

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
1-800-808-2991

Fax (440) 323-3422

TTY/TDD: (440) 284-4125

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.

We are located on North Ridge Road, Rte. 254, just west of Elyria Avenue on the south side of the street.

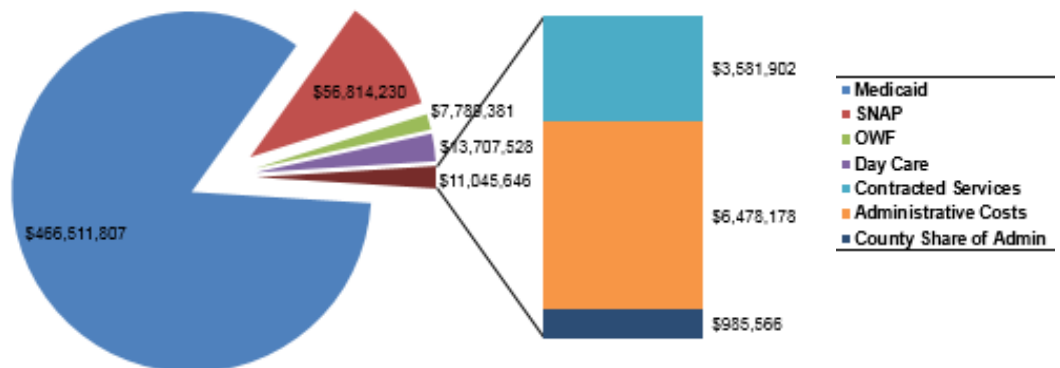
Lorain County Job & Family Services

2016
Annual Report

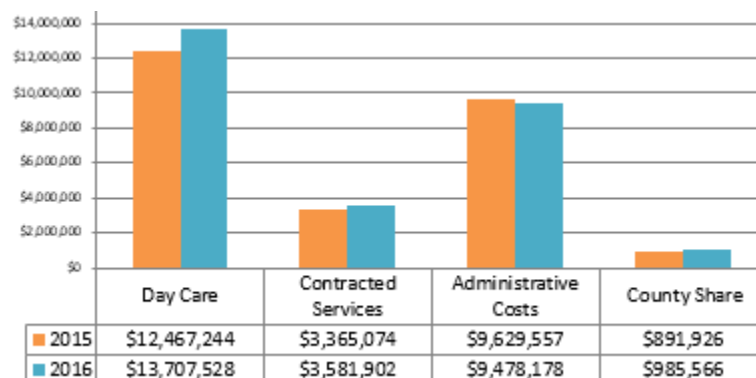
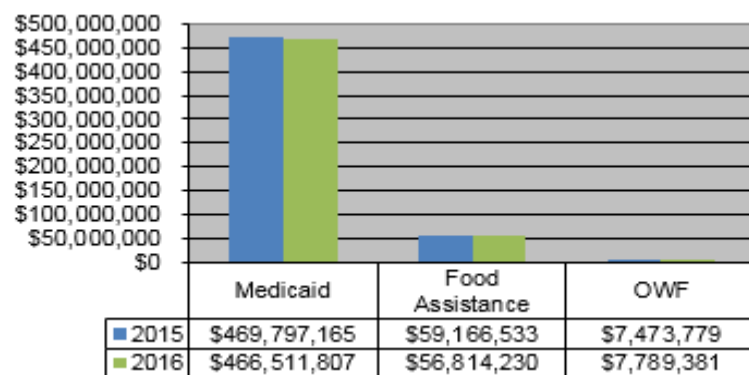
Snapshot of 2016

- Eligibility for Medicaid was extended to adults with an annual income up to 138% of the Federal Poverty Level. Lorain County received 7,081 applications electronically in the new Ohio Benefits system in 2016.
- 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 SNAP recipients with job readiness activities designed to increase employability potential. A total of 578 individuals logged 13,050.50 hours of participation in the program.
- The Child Support Enforcement Agency collected \$68,677 through an amnesty program held in 2016 and completed 296 license reinstatements.
- In 2016, our agency delivered 4,477 voter registration forms to the Board of Elections.
- Lorain County again administered the Ohio Fuel Fund. We assisted 702 families who were behind on their Ohio Edison electric bills. The total funds issued were \$181,719.
- The Income Maintenance Call Center averaged 15,778 phone calls per month in 2016. They also logged an average of 1,155 pieces of mail per month and placed an average of 1,018 long distance calls. The total number of clients seen in the main lobby averaged 5,063 per month.

