

Annual Report

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025

Stronger Families for a Stronger Georgia

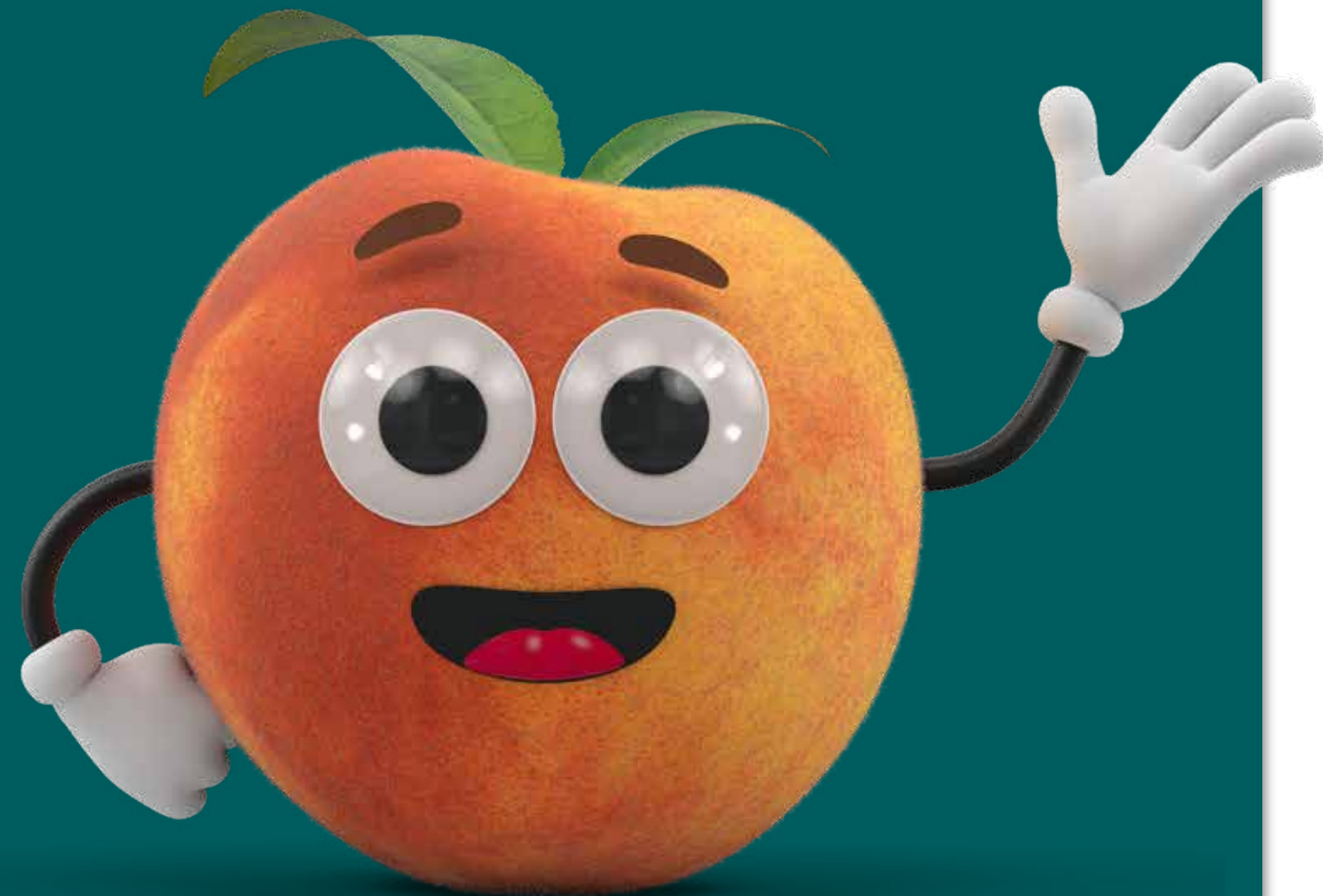


**Georgia Department
of Human Services**



Table of Contents

Click any heading to jump to that section.



- Letter from Commissioner Candice L. Broce..... 3**
- SFY 2025 Major Events 4**
- Georgia Department of Human Services..... 5**
 - Office of Human Resources 6
 - Commissioner’s Staff Excellence Awards Program..... 6
- SFY 2025 Budget Allocation & Funding 7**
- Division of Aging Services..... 9**
 - Area Agencies on Aging10
 - Aging and Disability Resource Connection ...10
 - SFY 2025 AAA Clients Served by Planning and Service Areas..... 11
 - Light Up the Holidays Gift Drive Celebrates 10 Years.....12
 - Georgia Memory Net.....13
 - Dementia Care Specialist Program.....14
 - Senior Community Service Employment Program.....15
 - Kinship Care15
 - Georgia’s Respite Care Study.....16
 - State Health Insurance Benefit Program.....16
 - Georgia Fund for Children & Elderly16

- Adult Protective Services.....17
- Public Guardianship Office17
- Forensic Special Initiatives Unit.....18
- Division of Child Support Services19**
 - Grants in Action: The SAVES Program and the Responsible Parenting Grant 20
 - A Story of Redemption and Resilience..... 21
 - DCSS Staff Spotlight 21
 - Fatherhood Program22
 - Prison Paternity Project 22
 - From Doubt to Determination: The Fatherhood Program Helps Build a New Future 22
 - Parental Accountability Court Program23
 - The Power of Persistence 23
- Division of Family & Children Services 24**
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program25
 - SNAP Works 25
 - D-SNAP: Serving Georgians in Time of Need.....25
 - New Lock Feature Helps SNAP Customers Protect Their Benefits..... 26
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.....27
 - Medical Assistance 28
 - Family Medicaid 28

- Aged, Blind, and Disabled Medicaid Plan..... 28
- Gateway Provider Portal Refresh Improves Provider Engagement..... 28
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program 29
- Benefit Integrity & Recovery Unit 29
- Child Abuse Prevention Month 30
- Child Protective Services..... 30
- Foster Care and Adoption Services.....31
 - Celebrating Georgia’s Caregivers with the Atlanta Braves 32
- Kinship Care33
- Georgia Resilient, Youth-Centered, Stable, and Empowered John H. Chafee Independent Living Program33
- The Family First Prevention Services Act.....33
- Out of School Services Program33
- Celebration of Excellence Honors over 180 Graduates 34
- Clark’s Christmas Kids.....35
- Office of Inspector General 36**
 - Residential Child Care Licensing..... 36
- DHS Leadership37**
- DHS Contacts 38**



Letter from **Commissioner Candice L. Broce**

The past year has been one of meaningful progress and renewed purpose for the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS). Every day, our agency works diligently to help Georgians build safe, stable, and independent lives – and this year’s accomplishments reflect that dedication. I am honored to share the many ways DHS has continued to make a difference throughout State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025.

This report highlights the work carried out by our three divisions and the initiatives that have shaped the agency’s direction during the year spanning July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. It also details how DHS invested state and federal resources to strengthen programs, enhance service delivery, and expand access to essential support services for children, families, and older adults.

Our success is driven by the hard work and compassion of nearly 10,000 DHS employees who serve their communities with professionalism and heart. Their efforts are guided by the leadership of Governor Brian P. Kemp and First Lady Marty Kemp, whose focus on strengthening Georgia’s families continues to inspire our mission.

Throughout the year, DHS has worked to simplify access to services, modernize our systems, and build stronger connections with local partners. Through implementation of the

Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) for Georgians impacted by Hurricane Helene, partnership with Columbus State University for development of the Let’s Get Real curriculum to empower young people with essential parenting knowledge, and delivery of more than four million meals to older or disabled adults, our agency has remained focused on delivering services that truly meet the needs of our fellow Georgians.

The progress made in SFY 2025 reflects the power of collaboration – within our agency, among state and local partners, and with the communities we serve. Together, we are finding innovative ways to solve complex challenges and ensure that every Georgian has the opportunity to thrive.

As we look to the future, DHS will continue building upon this momentum by advancing innovative solutions, supporting our workforce, and maintaining a steadfast commitment to accountability and transparency. I am deeply grateful to our employees, partners, and stakeholders for their continued dedication to those we serve.

Our collective work strengthens families, empowers individuals, and creates a stronger Georgia for generations to come.

Major Events | State Fiscal Year 2025



JULY 2024

Teens R 4 Me

DFCS's child welfare staff and youth in foster care gathered for the annual Teens R 4 Me conference.



AUGUST 2024

Waycross Family Justice Center Grand Opening

The Waycross Family Justice Center opened. DCSS's Safer Access for Victims' Economic Security (SAVES) Program works with survivors of domestic violence at the new center.



DECEMBER 2024

LUTH Gift Drive

DAS held its annual Light Up the Holidays gift drive to collect items for over 1,400 adults under guardianship in Georgia.



MARCH 2025

APDI Grant

On March 27, 2025, DAS was awarded the Alzheimer's Disease Program Initiative (ADPI) grant.



MAY 2025

Atlanta Braves Event

Foster families joined DFCS staff to celebrate National Foster Care Month and cheer on the Atlanta Braves.



AUGUST 2024

DCSS Wins Innovative Collaboration & Partnership Award

DCSS's Paternity Acknowledgment Program was awarded the Innovative Collaboration & Partnership Award at the 2024 NCSEA Leadership Symposium in Detroit, Michigan.



OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2024

D-SNAP Response for Hurricane Helene

In the wake of Hurricane Helene, DHS staff stepped up to serve their communities through the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP), assisting hundreds of thousands of Georgians recovering from the disaster.



DECEMBER 2024

Clark's Christmas Kids

Thanks to the generous support of donors in Georgia, and with partners Clark Howard, WSB-TV, St. Vincent de Paul, and others, Clark's Christmas Kids provided all children in foster care with gifts to open on Christmas morning.



APRIL 2025

New Memory Assessment Clinic

The Vidalia Memory Assessment Clinic (MAC) was added. This makes seven MACs across the state.



JULY 2025

Celebration of Excellence

DHS leadership joined with child welfare staff, state representatives, and other officials to celebrate students in foster care who graduated from high school and college in 2025.



DHS leadership, staff, and board members gather at the Georgia State Capitol with Governor Brian P. Kemp and First Lady Marty Kemp to commemorate National Adoption Awareness Month.

Georgia Department of Human Services

The Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) serves more than 2 million Georgians and employs over 9,700 people. With an annual budget of \$2.2 billion, DHS delivers a wide range of services that protect and enhance the lives of Georgia's most vulnerable residents.

DHS comprises three divisions — the Division of Aging Services (DAS), the Division of Child Support Services (DCSS), and the Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS).

About the Office of Human Resources

The Georgia Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Human Resources (OHR) plays a vital role in delivering essential people services, including recruitment, benefits and compensation, employee relations, compliance, and training and development.

By the Numbers | Office of Human Resources



DHS staff turnover was 16.8% in SFY 2025

- For SFY 2025, overall staff turnover was 5.1% lower than the previous year and was the agency's **lowest turnover rate since SFY 2016**.
- Aging Services Case Manager turnover is 7.2% lower than SFY 2024.
- Child Support Services Agent turnover is 10.7% lower than SFY 2024.
- Child Support Services Supervisor turnover is 7% lower than SFY 2024.



DFCS staff turnover was 18% in SFY 2025

- For SFY 2025, overall staff turnover was 5% lower than the previous year.
- Child Welfare Services Case Manager turnover is 13.6% lower than SFY 2024.
- Office of Family Independence Eligibility Specialist turnover is 3.6% lower than SFY 2024.



