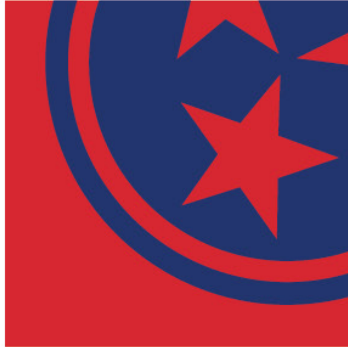
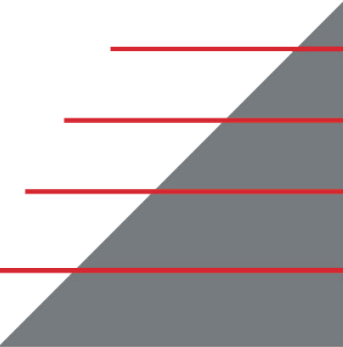
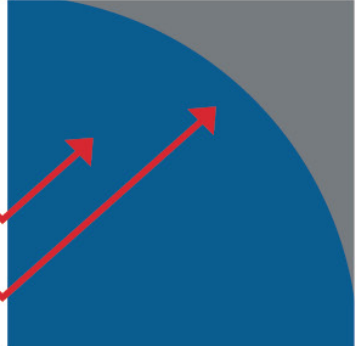
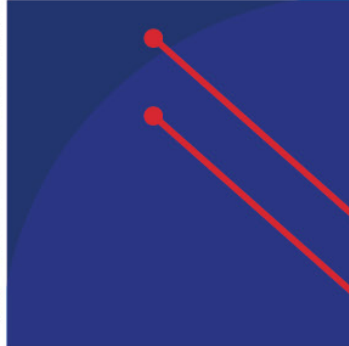


Tennessee Department of
HUMAN SERVICES





Tennessee Department of Human Services Annual Report 2022

"We're here to ensure that all Tennesseans have an opportunity to reach their full potential as contributing members of our community. For far too long government programs have focused on outputs, rather than the outcomes of the lives of those served. We aim to change that."

-Commissioner Clarence H. Carter

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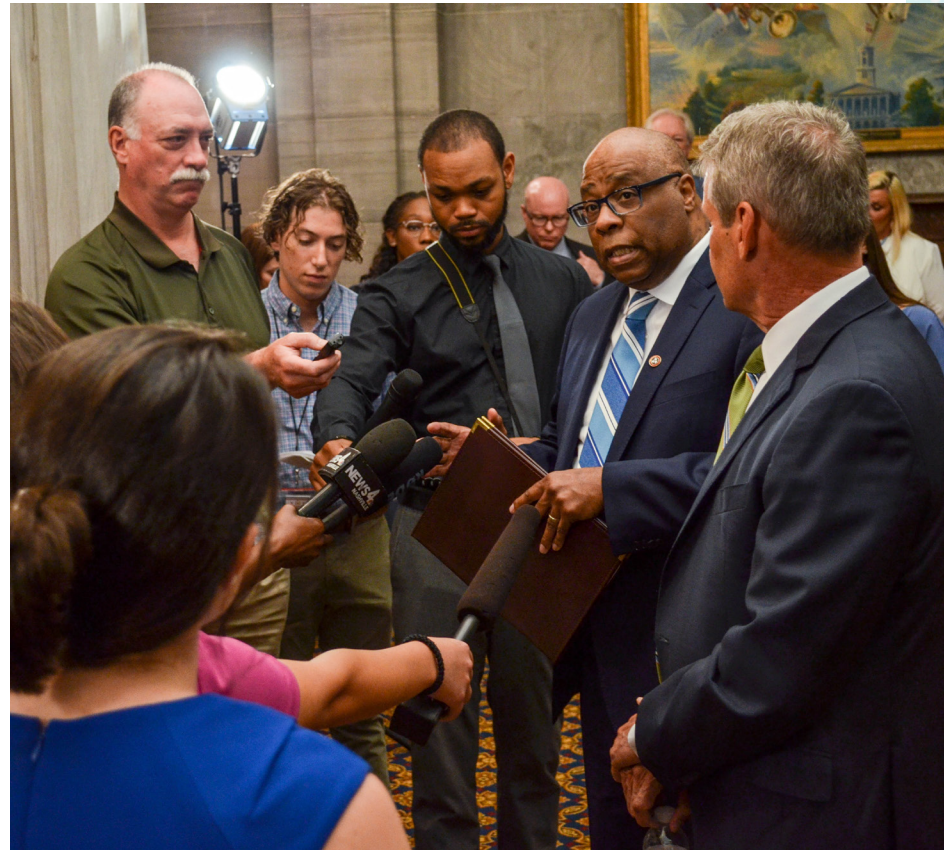


A message from Commissioner Clarence H. Carter

It is my honor as Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS), to present our State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2021-2022 Annual Report. Beyond a description of our programs and services, this report is a window into the department's accomplishments, statistics of interest, key initiatives, and progress. Most importantly, this report includes stories from Tennesseans who experienced real life changes that are a testament to the department's progress and collaborative work with staff, community organizations, fellow agencies, businesses, partners and stakeholders.

TDHS is made up of nearly 4,000 employees responsible for facilitating a broad scope of more than 17 programs and services. All in all, we serve more than a million Tennesseans as they navigate challenges in their journey supporting themselves and their families. As you read, you'll notice how broad the scope of our services places our department in a unique position to have a significant impact on the state's citizens, community, and economy. We understand that we are accountable to our customers and state and we're serious about continuously improving how we do business, collaborate both inside and outside of the department, implement strategies to fundamentally improve the safety net and move more Tennesseans toward financial independence.

Although this report highlights many significant transformative and collaborative achievements for our department, two cornerstones in our work over the past year



were the implementation of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Opportunity Act and the strengthening of dynamic relationships with key partners who share our vision to help more Tennesseans achieve long-term positive outcomes. The TANF Opportunity Act offers a pathway to self-sufficiency for TANF Tennesseans with low incomes. Since being introduced in last year's annual report, Families First (the state's TANF program) recipients received an increase in their monthly cash allotment, seven public-private collaborative groups were selected to lead TANF centered pilot projects, and TANF funds were designated to support the initiatives of 44 community-based organizations. Outcomes for the seven pilot projects will be tracked and analyzed to help drive future discussions regarding TANF funding. I'm excited about, not only the prospect of sharing and demonstrating innovation and partnership as an effective model for future programs, but



also the opportunity to use this and other initiatives as a point to connect with partner organizations.

It is my belief that our work has the highest impact when there are more voices at the table and that forming relationships with community organizations, businesses and other agencies is an effective way to find productive solutions, share responsibility and build trust with those we serve. In addition to working with TANF Opportunity Act partners, this year we took time for in-depth visits to each grand division of the state, and joined forces with businesses, providers and others to address child care needs, develop employment solutions, and ensure every Tennessean has access to the resources needed to contribute to the strength of our shared community.

As the TDHS team and I look to the year ahead, there's still so much to do, and we're excited to leverage new technology, strategies, and partnerships to help Tennessee become America at its best. We'll be taking on a new fatherhood initiative, implementing strategies to better inform the public of our work, connect with customers, and most importantly, continue working to positively transform the lives of Tennesseans. I hope this report demonstrates how our work strengthens Tennessee by strengthening Tennesseans and thank you for the opportunity to serve the great state of Tennessee.

Sincerely,
Clarence H. Carter, Commissioner
Tennessee Department of Human Services



Mission Vision Values

Mission

To build strong families by connecting Tennesseans to employment, education and support services.

Vision

To revolutionize the customer experience through innovation and a seamless network of services.

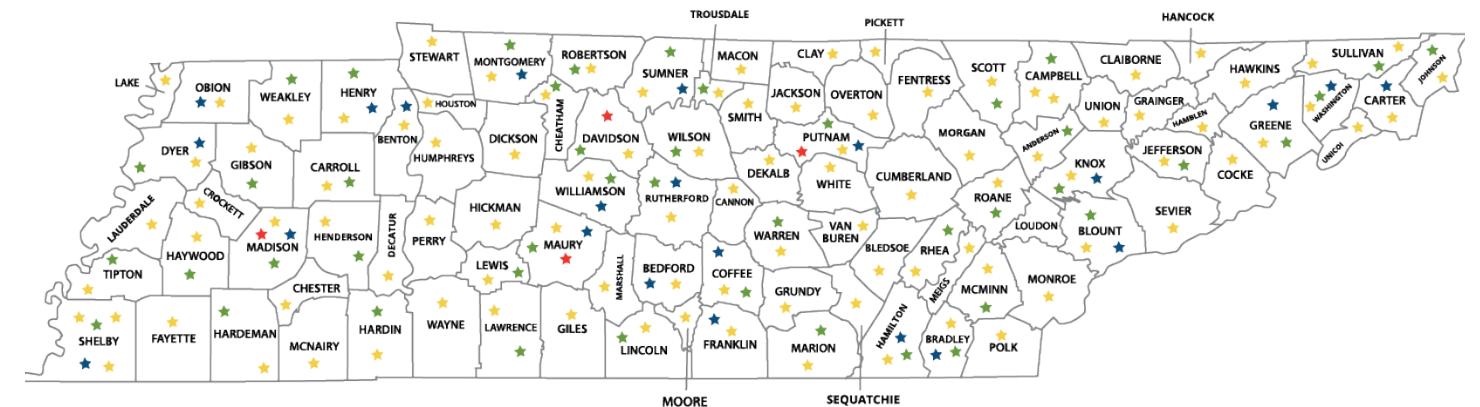
Values

- High Performance
- Collaboration
- Continuous Improvement
- A Shared Vision
- Customer-Centered Solutions



Human Services at a Glance

The Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) consists of multiple divisions on a **mission** to build strong families by connecting Tennesseans to employment, education and support services. We have a **vision** of revolutionizing the customer experience through innovation and a seamless network of services. Our **values** center around high performance, collaboration, continuous improvement, shared vision and customer-centered solutions.



Who We Serve:

Led by a governor-appointed Commissioner and organized into multiple customer facing and support divisions, the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) is in the business of building transformative bridges in the lives of Tennesseans. We're here to ensure that all state residents have an opportunity to reach their full potential as contributing members of our community. We achieve this goal by offering an extensive range of social services to a diverse group of almost two million Tennesseans in 95 rural and urban counties. Our broad range of customers includes custodial and non-custodial parents who participate in the Child Support Program, as well as the child care providers who may apply for licensure through TDHS and parents that need child care payment assistance. We also serve members of our community who have disabilities or are classified as blind, visually impaired, deaf and hard of hearing. Other customers include families living below the poverty line who may need assistance in obtaining nutrition or other resources to move beyond their current circumstances. We serve these groups and more, however our mission is always the same: build strong families by connecting Tennesseans to employment, education and support services.

- ★ DHS Central and District offices
- ★ Child Support Office
- ★ Family Assistance and Child Care Offices
- ★ Rehabilitation Centers and Offices





Executive Team Leaders

Commissioner

Clarence H. Carter

Deputy Commissioner of Programs and Services

Cherrell Campbell-Street

- Division of Child Care and Community Services
- Division of Family Assistance and Child Support
- Division of Rehabilitation Services

Deputy Commissioner of Operations

Melisa Hucks

- Procurement/Facilities
- Budget
- Division of Quality Improvement and Strategic Solutions
- Fiscal Services (In partnership with the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration)
- Information Technology (In partnership with the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration)

Chief of Staff

Whitney Page

- Public Information and Legislative Office
- People Operations

General Counsel

Krisann Hodges

- Division of Appeals and Hearings
- Legal Services
- Records Management

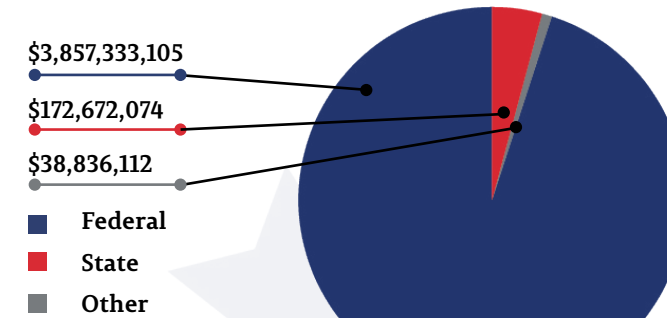
Inspector General

Todd McKinney

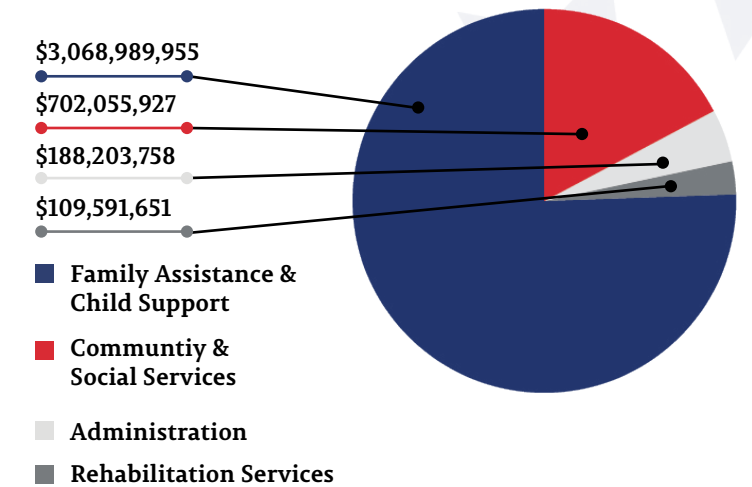
- Audit Services
- Program Integrity

Tennesseans Served in 2021/2022

TDHS SFY 2022 Revenue



TDHS SFY 2022 Expenditures



Families First

- Families First caseload for June 2022 was approximately 13,197 households, representing a 1% increase since June 2021.
- Approximately **22,649** children served in Families First households.
- An average of **99** cases closed per month in SFY 2022 due to employment.
- Average monthly benefit for Families First participants: **\$384.12**

Child Support

(Statistics provided for most recent federal fiscal year, as of July 2022)

- **\$631,000,000** in Child Support payments distributed to families in Tennessee through the Child Support Program during the 2021 federal fiscal year, reaching **302,000** children.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)

- Approximately **419,100** families served through SNAP as of June 2022, reaching **830,000** people. Total issuance of **\$137,505,000** in SNAP benefits for the month of June 2022.
- Average monthly SNAP benefit: **\$328.03**

Social Services Block Grant

- **1,450** Tennesseans served

Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer Program (P-EBT)*

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government authorized the administration of the P-EBT program in 2020 to provide nutritional benefits to children that missed meals due to school closures. The program continued through 2021 and 2022, providing valuable food resources to Tennessee families. The following is a snapshot into the program's reach in Tennessee.

| Benefit | Amount | Household/Students |
|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Childcare P-EBT | \$88,088,834.03 | 117,885 |
| Childcare Summer P-EBT | \$51,841,125.00 | 97,122 |
| P-EBT Students | \$337,822,288.90 | 705,358 |
| Total Issuance: | \$477,752,247.93 | |

*Data as of July 13, 2022

Office of Inspector General

- More than **\$10 million** identified in SNAP and TANF claims through fraud investigative activity
- **269** audits and monitoring reports completed
- **24,116** background checks conducted

Child Care & Adult Day Services & Licensing

- **2307** total Child Care facilities licensed: 1769 Child Care Centers, 298 Group Homes, 240 Child Care Family Homes, and **10** Child Care Drop-in Centers
- **41** licensed Adult Day Care Centers
- **19,645** children served through the Smart Steps Child Care Payment Assistance Program
- There were **1,355** Educators from **584** different licensed agencies served through the WAGE\$ program
- **4,242** quality child care spaces created through the Pre-Licensure process. This includes 48 provisional licenses and 23 continuous licenses supported by **\$1,495,615** in establishment grants
- **43,951** children served with **30,2022** children receiving books through partnership with the Governor's Early Literacy Foundation

Adult Protective Services

- **22,349** reports of abuse received
- **10,729** investigations conducted
- **6,667** referrals made
- **291** emergency assignments

Appeals and Hearings

- **50,300** issues Appealed for **24,874** Unique Appellants

Food Programs*

- **31,000,000** meals provided in 2021 and **26,000,000*** meals provided in 2022 by the Child and Adult Care Food Program.
- **8,000,000** meals served in 2021 by the Summer Food Service Program including meals served as part of the COVID-19 waivers

*The number of meals represents those submitted for reimbursement as of July 1, 2022 and does not include the months of April, May or June 2022. The actual number served is subject to change.

Community Services Block Grant

- **293,768** individuals and **150,798** households served by Community Action Agencies with CSBG funds

*Statistics are federal fiscal year, covering 10/2/2020 – 9/30/2021, which includes part of the 2022 State Fiscal Year)

Rehabilitation Services

- More than **1,400** vocational rehabilitation customers achieved their employment goals, worked over 29 hours per week and earned approximately \$12.72 per hour
- The Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at Smyrna provided services to **288** customers either on campus or virtually
- Rehabilitation Services assisted more than **1,954** businesses
- **9,423** pre-employment transition services provided to an average of **5,690** students each month of the school year (August to May)

For a more in-depth look at how these TDHS programs are working to build stronger families across Tennessee, continue reading.

Strengthening Tennessee Together: Outcome Driven Collaboration

The Tennessee Department of Human Services is a person-centered organization. We're not only dedicated to connecting people and resources to create positive outcomes for individuals, families, communities, and our state; we're also taking an evidence-based approach to connect with organizations, fellow state agencies and others who share a vision for building a thriving Tennessee one life at a time. Each year, we find new ways to partner with a variety of community organizations, businesses, and entities on our pathway to create more long-lasting positive outcomes in the lives of Tennesseans.



The TANF Opportunity Act

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Opportunity Act (TOA) passed into law effective July 1, 2021. This legislation serves TANF recipients by offering a structure for investment in community partnerships through the spend down of the TANF reserve while also directing plans for recurring dollars and strengthening protections against fraud, waste, and abuse.

