# TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. DHS Mission, Vision and Core Values

II. Division of Family and Children Services

  Child Protective Services

  Foster Care and Adoptions

  Family Independence

III. Division of Child Support Services

  Community Outreach: Parental Accountability Court Program

  Community Outreach: Fatherhood Program

IV. Division of Aging Services

  Home and Community-Based Services

  Adult Protective Services

V. Office of Inspector General

  Benefits Recovery Unit

  Residential Child Care Licensing

VI. DHS Contacts: Quick Reference
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

MISSION

Strengthen Georgia by providing individuals and families access to services that promote self-sufficiency, independence, and protect Georgia’s vulnerable children and adults.

VISION

Stronger Families for a Stronger Georgia.

CORE VALUES

• Provide access to resources that offer support and empower Georgians and their families.
• Deliver services professionally and treat all clients with dignity and respect.
• Manage business operations effectively and efficiently by aligning resources across the agency.
• Promote accountability, transparency and quality in all services we deliver and programs we administer.
• Develop our employees at all levels of the agency.
GEORGIA DIVISION OF FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES

Child Protective Services

Strengthening Georgia by protecting its most vulnerable children from the risk of abuse and neglect.

Reporting

DFCS receives reports of abuse and neglect through a centralized line (1-855-GACHILD) that operates 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

- Not accepted or assigned (screen out or screen out & refer to outside resource)
- Substantiated
- Unsubstantiated
- Assessment of family functioning is completed. No maltreatment finding is made.
- Accepted & assigned for investigation
- Accepted & assigned for Family Support Services
- Safety threats are identified. Case sent to investigations
- Opened for Family Preservation Services
- Opened for Foster Care or Case Closure
- Case Closure or Opened for Family Preservation Services (if safety threats are identified)
- No safety threats identified
- Services needed
- Services not needed
- Services provided or in progress

Increased Community Awareness & Impact on DFCS Caseloads

Since the implementation of a centralized reporting system for child welfare concerns in April 2014, reports of abuse and neglect have risen tremendously in Georgia. To help manage an increased demand for DFCS services, Gov. Nathan Deal has committed funding to reduce case managers’ caseloads to 15 per worker — a nationwide best practice — by 2017.

**AVERAGE CASELOAD FOR CASE MANAGERS IN 2015 BY REGION***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2015 Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region 1</td>
<td>18.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 2</td>
<td>17.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 3</td>
<td>20.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 4</td>
<td>20.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 5</td>
<td>19.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 6</td>
<td>14.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 7</td>
<td>16.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 8</td>
<td>21.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 9</td>
<td>32.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 10</td>
<td>17.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 11</td>
<td>18.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 12</td>
<td>22.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 13</td>
<td>14.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 14</td>
<td>13.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 15</td>
<td>17.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Investigations were opened as a result of abuse or neglect referrals in October 2015.

- 4,099
- 3,574

Family Support cases were opened as a result of abuse or neglect referrals in October 2015.

- 4,529
- 3,567

To report abuse or neglect call 1-855-GACHILD (1-855-422-4453)

Bobby Cagle, Director
Virginia Pryor, Deputy Director, Child Welfare
Jon Anderson, Deputy Director, Family Independence
Carol Christopher, Deputy Director, System Reform

Revised 1/2016
Top 5 reasons children entered DFCS custody (SFY2015):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NEGLECT</td>
<td>4,525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRUG ABUSE</td>
<td>2,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INADEQUATE HOUSING</td>
<td>1,906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABANDONMENT</td>
<td>1,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCARCERATION</td>
<td>1,004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Greatest Need for Foster Homes**

By county. Darkest red = greatest need.

Those interested in foster parenting can call 1-877-210-KIDS or visit dfcs.dhs.ga.gov/generalinformation for answers to frequently asked questions concerning foster parenting, links to related sites and upcoming events for the foster care and adoption communities.

From inquiry to approval, the process can take from five to 10 months due to safety screenings, pre-service training, required documentation and home evaluations.

After calling the 1-877-210-KIDS inquiry line, prospective parents are assigned to a resource development case manager from the local DFCS office to begin the process.

---

**Bobby Cagle, Director**

Virginia Pryor, Deputy Director, Child Welfare

Jon Anderson, Deputy Director, Family Independence

Carol Christopher, Deputy Directory, System Reform

Revised 1/2016
Family Independence

Strengthening Georgia by providing individuals and families access to services that promote self-sufficiency and independence.

