Substance Abuse Evaluator

In April, 2014, CPS was able to secure a contract to rehire a Substance Abuse Evaluator. This person is able to go out into the field with caseworkers to complete substance abuse

testing. The evaluator has been able to assist with case planning.

Parenting Group

In 2013, several caseworkers who have their LMSW (Licensed Master of Social Work) came together under the supervision of the CPS Director to enhance their knowledge and clinical skills for professional growth in the field of social work; while working towards their (Licensed Clinical Social Worker) certification. This group has developed a 10-12 week parenting skills program for clients in receipt of Child Protective Services and or Services to Children (Partners in Parenting). This is a first for DSS whereby the clients are learning and engaging with their caseworkers in a partnership. The Parenting program completed in 2016 with 27 people completing the 12 week training program.

Training Units

During the course of the year, CPS trained new caseworkers. Ten workers have been placed into CPS units, while four workers have been transferred to the Preventive Division. A new group of 8 trainees began on December 5, 2016.

Safe Harbour Project

In 2016, the Nassau County DSS Children's Services Division was awarded an additional \$136,500 in grant money from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) for our Safe Harbour program designed to address trafficked and commercially exploited youth. Nassau County's Safe Harbour Project is a County-wide, coordinated, multi-system, long-term strategy to enhance the identification, protection and service delivery for children who are victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, and to provide services to best meet their individual needs.

The steering committee continues to grow with community partners.

Our Public Awareness campaign has increased with the production and distribution of brochures and the design and placement of a Public Service Announcement of NICE Bus Cards, provided with the assistance of New York State Assemblyman David McDonough. During the month of January, we have been able to have the Nassau County



dome lit in blue in awareness of Human Trafficking Month.

Since 2014, 245 adolescents have been identified as possible human trafficking victims.

CPS/Domestic Violence Collaboration Project

Collaborative work in cases where child abuse/neglect and domestic violence coexist is a key to providing effective intervention for families. CPS and Domestic Violence specialists work together to improve coordination between the domestic violence and child abuse service systems, promoting safety interests of all family members.

The Domestic Violence specialists, staff members from The Safe Center of Long Island, are a resource for CPS staff. Staff is available for case consultations, to assist in safety planning, participate in home visits with the caseworkers, and provide ongoing service to adult victims and their children, in addition to offering Safe Center services, including legal assistance, advocacy, children’s counseling and emergency housing.

The CPS caseworker is a resource for DV staff in explaining regulations and laws regarding Child Protective Services, specifically the role of the mandated reporter and definitions of abuse and neglect. The caseworker works closely with the DV specialist in establishing safety plans and

strategizing around DV issues. Each professional discipline draws on the resources and expertise of the other, in order to work towards safety and protection for the family.

In 2016, the DV Specialist was able to go out on 48 cases and help engage the family in the necessary services and supports.

Behavioral Health Specialist

At the end of August 2014, CPS was able to secure a grant through OCFS to employ a Behavioral Health Specialist. The role of the Specialist is to go out into the field with the CPS caseworkers to assess and identify any mental health concerns regarding the child’s legal guardian or care taker.

In December 2015, two part time Behavioral Health Specialists were employed and have been completing mental health assessments and helping with case planning.



In 2016, DSS Preventive and Children’s Services joined together to provide Thanksgiving meals for 35 families receiving Preventive Services or Child Protective Services. Laundry baskets were purchased and donations collected to fill the baskets with juice, stuffing, vegetables, gravy, instant potatoes, cranberry sauce and desserts. Turkeys and hams were purchased for 33 families and cold cuts were purchased for 2 families that did not have cooking facilities. Preventive Services filled the baskets and the food was delivered by services staff to their clients. Services was very excited to have provided 35 families with all the ingredients to make a Thanksgiving celebration!



XXII. Services to Children

Services to Children (also referred to as Children’s Services), is responsible for several service areas including Foster Care and Adoption Services.

Preventive Services

Support Services. On July 1, 2016, DSS began providing its own CORE Preventive Services after more than two decades of contracting the program out. The Department created a third Child Welfare Division titled Preventive Services which also includes ongoing Child Protective Services and PINS Diversion. Staff at all levels were transferred from Child Protective Services and Services to Children to begin the program.



Preventive Services continues to provide concrete services (i.e.: day care, homemaking, budgeting, advocacy, etc.), casework counseling and referral services to eligible families in order to avert placements of children outside their homes, enhance family functioning and/or expedite reunification of children in care with their biological families. Eligible families include those at some risk of foster care and pregnant and/or parenting adolescents.

Referrals can be made to Information and Referral at (516) 227-8550.

PINS (Persons In Need of Supervision)

Diversion Program. Services through a contract provided are available to families in crisis, when children might be experiencing truancy, gang involvement, running away from home and/or substance abuse issues, in order to prevent/avert the filing of a PINS petition and placement outside the home.

In 2016, PINS Diversion received 418 referrals and filed 26 PINS petitions in Family Court. During 2016, PINS Diversion opened 374 cases. There are currently 38 cases pending.

The phone number for Information and Intake: (516) 227-8404

Perspectives

Stories about the people we serve

Juan is a 19 year old who took custody of his younger sister and brother to prevent their placement into foster care. Their mother was involved with Child Protective Services for many years as she is mentally ill and incapable of caring for her children. Juan graduated High School in June 2016 and had planned to attend a local college in September 2016. He was employed and contributing to the household when he lost his job due to his many responsibilities as a single teen parent. The family is facing many challenges such as difficulty finding permanent housing as Juan is a young man with a teenage sister and a younger brother. They were not able to be placed in a family shelter as most are designed to shelter women and children. They are renting a room with a relative with whom there is a strained relationship. It has been difficult for Juan to transition from being a sibling to a custodian which has placed the younger children, 15 year old Christina and 10 year old Miguel at risk of foster care. Christina was arrested for mischievous behavior in the community and has a case pending in Family Court. Through casework counseling, both Juan and Christina have come to understand that Juan must be able to adequately supervise and provide for the basic needs of his siblings and that the children must respect his authority and custodial responsibility. Both Christina and Miguel are receiving counseling services in school. The family was adopted for the holidays and Preventive Services staff was able to provide them with more gifts and gift cards to help this struggling family have a nice holiday. The family continues to work with Preventive Services on goals designed to keep the family intact.

Foster Care Services

Foster and Adoptive Resource Development.



The staff in this unit recruits, trains, studies, approves/certifies, develops, retains, and re-approves/re-certifies foster and adoptive families. To inquire about

becoming a foster and/or adoptive parent, please call (516) 227-7613.

Foster Care. Children enter foster care mainly through Child Protective Services via a Family Court order. The foster care units work intensively with the children and their foster parents to stabilize the placements, to assure that all of the children’s needs are being met, and to establish productive birth-parent/child visits. These units also extend immediate concrete casework counseling and referral services directly to birth parents in an attempt to reunite them as soon as possible with their children and to lessen the time the children spend in foster



care. Those children and families not reunited quickly, despite intensive efforts, receive continued concrete casework counseling and referral services as long as extended foster care is necessary. Ultimately, these units ensure the safe reunification of children with their birth families, free for adoption children who cannot be safely returned to their birth families, or refer older teens for Independent Living services where reunification or adoption are no longer possible. These older teens are provided with opportunities to develop independent living skills with emphasis on education and/or vocational services and to establish permanent family connections.

PINS Placement (Persons In Need of Supervision).

This unit coordinates contracted agencies' foster home, group home, and residential treatment center services for court placed PINS youngsters who require residential services and/or therapeutic foster care due to their higher levels of needs and/or asocial behaviors.

Review and Support. This unit determines eligibility for cases and periodically reviews case documents to ensure compliance with laws, regulations and mandates. Staff also coordinates Service Plan Review and Permanency Planning Review conferences and monitor youngsters placed for diagnostic evaluations. This unit manages and oversees all audits and reviews of Children and Family Services cases and coordinates OCFS Connections system for Nassau County.

Institutional Liaison. This unit acts as liaison to contract agencies that provide placement services to Nassau County foster children, making referrals and visiting the facilities to ensure appropriate care is provided to Nassau County children. The unit monitors contract compliance, reviews contracts for accuracy, facilitates new contracts when needed, and records and tracks any reports of institutional abuse involving Nassau County foster children.



The unit also monitors Nassau County children in OCFS custody, who were placed in group homes and residential treatment centers as Juvenile Delinquents.

Adoption Services

Adoption. Casework counseling, referral, and concrete services are provided directly to children freed for adoption and their foster and/or adoptive families until adoptions are legalized. This unit provides for adoption subsidies where



appropriate and prepares the documentation required for the legalization process. Direct and referral services are provided to match children with adoptive families in cases where the foster family is not adopting, to maintain the Prospective Adoptive Parent's Registry, to register freed children with the NYSAS Adoption Registry and with Children Awaiting Parents (CAP) Book, to administer the Subsidized Adoption Program, to respond to the Adoption Information Registry and to handle post-legalization issues.