Average years of service: 8 years

As of June 2025, DHS had a headcount of **9,720 employees** with an average of **8.1 years** of service.

Faithful Service Awards Program

The State of Georgia's Faithful Service Awards Program helps attract and retain employees by recognizing their service to the residents of Georgia.

Through this program, employees are recognized annually, beginning with five years of total service and every five years thereafter.

Employees completing 10, 20, 25, and 30 years of service receive a service award certificate and lapel pin. Employees with 5, 15, and over 30 years of service receive an award certificate.

1,215 employees received Faithful Service Awards in SFY 2025.

Commissioner's Staff Excellence Awards Program

The Commissioner's Staff Excellence Awards (CSEA) honor employees making significant contributions to our efforts to Build Stronger Families for a Stronger Georgia. Regardless of their office or division and area of expertise, these individuals have something essential in common – they demonstrate passion for their job and do their best for the good of the agency and the people we serve.

All category nominees are reviewed by an Awards Evaluation Committee. The award winners for 2025 are listed below and are recognized for the following categories:

Distinguished Staff:

Karey Coombs

DCSS

Positive Impact:

Brittany Philman

DFCS CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

Office of Family Independence Eligibility Specialist of the Year:

Julie Barrett

DFCS OFFICE OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE

Exceptional Customer Service:

Denise Lark

DFCS CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

Aging Services Case Manager of the Year:

Tanya Hoke-Hunter

DAS

Excellence in Innovation:

Love Taylor

OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Child Support Services Agent of the Year:

Melody Johnson

DCSS

Outstanding Organizational Leadership:

Monica Hall

DCSS

Child Welfare Services Case Manager of the Year:

Ray Benford

DFCS CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

Outstanding Supervisor:

Pamela Coley

DCSS

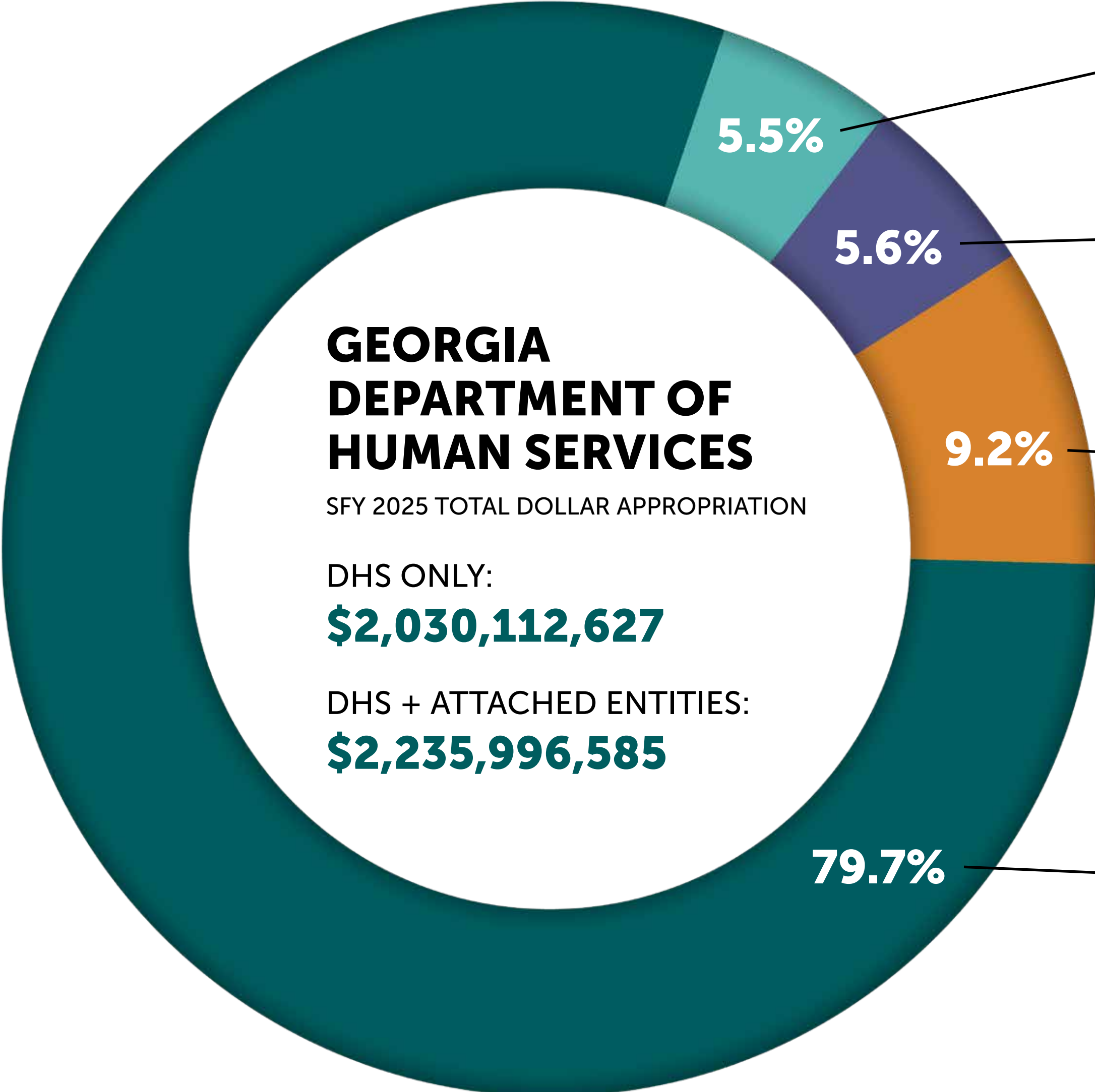
Outstanding Team:

Care Coordination Treatment Unit led by James Kizer

DFCS CHILD WELFARE SERVICES



State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025 Budget Allocation & Funding



DEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT: \$122,684,204

VULNERABLE ADULTS: \$125,056,221

- Elder Abuse Investigation & Prevention: \$34,795,110
- Elder Community Living Services: \$90,261,111

ATTACHED ENTITIES: \$205,883,958

- Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund Commission: \$8,476,159
- Council on Aging: \$376,625
- Family Connection: \$11,696,854
- Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency: \$185,334,320

SAFETY & ACCOUNTABILITY: \$1,782,372,202

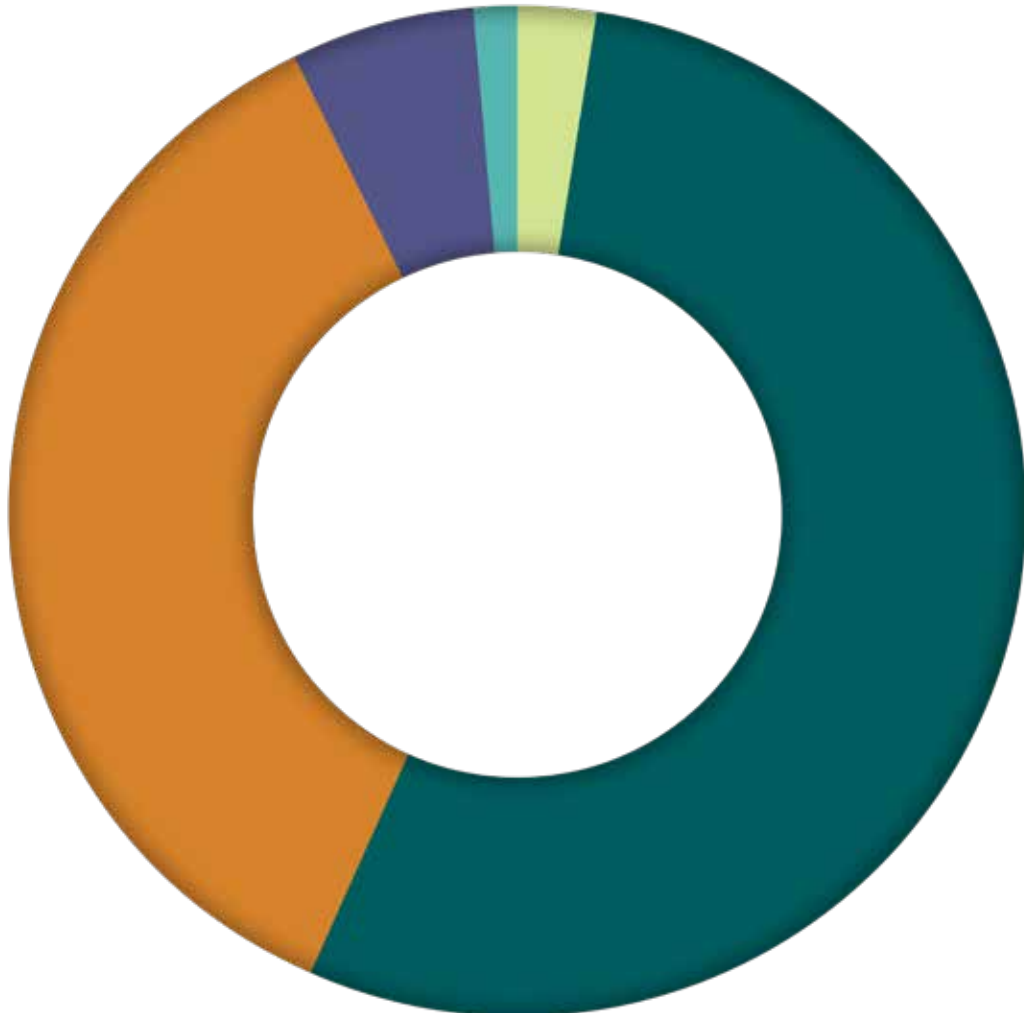
- Division of Child Support Services: \$127,207,190
- Residential Child Care Licensing: \$3,137,970
- Division of Family & Children Services: \$1,652,027,042

State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025 Budget Allocation & Funding

GEORGIA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCY \$185,334,320

(UNDER "ATTACHED ENTITIES" ON PREVIOUS PAGE)

