

annual report

Suffolk County Department of Social Services



Steven Bellone, County Executive
John F. O'Neill, Commissioner



2015

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A Message from the Commissioner



I am pleased to present the Department of Social Services 2015 Annual Report which describes our Divisions and highlights a number of notable accomplishments during 2015.

The mission statement of the DSS is to provide financial assistance and support services to eligible Suffolk County residents in a cost effective and efficient manner, simultaneously protecting the vulnerable while encouraging their independence and self-sufficiency. Recognizing that this is a difficult balancing act for workers to accomplish, I would like to thank the Department's 1,400+ workforce for your efforts.

In 2015, the Department continued its commitment to deliver services to the County's most vulnerable populations in a more efficient and effective manner. Every year, the Social Services staff is asked to continuously improve the manner in which services

are provided, and 2015 was no different. This improvement would not have been possible without the commitment of each and every DSS staff member. Collectively, you make this department capable of completing its mission by delivering the essential services to the County's at-risk community on a daily basis.

In closing, the Department would like to specifically acknowledge Suffolk County Executive Steven Bellone and the members of the Suffolk County Legislature for their support, which has enabled the Department to expand access to our services to eligible County residents while delivering these services at a lower cost to the taxpayers of Suffolk County.

Mission

The mission of the Department of Social Services is to provide financial assistance and support services to eligible Suffolk County residents in a cost effective and efficient manner, simultaneously protecting the vulnerable while encouraging their independence and self-sufficiency.

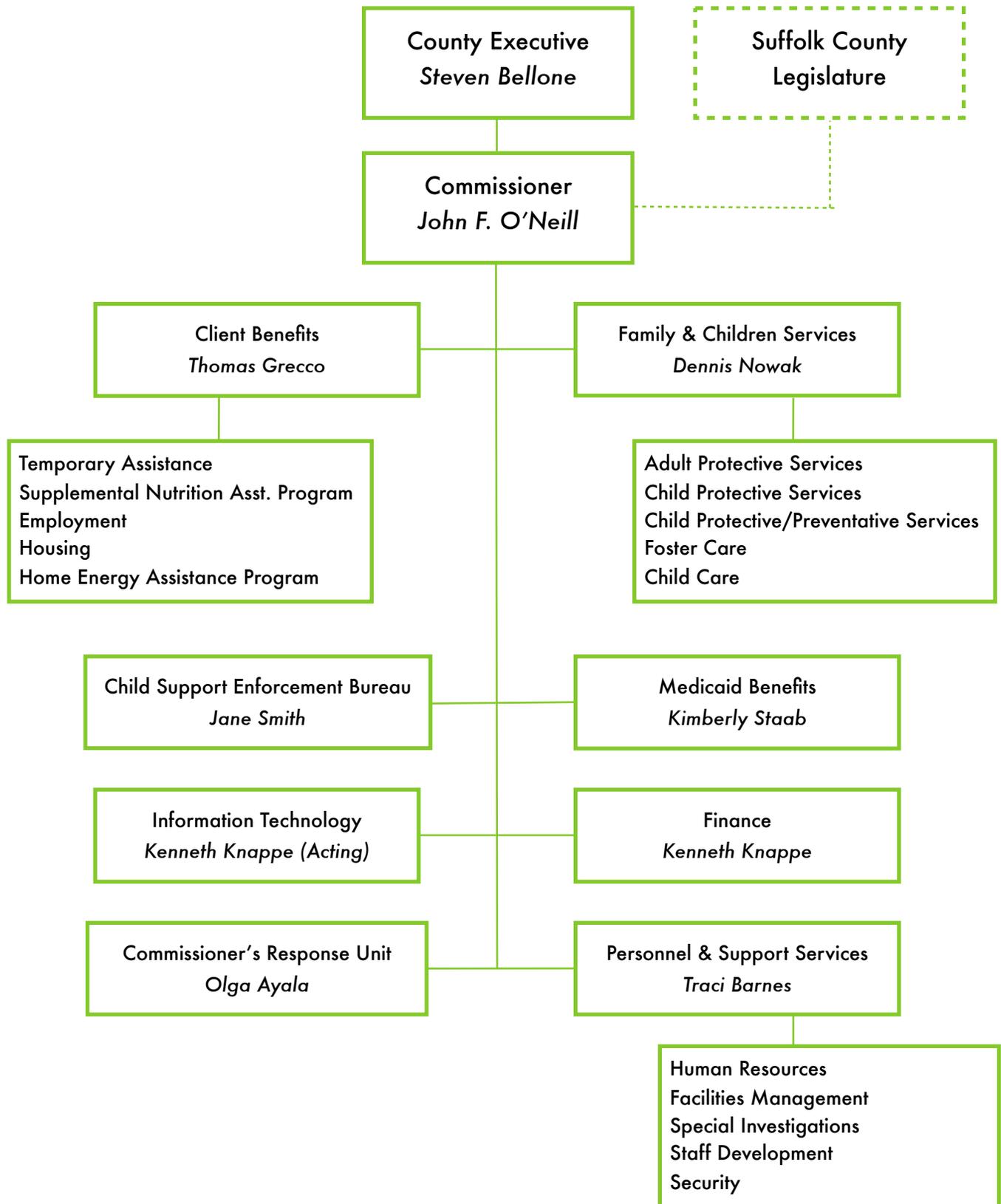


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Department of Social Services Organizational Chart

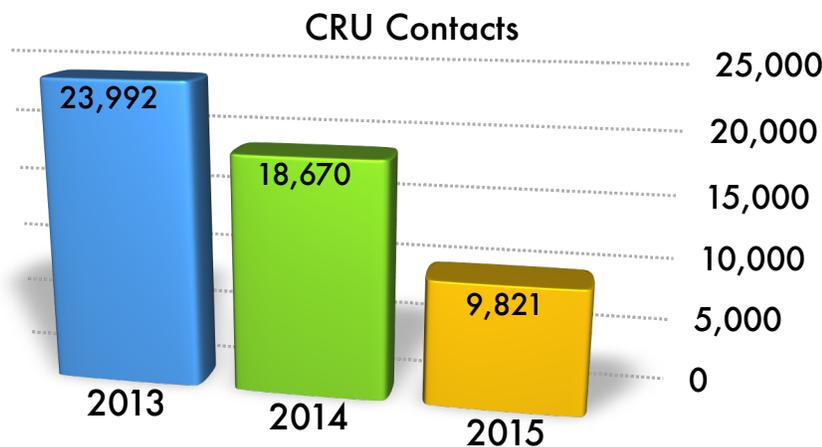


Commissioner's Response Unit

The main focus of the Commissioner's Response Unit (CRU) is to provide information to the County Executive's Constituent Affairs Unit, elected officials, consumers, consumer advocates, and other interested parties who contact the Commissioner for information, help or advice regarding the Department's programs.

Year over year, a goal of the CRU is to decrease the number of calls that the unit receives. This has been accomplished by adhering to the Commissioner's Rapid Response Policy, through the use of technology, the County Executive's Community Based Initiatives, and by coordinating homeless outreaches in conjunction with the Suffolk County Police Department.

On a year-over-year basis, the number of calls taken by the CRU have decreased from 18,670 in 2014 to 9,821 in 2015, which represents a decrease of more than 47%.



Pro-Active Outreaches

The CRU continues to effectively conduct joint homeless outreaches in partnership with the Suffolk County Police Department's Community Relations Bureau (SCPD CRB) and other community organizations, responding quickly when notified of homeless persons in the community needing assistance. In addition to responding to notices of homelessness, the CRU also performs proactive homeless outreaches with the SCPD CRB and have a set schedule that both organizations adhere to. The CRU and SCPD CRB have set the outreach calendar for 2016; there will be 45 proactive homeless outreaches conducted.

In 2015, the CRU conducted 61 proactive homeless outreaches. During those outreaches, 82 persons were seen by the Department, and of those, the Department helped 37 persons find shelter or were housed.

Community Based Initiatives

The Department continues to be an integral part of the County Executive's Community Based Initiatives (CBI), whereby Suffolk County Departments partner with a community based organization (CBO) to create a Community Resource Center to deliver enhanced access to County services for at risk communities. DSS's partnerships with the CBOs began mid-2014 and the CRU ended 2014 assisting 356 applicants. The program has grown throughout 2015, assisting 1,153 applicants, which represents an increase of 224%.

	Applicants Assisted	Percentage
Huntington Opportunity Resource Center	376	29%
Wyandanch Community Resource Center	412	32%
Make the Road NY Resource Center	227	19%
Bellport/Hagerman/Eastport Resource Center	261	20%
Total	1,276	100%



Toys for Tots

The Commissioner's Office coordinated the 2015 Toys For Tots campaign, a program that collects and distributes holiday toys for underprivileged children. The program provides gifts for children up to age 16. The primary goal of Toys for Tots is to deliver a message of hope to less fortunate youngsters that will assist them in becoming responsible and productive citizens.

The Department received 8,592 new, unwrapped toys from the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve alone. The CRU sorted, and with the help of the mail couriers, distributed these toys to our four DSS Service Centers and to the Office of Family and Children Services Administration. The toys were given to Suffolk County's homeless children and children in Foster Care. In addition, toys were delivered to the Long Island Head Start Programs in Patchogue and Amityville, which provide children from low-income families with a preschool experience to give them an equal opportunity for success in the public school system.



Stand Up for the Homeless

Every year SCDSS organizes the "Stand Up for the Homeless" event. The purpose of this event is to ensure that those who are in need can gain access to human services, resources and items offered by the county, state, federal and private entities. On August 28, 2015, the Department held its 8th Annual "Stand Up for the Homeless" event at Suffolk County Community College's Brentwood Campus. While we are able to assist many of our homeless clients through our Department's programs, the "Stand Up for the Homeless" event is intended to educate and serve the ineligible or recalcitrant homeless with informational referrals, community based resources, and items useful while homeless.

Major Contributors

- Suffolk County Community College - The venue
- St. Vincent de Paul - Clothing
- Alpha Kappa Alpha, Theta Iota Omega Chapter - Backpacks
- Island Harvest & Long Island Cares - Food
- Patchogue Lions Club - Diapers

Supplies/Services	Amount Donated
Backpacks filled with School Supplies	Over 450
Diapers	Over 4,000
Services-related Vendors	Over 60
Non-perishable Food Items	Over 2,200 lbs.
Donated Clothing	Over 8,000 lbs.

Campership Program

The Campership Program is offered to those families that are on temporary assistance. It aides in the expense of summer camp and offers the children a chance to enjoy the summer camp experience.



In 2014, 152 children had the opportunity to attend camp through 16 different facilities. In 2015, the number of children increased to 198, which represents an increase of 46 children, or 30%, while the number of camps decreased to 14, which represents a decrease of 2 camp facilities, or -13%.