Babies Can't Wait. In a collaborative effort known as Babies Can't Wait (formerly The Right Start for Babies) Services to Children works with Nassau County Family Court and the Adelphi University Institute for Parenting to provide services to the 0-5 year old foster care population and their offending parents. The initiative is a trauma focused, developmentally informed program that provides intensive Mental Health Treatment to the maltreated 0-5 foster care population and their offending parents in order to heal the damage caused by the abuse/neglect. The main purpose is to achieve expedited safe and lasting permanency, reduce re-entry rates and reduce, or eliminate when possible, the moves of very young children from home to home while in foster care. Both Nassau County DSS and Nassau County Family Court have restructured their existing programs to provide a



dedicated neglect/abuse judge and a dedicated 0-5 Foster Care Unit.

Perspectives

Stories about the people we serve

The Children's Services Foster Care program participated in a unique and heartwarming reunification in 2015. John, a one year old child entered foster care having been removed from Martha R., his 18 year old birth mother who was undocumented. From the information staff was able to gather, this 18 year old had been a victim of human trafficking and had suffered abuse and neglect herself as a young person. Due to her undocumented status, she was not entitled to housing, until such time that her son could be reunified with her. Children's Services staff attempted multiple out of the box plans for housing, and also connected her with an Immigration support agency and an Immigration attorney. Eventually staff succeeded in having her housed at Momma's House and she participated in dyadic treatment with her toddler at Adelphi Institute for Parenting. As her progress increased, staff referred her to NAFI, our in home Therapeutic Preventive Services provider, who partnered with foster care staff and her clinician at Adelphi to successfully discharge John to her. As with all Babies Can't Wait discharge cases, foster care provided the post discharge supervision in place of CPS and she successfully completed her term of supervision and remains successfully and safely parenting her son John, who is doing great

Family Engagement. Children's Services participates in the Family Engagement Initiative through Family Meetings which are held with birth families as soon as possible after the placement of their children into foster care. The birth parents and those individuals that they identify as supports are invited to the Department by the Family Engagement Team (FET). This invitation comes about via a home visit to the birth parent by the FET. The FET provides Metro Cards for the participants that are willing to come to the Family Meeting and has also transported birth parents to DSS when public transportation is unavailable. Children's Services is measuring the length of time toward permanency, with the goal of return to parent, discharge to a fit and willing relative, or adoption, to measure the success of Family Meetings as a tool to achieve expedited permanency.



Innovations in Family Recruitment Grant

Nassau County DSS Children's Services Foster and Adoptive and Homefinding Units joined with



OCFS in their application for a federal grant for the recruitment of foster parents. OCFS was granted the Innovations in Family Recruitment Grant award in October 2013. As partners with OCFS, Nassau receives assistance throughout the 5 years of the grant and is in the 4th year of this 5 year grant. The federal grant monies are intended for two phases. In the first phase, OCFS developed a blueprint including a systematic process for gathering and assessing data about the recruitment in Nassau County, then developed strategies to address the challenges. In the second phase, the strategies were implemented and are being reviewed for effectiveness.

2016 Highlights

Adoption Unit Honored



The Adoption Supervisor (Tara Carlo) and a caseworker from the Adoption Unit (Diana Faherty) were honored by the County Executive, on Monday, July 25, 2016. This was a result of an adoptive family writing a beautiful letter of



appreciation about these Children's Services staff who assisted the family in adopting John, their cousin, who is a medically fragile child with numerous disabilities, previously placed in foster care in another state. John's adoption was finalized on 3/9/16. Today John is thriving more than ever and has made unbelievably significant gains.

Educational Stability

The purpose of the Educational Stability initiative is to provide better educational outcomes for children in foster care by limiting disruptions and multiple moves of children among school districts. As a pilot county for OCFS, DSS is at the forefront of the Educational Stability Initiative in New York State.

Public Catalyst

On January 20, 2016, there was a Public Catalyst Presentation at NCDSS to share the results of the work of the Public Catalyst team which had been ongoing since August of 2015. The term Public Catalyst represents Nassau County partnering with OCFS to develop strategies designed to improve permanency outcomes for children involved in child welfare. The Nassau County workgroup, comprised of staff from Children's Services, CPS, Planning & Research, Staff Development and the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Regional Office met monthly with representatives from Public Catalyst to take a very close look at Nassau's permanency data and identify both "bright spots" and challenges in our processes. On January 20th, the data and strategies were presented to staff from Children's Services and CPS. OCFS attended as well.

As part of the Public Catalyst work, Children's Services has been conducting 10 Month roundtable Meetings. The Roundtable meeting is a case consultation that takes an in-depth look at the child's path to permanency from time of placement until the 10 month mark. Key issues and questions explored include: a review of the goals for the family and children, determining the permanency options, the role of the attorney for the child (AFC), each parent's level of cooperation, the suitability of the current placement for adoption or kinship guardian (KINGAP), if return to parent is not an option.

Innovations in Foster Family Recruitment Grant

Children's Services held Foster Family Recruitment Fairs at the Long Island Children's Museum, located at 11 Davis Avenue Garden City, in January, April, July and October. The forums drew a variety of individuals and families interested in fostering children involved in the Child Welfare system throughout Nassau County. Recruitment efforts have also continued with newspaper ads, radio broadcasts and participation in related events and fairs. DSS continues to partner with OCFS on the Federal Diligent Recruitment Grant and meet with WRI (Welfare Research, Inc.) on a quarterly basis. WRI and Child Trends conducted their annual Focus Meeting with Children's Services staff on 12/8/16-12/9/16, at DSS.

Children's Holiday Party

The annual Holiday Party for Children in Foster Care took place on Tuesday, December 27th at the Marriott Hotel in Uniondale. Every child in foster care received a gift from Santa. In addition to a disc jockey, several children participated in a talent show. DSS staff, as well as community and faith based groups, generously donated more than 200 gift cards which were given to the older youth who attended. Four high school students in the foster care program received scholarships to cover some of their anticipated college expenses. There was also an engaging demonstration of hip hop provided by Create Dance Center in Massapequa, as well as a photo booth donated by NYC Photo Booth, Inc. of Oceanside, both new additions this year. All who attended had a great time.



National Adoption Day

Nassau County DSS' celebration of National Adoption Day took place at the Long Island Children's Museum on Monday, November 21, 2016, at 10 am. Twenty-three adoptions of children in foster care through DSS were finalized on that date. The media attended this event and interviewed two teenage sisters who spoke about their excitement at having a "forever family."

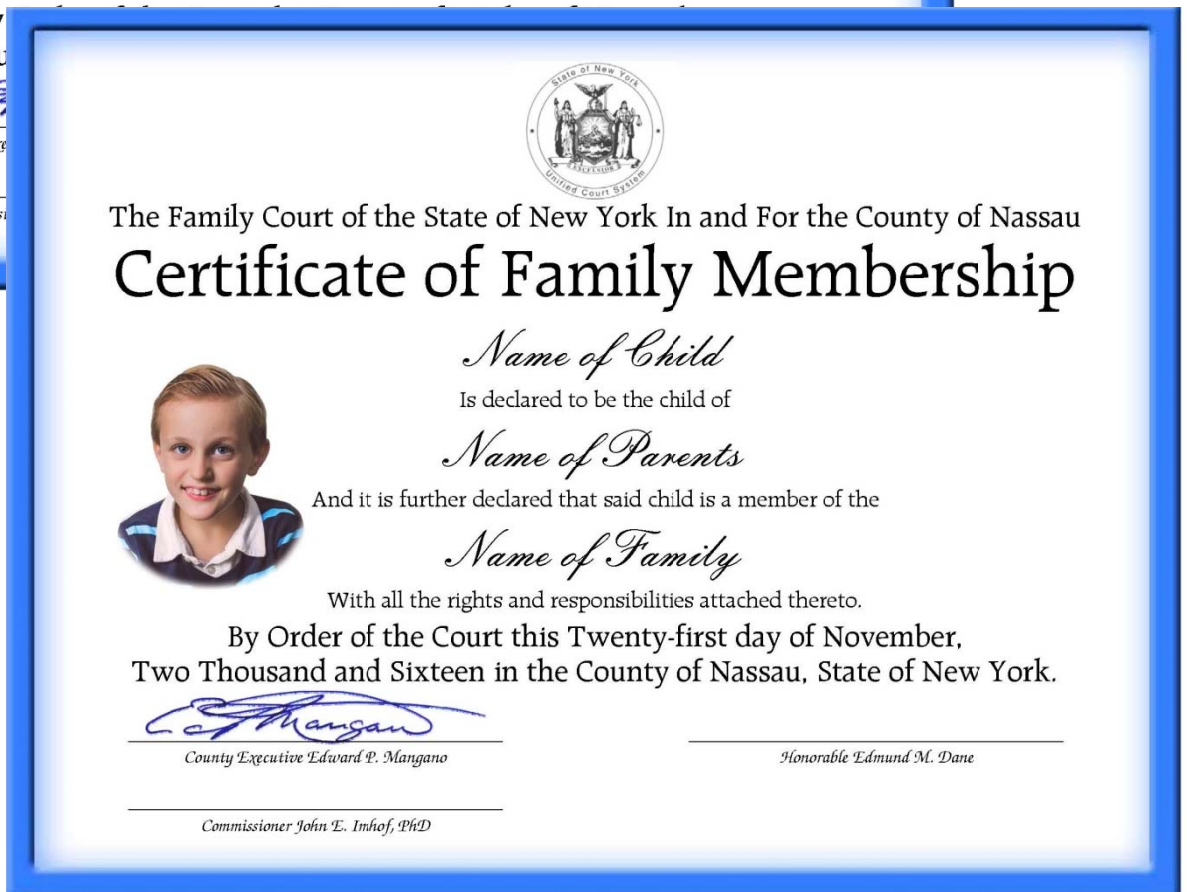


National Adoption Day – The Creation of Forever Families



Forever Family Certificates

Examples of the Forever Family Certificates presented to the newly adoptive families from the Nassau County DSS celebration of National Adoption Day that took place at the Long Island Children’s Museum, on Monday, November 21, 2016.