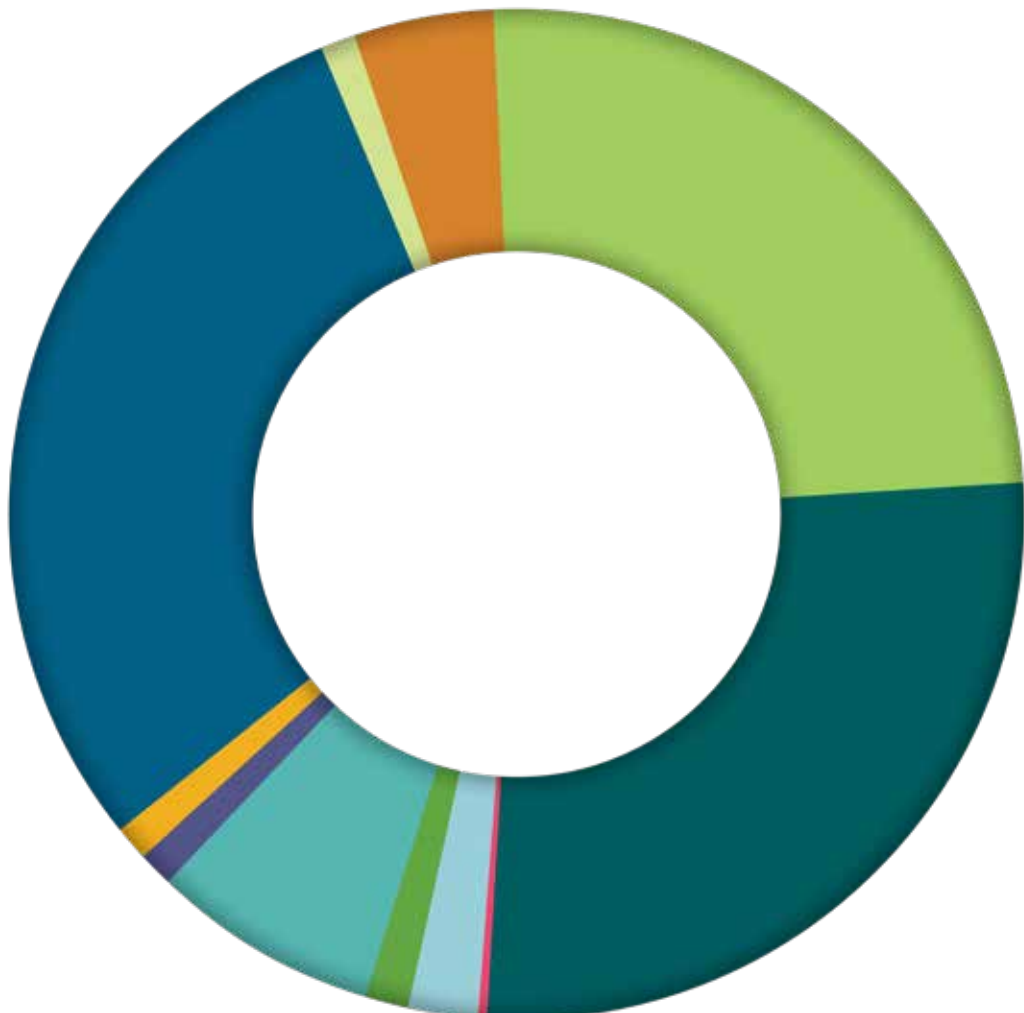
- Business Enterprise Program: **\$2,779,241**
- Departmental Administration: **\$11,039,595**
- Disability Adjudication Services: **\$66,908,724**
- Georgia Industries for the Blind: **\$4,365,888**
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services: **\$100,240,872**



DIVISION OF FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES \$1,652,027,042

(UNDER "SAFETY & ACCOUNTABILITY" ON PREVIOUS PAGE)

- Adoption Services: **\$123,488,226**
- Child Abuse & Neglect: **\$15,286,500**
- Child Welfare Services: **\$489,977,756**
- Community Services: **\$18,161,659**
- Energy Assistance: **\$71,610,157**
- Federal Eligibility Benefit Services: **\$409,586,503**
- Out-of-Home Care: **\$444,259,914**
- Out-of-School Care Services: **\$17,500,000**
- Refugee Assistance: **\$5,035,754**
- Support for Needy Families, Basic Assistance: **\$36,523,008**
- Support for Needy Families, Work Assistance: **\$20,597,565**





DHS's Division of Aging Services staff pose for a photo with Governor Brian P. Kemp and First Lady Marty Kemp at the Georgia State Capitol for Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month.

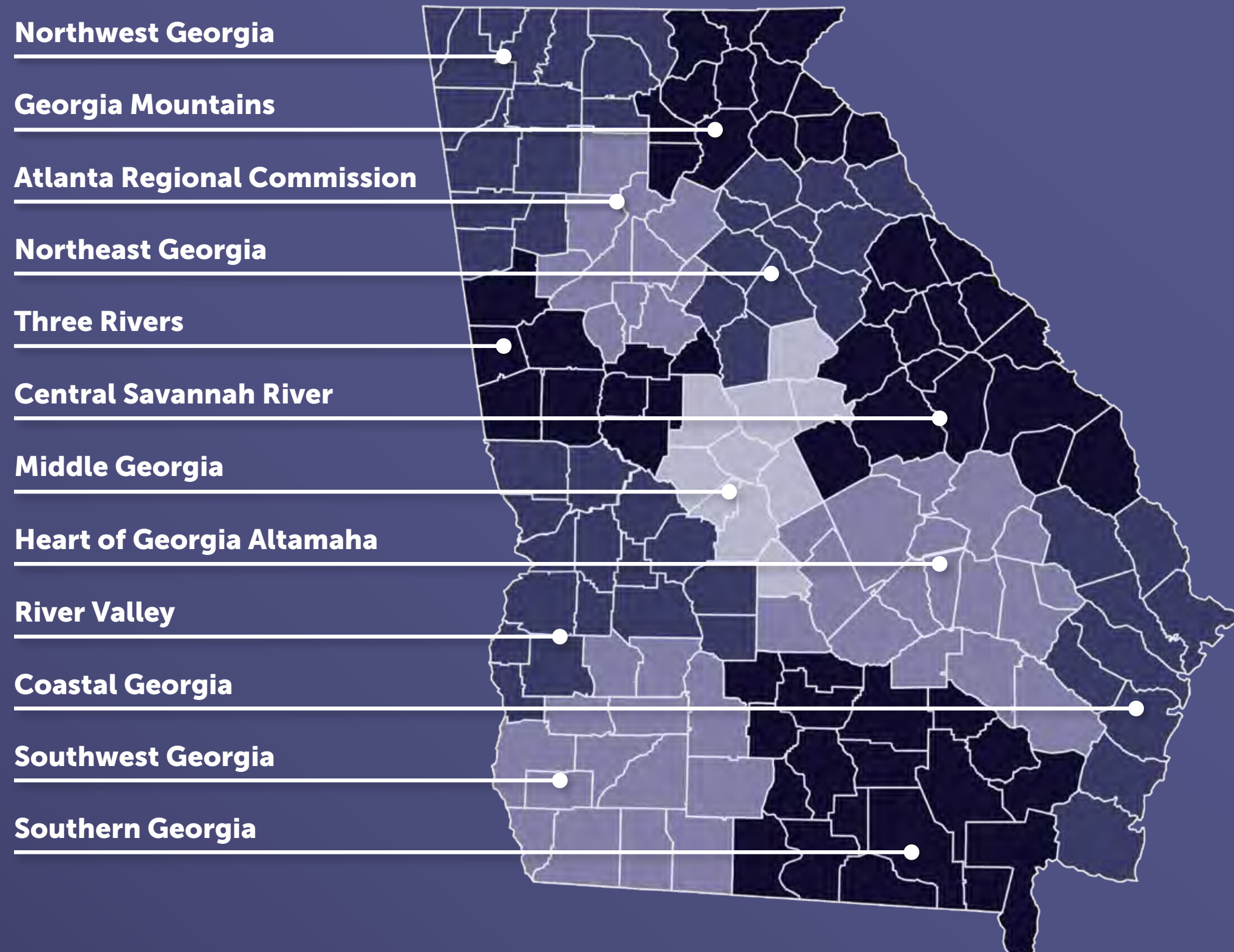
Division of **Aging Services**

The Division of Aging Services (DAS) assists older individuals, at-risk adults, persons with disabilities, their families, and caregivers to achieve safe, healthy, independent, and self-reliant lives. The Division works with its partners around the state to keep people in their homes and communities for as long as they desire, enabling them to function independently and avoid or delay placement in a long-term care facility.

DAS is also responsible for safeguarding vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The Division investigates claims of abuse in the community setting, while the Department of Community Health investigates claims of abuse in care facilities. DAS also provides services to advocate for adults under guardianship.

Area Agencies on Aging

The Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) is a one-stop shop or “no wrong door” entry point staffed with counselors who help older adults and adults with disabilities and their caregivers navigate life changes and find resources to assist them with living a more self-reliant life. The majority of these services are provided through the statewide network of Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs).



Aging and Disability Resource Connection

Through contracts with the 12 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), the Division of Aging Services supports older adults, adults living with a disability, and their caregivers through a variety of home and community-based services, as well as other supportive services. AAAs are located across the state and support individuals and caregivers in every county. While specific services vary by region, the core programs in each AAA region are:

Personal Care Assistance

Hands-on assistance with bathing, dressing, and similar daily living activities.

Transportation Services

Provides rides to and from senior centers, medical appointments, and quality of life trips such as shopping and other activities to remain engaged in the community.

Assistive Technology

Tools that can help individuals perform everyday tasks, allowing them to remain in their own home or the community setting of their choosing and/or avoid long-term residential care.

Home-Delivered Meals

Nutritious meals provided to qualified individuals in their homes.

Congregate Meals

Nutritious weekday lunches provided to older adults in a group setting.

Chronic Disease Self-Management

Services that teach individuals with recurring conditions and illnesses how to monitor and care for themselves in a way that maximizes their quality of life.

Respite Care

Services that offer a brief period of rest for family caregivers, either in the home or in a community-based day program, or a short-term basis in a long-term care facility.

Elderly Legal Assistance Program

Free legal information, education, and representation for people age 60 and older in civil elder law matters such as housing, access to health care, and public benefits.

Money Follows the Person and Nursing Home Transitions Programs

Programs that assist individuals who reside in long-term in-patient facilities with relocating back into a community setting. Money Follows the Person is a federally funded Medicaid program. Nursing Home Transitions is funded by the state. Both offer wrap-around person-centered support for up to 365 days.

SFY 2025 AAA Clients Served by Planning and Service Area

AAA Region	ADRC	Adult Protective Services*	Georgia SHIP	Home & Community Based Services	Money Follows the Person	Nursing Home Transitions
Atlanta Regional Commission	55,777	17,355	7,335	9,996	20	23
Central Savannah River	14,018	2,853	892	2,377	0	0
Coastal Georgia	10,191	3,027	959	2,788	4	10
Georgia Mountains	9,498	3,248	1,805	4,571	2	13
Heart of Georgia Altamaha	6,998	1,204	575	1,477	7	9
Middle Georgia	9,687	2,224	802	1,232	8	6
Northeast Georgia	12,178	2,822	1,585	2,957	4	15
Northwest Georgia	30,029	4,292	1,763	4,277	8	11
River Valley	13,278	1,873	571	1,424	7	8
Southern Georgia	10,254	1,851	894	1,630	9	13
Southwest Georgia	13,920	1,491	586	1,701	7	6
Three Rivers	6,815	2,244	1,998	2,655	11	20
Other Entities	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unavailable **	0	5,408	0	0	0	0
Total	192,643	49,892	19,765	37,041	87	134

Other Entities for Money Follows the Person and Nursing Home Transitions

Entity	MFP	NHT
Access to Independence	3	4
Disability Connections	5	6
Disability Resource Center	0	6
disABILITY Link	4	5
Northwest Georgia Centers for Independent Living (CIL)	1	0
LIFE	2	5
Multiple Choices	0	5
Walton Options (Parent)	14	23
Total	29	54

* Adult Protective Services clients served is defined as the number of intakes that met criteria during the fiscal year by Planning and Service Area region.

** Unavailable means that the county of the client is unknown.

By the Numbers

Aging and Disability Resource Connection



41,692

customers and family members received free, unbiased counseling on resources and services specific to their needs



37,041

individuals received Home and Community-Based Services



\$75,352

is the average annual cost to provide residential care in a nursing home



\$30,020,358

was the value of legal services provided to older Georgians through the Elderly Legal Assistance Program



310

vulnerable adults transitioned from nursing homes and in-patient facilities back into their homes and communities through the Money Follows the Person and Nursing Home Transitions programs



\$2,191,390.45

in out-of-pocket expenses was saved by SHIP Medicare beneficiaries



1,102

clients received assistive technology services



4,160,539

meals were provided to older or disabled adults through home delivery and congregate settings



\$2,730

is the average individual annual cost to provide Home and Community-Based Services



12

AAAs established Assistive Technology Labs to cover the entire state



1,377

individuals contacted the ADRC to receive information on assistive technology

Light Up the Holidays Gift Drive Celebrates 10 Years



The Division of Aging Services Light Up the Holidays Gift Drive celebrated 10 years in SFY 2025. The purpose of the gift drive is to ensure all older adults and adults with disabilities living under public guardianship receive a gift during the holidays. Many of these adults live in long-term care communities, have low incomes, and no family or friends. The Light Up the Holidays Gift Drive steps in to fill the void and bring comfort and joy to these individuals during the holidays. For more information on the gift drive and to learn how you can sponsor a gift, please visit aging.georgia.gov/get-involved/luth.