Smart Government Initiatives

The Commissioner along with his Direct Reports began meeting regularly in March of 2014 to discuss Smart Government Initiatives (SGIs). In the beginning, the goal was to eliminate unnecessary visits and calls to DSS and CRU by providing clients with virtual means to complete applications and gather information. This was accomplished in many ways: updated website, fillable forms, robocall reminders. In 2015, the focus shifted to creating operational efficiencies via automation and technology. To do this, databases were updated and waivers were requested from the State, to name a few.

SNAP Kiosks

An update to last year's report regarding the SNAP kiosks:

We procured 4 kiosks, 100% funded, in 2015 and are currently in the process of piloting one at a center. We continue to gather data and resolve any issues that arise with a plan to deploy the remaining 3 kiosks at our other centers in 2016. One of the biggest hurdles we've realized thus far is getting MyBenefits to sync with the kiosk software; another big hurdle is getting clients to actually utilize the kiosk. We believe with time, clients will become more accustomed to this automated method of SNAP recertification.

Increase Recertification period for Non-parent Caregivers

In a continued effort to streamline current workload, the Department requested a waiver for a variation of the 6-month recertification process; requesting a 12-month certification and recertification process for non-parent caregiver (NPC) Temporary Assistance Cases. Having the ability to increase authorization/reauthorization periods to 12 months and to eliminate the scheduling of recertification interviews every 6 months would greatly assist our Undercare Units in keeping up with the ever increasing workload. On August 10, 2015, we received approval for this request, granted immediately.

Medicaid Telephone Recert Initiative Project

In 2015, Medicaid Administration explored the feasibility of offering Medicaid clients, which represent the Department's largest caseload with 80,896 Community Medicaid Cases as of June 2015, an additional means to recertify via the web. MA and IT teamed to administer a pros/cons comparison based on vendor demos, technical discussions and staff meetings. A proposal and waiver request was submitted to NYS in June 2015, but was denied.

Medicaid subsequently requested and received NYSDOH approval for the Telephone Recert Initiative project (including a waiver of the requirement of an original signature on the renewal form) and will be piloting the project at the Smithtown Center with the R-Z alpha caseload. Suffolk will be required to record all telephone interviews for quality control and audit purposes. The designated caseload will receive a separate robocall advising them of the telephone renewal option. Dedicated examiner staff, including Spanish speaking staff, will be assigned to this project. Procedures and telephone scripts have been developed to assure conformity, and selection of the vendor for the telephone recording system is in the process of being finalized. Once completed, a demonstration of the system will be performed by the vendor and training procedures will be created. It is anticipated that the project will be operational within the first half of 2016. It is expected that this option will reduce the number of cases closed due to failure to return the renewal form and then later reconsidered, resulting in a decrease in workload.

POET - Partnering for Operational Efficiencies Team

POET was developed to create management and program efficiencies within the operations of DSS.

Reports Dashboard POET – CSEB & Child Care

In September 2014, DSS embarked on a POET initiative to develop and implement program and workflow efficiencies for the Child Support Enforcement Bureau (CSEB) and the Child Care Bureau to meet the following objectives:

- Create one main repository where all statistical data is stored in trend format that follows process flow for each program area, similar to that for other DSS program areas
- Develop data reports that help determine key drivers and their impact in an effort to measure workload

The Reports Dashboard POET team identified the following needs and designed solutions focused on improving processes.

NEED	SOLUTION
<p>CSEB’s reporting was performed manually and hard copies of reports were sent to the Division Administrator who then had the information re-entered into a spreadsheet. This process was slow, caused duplication of work, and did not result in timely delivery.</p>	<p>CSEB’s reports were redesigned and stored in a centralized location. Duplication of work has been eliminated, and the Division Administrator and supervisors can access the information and statistics earlier in the month.</p>
<p>Statistical information for Child Care applications was not being reported.</p>	<p>Members from FCSA and IT worked together to create monthly reports for Child Care applications registered, denied, opened, withdrawn, disposed, and overdue, as well as the number of referrals. All information is now captured on the dashboard.</p>
<p>The 16-page Child Care application was extremely lengthy.</p> <p>A high number of applications were received and reviewed but eventually denied due to ineligibility.</p> <p>Staff were spending as much as 20 minutes on the phone with new callers.</p>	<p>A Child Care subcommittee was established to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign the Child Care application • Create an online Eligibility Wizard • Enhance website with FAQs <p>The subcommittee’s achievements are described on the next page.</p>

Child Care Subcommittee Achievements

The Child Care subcommittee successfully accomplished the following improvements:

- **Designed a simplified and streamlined 4-page local Child Care application to replace the lengthy 16-page State application.** After approval from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, the revised application and instructions were rolled out in May 2015 and were also made available on the DSS website.
- Created an online Eligibility Wizard tool that enables prospective Child Care applicants to prescreen their eligibility and ascertain whether to submit a Child Care application for a formal eligibility determination. The Eligibility Wizard solicits information regarding family size and income as well as child care needs and other key factors.
- Developed an online list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding child care eligibility, required documents, common reasons for denial or closing of Child Care cases, how to locate a child care provider, and types of child care providers, to name a few.
- Generated robocalls to new Child Care applicants acknowledging receipt of application and to current Child Care recipients coming due for recertification, reminding them to submit their recertification application package. These robocalls contributed to a reduction in client phone calls to the Child Care Unit and have helped to expedite Child Care case processing.
- Crafted and distributed a letter and e-mail to the Department's contracted child care providers informing them of the newly enhanced Child Care webpage.
- Worked with Controltec, a NYS vendor, to post a webpage notice that appears when providers access the Child Care Time & Attendance System (CCTA).
- Provided training to the Child Care Unit, Commissioner's Response Unit, Child Care Council staff and Suffolk Department of Labor staff on the simplified Child Care application, revised forms, and enhanced webpage.
- Prepared a new script for handling intake calls to ensure that the Child Care Unit is referring callers to the website as often as possible in an effort to reduce the amount of time staff spend on the phone. After the initial phone call, clients can visit the website for answers to questions, to download applications and to self-screen for eligibility, with the goal of saving staff time by reducing the number of applications received and eventually denied due to ineligibility. To determine if there has been a reduction in call time, after completion of staff training, the Child Care Unit will measure the amount of time staff spend on the phone with new callers and will compare that to the previous time spent of 20 minutes per call, as measured through the POET process review.



Safety Net POET

To address the ever-expanding caseload and expenditures of Safety Net Families and Singles, the Department developed a POET in 2015. The POET met biweekly to discuss current Safety Net (SN) case processes, brainstorm possible cost-saving initiatives, and develop strategies that maximize federal reimbursement, thereby reducing local expenditures for Temporary Assistance (TA) programs. The primary goal of the SN POET was to contain or reduce the County's share of SN expenditures by carefully examining caseloads and providing specialized services, with a focus on making this population self-sufficient.

During the POET, the following objectives and corresponding new initiatives resulted:

- Identify the Emergency Services (ES) population and engage them to complete an application and begin receiving services.
 - CBA to review SOS Sync reports to determine if individuals placed by ES do not have active or pending TA applications. CBA staff have been reviewing the SOS Sync reports every two weeks since April 2015.
- Provide specialized services to aid in creating and implementing Independent Living Plans (ILPs), which were formerly tracked manually by each caseworker.
 - An Automated Transfer Form and an ILP Tracking spreadsheet were created to ensure a better tracking system that all caseworkers can access. Implementation of the new form and spreadsheet was launched in July 2015.
- To increase permanency and avoid Emergency Housing costs, ensure that all employable SN adults in shelters are engaged in some phase of the DSS Employment program
 - In conjunction with the Department of Labor (DOL), DSS began scheduling One-Stop Employment presentations at our larger shelters. Presentations have been held at three shelters and will be scheduled on a quarterly basis going forward. EMP is reviewing cases, and the process will be expedited for those that are non-compliant; those that are not involved with the DOL will be referred.
- Ensure that all other viable resources (e.g., monetary and housing) have been exhausted prior to placement in temporary housing, as per 96 ADM 20 "Responsibilities of Homeless Individuals and Families."
 - If the necessary information cannot be provided, a referral is made to the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) where an investigator interviews and investigates homeless individuals and families during their emergency needs assessment at certain centers. This has been approved by OTDA. To help reduce potential fraud, Client Benefits Administration (CBA) and SIU added "Homelessness" as a FEDS indicator. In March 2015 SIU/CBA implemented a procedure for the FEDS THA assessment at the Coram center and rolled it out to the South West Center in July 2015. As a result, for the period March through July, 17.7% of THA assessments were denied at the Coram Center.
- Enhance technology for caseworkers in the field.
 - Caseworkers in the field were provided with laptops/tablets and have reported very positive results. They have been able to review cases and answer questions on the spot, which has improved communication and facilitated access to resources as they assist clients in search of housing. Angela McNeil, caseworker at a large family shelter, has been assigned a laptop and she reports that this initiative has improved communication between the shelter and DSS. CBA is working with IT to secure additional laptops.

CSEB POET

The CSEB POET team comprised the Commissioner, the CSEB Division Administrator and the Division Administrator's direct reports, with valuable help and input from supporting staff and other divisions. The objective of the CSEB POET was to further investigate and follow up on any open items which resulted from the 2014 CSEB POET and Reports Dashboard POET. The CSEB POET identified the following needs and formulated corresponding solutions:

Intensify efforts to prompt non-paying Parents to pay child support. In April 2015, a Non-Paying Parents page on our DSS CSEB website was created which includes a list of the Non-Paying Parents and seeks the public's assistance to help with location efforts. The letter to Custodial Parents (CPs) was updated to advise CPs of the plan to post the names of Non-Paying Parents on the DSS website unless the CP objects by a certain date. (The previous version of this letter asked the CP to respond if they wanted the NCP on the list.) During 2015, approximately 100 Non-Paying Parents were published. Additionally, in April 2015, monthly robocalls were generated to Non-Paying Parents to remind them of their obligation to make payment. Furthermore, monthly robocalls were also placed to local CPs (if the NCP is located in another jurisdiction) seeking further information to assist in location efforts.

Standardize business processes and terminology. When discussing details regarding each unit's responsibilities for various functions, there appeared to be confusion regarding terminology. To alleviate misunderstanding, a comparison was made between the current CSEB units' functions with those outlined in 45 CFR 303.20 Minimum Organizational and Staffing Requirements. In addition, key staff were interviewed to ascertain their respective responsibilities. Accordingly, a Standard Business Process, which included a list of terminology and an updated organizational chart, was derived to be distributed to all staff. As a result, subsequent meetings were more productive, with everyone "speaking the same language."

Streamline intake process. The interviews conducted with key staff to standardize business processes and terminology led to further review of the Intake process, with the goal of increasing the "one and done" petition signing process (conversely decreasing, or eliminating, the need for visits solely to have visitors complete and sign the petition the same day). Various improvements were made within the Intake Unit, including modifications to the floor plan and seating arrangements. In addition, the Child Support application and a checklist of required documentation are now provided on the CSEB website. **Adoption of the "one and done" concept has resulted in 90% of interviews ending with a signed petition on the first visit, compared to 64% in 2014.** Other significant improvements include:

- Faster service to clients resulting in increased client satisfaction
- A reduction in duplication of data that is typed on court documents
- A considerable reduction in the number of callbacks

File room overhaul. The establishment of a Standard Business Process led to further review of the file room process. Key file room staff were interviewed and several improvements were identified and implemented including:

- Wireless capability was provided for a file room laptop which allows for ease of use around the file room as well as in other areas of the building, and for checking files in and out - reducing the time between returning case information and retrieving the next case.
- Additional file cabinets were installed in unused closets to accommodate oversized files.