How the TANF Opportunity Act (TOA) Serves Tennesseans Now and In the Future:

- The TOA created a Families First Community Advisory Board to oversee elements of the TOA structure. Members of the board include staff from TDHS and other state agencies, legislators, industry-specific thought leaders, as well as former TANF recipients.
- The legislation also established a three-year Tennessee Opportunity Pilot Program with representation in each of the three grand divisions, and one TDHS-administered pilot to demonstrate the efficacy of well-implemented, two-generation approaches to improving education, health, and economic outcomes. Choosing these recipients involved establishing a Planning Grant effective December 31, 2021 until March 31, 2022. The Families First Community Advisory Board reviewed applications for this grant and chose 17 agency recipients to receive planning grants and present pilot proposals to the Families First Community Advisory Board in April 2022. Two grant recipients were chosen in each grand division. Additionally, one TDHS-administered pilot grant was selected. Pilot projects have a tentative effective date of November 1, 2022.
- Additionally, the TOA formed Families First Community Grants. With a January 2022 application period, selected Community Grants were awarded to forty-four (44) agencies.

A Transformational Tour

With the 2021 TANF Opportunity Act, TDHS began a path to transform the way we transform lives for Tennesseans facing economic, social, and developmental vulnerabilities. As part of this journey, over the summer of 2022, Commissioner Carter and executive team members embarked on a cross-state Transformation Tour. Each stop in west, middle, and east Tennessee aimed to form and strengthen connections with community partners, non-profits, educational partners, civic leaders, and departmental staff committed to an outcome-driven approach that bolsters more Tennesseans on their way to economic independence and freedom.



Breaking New Ground in Child Care

The Tennessee Department of Human Services understands that access to safe, reliable child care can be a challenge for Tennessee workers that stands in the way of employment success and community-wide economic growth. In April 2022, Tyson Foods broke ground on a \$3.5 million child care facility located on the campus of the company's poultry processing plant in Humboldt, Tennessee. As one of the state's child care licensing and monitoring bodies, TDHS took an active role in educating Tyson on licensing processes and family needs related to the company's childhood learning center.

This public-private partnership demonstrates exactly what is possible when there is collaboration across sectors to support the well-being of Tennesseans.

- Clarence H. Carter, Commissioner of Tennessee Department of Human Services.



Raising Community Action Awareness

In honor of Community Action Month (May 2022), TDHS and the Tennessee Association for Community Action (TACA) hosted its first in-person event in more than two years, "Community Action is Music to My Ears," with over fifty (50) attendees to celebrate the hard work and dedication of our Tennessee community action network. The event followed a May 18, 2022, proclamation from Governor Lee.



Leading Efforts to Prevent and Stop Elder Abuse in Tennessee

Our Adult Protective Services team (APS) works with many organizations dedicated to protecting adults. On June 15, 2022, the unit joined many of these organizations to co-host the Center on Aging: Research and Education Services (CARES) Conference at Tennessee State University. This annual conference brings together a collection of community organizations dedicated to stopping abuse, neglect (including self-neglect) or financial exploitation of adults who may be unable to protect themselves. APS is proud to join forces with the Tennessee Council on Aging and Disability, sister state agencies and other community organizations with a passion for abuse prevention and also appreciates the support from Governor Bill Lee who issued a proclamation designating June 15, 2022, as Elder Abuse Awareness Day in Tennessee.



Child Support Collaborating to Aid Justice-Involved Tennesseans

The TDHS Child Support division introduced a Re-Entry Team in 2021. This team consists of program managers and coordinators who partner with the Tennessee Department of Corrections and Child Support offices to assist parents during incarceration, the pre-release period, and after release. The team focuses on providing intensive case management services to parents with child support matters such as modifications during and after incarceration, support services after release in partnership with community agencies, and mediation services to assist the family with developing a co-parenting plan. During SFY 2022, the team has initiated 970 modification reviews and modified 324 orders for incarcerated parents.

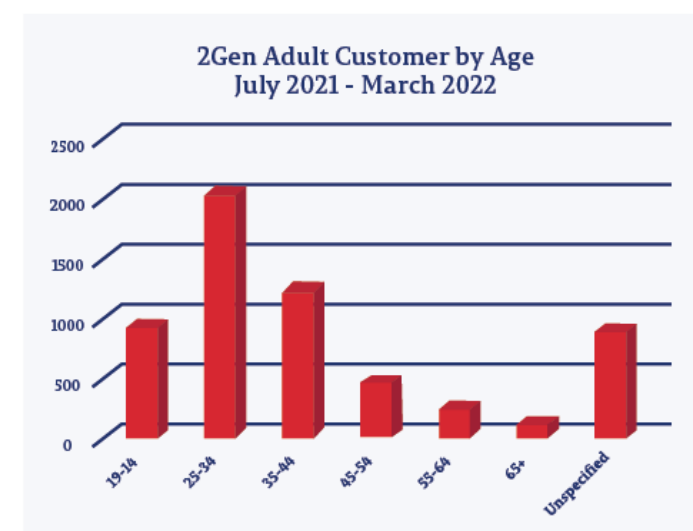
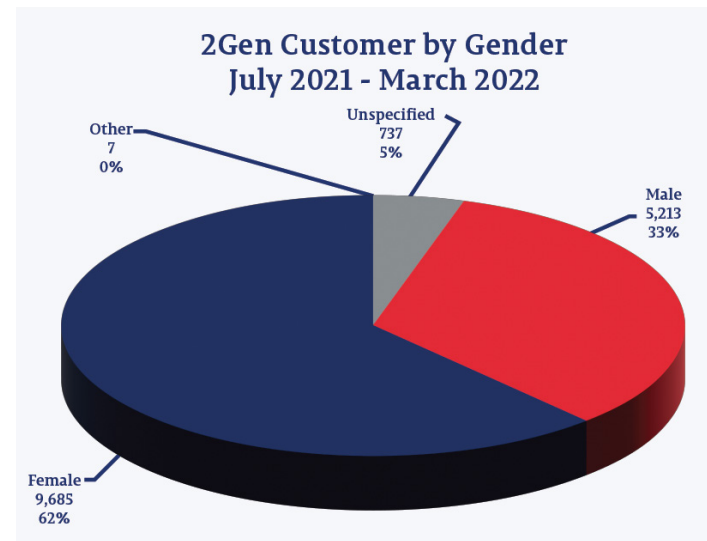
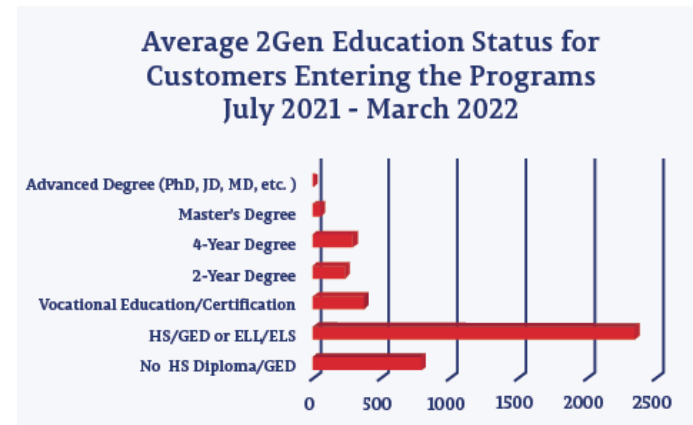
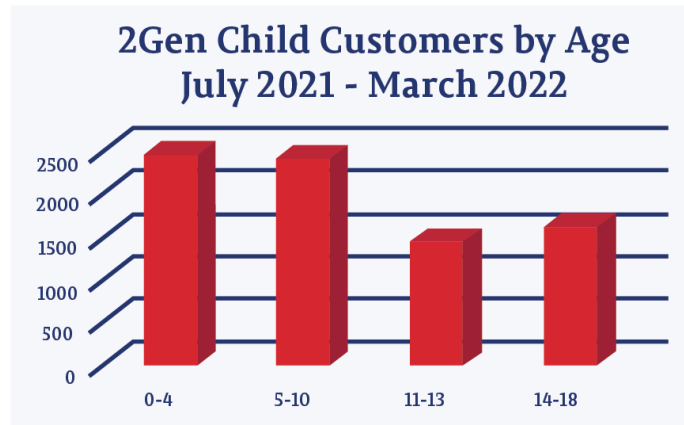


2Gen

Starting in 2013, TDHS adopted a two-generation approach that combines TDHS resources and community partnerships to break negative economic cycles for families. Short for “two generation,” 2Gen refers to a service framework that emphasizes placing equal and intentional focus on both the child and their parent or caregiver. Research shows wholistic support that includes solid connections and coordination between services for all family members increases the likelihood of economic success and mobility across generations and over time. Using Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds, the 2Gen approach harnesses the power of innovative community collaboration to move children and their caregivers towards educational success, economic security, strong social capital, and health and well-being. As part of the 2Gen approach, TDHS works with more than 60 community and state partners to deliver wholistic support services across the state.

Tennesseans Served

The state fiscal year began in July 2021 and ended in June 2022. The information in this report is reflective of the data available at the point of this report’s publication.



Current 2Gen Partners

- A 1 Learning Connections
- Agape Child & Family Services, Inc.
- A Step Ahead Foundation Chattanooga, Inc.
- A Step Ahead Foundation of Middle Tennessee, Inc.
- Ballard Health
- Belmont - The Store
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of East Tennessee
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Chattanooga
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Middle Tennessee
- Boys & Girls Club of TN Valley (Youth Force)
- Catholic Charities of Tennessee
- Chattanooga Hamilton County Hospital Authority ((Erlanger))
- Code Crew
- Council for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, Inc.
- Family & Children’s Service
- Girls, Inc.
- Greater Kingsport Young Men’s Christian Associations (YMCA), Inc.
- Healing Word Counseling Center
- Helen Ross McNabb Center, Inc.
- Hope House Day Care Center, Inc.
- Impact Management Solutions, Inc ((Martin Housing Authority))
- Knowledge Quest
- Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Agency
- Martha O'Bryan Center
- Meharry Medical College
- Methodist LeBonheur Community Outreach-Green & Healthy Homes Initiatives
- Neighborhood Christian Centers, Inc.
- Persevere
- Porter Leath
- Salvation Army
- Save the Children
- Tennessee Allegiance for Legal Services-MALS
- Tennessee Allegiance for Legal Services-Multi-County
- Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services ((Project Lifeline))
- Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services ((SOCAT – System of Care Across TN))
- Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services ((TIES))
- Tennessee Department of Health ((TN-DOH NHV))
- United Neighborhood Health Services, Inc.
- United Way of Greater Chattanooga
- United Way of Greater Nashville – Family Collective
- United Way of Mid-South-Drive to Dream
- Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency
- Urban Strategies, Inc.
- YWCA of Nashville & Middle Tennessee



YMCA of Nashville & Middle Tennessee

From Homeless to Housed in 86 days: A Success Story from 2Gen Partner Porter Leath

Note: Names Changed to Protect Customer Privacy

When Kay Williams* came to Porter Leath's Care Coordination, she arrived with a \$14,000 debt and warrant related to an "at fault" uninsured car accident. A mother living in West Tennessee with a seventh-grade education, her career options were limited. Making eight dollars an hour at the care center where her child was enrolled also made it difficult for Ms. Williams to leave her home situation where she experienced abuse, vandalism, and unsafe living conditions. Despite these barriers, Ms. Williams made it her goal to secure safe and livable housing, get her GED, and her driver's license.

Partnering with Care Coordination, Ms. Williams took the first step to become stable and clear her warrant. With support from Care Coordination, Ms. Williams participated in a conference call and negotiation with the insurance company. Not only did this advocacy result in a debt reduction (moving from \$14,000 to \$560 in owed amounts), Ms. Williams saw self-advocacy in action and reclaimed her driver's license. This lesson helped her take the bold step to leave her unsafe home situation. With few resources, she experienced homelessness and moved between two shelters and a hotel during her 86 days of homelessness. However, Ms. Williams would not be deterred and remained determined, resourceful, and resilient.

While experiencing homelessness, transportation challenges, issues with access to food and a means to prepare it, Ms. Williams participated in mental health and financial counseling through Alliance and Greater Memphis Financial Empowerment Center, two local nonprofits. She exercised resourcefulness and acquired a job at the hotel where she was staying temporarily. Better working hours and pay allowed her to drop off and pick up her children from school and she eventually secured stable housing in a three-bedroom subsidized apartment.

Today, Ms. Williams is housed, employed, and safe with stable transportation. Her next goal is to acquire her GED and increase her earning potential. She hopes to eventually own a home and with her determination, will, and willingness to learn, she is on her way to do it.

Family Assistance and Child Support

The Family Assistance and Child Support Division offers programs and services that provide or support families working to strengthen their households. The division includes the Families First, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance and Child Support Programs. Beyond these programs, TDHS has a number of Two-Generation Approach (2Gen) contract partners that work to break cycles of poverty by focusing support services on both the parent (or guardian) and child.

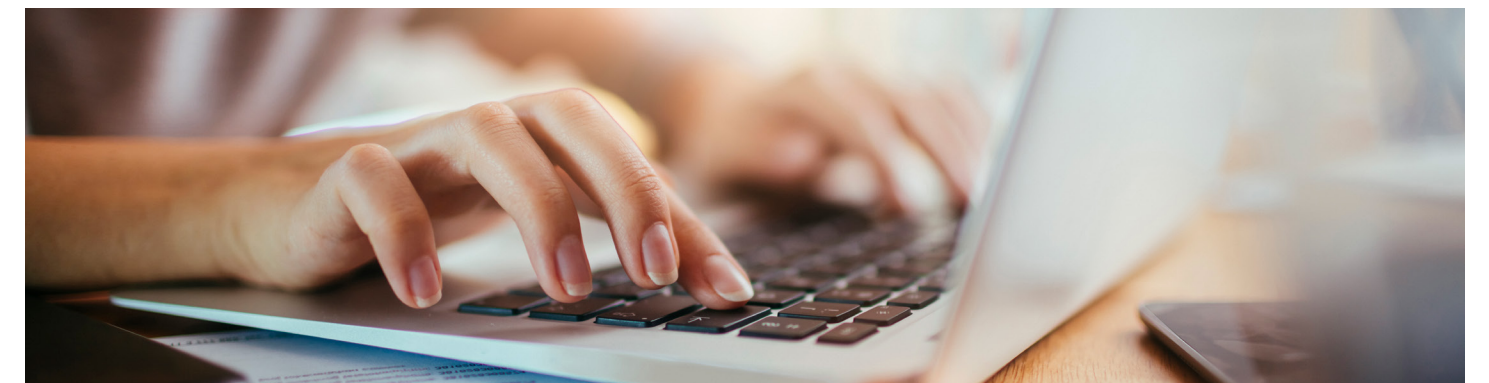
Families First

Families First, the state's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, is a workforce development and employment program. The program emphasizes work, training, and personal responsibility. It is temporary and has a primary focus on promoting self-sufficiency through employment. Families First helps participants reach this goal by providing temporary cash assistance, transportation, child care assistance, education, job training, employment activities, and other support and transitional services.

To be eligible for the program, participants must meet eligibility standards and agree to follow a Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP). The Personal Responsibility Plan is a document that avows participant's commitment to do certain actions to support their family and move toward self-sufficiency.

These actions include but are not limited to:

- Maintaining child health checks, immunizations, school attendance and progress
- Working with Child Support Services to collect child support
- Working with an Employment and Case Management Service (ECMS) provider and taking part in work and/or training for thirty (30) hours per week.



Family Assistance & Child Support Division Leadership

Charles Bryson

Assistant Commissioner

Lisa Francis

Director of Operations Field Services

Keisha Thaxton

Director of Operations Policy & Contracts

Sherron Brown

Director of Operations ACCENT/TCSSES Solutions

Patricia Wood

Director of Operations Field Services and Contracts

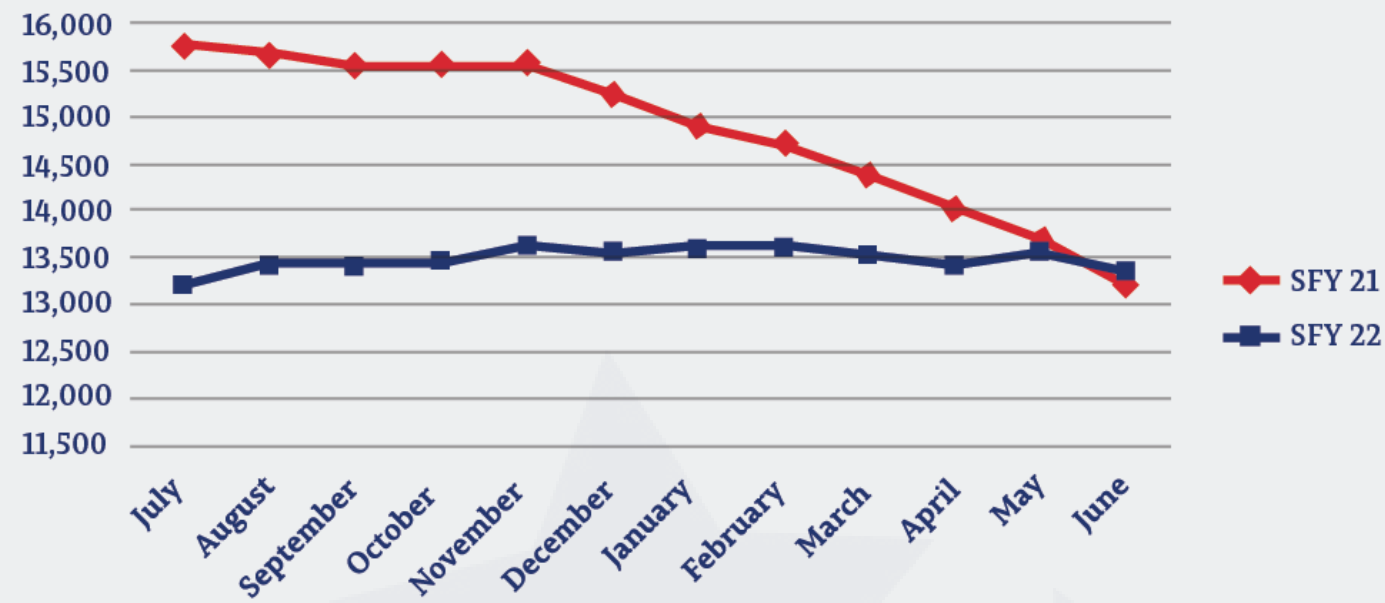
Robert Duck

Director of Operations Policy and Services

Tennesseans Served in 2021/22

- The Families First caseload for June 2022 was approximately 13,337 households, representing a 1 percent increase since June 2021.
- In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2022, an average of 99 Families First cases were closed monthly due to employment.

