

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 to 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.

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 review requests per year. Investigators in this unit answer calls from clients daily as well as managing caseloads and running guidelines. 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.

The Lorain County CSEA administers and enforces collection upon an estimated 26,000 cases. The Agency is ranked as a "large" county in the State of Ohio.

In 2019, CSEA was recognized by the State for Most Improved Current Collections in large caseloads.

Enforcement

Each enforcement unit investigator manages approximately 1,800 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 pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code.

CSEA has the ability to intercept federal & state tax refunds, and work bonuses. Specialized workers can intercept lump sum payments from an employer, garnish workers compensation payments and seize bank account funds.

Fiscal & Data Entry

These units consist of data entry clerks, auditors, and payment accuracy account 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 officer must be entered into the Support Enforcement Tracking System (SETS). Fiscal maintains and updates financial corrections, monitors and releases payments, balances spreadsheets, works reports, sets 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 Hearing Officer establishes and issues paternity determinations, administrative support orders, and conduct various other necessary administrative hearings.

Agency Director

Tim Carrion

Lorain County Commissioners

Michelle Hung
Matt Lundy
David J. Moore



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

Hours:

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

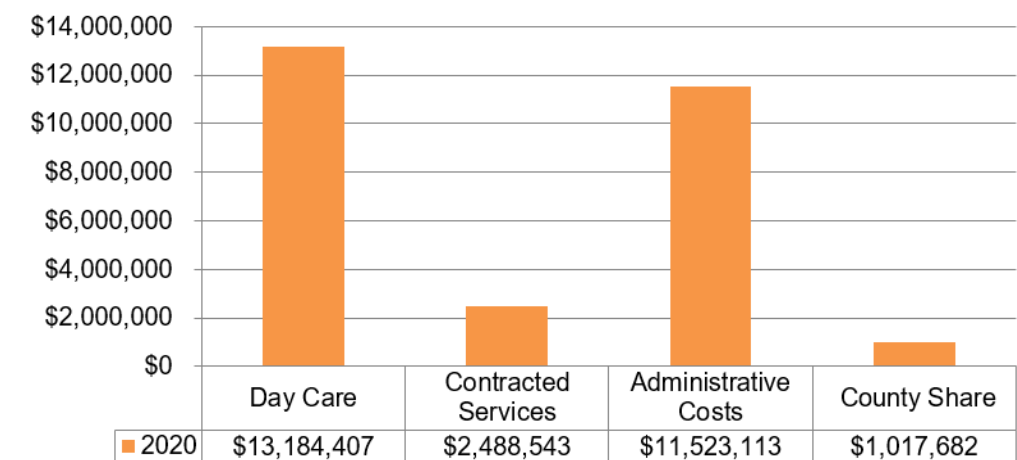
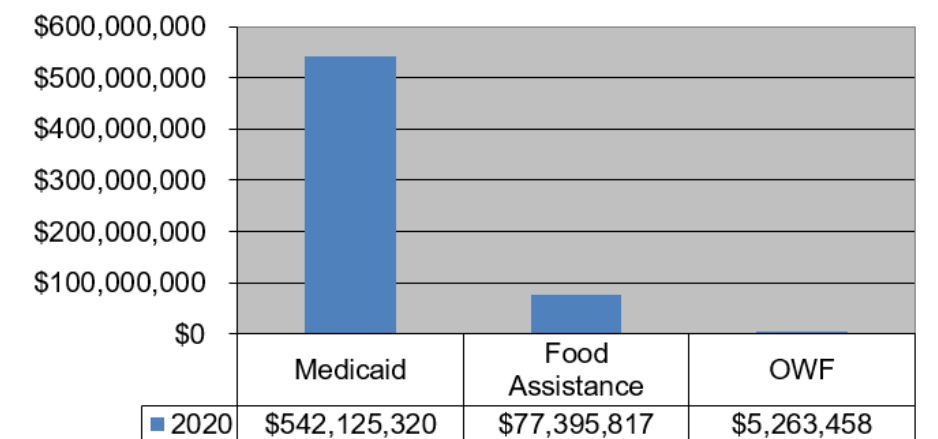
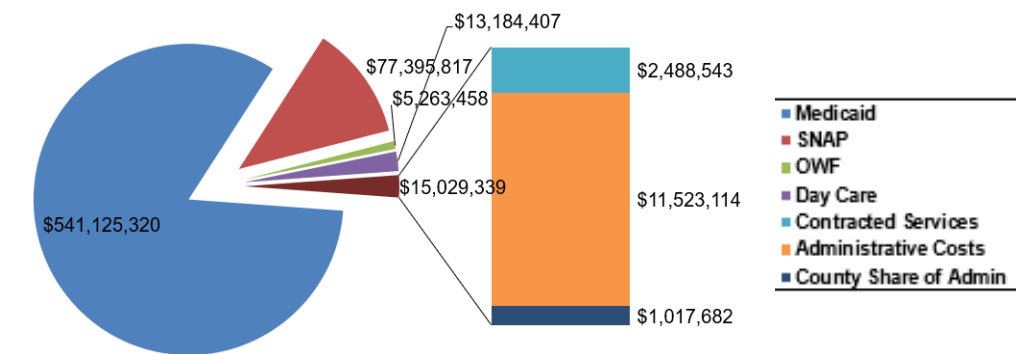
Lorain County Job & Family Services