POET - Partnering for Operational Efficiencies Team

CSEB POET (con't)

- Shelves were installed to get boxes of files off the floor, which alleviates staff bending down to reach files in boxes and created a more efficient work environment as staff can easily find the information they are looking for.
- A case file check-in process for workers who are retiring/ leaving/transferring was developed and implemented. This process accounts for all case files checked out to a particular individual and requires them to either return the files to the file room or reassign the case file to another worker in advance of their departure date.
- A file room process flow was created which substantiated the integral role of the file room in CSEB's overall process flow. Since it was determined that the file room software is obsolete and no longer supported, a software upgrade/replacement is planned for 2016.

Improve efficiencies within the Court Unit. After a detailed review of the Court Dashboard reports, an internal Court POET was conducted, headed by the CSEB Division Administrator, her Direct Reports, and CSEB Court Unit staff. The team met weekly, with its main objective to address appropriate assignment of tasks and responsibilities to respective CSEB staff and Family Court staff. CSEB leadership met with Family Court staff on a monthly basis to discuss the POET. CSEB has since transitioned several tasks back to Family Court staff, allowing CSEB to focus solely on CSEB-related tasks.

The following items were also addressed as part of the CSEB POET:

- Determine workload vs. caseload, particularly for Intake and Enforcement
- Perform caseload reconciliation, forecast and maintenance
- Reconcile DSS petition numbers with NYS report numbers
- Resolve undistributed money
- Monitor MA referrals from the Exchange and DSS MA
- Streamline the Foster Care referrals process

Smart Government Initiative

CRU Database Improvement

During the second and third quarters of 2015, modifications were made to the CRU database application to allow for more choices. The WMS case number search has been placed into production. Upon entering a case number, the user will be greeted with a pop-up window. By double clicking on the case record, the data fields for client last name, first name, Social Security Number (SSN) and Client Identification Number (CIN) will be populated automatically. In addition, the user has the ability to specify the Call Type by selecting CRU, CRC or Homeless Outreach. After entering the call, another pop-up window will prompt the user to enter the next type of call. All search screens have been modified to display the Call Type within the search results grid. For all data entry screens, the application will attempt to find the first value that closely resembles the data typed in the field. CRU staff are now able to access the application remotely while on-site performing community outreach work at the four Community Based Initiative Resource Centers. This reduces the amount of data to be input by the CRU Staff and reduces the need to write the data down only to have to re-key or input into the database later.

Medicaid Services

The purpose of the Medicaid Services Division (MSD) is to determine applicants' financial and categorical eligibility for Medicaid (MA) programs and to ensure that all clients are provided benefits in a timely manner. Medicaid provides payment for essential medical services to eligible Suffolk County residents through a variety of programs including traditional Medicaid, Prenatal Care Assistance Program, COBRA and AIDS Health Insurance Programs, Medicaid Buy-In Program for Working Persons with Disabilities and the Medicare Savings Program.

MRT Transition of Medical Transportation to NYSDOH

As part of New York State's Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT), non-emergency Medical Transportation for the Long Island region (Nassau and Suffolk) was transitioned to the State in July 2015. The Long Island region was the last to be transferred to State responsibility. This shift to State control was initiated to improve the quality of transportation services, reduce the burden of local management contracts and achieve Medicaid savings. Logisticare holds the transportation management contract for the Long Island region as well as the New York City transportation program. The State's takeover of this function allowed Suffolk to terminate our Transportation Management contract with Servisair. In December 2015 medical transportation benefits previously included in Medicaid Managed Care contracts were also transitioned to State responsibility and are now handled by Logisticare.

MRT Expansion of Health Homes Coordination

New York's Health Home initiative through the Medicaid Redesign offers an opportunity to expand and improve care management for health home members, who have multiple chronic health conditions and intensive, high-cost service needs. DSS already has an agreement with Hudson River Healthcare (HRH) which allows HRH to submit lists of potential health home candidates to DSS via a secure FTP site. DSS then matches the data against known WMS data and returns the results. This provides the health home with enhanced contact information and assists with their enrollment outreach efforts. Suffolk has begun the data exchange agreement process with Northwell Health (formerly Long Island Jewish) to provide them with the same information for their health home clients. Expansion to Northwell is expected by the 2nd quarter of 2016.



Affordable Care Act

The Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA) required states to make significant changes to their Medicaid program. In New York State, Medicaid eligibility was expanded and a new method of counting household income based on modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) was established. This provided certain individuals with options to apply for Medicaid through the New York State of Health (NYSOH), over the phone, by mail or in person through a Navigator or Certified Application Counselor. Eligibility determinations of individuals 65 and older or disabled (non-MAGI) continue under current regulations and remain the responsibility of the local districts, including the eligibility applications for nursing home coverage. The ongoing eligibility of the current MAGI and non MAGI caseload continues to be the responsibility of the Suffolk Medicaid Undercare units.

Medicaid Services

Centralization of Medicaid Eligibility Units

Eastern and Western Suffolk Eligibility Units were combined into a single unit for all of Suffolk County, located in the Mary Gordon Building. The reason for this centralization was due to a decrease in application activity, as the MAGI-related consumers are now required to apply for Medicaid through the NYSoH Marketplace. Centralizing Medicaid Eligibility has allowed for more efficient use of examiner staff and processing of Medicaid applications. There continues to be three Undercare units: Eastern Suffolk located in Riverhead; Western Suffolk (caseload alpha A-G) located in Great River; and Western Suffolk (caseload alpha H-Z) located in Smithtown.

Medical Review of Personal Care Services and Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program Cases

The Medicaid Services Division established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDOH) to conduct Independent Medical Reviews of Personal Care Services and Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program cases as per State regulations. Prior to the MOU, the Department of Social Services had a Medical Director on staff in the Medicaid Services Division. With the assistance of the IT Division, a secure file transmission system was instituted to share client health information between the two Departments. For the initial reviews, supervisory staff of the Medical Services Bureau met with SCDOH's physician to facilitate implementation. During 2015, 84 Independent Medical Reviews were conducted. At the end of 2015, New York State Department of Health revised the regulations to expand the types of cases subject to review by including live-in cases.

Consumer Assistance for the Aged, Blind and Disabled

Suffolk County was awarded, \$4,000,000 in grant funding for a five year contract term to provide consumer assistance for the aged, blind and disabled (ABD). Under this program, Suffolk DSS has partnered with its subcontractor, Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council (NSHC), to provide education, outreach services and Facilitated Enrollment (FE) services to persons applying for government-sponsored health insurance, with a special focus on persons aged 65 years or older, certified blind individuals and the certified disabled population. NSHC has trained outreach staff in locations throughout Nassau and Suffolk and began outreach and enrollment services in October 2015. Applications are submitted to Suffolk DSS, as the Lead Agency, who then conducts quality assurance before forwarding the applications to the appropriate DSS office in each county. In December 2015 NSHC added the Northport VA to their list of sites. This is expected to increase enrollment activity throughout 2016.

Asset Verification System

The Medicaid Division has agreed to participate as one of several pilot counties in the upcoming rollout of a new Asset Verification System (AVS). State DOH has chosen a contractor for this system and is currently testing system design changes. Implementation in the pilot counties is scheduled to start in the 1st quarter of 2016. Currently staff is required to manually review financial records, and in many cases, request additional documentation, as part of the eligibility process for certain applicants, especially those seeking coverage for Nursing Home Care. Staff will be able to access the system and receive both real estate and financial information from across the country by entering basic demographic data. Implementation of AVS should reduce, if not eliminate, the need to request hard copies of financial records from consumers or financial institutions. Due to previous modifications to existing databases, the Chronic Care Unit of Suffolk DSS will immediately be ready to determine the impact of AVS on the overall processing workload.

Medicaid Services

Total Annual Average Caseload

Caseload

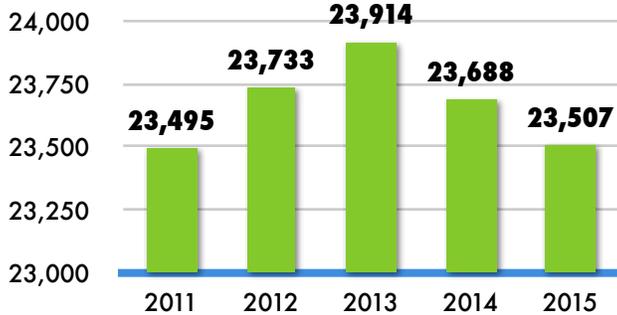
The number of Medicaid cases decreased from 115,448 in January 2015 to 104,606 in December 2015, which represents a decrease of 10,842 cases or 9.4%. This decrease can be attributed to the implementation of the New York State of Health (NYSoH) Exchange, which requires MAGI related individuals, with some exceptions, to apply and be processed through the Exchange.

Family Health Plus*

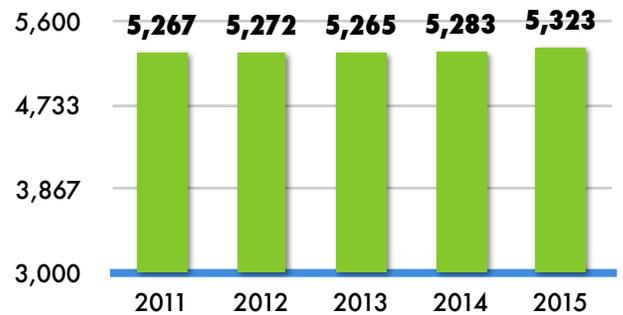
Under the reforms of the federal Affordable Care Act, the FHP program ended December 31, 2014. As of January 1, 2015, all of these cases were categorized as Community cases.