XXIII. Adult Services

Mission - To assist vulnerable adults, 18 and over, in accordance with local, state and federal laws and regulations, who reside in the community and are at risk due to neglect, self-neglect, abuse and/or financial exploitation. We strive to reduce or remove those elements of risk that impede the individual's ability to meet their essential needs. We recognize the individual's right to self-determination and offer the least restrictive intervention as we carry out our mission.



Adult Protective Services (APS) accepts all referrals of adults over the age of 18 years who are alleged to be abused, incapable of caring for themselves



because of a physical or mental incapacity, or neglected and/or financially exploited by others and have no one

willing or able to assist them responsibly. APS uses a case management approach to provide financial management, and refer for counseling, medical and other services (for example, Meals on Wheels and day programs). Services are provided free, without regard to one's income. Anyone making a referral to APS in good faith is protected from civil liability.

Adult Preventive Services provides help for those adults who demonstrate a need for assistance in managing their activities of daily living. Services may include medical and/or psychiatric support services, and financial management services.



Family-Type Homes for Adults provides a family living situation for adults who need supervision and care. Caring people open their homes to adults that

are mentally or physically impaired, who do not require the skilled care of a nursing facility.

Adult Financial Management

Services is available for adults who are not able to manage their finances. It ensures the proper use of a person's income and resources and prevents the mismanagement and financial exploitation of those funds by others.

AIDS Services Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that people who have been diagnosed as having HIV/AIDS receive all of the services and benefits for which they are entitled from DSS and the many public and private community based agencies.

Post Institutional Services program coordinates with the Department of Mental Health and New York State private psychiatric hospital units to ensure the proper discharge of patients into the community with the necessary social service support.

Guardianship Program



In 2009, the Department of Social Service in collaboration with Nassau County Supreme Court, New York State Office of Children and

Family Services, the Nassau County Bar Association Elder Law Committee, and Office for the Aging initiated a County Guardianship Program for incapacitated adults who require court appointed guardians. Nassau County Supreme Court appoints a guardian when it is determined that an adult is unable to provide for his or her personal needs and/or property management. The guardian's responsibilities can include arranging personal necessities such as food, clothing, shelter and health care. It can also include managing the property and financial affairs of the incapacitated person. If a person needing a guardian lacks sufficient assets to pay guardianship fees and has no other responsible person available to serve in that role, a referral is made to DSS. DSS conducts an investigation and determines whether a services case can be opened. Based on the department's assessment, the court makes a finding as to whether a DSS vendor can act as the guardian for the incapacitated individual. If so, one of two contracted vendors is appointed guardian and





assists the incapacitated person to live comfortably and safely while maintaining as much independence as possible.

In 2016, APS filed 10 new adult guardianship petitions. There were 14 new appointments made during the calendar year. In total, 63 adults were served by Guardianship in our district. Only four other counties in New York State have a larger number of guardianship cases than Nassau (one of the four is New York City).

IRRS, (Customer Service)

This unit offers a full range of informational services to all residents of Nassau County. The services include referrals for: children’s preventive, PINS (person in need of supervision) and Adult Services (protective and preventive). Anyone can call the number (this includes neighbors, family, the person themselves, community agencies, hospitals, schools, law enforcement, etc.) to obtain information and learn what services may be available within the County. Additionally, the unit can assist with referrals for crisis and emergency intervention which includes: child or elder abuse, domestic violence, employment, fuel services, homelessness, Medicaid and SNAP. Staff are available Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. – 4:45 p.m. The unit is designed to accept referrals over the phone by calling 516-227-1498 or 516-227-8762.

Homeless Intervention Team (HIT)

The Homeless Intervention Team (HIT) conducts homeless outreach throughout Nassau County on a regular basis with assistance from local, state and MTA police, as well as various non-profit agencies. People who notice homeless individuals in their communities can call Customer Services/HIT and identify the location and time of day the homeless were seen. HIT will go to these locations to try and engage the individuals. HIT evaluates the person’s situation and history to determine whether they may be eligible for assistance through DSS, Mental Health Case Management, Housing, Veterans Affairs, Office for the Aging, OPWDD or non-profit agencies.

In 2016, the HIT team went “hi-tech” with new software that was developed to help track the homeless reached through their intervention.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

For the second year, DSS participated in World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15, 2016 by wearing purple, the color officially designated to represent all anti-domestic and family violence educational programs and initiatives. APS initiated this awareness campaign by giving out pens, wrist bands and educating staff and clients regarding the severity of Elder Abuse in every community.



2016 Highlights

In 2016, APS formed a partnership with the DA’s Special Victims Bureau

after the creation of a dedicated Elder Abuse unit. The ADA in charge of this unit and DSS have begun discussing 4 cases in which both departments are involved. APS expects to increase its involvement with the DA’s Elder Abuse unit and participate in monthly meetings and case conferences.

A Spring Public Forum sponsored by the Nassau County Dept. of Social Services’ Advisory Council was held on April 6, 2016 in the HHS building. The topic of the forum was Senior Services and provided a panel discussion by representatives from DSS Adult Protective Services, NC Office of Mental Health, NC Office for the Aging, NC Police Dept. and the Federation of Organizations. Approximately 60 persons attended. Educational materials from several organizations were also made available to attendees.

Perspectives

Stories about the people we serve

James was a chronically homeless male who stayed in different train stations for many years. In October 2015 he came to DSS and applied for and was granted shelter placement. He did not go to the shelter and chose to remain homeless. After meeting with James a few more times, he went to the hospital for his medical condition, decided to attend rehab and has remained sober. He now has a room in Hempstead and is working to help support himself.



XXIV.Nassau County Re-entry Task Force

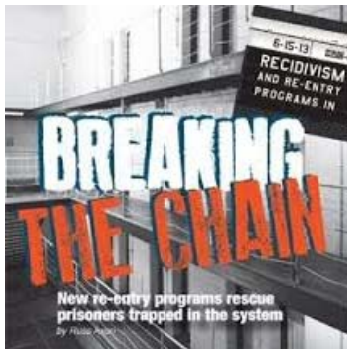
With the generous assistance of the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), Nassau County established its County Re-entry Task Force (CRTF) in 2006. The Task Force has created a comprehensive re-entry

COMING HOME
A Resource Guide for
Re-entrants and Their Families



program which emphasizes the utilization of collaborative case management treatment strategies using a multi-disciplinary approach and

partnerships with government agencies, not for profits and service providers. The focus of the program has three (3) components, which include (1) providing linkage to Concrete services (Case Management) for the participant reentering from a New York State or Nassau County correctional facility who has had or continues to have a drug and/or alcohol abuse or dependency issue, (2) providing short-term intervention for the reentering



participant and his/her family and (3) identification of service gaps and advocacy for the development and improvement of services required for participants reentering our communities.

Participants who are reentering the community face barriers which can impact their ability to reintegrate in a positive manner. The Re-entry staff is dedicated to assisting participants to successfully reenter the community, decreasing the potential for recidivism.

The vision: “Reduce Recidivism”

The Vision of the Nassau County Re-entry Task Force is to provide a greater level of safety for Nassau County residents by assisting offenders with reintegration into the community and back to their families. Support from the Task Force will provide offenders with the opportunity to become responsible, productive and contributing residents of Nassau County and reduce the risk of recidivism.

The Nassau County Probation Department assumed administration of the program when the Re-entry Task Force was renewed in October 2016.

To obtain more information regarding the Nassau County Re-entry Task Force, contact the CRTF Coordinator at 516-227-7025.



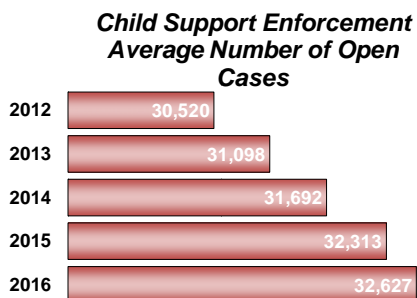
XXV. Child Support Enforcement

Child support services are available free of charge to any parent, guardian, or caretaker of a child for whom child support is needed. Filing for child support from non-custodial parents is part of the application process for Public Assistance and Medicaid. Applicants for, or recipients of, Public Assistance are automatically provided with support services unless otherwise indicated.