2020
Annual Report

Snapshot of 2020

- For 2019 & 2020, the Annual CSEA Back to School Amnesty Program collected a total of \$92,689.84 in child support payments.
- In 2020, our agency delivered 2,089 voter registration forms to the Board of Elections.
- In 2020, staff approved 15,657 applications for Medicaid and 7,157 SNAP applications.
- Fall of 2019, Lorain County joined County Shared Services (new phone system) that allows applications to be filed on the phone, with an electronic signature. Without this system we would not have been able to be so efficient during the Public Health Emergency.
- The Income Maintenance County Shared Services Call Center logged 120,717 calls in 2020, an average of 10,000 calls per month. 14,516 of those calls were specifically to apply for new benefits.

2020 Expenditures by Category



Family Employment and Support Services - 2020

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 \$1,627,259 was collected and applied to the claims in 2020.

Fourteen individuals were disqualified from receiving future benefits for committing Intentional Program Violations with their claims totaling \$16,835.

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. New claims were established on 75 cases, totaling \$134,069 which is subject to collection.

Due to the pandemic, it was asked that no new claims be initiated, therefore the unit assisted in processing benefits for seven months. In September, their attention shifted back to their regular duties.

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 2020, an average of 1,161 households (119 adults, 1,823 children) received OWF with an average of 86 Work Eligible Individuals required to meet the work participation requirements. Hardship extensions were issued to 4 families. There were no Good Cause exemptions in 2020.

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. Although in 2020, there was a Good Cause Waiver granted to excuse people from participating due to the Public Health Emergency.

Prior to the pandemic, a typical month of SNAP rolls would be approximately 34,000 totaling \$4.7 million in benefits. In April of 2020, nearly 1,500 SNAP applications were approved with a 99.35% timeliness processing rate. We ended the month with record highs of 42,465 individuals receiving SNAP benefits totaling just over \$10 million in benefits. Once the Unemployment Compensation benefits started to be processed, we began to see a decrease in the SNAP caseload. However, we continued to see a fluctuation in the caseloads as the UC benefits would end and start again. We could not be prouder of the work our staff did during this difficult time. It was truly amazing to see their dedication and resilience.

The last quarter of the year ended with an average of just over \$7 million in benefits being issued each 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.

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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. There were 122 individuals who received case management services.

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 childcare. This care is provided at licensed centers or in certified childcare homes.

In 2020, there was an average of 1,496 families being served. Child Care provider workers completed 116 home inspections of Type B professional providers, with approximately 85 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 710 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 2020, the unit assisted 397 individuals which resulted in 1,011 referrals to other organizations. In addition, 76 food boxes were distributed during the year.

Prevention – Retention – Contingency (PRC)

LCDJFS operate 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 an emergent need which, if not met, threatens a family's safety, health, or well-being. In 2020, the program assisted 380 families.

Although we had received a resolution to operate summer camps through various vendors, due to the Public Health Emergency and the concern of them being able to operate safely, the summer camp program was canceled. We were able to provide 3,181 children in receipt of either SNAP or TANF benefits in the month of April 2020 a backpack filled with clothing and shoes for the upcoming school year.



Joining Forces

Joining Forces operates in collaboration with the Lorain County Joint Vocational School. Two full-time social service workers provide supportive services for approximately 600 9th and 10th graders, including classroom presentations focused on social skills and character education. The social service workers work 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 401 new reports in 2020. Ongoing case management is provided for those at-risk clients who require it.