Nutritional Assistance

**SNAP**
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as the food stamp program, provides low-income Georgians help with their monthly food costs.

**SNAP Works**
Using a **$15 million** grant, Georgia is testing a program in select counties to provide intensive job training and placement services to SNAP recipients who are between the ages of 18 and 49, able to work and do not have a dependent child in their home. Working much like a managed care provider for medical services, the program seeks to help recipients become self sufficient through coordination with multiple state agencies, including the Technical College System of Georgia, the Department of Labor and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.

Currently, Georgia provides employment and training services to SNAP recipients in **12** counties. Over the next three years, the Division plans to serve **2,500** Georgians using grant funds.

**$2.8 billion**
Amount food stamps added to Georgia’s economy in SFY2015.

**2.15**
Average size of household receiving food stamps.

**130%**
Gross income must be of the federal poverty level to qualify for benefits.

**850,628**
Households receive food stamps in Georgia.

Medicaid

**718,457**
applications submitted for Medicaid in SFY2015.

Medicaid provides health coverage to low-income families, pregnant women and adults who are determined to be aged, blind or disabled. DFCS is a contractor of the Department of Community Health, providing eligibility determinations to applicants of the program. Apply for or renew benefits online at [www.compass.ga.gov](http://www.compass.ga.gov).

Childcare and Parent Services

DFCS continues to provide eligibility determinations for applicants of the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program operated by the Department of Early Care and Learning. Georgia residents can apply for CAPS at [www.compass.ga.gov](http://www.compass.ga.gov).

For information on economic assistance or to report fraud, call **1-877-423-4746**.

Bobby Cagle, Director
Virginia Pryor, Deputy Director, Child Welfare
Jon Anderson, Deputy Director, Family Independence
Carol Christopher, Deputy Director, System Reform

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program was created in 1996 as part of welfare reform legislation. The program provides time-limited cash assistance to Georgia’s neediest families. During SFY2015, Georgia had a total of **17,777** families who received TANF; **14,995** were child-only cases, including foster children in the care of relatives and **2,782** were adult recipients. Adults must participate in a work program, unless there are special circumstances. The average benefit amount is **$159.89** per month.
Through the Fatherhood Program, the Department works with parents who are unemployed or underemployed and are, as a result, unable to pay their full child support obligations. The program connects parents with resources leading to jobs that pay above minimum wage, greater self-sufficiency and more emotional, parental and financial involvement in the lives of their children. Georgia has the only statewide program in the country.

Georgia has the only statewide program in the country.

Individuals with child support cases may request a review and modification of their child support order every three years. However, a review may be granted sooner if the requesting party has a substantial change in circumstances. Situations that may qualify for a more frequent review include but are not limited to:

- Diagnosis of a serious illness or an accident that impacts either party’s ability to work and the resulting condition is expected to last for more than a year
- Either party begins receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits since the last order
- Parent suffers a 25 percent or greater involuntary loss of income
- Parent receives an unanticipated windfall of money (i.e. lottery, inheritance, etc.)
- Documented proof that custody of a child has changed from the custodian

Contact Information
Custodial and noncustodial parents may apply for services, enter and receive information about their case, make a payment online or check payment information by using the Customer Online Services portal at www.dcss.dhs.georgia.gov. Users receive a password to protect confidentiality. For information about the Georgia Fatherhood Program and other Community Outreach Services, call 1-844-MYGADHS (1-844-694-2347).

Available Summer 2016: A new mobile application that will allow parents to make online payments and receive alerts about changes in their case status. The app will be available on Apple and Android devices.
The Parental Accountability Court (PAC) program is a joint effort of the Department and Superior Court Judges to offer an alternative to incarceration and to help chronic non-payers of child support make regular payments. The program utilizes community resources and judicial oversight to address barriers that keep parents from meeting their support obligations. Each program, including the 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.

Judicial Circuits Served by Parental Accountability Courts

PACs are in operation in 21 judicial circuits across the state.

BY THE NUMBERS

Since SFY 2012, the Parental Accountability Court program has helped

- Program participants paid an estimated $2.8M
- 2,711 noncustodial parents provide much needed support to
- 4,780 of Georgia’s children.

Program participants paid an estimated $2.8M in support, which, in return, has saved the state more than $10M.

*Information on SFY15 incarceration savings are not available yet and have not been included in the amount.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For information about the Parental Accountability Court Program and other Community Outreach Services, call 1-844-MYGA-DHS (1-844-694-2347).