Georgia Memory Net

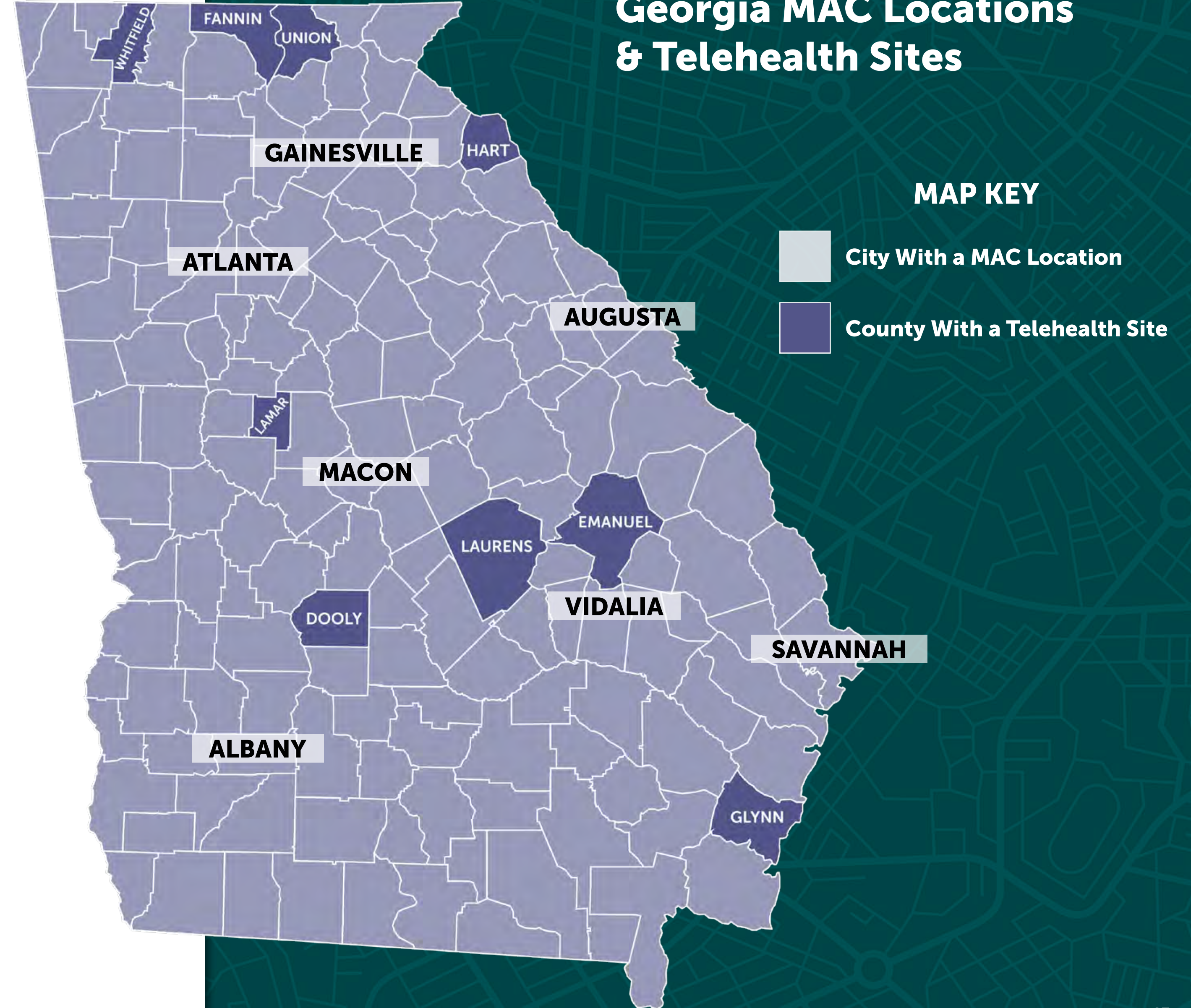
Georgia Memory Net (GMN) is a statewide program developed in partnership with Emory University to expand access to early and accurate diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias (ADRD) and to support those living with dementia, including caregivers.

GMN trains physicians to properly screen for the disease and collect data in a manner that will allow the state to better support those living with dementia. Cognitive neurology and neuropsychology leads based in Emory’s Cognitive Neurology Program train and continuously work with Memory Assessment Clinics (MACs) to ensure the MAC providers have the tools and training they need to effectively and accurately diagnose ADRD using evidence-based, clinically-proven tools.

GMN focuses on:

- Increasing physician education, outreach, and training
- Developing and maintaining Memory Assessment Clinics (MACs) and telehealth networks
- Enhancing families’ linkage to community support services
- Continually improving data development and collection
- Program evaluation

There are seven MACs and nine telehealth sites located throughout the state. The clinics are located in Albany, Atlanta, Augusta, Gainesville, Macon, Savannah, and Vidalia. The telehealth sites, where the client is assisted virtually, are located in Dooly, Emanuel, Fannin, Glynn, Hart, Lamar, Laurens, Union, and Whitfield counties. These clinics and sites are designed to help Georgians receive assessments and diagnosis, talk through a detailed care plan and connect clients and caregivers to community services in their local area. This program has been in existence since 2017 and is continuing to expand awareness and efforts across the state of Georgia.



Georgia Memory Net | SFY 25 Updates:

- GMN served over 1,300 unique patients and 1,200 care partners through an estimated 2,800 total visits.
- Of the patients seen, GMN referred over 1,000 patients to Georgia’s Area Agency on Aging (AAA) network for local services and resources.
- Vidalia’s MAC site opened, finalizing the full operation of all seven MAC sites.
- GMN increased educational opportunities for primary care providers (PCP), therapists, and community members through webinar series, online courses, presentations, community events, and more.
- GMN held the second annual PCP Symposium where PCPs, speakers, GMN partners, and clinic staff attended. Topics included a virtual dementia tour, functional assessments, simplifying dementia staging, and more.

By the Numbers | Georgia Memory Net



\$31,282

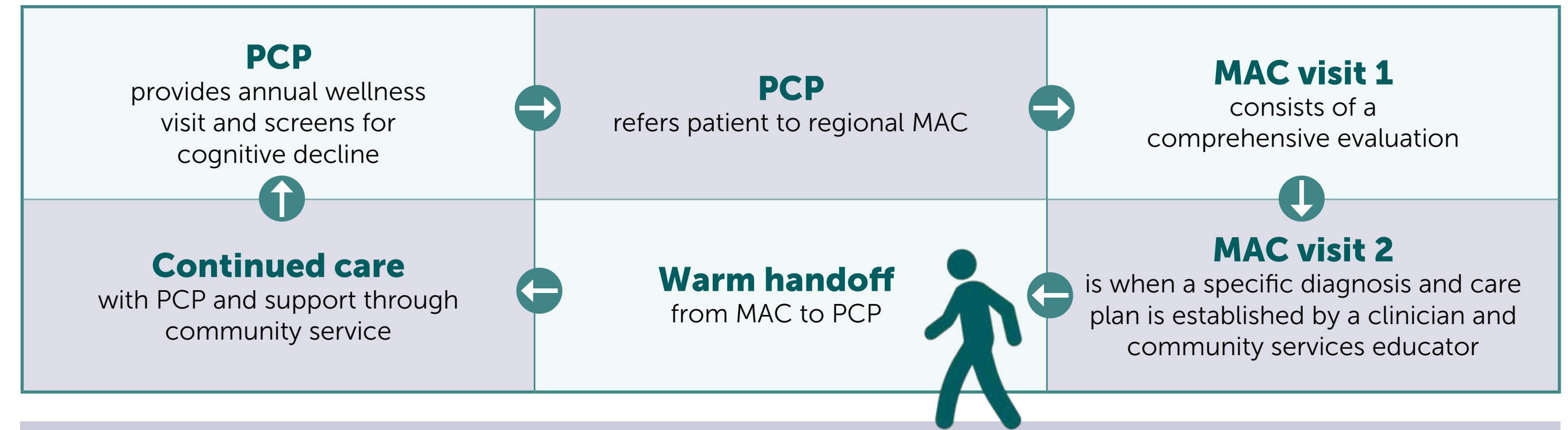
Medicare spending per capita on people with dementia



188,300

Number of people aged 65 and older with Alzheimer’s disease

How the GMN Process Works



Dementia Care Specialist Program

Funded in FY 2023, the Dementia Care Specialist (DCS) Program provides funding for a DCS at each of the 12 Area Agencies on Aging across the state. The mission of the DCS Program is to increase dementia education and awareness and build stronger community partnerships.

To achieve this mission, the DCS Program has three pillars:

1. Creating a dementia-capable aging network through training, education, awareness, and collaboration
2. Creating dementia-capable communities through community outreach and partnerships
3. Supporting people living with dementia and their families

The DCS Program builds on Georgia’s efforts to become dementia-capable and improve access and resources to better support people living with dementia, their caregivers, and their families.

In SFY 2025, the DCS Program reached over 14,322 Georgians by building dementia coalitions, participating in community programming, and educating the aging network. The DCSs have created Dementia Coalitions, or joined existing coalitions, within their region. The coalitions are comprised of various local stakeholders, including individuals living with dementia, care partners, first responders, business owners, and health care professionals. Each coalition focuses on meeting the needs of their communities by offering memory cafes, virtual dementia tours, education sessions, and outreach events. DCSs have presented their work at local, regional, and national conferences and trainings.

Senior Community Service Employment Program

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act. SCSEP has three purposes: to foster and promote useful part-time opportunities in community service activities for unemployed low-income persons who are 55 years of age or older and who have poor employment prospects; to foster individual economic self-sufficiency; and to increase the number of older persons who may enjoy the benefits of unsubsidized employment in both the public and private sectors.

The program serves people whose yearly income meets the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG), updated and published annually within the Federal Register. According to the 2025 FPG, a family size of one would equate to an annual income of no more than \$19,562.50, or \$26,437.50 for a family size of two.

For SFY 2026, the SCSEP program will not be offered in Georgia.

By the Numbers | SCSEP



284

people participated in SCSEP in SFY 2025



176,692

hours of community service were provided by participants



37%

of SCSEP participants were experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness



33

participants exited into unsubsidized employment



29%

of participants were individuals with disabilities



225

participants provided community service

Kinship Care



DHS staff members celebrate "Wear Yellow Day" during Kinship Care Awareness Month in September 2024

Through kinship support groups, DAS provides education and peer support for grandparents and relative caregivers raising children by focusing on positive parenting, effective discipline, and healthy relationships. Other kinship care services include provision of material aid such as school supplies, respite through summer camps, and case management for grandparents raising grandchildren with disabilities.

