



DHS Office of Community Services

One Smithfield Street, Suite 200
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-2221
412-350-6611 412-350-2785 (fax)

Established in 1998

Administration

Patricia L. Valentine, DHS Executive Deputy Director for Integrated Program Services

Reginald Young, DHS Deputy Director, OCS

County Community Services Advisory Council
Homeless Alliance Advisory Board
Local Housing Options Team (LHOT)

Pennsylvania oversight:

- Pa. Dept. of Labor and Industry
- Pa. Dept. of Human Services
- Pa. Dept. of Education
- Pa. Dept. of Community and Economic Development
- Pa. Dept. of Agriculture

Federal oversight:

- U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development

Mission

Provides contracted services designed to meet the immediate needs of low-income and vulnerable individuals and families and, utilizing the strengths of individuals and families, empower them to become more self-sufficient.

Office of Community Services Overview

People Served* (CY 2015)

- 23,523 - Under 18 years
- 26,200 - 18 years and older

OCS filled positions (a/o 01/16)

- 28

Contract Providers (FY 2015-16)

- 62

Budget (FY 2015-16)

- \$54.2 million
(no county funds, 16.8% state, 78.2% federal and 5% other funds)

Contracted agencies account for 91% of the total OCS budget.

*As recorded in the DHS Data Warehouse. The Office of Community Services met one or more of the basic needs of tens of thousands of individuals during 2015. Many of these individuals are not registered in the DHS Data Warehouse and are therefore not formally counted in the statistics of DHS.



2016

Allegheny County

Department of Human Services

Marc Cherna, Director

Office of Community Services

Reginald Young, DHS Deputy Director, OCS

One Smithfield Street, Second Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222-2221

412-350-6611; 412-350-2785 (fax)

Background

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Office of Community Services is the County's public office responsible for providing Allegheny County residents with a coordinated community-focused system of high quality and cost-effective services, programs and opportunities that enable low-income and vulnerable individuals and families to become more self-sufficient.

The Office of Community Services (OCS) was established in 1997. The OCS is comprised of the former Federal Programs, founded in 1971, to receive and administer federal grants, and the former Hunger and Homeless Program, previously under the auspices of the former Mental Health/Mental Retardation, Drug and Alcohol and Hunger/Housing (MH/MR/ D&A/H&H). The Office of Community Services, while serving eligible low-income populations, collaborates and coordinates services with other DHS program offices and community-based agencies.

Mission

The Office of Community Services (OCS), through more than 100 community-based agencies, provides contracted services designed to meet the immediate needs of low-income and vulnerable individuals and families and, utilizing the strengths of individuals, communities, and families, empower them to become more self-sufficient. OCS also provides direct service activities for summer breakfast and lunch, utility assistance and free tax preparation services.

Organization

The Office of Community Services is composed of four bureaus: the Bureau of Family and Community Services, the Bureau of Employment and Training Services, the Bureau of Homeless Services, and the Bureau of Outreach and Prevention. Through a coordinated effort, these four bureaus provide a wide array of services around food, housing, employment, family support, youth services, afterschool and summer youth programs, and other services vital to low-income persons.

Bureaus

Bureau of Family and Community Services

The Bureau of Family and Community Services provides a wide range of services that help

build and strengthen families and communities.

Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) provides transportation for Allegheny County residents of all ages to obtain non-emergency medical services including both physical health services (doctor, dentists, pharmacist, etc.) and behavioral health services (mental health, and drug and alcohol counseling and treatment).

For more information call **TOLL-FREE 1-888-547-MATP (6287)** .

Early Childhood Education (Early Head Start/Head Start)

Allegheny County Head Start - a partnership of the Department of Human Services and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit - is a free comprehensive child development and education program that serves families with children three to five years of age who meet the required Federal Income Guidelines. Head Start is child-focused and has the overall goal of increasing school readiness. Allegheny County Head Start provides a range of individualized services including language development, math, science and social skills; early childhood development; physical and behavioral health; nutrition; and parent involvement.

For more information call **TOLL FREE 1-866-214-KIDS (5437)**.

SummerFood Program serves children up to 18 years of age, living in low-income communities. During the months of June through August, SummerFood provides free, nutritious breakfasts and lunches to children at any one of nearly 100 Allegheny County locations outside the City of Pittsburgh. The program serves children without regard to gender, race, religion or disability.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides nutritious suppers and snacks to community-based programs that offer enrichment activities for at-risk children and youth, 18 and under, after the regular school day ends.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low-income needy persons, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance. Through a partnership with the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, TEFAP commodities are provided to 100+ food pantries throughout Allegheny County.

For information about SummerFood and CACFP call **412-350-2798**.