Robyn A. Crittenden, DHS Commissioner | Tanguler Gray, Division Director | Reed Kimbrough, Division Deputy Director

Revised 1/2016
Through the Fatherhood Program, the Department works with parents who are unemployed or underemployed and are consequently unable to pay their full child support obligations. The program connects parents with resources leading to jobs that pay above minimum wage, leading to greater self sufficiency and more emotional, parental and financial involvement in the lives of their children. Georgia has the only statewide program in the U.S. Services provided include:

- GED classes
- Short-term training
- Volunteer opportunities
- Resume writing
- Job placement, coaching and mentoring
- Federal bonding
- Referrals for access and visitation
- Referrals for legitimization

Participants who have had their driver’s licenses suspended or who are subject to license suspension for nonpayment of child support have the opportunity to regain driving privileges. The process for releasing a driver’s license for a program participant is outlined below.

Parent non-participation:
- Removed from FHP
- Suspension override removed
- License subject to suspension if criteria met

Parent completes program:
- Suspension override removed
- Current and arrears payments must be paid in full to avoid re-suspension
- Parent must pay reinstatement fee to DDS

Contact Information
For information about the Georgia Fatherhood Program and other Community Outreach Services, call 1-844-MYGADHS (1-844-694-2347). Custodial and noncustodial parents may apply for services, enter and receive information about their case, make a payment online or check payment information by using the Customer Online Services portal at www.dcss.dhs.georgia.gov. Users receive a password to protect confidentiality.

Robyn A. Crittenden, DHS Commissioner | Tanguler Gray, Division Director | Reed Kimbrough, Division Deputy Director

Revised 1/2016
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Division of Aging Services

Strengthening Georgia through services that give older Georgians and adults with disabilities independence and dignity.

Area Agencies on Aging

Georgia’s Aging Network provides an array of services to help older adults maintain independence and remain safely in their homes and communities. Through the 12 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), as shown in the map to the right, the Division provides the following services:

COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES PROGRAM
The Community Care Services Program (CCSP) helps Medicaid-eligible individuals who cannot perform activities of daily living to remain in their communities and avoid placement in a nursing home through:

- Alternative Living Services
- Emergency Response Services
- Home-Delivered Meals
- Adult Day Health
- Personal Support Services
- Out-of-Home Respite Care

$293 million
amount home and community-based services saved taxpayers in Medicaid expenditures in SFY15 over nursing home utilization.

$33,690
Cost of Nursing Home Care to Medicaid

$11,473
CCSP costs to Medicaid

HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES
Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) helps those aged 60 or older to remain independent, providing nutrition assistance to those who are temporarily or permanently homebound, as well as assistance with routine household tasks, home modification and emergency response systems. The program also supports caregivers and provides wellness programs that increase the ability of older adults to perform everyday activities and remain in their homes.

NUTRITION ASSISTANCE
20,215
Georgians were served home-delivered meals in SFY2015.

An additional 18,455
Georgians were given access to food through a congregate meal program in their communities.

MONEY FOLLOWS THE PERSON PROGRAM
In SFY2015, 227 Georgians were able to transition back into their communities from long-term acute care facilities through the Money Follows the Person program. A total of 1,125 have returned to the community since July 2011.

13,205
Georgians were able to remain in their communities through CCSP in SFY2015.

Dementia

More than 130,000
Georgians are living with Alzheimer’s or other forms of dementia.

Georgia continues to implement the State Plan on Alzheimer’s and Related Dementias to promote the early diagnosis of dementia, develop the state’s dementia-capable workforce, provide quality medical care for people with dementia and prepare law enforcement and other public safety officials for issues that surround dementia. In 2016, the Department held its first “Basics of Dementia” training to help case managers and other caregivers recognize the signs of dementia and to promote early diagnosis of the disease.

Caregiver Support

Care Consultation is an evidence-based information and coaching service designed to empower caregivers to understand options, manage care and make decisions more effectively.

In SFY2015, 5,433 caregivers were provided case management and counseling through the program.

1,800 caregivers were provided respite care services.

3,634 caregivers were provided with homemaker services.

To find out about aging services in your area, call 1-866-552-4464.

Robyn A. Crittenden, DHS Commissioner | Abby Cox, Division Director | Jean O’Callaghan, Division Deputy Director

Revised 1/2016
Adult Protective Services (APS) investigates allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation and seeks to prevent the recurrence of abuse, neglect or exploitation of adults through the provision of protective service interventions. When assessing the need for interventions, investigators consider an adult’s right to personal autonomy and self-determination while using the least restrictive method of providing safety.