Families First Caseload Data 2021/2022



Transformative and Innovative Achievements

Modernizing Systems | This year, Families First and SNAP program staff began their journey to replace the legacy ACCENT system with a modern enterprise system that accurately captures federal/state regulations and offers an efficient, streamlined process for TDHS customers and staff.

Leveraging Communication Tools | Families First Employment and Case Management Services and Family Focused Solutions providers continued to increase the use of virtual tools and phone communication to engage customers in work activities. Case management services, such as referrals to partner providers, are also conducted by phone or through other virtual tools to increase productivity.

From Minimum Wage to "Self-Confident Professional"

In Her Own Words: Families First Customer Sarah Ross



I am a single mother with a four-year-old daughter with special needs. I came to the Sullivan County Families First program in early 2018 when I was working part-time as a teacher's aide with the head start program earning minimum wage. When I first came into the program, I participated in Job Skills Training while working my part-time position to meet my 30-hour requirement for the program. As with the nature of schools, I was usually laid off during the summer months. My career coach placed me in a Community Service program with an area insurance agency where I worked in the office as a receptionist.



I continued to work at the insurance agency and became a very valuable member of the team. When my community service was completed, I was able to transfer to Work Experience with the same agency, and in 2019, I was lucky enough to be hired by the same insurance agency. Not long after, COVID-19 hit hard in our area, and when the head start program closed, I was able to increase my hours with the insurance agency and maintain employment throughout the pandemic. While working there, I started taking insurance classes and studying for my insurance boards. I passed my insurance exam on the first try!!!! (Which is very difficult to do) and was hired full-time as an insurance broker with the same agency!

My Families First case closed (since I was over the income limits) and I qualified for the Work Incentive Payment program. I was able to benefit from several support services including gas assistance, car repair, dental services, Family Focused Solutions and my daughter was also referred to Camelot for services to help her with her special needs which I greatly appreciated. I truly believe I am a success.

After a lot of hard work on my part, I feel I have developed into a very self-confident professional young woman with exceptional skills that have helped me become self-sufficient. I am thankful for Families First bringing this out in me! I know that with the help of my career coach and Family Focused Solutions counselor, I can honestly say I feel like my whole life is ahead of me in a positive way!

Customer Service and Cooperative Accomplishments

Helping Flood Victims | The Families First program provided Emergency Cash Assistance (ECA) benefits to Tennesseans whose homes and/or businesses were damaged due to severe flooding in August 2021, and the tornado outbreak in December 2021. A total of 118 applications were received, and \$14,250 was issued to approved customers.

Making the Transition to Independence | The Families First program is meant to help families move beyond a need for services. Once a family becomes ineligible due to earned income, Families First provides assistance through the work incentive payment program. Since implementation in December 2018, 627 families were approved for work incentive payments for a total of \$565,994 transitional benefits issued.

COVID-19 Relief | Tennessee was awarded \$12,994,779 from the Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund (PEAF) to provide non-recurrent, short-term benefits to families impacted by COVID-19. Through this funding, all active Families First child-only assistance units received an additional one-time payment of \$950 in December 2021 and, in July 2022, all active Families First assistance units received an additional one-time payment of \$450 to assist with back-to-school expenses.

Increasing Cash Assistance | The 2021 TANF Opportunity Act authorized the maximum standard grant for all Families First assistance unit sizes be no less than twenty-five percent (25%) of the standard of need for the applicable assistance unit size. For example the monthly cash assistance allotment for a family of three increased from \$277 to \$387.

Using Available Resources to Help Families | The Families First Standard of Need, known as the Consolidated Need Standard (CNS) and used as the program's net income limit, increased effective July 1, 2021. This increase was based on the 2019 recommendation from the University of Tennessee Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research. The gross income standard (GIS), defined as 185% of the CNS, also increased relative to the CNS increase.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) ensures eligible families and individuals with low incomes receive benefits to supplement their household monthly food budget, maintain good health, and allow them to direct more of their available income toward essential living expenses. TDHS staff determine the eligibility of applicants based on guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The primary goals of the program are to alleviate hunger and malnutrition and to improve nutrition and health in eligible households. TDHS has a dual focus on alleviating hunger and establishing or re-establishing self-sufficiency.

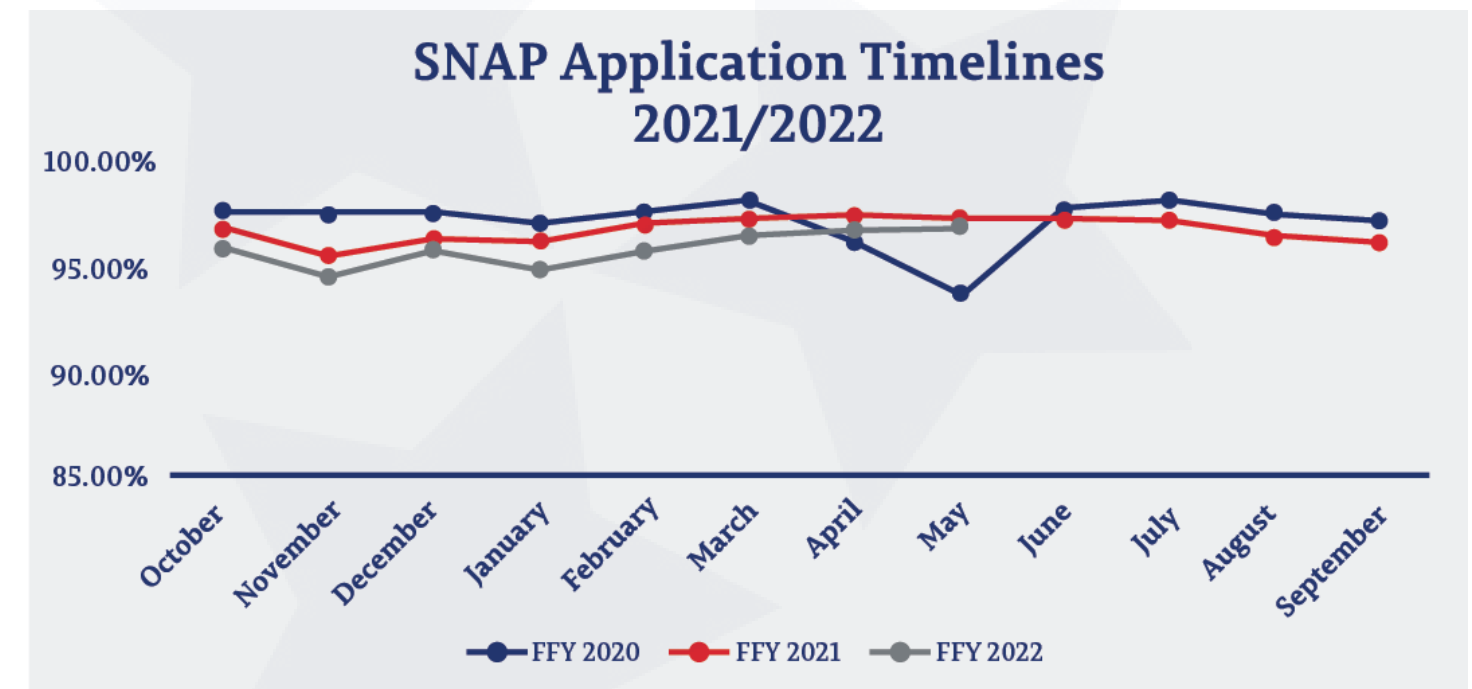
The SNAP program encompasses the following program areas: SNAP Nutrition Education, SNAP Outreach, SNAP Policy, Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) for SNAP and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF/Families First), Disaster SNAP, Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) and SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T). With these programs, the SNAP unit works in collaboration internally with other divisions of the department and externally with other state agencies and community organizations statewide to offer services to families in need.

Most Tennesseans are familiar with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). However, many people are unaware that beyond receiving nutritional benefits, SNAP recipients can also participate in the SNAP Education and Training Program (SNAP E&T). This program helps eligible SNAP recipients over the age of 16 move toward financial independence by providing tuition, training, textbooks, uniforms, tools, transportation assistance, child care, job search and other employment support services.

Through Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT), eligible school children receive temporary emergency nutrition benefits loaded on designated EBT cards that are used to purchase food. School-aged children who would have received free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Act or attend a school that serves free meals through community eligibility or other provisions are eligible for P-EBT. P-EBT also provides benefits to younger children in households participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) whose covered child care facility was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program has continued into 2021 and 2022, providing valuable food resources to Tennessee families.

Tennesseans Served 2021/22

- \$328.03 average monthly SNAP benefit as of June 2022.
- Approximately 830,152 people representing 419,184 households served through SNAP.
- \$137,505,160 in SNAP benefits were distributed in June 2022.
- Approximately 197,000 students received a retroactive P-EBT payment, amounting to \$26.98 million to cover P-EBT benefits that they may have missed in previous iterations of the program.



Data as of July 13, 2022

| Benefit | Amount | Household/Students |
|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Childcare P-EBT | \$88,088,834.03 | 117,885 |
| Childcare Summer P-EBT | \$51,841,125.00 | 97,122 |
| P-EBT Students | \$337,822,288.90 | 705,358 |
| Total Issuance: | \$477,752,247.93 | |

Customer Service and Cooperative Accomplishments

Helping Justice Involved Individuals Restart | The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) approved an extension of Tennessee’s Pre-release Waiver. This program helps inmates find footing after incarceration by allowing these citizens to be interviewed to determine eligibility for SNAP and the SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) Program within 30-days of being released from incarceration.

Answering 145,852 Calls | P-EBT Parent Hotline/District Hotline – From July 2021 to June 2022, a total of 145,852 calls were fielded from parents asking about P-EBT. Concurrently, we provided support to School Districts in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Education to complete student submission and attendance validations, amounting to approximately 627 complex calls fielded.

81,017 Chats | From July 2021 to June 2022, a total of 81,017 sessions, and 383,197 messages were exchanged through the AVA chatbot on the P-EBT Portal page.

Transformative and Innovative Accomplishments

Leveraging Technology for SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) | Tennessee was awarded a Data and Technology Grant to assist in funding the development and enhancement of an integrated portal to drive data-driven strategies, implementation, and forward-facing outcomes for SNAP E&T participants and partners across the state.

Communicating with Customers Where They Are | This year, TDHS implemented new innovative approach for engaging with parents of P-EBT eligible children and P-EBT benefit recipients via e-mail campaigns and text-messaging. The service allowed parents to have two-way text communications with TDHS regarding the P-EBT program. Currently, approximately 33,558 parents have opted into the text messaging service for P-EBT.

Child Support

With offices in thirty-one judicial districts across the state, the Child Support Program provides the following core services: locating parents; establishing paternity; establishing and enforcing financial and medical support orders; and collecting and disbursing child support payments. Services are provided through local district attorneys, TDHS employees and private vendors. In addition to these services, the Child Support Program provides additional assistance such as pregnancy prevention, health care coverage, parenting programs, justice involved re-entry, employment assistance, fatherhood promotion, and access and visitation with children. The program focuses on family-centered services such as parenting programs, justice involved re-entry services, employment assistance, and more. Child Support staff also help build healthy families by referring qualifying customers to other services available from the department such as SNAP and Child Care Payment Assistance. The program also partners with other state agencies including the Department of Safety, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Department of Corrections, and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Tennesseans Served 2021/22

- \$631,000,000 in Child Support payments distributed to families in Tennessee through the Child Support Program during the 2021 federal fiscal year, reaching 302,000 children.
- 60% of Child Support collected through income withholding from employee’s paychecks
- 94% of Child Support collected went to families --5% of Child Support reimbursed public assistance dollars (does not total 100% due to rounding).
- \$7.92 Collected for every \$1 spent by the program

Note: Information reported from Federal Fiscal Year 2021, which includes portions of state fiscal year 2022

Customer Service and Cooperative Accomplishments

Empowering Justice-Involved Parents | The TDHS Child Support Division introduced the Re-Entry Team in 2021. The re-entry team consists of program managers and coordinators who partner with the Tennessee Department of Corrections and Child Support offices to assist parents while they are incarcerated, during the pre-release period, and after release. The team focuses on providing intensive case management services to parents with child support matters such as modifications during and after incarceration, support services after release in partnership with community agencies, and mediation services to assist the family with developing a co-parenting plan. During SFY 2022, the team initiated 970 modification reviews and modified 324 orders for incarcerated parents.

Celebrating Parents Across the State | The Tennessee Voluntary Acknowledgment of Paternity Program continued outreach in the community by organizing “Baby Celebrations” that provided information about TDHS services and donated items such as diapers and baby wipes. Events were held in Memphis, Cookeville, Dickson, and Chattanooga.

Transformative and Innovative Accomplishments

Modernizing the Child Support Enforcement System | In 2019, the Child Support Program began working with Deloitte to modernize the Tennessee Child Support Enforcement System (TCSES) which debuted in 1995. This highly technical project required extensive testing to ensure a successful deployment and uninterrupted service to customers and end users. The updated TCSES application was successfully deployed on July 7, 2021 without any major service related issues. At the publication of this report, Child Support staff were continuing work with Deloitte to modernize the end user experience in TCSES using the human-centered design approach which focuses on end users to drive new system enhancements. The overall goal is to modernize all the screens in TCSES by 2023 and to roll out new updates every 4-6 months. The first enhancement to TCSES, the Bluebird release, was deployed successfully in June 2022. The deployment included four new screens: My Caseload, Case Overview, Participant Overview, and Search Results. These new screens consolidate information previously found on 18 different screens in TCSES 1.0 and provide users with a modern point and click interface. After years of planning and months of design workshops, interviews with Child Support professionals, reviews, and UAT testing, the Child Support Program is proud to have successfully delivered its first significant enhancement to TCSES.

Improving the License Revocation Process and Procedures | The Child Support Centralized Services Unit collaborated with the TDHS Quality Improvement and Service Solutions division to review the annual license revocation process. After analyzing this process, executive approval was granted to streamline and execute license revocation once rather than twice a year. This updated process will reduce duplicate matches and account for seasonal workers during the summer months. To ensure customers understand the process, the Centralized Services Unit worked with the Public Information and Legislative Office to leverage the Service Now (SNOW) digital platform to track customer service inquiries related to license revocation, liens, bankruptcies, and other centralized enforcement tools.

A Year of Positive Audit Findings | Every three years, the Child Support program participates in a required audit from the Internal Revenue Service Office of Safeguards. The June 2022 audit included in person visits to local offices, the State Disbursement Unit, State Office, local data centers and involved detailed cross divisional preparation from staff. This year's hybrid review resulted in very few audit findings for both information technology and program staff which greatly reduces time needed to develop corrective actions. Another audit, from the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE), takes place on an annual basis to verify the data submitted on our annual performance report. The Data Reliability Review for FFY 2021 resulted in no findings for the program. This was our most successful audit to date.

This year, the Child Support team also met with the OCSE regarding the annual Federal Case Registry (FCR) Data Analysis. These reviews help child support programs pinpoint opportunities to optimize FCR data and improve performance. Tennessee performed better than the national average in all four areas of review. In addition, the program realized performance gains in all categories as well. OCSE staff specifically praised Tennessee's child support staff for overall performance.

Getting the Support to Support

Note: Names Changed to Protect Customer Privacy

Even in the best of times, being a parent can be difficult. When employment is inconsistent, supporting a child becomes more than a challenge. For Chris James, a pattern of only paying child support when called to court resulted in a driver license suspension that further complicated the ability to gain employment. However, Mr. James started a new path with referral to the Tennessee Child Support Employment and Parenting Program (TCSEPP), a support initiative for non-custodial east Tennessee parents operated by the University of Tennessee Office of Community Engagement and Outreach.

Although enrollment in TCSEPP paved the road for his license to be reinstated, the COVID-19 pandemic complicated Mr. James' job life. Between August 2020 and August 2021, he reported to 14 different jobs, most lasting only a few days. However, the TCSEPP Coordinator continued supporting Chris with interview tips, application assistance and job leads. When his mother died unexpectedly and Mr. James faced additional court involvement due to family issues, the TCSEPP Coordinator referred Mr. James to a mental health agency and job center. TCSEPP was also able to assist him with car repairs to overcome transportation challenges that stood in the way of consistent employment.

On September 25, 2021, Mr. James started a new job, and a wage assignment was issued. During a recent check-in, he told his coordinator that "Work is amazing, and I'm killing it." His child support payments are now consistent, and he successfully exited from TCSEPP. Chris continues to check in with the coordinator and still loves his job.

Child Care and Community Services

The Division of Child Care and Community Services includes Child and Adult Care Services, Adult Protective Services, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, Community Services Block Grant and the Social Services Block Grant Programs. The division works to ensure the safety and wellness of Tennessee children and vulnerable adults by standardizing care, protections and related assistance while guiding and providing aid to partnering community agencies in accordance with federal guidelines.

Child Care and Community Services Leadership

Jude White
Assistant Commissioner

Barbara Davis
Director of Operations

Renee Bouchillon
Director of Adult Protective Services

Gwen Laaser
Director of Child Care Services

Lindsay Whitten
Director of Community Services Block Grant

Allette Vayda
Director of Operations, Food Programs

Avé Trotter
Director of Strategic Initiatives

Child and Adult Care Services

Through Child Care Services, TDHS exemplifies our state's commitment to promoting high quality early childhood environments that are safe, healthy, and educationally rich. The subdivision advocates for the safety and wellness of children and vulnerable adults by planning, implementing, and coordinating activities and programs that promote quality, ensure the health and safety of children in licensed spaces and facilitate child care financial support for families utilizing child care. The subdivision also works with contracted partners to support high quality care and increase access to early care and education programs. The Child

Care Services division consists of two primary program areas: Child and Adult Care Licensing and the Child Care Certificate Program. Child Care Services also contracts with Quality Partners who work closely with child care providers with necessary services to support the success of child and adult care environments. This group also has a role in the licensing of Adult Day Services Centers.