By the Numbers | Kinship Care



\$552,325

was provided to AAAs for kinship care services using federal and state funds



2,125

people attended AAA-sponsored kinship support groups



23

ongoing kinship care support groups were held



Georgia's Respite Care Study

DAS contracted with the University of North Georgia (UNG) Institute for Healthy Aging for SFY 2025 and SFY 2026 to conduct the Georgia Respite Care Study. The purpose of the study is to describe and evaluate the overall landscape of caregiver respite services and caregiver services policy in Georgia and other southeastern states.

This work is grounded in the analysis of caregiving data shared with UNG by DAS, as well as interviews with family caregivers, a comprehensive review of state and federal resources, and a synthesis of best practices research.

Georgia Fund for Children & Elderly

DHS co-administers the Georgia Fund for Children and Elderly with the Department of Public Health's (DPH) Maternal and Child Health Program Division. DAS receives 50% of the fund's donations each year, and those donations are distributed to Area Agencies on Aging for home-delivered meals and senior transportation. The remaining 50% is allotted to DPH to provide grants for programs that serve children and youth with special needs. In SFY 2025, the Georgia Fund for Children and Elderly provided **\$109,479.67** for the funding of programs for the elderly.



Navigating Medicare

State Health Insurance Benefit Program (SHIP)

The Georgia State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) offers one-on-one assistance, counseling, and education to Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers to help them make informed decisions about their care and benefits. Georgia SHIP provides services to support people with limited incomes, Medicare beneficiaries under the age of 65 with disabilities, and individuals who are dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid. DAS has certified counselors available to help answer Medicare questions. Call 1-866-552-4464 (option 4).

In SFY 2025, Georgia SHIP provided Medicare counseling to **19,765 clients**.



Need assistance?

Anyone seeking resources to support an older adult or individual living with a disability can call the ADRC's toll-free number at **1-866-552-4464** to speak with a counselor or visit **aging.georgia.gov/programs-and-services/adrc**.

Based on the individual's needs, counselors provide unbiased information on resources and services that will support the individual and allow him/her to live in the setting of their choosing.

The toll-free number can also connect callers to the SHIP program, which provides free and unbiased counseling on Medicare, Medicaid, and other related health insurance. For more information on the SHIP program, please visit **ship.georgia.gov**.

Adult Protective Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) investigates reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older persons or adults with disabilities who do not reside in long-term care facilities. Abuse involves physically harming or distressing an at-risk adult or depriving an individual of his/her basic needs, such as not providing necessary medications or withholding food.

APS case managers work with victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation to employ the least restrictive intervention for adults who are in need of support and have the capacity to engage in decisions about their well-being.

To report abuse of an older adult or a person with a disability in the community:

Call **1-866-552-4464** or visit aging.ga.gov.

To report abuse of an older adult or a person with a disability in long-term care facilities: Call the Georgia Department of Community Health at **404-657-5700**.

In case of emergency, call **911**.

By the Numbers | APS



15,977

cases were substantiated, meaning alleged abuse, neglect, or exploitation was confirmed



49,892

number of reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation



187

budgeted APS case manager positions

Public Guardianship Office

By law, the guardian of last resort is the Department of Human Services. The Public Guardianship Office (PGO), now Adult Guardianship Program (AGP) workers serve as their case managers.

PGO case managers advocate for persons under guardianship, act as surrogate decision-makers, and coordinate and monitor all services needed for the support, care, education, health, and welfare of guardianship clients.

By the Numbers | PGO



2,213

vulnerable adults in SFY 2025 have been advocated for by the PGO



42

budgeted PGO case managers



Did you know?

Medicare recipients can receive a free cognitive impairment assessment that measures memory loss and cognitive decline as part of their annual wellness visit. For more information, visit georgiamemorynet.org.



SFY 2025 Top Five Reasons for APS Reports

1

FINANCIAL ABUSE OR EXPLOITATION

Improperly or illegally using a person's resources for the benefit of another person. **18,169 reports**

2

SELF-NEGLECT

Depriving oneself of necessities such as food, water, or medication. Consciously putting oneself in harm's way or being unable to handle the needs of day-to-day living because of medical problems, mental health, or other disabilities. **8,426 reports**

3

NEGLECT

Refusing or failing to provide essential services (food, water, shelter, medical care, etc.) to a person to the degree that it harms or threatens to harm them. **7,281 reports**

4

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Using physical force to coerce or to inflict bodily harm. It often, but not always, causes physical discomfort, pain, or injury. It may include the willful deprivation of essential services, such as medical care, food, or water. **2,604 reports**

5

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Using tactics, such as harassment, insults, intimidation, isolation, or threats that cause mental or emotional anguish. Emotional abuse diminishes the person's sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth. **2,379 reports**

Forensic Special Initiatives Unit

The Forensic Special Initiatives Unit (FSIU) aids the Division and other local, state, and federal partners in their efforts to protect Georgia's at-risk adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The unit provides technical assistance and case consultations and offers a two-day Certified Adult Crime Tactics Specialist (CACTS) certification course. The course trains professionals to identify and investigate cases of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The CACTS training is open to primary and secondary responders including:

- Law enforcement
- Judges and prosecutors
- Health care providers and medical services personnel
- Employees of financial institutions
- Regulatory/social/victim service workers
- Other professionals who respond to the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of at-risk adults

FSIU provides a ReACT training module that provides Georgia-designated mandated reporters with an overview of the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults in Georgia; the different types of state agencies that respond; and how to report abuse. The class is open to the general public. **In SFY 2025, 452 people attended ReACT training.**

The unit also provides training for healthcare workers known as Facility At-Risk Crimes Training (FACT). This class is reserved for hospital social workers, case managers, discharge planners, care coordinators, home health, and hospice providers who respond to the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of at-risk adults. The mission of FACT is to help primary and secondary medical and home health providers understand Adult Protective Services and Public Guardianship's role in responding to at-risk adult crime victims in Georgia. Since FACT training began in October 2021, **46 classes have been hosted, and 690 people have attended the classes.**

In SFY 2025, FSIU experienced a slight decline in attendance of the Certified Adult Crime Tactics Specialist (CACTS) certification, primarily due to a shift toward more in-person classes and a reduction in virtual sessions. During SFY 2025, a total of **71 law enforcement officers completed the two-day CACTS training** focused on recognizing, responding to, and investigating abuse of at-risk adults. Overall, **359 individuals attended CACTS sessions**, representing a multidisciplinary group that included professionals from the medical field, APS, the Healthcare Facility Regulation Division, financial institutions, prosecutors, and various other state agencies.



By the Numbers | FSIU



359

law enforcement officers, medical staff, prosecutors, and other mandated reporters were trained by FSIU on issues pertaining to the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults



5,211

people have become CACT Specialists since training began in SFY 2011



DHS leadership and staff gather at the Georgia State Capitol with Governor Brian P. Kemp and First Lady Marty Kemp to commemorate National Child Support Awareness Month.

Division of **Child Support Services**

The Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) works to increase the consistency of financial support children receive from parents who do not have primary custody.

DCSS's services include locating parents; establishing paternity; establishing, monitoring, and enforcing fair support orders; increasing health care coverage for children; and removing barriers to payment. In an effort to build stronger families, DCSS helps noncustodial parents find jobs that pay above minimum wage by connecting them with resources that help them meet their court-ordered obligation and be positively involved in their children's lives.

Grants in Action: The SAVES Program and the Responsible Parenting Grant

State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025 has seen some exciting developments for two of the ongoing federal grants awarded to DCSS.



On Feb. 7, 2025, the Safe Access for Victims' Economic Security (SAVES) team held a pilot kickoff meeting for the Waycross and Brunswick judicial circuits, as well as the Family Justice Center based in Waycross. The kickoff meeting brought together key stakeholders from the Waycross and Brunswick areas to discuss strategies for strengthening partnerships and refining practices to serve the community better. The initial meeting provided an essential platform to explore how DCSS services can be more effectively integrated with the Family Justice Center, creating a more streamlined process for domestic violence survivors as they navigate through the intake, establishment, and enforcement phases of child support cases.



On June 22, 2025, DCSS, in partnership with Columbus State University (CSU), completed the development of the Let's Get Real curriculum – a new educational initiative designed to empower young people with essential knowledge about parenting.

The goal of the curriculum is to educate teens and young adults on the legal, emotional, and financial responsibilities of parenthood, with a special focus on child support and co-parenting.

The program features eight interactive learning modules that provide real-world insights and tools for making informed life choices:

- Choices vs. Decisions
- Parental Readiness
- The Child Support Process
- Custodial Responsibilities
- Noncustodial Responsibilities
- Co-parenting
- Romantic Relationships
- Relationship Red Flags

Beginning in SFY 2026, the Responsible Parenting team will deliver the Let's Get Real curriculum to teens and young adults across Georgia through workshops, school presentations, and community outreach events.

By the Numbers Child Support Services



\$659,283,551

was distributed to Georgia's children and families by DCSS



213,248

parents were under a court order for child support in Georgia



389,737

children were financially supported as a result of these orders

A Story of Redemption and Resilience

Craig T.'s journey is one of remarkable transformation – proof that hope, when combined with courage and support, can truly change a life.

In June 2017, Craig walked into a child support courtroom in Lakeland, Georgia, at what he describes as the lowest point in his life. Years of trauma, addiction, and broken relationships had left him feeling hopeless. He had struggled with substance abuse since his early teens, using drugs and alcohol to mask the pain of a troubled childhood and the grief of losing his older brother. That path ultimately led him to a place of deep despair, where he was alienated from his children and fighting for survival.

But on that day in court, instead of hiding his reality, Craig made a bold and honest plea for help. He openly confessed the severity of his drug addiction to Judge Clayton Tomlinson in open court. Rather than facing the jail time he expected for failing to meet his child support obligations, he was met with compassion and an unexpected opportunity. With the support of Attorney Charles R. Reddick, Sheriff Nick Norton, and the court, Craig was permitted to enter Evans Memorial Camp, a Christian rehabilitation program in Lakeland, Georgia, that assists men in overcoming addiction and rebuilding their lives.

That was the turning point.

At Evans Memorial Camp, Craig began the hard work of recovery. He confronted the root causes of his addiction, rebuilt his character, and deepened his faith. Over time, his life began to change – one step, one choice at a time. Today, nearly eight years later, Craig is clean and sober, a husband, a father, and a man dedicated to helping others find the same freedom he found.

In March 2025, Craig provided DCSS with an update. Today, he serves as a community outreach director. In 2020, he married his wife, and in 2021, he became an ordained recovery minister. Together, they are raising their daughter and working in full-time ministry to support other men and families affected by addiction.

Craig faithfully pays his child support, has regained his driver's license, and uses his story to inspire others to seek help and believe in the possibility of change. He often speaks to others and references his experience with DCSS as a turning point in his journey. His testimony is a powerful reminder of what can happen when agencies, courts, and communities come together with empathy and purpose.

DCSS Staff Spotlight



Pictured (L-R): Sharmaine Butler, Vontanice Vicks, and Kimberly Sutton of the Lawrenceville DCSS office

In April 2025, a struggling father arrived at the Lawrenceville DCSS office. Recently released from jail, he was barefoot, homeless, and in need of help. A simple act of compassion by the local staff changed his path. Customer Service Agent **Kimberly Sutton** saw a man in need and went beyond her usual duties. She contacted Parental Accountability Court (PAC) Coordinator **Sharmaine Butler**, who saw great potential in the man despite his circumstances. He was a perfect fit for the PAC program, and with a renewed sense of hope, he accepted their help. While Ms. Butler and Enforcement Agent **Vontanice Vicks** worked quickly to prepare the necessary legal documents to enroll him into the program, Ms. Sutton went a step further. She left the office and returned with new shoes and a meal. She also provided information for the St. Vincent de Paul shelter, ensuring he had a place to stay. This collaboration wasn't just about completing paperwork; it was about offering a lifeline. It shows how the dedication of DHS staff can create a path from hardship to hope, proving that with compassion and teamwork, we can help build stronger families one person at a time.