The Office of Child Support Enforcement (CSE) works to:

- Locate non-custodial parents.
- Establish paternity for children by assisting both parents with the signing of a voluntary acknowledgment of paternity, or through family court by filing petitions to establish paternity. Genetic marker or DNA testing may also be used to aid in making a determination about paternity.



- Obtain support orders from court, including provisions for health care coverage.
- Enforce unpaid child support: All individuals obligated to pay child support through the Office of Child Support Enforcement are subject to any and all enforcement measures available.
- Review support orders for increased support based on cost of living adjustments.

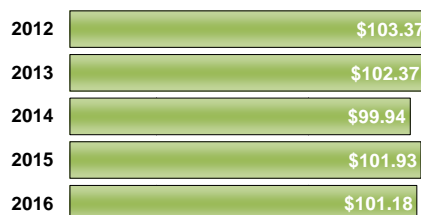
- Modify child support orders based on changes in circumstances.

The above services may be applied to orders originating in other states and countries.

2016 Highlights

- Nassau County Child Support Collections for 2016 totaled \$101,179,394, a decrease of 0.73% over last year's collections.
- Over 2400 petitions for child support were filed in 2016.
- 32,763 child support cases were open at the end of 2016.

**Child Support Enforcement
Amount Collected (In Millions)**



- Nassau Child Support Enforcement was one of the eight local districts chosen to participate and share in funding from the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). OTDA issued approximately \$400,000 in funding amongst the eight social services districts to operate a Non-Custodial Parent Employment (NCP) Program. The funds available through the NCP employment initiative are to support court based referral and compliance monitoring programs designed to address underemployment and unemployment among NCPs, promote timely and consistent payment of child support and improve the financial stability of custodial parents to support and better enable outcomes for their children.



Care Plan and choosing to use the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP). In addition, Medical Services' staff act as liaison with numerous Medicaid programs which provide Home Care services to specific populations. Medical Services also oversees the 4 New York State Department of Health authorized Medicaid Assisted Living Programs that operate in Nassau County.



The Department's Registered Nurses, contracted through the Nassau County Medical Center, assess recipients who are requesting home care services not enrolled in a MCO or MLTC. If eligible, they authorize a Plan of Care under Personal Care Services or CDPAP guidelines.

XXVII. Child Care

The DSS Child Care Unit is responsible for determining eligibility and authorizing subsidies to income eligible working families as well as families in receipt of public assistance, child protective services or preventive services to avoid placement in foster care, and children with special needs in Nassau County. Over 5000 families and 15,000 individuals received assistance through the unit in 2016. The unit also administers the child care summer camp program for temporary assistance and foster care children. Over 2000 children were authorized to attend summer camp for at least a two week period in 2016, many for the first time!

The Child Care Unit is also responsible for authorizing and monitoring payments to over 900 OCFS licensed day care centers, group and family day care providers, and legally-exempt group, family, and in-home providers. The aforementioned entities represent a significant and growing entry-level employment resource for employable public assistance recipients transitioning into the workforce. Processing payments timely enables these Nassau small-business owners to meet their payrolls so that ex-recipients of public assistance can maintain self-sufficiency and support their families with dignity.



For 2016, the Child Care unit continued to meet its mandate to expeditiously provide day care subsidies to working families. The average number of days between

application registration and disposition consistently remained under the mandated 30-day processing limit. Successfully fulfilling this mandate means that working families were able to quickly access child care subsidies, allowing them to obtain and more successfully retain employment, knowing their children

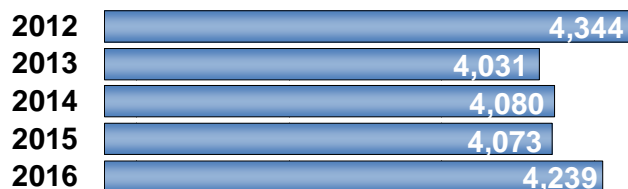


are being cared for in a safe and nurturing environment.

2016 Highlights

In 2016 the Child Care Unit undertook the mammoth task of culling and updating all Group and Family provider files. New Letters of Intent to participate were mailed to over 500 group and family providers who were active in the provider data base. Some providers were active but had no DSS children in their care for over one year. All active providers were given the opportunity to continue participation with NCDSS or terminate. Stronger language was added to ensure compliance with federal, state, and county regulations and to bolster agency efforts to combat fraud and abuse while safeguarding children in subsidized care.

Average Number of Child Care Cases



Average Number of Children in Day Care



Nassau County now has 575 active group and family providers, 101 day care centers, and 22 SACC (school-aged child care) programs who can receive direct subsidy payments from NCDSS at the request of their subsidized customers. Additionally, NCDSS clients who seek assistance in locating a provider who can receive direct subsidy payment will only be referred by the CCC to actively participating providers. This should save them time and effort as they interview and select providers to care for their children.

Child Care administration continued outreach efforts to child care providers and consumers through participation in public forums, visits to day care centers and homes, as well as regular meetings with the Child Care Council of Nassau and CSEA VOICE, the union representing group and family providers in NYS.

In preparation for significant changes in child care regulations in 2017, the Child Care Unit participated in two state trainings and several in-service trainings to

become familiar with the new regulations and requirements. The unit reorganized case responsibilities to improve application processing timeframes and meet increased demands for services. After years of decreasing staffing due to Nassau's fiscal crisis and attrition, the last quarter of 2016 saw the addition of one caseworker and one Social Welfare Examiner transferred in from other units, and three new SWEXs to DSS. Some of the big changes expected in 2017 are additional focus on homeless families who need care to work and seek housing, and 12 month eligibility periods. The additional caseworker is assigned to address the homeless caseload, three SWEXs are being trained to process new applications, and one SWEX I assigned to the recertification units to assist with families who will retain eligibility longer under the new regulations.

Child Care Council of Nassau

The Department works closely with the Child Care Council of Nassau and other non-profit community groups to help make day care available to working families in Nassau.

Perspectives

Stories about the people we serve

Working mom with a young child, who was receiving child care subsidy payments for working parents. The subsidy payments helped her to pay for child care costs and maintain employment. Ms. was diagnosed with cancer. Her mother took a medical leave from her job and moved in to help care for her daughter while she was debilitated by chemotherapy. The child continued in day care. Neither the mother nor the grandmother advised the agency that the mother was no longer working. The family was entirely consumed with dealing with the illness while trying to maintain some semblance of stability for the child. The mother's illness turned out to be terminal and the after several months, she passed away. Sometime after the funeral the family received a day care closing notice from DSS for failure to recertify. The grandmother contacted the agency to advise that her daughter had passed and stated that she was at her wit's end because her leave of absence was ending and she needed to go back to work. She stated that she continued to send her granddaughter to the day care while she was attending to her sick daughter, that she did not know if that was the correct thing to do, but that she had no other choice because she could not care for an infant and manage her daughter's needs as well. The grandmother also broke down and expressed her fear that her granddaughter would be taken away because she had to go back to work, could not stay home to care for the child, nor could she pay for the care her granddaughter was receiving.

The DSS worker patiently explained that, yes, she should have reported that her daughter was no longer working and, yes, that might have made her daughter ineligible for the child care. However, the worker also explained that as the maternal grandmother acting in loco parentis, she could apply for benefits for her grand-child so that she could work and remain independent. The worker also advised the grandmother that she might be eligible for other benefits e.g., cash assistance, SNAP, and medical assistance to help her care for her grand-daughter. She also advised the grandmother to contact the Social Security Administration because her daughter had a work history and her grand-daughter might be eligible for Survivor's benefits. The grandmother knew that she could add her daughter to her coverage through her job and accepted the worker's help in applying for child care assistance. The worker explained what documents were necessary to continue child care and get the case opened in her name. The grandmother sent in the documents, the child continued in care and the grandmother was able to return to work. Sometime later, the grandmother called the worker to thank her for her patience and assistance and reported that her grand-daughter was approved for Survivor's benefits through Social Security. The child care assistance and the Survivor's benefits helped her to care for her grand-daughter, go back to work, and maintain her dignity and independence.



XXVIII. Human Resources

Overview

The Department of Social Services' Human Resources Office (HR) consists of supervisory and support staff who conduct the day-to-day operations of a very active personnel office. The DSS HR office is also involved with carrying out administrative research assignments and working on special projects, assigned by DSS Administration. On a continuing basis, DSS HR staff assists all department employees on a wide range of issues, addressing employee questions & concerns on various human resources-related benefits and other programs, some of which



include: Salary/Benefits, Health/Dental/Optical Insurance coverages, Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA), Health and FLEX Open-Enrollment Periods, New York State Retirement System issues, employee Transfer Requests, Equal Employment Opportunity Policy (EEO) and Reasonable Accommodation requests, Workplace Violence Prevention Program, Workers' Compensation procedures, Work Schedules, Personnel File maintenance, and much more.



HR staff work with DSS managers and department unit supervisory staff on a daily basis, providing guidance and an understanding pertaining to the appropriate implementation and administration of Human Resources Policies and Departmental Programs, along with an

explanation of the various Policies & Procedures as these coordinate with the needs & requirements of Nassau County Human Resources Office, of DSS HR, and of the Commissioner's Office.