The **KEYS Service Corps AmeriCorps®** Program is an opportunity for people from all walks of life to spend a summer or a year working with school-age youth in the Pittsburgh area. Our AmeriCorps members earn a modest living allowance, money for their education, and other benefits while working with schools, after-school programs, and other non-profits to provide tutoring, mentoring, and service opportunities to some great kids. All candidates must be eligible to obtain Act 33, 34, and FBI clearances.

For more information, please visit: www.keysservicecorps.org or call 412-350-3344

Bureau of Employment and Training Services

The Bureau of Employment and Training Services provides countless opportunities for unemployed or underemployed individuals to learn the skills needed to earn gainful employment and to advance in that employment.

Career Development Centers provide EARN (Employment Advancement and Retention Network) services to assist TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families). These centers, located in Downtown Pittsburgh, Wilkinsburg and McKeesport, provide assessment, job readiness and life skills training, entry-level work experience, and ongoing support and resources to help individuals obtain and retain employment with an emphasis on career advancement.

Job Readiness is the primary focus of the WorkReady Program located in the uptown section of Pittsburgh. The program provides intensive case management services to welfare recipients, many involved with multiple DHS offices in order to assist with the stabilization of barriers. This program provides assessment of skill levels and adaptability in a work environment. The outcome goal is to help job seekers transition to the EARN Program where they will be able to achieve the goal of self-sufficiency.

Senior Training and Employment Program (STEP) offers hands-on training to unemployed low income Allegheny County residents 55 years of age and older. Program participants are matched with appropriate training opportunities at local not-for-profit sites and paid a minimum wage for twenty hours per week. Participants work with staff during and after training to transition to unsubsidized employment.

Bureau of Homeless Services

The Bureau of Homeless Services provides a safety net of resources to help those in critical need of shelter with the goal of a client's eventual independence and self-sufficiency.

Homeless programs address the needs of the homeless or near homeless through emergency shelters, transitional and permanent housing and rental assistance. Support is also provided to link the homeless to all available community resources and offer assistance to public housing residents.

In March of 2015, DHS implemented “ Coordinated Intake “ which is the process of ensuring that homeless persons are matched with the right intervention, among all of the interventions or programs available as quickly as possible. This process standardizes access and assessment for all clients and coordinates referrals across all providers in the homeless system.

Emergency Shelters: Twelve shelters throughout the County provide temporary refuge for the homeless or those in need of emergency housing. The Emergency Shelter System also includes operation of a Severe Weather Emergency Shelter (SWES) between November 15 and March 15. The SWES provides food and shelter for the chronic street homeless during severe winter conditions whenever the traditional network of shelters become overcrowded.

Rental Assistance: Helps to prevent homelessness by providing individuals with payment for rent, security deposits, and utilities.

Bridge Housing: Offers housing and supportive services to the homeless for approximately three to 12 months, with the goal of returning clients to the most self-sufficient situation possible.

PennFree Bridge Housing: Provides transitional housing and support services to homeless individuals and families with drug, alcohol, or dual addiction or dependency issues.

Innovative Supportive Housing Services: Enables the service provider to design a housing service for homeless persons that is outside the scope of existing Homeless Assistance Program (HAP) components. Provides outreach, case management, crisis intervention and links to other housing and social service programs via a multi-disciplinary team approach.

Housing Continuum of Care (HUD) Program: Funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the program provides the homeless with both temporary and permanent housing, along with other support services, to help them achieve independence and self-sufficiency.

Bureau of Outreach and Prevention

Compelled by the importance as well as the cost-effectiveness of prevention, the Bureau of Outreach and Prevention strives to provide supports to individuals and families before situations in their lives reach a crisis level. A wide variety of prevention programs and services are funded with allocations to community-based organizations.

Some are specifically offered to individuals and families whose total household income is at or below 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines; these are funded by the Human Services Development Fund (HSDF) and the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG).

The Human Services Development Fund (HSDF) is included in the state block grant program that is used in the county human services system to provide services in several areas as defined under Section 4 of Act 1994 - 78. These areas include services for specific populations including low-income adults, homeless persons, aging and aged persons, drug-addicted and alcohol-addicted persons, persons with mental health problems, persons with mental retardation and/or dependent and delinquent children. In addition to categorical services for specific populations, HSDF is used to provide service coordination which consists of planning and management activities designed to improve the effectiveness of county human services, generic services which consists of services that meet the needs of two or more populations, and specialized services which consists of new services or a combination of services designed to meet the unique needs of a population that are unmet by the current categorical programs.

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is a federal block grant program that is allocated to eligible local entities under legislative authority to fund a full range of services and activities that have a measurable and potentially major impact on the

causes of poverty in the community. Services funded under CSBG must demonstrate effectiveness in the achievement of one or more of the six national goals that include: (1) Low-income people become more self-sufficient; (2) Conditions in which low-income people live are improved; (3) Low-income people own a stake in their community; (4) Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people are achieved; (5) Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results; (6) Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems. Services supported under CSBG include but are not limited to service coordination, case management, employment and training, nutrition, transportation, education, energy assistance, housing, , and outreach and referral.

