

Agency Director

Barbara Tamas

Lorain County Commissioners

Ted Kalo
Lori Kokoski
Matt Lundy



Mission Statement

Lorain County Department of Job and Family Services is committed to promoting the dignity and self-worth of those in need. We believe that given a choice, people prefer self-sufficiency. It is our mission to maximize available community resources to support, encourage, and assist families and individuals in achieving their goals for self-sufficiency; to assist in elimination of barriers; and to respond to ever-changing needs in a progressive, caring, professional manner.

Contact Us:

Lorain County Job & Family Services
42485 N. Ridge Rd.
Elyria, OH 44035-1057

Phone: (440) 323-5726 or
(440) 244-4150

Child Support: (440) 284-4401 or
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Website: www.lcdjfs.com

Hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

7:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Tuesday

7:30 a.m. - 6:15 p.m.

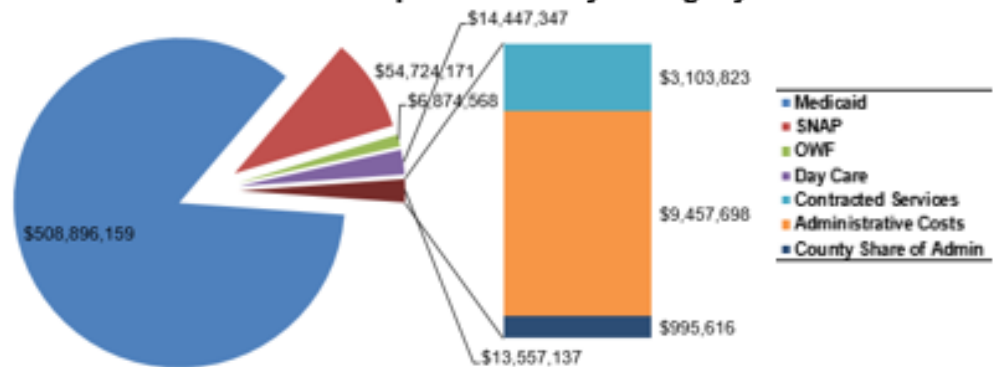
Lorain County Job & Family Services

2017
Annual Report

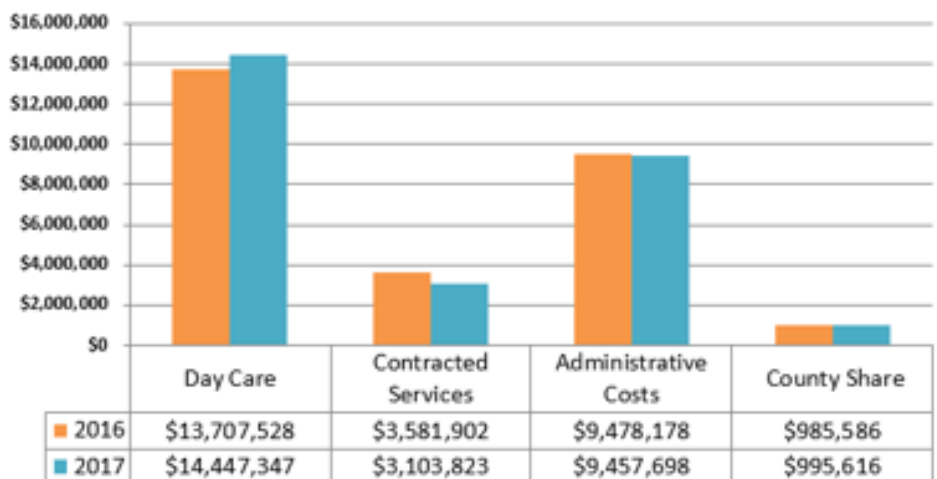
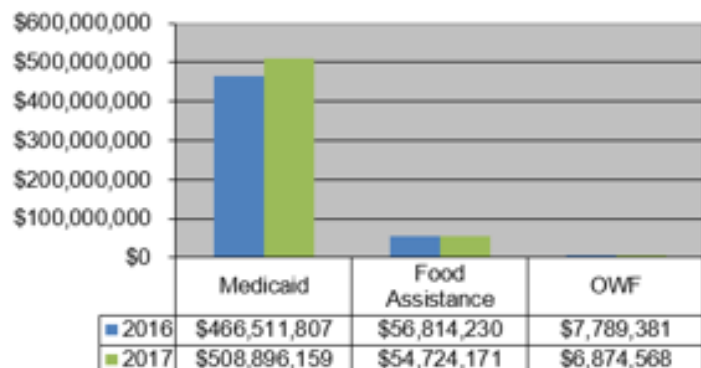
Snapshot of 2017