2016 Expenditures by Category



Comparison of Expenditures: 2015-2016



Family Employment and Support Services - 2016

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.

SSI Case Management

Disability Assistance recipients are helped through the SSI Case Management program with the SSI application and appeal process. SSI financial assistance from the Social Security Administration results in increased personal income and a cost savings to the Disability Assistance Program. We have found many individuals are mostly concerned with obtaining healthcare coverage. Medicaid Extension is meeting that need, which has resulted in a decrease in the number of individuals applying for the \$115 monthly grant. Thirty-nine individuals were served through this program gaining eligibility for SSI, with \$77,647 in SSI reimbursement to the Disability Assistance fund. Two hundred twenty individuals currently receive Disability Assistance pending SSI approval, this is an increase from the previous year. Most of these individuals had been approved for DA prior to the Medicaid Extension and are awaiting final review of their SSI.

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 1,222 cases, totaling \$1,787,921 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 \$1,656,340 was collected in 2016 through installment payments, grant and coupon reductions, lump sums, and

TOP intercepts. Forty individuals were disqualified from receiving future benefits for committing Intentional Program Violations with their claims totaling \$96,247.

Lorain County received the SNAP Recovery Leader Award for 2016.

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 9.5% in 2016.

ADCR and ADCI decreased to 3,360 individuals receiving assistance, including 2,778 children. The ADCU program, two-parent households, decreased to 101 individuals receiving assistance, including 56 children. Hardship extensions were issued to 26 families. There were no Good Cause exemptions in 2016.

Food Assistance

Food Assistance 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 in order to qualify for Food Assistance.

Lorain County had 38,327 individuals receiving Food Assistance averaging \$123/month per household member, this is a slight decrease from last year.

Medicaid

Medicaid is a federal and state funded program for health care coverage for children, adults, families, aged, blind and 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 2016, we received 7,081 Medicaid applications electronically in our new system. We ended the year with 35,096 cases in OBWP.

In August 2016, all ABD Medicaid cases were converted to OBWP, prior to that they were maintained in CRISE. Major rule changes impacted the ABD Medicaid clientele. The Spenddown Program was eliminated, and anyone over the income standards for long term care services are required to establish a Miller Trust in order to meet the income standards and gain eligibility for Medicaid.

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 50 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 2016, there was an average of 1,738 families being served on a monthly basis. Child Care provider workers completed 202 home inspections of Type B professional providers, with approximately 107 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 652 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 2016, the unit assisted 2,128 individuals which resulted in 2,284 referrals to other organizations. In addition, the unit processed applications for the Fuel Fund, which assisted families with payments towards their electric bills. There were 702 households that benefited from the program, with a total of \$181,719 being applied towards past due bills.

Prevention – Retention – Contingency (PRC)

From June through August, The Boys and Girls club of Lorain County and Common Ground of Oberlin 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, 460 youth ages 8-15 were eligible to have the cost of camp covered through TANF federal funding. Three hundred and ninety-two summer camp participants also received school uniform clothing and shoes. This temporary program was met with great success.

On November 1st, 2016, LCDJFS began operating 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. Thirty-nine 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 28,497 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 383 new reports in 2016. 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/First Step Program, Vocational Guidance Services/Welfare Out, Retention Kept Program, Goodwill Industries/Goodwill Work for Success: Job training, placement, retention, and EI 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. Each of the five caseworkers are required to work the modification call center for one-half day every day taking calls requesting information on pending modifications and answering questions regarding whether cases qualify for a modification. This unit's modifications of support can take from 45-120 days until completion. The average number of support orders that are modified each year is 1,350.

The CSEA has approximately 30,134 open cases to enforce and is 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.

Establishment

This unit is responsible for the establishment of paternity and child support orders. They also handle genetic testing when appropriate. There is an onsite phlebotomist. These caseworkers process requests for genetic testing and/or support orders and establish support orders for custodial parents that are receiving public assistance.

Fiscal

Made up of data entry, audit and payment corrections sections, the work produced by data entry is very time sensitive. Every entry produced via the Domestic Relations Court and the administrative hearing officers must be entered into the Support Enforcement Tracking System (SETS). Audit requests come from the court and other sources such as state hearings.

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.