Child Care Services



Care and Adult Care Licensing

A champion who promotes the safety and health of young children and vulnerable adults in care, the Child and Adult Care Licensing subdivision is the regulatory body responsible for licensing and monitoring child and adult care facilities across Tennessee. The Child Care Services team takes a relationship-focused approach to improvement that enables partners, families and children in Tennessee to thrive. To better serve these partners and families, the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) is undergoing a complete redesign.

Under the new system's structure, the licensing and assessment teams merged to create a new Licensing Consultant role that monitors compliance and evaluates quality. This new approach supports a better customer experience for care providers and strengthens child care quality and business efficiencies.



Child Care Resource and Referral Centers

Child Care Resource and Referral Centers are free child care location and counseling services located in communities across the state. Parents can receive information regarding the components of quality care and what to look for when choosing quality care.



Child Care Certificate Program

The Child Care Certificate Program includes multiple categories of child care payment assistance, including Smart Steps. These programs provide child care payment support to families who are working, pursuing post-secondary education programs, participating in the Families First program or meet other eligibility requirements. Child care payment assistance takes a two-generational approach by promoting early learning, development and quality child care environments for children while giving parents and guardians a sense of security that allows them to focus on work or educational goals that elevate future prospects.

Child Care Services By the Numbers

- **43,951 Children Registered to Receive Monthly Books** | Through a partnership with the Governor's Early Literacy Foundation, children participating in TDHS child care payment assistance programs will receive free books on a monthly basis.
- **4,242 Quality Child Care Spaces Created** | Through the pre-licensure process, the Child Care Services subdivision facilitated 48 provisional licenses and 23 continuous licenses.
- **\$1,495,615.79 Invested in New Child Care Agencies** | Using 39 Establishment Grants, TDHS helped increase the number of child care options for parents across the state.
- **2,307 total Child Care facilities licensed** | 1,769 Child Care Centers, 298 Group Homes, 240 Child Care Family Homes, 10 Child Care Drop-in Centers and 41 Licensed Adult Day Care Centers

Innovative and Transformative Achievements

3,469 Child Care Professionals Participate in Small Business Academies | Working with the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, this year, TDHS introduced Small Business Academies to promote best practices and strengthen business operations for child care agencies. These academies offer child care providers business tools on Budgets, Projections and Planning, Financial Reports and Internal Controls, Marketing for Child Care Programs and Staff Recruitment and Retention for Center-based Child Care Programs.

"Tech Goes Home" Providing 169 Child Care Agencies with 292 Modern Equipment Devices | Launched in October 2021, "Tech Goes Home" is a collaboration with the Child Care Resource and Referral Network. The program delivers technology devices, related coaching and technical assistance to lessen the administrative burden on child care agencies. Access to modern technology allows child care agencies to strengthen business operations so that providers can focus on family/child interactions and delivering quality care. From its inception, Tech Goes Home has served 303 total participants.

New E-Licensing System Launched | In June 2022, the department successfully launched a new e-licensing system that manages the licensure process, continuous licensing activities, legal enforcement actions, violations and corrective action as well as collecting critical data that drives future planning. The system's interactive provider portal supports new applications for licensure, account maintenance, document uploads and access to the Attendance Tracking system to facilitate more efficient and streamlines processes.

Fostering Child Care Solutions for Families, Providers and Businesses

As a child and adult care licensing body, TDHS understands that child care is a serious issue for Tennessee parents, care providers and employers. Parents want child care that is safe, affordable and a learning lab to help prepare their children for school and life. Care professionals and providers want to provide quality care and run a good business. And, employers want parents to be able and available to join the workforce. TDHS' goal is to find solutions that serve our state well by facilitating solutions that address the needs of each of these groups. To meet our state's child care needs, this year, the Child Care Services division embarked on several partnerships.

Working with the Childcare Tennessee, a Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee Initiative, the Child Care Services Division launched an Establishment Grant program to help potential child care providers. This grant supports new child care providers and expands the state's network of child care facilities by offering up to \$1000 in establishment grants per slot of licensed capacity. Grant funds can be used to purchase furniture, supplies, materials, curriculum materials and other key items upon completion of the Pre-Licensure Process.

The Child Care Services Division also collaborated with fellow state agencies to meet the state's child care needs. A new partnership between TDHS, the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, and local development districts is expanding the state's network of child care facilities by exploring community and employer-based child care opportunities through braided funding.

In another partnership with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, TDHS initiated a new category of child care payment assistance to support families participating in the department's Re-Employment Services & Eligibility Assessment program. This program supports re-entry to the workforce and reduces barriers such as child care.



Tennessee Department of Human Services Child Care and Community Services Assistant Commissioner Jude White, Director of Child Care Services Gwen Laaser Commissioner Clarence H. Carter, and Senior Policy Advisor Suzanne Carr at Tyson Foods' child care facility groundbreaking in Humboldt, TN. The TDHS team worked with the food provider to understand child care licensing requirements and processes needed to open a facility for Tyson employees.

Customer Service and Collaboration

\$4,678,392.31 in Mini Grants Distributed to 1,093 Licensed Care Agencies | TDHS awarded Enhancement Mini Grants to qualifying licensed agencies during the 2021/22 fiscal year. These grants support quality improvement, compliance with licensure rules and capacity enhancement that leads to higher standards in care.

1,355 Educators from 584 Licensed Child Care Agencies Received Education-Based Stipends | The WAGE\$ Program provides financial stipends to qualifying child care professionals according to their level of training and education. This year, 51 percent of educators supported have a permanent level on the WAGE\$® scale (Associate of Science or above) or are continuing their education as documented by coursework since submitting original application.

Shared Service and Resources Boost Child Care Provider Operations | To help child care agencies serve families better in 2021/22, TDHS continued facilitating access to business management, human resources, program administration and tools. Combined with classroom and bulk purchasing/discount purchasing options, these free resources ensure agencies can focus on providing quality care.

New Quality Rating System Introduced | With an October 2022 full implementation date, this year, the department began transitioning to the new Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). Under the new structure, the licensing and assessment teams merged to create a new Licensing Consultant role that monitors compliance and evaluates quality. Following the promulgation process and associated public hearings, new licensing rules took effect in June 2022 and will be supported by the new e-licensing system.

Establishment Grants Help Increase Child Care Options for Parents and Providers Across the State.

As a department that serves parents through child care payment assistance, TDHS understands that finding affordable quality childcare is a major concern for working parents. And, as an agency responsible for licensing and evaluating child care providers, we comprehend the issues child care professionals face as business owners. To maximize parents' options for high-quality early childhood care and increase the capacity of child care and education spaces across the state, this year, TDHS introduced Establishment Grants.

These grants encourage the creation of new child care spaces by supplying qualifying child care providers with funding to purchase supplies, equipment and consultants necessary to facilitate opening a new agency.

“The grant funds eased the financial burden on us as new owners, which allowed us the room in our budget to complete much needed updates and repairs to the building which would not have been possible without the assistance” said Jaime Nunan, Owner of Wonderbees Childcare Center LLC, an Overton County Child Care and Establishment Grant recipient. Wonderbees is one of 39 facilities chosen to receive a grant after meeting the criteria required to submit an application and demonstrate a commitment to completing the licensure process.

Without your dedication and assistance to opening our center, our community would have endured a much longer hardship without child care. You understood the need our community was facing with the only center in our county closing.

Wonderbees has the capacity to serve 82 children with the \$81,996 grant. Moving forward, TDHS will continue to explore new ways to address our state's child care needs.

Adult Protective Services

Adult Protective Services is the Child Care and Community Services subdivision responsible for investigating reports of abuse, neglect (including self-neglect) or financial exploitation (of government funds) of adults who are unable to protect themselves due to a physical or mental limitation. APS relies on and works collaboratively with many state agencies to provide protective services to Tennessee’s vulnerable adults.

To ensure there is a seamless flow of services and timely service delivery, APS leads the Statewide Coordinated Community Response (CCR) made up of 19 state agencies who meet monthly to address issues and develop efficient interagency processes to improve protection of Tennessee’s vulnerable adults. Internally, APS collaborates with the TDHS Office of General Counsel on a regular basis to fulfill our mission. APS also makes referrals to other divisions, such as SNAP and VR to obtain services for APS clients.

Adult Protective Services 2021/22 Numbers

- 22,349 Reports of Abuse Received
- 6,667 Referral Calls Received
- 10,729 Investigations Conducted

27,367 Allegations Reported*

| Allegation | Count |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Emotional Abuse | 3,218 |
| Financial Exploitation | 4,422 |
| Neglect | 8,122 |
| Physical Abuse | 2,777 |
| Self-Neglect | 8,317 |
| Sexual Abuse | 511 |
| Total Allegations Reported | 27,367 |



*Note: There may be more than one allegation per report. Additional allegations may be added during an investigation.

| Type Reports | Total |
|------------------------|--------|
| Emergency Priority | 291 |
| Non-Emergency Priority | 10,438 |

Innovative and Transformative Achievements

Starting Improvement Inside | Using several in-depth analysis tools and models, APS teams developed a Strategic Operational Plan.

Staying Updated | To help staff work well in remote environments, APS upgraded staff members’ iPhones and iPads to newer models that can be used while staff are conducting investigations across the state.

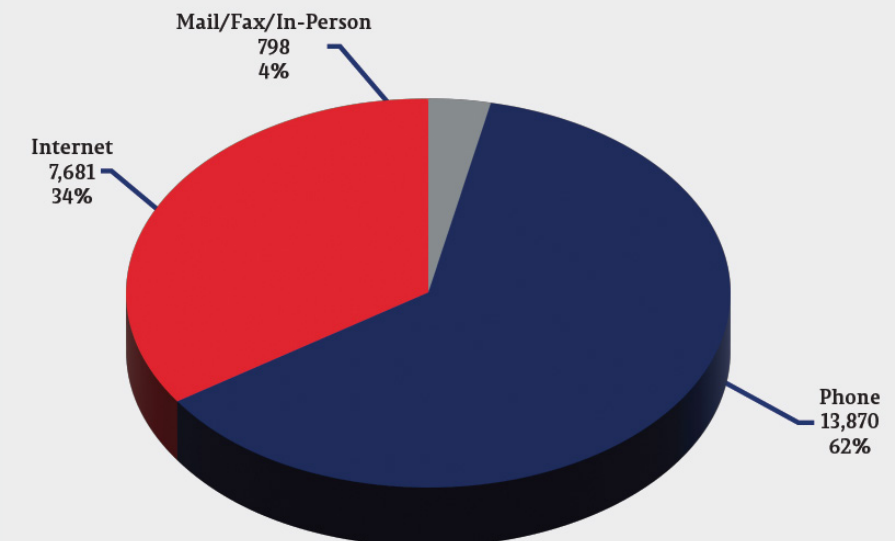
Real Time Updates from Partners | This year, APS collaborated with the District Attorney's Conference and Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability to create a portal to receive current reports and update cases involving vulnerable adults.

Pro-Actively Preparing for the “Silver Tsunami” | APS is working with the Quality Improvement and Strategic Solutions Data Strategies Unit to develop a five-year projection for APS workloads and challenges related to the rise in Baby Boomers reaching retirement age and/or higher age related care needs.

First APS Registered Nurse Hired | APS successfully addressed the policy, procedure, and new processes required to hire its first APS Registered Nurse in July 2022 who completed 283 assessments for APS clients and developed and delivered capacity assessment training sessions to APS staff while improving alliances with medical examiners.

Efficiently Tracking Trends and Improving Outcomes | This year APS created a dashboard to identify and track customer and staff activity and touch points. The dashboard enables APS to evaluate trends, adjust policies and improve performance.

How APS Received Reports of Abuse in 2022



Customer Service and Collaborative Accomplishments

Working with Partners to Prevent Fraud | In 2021, APS actively participated in two Tennessee Bureau of Investigation-led Financial Exploitation and Victim Services Human Trafficking working groups. These initiatives worked to find new solutions and processes to address fraud scams and exploitation schemes targeting vulnerable adults and provided a forum to share contacts, resources and to coordinate efforts to better serve victims.

Conducting an Elder Abuse Awareness Campaign | To bring World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) into the public conversation and call others to action, the APS team submitted and obtained the WEAAD Proclamation that listed many of TDHS sister agencies to support World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Recognized on June 15th each year, WEAAD raises awareness of the cultural, social, economic and demographic processes affecting elder abuse and neglect and provides an opportunity to promote a better understanding of public health and human rights related to the abuse and neglect of older adults.

Creating a Forum for Professionals Who Serve, Treat or Represent Aging Adults | In November 2021, APS hosted a virtual luncheon with the Tennessee State University (TSU) Center on Aging Research and Education Services Conference (CARES) to examine topics related to mental health and COVID-19 among older adults. Later, at TSU's Avon Williams Campus, partnership continued with the CARES conference. This year's conference centered on "Promoting Excellence in Service Delivery to TN Aging Citizens" and offered an opportunity for stakeholders and professionals with related interest to build knowledge of the service delivery systems for older community member groups.

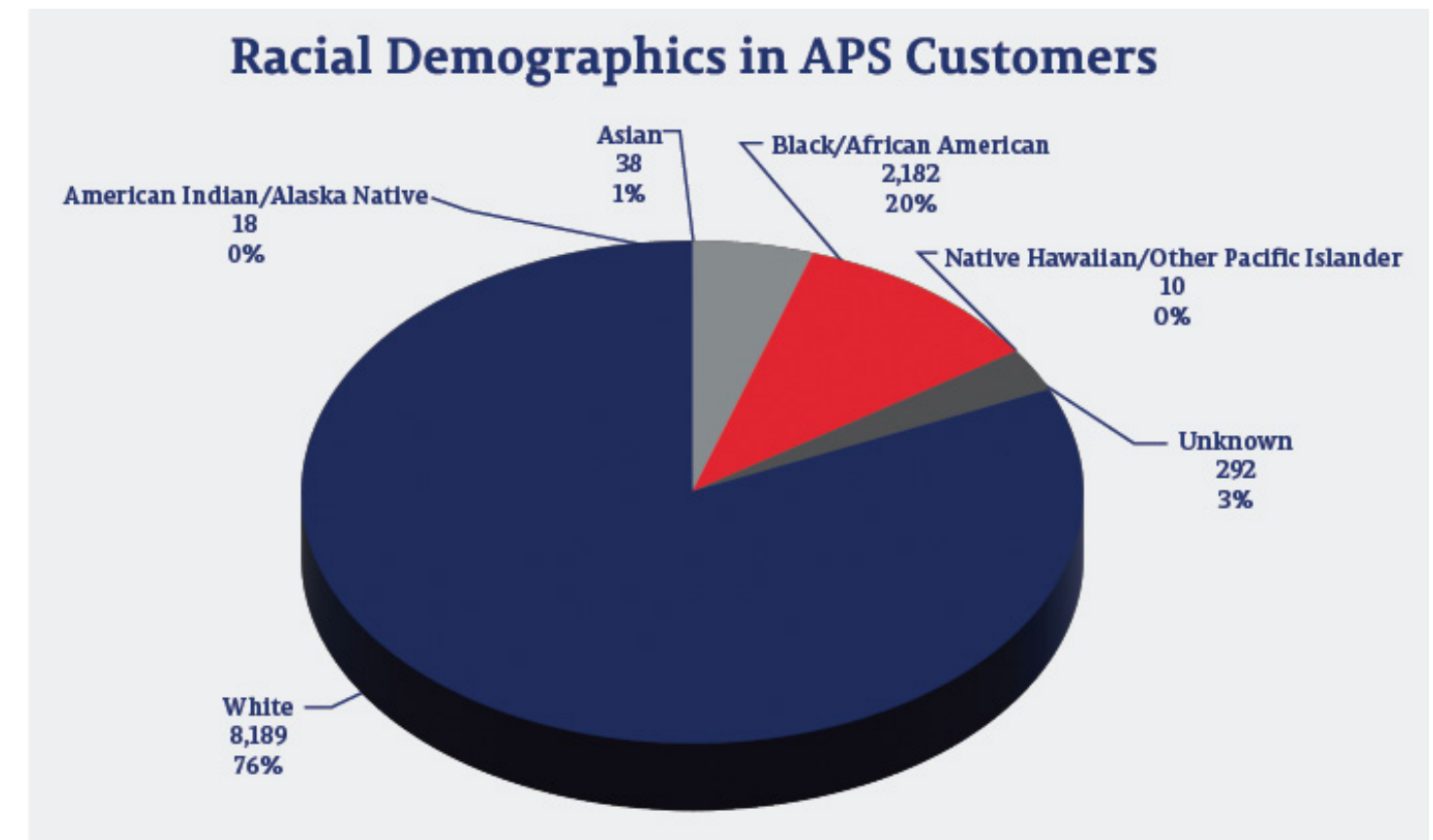
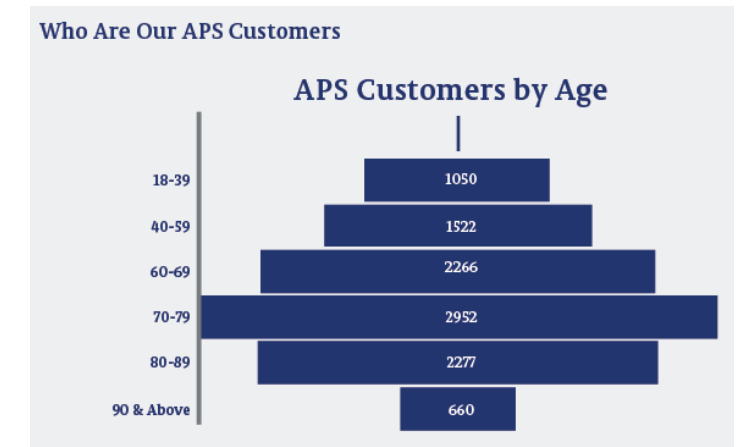
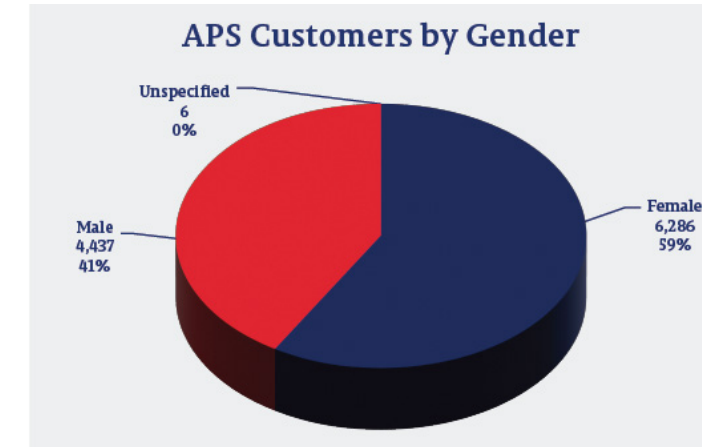
Increasing Staff Competencies Through Training | This year, APS staff elevated their skills by completing training and certification work in the areas of continuous quality improvement, internal culture development, soft skills, work/life balance, compliance standards and other organizational growth topics.