Fatherhood Program

In SFY 2025, the Fatherhood program has experienced tremendous success through program modifications, a continued focus on outreach events, and strengthened partnerships with the Technical College System of Georgia, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Fathers Incorporated, and the Georgia Department of Corrections (DOC). **Specifically, program enrollment has increased by 7%, thus increasing the number of children served by more than 1,200.**

An outreach event spearheaded by the program is the Fatherhood Conversation, through which attendees have a chance to address questions and concerns directly with local DCSS staff members, businesses, and community support resources. These events reached over 500 live attendees, through shares on Facebook, YouTube, and Zoom.



A Fatherhood Conversation event in Cartersville.

Prison Paternity Project

The Prison Paternity Project was initiated on Sept. 15, 2008, to establish a process by which the issue of paternity could be resolved for justice-involved individuals with active child support cases. In partnership with Georgia DHS and DOC, Fatherhood Prison Paternity staff conduct onsite visits at all DOC facilities statewide to emphasize the importance of establishing paternity, to educate customers on the genetic testing process available while incarcerated, and to provide education about Fatherhood program services available upon their release. Since December 2024, prison paternity specialists have visited 16 prison facilities, met with 90 putative fathers, and gained consent to collect 60 DNA samples, which resulted in paternity being determined for 67 children.

From Doubt to Determination: The Fatherhood Program Helps Build a New Future

The success of the Fatherhood program shines upon noncustodial parent Lane, a former participant in the Georgia Fatherhood program. Initially, Lane expressed frustration and doubt about finding stable employment. Despite his willingness to work, he lacked the credentials and confidence that many employers require. Lane was encouraged to enroll in a National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) Heavy Equipment Certification Program in his area. Not only did Lane agree, but he also exceeded expectations by completing three certifications, which include Heavy Equipment Operations Utilities, Heavy Equipment Operations Level One, and NCCER Core. This accomplishment not only strengthened his resume, but also renewed his belief in his own potential. Shortly after completing the program, Lane was offered a position with a manufacturer that produces parts for Kia Motors. His story is a true testament to what can happen when support, guidance, and motivation align. Lane's perseverance, paired with the resources provided through our program, launched him into a promising new chapter.

By the Numbers Fatherhood program



5,661

parents enrolled in the Fatherhood program



1,426

noncustodial parents were referred to GED and short-term job training assignments



11,318

children received increased support from parents who enrolled in the Fatherhood program



\$4,706,653

was collected from Fatherhood program participants

Parental Accountability Court Program

The Parental Accountability Court (PAC) program is a joint effort of the Division and Superior Court Judges to offer an alternative to incarceration and to help chronic nonpayers of child support make regular payments. The program uses community resources and judicial oversight to address barriers that keep parents from meeting their support obligations. Each program, including services provided to participants, is tailored to the needs of the local community. Superior Court Judges provide judicial oversight and collaborate with PAC coordinators to implement the program. PAC coordinators connect participants to existing community resources.

Services offered through the PAC program include:

- Substance abuse treatment
- Job assistance and placement
- Short-term training
- Coaching and mentoring
- Educational services
- Employment training

The Power of Persistence



Dontavious M. has shown incredible determination and resiliency on his journey through the PAC program. Enrolling in September 2023, Dontavious immediately began working on a personalized action plan to address needs in key areas of his life, including his education, employment, and driver’s license status.

In December 2024, he achieved his initial goals of completing a defensive driving class, successfully obtaining his driver’s license, and securing employment shortly thereafter. Although a setback in January required a shift in plans, Dontavious never lost focus. He and his PAC coordinator set out to achieve a new goal: to earn his commercial driver’s license (CDL) permit and enroll in the CDL program at Albany Tech.

Through consistent communication and hard work, Dontavious secured his CDL permit in April 2025. He faced another challenge but he committed to staying on track. His resolve paid off when he passed the necessary tests in July 2025 and officially began the CDL program in August.

Dontavious’s story is a powerful example of what can be accomplished with dedication and a willingness to utilize the resources and support available. He is a testament to the fact that setbacks don’t define your path – your response to them does. The PAC team is incredibly proud to have supported Dontavious through his journey and looks forward to seeing what he accomplishes next.

By the Numbers

Parental Accountability Court program



1,394

children received increased support from parents who participated in the PAC program



\$879,196

in financial support was collected from parents who participated in the PAC program



8,317

participants received services through PACs across the state since the beginning of the program in 2009, avoiding incarceration and saving taxpayers the cost of incarceration



673

noncustodial parents received help on their journey to lead more self-sufficient lives as part of their enrollment in the PAC program



218

parents graduated from the PAC program, providing support to children who previously received partial or no support



\$37,623,507

was collected in child support payments because of the success of noncustodial parents in the PAC program, an **increase of \$4,218,949** from SFY 2024



DFCS Caregiver Recruitment and Retention Unit staff greet foster families and children ahead of the Atlanta Braves game in May 2025.

Division of **Family & Children Services**

The Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS) investigates reports of child abuse and neglect; finds foster and adoptive homes for abused and neglected children; determines eligibility for and administers Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); helps out-of-work parents get back on their feet; and provides numerous support services and innovative programs to help families in need.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federally funded program that helps low-income families pay for the cost of food. SNAP also provides recipients the opportunity to improve their economic standing with job skills training and other support.

SNAP Works

The SNAP Employment and Training Program, also known as SNAP Works, is a voluntary workforce development program designed to help SNAP recipients who are unemployed or underemployed with job placement assistance, thereby reducing and/or eliminating their dependency on SNAP. SNAP Works provides SNAP recipients with opportunities to gain skills, training, and experience that will improve their ability to attain employment. The program offers supervised job search, job skills training, GED, and vocational training for specific jobs, and work experience through partnerships with community-based organizations and educational institutions. SNAP Works participants include able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs), single parents, families, refugees, senior citizens, and some individuals with disabilities.



Did you know?

You can call DHS's Customer Contact Center for assistance with Family Independence programs at 1-877-423-4746.

D-SNAP: Serving Georgians in a Time of Need



In late September 2024, Hurricane Helene crossed into Georgia as a Category 2 hurricane, bringing damaging winds and heavy rain to much of the state and impacting thousands of Georgians.

In response, the State of Georgia implemented the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) which provides eligible low- to moderate-income households with help buying groceries due to lost income or damages following a disaster. D-SNAP is a one-time payment for the purchase of food to eligible households that are not current SNAP recipients. A household must live or work in the identified disaster area, have been affected by the disaster, and meet certain D-SNAP eligibility requirements to receive D-SNAP benefits.

Thousands of DHS staff and volunteers stepped up to run the largest D-SNAP operation in Georgia's history. The program was implemented in a phased approach in more than 50 counties.

The results of the Hurricane Helene D-SNAP included:

- Applications processed: **189,345**
 - * On-site applications: **84,649**
 - * Telephonic applications: **104,696**
- Households served: **176,325**
- Individuals served: **408,156**
- Benefits disbursed: **\$104,579,860**
- Average benefit per household: **\$593**
- Households approved for supplements: **93,991**
- Individuals approved for supplements: **190,865**
- Supplemental benefits disbursed: **\$21,753,239**
- Average supplement for SNAP household: **\$231**

New Lock Feature Helps SNAP Customers Protect Their Benefits

Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) fraud is a nationwide problem, with billions in benefits stolen annually as estimated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). In response, DHS announced a new security feature in December 2024 that allows SNAP customers to lock and unlock their EBT cards.

The card-locking function is available on both the ConnectEBT website and the ConnectEBT mobile app, providing Georgia cardholders with an extra layer of protection against theft.

Protect your SNAP benefits

1 LOCK
your EBT card between purchases and choose the "lock everywhere" function.

2 PROTECT
your PIN – do not write it down or share with anyone. Don't use simple PINs. Change it often.

3 NEVER SHARE
your card number with anyone.

Georgia Department of Human Services
Division of Family & Children Services

Here's how the new security feature works:

- On-demand locking: SNAP recipients can easily lock their cards when not in use and unlock them right before making a purchase.
- Geographic control: Users can choose to lock their cards everywhere (in-state, out-of-state, and online) or only for transactions attempted outside of Georgia.
- Automatic re-lock: An auto-lock feature can be set to automatically re-lock the card after a user-specified time, such as 30, 60, or 90 minutes.
- Account monitoring: The ConnectEBT website and app also offer a secure way to check balances, view deposits and transactions, and change PINs.

EBT cards are historically a prime target for criminal activity like skimming and cloning, and officials urge all Georgia EBT cardholders to download the ConnectEBT app and use the lock feature to protect their benefits.

By the Numbers | SNAP



1,455,196

is the average number of individuals who received SNAP benefits each month



215,750

individuals received Senior SNAP* benefits



\$20,653,502

is the average amount of Senior SNAP benefits issued per month



195,351

is the monthly average number of individuals who received Senior SNAP benefits



410,813

seniors and disabled adults received SNAP benefits



\$385

was the average monthly SNAP benefit per household



241,089

SNAP recipients who could participate in SNAP Works to improve their economic well-being and were not subject to ABAWD work requirements



843,043

children benefited from the SNAP program



121,757

is the number of able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) who could volunteer to participate in the program to meet federal work requirements



362,486

is the number of SNAP recipients who could participate in the SNAP Works Program

*The Georgia Senior SNAP program is an elderly simplified application project designed to make it easier for seniors to receive SNAP benefits.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Adults who receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) are required to participate in approved work activities a minimum of 30 hours each week. If the household has a child under age six, the weekly minimum requirement is 20 hours. Children and families exhibiting the greatest need can benefit from the TANF cash assistance program if their parents participate in qualified work activities.

