

Agency Director
Barbara Tamas

Lorain County Commissioners

Lori Kokoski
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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

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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.

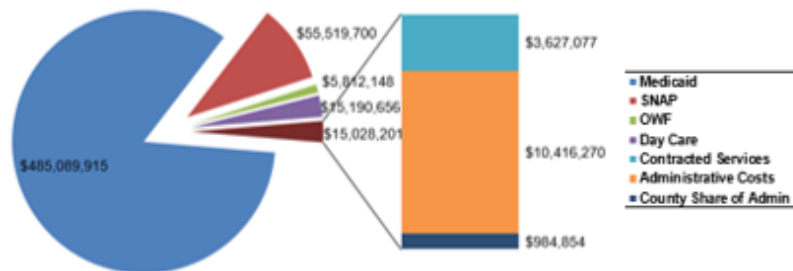
**Lorain County
Job & Family Services**

**2018
Annual Report**

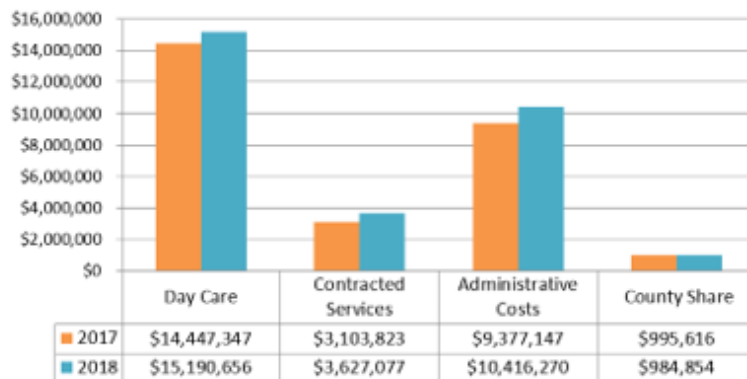
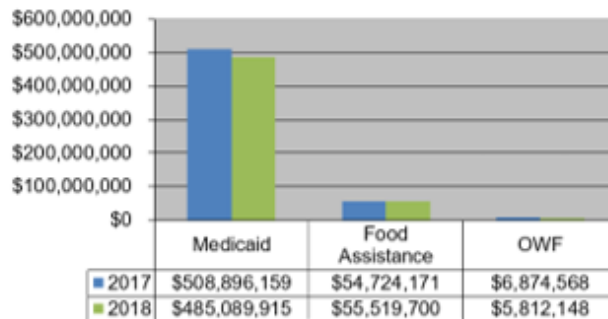
Snapshot of 2018

- Our In-House Work Experience Program provides OWF 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 who provides OWF and SNAP recipients with job readiness activities designed to increase employability potential. A total of 650 individuals logged 11,200.50 hours of participation in the program.
- The annual CSEA Back to School Amnesty Program for 2018 collected a total of \$48,199.32 in child support and completed 268 license reinstatements during July and August.
- In 2018, our agency delivered 3,642 voter registration forms to the Board of Elections.
- The Income Maintenance Call Center averaged 12,461 phone calls per month in 2018. There was also an average of 11,200 individuals through our doors each month.
- 26,075 applications were screened for Medicaid/SNAP/TANF in 2018, nearly 2,200 per month.
- The state converted CRISE to OBWP for SNAP benefits and offered a new imaging system to the counties, the Electronic Digital Management System (EDMS). Change is always difficult, but the staff rose to the challenge and by year's end were comfortable processing in each system.

2018 Expenditures by Category



Comparison of Expenditures: 2017-2018



Family Employment and Support Services - 2018

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.

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 \$1,518,286 was collected and applied to the claims in 2018.

One hundred thirty-five individuals were disqualified from receiving future benefits for committing Intentional Program Violations with their claims totaling \$262,541. This was an increase of 56 individuals, double the dollar amount, from last year. Mostly due to a few stores being identified as buying SNAP cards for cash which then allowed us to identify the clientele selling their cards.

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 1,366 cases, totaling \$2,966,163 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.

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.

In 2018, an average of 1,334 households (222 adults, 2,125 children) received OWF with an average of 153 Work Eligible Individuals required to meet the work participation requirements.

Hardship extensions were issued to 20 families. There were no Good Cause exemptions.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP is a federally funded program designed to subsidize 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.

In July 2018, the legacy system known as CRISE was retired and SNAP benefits were converted into a new processing system called Ohio Benefits. This was a major change in processing benefits for SNAP and caseworkers had to adjust while identifying system glitches and notifying the state of required fixes. As if that was not enough of a change for our seasoned staff, the week prior a new document imaging system was also rolled out which included a work flow process to learn.

Our application timeliness rate took a dive with these two major changes in business processing. The 30-day processing timeframe dipped to 87.5% but then rebounded by the end of the year with 96.01%, above the federal requirement of 95%.

Lorain County had 33,910 individuals receiving SNAP averaging \$121/month per household member, a decrease of 4,500 individuals from the prior year. On average, the total monthly issuance distributed in Lorain County is \$4.1 million per month.

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.

We ended the year with 66,129 Medicaid recipients, an increase of 23,929 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 20 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 2018, there was an average of 1,719 families being served. Child Care provider workers completed 169 home inspections of Type B professional providers, with approximately 81 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 703 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 2018, the unit assisted 1,478 individuals which resulted in 2,083 referrals to other organizations. In addition, 275 food boxes were distributed during the year.

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, 1,051 youth ages 6-15 were eligible to have the cost of camp covered through TANF federal funding. This temporary program was met with remarkable success. An additional 1,026 children in receipt of TANF benefits in the month of June 2018 received school uniform clothing and shoes for the upcoming school year.

LCDJFS operates a PRC funded program that provides benefits and services to Lorain County families who qualify to help overcome immediate barriers and stay self-supporting. The purpose of the program emphasizes the need for individuals to participate in employment and training activities, prevent loss of employment due to lack of transportation, or helps meet emergent need which, if not met, threatens a family's safety, health or well-being. In 2018, the program assisted 1,227 families.

Joining Forces

Joining Forces operates in collaboration with the Lorain County Joint Vocational School. A full-time social service worker provides supportive services for approximately 200 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.

Adult Protective Services

Lorain County Job & Family Services is mandated to investigate reports of elder abuse, neglect, or exploitation of individuals age 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 456 new reports in 2018. 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:

New Beginnings and Windfall Industries 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

The Modification unit handles thousands of reviews per year. Investigators in this unit answer calls from clients daily as well as managing caseloads. The review process may take anywhere from 30 - 120 days for completion. The average number of support orders that are modified each year are approximately 1,250 – 1,400.

Establishment

This unit is responsible for establishing paternity and support orders for the collection of child support in its Administrative capacity and by working closely with the County Prosecutor's office and Juvenile Court. Caseworkers have face to face contact with walk-in clients as well as answering client phone calls on a daily basis. Caseworkers work with an onsite phlebotomist who administers genetic tests four days a week. Caseload sizes vary from 350 – 600 per caseworker.

The Lorain County CSEA administers and enforces collection upon an estimated 28,010 cases. The Agency is ranked as a "metro" county in the State of Ohio.

In 2018, CSEA was recognized by the State with an award for Superior Performance Statewide in the I-70 initiative. The Agency was also featured as a county of the month for high collections.

Enforcement

Each enforcement unit investigator manages approximately 1,600 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 Investigators to administer their caseloads. They monitor the orders for payment compliance and use various enforcement strategies for collection efforts within the bounds of State law under the Ohio Revised Code.

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 Family 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.