YEAR	CASELOAD
2015	109,482
2014	124,445
2013	129,190
2012	120,224
2011	111,318

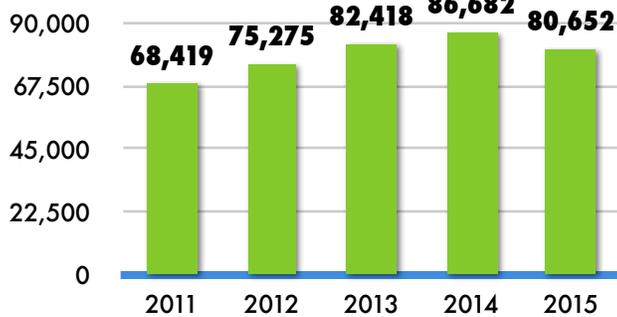
MA/SSI



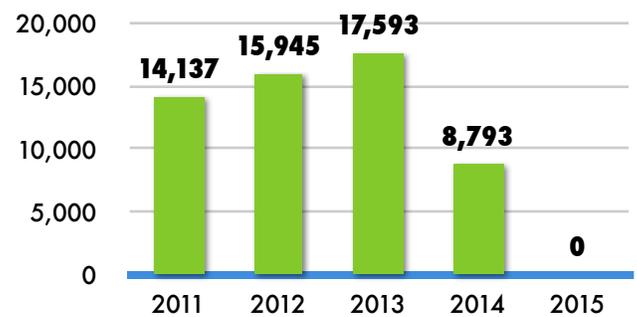
Chronic Care



Community



Family Health Plus*



* See above Family Health Plus

Smart Government Initiative

Online Replacement of the Common Benefit Identification Card (CBIC)

Medicaid, Client Benefits and IT implemented a process whereby consumers can request a replacement CBIC via the DSS website. Consumers can enter their basic demographic information, indicate a change of address if appropriate, and have their information matched to known cases in WMS. MA and CBA Administration staff then receive a daily report and issue the replacement cards. The addition of this link on the DSS website is aimed at reducing visits and wait times at the DSS Centers as well as reducing telephone inquiries.



Fair Hearings

A fair hearing (FH) is an opportunity for a client to have the New York State Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) review an action taken by the local DSS Agency, or to have OAH examine possible failures of the DSS Agency to act on the client's requests for assistance. A determination is then made as to whether the County acted appropriately under the law. Hearings can cover denials, reductions or discontinuances, taken regarding the various programs administered by DSS. The hearings are generally held locally and are presided over by State Administrative Law Judges. At the hearing the Social Services Examiners (Agency Representatives) that speak for Suffolk County DSS must establish that the Agency acted appropriately given the client's particular circumstances. Clients are given the opportunity to state why they disagree or feel that the action taken by the Agency was not correct. They may come on their own, or have legal or supportive representation. Usually the hearings are scheduled approximately 4-6 weeks from their request date and decisions are rendered about 2-4 weeks following the date the hearing is heard. Adjournments are given by OAH as necessary to ensure the client's due process rights are preserved.

Agency Representatives:

- Serve as liaisons between OAH and all SCDSS Centers/Units.
- Represent SCDSS in prehearing reviews requested by the Appellant to see their case records.
- Conference with the clients prior to the hearing regarding the issues in question.
- Review summary packets to ensure adequate documentation of the Agency's actions.
- Provide fair hearing training to Supervisors involved in the hearing process.
- Track and evaluate fair hearing statistics.



Reduction of Fair Hearing Backlog

The Fair Hearing (FH) Unit held meetings with the State's Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) for the purpose of reducing the backlog of Suffolk County's fair hearing cases. As per state regulations, the client is entitled to a decision within 90 days of the fair hearing request; a SNAP benefit fair hearing must be decided in 60 days. Suffolk offered suggestions for reducing the backlog numbers by asking that OAH track and limit the granting of adjournments and that OAH consider the pending Safety Net hearings which are particularly expensive for the County. In order to expedite the scheduling of those fair hearings, the FH Unit provided OAH with lists of various types of hearings, including those involving Safety Net issues, Chronic Care Medicaid hearings, and hearings that could be scheduled on heavier calendar days because of the issues involved (i.e., simple budget matters). The FH representatives have also requested that the Administrative Law Judges only grant short adjournments and have objected to those adjourned without good reason.

The results have been substantial. December 2014 showed a FH backlog of 975 cases compared to 429 in December 2015, which represents a reduction of 56%.

FAIR HEARING ACTIVITY 2015

Postponed or Adjourned	2,590
Hearings Scheduled/Rescheduled	10,696

FAIR HEARING DISPOSITIONS

Appellant Withdrawals	2,280
Appellant Defaults	3,984
Agency Decisions Upheld	1,426
Correct when Made	210
Other	141
SUBTOTAL	8,041
Agency Decisions Reversed	195
Agency Withdrawals	972
SUBTOTAL	1,167
TOTAL	9,208
Percentage of Hearings in Favor of the Agency	87%

Client Benefits Administration

Clients Benefits Administration (CBA) encompasses Temporary Assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Employment, Housing, and Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). The purpose of CBA is to provide financial assistance and service-related programs to low income households as they meet their goals in becoming self-sufficient.

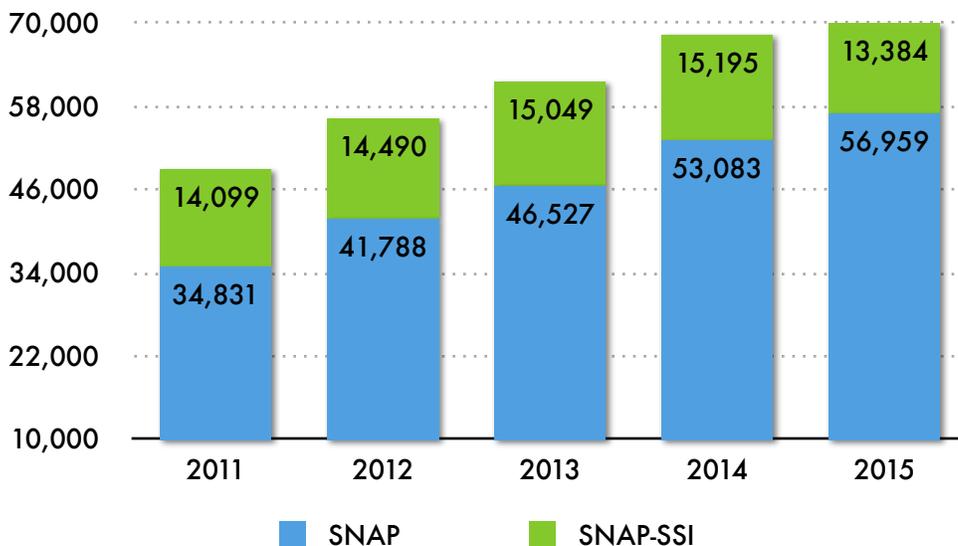


Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SNAP issues monthly electronic benefits that can be used like cash to purchase food. Eligibility and benefit levels are based on household size, income and other factors.

The total SNAP caseload has increased approximately 3% from an average of 68,278 in 2014 to an average of 70,343 in 2015. To further illustrate the overall growth, the SNAP caseload has increased by 73% over the last five years, from 40,607 in 2010 to 70,343 in 2015. It is worth noting that DSS received approximately 116 SNAP applications per day during 2015 vs. 126 per day in 2014, or a 7.9% decrease. These applications come in paper and as well as electronic format, with electronic applications accounting for 48.3% of the total SNAP applications received. We anticipate the SNAP caseload will continue to grow consistent with the trend depicted below.

Annual Average Caseload



Smart Government Initiative

Report to Identify SNAP Recipients Subject to New ABAWD Requirement

The USDA limits an Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) to 3 months of SNAP benefits in 36 month period unless the individual is participating in certain employment or training activities. New York State no longer qualifies for the ABAWD waiver effective 1/1/16.

CBA and IT were tasked with properly coding/identifying SNAP recipients who would be subject to the new ABAWD requirement as of 1/1/16, then re-code those cases before OTDA automated letter is sent in mid/late November 2015. CBA and IT successfully developed two management reports that allowed for resolution.

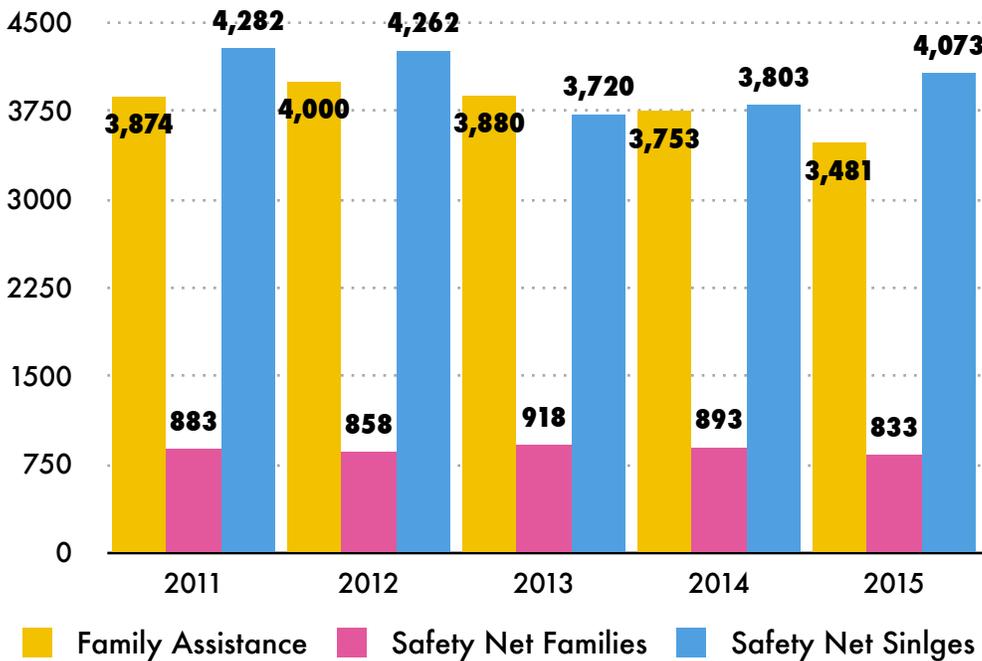
CBA's Common Eligibility Criteria

A common eligibility criteria spreadsheet was developed and is now available via a shared folder. Instead of keeping separate files of their own eligibility criteria, CBA staff now has access the same standard criteria. Consistency in the process allows for improved service to clients and better efficiency in-house.

Client Benefits Administration

Temporary Assistance

Temporary Assistance (TA) offers temporary help for shelter, heating, fuel, electricity and other basic needs and may be provided in the form of cash assistance or restricted payments. TA also provides emergency assistance to those that are in dire need but do not necessarily require ongoing assistance.



Single Point of Access

Single Point of Access (SPOA) provides timely access to intensive community based Care Coordination, Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), and/or Housing services and support for adults with severe mental illness. While the criteria for this housing resource are very specific, CBA has been actively identifying potential program candidates. In 2014, 191 clients in Emergency Housing were identified as possible candidates for SPOA Housing. Housing casework staff and vendors submitted 131 completed applications to SPOA on behalf of these clients. As a result, there were 32 SPOA Housing placements during 2015 versus 23 for 2014, representing an increase of 40%.

Veterans Outreach

CBA has collaborated with Veterans Services to reach out to Veterans who are in receipt of Temporary Assistance (TA), informing them of available services thru Veterans Services. CBA launched a mass mailing to these 87 Veterans as well as prepared and displayed a brief PowerPoint presentation on the lobby monitors in the four DSS centers. Additionally, in light of the high incidence of suicide among the Veteran population, CBA has reviewed the medical, psychiatric and substance abuse assessments of each Veteran that were completed as part of the TA eligibility process in order to determine those who may be the most at risk. These individuals will be asked to meet with an eligibility specialist at our DSS Centers to ensure that they are receiving the benefits and resources to which they are entitled. They will also meet with a Veterans Services Officer who will explain VA entitlements as well as reach out to the Veterans regarding any unmet mental health needs. CBA piloted this initiative with Veterans Services at the Smithtown Center in early February 2016.