Data-Driven Improvement and Engagement | In April 2022, APS conducted a statewide survey among partners and external stakeholders for feedback on program improvements. In June, these surveys were followed up with a listening tour that traveled across Tennessee to discuss the survey, supporting local teams, and increase collaborative improvements.

Interagency Collaboration | The APS team created a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to direct collaborative protocols and efficiencies.

Collaborative Response to End Self Neglect in Tennessee | This year APS contracted with Human Resource and Area Agencies on Aging and Disability to use American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to fund the Collaborative Response to End Self Neglect in Tennessee (CREST), a program that provides person-centered advocacy, case management, and immediate specific assistance to self-neglecting APS clients in crisis.

Prevention Through Public Education | Over the 2021/22 fiscal year, APS staff conducted 188 presentations in state, national and global conferences and community settings.



Returning to Clean and Healthy Slate



When Herman Brady received his APS referral, the 83-year-old weighed 97 pounds and life in his two-bedroom home was unsafe due to his refusal to remove unneeded items from his home. When his Home Care Specialist from Mid-Cumberland Human Resource Agency, Yolanda, arrived to provide assistance, it was impossible to move through the house due to the mass of collected items. Yolanda signed Mr. Brady up for Meals on Wheels, to ensure his nutritional needs were met and diligently worked with Mr. Brady to declutter his home so that he could live safely and independently. When a tornado tore sections of the roof from Mr. Brady's home, Yolanda acted

quickly to find a roofer to address the damage. Now, 127 pounds, Mr. Brady is happier, healthier and safer in his home.

Social Services Block Grant

The Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) program is a federally funded grant program created under the Title XX of the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1981. The purpose of the grant is to enable each state to furnish social services best suited to meet the needs of its residents.

Closely aligned with Adult Protective Services, Tennessee's SSBG program provides funding for elderly and vulnerable adults to receive Personal Support Services, Adult Day Services, and Specific Assistance. Personal Support Services provide limited in-home personal care designed to allow participants to remain in their own residences and maintain independence. Adult Day Services provide on-site, non-medical care in a daytime setting. Specific Assistance helps vulnerable adults maintain independence by helping to meet emergency needs for food, utilities, and other essentials. SSBG is administered through contracts with an established network of 15 non-profit and government agencies and provides Personal Support and Specific Assistance in all 95 counties, with Adult Day Care provided in five urban centers. Services are limited to low-income elderly or disabled adults who meet federal poverty guidelines or are referred by the TDHS Adult Protective Services Program due to allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

More Than Just a Friendly Face

Although the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) Program provides medical coordination, personal care, finance management, and medication management for clients, many consumers like Robert Johnson, also benefit emotionally from the interactions with their Specialist.

Mr. Johnson is a father and older Tennessean with a brain injury and other health conditions that require regular appointments and medications making it difficult for him to attend to basic needs many people take for granted. After Mr. Johnson missed several medical appointments, failed to get prescribed medication, and experienced a deterioration in personal and financial care, it became clear that Mr. Johnson's son, his sole caregiver, was not acting in Mr. Johnson's best interests. After receiving a report, the TDHS Adult Protective Services Unit referred Mr. Johnson to the Social Services Block Grant Home Support.

SSBG Home Support Specialist Regina helped Mr. Johnson coordinate with his doctor and insurance company to ensure Mr. Johnson received necessary medical care and services such as daily medication reminders during the week. Specialist Regina also set up a representative payee to protect Mr. Johnson from financial abuse and reads him his mail during each visit. With his medical, financial and hygienic affairs back in order, Mr. Johnson is able to continue living independently. For Mr. Johnson, Regina is not just a friendly face. Her efforts provide an immeasurable amount of emotional support, mental stimulation and positive affirmation – ingredients for a safe, happy, home life.



Customer Service, Collaboration and Transformative Achievements

Spreading Cheer | In December 2021, SSBG collaborated with the Silver Bells Program to provide Christmas gifts for APS and SSBG clients.

COVID-19 Response | The SSBG supported COVID-19 related needs by funding utility assistance and Personal and Protection Equipment.

Training to Better Serve Clients | SSBG staff participated in training sessions on the importance of documentation such as Missed Visit Logs, Waitlist Contact Reporting, Assessments, Service Plans, and Case Closure Reasons.

Process Automation | SSBG worked with the state's Strategic Technology Solutions (STS) to build a SSBG enhancement that will provide new automatic processes for making SSBG referrals and entering documentation that will result in improved data collection process, more accessible client information, and track client outcomes.

A Home Away From Home



For many people, self-medication is one way of coping with mental or physical issues. However, positive social interactions can be a bridge on the road to developing healthier habits. When Adult Protective Services team recommended the East Tennessee resident Julie Kelly to the Adult Day Care program available through the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), it resulted in a new positive look in life.

Upon Ms. Kelly's introduction to the SSBG Adult Day Care program, she was described as vulnerable and suffering from acute alcoholism, a previous brain injury and osteoarthritis. However, she was open to attending the program on the condition that she could limit participation to two days each week to prevent her cat from being alone too often. Adult Day Care gave Ms. Kelly something to look forward to, and a reason to get up in the morning.

"Coming here has helped me to stop drinking so much and do something else with my life. I love all the staff and all my friends," said Ms. Kelly regarding her experience. She describes the care center as a second home where she can sit in a favorite chair, enjoy bingo and socialize with other attendees and staff. Occasionally Ms. Kelly calls the care center on her days off to chat with her "second family." Ms. Kelly's family at home regularly expresses their pride in Ms. Kelly's progress and the care facility's staff is always ready to offer additional support to Ms. Kelly and other care clients who may need additional support to face behavioral challenges.

Food Programs

Although many state residents are familiar with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Tennessee Department of Human Services also administers the Child and Adult Care Food (CACFP) and Summer Food Service (SFSP) programs. These programs differ from SNAP in their focus on partnering with community organizations to provide reimbursement for meals provided to children and adults who attend care facilities or are enrolled in primary or secondary education programs.

Child and Adult Care Food Program

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides reimbursements to select institutions that serve nutritious meals to participants who meet age and income requirements. Eligible institutions include child and adult care centers, child care homes, emergency shelters and afterschool care programs for at-risk children. Eligible participants include children enrolled in child care institutions who are 12 and younger; children of migrant workers who are 15 and younger; persons of any age with one or more disabilities who are enrolled in an institution or child care facility serving a majority of persons who are 18 and younger; and adults who are enrolled in adult care institutions that serve functionally impaired adults or persons who are 60 or older.

Summer Food Service Program

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides reimbursements for nutritious meals served to participants during periods when their schools are closed. The program primarily serves children 18 or younger in areas where poor economic conditions exist and in residential camps where children are determined individually to be eligible. Persons older than 18 who are mentally or physically disabled and who participate in school programs for the disabled are also eligible to participate. To accomplish its goals the SFSP partners with "Sponsors." SFSP sponsorship is limited to public or private, nonprofit school, food authorities; state, local, municipal or county governments; residential public or private, nonprofit summer camps; public or private, nonprofit colleges or universities administering Upward Bound Programs; and private, nonprofit organizations. Eligible feeding sites include public parks, recreation centers, schools, churches, playgrounds, residential camps and public housing complexes.

Food Programs by the Number

- 31,000,000 meals provided in 2021 and 26,000,000 meals provided in 2022 by the Child and Adult Care Food Program.
- 8,000,000 meals served in 2021 by the Summer Food Service Program including meals served as part of the COVID-19 waivers.

**The number of meals represents those submitted for reimbursement as of July 1, 2022 and does not include the months of April, May or June 2022. The actual number served is subject to change. We anticipate CACFP 2022 numbers being similar to CACFP 2021. As federal programs, CACFP and SFSP operate on a federal fiscal year schedule.*

Innovative and Transformative Achievements

Improving Operations | Using funding from a Technology and Innovation grant, TDHS launched online app solution to help SFSP Sponsors manage day to day program operations and submit meal counts. Both the SFSP and CACFP transitioned to an online portal to accept applications and claims.

Customer Service and Collaborative Accomplishments

Changing Models | Both nutrition programs transitioned to a case management model that provides customer service to all CACFP and SFSP sponsors on an ongoing basis.

Increasing Training Access | CACFP and SFSP transitioned trainings to an online platform that includes live web-based trainings and on-demand training modules.



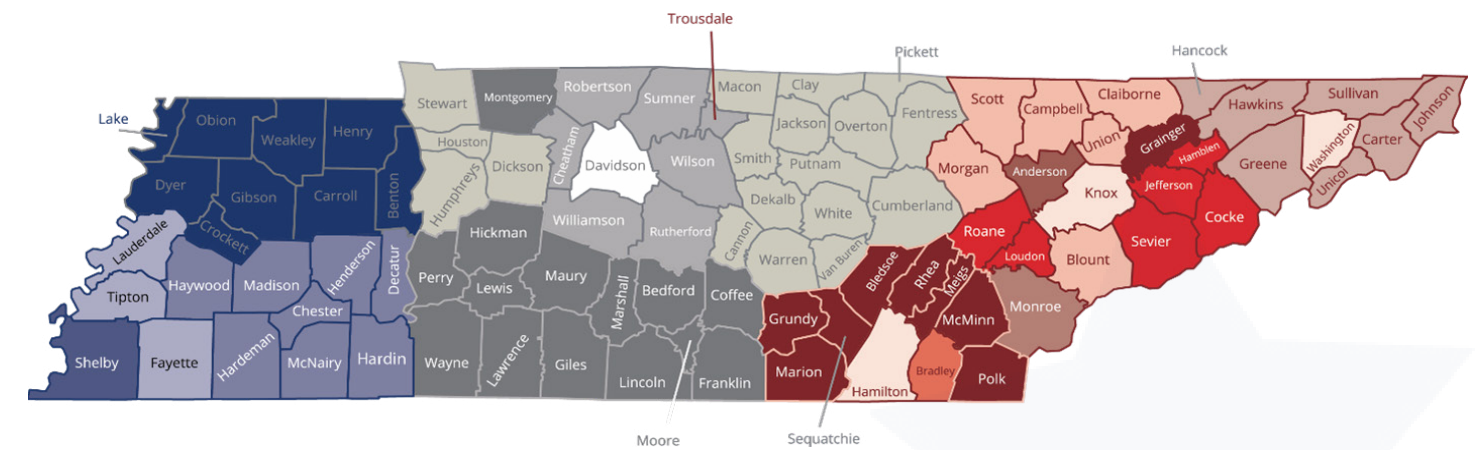
Community Services Block Grant Program

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is a federally funded grant program created by the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1981. The program aims to combat poverty within communities by removing barriers to self-sufficiency clients may encounter.

The state administers the CSBG program through a network of 20 community action agencies that reach each of the state's 95 counties. These agencies improve communities by providing a wide array of services to individuals and families with low incomes. Services include, but are not limited to: emergency utility assistance, Head Start, services for senior citizens, transportation assistance, employment support and more. These and other supports all work to improve communities across the state.

Tennesseans Served By 20 Community Action Agencies Across the State

In the 2021/22 fiscal year, Community Action Agencies served 293,768 individuals and 150,798 households with CSBG funds.



West Tennessee

- Delta Human Resource Agency
- Northwest Tennessee Economic Development Council
- Shelby County Community Service Agency
- Southwest Human Resource Agency

Middle Tennessee

- South Central Human Resource Agency
- Mid-Cumberland Community Action Agency
- Metropolitan Action Commission
- Highland Rim Economic Corporation
- Clarksville/ Montgomery County Community Action Agency
- Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency

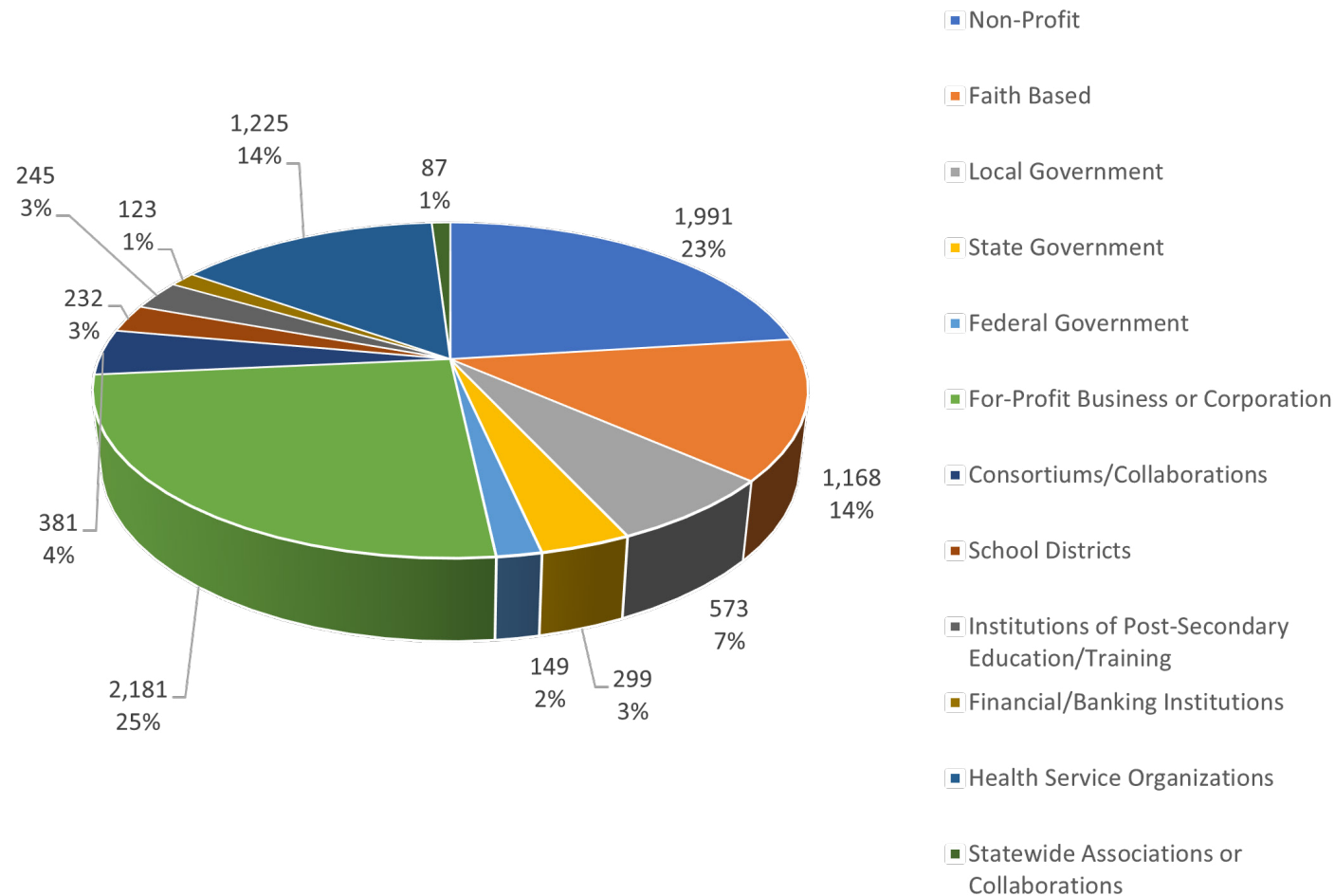
East Tennessee

- Delta Human Resource Agency
- Northwest Tennessee Economic Development Council
- Shelby County Community Service Agency
- Southwest Human Resource Agency

Supporting a Diverse Group of Partner Organizations

Through our 20 Community Action Agencies (CAAs --also referred to as eligible entities), the TDHS CSBG team worked with a broad spectrum of 8,654 public and private organizations to help improve Tennessee communities.

CSBG Eligible Entities



Customer Service and Collaborative Accomplishments

Bringing More Community Voices to the Table | In July 2021, the CSBG Unit conducted a virtual CSBG State Plan Public Hearing to share Tennessee’s goals and processes for creating and maintaining a high-quality community action network. The public hearing was an opportunity for Tennesseans to offer comments on the plan to provide services to low-income individuals and families to improve the communities where they live.

Getting Engaged with the TANF Opportunity Act | In August 2021, and partnership with the Tennessee Association of Human Resource Agencies (TAHRA) Conference, TDHS Commissioner Clarence H. Carter and the CSBG team engaged agencies in sector-based conversations regarding the TANF Opportunity Act to gain insight to how TDHS can best serve the state going forward.

755,614 Volunteer Hours Logged | Beyond financial investments, CSBG partner agencies depend on the work of diligent volunteers. This year 452,527 of these hours were completed by individuals with low incomes and community members who qualify for CSBG services.

Increasing Communication with Agency Partners | This year, CSBG realized many of its communication plan goals including creating an agency event calendar and launching the inaugural quarterly CSBG e-Newsletter, “Community Impact in Action.” This work increases transparency and provides an additional channel for peer sharing.

Helping Agencies Reach More Tennesseans | In March 2022, the CSBG team hosted an event titled “Increasing Your Reach in the Community” to share marketing tactics that may increase agency’s reach in the community—from attracting donors to educating potential clients on the services offered. This peer sharing event was co-hosted by the Public Information and Legislative Office and People Operations.

Disaster Preparedness with Experts | In December 2021, CSBG Staff participated in calls with the federal Office of Community Services (OCS), Office of Human Services Emergency Preparedness and Response (OHSEPR), and other states to discuss ways to assist agencies and communities in crisis affected by natural disasters such as flooding and tornadoes in addition to the pandemic.