In addition to assisting all department employees, and working with supervisors to help the supervisors manage their staff, DSS HR processes various personnel actions, and completes special assignments as directed by DSS Administration. HR supervisory staff advises the Commissioner and his senior staff on the status of current HR issues/projects and the processing of approved personnel actions.

Included among the many day-to-day responsibilities handled by HR Office staff in 2016 are the following: conducting employee benefit program enrollments, implementation of approved alternate work schedule requests, processing voluntary furlough requests, consideration of employee transfer requests, processing EEO Reasonable Accommodation requests and Workplace Violence Incident reports, completion of and follow-up of filed Workers' Compensation accident/illness reports, and updating of employee NUHRS and personnel records as necessary. The HR office also maintains and posts Open-Competitive and Promotional Civil Service Exam Announcements, canvasses Civil Service Lists to fill approved positions, conducts new employee HR orientation, processes employee title changes and separations, and maintains employee personnel files.

In coordination with the DSS Commissioner's Office, the DSS Human Resources Office works closely with the Nassau County Civil Service Commission to advance the Department's needs specifically pertaining to the department's staffing requirements. In the course of regular business, DSS Human Resources staff have also established and maintained effective working relationships with officials and staff of several other Nassau County Offices and Agencies, including the following: NC Office of Human Resources, Office of the County Comptroller, NC Office of Labor Relations, Office of the County Attorney, NC Office of Equal Employment



Opportunity, and the NC Office of Risk Management.

Staffing

DSS staff headcount at the beginning of 2016 was 811, consisting of 754 Full-Time and 57 Part-Time employees. Total DSS headcount at the end of 2016 was 834, consisting of 763 Full-Time and 71 Part-Time employees.



This represents a net headcount increase of 23 employees during calendar year 2016.

New Hire full-time positions were filled across various job titles in 2016. DSS Human Resources staff arranged for canvassing of multiple Civil Service Lists throughout the year, resulting in hundreds of candidate interviews. DSS HR then processed the selected candidates for Civil Service Commission and Budget/CE approvals in order to fill approved positions as quickly as possible. Of particular note, DSS Human Resources processed new employees to fill the critical job titles of Caseworker I & Caseworker I Bilingual, with fourteen (14) new caseworker and eleven (11) new bilingual caseworker staff hired during the year. These new caseworkers were placed in Children’s Protective Services & Preventive Services units. Other hiring was processed by DSS HR in the key job titles of Social Welfare Examiner I (11) & Social Welfare Examiner I Bilingual (4). These eligibility workers were

placed in various Temporary Assistance, SNAP, Medicaid, Employment & Day Care units, where they were most needed. Much other hiring activity occurred in 2016 in many other important job titles, including Job Developer I (2), Child Support Investigator I (1), Community Services Representative (1), Clerk Typist I/Clerk-Typist I Bilingual (4), and Accountant I (1). In addition, the DSS HR Office was involved in the hiring of seasonal clerical staff: twenty (20) for the Nassau County Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), and five (5) new seasonal clerical workers assigned to HEAP for the winter home-heating season. The HR department was also successful in adding additional permanent part-time staff to DSS, mostly in entry-level clerical titles. During 2016, DSS HR processed candidates to fill twenty-five (25) approved Clerk-Typist I part-time positions. Regarding promotions for current staff, where possible and where opportunities existed, the department sought to fill a number of approved promotional positions. Approvals to fill the promotional positions were secured through the Nassau County Civil Service Commission, Office of Management and Budget, and the Nassau County Executive’s Office. There were a number of approved promotions implemented in 2016, including employee promotions to the job titles of: Director of Children’s Services/Preventive Services (1), Caseworker II (21), Case Supervisor Series (5), and the Social Welfare Examiner Supervisor series (3).



XXIX. Information Technology Systems

DSS works in partnership with the NC Information Technology group and is charged with managing day-to-day operations and support for approximately 1,600 users that comprise Health and Human Services, in addition to users located at various offsite locations including the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Court Liaison Unit, and The Safe Center.



Daily operations and major activities include; lobby status tracking, Network Administration of the New York State Human Services Enterprise Network (HSEN), user support of state, county, and local systems including supporting over 1,500 personal computers, application development and maintenance, hardware and software installation and troubleshooting general user problems.



Perfusion of Technology

Within any large organization there are rivers and tributaries of information and data, and DSS is certainly

perfusion [per-fu'zhun]

1. the act of pouring through or over

no exception. The 2016 Highlights below illustrate the many ways DSS has leveraged technology to ensure better command of and improve analytical assessment of available data and information for management and quality improvement purposes. From deploying iPads so caseworkers can more efficiently record their fieldwork responsibilities, digitalizing documents to expedite application processing and integrating the utilization of Information Technology, 2016 witnessed DSS making lightning advancements in using technology for all aspects of the department's direct services and supportive operations.



2016 Highlights

- **PrinterLogic Implementation** – Mapped and inventoried 200 printers to be included in Statewide implementation allowing staff to easily

locate and connect to printers (new statewide standard)

- **Homeless Intervention Tracking System** – Implemented new system that is used by the Homeless Intervention Team (HIT) to track information on clients they interact with in the field and homeless sighting reports. The system is also integrated with several other local systems (SPOT, GCI and Transportation App)
- **General Client Inquiry (GCI)** was expanded to include new state mandated codes for the ABWAD regulations allowing for more immediate access to the information
- **Emergency Night Service App (ENS)** – Added additional functionality to include ability to track the Governor's Executive Order 151 regarding mandated placement of homeless persons in 32 degree or below weather
- Expanded **Status Tracking System (STS)** to allow Mental Health Staff to add comments to DSS GCI
- Wi-Fi Access Points added to multiple Quads to allow iPads to print wirelessly
- Automated the **IMA (Industrial Medicine Associates)** Referral form process allowing for electronic form creation and tracking, and automated appointment scheduling
- Enhanced the **Shelter Placement Online Tracking (SPOT)** system to include a room HOLD feature
- Expanded the imaging Tab in General Client Inquiry to include a date sort which provided a more efficient search for recent images
- Implemented the Automated Transportation Log to track transportation authorizations
- **VDI Pilot County** – Participated in the NYS Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) pilot for Local Departments of Social Services on the Human Services Enterprise Network (HSEN). VDI is the practice of hosting a desktop operating system within a virtual machine running on a centralized server. It will allow staff to access a full desktop (state and local applications) from any location or device including iPads



- Manage PI has been expanded to allow for data selection/entry of 3 new fields to help clearly identify Personnel
- Status Tracking Check Ticket function available on iPad to assist staff with clearing the lobby
- Developed and implemented the **Revolving Fund Log** – to prevent accounting errors and manual check fraud
- Developed and implemented the **Web Based 279 Management System** that creates and tracks medical forms for customer eligibility
- Implement 3 New APEX Applications
 - a. Family Type Homes for Adults/Sponsors
 - b. Foster Care Applicant Tracking System
 - c. Summer Camp Program
- Installed additional monitors in the Lobby to assist with information dissemination

The DSS Information and Technology Team



XXX. Quality Management, Research and Planning

Beginning in 2006, Nassau was the first county in New York State to create and implement a Division of Quality Management within its Social Service department.

This unit works to:

- ensure effectiveness and efficiency of all DSS operations
- coordinate initiatives including the development of unit-specific standards, policy and procedures
- maintain ongoing review to ensure implementation of Corrective Action Plans
- manage statistical information, data flow and analysis
- provide quarterly reports to the County Executive

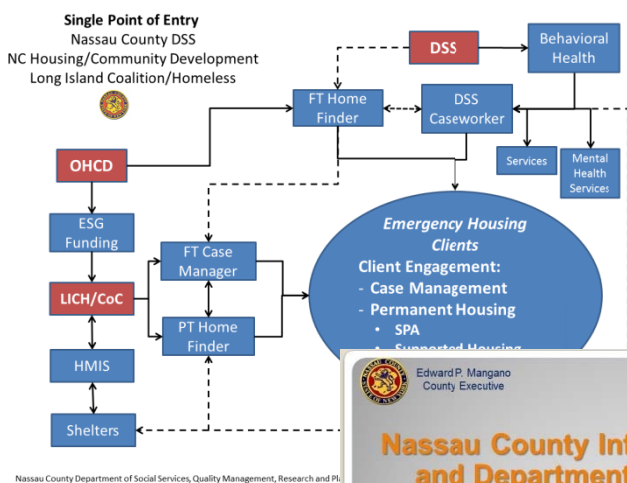
The Quality Management group participates in most initiatives that the Department undertakes. The group has been a leader for understanding efficiency, technology, organizational effectiveness and cost savings. In 2016 some of the more notable initiatives included continued development of the SPOT system (Shelter

Placement On-line Tracking system) to help keep track of homeless emergency shelter resources; contracts; Task Force on Domestic Violence; Disproportionate Minority Representation; development of performance based contracts for employment vendors; and countless reviews of departmental program data to help support and guide administration policy and action.




The unit manages all departmental contracts which include over 500 day care contracts and dozens of other contracts for the various services utilized by the Department. The unit tracks these contracts and facilitates their processing within the Department and throughout the County's approval process.