- Our In-House Work Experience Program provides OWF cash assistance recipients and SNAP Employment and Training recipients an opportunity to acquire skills necessary to obtain employment. In addition, we have a contract agreement with Windfall Industries which began in May 2016 who also provides OWF and SNAP recipients with job readiness activities designed to increase employability potential. A total of 686 individuals logged 15,009.25 hours of participation in the program.
- In July and August of 2017, the Child Support Enforcement Agency collected \$84,598.50 in child support and completed 334 license reinstatements through their annual back-to-school amnesty program.
- In 2017, our agency delivered 3,171 voter registration forms to the Board of Elections.
- The Income Maintenance Call Center averaged 12,670 phone calls per month in 2017. They also logged an average of 996 pieces of mail per month and placed an average of 1,042 long distance calls. The total number of clients seen in the main lobby averaged 5,616 per month.
- Lorain County received the Director's Award for Excellence in Claims Management Benefit Recovery Leader award for 2017.

2017 Expenditures by Category



Comparison of Expenditures: 2016-2017



Family Employment and Support Services - 2017

The Family Employment and Support Services (FE/SS) Division provides economic support to individuals in Lorain County in need of financial assistance through cash, medical, and food assistance programs.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP is a federally funded program designed to subsidize family and individual income to purchase food necessary for maintaining good health. Lorain County continued to strive to deliver these benefits with accuracy, while meeting or exceeding strict federal and state performance standards. Individuals between the ages of 18-50 years old must have a work activity or meet an exemption to qualify for SNAP.

Lorain County had 38,411 individuals receiving Food Assistance averaging \$124/month per household member, this is a slight increase from last year.

On average, the total monthly issuance distributed in Lorain County is \$4.6 million per month.

A determination of benefits are to be completed within 24 hours/7 days if qualifying for expedited benefits or within 30 days otherwise. Our timeliness rate was 90.5% for 2017.

Investigation

The primary responsibility of the Investigative Unit is to investigate taxpayer complaints and allegations of welfare fraud by assembling the best available evidence including documents and accounts of witnesses. Claims were established on 1,354 cases, totaling \$2,731,182 which is subject to collection. Upon review of evidence and specific criteria cases may be referred to the Prosecutor's Office for possible legal action.

Claims Processing

The Claims Processing Unit pursues collection of OWF, PRC, Medicaid, Disability Assistance and Food Stamp overpayments. Referrals are made to the Investigative Unit for further action if a client fails to cooperate in making restitution or if an intentional program violation has been committed. In conjunction with Claims Processing, the Treasury

Offset Program (TOP) assists in collection of delinquent Food Assistance and OWF accounts by diverting federal and state income tax refunds to the department. A total of \$1,410,751 was collected in 2017 on 17,350 assistance groups through installment payments, grant and coupon reductions, lump sums, and TOP intercepts. Seventy-

nine individuals were disqualified from receiving future benefits for committing Intentional Program Violations with their claims totaling \$130,513.

Lorain County received the Director's Award for Excellence in Claims Management Benefit Recovery Leader award for 2017.

Ohio Works First (OWF)

The OWF program is a work performance program to earn cash assistance. OWF provides short-term, time-limited cash assistance to families while they develop skills leading to self-sufficiency. The three-year lifetime limitation may be waived for those meeting Hardship criteria as determined by the Time Limit Extension Review Team; or

those with Good Cause who may receive OWF cash for up to an additional 24 months after being off cash assistance for 24 months. Adults in one and two-parent households must participate in work activities for 35 to 55 hours per week until employment and self-sufficiency are obtained. Ohio Works First cash rolls decreased by 14.2% in 2017.