This program is also available to children in the care of relatives. Adults who receive benefits on behalf of a relative child (called a “child-only case”) are not subject to work requirements. Activities that meet TANF work requirements include:

Unsubsidized Employment

Full or part-time employment

Work Experience

Work activity performed in return for public assistance that provides an individual with the opportunity to acquire the general skills, knowledge, and work habits necessary to obtain and retain employment

On-the-Job Training

Training given to a paid employee that provides knowledge and skills essential to the performance of the job

Community Service

Structured programs and activities for the direct benefit of the community. These programs are limited to projects that serve a useful community purpose in fields such as health, social services, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, recreation, public facilities, public safety and/or child care

Vocational Training

Organized educational programs that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for employment in current or emerging occupations. This activity is countable for up to 12 months

Job Search and Job Preparedness Assistance

Act of seeking or obtaining employment, or preparation to seek employment, by undergoing life skills training, substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, or other rehabilitation activities. Treatment or therapy must be deemed necessary by a qualified medical, substance abuse, or mental health professional

Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment

Training or education required for employment to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace

By the Numbers | TANF



5,361

total number of TANF cases



157

caregivers – on average – receive TANF support each month and are subject to a work requirement



\$272

is the average benefit amount per month



6,120

children, on average, were supported by TANF each month



3,604

is the average number of child-only cases receiving TANF support each month, meaning the caregivers receive assistance on behalf of a child and are not required to participate in work activities

Medical Assistance

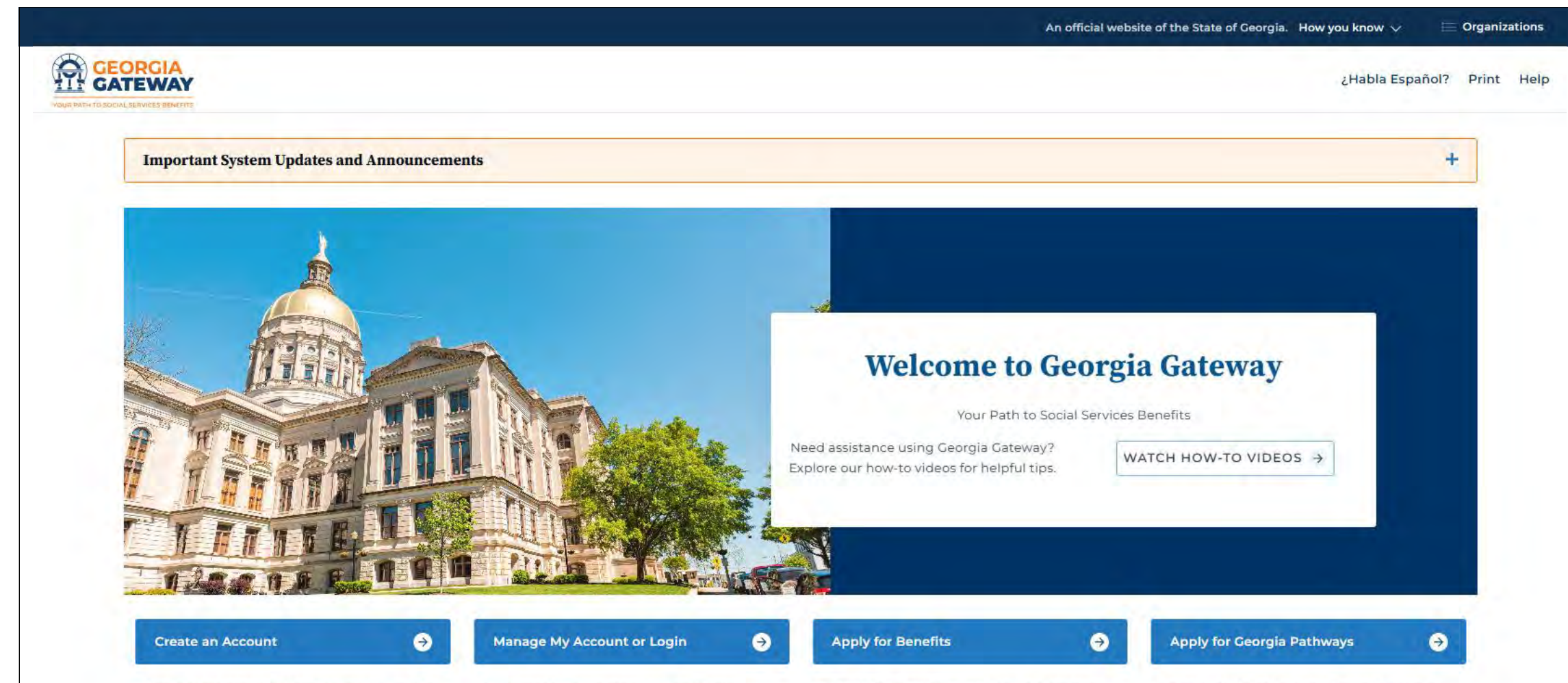
The Medicaid and PeachCare for Kids® programs provide a safety net for people who may not otherwise have access to health care.

Family Medicaid

Low-income families with children under age 19 may qualify for Family Medicaid. These families may qualify at various income levels depending on family size and income. Families who qualify are entitled to the full range of Medicaid covered services including doctor’s visits, health checkups, immunizations, dental care, and vision care.

Aged, Blind, and Disabled Medicaid Program

The Aged, Blind, and Disabled (ABD) Medicaid Program in Georgia serves individuals who are age 65 and older, individuals who are legally blind, and individuals who are disabled, as defined by the Social Security Act. There are 19 different coverage categories known as Classes of Assistance (COA) for the ABD population. An individual’s living arrangement, income, marital status, and prior Medicaid eligibility, among other factors, determine the most appropriate COA.



Gateway Provider Portal Refresh Improves Provider Engagement

DHS updated the Gateway Medical Assistance Provider Portal to give nursing home providers a more user-friendly experience. The new dashboard includes an updated welcome page and allows users to:

- Track overdue renewals, current renewals, and other clients
- View case details, renewal due dates, and case statuses
- Filter and sort the renewals data
- Export renewals data to Excel
- Submit renewals and changes from the dashboard

- View and upload verification for pending verification checklists (VCLs)
- View information for deceased clients based on data received from federal partners

Since implementation on Jan. 27, 2025, through Aug. 28, 2025, 219 new providers requested portal access. There are currently 581 active providers registered in the Gateway Medical Assistance Provider Portal.

Existing providers have submitted approximately 600 requests to add new users, update their contact information, inquire about training and monthly provider calls, and to share information on things they’re learning in the portal.

By the Numbers Medical Assistance



1,187,186

is the average number of children who received Medicaid (excluding PeachCare for Kids®) each month



605,572

is the average number of adults who received medical coverage through Medicaid each month



1,034,033

is the average number of families that received medical coverage through Medicaid each month



156,159

children, on average, received medical coverage through PeachCare for Kids® each month



662,448

medical assistance applications were processed

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program



GEORGIA LIHEAP

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federally-funded program that helps low-income Georgians with home energy bills to reduce the risk of health and safety issues that occur as a result of disconnection.

Qualified individuals may be able to receive energy bill payment assistance, energy crisis assistance, weatherization, and energy-related minor home repairs. Applications are offered first to medically homebound individuals, individuals aged 65 and older, and those with life-threatening circumstances. For more information, call 877-423-4746 or visit dfcs.ga.gov/services/low-income-home-energy-assistance-program-liheap.

By the Numbers | LIHEAP



160,140

households received assistance from LIHEAP in SFY 2025

Benefit Integrity & Recovery Unit

The Benefit Integrity and Recovery Unit (BIRU) is charged with investigating recipient fraud in the agency's public assistance programs. Examples of suspected fraud include withholding or falsifying information in order to receive public assistance to which one is not entitled, and trading or selling Electronic Benefits Transfer cards in violation of program regulations. BIRU has five operating units throughout the state:

- Benefit Trafficking
- Claims and Recoveries
- Fraud Detection and Investigations
- Investigative Analytics and Knowledge Management
- Staff Development

By the Numbers

Benefit Integrity & Recovery Unit



\$6,028,165.20

in fraud claims investigated by BIRU



5,023

investigations were completed



1,271

claims were established from the investigations



\$4,742.85

is the average fraud claim



Did you know?

You can report waste, fraud, or abuse by calling **1-844-694-2347** or visiting dhs.georgia.gov/dhs-oig-fraud-and-abuse-reporting-form

Child Abuse Prevention Month



Division of Family & Children Services staff meet with community partners, state representatives, and Governor and First Lady Kemp at the Georgia State Capitol to honor Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Child Protective Services

Child Protective Services (CPS) staff investigate reports of child abuse and neglect and work with caregivers, law enforcement, and judicial partners to ensure the safety of Georgia's most vulnerable children. When an allegation of child abuse or neglect is confirmed, caseworkers partner with families and community organizations to address issues that affect child safety in the home. In most cases, DFCS can work with families to address the safety concern and stabilize the home environment.

By the Numbers | Child Protective Services



34,238

reports of abuse or neglect of children were investigated by CPS staff



9

median number of cases a CPS worker manages at a time



14,694

children received services without entry into foster care



Did you know?

Call **1-855-422-4453** 24/7 to report child abuse or neglect. In emergencies, or when a child is in imminent danger, you should always call **911**.

Foster Care and Adoption Services

When children are victims of abuse or neglect and DFCS caseworkers determine they cannot remain safely in their homes, DFCS petitions the juvenile court to bring children into foster care to ensure their safety. Foster care is intended to be a temporary solution for children as the agency works with their families to eliminate the safety issues that

required DFCS intervention. The Division's goal is to return children safely to their families as quickly as possible, but only after the safety issues have been resolved. When parents consistently demonstrate that they are unable or unwilling to care for their children, DFCS works with the courts to find loving adoptive homes for them.



By the Numbers Foster Care and Adoption Services



15,517

children were in foster care at any point during SFY 2025



400

is the average number of children eligible for adoption during SFY 2025



17

is the median caseload for a foster care caseworker



1,170

children were adopted by new families and given permanent homes



35.6%

of children in foster care were placed with a relative

Celebrating Georgia's Caregivers with the Atlanta Braves



For three years, DFCS has partnered with the Atlanta Braves organization to host a family day at the park to celebrate current foster caregivers and their families and to promote foster parent recruitment. This year's event was held during National Foster Care Awareness Month on Sunday, May 25, 2025.

At the event, DFCS was able to provide over 25 foster caregivers and their families with free tickets to the game. Eleven of those families were Foster Caregivers of the Year for 2025. We were honored to have additional foster families, agency staff, and providers attend as well to help support and celebrate Georgia's caregivers. To learn more about the 2025 Foster Caregivers of the year, please read our spotlight here: dhs.georgia.gov/spotlight/2025-05-28/2025-foster-caregivers-year.

Foster and adoptive youth were able to participate in various pre-game activities that included attending the opening of the gate ceremony, standing with players during the national anthem, participating in a player Q&A, walking in a pre-game parade, and serving as an honorary team captain.

Throughout the game, DFCS promoted foster parent recruitment through a number of photo and video advertisements broadcast on TVs and digital signage around the park.



Kinship Care

When a child is not able to safely remain in the care of their biological parents, relatives can step in to provide the stability they need during a difficult time. These arrangements are often called kinship care. Children who remain connected to their family, friends, school, extracurricular activities, and community through these kinship care arrangements fare much better and experience less trauma than children placed in traditional foster care arrangements.

Georgia Resilient, Youth-Centered, Stable, and Empowered John H. Chafee Independent Living Program

DFCS bolsters youth on their path to adulthood through a variety of programs that support their education, their readiness for the job market and their social well-being. The Georgia Resilient, Youth-Centered, Stable, and Empowered (GA RYSE) John H. Chafee Independent Living Program seeks to bridge the gap between adolescence and adulthood and provide youth who are aging out of foster care with the social, educational, medical, and financial foundation they need to live independently as adults. The GA RYSE program also supports opportunities that promote normalcy, such as attending prom or completing driver's education.

The Family First Prevention Services Act

DHS launched phase one of its implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act on Nov. 1, 2023. This included selecting Grace Harbor as the Multisystemic Therapy (MST) provider in Chatham and Richmond counties and Family Ties as the Functional Family Therapy (FFT) provider in Cherokee and DeKalb counties.

Phase two launched on July 1, 2025, and included the implementation of FFT services in Fulton and Pickens counties and Parents as Teachers in Dougherty County. Additionally, Youth Villages was selected as the intercept provider for Clayton, Cobb, and Gwinnett counties.

The implementation team, consisting of subject matter experts in the areas of child welfare practice, child welfare policy, workforce development and training, SHINES, continuous quality improvement (CQI), and fiscal services, has continued to provide support to these counties and providers by incorporating monthly implementation meetings and ongoing training. Family First CQI efforts were initiated as well to collect data that informs methods to improve operations for phase one and subsequent phases. DFCS is currently working to expand services statewide with planning for phase three currently underway.