Finally, the unit is responsible for procuring all new services for the Department following the County's competitive procurement procedures. This involves developing, issuing and publicizing Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and evaluating RFP responses so that the services purchased provide optimum value in meeting the needs of Nassau residents.




EDWARD P. MANGANO
COUNTY EXECUTIVE



JOHN E. IMHOF, PH.D.
COMMISSIONER

SOCIAL SERVICES VOLUNTEERS OF NASSAU COUNTY

We Help



An artistic rendition of the DSS Volunteers office in Eisenhower Park

Contact: 516-227-7415

Edward P. Mangano
County Executive

John E. Imhof, PhD
Commissioner, DSS
Ed Eisenstein
Commissioner IT

Nassau County Information Technology and Department of Social Services

We Have An App for That!

ENABLING TECHNOLOGY



Department of Information Technology Department of Social Services

Nassau County Information Technology and Department of Social Services, July 2016



2016 Highlights

XXXI. Office Services

Office Services (OS) is responsible for the collating of the many application packets for our clients, New York State and County forms, all mail related functions, photocopying for the agency, monthly mailings, unit moves, the setting up of tables and training rooms, telephones, vehicles and drivers, building equipment, pulling and the distribution of supplies, paper and forms. OS is also responsible for the purchasing and receiving for DSS, fixed asset control, ordering and distribution of client benefit cards and Metro Cards. OS is the liaison between DSS staff and the building manager and cleaning staff. Office Services processes approximately 1300 pieces of incoming mail daily, many of which are time sensitive, and approximately 860 pieces of outgoing mail each day. On a daily



The DSS Office Services Team

basis, Office Services answers numerous requests for supplies, photocopying, classroom and table set ups, equipment repairs and handles complaints and requests for building related issues.

Record Room

The Record Room bar codes and tracks thousands of client folders and stores, retrieves and delivers client case folders to workers as requested. The Record Room coordinates the pick-up and deliveries of client folders from our off site record storage vendor. They work closely with the Imaging Department to successfully scan the client files to make them available online. The files are then boxed, bar coded and sent to the storage facility.

Record Clearance

Performs clearance functions of client applications to determine if a client is already in the DSS system, assigns new case numbers if required and handles emergency requests from all program areas.

Data Entry Pool

The Data Entry Pool enters data from client applications into the Welfare Management System. They work closely with Children's Services entering data for their program areas. They also do homemaking billing and process returned Common Benefit Identification Cards (CBIC).

- Office Services continues to manage and coordinate the translation of new and existing county forms into the six languages identified by the County Executive's office. Office Services worked with the Language Access Plan (LAP) team and Quality Management Research & Planning to make these vital county forms available for easy access on Web Connect. Currently, 138 forms are available – with more being added regularly.
- There were 14 new copiers purchased and installed in 2016, replacing the oldest machines in the department. Over the last two years we have worked with IT to identify and network those copiers which would most benefit DSS staff, by enabling direct print as well as scan to email. More than half of the copiers throughout the building are now networked.
 - Office Services assisted with the reorganization of Services; necessitated by the creation of the new Preventive Services program area. Preventive Services was staffed with employees from CPS and Children Services. The creation of this new program area allowed for the total reorganization of CPS and Children's Services for better supervision and workflow. Working with IT and DPW, Office Services planned and managed the relocation of more than 200 employees.
- Office Services, working closely with County IT, has assisted with the installation of the new ALCATEL phones for Fiscal, Investigations, Staff Development, Human Resources and Payroll. We will continue to work closely with IT to roll out the new phones throughout DSS. These phones have caller ID and call waiting, allowing for better communication and response.

Office Services staff continues to work hard each and every day to facilitate the important work of this department. Office Services assigns case numbers, finds docs, keys in important data, moves, fixes, cleans-up, sets-up, replenishes and delivers for DSS every day!



XXXII. Staff Development

Staff Development is the training unit of the Department of Social Services, dedicated to providing an extensive array of educational and training opportunities for staffs' professional and personal



growth. Included in its responsibilities is the provision of orientation to new staff; planning and registering training for new and experienced staff and, when appropriate, arranging for reimbursement of travel

expenses; promoting opportunities for professional growth; completing State Training Needs Assessments with the various program areas at DSS; maintaining a resource library; coordinating placement and participating in the supervision of social work interns; awarding Tuition Remission credits to DSS staff; and awarding Tuition Reimbursement from the Social Work Education Consortium to Child Welfare staff pursuing their Masters degree in Social Work.

2016 was another busy year for Staff Development!

2016 Highlights

- Staff Development arranged for the CLEs (Continuing Learning Education) through the County Attorney's Office for Attorneys from Family Court in Nassau and Suffolk.
- In compliance with new ADMs (Administrative Directives from the State) Staff Development delivered webinars to child welfare staff on: Supporting



Normative Experiences: Applying the Prudent Parent Standard; Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act; Human Trafficking/Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Sex

Trafficking Victims.

- Sessions of "The FISH! Philosophy" were held during 2016. The FISH! Philosophy is a training program that helps organizations create a culture where people choose to bring their best to work. It focuses on breaking down barriers, attitudes, building teamwork and working co-operatively for the benefits of the clients and the agency as a whole.
- Staff Development, with planning and financial support from OCFS, delivered "Race Equity Learning



Exchanges" (RELE). The RELE sessions provided a learning experience about achieving equity in child welfare and provide a framework for action planning to promote equity, cultural competence, and diversity.

- Front End Detection System (FEDS) Training was held for staff. The purpose of FEDS is to identify, investigate and resolve potential cases of fraud, misrepresentation or inadequate documentation prior to determining an applicant's eligibility for public assistance.
- Training on "Domestic Violence" was offered during the year to CPS staff.
- Staff Development offered many lunch hour programs that support staff well-being in 2016. Some examples include weekly "weightwatchers" meeting on Mondays at noon and "Mindfulness Practice" sessions on Wednesdays at noon. Weight watcher sessions promote overall health and practicing mindfulness sessions helps improve both physical and psychological well-being.
- Staff Development coordinates a robust internship program for many local colleges and universities. Student interns gain exceptional experience working with the professional staff at DSS. Often students earn academic credit for their internship time at DSS.



XXXIII. Legal Services

Legal Services

The DSS legal team consists of Agency Attorneys and Deputy County Attorneys assigned to the Department. These lawyers perform vital specialized client counseling on behalf of the Department. The areas served by the legal services bureau include but are not limited to the following program areas of the Agency:

- Commissioner’s Office/DSS Administration;
- Adult Protective Services and Guardianship Support;
- Medicaid and Medical Assistance;
- Liens and Recovery;
- Services to Children and Families;
- Foster Care;
- Child Protective Services (CPS);
- Day Care and Employment;
- Special Investigations;
- Public Assistance;
- SNAP;
- Housing and Homeless Prevention;
- Quality Management, Research and Planning;
- Systems;
- Staff Development;
- Labor and Human Resources.



Attorneys are in routine and regular contact with OCFS and OTDA in Albany regarding a large variety of pending and procedural matters.



- All petitions regarding the County Guardianship program as well as matters that are placed on the Surrogate Court’s calendar are drafted by DCAs and agency attorneys who then represent the County in these matters.
- Attorneys evaluate complex legal documents for Medicaid compliance. These include Wills, Deeds, Accountings, Special Needs Trusts, Supplemental Needs Trusts, Irrevocable Medicaid Trusts, Revocable Trusts, Medicaid Personal Service Contracts and Medicaid Promissory notes.
- Attorneys actively assist the Agency’s Liens and Recovery Division in the collection of monies owed the County.
- Article 10, Article 6 and Article 7 petitions under the Family Court Act that are initiated by Nassau County are drafted at DSS. These include emergency removal petitions pursuant to the Family Court in matters involving child abuse and neglect; access orders to see the child if access is refused; access orders to the home to do a home assessment.
- Attorneys consult with the CPS and Foster Care workers and supervisors on an ongoing basis providing advice and guidance. Attorneys participate in Child Protective Services investigative conferences including “face to face” interviews if counsel is going to be present.
- The Adoption and Safe Family Act (“ASFA”) provides for rigorous deadlines with respect to presenting petitions to terminate parental rights (TPR petitions) in cases where children are confined to long term Foster Care placements.
- Attorneys have been defending DSS in fair hearing proceedings where benefits were either terminated or reduced. Attorneys represent the Department in conferences and administrative hearings in order to make sure that Agency determinations are upheld.
- Attorneys also handle the disclosure of agency records, freedom of information requests and subpoena compliance.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Attorneys represent the Agency in legal and administrative proceedings, including but not limited to: Administrative Fair Hearings conducted by New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and New York State Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA); matters before the New York State Supreme Court, the Nassau County Surrogate, Nassau County District Court and in conjunction with General Litigation Bureau before Eastern District of New York.

Among the duties consistently performed by DCAs and Agency Attorneys are:

- Attorneys serve as in-house counsel to the DSS Commissioner, DSS Executive Staff, DSS Administration, the Directors of each Division within DSS and DSS employees on a wide variety of matters ranging from the analysis of legal documents submitted to the Commissioner for signature to reviewing correspondence, legal documents and mail received on a daily basis in order to determine the appropriate resolution/distribution/assignment of same.
- Attorneys serve as liaisons between the Agency and other County Departments and State Offices.



