



# New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services

*To join communities and families in providing opportunities  
for citizens to achieve health and independence*



# **Division of Family Assistance (DFA)**

2011



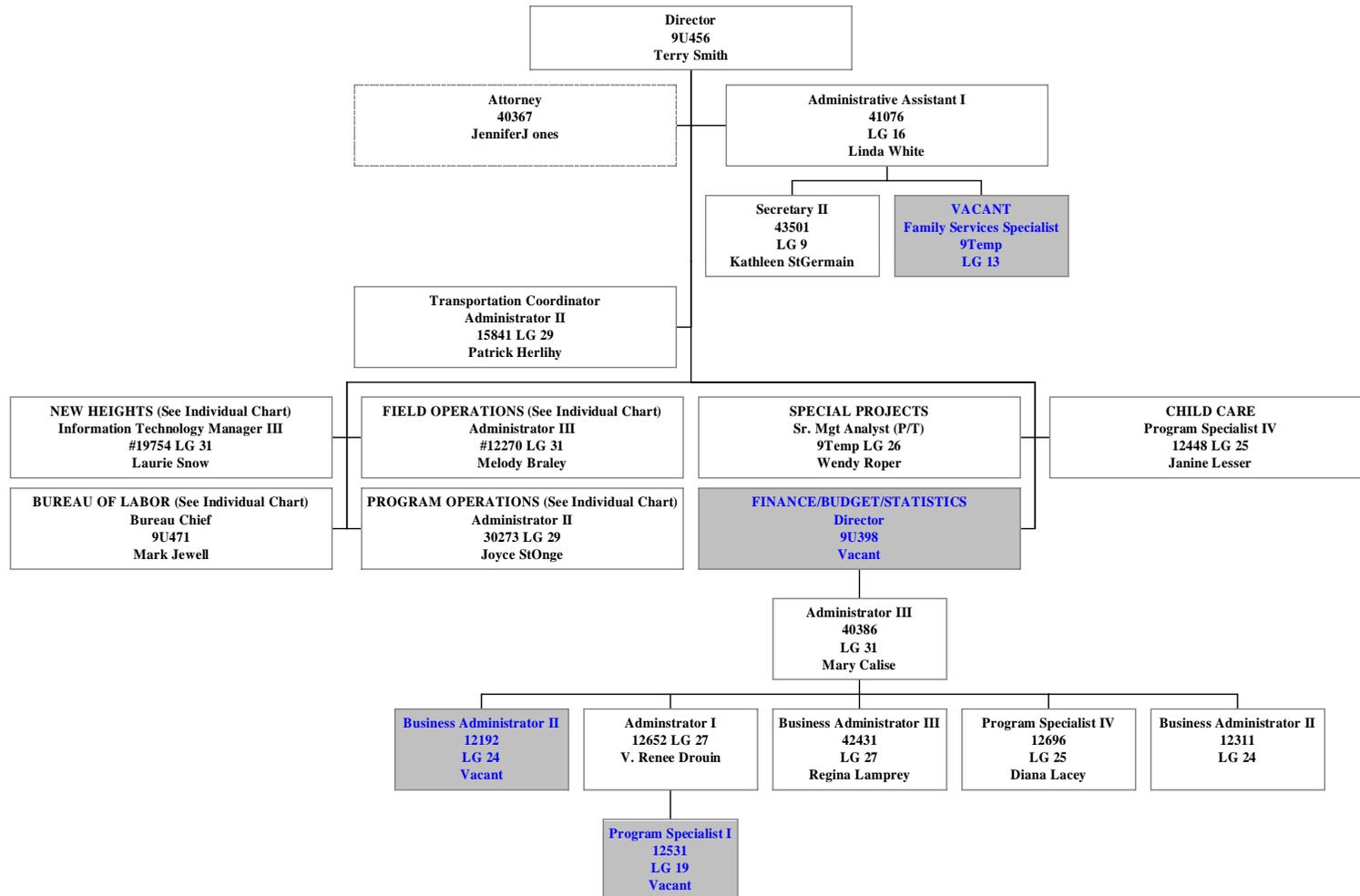
# DFA

## Five Missions

1. Cash safety net for low income people.
2. Nutritional safety net for low income people.
3. Eligibility services for other division programs.
4. Moving able-bodied people to independence.
5. Careful stewards of taxpayer dollars.