Innovative and Transformative Achievements

Increasing Invoice Tracking Efficiency | This year, the CSBG team implemented an Annual Invoice Transition Procedure to ensure increased efficiency, timeliness and accuracy in reimbursement to agencies. The unit is also working with Strategic Technology Solutions (STS) on developing a CSBG Invoice Dashboard to identify trends in agency spending and other reporting functions related to the spend down of CSBG funding.

Training to Maximize Community Impact | In August 2021, the CSBG team worked with People Operations to develop its 2022 Training and Technical Assistance plan to support agency partners in program administration and maximization. The team also developed a strategic system of technical assistance and support to empower partner agencies to expand capabilities and reach their full potential.

Helping Agencies Address COVID-19 | In 2022, the CSBG team facilitated a peer sharing webinar for agencies on the topic of “Getting Creative with Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act Funds.” This forum invited state and national partners to examine challenges related to utilization of CARES funds. The CSBG team also conducted calls and provided technical assistance to agencies employing CARES funds and implemented Redistribution of Unobligated Administrative Funds to assist in the current exhaust of CARES funds as well as future supplemental and regular spending.

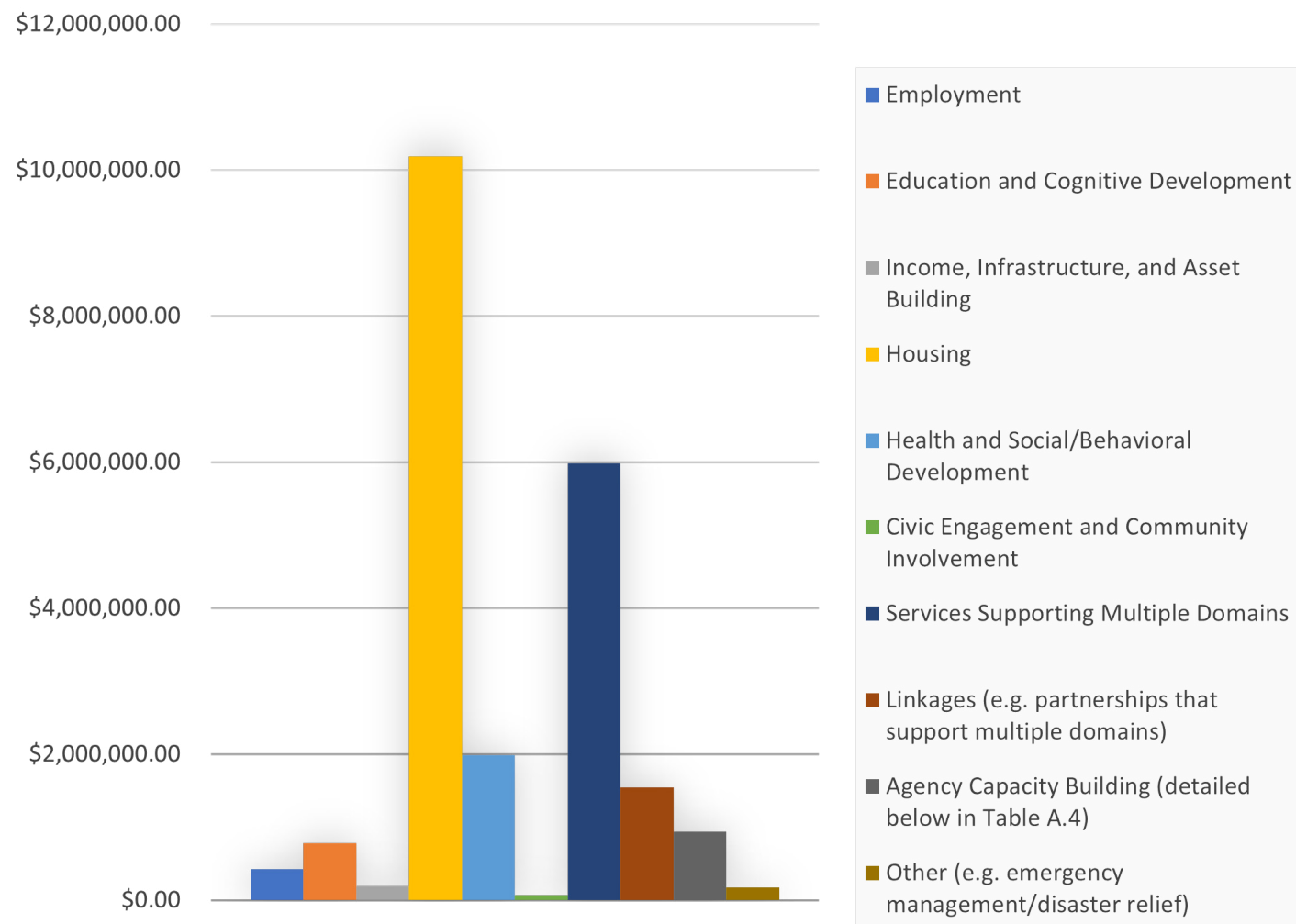
Collecting Data to Transition to a Multi-Year Plan | Beginning in December 2021, CSBG Staff held calls with peer states regarding their Community Action Plan process to gather research and tools to transition Tennessee to a multi-year Community Action Plan process. Collected information was shared with the CSBG Task Force in March 2022.

Investing \$22,273,858.85 in Communities Across the State

Guidelines allow Community Services Block Grant strategies to be developed in partnership with federal, state, and local resources to fill the gaps and develop innovative initiatives to meet the needs of low-income individuals. These strategies focus investments on addressing the causes and conditions of poverty by supporting education, employment, housing, health, nutrition, income management, and incorporate case management, self-sufficiency, and re-entry programs. The graph below illustrates how funds will be invested in Tennessee communities.

In addition to financial investments, CSBG partner agencies are supported by employees and volunteers. Over the 2021/22 fiscal year, 755,614 volunteer hours were logged.

Community Service Block Grant Program Investment Focus Areas



Note: CSBG operates on a Federal Fiscal Year. Numbers provided in all categories are for the period 10/01/2020 to 09/30/2021, as provided in the CSBG Annual Report.

*Total CSBG Expenditures include all funding streams for the budget period. Funding streams include CSBG Regular, Carryover, and CARES expenditures.

Rehabilitation Services

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) supports Tennesseans with disabilities as they work to achieve their employment and independent living goals. With a commitment to strengthening communities, the division utilizes a cross section of vocational partnerships, transitional services, accessibility, self-advocacy promotion, and many individualized services. Each action is meant to ensure that no Tennessean is defined by their disability, but able to leverage their strengths, resources, abilities and capabilities to find the right setting to make a contribution to our state's community and economy.

Rehabilitation Services Leadership

Kevin Wright

Assistant Commissioner

Selina Kirkland

Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers Network Director

Julie Johnson

Director of Operations

James Stanfield

Disability Determination Services Director

Vacant

Strategic Business Solutions Director

Vacant

Vocational Rehabilitation Program Director

Rehabilitation by the Numbers

- 6,766 referrals received by the Vocational Rehabilitation Program
- 4,647 Vocational Rehabilitation applications received, and 1,954 services provided to businesses
- 1,400 customers achieved their employment goals
- 288 customers served on campus or virtually by the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at Smyrna.

Customer Service and Collaborative Accomplishments

Helping Teens and Young Adults Find Work and Training | As Tennessee began implementing plans related to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Vocational Rehabilitation joined forces and established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Tennessee Department of Education to outline provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students between the ages of 14-22. The five Pre-ETS facilitate education, training, and work experiences within the supportive high school environment. The MOU clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of each entity and the shared responsibilities between the two.

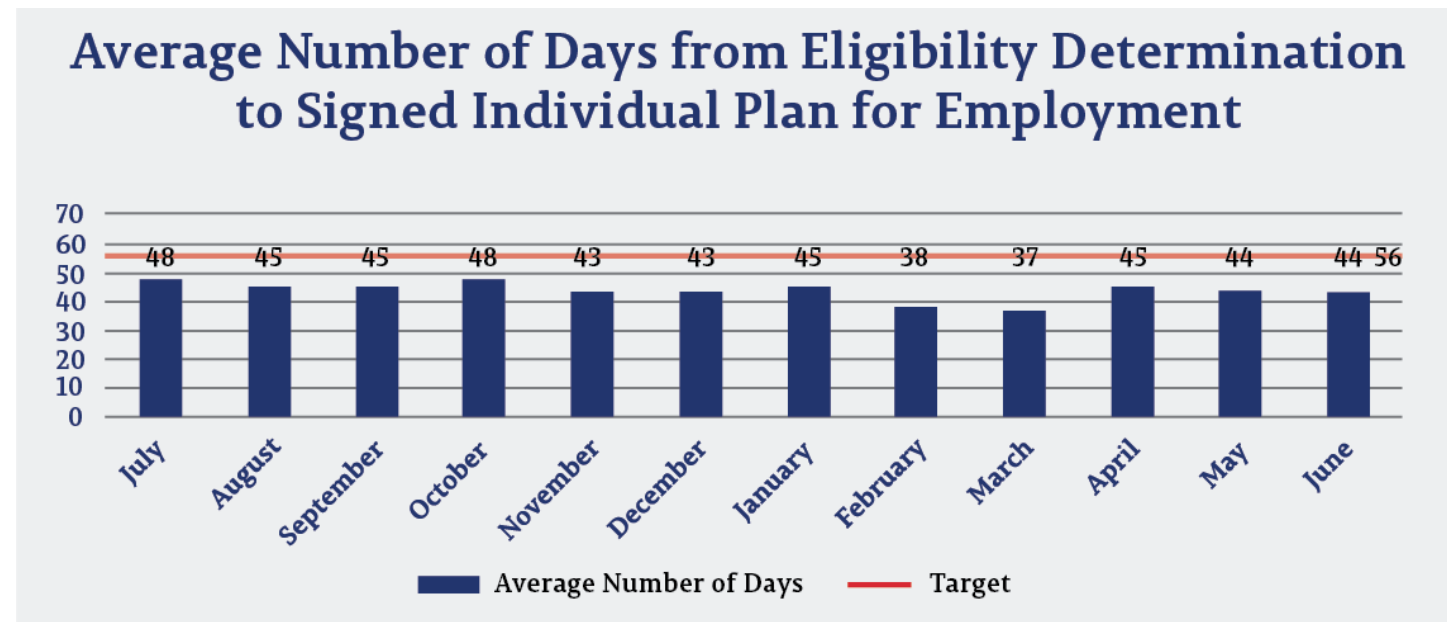
Helping Tennesseans with Behavioral Health Disorders and Addictions Find Work and Independence | This year, DRS continued partnership with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (DMHSAS) on the Individual Placements and Supports (IPS) Program. This model of supported employment successfully helps people with behavioral health disorders such as mental illness, substance abuse, and co-occurring disorders obtain competitive integrated employment. Since establishing an interagency

agreement in 2017, DMHSAS and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) continue to develop, expand, and improve opportunities for competitive integrated employment for Tennesseans living with disabilities including mental health and/or substance abuse issues.

Improving Competitive Integrated Employment and Community First CHOICES | This year DRS continued its work to support employment goals shared with the Employment and Community First CHOICES program. Following a 2017 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlined the roles of each agency, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, and the three managed care organizations (MCOs), the department continued contracted initiatives to provide high quality employment services that lead to competitive integrated employment for Tennesseans with disabilities.

Supporting Customers with Timely Decision Making

A key customer experience metric is the engagement rate for individual plans for employment. Over the last year, VR set a goal to complete the individual plan for employment in 56 days - that is 34 days faster than the federal regulations require. This ensures that VR customer engagement is accelerated toward their employment goals. Over the last year, VR not only met, but exceeded this goal and ended the year with a cumulative average of 44 days from eligibility to a signed individual plan for employment.



Tracking Successful Employment Outcomes

In addition to tracking all individuals who are successfully employed for a minimum of 90 days, VR also tracks the average number of hours worked per week and the average hourly wage. Over the last year, 1,400 VR customers achieved their employment goals, worked over 29 hours per week and earned an average of \$12.72 per hour.

Total Successful Closures:
Employed at Least 90 Days in an Integrated Setting and Paid at a Competitive Wage

| Month | Successful Closures |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| July 2021 | 86 |
| Aug. 2021 | 97 |
| Sept. 2021 | 155 |
| Oct. 2021 | 113 |
| Nov. 2021 | 102 |
| Dec. 2021 | 106 |
| Jan. 2022 | 89 |
| Feb. 2022 | 85 |
| March 2022 | 154 |
| April 2022 | 103 |
| May 2022 | 140 |
| June 2022 | 170 |
| Cumulative Total | 1,400 |



Preparing Students with Disabilities for Life After High School

The Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) program prepares students with disabilities for the transition from high school to a post-secondary career path. Preparation may include education, training, or employment. Camden Tennessee residents like Central High School student Hunter Peek receive these services from Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Career Training Specialists at the local Community Tennessee Rehabilitation Center (CTRC). During the 2021/22 academic year, Hunter participated in Pre-ETS job readiness classes to help him reach his goals.



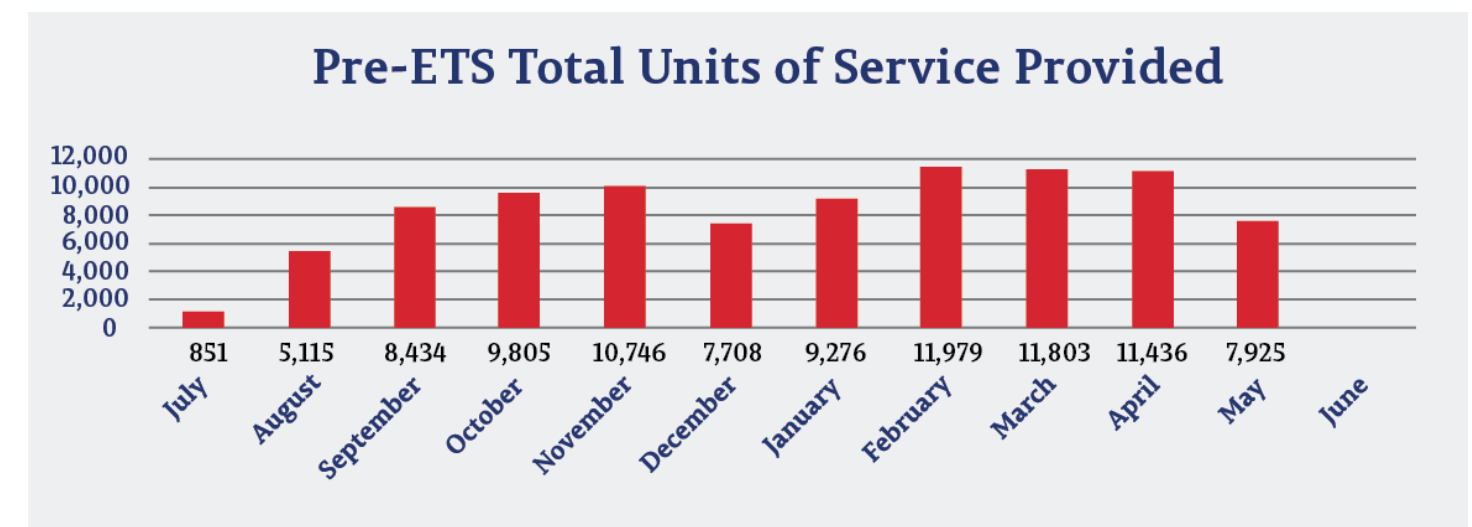
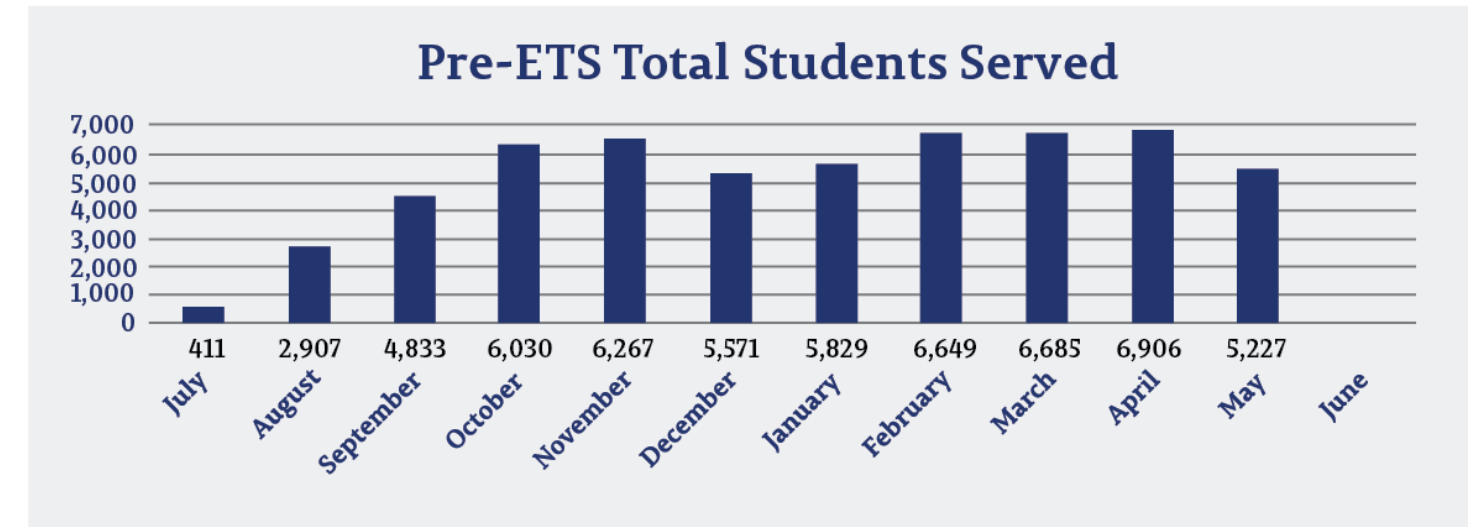
As the VR Career Training Specialist got to know the quiet, shy, polite, and reserved young man, she learned Hunter wanted to go to auto diesel school and work as a diesel mechanic. Knowing Hunter's goals, the Specialist informed Hunter and his family about the Youth Work Experience Program offered by the American Job Center through the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Support services from the Vocational Rehabilitation program partner to provide opportunities for youth to gain paid hands-on work experiences with local businesses according to interests. With Hunter's permission, the Training Specialist began contacting local trucking companies to learn about any unmet needs that Hunter could fill as an employee and found Melton and Sons Trucking.