ADCR and ADCI decreased to 2,882 individuals receiving assistance, including 2,496 children. The ADCU program, two-parent households, decreased to 86 individuals receiving assistance, including 50 children. Hardship extensions were issued to 20 families. There were no Good Cause exemptions in 2017.

SSI Case Management

In July 2017, an announcement was made to discontinue the Disability Financial Assistance program. Effective 7/1/17, any new applications or reapplications for DFA were denied. Recipients of the DFA cash assistance had to meet specific criteria throughout the remainder of the year to continue to receive their benefits. The caseload went from 142 recipients in July to the final 12 individuals who received their last DFA check. Effective 12/31/17, all cases were closed.

Throughout 2017, fifty-four individuals in this program were found eligible for SSI, with \$67,814 in SSI reimbursement to the Disability Assistance fund.

Medicaid

Medicaid is a federal and state funded program for health care coverage for children, adults, families, and those who are aged, blind or disabled. The scope of coverage includes prescription drugs, medical services including inpatient and outpatient care, family planning services and special equipment.

The State contracts with several Managed Care Plans to deliver services in an effort to reduce costs and save taxpayer dollars, yet still provide quality health care services to eligible citizens. Medicaid works in conjunction with Medicare and private health insurance plans.

In 2017, we received 6,503 Medicaid applications electronically in the online Ohio Benefits Self Service Portal. We ended the year with 42,200 Medicaid recipients, an increase of 7,100 from the year prior.

Case Management

Case Management works with identified individuals and families who are struggling with multiple barriers in following through with the process of applying for SSI and/or Medicaid. Those individuals are assigned a case manager that will assess the barriers, and give guidance throughout the application processes. They work towards obtaining the medical records required to determine the disability, coordinate doctor's appointments and transportation services as needed. We currently have 28 cases pending the disability determination process.

Child Care

The Child Care Unit enables parents who are on OWF or income eligible, and either employed or attending school or training to receive child care. This care is provided at licensed centers or in certified child care homes.

In 2017, there was an average of 1,712 families being served on a monthly basis. Child Care provider workers completed 183 home inspections of Type B professional providers, with approximately 93 certified and active providers throughout Lorain County.

Non-Emergency Transportation and Employment Transportation

The NET Program assures non-emergency transportation for Medicaid recipients to services delivered by Medicaid Providers. This program allows clients to receive medically necessary transportation for dialysis, radiation, chemotherapy treatments, and other routine medical services. Clients can receive passes for Lorain County Transit. A total of 635 clients are using this service.

Information and Referral

The Information and Referral Unit (I & R) sees individuals who have needs that are not met by public assistance programs. If the need can't be resolved with agency resources, they work with other social service agencies in the county to help coordinate assistance. In 2017, the unit assisted 1,587 individuals which resulted in 2,072 referrals to other organizations.

Prevention – Retention – Contingency (PRC)

From June through August, The Boys and Girls Club of Lorain County, Common Ground, and Horizon Education Centers operated summer camps with various educational activities with an emphasis on career exploration as well as field trips to parks, museums and other recreational activities. Through a contract agreement with the Lorain County Commissioners and LCDJFS, 810 youth ages 6-15 were eligible to have the cost of camp covered through TANF federal funding. Six hundred and thirty-two summer camp participants also received school uniform clothing and shoes. This temporary program was met with remarkable success.

LCDJFS continues to operate a PRC funded program to provide repairs for the vehicles of Lorain County families who qualify so that the vehicle will be safe and operational. The purpose of the program emphasizes the need for individuals to participate in employment and training activities or prevent loss of employment due to lack of transportation. One hundred forty-five recipients met the eligibility requirements to have their vehicle repaired by an approved vendor.

Joining Forces

Joining Forces operates in collaboration with the Lorain County Joint Vocational School. A full-time social service worker provides supportive services for 9th and 10th graders, including classroom presentations focused on social skills and character education. The social service worker works individually with students who are at risk because of developmental, academic, or behavioral problems, acting as a liaison between the school, family, and community based agencies. The goal of Joining Forces is to help students succeed at JVS, and to help parents support their child's efforts.