Employment Program

The Suffolk Works Employment Program (SWEPE) assists families and individuals to attain self-sufficiency through a variety of employment related activities such as vocational training, supervised job search, work experience and unsubsidized employment. During 2015, TANF and Safety Net Families participated in the following employment activities on an average monthly basis:

- Vocational Training: 65
- Supervised Job Search: 41
- Work Experience: 175
- Unsubsidized Employment: 876

As a direct result of these employment activities, Suffolk County achieved the 4th best participation rate (on average) in New York State during 2015.



Housing Permanency

The DSS provides temporary housing assistance as well as promotes permanency for families and individuals. As part of our mission, the Housing unit assisted the following families and individuals with transitioning from emergency housing to permanent housing. Some of the decrease in 2012/2013 can be attributed to the loss of housing inventory due to Hurricane Sandy, coupled with the dramatic increase in the cost of rentals. However, with the implementation of various shelter supplement programs, CBA was able to increase permanent placements by 39.9%, from 190 in 2014 to 270 in 2015.

Year	Placements
2015	270
2014	193
2013	215
2012	300
2011	407



Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) provides heating assistance to low income families and individuals. It must be noted that HEAP Benefit amounts and income guidelines change annually and directly affect the number of benefits issued as well as the dollar amount of these benefits. As per OTDA, the HEAP benefits by season are reflected in the table below.

HEAP SEASON	# OF BENEFITS	AMOUNT OF BENEFITS
Oct. 2014 - Sept. 2015	53,861	\$17,138,102
Oct. 2013 - Sept. 2014	49,448	\$17,522,071
Oct. 2012 - Sept. 2013	46,932	\$16,102,866
Oct. 2011 - Sept. 2012	48,990	\$13,925,942
Oct. 2010 - Sept. 2011	51,876	\$19,879,099

Family & Children's Services

Through Family and Children's Services Administration (FCSA), the Department is responsible for the investigation of reports of child abuse and neglect and adult protective services. The division also provides foster care and adoptive services and services for preserving, reuniting or rehabilitating families indicated for abuse or neglect. The division's Child Care Unit administers the County's child care program and authorizes child care subsidies for child protective families, public assistance families, and income eligible families according to eligibility guidelines.

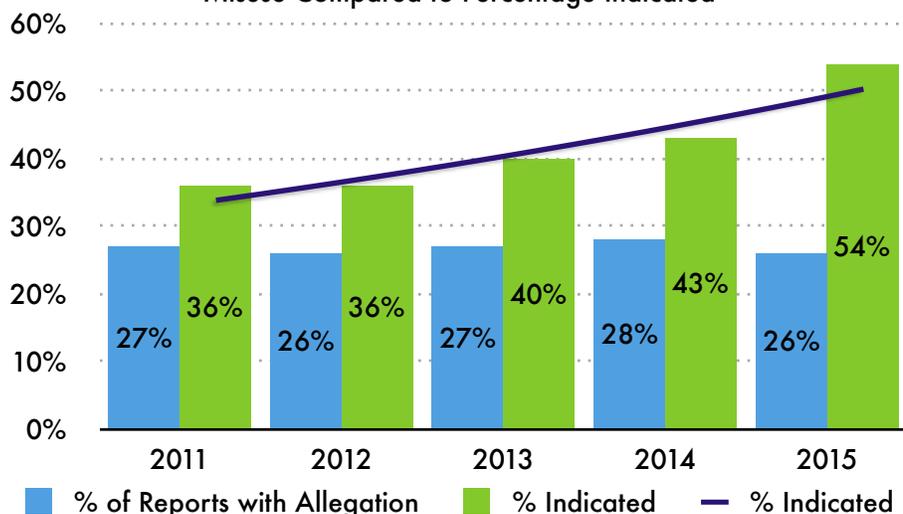
Increasing Reports Indicated for Parental Drug/Alcohol Abuse

New York State health data shows that the number of babies born with positive toxicology in Suffolk County has more than doubled from 2009 through 2014. There were 171 Suffolk infants born with opioids in their system in 2014 at a rate of 11.2 per thousand, compared with 93 babies, or a birthrate of 5.42 per thousand, in 2009. Child Protective Services has experienced a spike in indicated drug related reports of child abuse and neglect as well as foster care admissions.

- CPS substantiates approximately 30% of all reports for some credible evidence of child abuse or neglect.
- Approximately 26% of all reports involve allegations of parental drug/alcohol abuse.
- In 2015, CPS investigated approximately 2,400 reports of drug/alcohol abuse.
- In 2015, CPS substantiated a higher proportion of these cases and that rate has increased dramatically in the past few years from 36% in 2012 to 54% in 2015.

As a result, CPS is petitioning more of these cases to court which results in an increased workload for CPS staff and the courts.

Percentage of Reports with Allegations of Parental Drug / Alcohol Misuse Compared to Percentage Indicated



Child Protective Investigations Intake

The intake of new reports of child abuse and neglect decreased by 126 reports, from 9,083 reports in 2014 to 8,957 reports in 2015. This is a decrease of 1.4% and is the first time intake has dropped below 9,000 reports in a year since 2007. Suffolk County has the second highest intake of new CPS reports of any county in New York State other than New York City. The high intake is due to the County's large population.



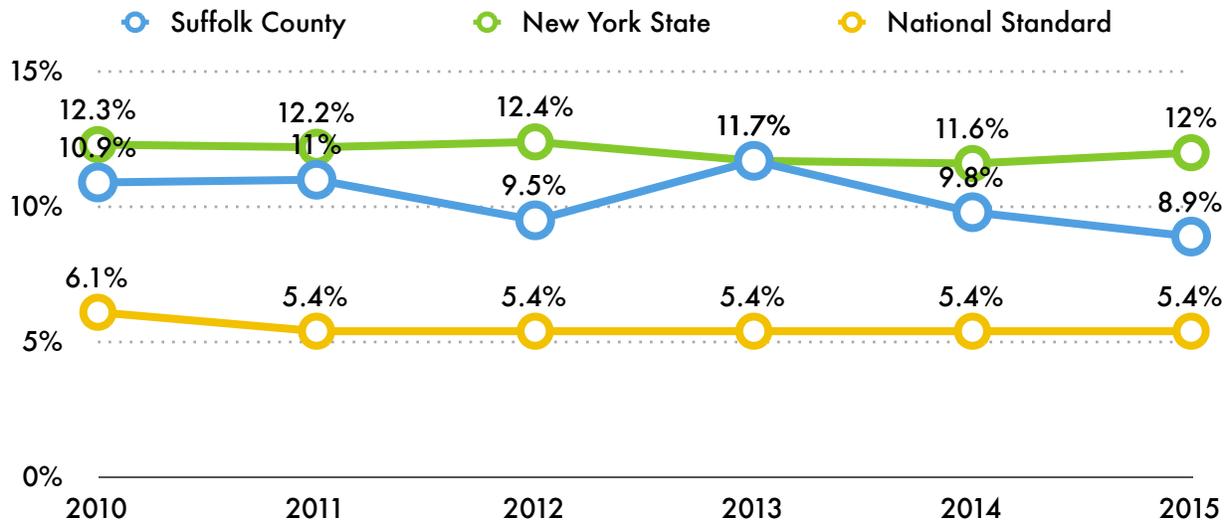
Overdue Investigations

New York State tracks "overdue investigations" as a performance measure. CPS workers have 60 days to complete an investigation of child abuse and neglect and determine whether the reported allegations are substantiated or unfounded. In 2015, Suffolk County had an average end-of-month overdue rate of 11.5% for the year. The New York State benchmark is 10%. Suffolk holds the second lowest rate of the State's six largest counties.



Recurrence of Maltreatment

The recurrence of child maltreatment measures the rate of receiving a second substantiated report of child abuse and neglect within six months of a prior indication. As of September 31, 2015 – the end of the federal fiscal year, Suffolk County hit a new end-of-year record low with a recurrence of maltreatment of 8.9%, which represents a – 3.1 percentage points below the NYS average of 12%. Suffolk is doing a good job of alleviating child abuse and neglect and has brought the rate of recurrence down from a high 18% in 2001. Suffolk has the 11th best record among 64 districts in the State.



Child Protective/Preventive Services – Service Delivery

The Child Protective/Preventive Services (CPPS) Bureau is responsible for the supervision of “indicated” cases of child abuse and neglect and providing services to alleviate and avoid a recurrence of maltreatment. Most cases are court ordered. The bureau also provides voluntary preventive services to families with children at risk of foster care placement. CPPS was responsible for serving 1,244 families with more than 2,500 children at the end of December 2015, down from 1,258 families at the end of December 2014, and down 169 from 1,427 families and 2,900 children in December 2011.

Family Assessment Response (FAR)

FAR is New York State’s alternative Child Protective response to certain child maltreatment reports. Unlike the traditional CPS investigative process, FAR is a non-investigative and intentionally family-centered and non-adversarial approach to CPS. FAR aims to provide protection to children by engaging families in an assessment of child safety, risk, family needs and finding solutions to family problems. FAR helps to identify informal and formal support systems to meet family needs and increase their ability to care for their children. With two teams and a total of 10 caseworkers, the division tracked 616 reports through FAR in 2014, or 7% of all new Child Protective reports. Because of staff openings in the FAR and CPS investigative teams, Family and Children’s services collapsed the two FAR teams into one in July 2015 and transferred two of the eight remaining FAR workers to traditional CPS teams. As a result, the number of FAR tracked reports decreased to 463 in 2015, 5.2% of all new Child Protective reports.