# DFA





# Organization

- Program Operations coordinates policy for food stamps, Medicaid, and cash programs with federal and State requirements
- Field Operations takes applications and verifies with third-parties all client income and expenses  
Determines eligibility for 32 separate programs in 13 District Offices across the state
- Welfare to Work consistently ranks among nation's top performers in keeping TANF clients connected to the workforce
- New Heights is one of the largest, most complex computer systems in state government. It automates benefit issuance, client scheduling, reporting, and a driver flow for eligibility for 32 programs



# Organization

- Finance coordinates the DFA budget, contracts, cash and food stamp benefit issuance, and the Community Services Block Grant (a federal pass-thru to Community Action Agencies)
- Child Care coordinates the Child Care Program with TANF work programs
- Transportation Brokerage facilitates grass roots effort in 10 regions across New Hampshire to develop non-emergency medical transportation, and transportation for seniors, with the goal of reducing Medicaid transportation reimbursement costs



# Personnel and Administrative Profile

- 379 authorized positions
- 8,820 **new** applications processed per month for DHHS programs and services
- **Re-**determine eligibility for 11,565 cases each month
- Keep 2,752 TANF clients attached to work activities
- Align policy with federal and state mandates thru 7 policy changes, 3 rules changes, 4 manual changes, 2 special client mailings, and 7 Heights change requests each month.
- Ensure clients claiming disability apply for SSI
- Intervene for TANF clients experiencing domestic violence or crisis



# Enabling Legislation

## Federal Law

- Food Stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program): 7 U.S.C. 2014 - 2036 (Title 7 Chapter 51)
- TANF: 42 U.S.C. 601 - 619 (Title IV, Part A, Section 401 - 419 of the Social Security Act)
- Medicaid: 42 U.S.C. 1396a - u (Title XIX, Section 1902 - 1931 of the Social Security Act)
- State Supplement Payments: 42 U.S.C 1382g (Title XVI, Section 1618 of the Social Security Act)

## State Law

- Responsibility of the Department for all programs: Chapters 161 and 167 (R.S.A. 161:2, Duties of the Department)



# Target Population Served

## Food Stamp Nutritional Safety Net

- 110,694 individuals. 45,865 (41.4%) are children
- 1,825 homeless recipients (300% increase over June, 2008)
- maximum allotment \$5.56 per person per day (less cash grants)

## FANF Cash Safety Net

- must have a child to be eligible
- 13,615 individuals. 9,530 (70%) are children
- average months on assistance: 18.49
- maximum grant \$738 per month for family of 4
- most recent NH work participation rate: 47.4%. Nat'l avg: 29.4%



# Target Population Served

## Old Age Assistance Cash Safety Net

- must be age 65 or older
- 1,501 individuals
- maximum grant \$688 per month for one individual
- half live independently, half in residential care and nursing homes

## Aid to the Needy Blind

- individual must be blind to be eligible
- 250 individuals. 101 (40%) are children.
- maximum grant \$688 per month for one individual



# Target Population Served

## Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled cash

- must show a disability of 4 year duration; cannot engage in substantial employment
- 8,656 individuals all aged 18 thru 64 years
- maximum grant \$688 per month for one individual
- 88% live independently

## Medicaid

- 118,770 individuals



# Service Delivery

- By federal mandate, eligibility for all programs is determined by state merit staff.
- TANF work counselors are also state merit staff
- TANF job readiness training and development of alternative work experience sites are contracted.
- Electronic benefit issuance is contracted.
- Nutrition education is contracted to UNH and paid for by a 100% federal USDA grant.



# Expected Outcomes

**Basic health and well-being of NH residents are expected outcomes for DFA cash, nutritional, and Medicaid programs.**

## **Food Stamps**

- \* Nutritional safety net for low income children, adults and seniors
- \* 2009 Negative Error Rate (% of applications inappropriately closed or denied): **1.5%** (*Winner 2008 and 2009 USDA High Performance \$ Bonus*)
- \* 2009 Program Participation (% eligible people participating): **66%** (*Winner 2007 USDA Most Improved High Performance \$ Bonus*)
- \* 2009 Timeliness of Eligibility (% applications determined within 30 days): **92.5%** (*Winner 2006 USDA High Performance \$ Bonus*)
- \* 2009 Payment Error Rate: **3.06%** (*17<sup>th</sup> of 53 nationally*)
- \* Better nourished recipients. (Each year, DFA passes through a grant from USDA to UNH for nutrition education.)