Pregnancy Related Services

All Medicaid eligible pregnant women are eligible to receive Pregnancy Related Services from their medical providers and LCDJFS. These services include counseling, care coordination, and transportation.

Healthchek

The HEALTHCHEK unit administers a federally mandated preventive health care program for children who are covered by Medicaid Services. This unit strives to promote wellness and preventive health care by encouraging regular medical checkups for children and adolescents from birth to their twenty-first birthday. Approximately 26,398 children are receiving these services in Lorain County.

Adult Protective Services

Lorain County Job & Family Services is mandated to investigate reports of elder abuse, neglect, or exploitation of individuals sixty and older. Adult Protective Services workers arrange a wide variety of social services directed toward eliminating or reducing the endangerment faced by at-risk older adults. Emergencies are investigated within 24 hours, and all other reports within three working days. The unit investigated 323 new reports in 2017. Ongoing case management is provided for those at-risk clients who require it.

OWF Employment and Training

In October 1997, Ohio's welfare reform law created the Ohio Works First (OWF) program. It became the temporary assistance program for needy families. The focus was, and continues to be: prepare families for self-sufficiency within the three-year time limit. All OWF adults and minor heads of households are required to participate in work activities which prepare them for self-sufficiency.

LCDJFS provides support and training venues to assist our clientele in overcoming barriers to employment,

allowing them to rejoin the work force, and regain their self-sufficiency. We have entered into contracts to provide employment services for OWF adult participants. Some of our contracted services include:

Common Ground/New Beginnings (formerly First Step), Goodwill Industries/Goodwill Work for Success: Job training, placement, retention, and El Centro/Business English and Work Experience Program.

Federal law requires most able-bodied adults enrolled in the Ohio

Works First cash assistance program to participate at a minimum, 30 to 35 hours per week in an approved work activity. Failure to comply, results in a sanction for the household.

States must show that at least 90 percent of adults in two-parent households, and at least 50 percent of all adults are working the required number of hours. Non-compliance by the state results in a potential federal penalty.

Child Support Enforcement

Modification

There are an average of 4,000 requests for support order modification per year. Modification caseworkers are required to work the modification call center for one-half day every day taking calls from clients that request information on pending modifications and answering questions regarding whether cases qualify for a modification review. The review process may take anywhere from 45-120 days for completion. The average number of support orders that are modified each year is 1,250.

Establishment

Caseworkers are responsible for establishing paternity on child support orders. They have direct contact with walk-in clients requesting genetic testing. An on-site phlebotomist administers genetic tests four days a week. Caseworkers process cases by request of support services and when a client receives public assistance. They also work closely with the Prosecutor's Office and Juvenile Court.

The CSEA has approximately 28,850 open cases to administer and enforce. The Agency is also ranked as a "metro" county.

Enforcement

Each caseworker has approximately 1,400 cases. While this number is large, a new call center began in August of 2014. Experienced enforcement staff now answer phone calls as a full-time job leaving more time for the other caseworkers to administer their caseloads. They monitor the orders and attempt to use various enforcement strategies if the obligor is not making regular payments. The initial technique is the suspension of a defaulting obligor's driver's license. The second

step is a referral to the Prosecutor's office for contempt of court. If all else fails, the case may be referred to the Prosecutor for a charge of felony non-support.

CSEA has the ability to intercept federal and state tax refunds. Specialized workers can intercept lump sum payments from an employer, garnish workers compensation payments and divert money from bank accounts of defaulting obligors.

Fiscal & Data Entry

These units consist of data entry, audit and payment corrections workers. All work produced by these two units is very time sensitive. Legal documents pertaining to child support and/or spousal support produced from the Lorain County Domestic Relations Court and the administrative hearing officers must be entered into the Support Enforcement Tracking System (SETS). Fiscal maintains and updates financial corrections, payments, impounds, bookkeeping and conducts audit requests from the court, parties, attorneys, or the state.

Administrative Hearing Officers

CSEA employs one full-time hearing officer. The modification supervisor and administrator also conduct some hearings. The hearing officers establish paternity and support orders and conduct various other administrative hearings.