Child Care

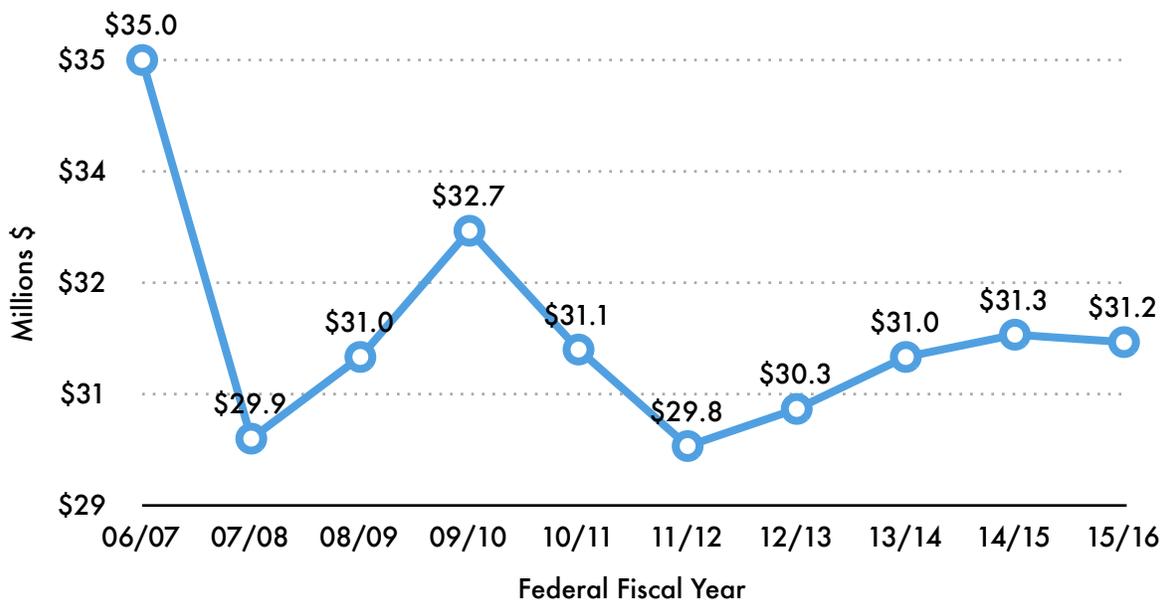
The number of families receiving child care subsidies from the Department of Social Services increased by 411, or 19.8%, from 2,073 in December 2014 to 2,484 in December 2015. The number of children receiving child care services increased by 807, or 19.0%, from 4,255 to 5,062 during the same time. Due to Suffolk County increasing the local income eligibility standard from 150% in July 2013 to 165% in July 2014, more families are receiving child care subsidies

It is questionable whether these levels can be sustained in 2016 and beyond as the Child Care Block from the State and Federal government has failed to keep pace with child care demand. Further, there will be added pressure on the Block Grant this year and beyond as New York State responds to the Federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014. The CCDBG Act of 2014 was signed into law by President Obama in November 2014. The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and the Division of the Budget (DOB) have generated estimates that it will cost New York State \$90 million or more to comply with the requirements of the reauthorization bill, with the costs falling on the State, County and child care providers.

According to NYS, without additional Federal funding, the new subsidy requirements under the Act, (that is, the 12-month eligibility redetermination period and the graduated phase out of families leaving the subsidy program), may put states in the position of closing intake, or even closing active cases, to implement the new subsidy requirements.

Children come into foster care for a variety of reasons including the illness, death, or incarceration of their parents or as a result of neglectful or abusive family situations. The number of Suffolk County children in foster care decreased from 716 children at the end of 2014 to 673 children at the end of 2015, which represents a decrease of 43 children or 6%. This is the lowest number of children in foster care at the end of a year since 2012 when we ended the year with 650 children in care. The number of children discharged from foster care from January through December 2015 outpaced the number of admissions, 468 to 416.

Child Care Block Grant





Partnership for Permanency

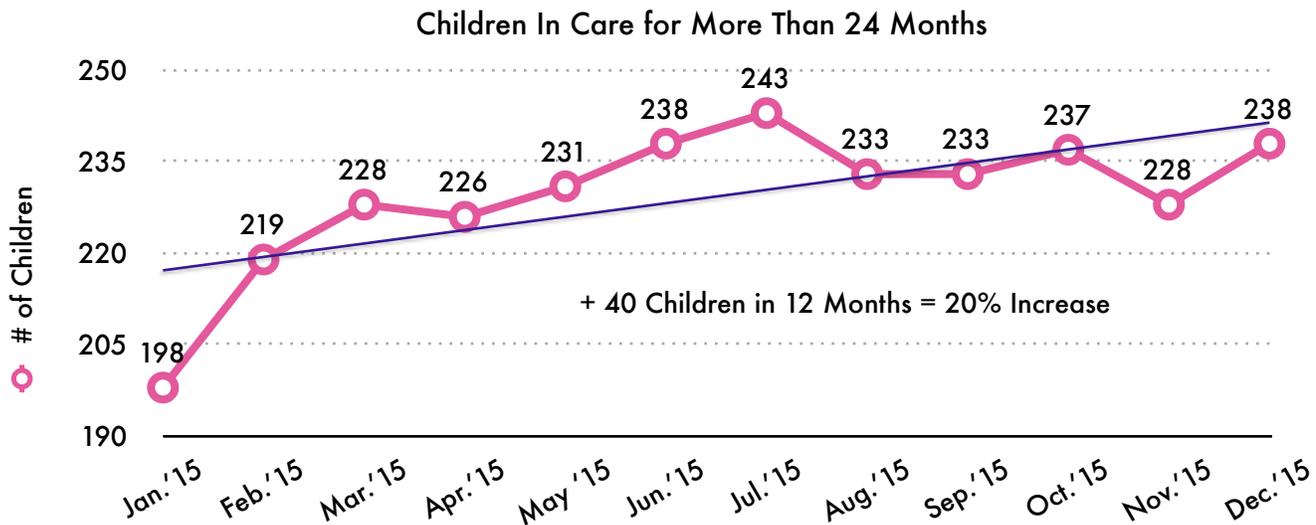
In August 2015, Family and Children's Services Administration (FCSA) started the Partnership for Permanency (P4P) team to improve outcomes for children in foster care. By definition, foster care is only a temporary placement for children who cannot live with their parents. Through the Partnership for Permanency team, we are looking to improve permanent outcomes for children in foster care including return to family, adoptions, or legal guardianship.

The P4P team meets several times each month and uses data to identify "bright spots" and challenges in our practice and performance. The work involves a combination of diagnostic work, strategic planning and implementation - including development of metrics, tracking performance and achievement of goals.

In its initial work, FCSA has identified several strengths and challenges. For children discharged to permanency within "12 Months of Entry into Foster Care," one of four federal permanency indicators, Suffolk County, with a rate of 43%, exceeds the national average of 40.5% and the NYS performance rate of 34.5%.

For children re-entering care within 12 months of discharge to permanency, Suffolk, at a rate of 8.2%, surpassed the national average of 8.3% and bested the statewide average of 10.4% by 2.2%. (The lower the re-entry rate, the better).

While FCSA has successfully reduced the number of children in foster care and achieved permanency quickly for the majority, the number of children with "delayed permanency" (i.e., those in care for 24 months or longer), increased by 40 children from 198 to 238, which represents an increase of 20% in 2015.



To improve our performance in finding permanent homes for youth, FCSA is leveraging and expanding on its "bright spots" and achievements. For example, FCSA finalized 188 adoptions between 2014 and 2015, an increase of 63, or 50% more than the 125 adoptions finalized in the prior two years. In addition, FCSA completed 13 KinGap guardianship cases in 2015 and more than any other district in the State (outside of New York City) since the program began in April 2011.

FCSA is working toward finalizing more adoptions and increasing legal guardianship. To start, the division is reengineering the adoption finalization process to cut the average length of time to adoption by 10 months (from 21 months to under a year). In addition, FCSA is working to increase permanency by making service connections with families sooner and tracking permanency earlier starting with 10-month permanency conferences. The division has also been awarded a planning grant to improve its parent/child visitation practice. This grant will allow FCSA to improve its visitation practices and to compete for a larger grant to implement new strategies to reunite families sooner.

Adult Protective Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) offers protective services to adults and individuals 18 years or older with mental and/or physical impairments that prevent them from meeting essential needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, and medical care. APS also provides protective services to those who are in a situation where they are harmed or threatened with harm by the actions of themselves or others. This often involves the frail elderly and adults who are physically or mentally disabled, have a serious illness, or are alcohol/substance abusers. This service is voluntary and available to all adults regardless of income and resources.

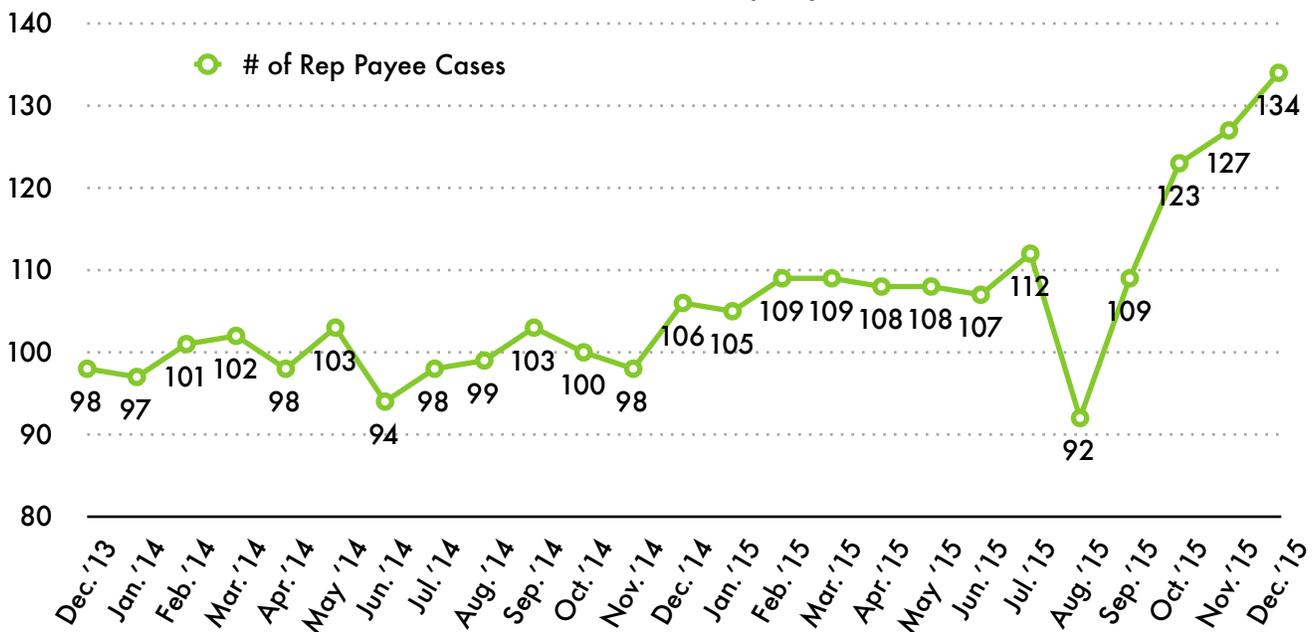
The APS Intake Unit handles over 4,000 calls a year, over a third of which become active APS referrals. The remaining callers are provided with information or are directed to agencies that would directly assist both the 'at risk' individual and their families. APS Intake handles calls from concerned professionals and the community covering all of Suffolk County.

In 2015, APS received 1,613 new referrals, compared to 1,488 in 2014. This represents an increase of 125 new referrals, or 8% year-over-year and is a record intake for new reports. The increase follows a sharp rise in reports in 2014 when the intake increased by 221 reports, or 17% over the average annual intake of 1,267 from 2009 through 2013. The Department expects this trend to continue as the County's population begins to age.