CSBG- and HSDf-funded Community-based Services

Vulnerable, low-income families, individuals and children, are provided a rich array of services through the Human Services Development Fund and Community Services Block Grant funds.

These services include:

- counseling,
- case management
- homemaker and chore/in-home support
- County Jail community-re-entry services (in jail and in community)
- emergency food provision
- income tax preparation
- job skills education and training
- life skills education
- literacy development
- transportation
- tutoring and mentoring
- job search assistance

Prevention programs for families and youth that do not have income restrictions include:

Family Support

Family Support Centers provide family-driven, community-based support where families can find resources to build upon their strengths. Centers focus mostly on families with children six years of age and younger.

Family Support Centers offer:

- Parenting education and supports through home visits and groups
- Developmental screenings of infants and young children and referrals for Early Intervention
- Guidance in setting family and individual goals
- School-readiness
- Providing opportunities for families to meet with one another in family-oriented activities
- Assistance in accessing preventive health care including pre-natal care, immunizations, primary care, WIC
- Fatherhood programming

For information on locations of Allegheny County Family Support Center, please visit www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/fpsupport.aspx

First Steps assists pregnant women and families with children up to six years of age through home visits and support groups that address parenting and child development.

Small SEEDS/Mother to Son supports single African American mothers of boys, ages eight to 15 years. The boys engage in activity groups and manhood training. Single moms participate in support groups to receive assistance with raising boys and with personal issues.

Reach Out to Families provides counseling and life-skills training for families with children—infants through adolescents—whose life stressors and risk factors increase the likelihood of child maltreatment or neglect. Services include home visiting, parent education and support with the goal of preventing child abuse and neglect.

Immigrant Services and Supports

AJAPO (Acculturation for Justice, Access and Peace Outreach) assists immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean to become more self-sufficient and integrated into their communities.

Latino Family Center is a family support center for families from Spanish- and Portuguese- speaking nations.

Prospect Park Family Center is a family support center for families from many different nations.

Professional Development

The Credential for Strengths-based Family Workers (SFW) is a professional training and credentialing program that is comprised of a competency-based curriculum. It is unique in its focus on the development and documentation of knowledge and skill through the completion of a portfolio. Workers who complete the program are better able to facilitate a family's ability to set and reach their own goals. While nationally standardized, the training is tailored to meet the needs of local communities. Temple University Family Development Programs operates through Approved Providers throughout Pennsylvania to provide opportunities for high quality professional development for family workers. The Allegheny County Department of Human Services is a sponsor of the SFW Programs.

ACT Raising Safe Kids is an evidence-based parenting curriculum developed by the American Psychological Association that promotes non-violent techniques and practices through education about: child development, exposure to and effects of violence (including media), and emotional regulation. Safe Start is the coordinator for ACT in Allegheny County and offers facilitator training for human service staff.

Reach Out to Families provides counseling and life-skills training for families with children—infants through adolescents—whose life stressors and risk factors

increase the likelihood of child maltreatment or neglect. Services include home visiting, parent education and support with the goal of preventing child abuse and neglect.

School-age children and youth supports

Out-of-school programs provide community-based, safe place for children, youth and/or young adults after their school day ends. Some sites offer programming during the summer as well. They provide activities for students that typically include academic supports, recreation, enrichment, etc.

- The Beverly Jewel Wall Lovelace Year Round Program for Children is designed for children ages five through twelve years who live in or near most public housing communities in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.
- DHS funds a number of faith- and community-based afterschool and summer programs for children and youth throughout Allegheny County.
- Youth Places is designed for older youth, ages 12 to 18 years, who live in high-risk neighborhoods. Programs include academic assistance, career and leadership development and recreational activities.

Please visit www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/education/out-of-school.aspx for the locations of these programs.

Violence Prevention, Intervention and After-care

Safe Start helps children, parents, child care providers and community members confront the reality of violence in our society by:

- Raising awareness of the harmful effects of witnessing violence on the healthy development of young children
- Providing training and resources to help caregivers reduce the effects a violent society has on young children
- Offering alternatives to children and caregivers in their responses to each other
- Providing grief counseling to children in the wake of a crisis involving violence

For more information about Safe Start, please visit: www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/safestart.aspx .

Community Relations

The Department of Human Services established the Director's Action Line (DAL) (1-800-862-6783) to empower people in Allegheny County and provide a means to share concerns about services received by DHS program offices or contracted providers. The DAL responds to thousands of calls annually by resolving issues and answering concerns. DAL routinely receives a consumer satisfaction rate of higher than 90 percent.