Out of School Services Program

Out of School Services (OSS) provides federal and state funding to non-profit organizations and public agencies who serve youth and families during traditional non-school day hours including before and after school, during school breaks, and summer break. It is designed to support DFCS's goal of providing resources and services that promote self-sufficiency among children and families.

During SFY 2025, OSS-funded partners implemented comprehensive, evidence and project-based curricula in the areas of academic support, health and wellness, and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM). These programs provided meaningful experiences that enhanced academic achievement, promoted health development, and encouraged exploration of career pathways. OSS collaborated with United Way of Greater Atlanta to address learning loss and expand youth services statewide. In total, **OSS supported 244 program sites and more than 60 learning loss partners, reaching over 23,000 youth and across 72 counties in Georgia.**

By the Numbers

Out of School Services Program



23,018

youth were served through the program

Celebration of Excellence Honors over 180 Graduates



Celebration of Excellence (COE) is an annual event that honors the secondary and post-secondary achievements of youth in care. This year, Georgia had 184 graduates, including 87 who attended COE. During COE, youth participated in the Dress for Success program, attended educational and career development workshops, and connected with employers and post-secondary institutions at the career and vendor fair. Each graduate also received a laptop and a \$200 gift card. Our agency was honored to have DHS and DFCS board members and additional special guests join us at the COE Commencement Ceremony where we recognized each youth individually for their academic success.



Clark's Christmas Kids

For 34 years, DHS has partnered with Clark Howard, WSB Radio, and St. Vincent de Paul for Clark's Christmas Kids. This program provides children and youth in foster care with gifts on Christmas morning. This is made possible by the generous support of the Governor and First Lady, employees from all Georgia state agencies, and with the help of Georgians shopping for gifts, volunteering their time, and donating funds.

At the in-person shopping events, customers had the opportunity to pick a child's wish list and donate their gifts directly at several metro Atlanta Walmart stores. Many of "Santa's helpers" – from Clark Howard's team, DHS, St. Vincent de Paul, Walmart, WSB, and more – helped organize and pack the presents before sending them to the warehouse.

At the warehouse, volunteers checked each wish list twice making sure that every child had the gifts they asked for – from bicycles, games, art supplies, and essentials to tablets, TVs, speakers, and video games. Their gifts were packed up and prepared for distribution to their county DFCS office.

In 2024, Clark's Christmas Kids collected over **21,000 gifts**, making Christmas morning brighter for thousands of children and youth in foster care.



Residential Child Care Licensing

The Department's Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL) unit inspects, monitors, licenses, and registers a variety of child welfare agencies. The purpose of the unit is to ensure that facilities and programs operate at acceptable levels, as mandated by state statutes and by rules and regulations adopted by the Georgia DHS Board of Human Services.

Through the Residential Child Care's Tracking Residential Applications, Incidents, and Licenses System (RCC TRAILS), RCCL also keeps stakeholders and the public informed of the quality of residential child care programs. Facilities that require a license from RCCL include child-caring institutions (CCI), child-placing agencies (CPA), commercial sexual exploitation recovery centers (CSERC), outdoor child caring programs (OCCP), children's transition care centers (CTCC), maternity homes (MH), and qualified residential treatment programs (QRTP). CCIs and CPAs make up the majority of state licenses. RCCL registers runaway and homeless youth programs (RHYP) and maternity supportive housing residences (MSHR).

CCIs are commonly referred to as group homes and include any institution, society, agency, or facility that provides full-time care for six or more children through 18 years of age outside of their own homes. CPAs are any institution, society, agency, or facility that places children in foster homes for temporary care or in prospective adoptive homes for adoption.

During SFY 2025, some rules and regulations for MHs and all rules and regulations for CCIs were amended to streamline regulations, update terms and provisions, reorganize rule provisions for clarity, and make certain regulatory requirements less burdensome for providers where safe to do so.

By the Numbers

Residential Child Care Licensing



295

facilities were regulated by RCCL



5

new licenses were approved for CCIs



1

new license was approved for CPAs



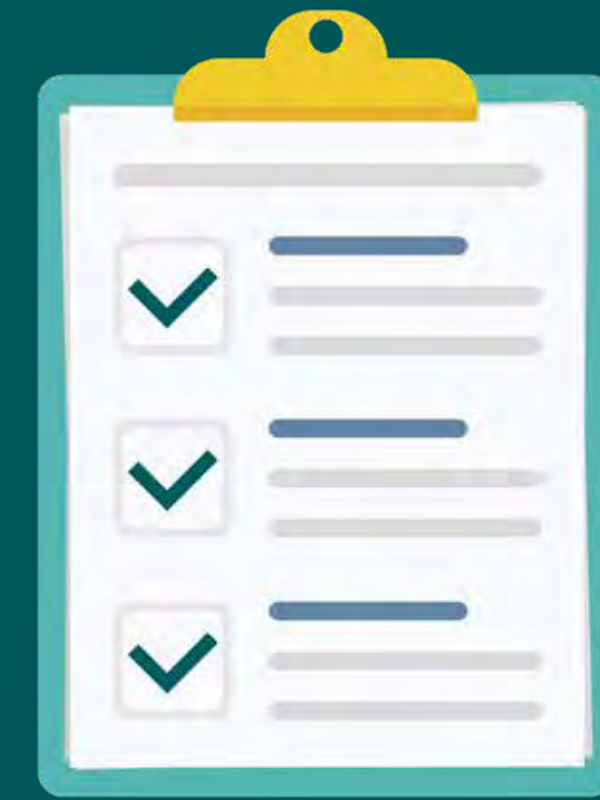
7

new registrations for Maternity Supportive Housing Residences



138

Interagency Agreements were processed



Top 4 Reasons Facilities Received Citations in SFY 2025

- 1** Missing or insufficient documentation of employment references for personnel
- 2** Missing a license or an approved agreement with a Georgia CPA prior to engaging in child placement activities in Georgia
- 3** Insufficient or untimely health screenings of personnel
- 4** Missing or insufficient documentation of timely dental examinations of residents

DHS Leadership



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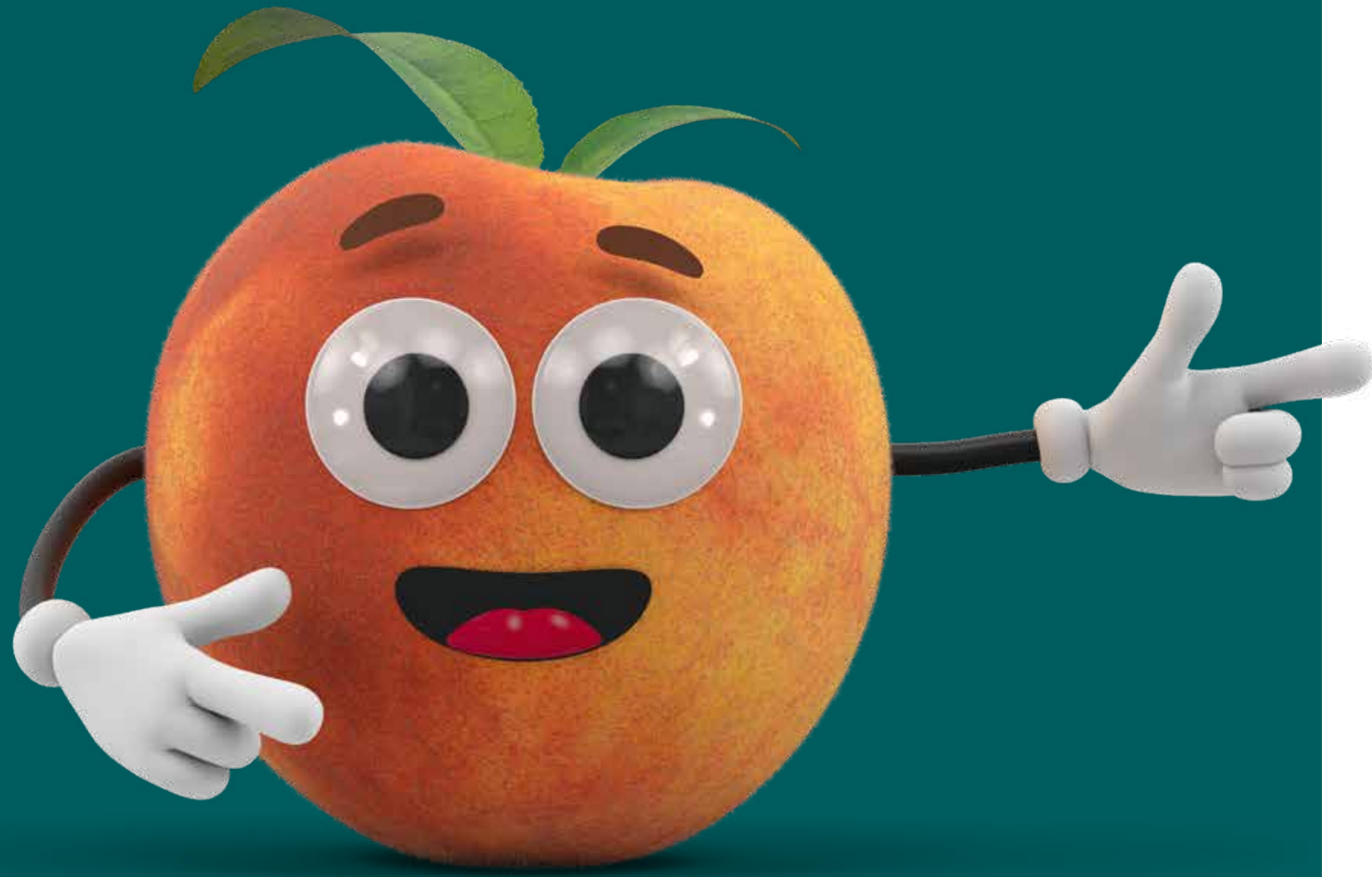
Robin Herron

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Hunter Llewellyn

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DHS Contacts



CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTER

1-877-423-4746

Statewide toll-free number for customers with questions or concerns regarding the Division of Aging Services, Division of Child Support Services, Division of Family & Children Services, or DHS enterprise functions.

Email: customerservicedhs@dhs.ga.gov

AGING SERVICES

1-866-552-4464

Statewide toll-free number serving older adults and individuals of all ages with disabilities for information and to make reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of adults. Callers may leave messages 24 hours per day.

OFFICE OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE

1-877-423-4746

Statewide toll-free number for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and general inquiries.

Call center hours are Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Reasonable modification: dfcs.georgia.gov/adasection-504-and-civil-rights

Online form submission: dhs.georgia.gov/dfcs-reasonable-modifications-and-communication-assistance-request-form-persons-disabilities

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

1-855-GACHILD (422-4453)

Statewide toll-free number for all reports of child abuse and neglect. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Email: cpsintake@dhs.ga.gov

(NOTE: This email is only for mandated reporters.)

ADOPTIONS & FOSTER CARE

1-877-210-KIDS (5437)

For information, visit itsmyturnnow.dhs.ga.gov or fostergeorgia.com

Call center hours are Monday-Thursday: 8 a.m.-6 p.m., Friday: 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday & Sunday: closed.

DFCS COUNTY OFFICES

To find a DFCS office location and hours of operation, visit dfcs.ga.gov/locations

ON THE WEB

Department of Human Services: dhs.ga.gov

Division of Aging Services: aging.ga.gov

Division of Child Support Services: childsupport.ga.gov

Division of Family & Children Services: dfcs.ga.gov



**Georgia Department
of Human Services**