Year	Referrals
2015	1,613
2014	1,488
2013	1,216
2012	1,285
2011	1,192

APS Representative Payee cases have increased to record levels in 2015. A representative payee is an individual appointed to manage the finances of APS clients who cannot properly manage their money. The rep payee ensures the proper use of their money, prevents the mismanagement of their money, and prevents the financial exploitation of this money by other people. The rep payee caseload has averaged around 100 active cases in the past two years

Adult Protective Services Rep Payee Cases



Safe Harbour

For the third consecutive year, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services has awarded funding to Suffolk County to enhance services for sexually exploited children under the Safe Harbour initiative. The Safe Harbour Act of 2008 guaranteed that sexually exploited children would be treated as child victims and be offered services that could reduce trauma, hasten rehabilitation and pave the way for better outcomes.

Suffolk County DSS initiated its Safe Harbour program starting in June 2014 including a contract with EAC Network Inc. that hired a Safe Harbour Coordinator. EAC's Safe Harbour Program established a hotline number (631-533-5656) so that calls may be received 24/7, and the Safe Harbour Coordinator is available to provide information, guidance or assistance (such as accompaniment into the field to jointly interview a child).

Children suspected of being exploited/trafficked may be identified by DSS staff, Probation, Suffolk County's Alternative for Youth Program, law enforcement personnel, medical professionals, schools, community-based service providers, family members, friends and neighbors. Some are already known to, or enter, the Child Welfare system through a CPS report that results in a voluntary or court-ordered Child Protective Service case, or by voluntarily applying for preventive services.

During 2015, 75 children were identified as potential victims of exploitation/trafficking. Six of the children were formally confirmed as victims by NYS Office of Children and Family Services and NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services. DSS staff have been building relationships of trust with the children with the hope that the children will eventually make a disclosure, accept supportive services and, ultimately agree to work with law enforcement to be confirmed as a victim and prosecute their exploiters. In the interim, DSS staff continuously assess and meet the children's basic needs for shelter, food, clothing, advocacy, support, educational services, mental health services, and alcohol/substance abuse treatment services within the framework of Suffolk County's existing service delivery system.

With its 2016 award of \$136,000, Suffolk County DSS and EAC Network Inc. will be expanding the Safe Harbour program to include mental health services with an emphasis on trauma-related interventions, peer support through the use of peer specialists who can serve as mentors to participating youth, and vocational support including counseling, job development and job placement services to participating youth as needed.

Infant Safe Sleep

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) does not discriminate. Sadly, SIDS is the sudden, unexplained death of a baby younger than 1 year of age that doesn't have a known cause even after a complete investigation. In Suffolk County alone, Child Protective Services investigated 59 child fatalities over the past five year; 25% or 15 of those fatalities involved sleep related incidents. Even though the exact cause of SIDS is unknown, there are ways to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death. Since awareness campaigns that stressed back sleeping for babies started in 1994, the SIDS rate in the United States has dropped by 50 percent. This decreased rate equals thousands of babies' lives and is a result of parents and caregivers placing babies on their back to sleep.

- *Always place a baby on his or her back to sleep, for naps and at night, to reduce the risk of SIDS.*
- *Use a firm sleep surface, such as a mattress in a safety-approved crib covered by a fitted sheet, to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death.*
- *Keep soft objects, toys, crib bumpers, and loose bedding out of your baby's sleep area to reduce the risk of SIDS.*

In 2015, the Stony Brook University's Sudden Infant and Child Death Resource Center did a presentation at the Department and provided campaign materials to us, which we distributed to our shelters.

Child Support Enforcement Bureau

The purpose of the Child Support Enforcement Bureau (CSEB) is to ensure that custodial parents of children in Suffolk County receive child support owed to them by their child's non-custodial parent. Child Support regulations allow the following actions:

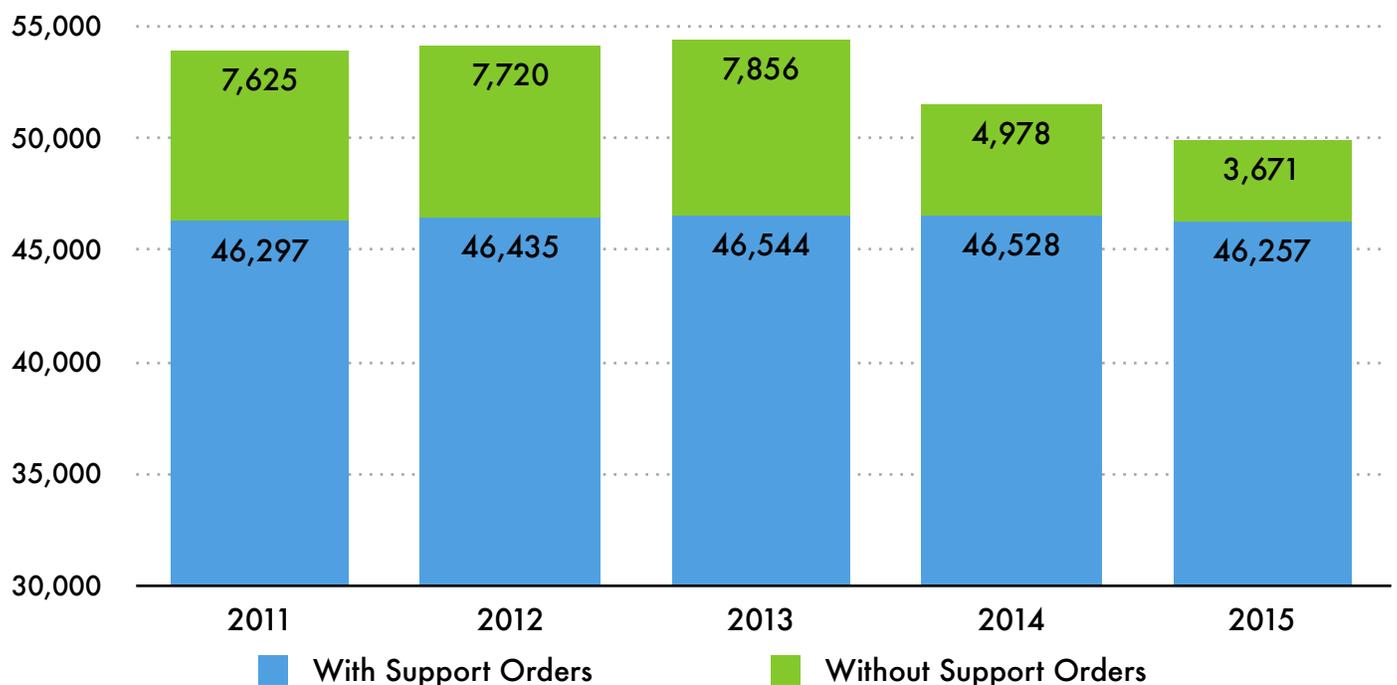
- Establishment of the legal obligation to support: This may include court ordered paternity testing.
- Locating a non-custodial parent: This may include research on social media, obtaining assistance from SIU, or inquiries through the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- Establishment of the amount of support: This includes methods and terms of payments as well.
- Collections: Once the support order is established, the collection and disbursement of monies associated with that order must be monitored.
- Enforcement: This involves activities to enforce collection of support, including income withholding and other available enforcement techniques such as NYS Lottery Intercept, collections from tax refunds, and suspension of driver's license.

Child Support Collections

YEAR	AMOUNT
2015	\$159,993,097
2014	\$157,610,939
2013	\$155,765,637
2012	\$152,902,095
2011	\$151,894,862
2010	\$148,833,045
2009	\$143,981,027
2008	\$141,139,867
2007	\$140,832,267
2006	\$132,848,711



Annual Caseload Averages



Key Performance Measures

The Federal Office of Child Support has established five key performance measures that each state must meet to receive the maximum amount of incentives available.

1. **Paternity Establishment Performance Level (PEP)**
 - This measures the establishment of legal paternity for children on caseload.
 - Federal goal is 80%; Suffolk's percentage for PEP was 94.88% in December 2015, up slightly from 94.28% in December 2014.
2. **Support Order Establishment Performance Level (SEP)**
 - This measures the percent of court ordered cases to total caseload.
 - Federal goal is 80%; Suffolk's percentage for SEP was 92.67% in December 2015, up from 91.73% in December 2014.
3. **Current Collections Performance Level**
 - This measures current support collections to current support obligations.
 - Federal goal is 80%; Suffolk's percentage was 66.47% in December 2015, down from 79.32% in December 2014*.
4. **Arrearage Collection Performance Level**
 - This measures past due support collections to cases with arrears due.
 - Federal goal is 80%; Suffolk's percentage was 40.15% in December 2015, up from 38.45% in December 2014.
5. **Cost Effectiveness Performance Level**
 - This measures total IV-D dollars collected to total IV-D dollars expended.
 - To date, there has been no definitive direction on exactly how to calculate this from NYS DCSE.

*NYS Division of Child Support Enforcement (NYS DCSE) continues to distribute a share of those incentive funds to local districts based on their percentage share to total collections statewide.

**Paternity Establishment
Performance Level**

Year	PEP%
2015	94.88%
2014	94.28%
2013	90.16%
2012	86.00%
2011	85.82%

As of December each Year

**Support Order Establishment
Performance Level**

Year	SEP%
2015	92.67%
2014	91.73%
2013	86.15%
2012	85.30%
2011	85.52%

As of December each Year

Information Technology

Information Technology manages the PC and network helpdesk, and creates and maintains the technological environment at the Department's various sites.



Smart Government Initiatives Database Development

SOS Synch

Database logic was developed to synchronize case information in the Emergency Placement application to the SOS database. The purpose of the synchronization is to:

- Update the auto-assigned "temporary" case number of a new Emergency Placement application with matching WMS data.
- Update case and individual information when available in WMS and/or provide an exception report of cases that could not be synchronized.

The synchronization went live in January 2015 and runs on a daily schedule at 6:15 pm.

Shelter Online Attendance Reporting (SOAR)

In order to improve shelter providers' experiences with the Shelter Online Attendance Reporting (SOAR) system, the single sign-on functionality was implemented in March 2015. This functionality enables shelter providers with multiple locations to use one account to manage all sites. Another enhancement for the provider is the ability to create/save a print file of their submitted daily attendance and total fields for children/parents.

Database Application Conversion

Due to the end of life support of Microsoft Server 2003, DSS databases required the following conversions in order to migrate to Server 2008 r2:

- 4 Access applications were converted to VB.Net\SQL Server
- 8 Applications were converted from VB.Net 2003 to VB.Net 2008
- 1 Application was completely rewritten from VB6 to VB.Net 2008
- 25 Databases were migrated from Server 2003 to Server 2008 r2

CBIC Application

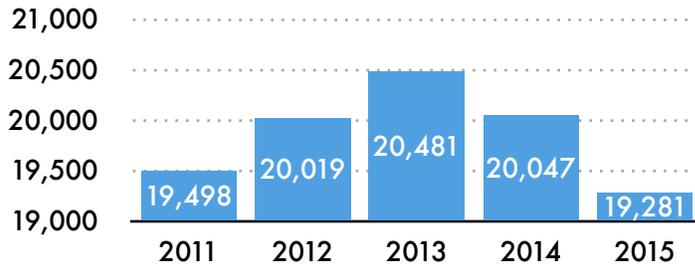
A website was developed to allow clients to request CBIC cards online instead of visiting a DSS Center. Functionality was created to allow key members in CBA and Medicaid to review and process requests.