**Forensic Special Initiatives Unit**

The Forensic Special Initiatives Unit (FSIU) educates law enforcement, first responders, members of the legal community and others about ways to identify and respond to abuse, neglect and exploitation of at-risk adults. The FSIU also works with state agencies to coordinate the emergency relocation of abused and neglected adults.

Unlicensed Personal Care Homes

When older adults and adults with disabilities face abuse, neglect, or exploitation — particularly in unlicensed personal care homes — responders may need to move them quickly to a safe, accessible location.

The Department works with legislators, agencies, and other experts to develop coordinated response procedures and identify emergency resources for vulnerable adults. In SFY2015, APS relocated 92 individuals.

**Financial Exploitation Training**

The Department and its partners trained 140 bank personnel and law enforcement officials on how to prevent, recognize and prosecute financial exploitation of vulnerable adults.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

1,714

Law enforcement and other professionals who have received training from the FSIU to serve as At-Risk Adult Crime Tactics (ACT) Specialists.

Active APS investigations in 2015: 30,924

APS workers in 2015: 135

1 in 24

For every one case of elder abuse that comes to the attention of a responsible entity, another 23 cases never come to light.

Source: NYS Elder Abuse Prevalence Study; Weill Cornell Medical College, NYC Department for the Aging; Lifespan; (2011)

**Contact**

Contact Adult Protective Services to report the abuse of older individuals (65+) and adults with disabilities (18+). Call 866-552-4464, and press Option 3.

Robyn A. Crittenden, DHS Commissioner

Abby Cox, Division Director

Jean O’Callaghan, Division Deputy Director
Ensuring DHS work is conducted according to state and federal laws, policy, procedure, and practice.

Benefits Recovery Unit

The Benefits Recovery Unit (BRU) of the Office of Inspector General investigates suspected intentional program violations in the SNAP (traditionally known as food stamps), TANF and Child Care programs. The unit also investigates retailer trafficking of SNAP EBT cards.

Penalties for Program Violations

Benefit recipients who are found guilty of an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) are suspended then permanently disqualified from the program on a three-strikes-you’re-out policy.

**FOOD STAMPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offense</th>
<th>Disqualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-time offenders</td>
<td>1 year disqualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second-time offenders</td>
<td>2 year disqualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-time offenders</td>
<td>Permanent disqualification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offense</th>
<th>Disqualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-time offenders</td>
<td>6-month disqualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second-time offenders</td>
<td>12-month disqualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-time offenders</td>
<td>Permanent disqualification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EBT TRAFFICKING**

The BRU works with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service to investigate EBT trafficking at retail locations. The USDA retains exclusive authority for investigating retailer fraud, while the State is responsible for investigating recipient fraud. Once an authorized SNAP retailer has been identified for engaging in EBT trafficking, the State reviews all transactions to identify specific benefit recipients who engaged in EBT trafficking with the retailer. Once those recipients are identified, the State initiates an adjudication process to hold recipients accountable for violating the program.

**Georgia** is recognized nationally for its aggressiveness in seeking out and establishing fraud claims in the Food Stamp program.

**FOOD STAMPS**

There were 3,881 established claims for Intentional Program Violations — both non EBT trafficking and EBT trafficking — in SFY2015.

Those claims were valued at $12.2 million making up 0.4% of the total $2.8 billion disbursed in SNAP benefits in SFY2015.

**TANF**

There were 42 IPV claims established in SFY2015.

Those claims were valued at $75,108 comprising 0.22% of the $34,066,817 in TANF benefits that were disbursed in SFY2015.

To report fraud, waste or abuse in Georgia benefit programs, call 1-844-MYGADHS (1-844-694-2347) or email inspectorgeneralhotline@dhs.ga.gov.