# Expected Outcomes

## TANF Precision Case Management

- \* Cash safety net for low income children
- \* High Work participation rate: Led New England last two consecutive years. (17<sup>th</sup> of 53 nationally in 2007; 11<sup>th</sup> in 2008)
- \* Parents move children out of poverty thru employment
- \* Parents leave TANF for employment with career plan
- \* Clients leave with budget management skills and barrier coping skills
- \* Clients use Earned Income Tax Credit and other resources for independence
- \* Disabled clients move from TANF to APTD and/or SSI
- \* TANF clients learn to welcome independence, not fear it



# Expected Outcomes

## Transportation Brokerage

\* Assist with reducing the Department's cost trends for non-emergency medical transportation (that is, other than ambulances)

## **State Supplemental Cash Programs** (*Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled, Aid to the Needy Blind, Refugee Cash Assistance*)

\* Cash safety net for low income aged, blind and disabled individuals

\* All individuals apply for and follow through with applications for federal cash assistance



# Major Initiatives

- **DFA Contract Reform:** Over the past four years, DFA has generated savings of \$3 million per year due to reforms of contracts. Using outcome-to-investment analyses, we altered how we provide services related to the TANF medical exemption process, TANF GED process, TANF Family Intervention process, Life Skills Training process, and the housing of TANF Employment and Training Counselors.
- **Facilitating Application for SSI:** Saving about \$642,000 in the 6 month period from March to September, 2010, DFA has built a unit of people under the leadership of Karyl Provost to ensure that OAA, APTD, ANB, and TANF clients claiming disability apply for SSI or SSDI benefits—and that they appeal if denied—as a condition of eligibility. When clients are made eligible for federal cash benefits, the 100% generally funded State cash benefits are reduced by up to \$348 per case per month.



# Major Initiatives

- **Digital Imaging:** DFA is almost done moving to paperless eligibility. Client applications and verifications will be entirely electronic by February/March, 2011. Advantages include Statewide mail going a Central Scanning Unit, reducing mail going to district offices and allowing field staff more time to concentrate on timely and accurate eligibility. Digital imaging will also eliminate the need for expensive file rooms in district offices.
- **New Hampshire Easy:** In December in the Laconia area, DFA piloted a web-based application process for individual clients. Now clients can apply for cash, food stamp, and Medicaid assistance from the privacy of their homes, any time day or night. A significant portion of this initiative is being paid for with a federal grant from USDA. This initiative also allows us to send clients e-mails instead of the historical 1 million pieces of US paper mail sent each year.



# Costs

Division of Family Assistance (formerly Human Services)		
Program Measures		
Description	SFY 2010 Actual	SFY 2011 Budget
<b>TANF Cash Assistance</b>		
Anticipated Cases	5,827	5,827
Revised Anticipated Cases	5,335	
Monthly Grant	\$510.07	\$507.14
	0.9%	-0.6%
Annual Grant Cost	\$ 32,654,681	\$ 35,461,257
<b>FWOC Cash Assistance</b>		
Anticipated Cases	37	49
Revised Anticipated Cases		
Monthly Grant	\$ 477	\$ 489
		2.6%
Annual Grant Cost	\$ 211,619	\$ 287,556
<b>TANF - Unemployed Parent Program</b>		
UP Anticipated Cases	279	279
IDP Anticipated Cases	664	664
UP Revised Anticipated Cases	315	
IDP Revised Anticipated Cases	781	
UP Monthly Grant	\$ 596	\$ 543
IDP Monthly Grant	\$ 549	\$ 511
UP	4.2%	-8.9%
IDP		-7.0%
Annual Grant Cost	\$ 7,400,690	\$ 5,889,537
<b>APTD</b>		
Anticipated Cases	7,422	7,422
Revised Anticipated Cases	8,151	
Monthly Grant	\$ 213	\$ 190
	9.9%	-10.7%
Annual Grant Cost	\$ 20,787,006	\$ 16,897,222
<b>OAA</b>		
Anticipated Cases	1,347	1,347
Revised Anticipated Cases	1,383	
Monthly Grant	\$ 177	\$ 167
Annual Grant Cost	\$ 2,939,649	\$ 2,696,802
<b>ANB</b>		
Anticipated Cases	236	231
Revised Anticipated Cases	\$ 247	
Monthly Grant	\$ 374	\$ 394
Annual Grant Cost	\$ 1,107,765	\$ 1,091,475
<b>JOBS</b>		
	\$ 12,023,874	\$ 12,264,352
TANF Emergency Assistance	\$ 750,000	\$ 750,000



# Challenges

## The Economy

Caseloads are dramatically up since June, 2008:

- Food Stamps: up 20,726 cases. 65%
- Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled: up 1,875 cases. 27%
- Family Assistance to Needy Families: up 1,188 cases. 24%
- Inverse Parallel: even as cases increase, DHHS's budget to cope decreases

Costs are escalating:

- Increased caseloads cause increased costs in cash benefits
- Food stamp benefits are 100% federal.
- As caseloads continue to increase, 5 eligibility workers were frozen.

System is strained:

- June 2008, cases per worker = 501; November 2010 cases per worker = 633
- Staff stress evidenced by FMLA and sick leave usage at all-time highs
- Payment errors are increasing
- District Office staff unable to handle telephone call volume
- New Heights changes backlogged for lack of staff
- Policy changes backlogged for lack of staff



# Contact Information

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