HEAP Application

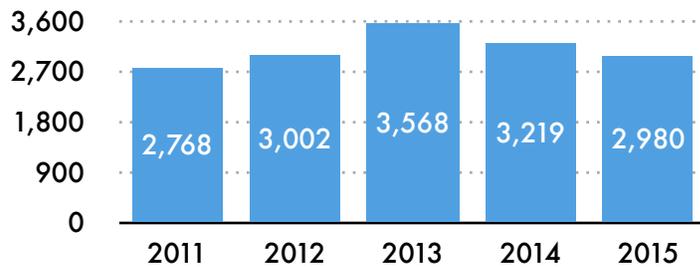
This application was created to prevent the same oil vendor from being selected for a service in any given zip code when other vendors are available to cover that zip code. Users enter a zip code as a parameter and the application then returns the next available vendor that the user should contact.

Help Desk Work Orders

Applications / Software



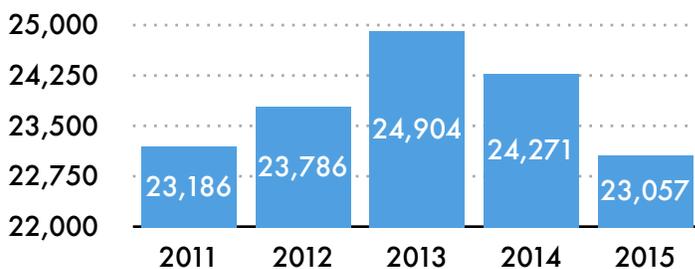
Hardware



Network



Grand Total All Help Desk Work Orders



Program & Application Support

Child Care

IT updated the Suffolk County DSS Child Care web presence. Child Care FAQs were posted to the website along with an eligibility wizard and fillable forms.

Robocalls

DSS partnered with FRES and implemented a monthly robocall system for SNAP and MA recipients to remind clients that their benefits are expiring. In February 2015 IT received access to the Code Red (robocall) system; therefore, DSS is no longer dependent on FRES to run our calls. In addition to the monthly MA and SNAP recertification calls, IT generates monthly calls to CSEB Deadbeat and Interstate parents. For CCTA recipients, a weekly robocall is generated for new applications and recertification calls are done on an ad hoc basis.

Wireless Access (Wi-Fi)

IT worked with DoIT to set up a wireless access point (Wi-Fi) so that Fair Hearings staff could use laptops during the hearings. Fair Hearing staff can now log on to the network wirelessly and access information contained in the case record to help defend the Department during Fair Hearings.

Personnel & Support Services

The Personnel and Supportive Services Division includes the following units: Human Resources, Facilities Management, Security, Special Investigations Unit and Staff Development. Administrative support is provided to allow the other Divisions to focus on their core missions.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Unit oversees the maintenance of official personnel records, processes all employee hiring, handles employee relations inquiries, maintains the employee database, updates employee manuals, and handles inquiries regarding sick leave, workers' compensation, and other employment related issues. The Department currently staffs 1,450 full-time employees. In 2015, Human Resources processed 31 new hires and promoted 12 employees. Throughout 2015, approximately 450 temporary employee appointments were processed. By close of 2015, the Department had a turnover of 82 full-time employees, 46% of which were due to retirement. Last year, an employee suggestion program, Improving Quality (IQ), was implemented to promote the communication of ideas, enabling both DSS and its employees to benefit from greater productivity, manageable workloads, and safer working conditions. The program ensures objective consideration of all ideas.

Staff Development

It is the responsibility of Staff Development to review and coordinate training topics and facilitate training offering deliveries for all Divisions within the Department. Training allocations from NYS Office of Temporary Disability, NYS Office of Family and Children Services, and NYS Department of Health primarily provide program specific training institutes and topic training to support the implementation of regulatory compliant training curriculum for all permanent local district staff. Additionally, the State offices provide Social Services Workforce Development Skills topics and Computer Skills topics needed to enhance performance skills of all employees. Staff Development maintains a comprehensive training database to track and manage training needs and outcomes. At the district level, direct classroom training is provided to staff by Staff Development, including: Employee Orientation topics (Sexual Harassment & Discrimination, Americans with Disabilities Act, Confidentiality, Language Interpretation), Mandated Reporter Overview for DSS employees, Civil Service Compliant Interviewing Skills, Defensive Driving, and other topics as needed. Additionally, Staff Development coordinates, facilitates and tracks the training offerings provided by dedicated Training Staff in other divisions. In 2015, a combined (State and local district) total of 324 topics were attended by 3,393 staff.

Facilities Management

The Facilities Management Unit ensures the operational efficiencies in day-to-day operations and manages long-term planning for all eight DSS buildings. This includes maintaining existing space, anticipating changes, determining space allocation, and scheduling building repairs. Projects include the renovation of existing space to accommodate the needs of personnel and to increase workflow efficiency and productivity.

Security

It is the responsibility of the Security Unit to oversee and ensure the safety of all staff, clients and visitors of DSS facilities. Security provides an orderly environment and assists several hundred clients each day in conducting their business at DSS facilities. They are prepared to assist with emergency situations and document incidents accurately. Security Guards also answer general questions from clients, direct clients to the appropriate line for their business, as well as instruct which forms must be completed.

Personnel & Support Services

Special Investigations Unit

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is responsible for the review and investigation of fraud complaints and allegations on behalf of the Suffolk County Department of Social Services. SIU's primary function is to ensure that the expenditure of public funds is only for those who are legally entitled to receive these benefits. Through a variety of mandated programs and local initiatives, SIU investigators save taxpayer dollars by uncovering fraud of unreported assets, income, household composition, dual assistance, fraudulent vendor billing, misuse of funds, and the filing of false applications.

Uncovered:	2014	2015
Investigations completed:	3,379	3,930
FEDS/CC FEDS cases completed:	2,212	2,911
Fraud uncovered:	\$1.708 Million	\$0.928 Million
Realized Cost Avoidance:	\$7.326 Million	\$7.941 Million
Cases Referred to SCDA for Criminal Action:	53	30

Front End Detection System (FEDS) - FEDS is a State mandated fraud prevention program for Temporary Assistance and Child Care applications designed to identify ineligibility and to eliminate potential overpayments prior to case acceptance and ongoing assistance. Cases referred to FEDS must meet referral guidelines and appropriate State-approved indicators. FEDS investigations comprise approximately 33% of the total workload in the Special Investigations Unit.

Media Search -

Beginning in June 2015, SIU began a review of news media sources in an effort to identify active subsidy recipients who were recently arrested. Once verified that the arrested individuals remained in custody and were also currently in receipt of subsidy benefits, the Department took action to close the recipients' subsidy cases. Although there are monthly data matches utilized by the Department which identify incarcerated individuals, this quick search helps to expedite the process and prevent benefits from being issued inappropriately. A total of 72 cases were closed as a result of this initiative representing:

- 5 Child Care Cases
- 4 Temporary Assistance Cases
- 34 SNAP Cases
- 29 Medicaid Cases

Finance



Finance consists of three units: Administration, Revenue, and Expenditures.

The Administration Unit handles all areas within Finance and performs many Department-wide and interdivisional functions. In addition, Finance Administration is responsive to the fiscal concerns of the program Divisions.

The Revenue Unit consist of three key units: Assets and Resources (A&R), Federal and State Aid Claims, and Collections. A&R Unit's function is to identify and secure liens. The Federal & State Aid Claims Unit must continuously adapt to a changing fiscal environment relating to both Suffolk County and New York State revised fiscal systems and financial reporting requirements. The Collections Unit is responsible for collecting refunds and recoveries, as well as maintaining the accounts receivable subsidiary system for landlord security deposits and other debts.

The Expenditure Unit consists of the accounts payable units. Complying with Federal, State and Local Laws to issue payments for the many program areas within the Department is complex. In addition, the Unit provides fiscal information and documentation to various Departments within the County. The Unit also provides the Department's Special Investigations Unit with payment authorization documentation to assist in fraud investigations.

2015 Accomplishments/Notable Happenings

Administration

The Administration component of the Finance division oversaw the Department's \$633 million adopted budget for 2015, and is directly responsible for coordinating the Department's Operating and Capital Budget Requests. In the narrative of the 2015 Budget, the Suffolk County Budget Review Office references six concepts in DSS that could be applied in other County Departments. This captures the initiatives and efficiencies that were included in our Budget, and are a part of the Departments continuous process improvement mindset.

Revenue

The Revenue unit brought in an excess of \$325 million in revenue. The Division aggressively sought recoupments and money owed from vendors through our internal collection process as well as using an outside collection agency. The Finance division continues to work with program areas to strategize on maximizing revenue as well as timely filing of claims with the State to secure both State and Federal dollars owed to Suffolk County.

Expenditure

The Accounting unit processed over 180,000 vouchers and more than 322,000 checks and stayed consistent with processing time of payments. The Expenditure unit remained steadfast in compliance for all payment processing subject to Local Laws. The average days for payment of child care vendors as well as not-for-profits were below 24 days throughout the year.

2015 Employees of the Month



January 2015
Yesenia Gonzalez
 Social Services Examiner I - SS
 Client Benefits - SouthWest Center



February 2015
Alexandra M. Joy
 Social Services Examiner I
 Client Benefits/Housing - MGB



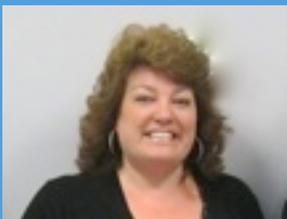
March 2015
Alan Bettis
 Social Services Examiner I
 Medicaid - Smithtown Center



April 2015
Karleen B. Norton
 Social Services Examiner I
 Medicare Undercare - MGB



May 2015
May Berkowitz
 Senior Account Clerk
 CSEB/Finance - MacArthur Bldg.



June 2015
LeighAnne Mattheus
 Senior Clerk
 Special Investigations Unit - MGB



July 2015
Karen L. Webber
 Principal Clerk
 FCSA - MacArthur Bldg.



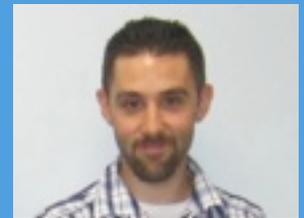
August 2015
Christopher "Mike" Cosgrove
 Office Systems Analyst II
 Information Technology - MGB



September 2015
Gerald McDowell
 Social Services Examiner I
 Client Benefits - South West Center



October 2015
Kathleen M. Chin
 Caseworker
 FCSA/APS - MacArthur Bldg.



November 2015
Christopher Orlando
 Office Systems Analyst I
 Information Technology - MGB



December 2015
Jennifer Liss
 Social Services Examiner I
 HEAP - Smithtown Center