Once the company's owner began to collaborate with VR to create a work experience placement that would meet business needs and provide a paid work experience for Hunter, the Training Specialist examined what skills would be necessary for success from a business perspective. After a customized training plan was developed with Hunter, he began receiving career readiness classes to learn about work ethic, attitude, getting along with co-workers and supervisors, banking, budgets, work behavior, attire, punctuality, asking for help, disability disclosure, and orientation.

In the summer of 2022, as a rising high school senior, Hunter began work at Melton and Sons Trucking Company and received complements on his work and fit with coworkers. Hunter and his mother shared their satisfaction with his first job and hopes to continue work with Melton. The VR team is proud of Hunter and his accomplishments and will continue to work with him and other students as they prepare for their chosen career paths.

Preparing Students with Disabilities for Life After High School

In the past year, the Rehabilitation Services division provided 9,423 pre-employment transition services to an average of 5,690 students each month of the school year (August 2021 to May 2022).



Working With Fellow Agencies to Change Employer Perceptions of Disability

Although employers are legally required to avoid discriminatory practices in hiring and accommodating staff, having a diverse staff that includes workers with disabilities can seem intimidating, especially for small businesses with limited resources. To remove the fear and uncomfortableness of the unknown for businesses across the state, the TDHS Vocational Rehabilitation Business Services Unit is partnering with the Tennessee Department of Human Resources, Tennessee Department of Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities and other state agencies to increase the number of certified WINDMILLS trainers who are ready to help employers build their organizational competency for employing individuals with disabilities.

Considered to be the industry's leading disability inclusion training curriculum for employers nationwide, WINDMILLS is best defined as an employer training tool designed to change attitudinal barriers and create a new perspective on the unique abilities of individuals. Several VR staff members and State Department partners are already certified in the WINDMILLS curriculum. These staff members deliver in-demand disability inclusion training to employers across Tennessee and help employers build their organizational competency for a diverse workforce.

Unlike most training that focuses on building skills to specific business operations or job skills, WINDMILLS is a 12-module training system that focuses on what happens after a person with a disability gets hired. To get comfortable, you have to get uncomfortable. WINDMILLS helps employers prepare for and answer questions such as: what is the work culture like? How do managers relate to their new employee who has a disability? How do co-workers interact with a co-worker with a disability? What if accommodations are needed? The curriculum is designed to help people understand themselves and correct the preconceived notions they have about people with disabilities.

WINDMILLS modules can be delivered in a customized manner to best support employers' needs. The curriculum uses multiple exercises to train staff at all levels; including managers, executives, and front-line employees in how to be more welcoming to co-workers with disabilities by breaking through the fears of saying or doing the wrong thing.

WINDMILLS increases disability awareness, inclusion, and sensitivity in the workplace by giving practical applications for working with people with disabilities on the job. Helping Tennessee employers move beyond assumptions and learn to develop employee accommodations is one more way TDHS is helping Tennessee develop a strong inclusive community, workforce and economy.

Innovative and Transformative Achievements

Having the Right People for the Mission | New technology and resources demand new skills and VR continues to successfully align positions with modernized systems, processes, and new service delivery models while building a career pathway for employees. Remote and community-based services required the division to think about positions (and where they are located) differently. When work assignments are even and in line with the customer base, the team can optimize performance and improve the customer experience. The program goals cannot be achieved without qualified staff to carry out the mission. The organizational restructure ensured compensation aligns with position qualifications, responsibilities, and fair market value while simultaneously aligning with transformation goals.

Organizational Restructure Results (at a glance):

- Estimated investment of \$700,000 in staff pay
- About an 8.5% increase in the average salary
- 136 new positions
- A total of 229 positions impacted
- Five new position classifications created to form a career pathway with opportunities for growth and advancement

Phone System Modernization | The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) simplified the customer experience with the launch of the NICE inContact phone platform in January 2022. The new system allows a more efficient method of receiving phone calls with the ability to provide real-time response to customer inquiries across program areas. More than 30 different phone numbers statewide were condensed into one phone number, staffed with a knowledgeable team of agents ready to help callers. The platform enables DRS to decrease time for inquiry resolution, reduce transfers and delays and creates customer self-service opportunities. The new system also improves operations through enhanced visibility into call type, volume, and other analytics, and demonstrates improvement opportunities through recording and caller surveys.

The Impact of Assistive Technology

The Tennessee Technology Access Program (TTAP) is designed to increase access and acquisition of assistive technology and services. Through TTAP funding assistance, device demonstration and education, device loan and device reutilization, DRS helps people with disabilities and their families find and get the tools and technology they need to live independent, productive lives where and how they chose.

For example, consider the following:

Jane, a woman in her 60s with a history of medical conditions including Parkinson's and post CVA, typically uses a wheelchair to maintain independent mobility. One day, Jane decides to travel across Tennessee via bus. Upon her arrival in the mid-state area, she feels quite unwell and is ambulated to a local hospital for treatment. However, in the chaos, her wheelchair is not transported to the hospital with her and despite inquiries and assistance from bus the station, her wheelchair is not located and her insurance plan makes her ineligible for a wheelchair purchase for another three years. Although a claim can be filed for a lost / stolen wheelchair

replacement upon discharge from the hospital, a couple of days later, Jane is still without a wheelchair due to the time required to process a replacement claim. However, Jane needs a replacement as quickly as possible to leave the hospital and board another bus to continue travel to her final destination.

Fortunately for Jane, a healthcare advocate at the hospital is aware of the TTAP program and contacts TTAP about the availability of a manual wheelchair through the reutilization program. TTAP staff confirms the availability of a wheelchair and meets with the advocate the same day to give Jane the wheelchair. With assistance from the TTAP, Jane acquires the wheelchair at no cost and is able to continue her journey and mobility independence.

| <i>Activity</i> | <i>State FY 22 (July 2021- June 2022)</i> |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Demonstrations | 346 Demonstrations |
| | 579 Individuals |
| Loans | 295 Devices |
| | 214 Individuals |
| Reutilization | 1,794 devices |
| | 1,217 Individuals |
| | \$671,738 Cost Savings |
| Information & Assistance | 1,504 Individuals |
| Training | 1,169 Individuals |

Students Return to a New Normal After COVID-19 | After nearly two years of remote learning due to COVID-19, the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at Smyrna (TRC Smyrna) began welcoming students back on campus in January 2022. The students have flexibility in learning with both in person and remote learning options. Spring semester concluded with the first in-person graduation in over two years! Over 140 students were invited to attend with a streaming option available.



TDHS Support Divisions

Most Tennesseans are familiar with our customer-facing program and service divisions the sector responsible for interacting with the public and administering benefits on a daily basis. However, the success of our programs and services is directly reliant on the work of our support divisions and offices. These divisions enhance the function of direct services and foster innovative efficiency in service delivery and include: Operations, Quality Improvement and Strategic Solutions (QISS), Appeals and Hearings, the Office of Inspector General, the Office of General Counsel, People Operations, and the Public Information and Legislative Office.

Office of General Counsel Leadership

- Krisann Hodges**
General Counsel
- Rebekah Parkhurst**
Deputy General Counsel
- Dezanne Russell**
Deputy General Counsel
- Jacqueline Griffin**
Office Manager
- Mary-Glenn Hartup**
Appeals and Hearings Assistant Commissioner

Office of General Counsel

The Office of General Counsel (OGC) provides legal consultation, advice, and representation to the department in judicial and administrative forums across all department programs and support divisions. Attorneys within OGC draft and promulgate departmental rules related to the implementation of laws and programs; draft and analyze departmental legislation; draft and review departmental contracts and all other agreements; review employee disciplinary action; process public records requests; coordinate with the Attorney General's Office on legal matters in federal or state court; and provide oversight and advice of child support law to the Child Support IV-D offices statewide. In addition, OGC is responsible for records management oversight through the Records Management Unit (RMU). RMU provides records management support to the agency by providing training and assistance to staff regarding the maintenance, storage, and destruction of records.

Transformative Achievements

The support provided by the Office of General Counsel increased in both volume and complexity over the past year as the department continues to experience a high volume of activity related to pandemic funding, modernization efforts, and enterprise-wide programmatic changes. Here are a few highlights of the year's accomplishments:

Increasing Demand for Contract Development, Analysis, and Review | As the Department moves through an aggressive modernization schedule, OGC is providing comprehensive analysis and review of large-scale technology contracts and ongoing contract compliance maintenance. OGC is also providing increased support for grants and contracts related to pandemic spending, often with tight deadlines about obligation or expenditure of funding. Finally, OGC has provided in-depth analysis and review of contracts and other issues

related to the TANF Opportunity Act legislation, an initiative requiring unique solutions to promote success.

Comprehensive Revision of Rules and Policies | As the Department pursues modernization of systems and programs, OGC has taken a significant role in review and revisions of rules and policies to ensure that the program framework is accurately represented. Over the past year, OGC led a massive effort to review, revise, and promulgate all chapters of the Child Care program state rules. OGC is also working on promulgation of state rules for the Administrative Procedures Division (Appeals and Hearings) and comprehensive edits to the Adult Day Services rules. Over the next year, OGC will lead the effort on a retrospective review of all TDHS rules that will result in development of a plan to review, amend, and delete any rules as appropriate. In addition to these projects, OGC is reviewing TDHS policies to ensure that they also reflect the modernization and programmatic changes desired by TDHS programs.

New Case Management System for OGC | The Office of General Counsel is always looking for new, innovative ways to serve our internal customers with the most comprehensive legal advice in a manner that is easy to access and track. The OGC portal, delivered through the Service Now platform, will provide a channel for TDHS employees to request legal services, to communicate about the request, and to track progress of the request. The counsel center within the program will provide OGC staff a collaborative space to track assignments and workflow, to provide metrics and produce reports, and to serve as a resource for OGC staff with items such as templates, research, and notes. The module should go live in SFY 2023 and is expected to be an asset to the entire Department.

Appeals and Hearings

Appeals and Hearings handles appeals for many of the programs administered by the Tennessee Department of Human Services, including eligibility for SNAP, Families First, Child Support, Vocational Rehabilitation, and disaster/pandemic benefits.

Appeals and Hearings by the Numbers:

- 19,490 Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) appeals received
- 50,300 issues appealed for 24,874 unique appellants

*For clarification, the Division identifies the number of unique appellants filing appeals. In addition, we also count the number of issues appealed. The reason for this is because each issue can be appealed. Only reflecting the number of unique appellants does not effectively capture the number of issues appealed.

Transformative Achievements

A Timely Return | Similar to the 2021/22 fiscal year, this year, Appeals and Hearings experienced an increase in appeals volume due to the pandemic-related programs. However, by streamlining processes, the division returned to pre-pandemic timeliness benchmarks.

Modernizing Systems | Continued modernization efforts include steps to replace the ARTS legacy system to increase efficiency in divisional processes and a greater emphasis on customer-centric service. Deployment is expected to take place in the 2022-23 state fiscal year.

Office of Inspector General

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) provides oversight of the department's independent accountability functions. Those functions include internal audit, external program review, claims management and investigations. This office also investigates referrals of potential fraud, waste, and abuse and handles adjudication. OIG partners with other state and federal agencies and law enforcement entities as necessary on investigations. To accomplish its goals, the division is organized into four subdivisions: Audit Services, Background Investigation and Child Care Licensing, Claims, and Special Investigations.

Office of Inspector General Leadership

Todd McKinney
Inspector General

Frank Houle
Director of Program Integrity

Sam Alzoubi
Director of Audit Services

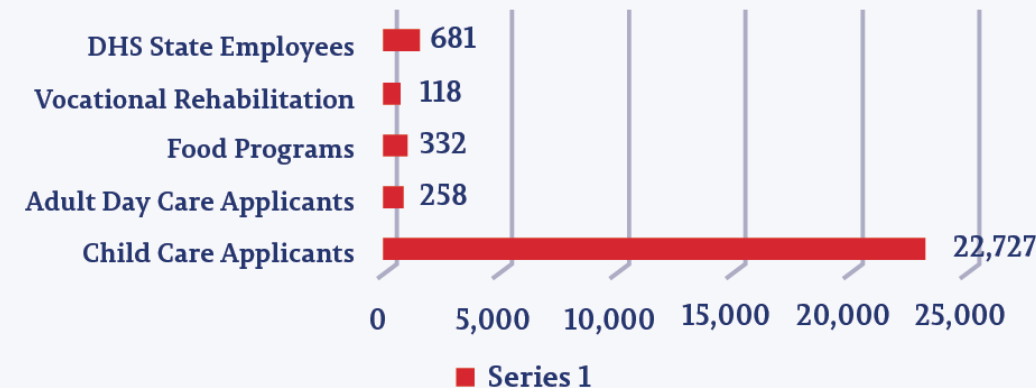
Office of Inspector General by the Numbers

- 168 external auditing and monitoring reports conducted
- 101 internal audits of TDHS conducted
- 24,116 background checks completed
- More than \$10 million identified in SNAP and TANF claims through fraud investigative activity

Background Investigation and Child Care Licensing

The Background Check Unit conducts fingerprint and criminal background investigations on all current and/or prospective employees and/or contract workers who have access to Federal Tax Information (FTI). This includes employees who work for the Tennessee Department of Human Services, Tennessee Department of General Services (DGS), Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE), Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), and Adult Protective Services (APS). The background check tracking system also records and tracks fingerprints submitted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) from employees of child care agencies and adult day care centers.

Background Checks for TDHS Programs 2021/2022 Total = 24,116



Audit Services

The Office of Inspector General's Audit Services group is a 54-person team of audit and administrative support professionals headed by the Director of Audit Services (DAS). The DAS has four reporting audit directors for each of the following divisions: Food Programs, Grants and Contracts, Internal Audit, and Data and Special Projects.

The mission of Audit Services is to conduct audits and monitoring reviews of the Department's external subrecipients, contractors, and internal programs' processes to bring accountability through its reporting and to aid departmental management in the assessment of operating effectiveness of its internal controls. The Data and Special Projects team supports Audit Services' operations by providing analysis of raw data to enhance the value of the audit work performed through identifying potentially problematic transactions. In addition, special projects are initiated at the direction of the DAS to further help bring program integrity to the Department's programs and processes.

The DAS has designated the Certified Fraud Examiner as the preferred professional credential for auditing and monitoring staff. At the time of this publication, the team included nineteen Certified Fraud Examiners to ensure that grant recipients receive high-quality auditing, monitoring, and feedback.

The Audit Services group provides grantees with training and technical assistance while onsite during each monitoring or auditing engagement. Receiving specific, timely feedback, and technical assistance allows grant recipients to be fully equipped with the knowledge and information needed to improve operations or services quickly and more effectively serve the citizens of Tennessee.

Audit Services also serves the department by identifying and following up on potential fraud, waste, or abuse of the department's administered programs; as well followed up on internal or external referred complaints.

| TDHS Program | Number of Monitoring/Auditing Reports Released |
|---|---|
| Food Programs (SFSP/CACFP) | 117 |
| Block Grants (CSBG/SSBG) | 10 |
| Vocational Rehabilitation Program | 21 |
| Childcare Certificate Program | 8 |
| Family Assistance Programs (SNAP/TANF) | 12 |
| Total External Auditing/Monitoring Reports | 168 |

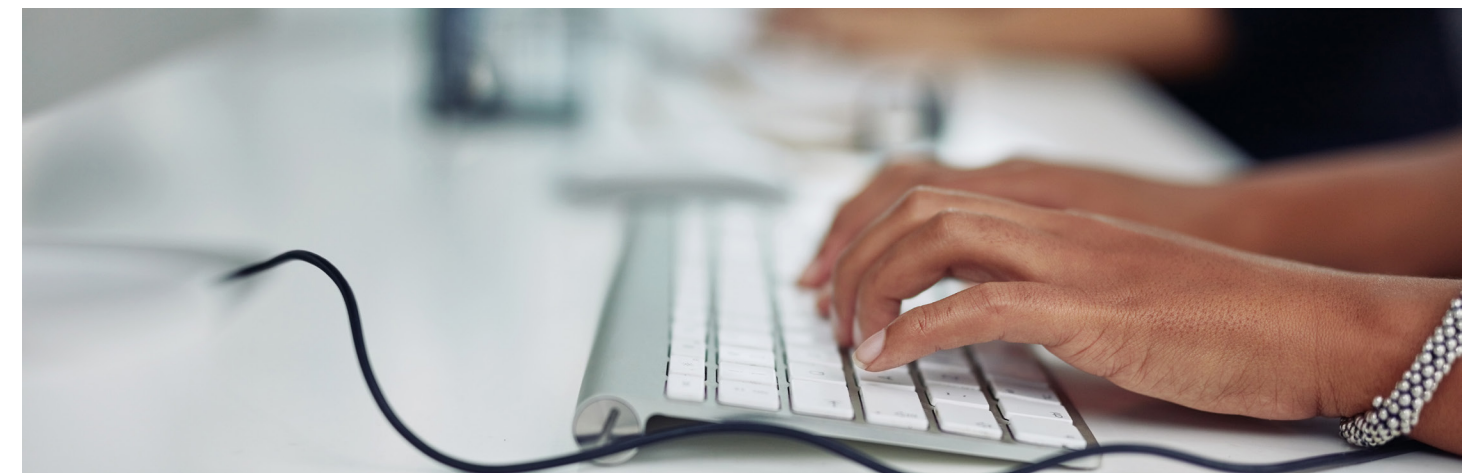
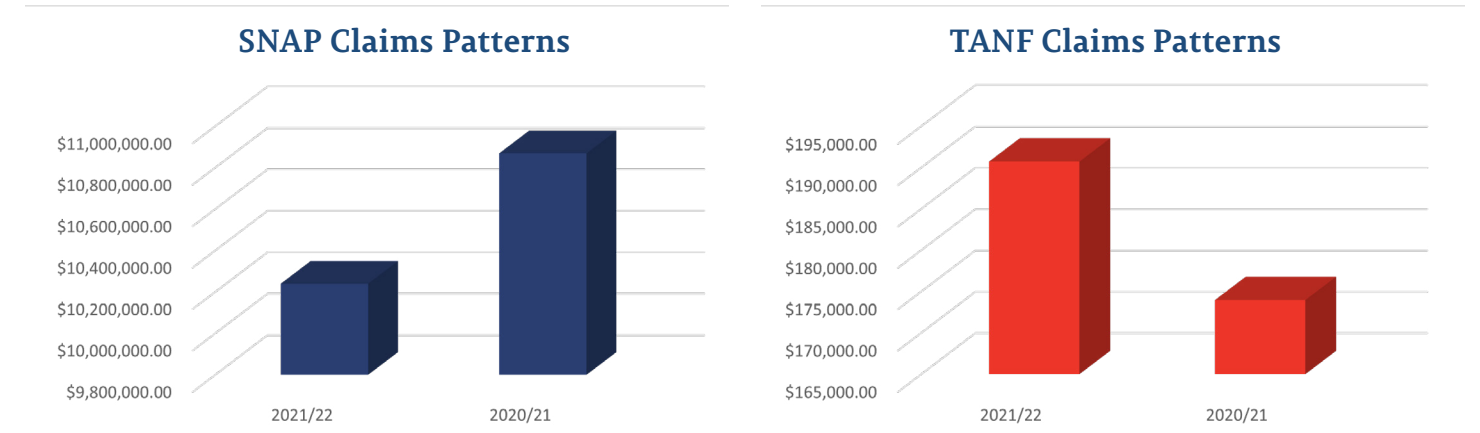
| Internal Audit of DHS | Number of Monitoring/Auditing Reports Released |
|--|---|
| Internal Audits | 4 |
| Federal Tax Information Audits | 51 |
| Motor Voter Act Audits | 46 |
| Total Internal Audit Reports | 101 |
| Total Internal & External Auditing/Monitoring Reports | 269 |

Special Investigations

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) manages internal investigations, threat incidents, and special projects for TDHS and is instrumental in identifying and investigating fraud schemes in programs administered by TDHS.

