



# Guide to Health and Social Services



## Health Services

*If you have little or no insurance and need health services:*

You can visit one of the 159 county health departments across the state. The local health departments provide services which promote the health and well-being of the whole community. They offer direct healthcare to low-income people and individuals in underserved areas of the state. For more information about these services, please contact or visit your local health department. To find a health department in your area visit online <http://health.state.ga.us/regional>.

*If you or your children do not have insurance and need healthcare coverage:*

You may be eligible for Medicaid benefits. Please visit the Georgia Department of Human Services' online tool COMPASS at: <https://compass.ga.gov> to determine if you qualify for Medicaid benefits. Individuals can also download the Medicaid application, in English or Spanish, from the DFCS website by visiting <http://www.dfcs.dhs.georgia.gov/medicaid>. Applications can be submitted via mail, telephone, fax or e-mail to the local DFCS Office.

Children may qualify for PeachCare for Kids, Georgia's State Children's Health Insurance Program. The program provides low-cost health care coverage to children up to age 18. To learn more about PeachCare for Kids go to <http://www.peachcare.org/> or call 1-877-GA-PEACH (1-877-427-3224).

*If you need mental health services or other support services:*

Please call Georgia's Crisis and Access Line at 1-800-715-4225 or visit <http://www.myqcal.com>. The Crisis and Access Line is available 24 hours, 7 days a week and helps individuals with mental illness, substance abuse disorders or developmental disabilities locate treatment or support services.



## Economic Assistance

*If you are a low-income eligible family and need help with heating and cooling bills:*

Georgia has an **Energy Assistance Program (EAP)** which pays for some home heating and cooling costs for low-income eligible families including crisis. The program has three components:

- **Energy Crisis:** Provided to low income households with disconnection notices or already disconnected.
- **Regular Home Energy Assistance:** Provides financial assistance to households meeting certain income and other requirements.
- **Weatherization:** Provides low-cost home energy conservation improvements to eligible households.

For energy assistance or other services for low-income families or refugees, contact the Community-Based/Refugee Program Unit at 404-656-2323 or toll free 1-877-423-4746 for information on the agency serving your county.

*If you need help paying your monthly expenses:*

You may qualify for **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)**, commonly known as welfare. Through the TANF program, monthly cash assistance is given to poor families with children under age 18. Participation in work-related activities is required to receive this assistance. To apply for TANF, individuals should contact the county Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) office in the county where they live. Individuals can also visit the COMPASS website at: <https://compass.ga.gov> to determine eligibility.

*If you are owed child support funds from a non-custodial parent:*

Please contact your local Division of Child Support Services. To locate the Division of Child Support Services in your area, please visit: <http://dcss.dhs.georgia.gov/office-locations>.



## Food Assistance

*If you have low income and need help buying food:*

Please visit the Georgia Department of Human Services' online tool COMPASS at: <https://compass.ga.gov>. COMPASS helps determine if you are eligible to receive food stamps and allows you to apply online for the services. The food stamp program is a federally funded program that provides monthly benefits to low-income households to help pay for the cost of food and improve

their nutrition education. Individuals can also visit their local DFCS office to apply. To find a DFCS office closest to you, please visit: <http://dfcs.dhs.georgia.gov/county-offices>.

Another service is the **Emergency Food Assistance Program** (TEFAP). It is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low income persons in Georgia, including the elderly, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost. Contact Food Banks or GCAAs (lists attached) for more information.

*If you are a low-income pregnant, postpartum or breastfeeding woman or have children up to age 5 and need assistance with food:*

You may qualify for the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. WIC provides special supplemental foods for young children and their mothers during critical periods of growth and development. WIC provides nutrition education, nutritious foods, breastfeeding promotion and support, and referrals to other health services. To apply for WIC, please visit your local health department (find your closest location at <http://health.state.ga.us/regional>) or call 1-800-228-9173.



## **Family and Children Services**

*If you or someone you know is a victim of domestic violence:*

Georgia has 45 certified family violence shelters and one family violence program, operated by private, nonprofit organizations that can help. They provide 24-hour crisis lines; legal and social service advocacy; children's programs; parenting support and education; emotional support; and community education. All of these agencies also offer emergency safe shelters. And all services are free and confidential. There is also a statewide toll-free 24-hour crisis line, 1-800-33-HAVEN (334-2836) which automatically connects the caller to the nearest family violence agency.

*If your child or a child you know is being abused:*

Contact the police first if the child is in immediate danger, obviously being beaten or left alone overnight, for example. In all other cases, reports should be made to the DFCS office in the county where the child lives. To find the nearest DFCS office please visit: <http://dfcs.dhs.georgia.gov/county-offices>. Reports are confidential and those who call do not have to give their name.

*If you have limited income and need childcare to work, attend school or participate in training:*

Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program may be right for you. CAPS helps Georgia families pay for early childhood and school age care

programs. Subsidized care is available for children from birth to age 13, or up to age 18 if the child has special needs. CAPS is available in each of Georgia's 159 counties. There may be a waiting list for this service in some areas. To apply, contact the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) in the county where you live or call (404) 651-9361.



## Older Adult Services

*If you are unemployed with low-income age 55 or over:*

You may qualify for the Senior Community Service Employment Program. The program provides part-time community service work and training for Georgia's unemployed low-income seniors age 55 or older and helps them obtain paid employment. Job counseling, career development assistance and referral to needed community resources are among the services available to older persons who enroll in the program. For more information, please call the Division of Aging Services at 1-866-552-4464 (1-866-55-AGING).

*If you are older adult and are being abused or know someone that is:*

Contact the police first if there is immediate danger. Reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation of disabled adults or elder persons (**who are NOT residents of nursing homes or personal care homes**) should be directed to the **APS Central Intake Unit** of the Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services. APS can be reached by calling toll-free 1-888-774-0152 or within the Metro Atlanta local calling area at (404) 657-5250.



## Legal Services

*If you need free legal consultation and other services:*

**Georgia Legal Services Program** may be able to assist with your needs. The organization provides access to justice and opportunities out of poverty for Georgians with low-incomes. Please call them at 1-800-498-9469 or visit online at <http://www.glsp.org>.

The **Atlanta Legal Aid Society** provides representation exclusively in civil (non-criminal) matters. They will accept unemployment compensation cases and can also make referrals. Please visit their website at <http://www.atlantalegalaid.org> or call them at (404) 524-5811. They also have additional locations which include: Cobb - (770) 528-2565; DeKalb - (404) 377-0701; Gwinnett - (678) 376-4545; South Fulton/Clayton - (404) 669-0233.



## Shelter

*If you need help with housing:*

You may contact the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. DCA helps put all Georgia's citizens in decent housing through a range of programs designed to foster new housing development, homeownership, and improved housing choices. Please call them at (404) 679-4940 or (800) 359-4663 for more information. You can also visit their website: <http://www.dca.state.ga.us>.



## Employment

*If you seek employment:*

Please visit <http://www.dol.state.ga.us> to find out about Career Centers in your community. If you are interested in employment with state government in Georgia, go to <http://www.careers.ga.gov>. For DHS positions, please visit <http://www.dhsjobs.org>.



## All State Services

*If you are unsure of who to call:*

Please call 1-800-Georgia which is a toll-free service for citizens seeking state services but don't know who to contact.

Individuals can also contact the Georgia Department of Human Services' DHS Office of Constituent Services at (404) 651-6316.