XXXIV. Language Access Plan

In 2016, DSS implemented many enhancements to the Department’s Language Access Plan (LAP) which was developed in October 2013 to meet the requirements of NYS OTDA ADM 06-ADM-05 and Nassau County Executive Order Numbers 67-2013 and 72-2013. The LAP was developed to ensure that applicants, clients and recipients with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have equal access to all benefits, programs and services provided by DSS for which they are eligible. Updated annually, the LAP is a tangible symbol of the Department’s commitment to the diverse communities that reside in Nassau County.

During calendar year 2016, the following enhancements took place to augment the Department’s ability to provide equal access on behalf of applicants, clients and recipients classified as LEP:

- On average the Department spent more than \$2,500 per month for a total of \$31,163.75 in 2016 on language access services provided by Language Line Solutions, the language translation service employed by Nassau County.
- A Welcome Screen Slide was added to the Welcome Area advertising that free language assistance services are available at DSS.
- Approximately 390 vital forms are being added to the DSS Webconnect system for easy access by employees who need forms translated for clients.
- DSS employees participated in further training, including a webinar on engaging confidently with people from other cultures.
- As part of its public outreach, DSS’ Language Access Coordinator and a DSS attorney met with the Long Island Language Advocacy Council (LILAC) to inform LILAC of the language access services available at DSS.

- In response to requests made by members of the public, the DSS Language Access complaint form, which has been translated into Spanish, Chinese (Traditional), Italian, Persian (Farsi), Korean, and Haitian has been placed in the lobby by the DSS pamphlets rack for easy access.
- Language Access Complaints which were received by the Department were promptly reviewed and addressed by the Department’s staff.
- The LAP was expanded to include a new section on Effective Communication with people with Disabilities.
- The LAP was amended to include a new tool which will enable employees to respond more effectively with clients availing themselves via the telephone by providing easy access on how to say “Hold Please” in Spanish, Chinese (Traditional), Italian, Persian (Farsi), Korean, and Haitian.
- The LAP was amended to include Instructions on how DSS Employees can access translated forms distributed by the Office of Temporary Disability & Assistance (OTDA) and the Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS) forms via Centraport.
- The LAP was amended to include an updated list of bilingual caseworkers, social welfare examiners, and child support enforcement workers, and the list of employees who speak other languages has been updated.



The past year demonstrated not only a growing demand for such services by members of the public, but also an appropriate and robust response on the part of DSS. In this regard, the Department’s Legal Unit has and will continue to facilitate such efforts in order to ensure both compliance with the law and the best possible service.

XXXV. Community Outreach Services

The DSS Office of Community Outreach is designed to inform the communities of Nassau County of the services that are available for our residents. DSS administers many social service programs established and funded at the federal, state, and local government levels.



The objective of the Office of Community Outreach is to broaden public knowledge of our

programs and procedures, as well as to improve client access to benefits to which they are entitled.

Having this important information will greatly assist residents of Nassau County. Program staff from DSS are available upon request to travel throughout Nassau County to conduct presentations and informational forums on the various programs offered by the Department.



Informational presentations are available for all services provided by DSS. Such services are provided at no charge.

The 2016 Nassau County Summer Food Service program distributed 71,858 meals to children throughout Nassau County.

2016 Highlights

XXXVI. Volunteer Services

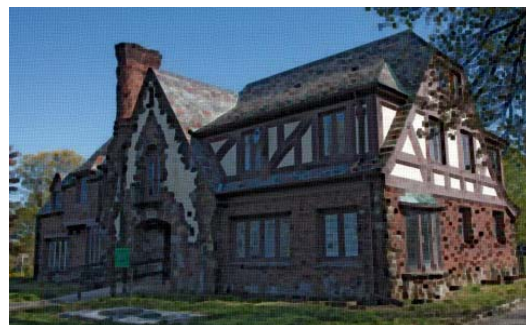
Established in 1983, the Social Services Volunteers of Nassau County (VS) conduct programs throughout the year for individuals and families in need. The holiday and other programs include:

- Thanksgiving Assistance
- Toy Distribution
- Foster Children's Holiday Party
- Adopt-A-Family
- Back to School
- Dress to Impress

2016 Highlights

- The "Dress to Impress" program at the Lannin House building assists clients from DSS, as well as the Safe Center, veterans, Re-Entry, Hempstead Works, NADAP and all those who have emergency needs with necessary clothing items. The generous support of the DSS staff and the community is helping Volunteer Services to help others.
- The 2016 camp program was a huge success this year. VS was able to assist in sending many children off to enjoy a summer camp experience. Children in Foster Care or on Temporary Assistance are eligible for camp.
- In 2016, VS moved from the SAC building in Eisenhower Park to the Lannin House building at parking field #6 in Eisenhower Park.
- In August and December, VS worked with the Henry Schein company, who did a Back to School and Holiday of Cheer program for the DSS children. They purchased school clothing and packed backpacks filled with school supplies and in December, they gave the children a wish list for holiday gifts.
- When school begins, VS enlists the assistance of many of the schools and key clubs in the community to assist with the holiday programs, including "Toy Drives for

Children" and Adopt a Family. This year in our Adopt a Family program, 98 families



were sponsored – among them were 5 military families.

- In 2016, with the help of volunteers, 250 toy bags were given to families.
- VS hosted a Holiday Party for children in foster care with the help of schools and the community. Each child that attended the party received a gift. Santa really enjoys the young children, taking photos with them and seeing the joy in their eyes as he gives them their gift. The craft tables are provided by many Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops who fundraise to provide crafts for the children. The party is hosted at the Marriott Hotel in Uniondale.
- VS continues to host monthly boutiques. These boutiques are attended by staff and the monies raised benefit the needy that the department serves in emergency situations.
- The Social Service Volunteers are always working on new projects and recruiting new volunteers. VS has brochures that are available to those interested in volunteering for DSS.



Foster Care Holiday Party at the Marriot Hotel Grand Ballroom in Uniondale, NY



XXXVII. Employees of the Month in 2016

Since 2007, the HR department in conjunction with the Commissioner’s Office reviews recommendations made by supervisors and co-workers regarding the exemplary performance of various employees. After a comprehensive review, one employee is selected each month as the Employee of the Month. And the honor comes with a few perks including lunch and a parking spot, not to mention the pride that comes from being recognized by their fellow workers! To date 101 DSS staff have been selected as “Employee of the Month”. Here are the 2016 employees of the month:

January
Sarah Smith

February
Alexis Pegram

April
Oscar Ramis

May
Janice Hyman

June
Gladys Rodriguez

March
Suzanne Sacks

Employee of the Month

July
Melissa Greco

August
Debra Hatch

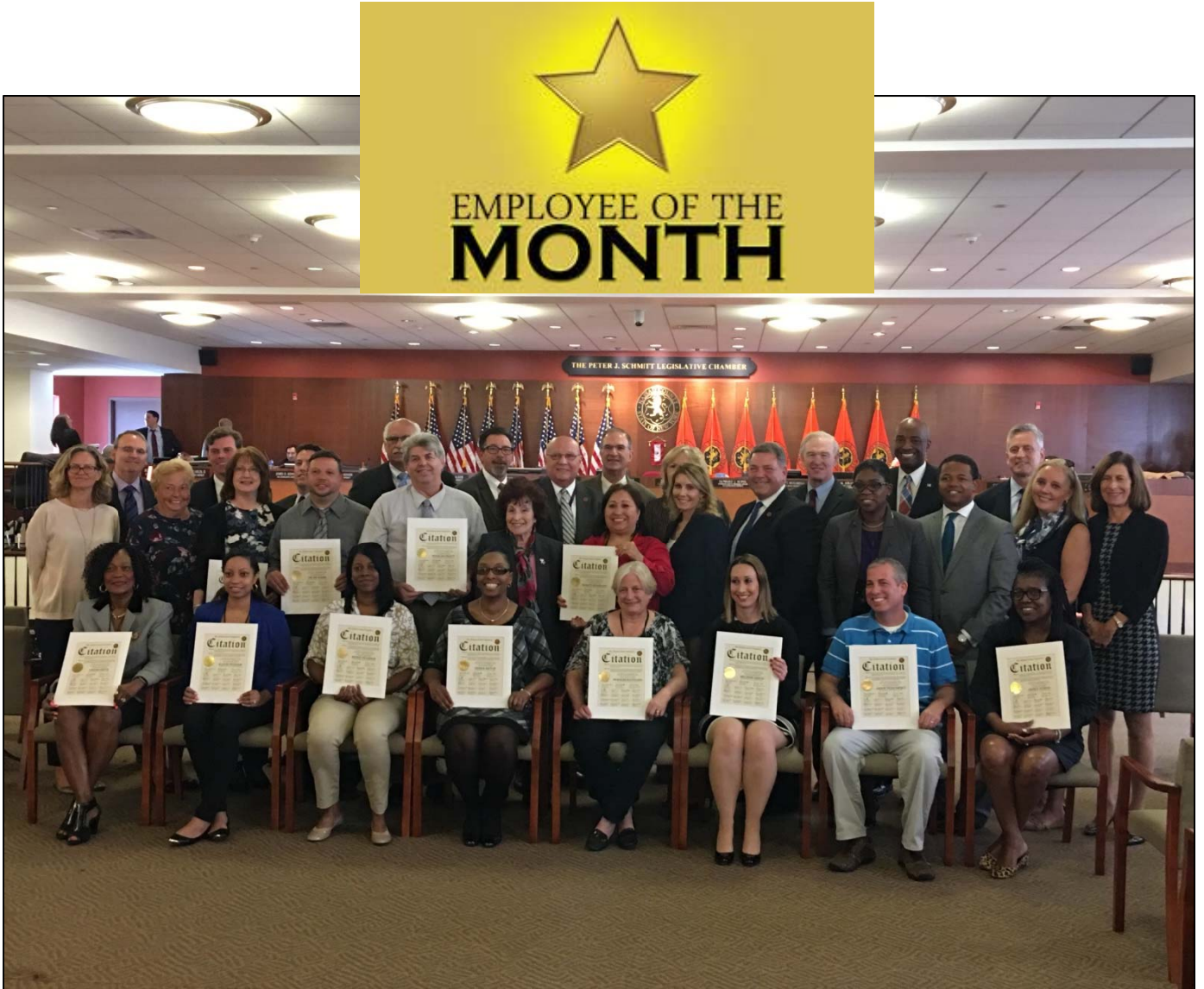
October
Tahereh (Tina) Mahoutchian

November
Belinda Bellamy

September
Jason Perkowsky

December
John McMullin





Legislature honors 2015-2016 DSS Employees of the Month



XXXVIII. Resident Feedback and Kudos to DSS Staff

In addition to our Employees of the Month, the following DSS staff were acknowledged by letters and phone calls to the Commissioner’s office praising their exemplary service to the residents of Nassau County.



- Sylvia Thomas Temporary Assistance
- Alice Barr Medicaid
- Angela McDow Medical Services
- Barbara Schabhuttl..... Temporary Assistance
- Thomas Lang Temporary Assistance
- Annetta LeeDisabled Client Assistance Program
- Emmanuel Valentin Medicaid
- Alison Krohn Child Support
- Diana Faherty Children Services
- Tara Carlo Children Services
- Charan Mahandru Temporary Assistance
- Miriam Markowitz Medical Services
- Carol Walker..... Medicaid
- Gloria McNeill Medicaid
- Denise Fierro Medicaid
- Vanessa Wood Temporary Assistance
- Arlene Sceri..... Temporary Assistance
- Heidi Escorza Temporary Assistance
- Lorraine Michalski Temporary Assistance
- Tania Chiu Temporary Assistance
- Jamie Lee Essig Homeless Placement Unit
- Michelle Torres Child Protective Services

Resident Feedback

We are also pleased to present some excerpts from a few of the commendation letters received in 2015 from residents of Nassau County complimenting DSS staff for their outstanding customer service.

Temporary Assistance/Housing: “I would like to take this opportunity to let you know how grateful (our agency) is for the partnership we share with Nassau County DSS staff. In particular, I want to express our appreciation for several people on your staff. Ms. W, Ms. S, Ms. E, Ms. M, Ms. C and Ms. E were extremely helpful recently when (we) were advocating on behalf of a homeless family of four with special needs. The family was ultimately placed in a shelter. I was pleasantly surprised by the cleanliness of the house

as well as the compassion and helpfulness of the staff.”

Medicaid: “I’m writing to tell you how helpful one of your caseworkers has been to me. Ms. F has helped me through the home health process for the past few months. Her care and expertise have been above and beyond. Thanks to Ms. F I am now on my way to providing quality care for my mom. I so appreciate the help I received and wanted Ms. F to be recognized.”



Medicaid: “I want to compliment Ms. B in her handling of (a case shared with our agency). I was so impressed by her quick and detailed response, as well as the fact that she clearly remembered the client and her situation in such detail. I would be remiss if I didn’t mention Ms. W and Ms. M as well, who are always responsive and a pleasure to work with! I truly have no idea how I could do my job without them.”

Disabled Client Assistance Program: “I am a homeless man (who) recently received a letter that my case will be closed. My prayers were answered by a wonderful person named Ms. L of your DCAP unit. Ms. L went above and beyond the call of duty. She reassured me that my problems could be resolved. Ms. L calmed me down...answered all my questions...treated me with respect and dignity. Ms. L left me with a feeling that I mattered and was deserving of benefits. It’s been a long time since I felt this way. Ms. L is an angel and a true asset to your organization.”

Medical Services: “I am writing to let you know about my wonderful experience in dealing with your department and especially Ms. M. The process of trying to negotiate the very confusing, daunting and

overwhelming task of arranging for my mom’s home care after her discharge was basically left up to me. Ms. M was so helpful and kind in helping me get the care and support that was needed. She is a wonderful asset to your department. There are no words to describe how much we appreciate her dedication and kindness.”

Housing Support: “I am writing to express my profound appreciation for one of your workers, Ms. R. I applied for arrears assistance (and) met this wonderful young lady who was so polite, courteous and professional. I am a widow who lost my husband suddenly and is now in dire need of assistance. Ms. R took the time out to explain all about the program and was also very sympathetic of my situation. This experience has lead me to believe there are still good people left in the world.”

Temporary Assistance: “I recently had the opportunity to be assisted by Ms. S with a case opening for children’s services. I have expressed my thanks to her for her time, patience and assistance but wanted to share with you how helpful she was to me. It was a pleasure to be assisted by such a professional, efficient and prompt person.”

XXXIX. Nassau County DSS and the New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA)

Since 1931, Nassau County Department of Social Services has been an active member of the New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA).

Founded in 1869, NYPWA is the oldest public welfare association in the United States and its role is to independently represent New York’s 58 local social services districts while offering a variety of opportunities for the exchange of ideas, development of new initiatives and refinement of existing programs and services. The NYPWA is an active partner with government agencies, associations and community organizations, and provides information, policy analysis and technical assistance to federal, state and local policymakers as well as direct support to local social service districts.

The Nassau County Department of Social Services original name was The Department of the Poor from 1915-31, and from 1931 – 1955 the Department of Public Welfare. Modern day DSS came into existence in 1955.

DSS Commissioner Dr. John Imhof has been an active member of

NYPWA since the beginning of his tenure as DSS Commissioner in 2006. Commissioner Imhof, who formerly served as 3rd Vice President and two previous terms as the Long Island representative for NYPWA, was elected

unanimously by his 57 fellow commissioners as the 2nd Vice President of the NYPWA Executive Board for 2015-2016. In early 2017 Dr. Imhof was unanimously elected as NYPWA President and his term will be described in in our next Annual Report.

Nassau County’s on-going participation in NYPWA ensures that DSS maintains an on-going dialogue and communication with all statewide county social service departments and through its many collaborative initiatives and lobbying efforts ensures that Nassau County and DSS remain in the forefront of local, state and Federal social services initiatives.



Nassau County Executive Edward P. Mangano administers the oath of office to Dr. Imhof as President of NYPWA.



XLI. DSS Celebrates

Happy Halloween





Donna Lee Birthday Celebration SNAP



Nakieta Clark Birthday Celebration SNAP



Wendy Baines Birthday Celebration HEAP



Secret Santa SNAP



Secret Santa SNAP



Christmas Celebration HEAP



Christmas Celebration Adult Services,
Carolyn Harris, Sandra Mennella



XLII. Commissioners in Department History



Claude C. VanDeusen
1931 - 1935



Edwin W. Wallace
1935 - 1955



Commissioner Robert D. Campbell
1956 - 1961



Commissioner John E. Imhof
2006 - Present



Commissioner Robert Sherman
2000 - 2005



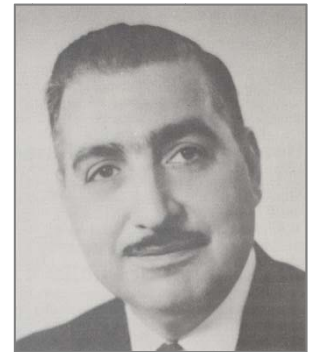
Commissioner Irene Lapidez
1993 - 1999



Commissioner Joseph A. D'Elia
1973 - 1992



Commissioner John J. McManus
1961 - 1964



Commissioner Joseph S. Barbaro
1965 - 1971



Commissioner James M. Shuart
1971 - 1973

Pictured here are the ten individuals serving as County Commissioners in the 85 years from 1931 to the present. Mr. VanDeusen's title was actually Superintendent of the Poor, and Mr. Wallace was the Superintendent of Public Welfare. Mr. Campbell was the first to hold the title of Commissioner of Social Services beginning in 1956.



XLIII. In Memoriam

We wish to acknowledge the passing of those DSS staff who were lost to us during 2016. We respectfully honor their memory and years of dedicated service to the residents of Nassau County.

Susan Swenson Investigations unit 29

Beatrice Green Children's Services 46

DSS retirees who passed in 2016:

Eileen Stone Customer Service unit 49

Garrett Walker Office Services 11