Claims

The Claims Unit is responsible for managing overpayments and repayments related to TDHS programs.



Transformative Achievements

Completing 40 Preliminary Investigations | Of the 40 preliminary investigations completed by the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) 25 were related to threat assessments conducted from incident reports that were received.

Finding New Partners | The Special Investigation Unit increased the number of State Law Enforcement Bureau (SLEB) partners to 32 agencies in FY 2021-2022 and continues to seek out new agencies to join in combatting SNAP trafficking and fraud in the state.

Leveraging the SNAP Fraud Framework Implementation Award | On August 13, 2021, the department was awarded the SNAP Fraud Framework Implementation Award through the USDA Food and Nutrition Service. The Program Integrity Unit applied for the grant to improve processes in adjudicating SNAP fraud and trafficking cases, partnerships with state law enforcement, legal process, and data collection and analysis processes that support the unit's investigations in SNAP fraud and trafficking.

Changing Schedules | The Federal Tax Information (FTI) changed from a 10-year to a five-year background check schedule and TDHS created an Employee Background Check Tableau Report to track the employee background checks according to schedule.

Transferring Fingerprints | To support child care professionals, child care employees who were fingerprinted in the last five years and who continued to work without an employment break of 180 days can now transfer their fingerprints for employment purposes.

Elevating Communication Efficiency | Multiple teams collaborated to revise the referral process for Out of State (OOS) Background Checks and reduce the number of document files exchanged each month.



Operations

The Operations team is responsible for managing the infrastructure that supports TDHS in helping Tennesseans. The Operations subdivisions include Budget, Fiscal, Information Technology and Procurement/Facilities, and the division of Quality Improvement and Strategic Solutions.

Operations Leadership

Melisa Hucks
Deputy Commissioner & Chief Operating Officer

Gary Wilson
Quality Improvement & Strategic Solutions Assistant Commissioner

Stephen Reksten
Director, Procurement

Winfield Shier
Director, Budget

Amanda Woody
Director of Strategic Analysis

Anthony Burwell
Chief Information Officer

Krysta Krall
Chief Financial Officer of Fiscal Services

Quality Improvement and Strategic Solutions

The Quality Improvement and Strategic Solutions (QISS) division provides oversight and direction to the department's data analysis efforts, continuous quality improvement, and quality assurance.

Office of Procurement

As a support arm for the department of Human Services, the Office of Procurement is dedicated to procuring or providing goods and services necessary for serving TDHS clients in an efficient, timely, professional, courteous, and fiscally responsible manner that is compliant with applicable law, rules, and policy. The office also manages mail handling, surplus property management, vehicle management, facilities management, and Emergency Response coordination. The office is comprised of a non-professional services/commodity procurement sub-unit and professional services procurement sub-unit.

Facilities

The facilities subdivision is responsible for facilitating the acquisition, maintenance, and disbursement of TDHS properties and equipment.

Budget

The Budget Unit is responsible for overall management of the Department's \$3.9 billion budget, including analysis and approval of contracts, personnel actions, and program initiatives having a financial impact. Alongside the development of the Department's annual State budget, the Budget Unit regularly monitors the Department's budgetary health and provides counsel to program and executive leadership on issues affecting the budget. In addition, the Budget Unit serves as the primary contact for administration and legislative requests for financial information and provides support to the Public Information and Legislative Office and legal staff on legislation impacting the Department, including fiscal note development.

Information Technology

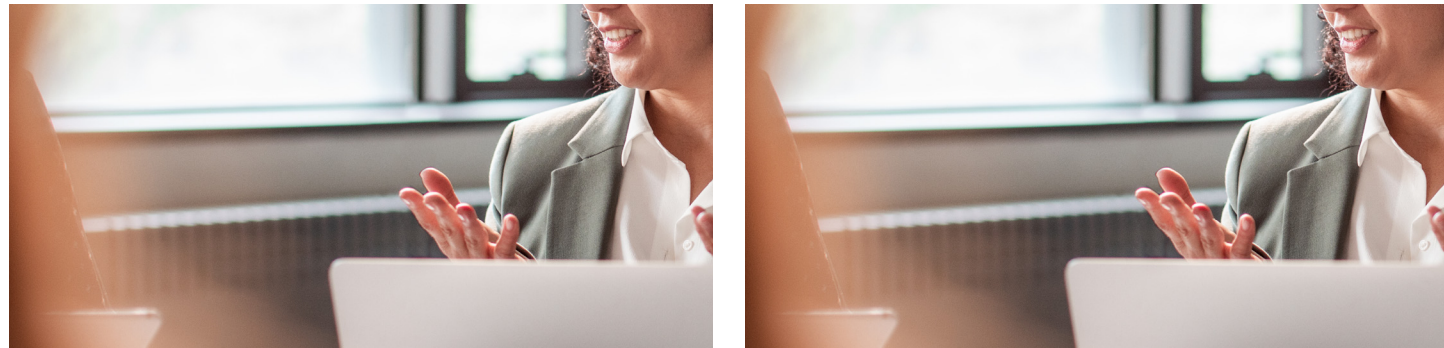
The Information Technology Team is an extension of the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration and includes the Strategic Technology Solutions (STS) Unit. It works to support TDHS staff and programs with technology systems, networks and related equipment to conduct business.

Key Accomplishments and Transformative Achievements

Modernizing Child Care | This year, Information Technology successfully delivered the third (Child Care Modernization – June 2022) of the four major transformation projects, as well as, other smaller projects related to the overall Enterprise System Modernization (ESM) initiative.

Keeping Contract Awards on Schedule | This year, the Office of Procurement, set and met a goal to have the department's goal of 98 percent of contracts awarded by July 1, 2022.

Awarding 308 Contracts | This year the Procurement Unit ensured uninterrupted services for TDHS customers by awarding 90 contracts for the State Fiscal Year in addition to 218 contracts that were awarded for the Federal Fiscal Year that started on October 1, 2021.



Transitioning Four Offices Across the State | TDHS successfully relocated the following offices into new and improved facilities or combined facilities to better serve our customers:

- Tennessee Rehabilitation Center Murfreesboro combined with the Rutherford County Family Assistance Field Office – October 2021
- Tennessee Rehabilitation Center Greenville combined with the Greene County Family Assistance Field Office – December 2021
- Dickson County Family Assistance Field Office – December 2021
- Montgomery County Family Assistance Field Office - April 2022

Training Champions and Eliminating 4,419 Hours of Work Time | In State Fiscal Year 2022, the QISS Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Unit partnered with employees across all divisions in the agency to make 14 processes more effective and efficient. During this time period, the CQI unit facilitated LEAN methodology training to empower more than 50 TDHS employees, known as “CQI Champions” to utilize process improvement within their areas and create a culture of problem solvers. Capitalizing on the strengths and expertise of the CQI Champions and the CQI unit, the agency was able to save 4,419 hours of work time by eliminating waste, reducing redundancies and handoffs, and increasing the use of automation. One of the biggest accomplishments of the year resulted in administrative task reductions for 100 percent of TDHS employees enabling them to devote more focused time to serving the citizens of Tennessee.

People Operations

People Operations includes Human Resources, Learning & Development, and Talent Management Units. The division manages all processes impacting the work-life cycle of Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) employees. This includes focused support driven by agency strategy to ensure that TDHS has the ability to attract, recruit, select, develop, engage and retain staff. For People Operations, the guiding principle is that TDHS employees are the most important resource and make the mission possible.

People Operations Leadership

Vacant

Assistant Commissioner

Amy Neufeld

Director, Human Resources

Delores Stokes

Director, Talent Management

Karen Perry

Director, Learning and Development

People Operations by the Numbers

- 477 staff members hired and onboarded
- 404 employees promoted
- 170 employees assisted in the retirement process
- 5,750 TDHS employees and contract staff successfully completed learning opportunities
- 4,213 TDHS employees completed a total of 41,147 learning sessions
- 1,537 TDHS contractors completed a total of 3,059 learning sessions
- 149 web-based courses were offered with 36,883 completions
- 137 instructor-led courses were offered with 7,322 completions
- 48 courses (350 classes) facilitated with 6,326 completions
- 780 TDHS employees participated in LinkedIn Learning, completing a total of 3,604 courses
- 313 Rehabilitation Services staff trained with the statewide rollout of CORE Introductory Modules in July 2021
- 88 virtual instructor-led Families First Refresher training sessions delivered to approximately 1,200 eligibility staff and supervisors

Transformational Achievements

Making Wellness a Priority | During the 2021/22 fiscal year, TDHS continued to make employee wellness a priority with activities that included weekly fitness breaks with the Tennessee Departments of Health and Education, wellness challenges, Lunch and Learn series' on health and nutrition topics and virtual activities from Working for a Healthier Tennessee. The TDHS Health and Wellness Council also received rewards from Working for a Healthier Tennessee including: Division A Wellness Week Championship, Most Well-Rounded Wellness Council, and Most Innovative Wellness Council.

The Power of Diversity and Inclusion | TDHS understands that each member of our department has a unique perspective informed by their experiences and background. Having many perspectives is a strength we can leverage to solve problems and better serve our mission of building strong Tennessee families. During the 2022 fiscal year, TDHS brought together a group of passionate, dedicated employees with representation from various TDHS divisions, locations across Tennessee, and different levels of the organization to form the TDHS' Diversity Council. After creating strategic goals around communication, education and engagement, the council developed a calendar for sharing diversity observances and a series

of Lunch and Learn session topics such as Emotional Intelligence, Socialization and Mental Shortcuts, Cultural Competence and Language and Etiquette.

Creating a Modern Workplace | By June 30, 2022, 81 percent of TDHS employees participated in some capacity remote work.

A Focus on Recruitment | People Operations created a Talent Acquisition team with two Talent Acquisition Specialists dedicated to recruiting for TDHS.

Leadership and Organizational Development | A Leadership and Organizational Development team formed to focus on delivering leadership development programs and opportunities and form improvement strategies for workplace culture and employee engagement.

Training Progress | People Operations created and reviewed supplemental training videos/resources for new systems and digital platforms used by Child Care, Child Support, and Family Assistance divisions.

Teaching New Teams | During the 2021/22 fiscal year, People Operations developed and delivered online and instructor-led training for the new Child Support Re-entry Team that supports parents with justice system involvement.

Public Information and Legislative Office

The Public Information and Legislative Office (PILO) facilitates public, media, legislative, and customer requests. The communications team works to implement communications strategies that are supportive of the department's mission and program needs. The office also focuses on legislative priorities for the Department, including the analysis of legislation affecting the Department, and representing the Department before the Tennessee General Assembly. Finally, the customer service team collaborates across program lines and directly with customers to ensure timely, thorough, and compassionate customer service.

Public Information and Legislative Office Leadership

Callon Schmid

Assistant Commissioner

Devin Stone

Director of Communications

Pamela Fusting

Director of Operations & Customer Experience

Communications

TDHS is tasked with helping Tennesseans reach their full potential as independent contributing members of our community and economy. The Communications team helps TDHS team members foster public trust not only through communication related to service delivery, but also through everyday messaging practices and standards. The PILO team is responsible for managing communication tools and production such as the TDHS web pages, print media, social media and other tools and also interacts with the media and other entities that share a vested interest in TDHS services.

Legislative

The Legislative team works to represent the Department before the General Assembly and with any related external stakeholders. The team monitors legislative session, meets with members, and ensures passage of Department initiatives. The team also works to educate members on topics related to TDHS programs and services, as well as assisting with constituent concerns. The team also handles rule review before the legislature's Government Operations Committee and contracts before the legislature's Fiscal Review Committee. Post-legislative session, the legislative team works with program and legal to develop legislative proposals for the upcoming year and plan outreach events for the Commissioner and executive leadership team.

Customer Service

The Customer Service (CuSe) unit within PILO serves as a centralized customer service operation, equipped to handle inquiries and escalations related to all DHS programs and services and to provide appropriate referrals for misdirected inquiries. Customers access CuSe via multiple channels: telephony (mainline), mail correspondence, email, Webform submissions, LiveChat, fax, and referrals from other agencies and political officials. The team is trained to care for customers seeking services as well as those lodging legitimate concerns regarding delivery of services. All inquiries are documented and tracked within the ServiceNow inquiry management platform, per required protocol and timelines.

Transformative and Customer Service Achievements

Helping TDHS Employees Become Brand Ambassadors | To help TDHS employees understand their power to create and maintain a positive impression among stakeholders, the Communications team began work on a TDHS Style Guide and complementary intranet site. With a 2022 launch date, the guide provides information on state and TDHS communication policies, tools and practices. Additionally, the guide provides guidance on how and when to contact the Public Information and Legislative Office (PILO) for help with communication initiatives.

Improving Workflows | To help staff from 17 program areas and related support divisions get their message to stakeholders, the Communications team created new workflows and forms for communication campaigns and content. These tools reduce waste and streamline the production process.

Keeping Staff Informed | To ensure staff remain informed about upcoming initiatives and departmental developments, the Communications team supported quarterly "Town Hall" meetings for all staff. These virtual meetings provided a forum for staff to ask questions about existing and upcoming TDHS developments. Staff are also encouraged to submit questions and suggestions regarding department-wide changes through the weekly internal newsletter.

Multiple Newsletters for Multiple Audiences | This year, the Communications team worked to launch newsletters to multiple customer segments including, but not limited to: Rehabilitation Services provider partners, Child Care partners, Community Service and Block Grant partners.

Furthering the Work of the Department | The Department of Human Services was extended to June 30, 2026 via public chapter 751. The department was asked to follow up within a year on the status of the TANF Opportunity Act and we plan to do so in the beginning of the 113th General Assembly.

Utilizing the Voice of the Customer | The Customer Service unit continued its Voice of the Customer Program, which is central to the Department's customer experience strategy and can serve as a bridge between insights and action. The unit conducted 17 in-depth customer interviews, yielding insightful feedback to strengthen customer service practices and communication initiatives.

Obtaining Feedback on the Digital Experience | In FY22, between 6,000 – 7,000 customers responded to individual questions offered through online surveys, in which the overall experience was rated at 91.4% excellent or good.

Development and Maintenance of Online Knowledge Base | In 2022, TDHS launched the OneDHS Customer Portal, a one-stop shop for all TDHS web-based applications. As part of the OneDHS Customer Portal, the Customer Service Unit created a searchable knowledge base including 135 Knowledge Articles or FAQs with commonly sought after Departmental information. The Knowledge Articles have been viewed 36,527 customers since the Customer Portal launch on March 19, 2022. 731 open-ended comments responding to the Knowledge Articles were submitted on the Customer Portal between March 19 – June 27, 2022. When necessary, the Customer Service Unit provides questions or clarification to customer comments in an effort to maintain the accuracy and usefulness of the Knowledge Base.



A Brief History of the Tennessee Department of Human Services

Tennessee has long been known as the “Volunteer State” for its willingness to step in when help is needed. Since its founding in 1796, state administrators have understood that we are stronger when our most vulnerable are supported.

For the first 31 years of the state's life, the administration of “poor relief” was a responsibility of state counties and a court system that extended into the most remote sections of the state. In 1827, new legislation allowed counties to establish almshouses to provide for citizens who could not care for themselves due to disability or other factors. A century later in 1925, the Welfare Division was created under the state Department of Institutions to license child care institutions, maternity homes, jails, workhouses, and almshouses. The organization was also responsible for organizing county welfare committees.

The Great Depression saw a larger number of Americans in need of assistance and the state utilized a Federal Reconstruction Finance Corporation loan to assist Tennessee families. This support was continued through the 1933 Federal Emergency Relief Act that established the Tennessee State Relief Administration (TSRA), an organization that later transitioned to become the Tennessee Welfare Commission before morphing into the Department of Institutions and Public Welfare in 1937 and subsequently, the Department of Public Welfare in 1939.

In May 1975, the agency's name again changed to the Department of Human Services. Over the next forty years, the department's services grew to include child support programs in 1977, Rehabilitation Services in 1983 and managed the transition of Aid to Families with Dependent Children to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program in 1996.

Today, the Department encompasses an extensive number of divisions all aimed a one purpose: building strong families by connecting Tennesseans to employment, education and support services.



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