Robyn A. Crittenden, DHS Commissioner
Renorta Heard, Deputy Commissioner | Gerlda Hines, Deputy Commissioner

Revised 1/2016
Residential Child Care Licensing

Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL) inspects, monitors, licenses, registers, certifies and investigates complaints at all residential child care facilities in Georgia that meet the definition of:

**Child Placing Agencies (CPA)** — an agency that places children in foster homes for temporary care or in prospective adoptive homes for adoption. [106 statewide]

**Child Caring Institutions (CCI)** — a facility that provides full-time room, board and watchful oversight to six or more children through 18 years of age (also known as a group home). [171 statewide]

**Outdoor Child Caring Programs (OCCP)** — a CCI that provides outdoor activities designed to improve the emotional and behavioral adjustment of the children that take place in a wilderness or camp environment. [2 statewide]

**Children’s Transitional Care Centers (CTCC)** — a temporary, home-like environment meant to help medically-fragile children, technology-dependent children, and children with special healthcare needs to transition from a hospital or other facility to a home or other appropriate setting. Facility serves children up to 21 years of age. [0 statewide]

**Maternity and Second Chance Homes (MH)** — Maternity Home is any place that receives, treats or cares for, within any six-month period, more than one pregnant woman, whose child is to be born out of wedlock, either before, during or within two (2) weeks after childbirth. A Second Chance Home provides care for pregnant and parenting youth for more than an eight-week period following delivery. Serves youth through the age of 21. [14 statewide]

In addition to these facilities, RCCL registers:

**Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs (RHYP)** — facilities that serve children under the age of 18 who have run away and/or are homeless. Providers must notify a parent, guardian or legal custodian of the child’s location and general state of well-being as soon as possible, but no later than 72 hours after the child’s acceptance of services. [7 statewide]

**Rule Waivers**

RCCL recognizes that each facility is unique in its services to children, and that certain rules may create a hardship for an agency providing for children with specialized needs. For that reason, facilities may request a waiver or a variance to a rule that impedes the ability to adequately serve a child. There is a mandated 15-day wait for waiver requests, and requests are typically processed in 30 days.

Calendar Year 2015:

- 44 waivers requested
- 33 Approved
- 10 Denied
- 1 Pending

**Refuting Citations**

When a facility is found to be in violation of RCCL rules, the result can be a citation or an adverse action. Adverse actions may involve a financial penalty, and can be appealed through an administrative court hearing. Citations that do not rise to the level of an adverse action have no financial penalty and cannot be appealed through administrative courts. However, to ensure each evaluation is fair, Georgia is one of the only states to allow facilities the opportunity to refute citations. Refutation requests must be made within 15 days of the notification of a citation and are typically processed within 35 days.

- 10 Citations Refuted out of 3,976 issued CY2015
- 0 Changed due to Surveyor Error

**RCCL ACCOMPLISHMENTS [Calendar Year 2015]**

- Complaints/Incidents investigated: [606]
- Intakes Assigned: [615]
- CPS Referrals: [410]
- Relicensure Visits: [276]
- Adverse Actions Issued: [28]
- $8,300 Fines collected on Adverse Actions

For questions about licensing a residential childcare facility, call (404) 657-9651. To file a complaint about a facility, notify the Department by email at RCCReports@dhs.ga.gov.

Robyn A. Crittenden, DHS Commissioner | Renorta Heard, Deputy Commissioner | Gerlda Hines, Deputy Commissioner
DHS CONTACTS: QUICK REFERENCE

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

GENERAL INFORMATION ........................................................................................................... 1-844-694-2347 (1-844-MYGADHS)
Statewide toll-free number for customers who need assistance from the Division of Child Support Services, Division of Aging Services or the Office of Inspector General

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

DHS CONSTITUENT SERVICES .............................................................................................. 404-651-6316
For information, questions and complaints regarding Aging Services, Child Support Services and DHS enterprise functions. Email: CustomerServiceDHS@dhs.ga.gov

DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES

OFFICE OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE .................................................................................. 1-877-423-4746
Statewide toll-free number for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/Food Stamps), Medicaid, TANF, or Child Care and general inquiries. OFI Only: Self service available 24 hours/day. Agents are available 7:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

CHILD WELFARE

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS) .................................................................................. 1-855-422-4453
Statewide toll-free number for all reports of child abuse and neglect, 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. Email: CPSIntake@dhs.ga.gov

ADOPTIONS & FOSTER CARE ............................................................................................. 1-877-210-KIDS (5437)
For information, visit http://itsmyturnnow.dhs.ga.gov or call. Hotline hours are Mon.-Fri.: 8 a.m. -10 p.m., Sat.: 10 a.m. - 11 p.m.

DFCS COMMUNICATIONS GROUP ....................................................................................... 404-657-3433
For information, questions and complaints regarding OFI Programs & Child Welfare. Email: Customer_services_dfcs@dhs.ga.gov

All hotline hours of operation are Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5p.m., unless otherwise noted.