



# **Georgia Department of Human Services**

Fiscal Year 2017 Fact Book

Robyn A. Crittenden, Commissioner



In 2017, the Georgia Department of Human Services continued its work to protect and enhance the well-being of more than 2 million people across the state. Thanks largely to our dedicated staff and the continued support of elected officials, these efforts will continue this year.

Under Gov. Nathan Deal's leadership, the state remains steadfast in addressing the current needs of Georgia's most vulnerable residents and preparing for challenges that lie ahead. Georgia's population is growing larger and older. It is our responsibility to anticipate and meet the needs of the people we serve: children, families, seniors, adults with disabilities and their caregivers.

Only through efficient and effective delivery of services can the Department continue to promote safety and self-sufficiency and to empower individuals and families to live their best lives.

By embracing innovative technologies, the Department has streamlined interactions with our customers to reduce wait times and increase efficiency and accountability. Georgia Gateway, our new integrated eligibility system, provides customers with a single point of entry to apply for benefits across multiple state agencies. Our child support mobile phone app allows parents to manage their child support accounts with ease.

By focusing on training and retention of qualified staff, we have improved our service to customers.

We have become more responsive to reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation through increased staffing and training in Adult Protective Services. Efforts to arrest case manager turnover in child welfare are resulting in the development of a more experienced child welfare workforce and promise to bring more consistency to casework, allowing staff to build trust and partner with families in ways that make children safer and families stronger.

By expanding partnerships with community partners, higher education, health care providers and other nonprofit and corporate entities, we are laying the groundwork to ensure that our most vulnerable residents' lives are safer, more independent and more fulfilling.

Looking ahead to the new year, the Department will continue to be proactive in helping Georgians reach their full potential. With the continued support of Gov. Deal, members of the General Assembly, community partners and our staff, we are **building stronger families for a stronger Georgia.**

Sincerely,

**Robyn A. Crittenden**

Commissioner, Georgia Department of Human Services

**Virginia Pryor**

Interim Director, Division of Family & Children Services





# About the Department of Human Services

The Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) was formed in July 2009 as part of the reorganization of the former Georgia Department of Human Resources, which served Georgia since 1972. DHS delivers a wide range of services designed to promote self-sufficiency, safety and well-being for all Georgians.

The Department serves approximately 2 million Georgians with more than 9,000 employees and an annual budget of approximately \$1.9 billion in state fiscal year 2017 (SFY17). DHS comprises three divisions — the Division of Family and Children Services, the Division of Child Support Services and the Division of Aging Services.

## **VISION**

Stronger families for a stronger Georgia

## **BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE**

The Blueprint for Change is a three-pronged reform effort pioneered by the Division of Family & Children Services and later adopted by the entire Department of Human Services. The initiative creates a framework for how the Department meets its goals, carries out its mission and follows its core values. It serves as the internal road map to improving the lives of vulnerable children and adults. The Blueprint for Change supports a strong practice model, developing a robust workforce and continuous engagement with both internal and external constituents.

### **Practice Model**

Our practice model ties into the Department's vision: to build stronger families for a stronger Georgia.

### **Robust Workforce Development**

Recruiting, retaining and recognizing our staff while offering continuing development and training provides DHS with a robust workforce.

### **Constituent Engagement**

In the area of constituent engagement, the Department engages with constituents at the state and local levels through a series of Listen and Learn Tours. This collaboration with stakeholders further enhances the Department's accessibility, transparency and accountability.



# 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](mailto:CustomerServiceDHS@dhs.ga.gov)

## **DIVISION OF FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES**

**OFFICE OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE (OFI)** ..... **1-877-423-4746**

Statewide toll-free number for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/food stamps), Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and general inquiries.  
OFI only: Self service available 24 hours per 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](mailto:CPSIntake@dhs.ga.gov)

Adoptions & Foster Care ..... **1-877-210-KIDS (5437)**

For information, call or visit [fostergeorgia.com](http://fostergeorgia.com) or <http://itsmyturnnow.dhs.ga.gov>.  
Call center hours are Monday - Thursday: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday: closed

**DFCS CONSTITUENT SERVICES** ..... **404-657-3433**

For information, questions and complaints regarding OFI Programs & Child Welfare.  
Email: [Customer\\_services\\_dfcs@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:Customer_services_dfcs@dhs.ga.gov)

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

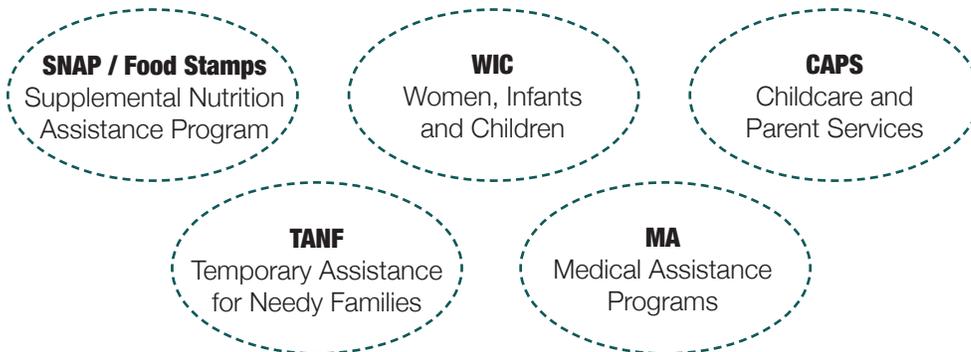
# Georgia Gateway

The state's integrated eligibility system for social benefit programs



## About Georgia Gateway

Georgia Gateway integrates benefits eligibility for five social benefit programs:



### At a glance

Georgia Gateway is an integrated eligibility determination system collaboratively developed and used by the:

- Department of Community Health
- Department of Early Care and Learning
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Public Health
- Division of Family & Children Services

### Award-winning Enterprise Master Person Index

In October 2017, the American Public Health Services Association (APHA) gave DHS its top award for Effective Use of Technology to Improve Operational Services. The Enterprise Master Person Index (EMPI) replaced the Client Registration System.

### The next phase: Maintenance & Operations

Georgia Gateway is currently transitioning from design, development, and implementation (DDI) to its maintenance and operations (M&O) phase. This phase entails:

- Operating as currently designed
- Maintaining for use by caseworkers and constituents
- Responding to any interruptions or other issues which may occur

### Features

- Systemwide scanning prior to case processing enhances anti-fraud capabilities by flagging suspicious duplicate information across multiple cases for more in-depth review
- Eligibility verification data—such as pay stubs—are now shared across program agencies, cutting down on duplicative filings and reducing the chances of fraud or error
- Allows caseworkers to see constituents' active or pending cases with other agencies, strengthening their ability to better refer families for other services
- Expands the ease with which customers manage their benefits—online uploading and office kiosks give constituents the ability to manage their own cases, freeing caseworkers to provide better customer service and to process cases
- Gives constituents a "one-stop-shop" system across all Georgia Gateway programs, saving them time and effort in managing their benefits

## Timeline

**2016** [March]

EMPI rolls out

**2017** [February]

Pilot phase begins

**2017** [May]

Wave 1 rolls out

**2017** [July]

Wave 2A rolls out

**2017** [September]

Wave 2B rolls out

**2017** [October]

Georgia Gateway replaces SUCCESS and other older eligibility systems

**2017** [December]

Georgia Gateway reaches 7 million log-ins



# About the Division of Family & Children Services

The Georgia Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS) investigates reports of child abuse; finds foster and adoptive homes for abused and neglected children and provides several support services to help families in need, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

## OVERALL

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

In State / Federal Fiscal Year 2017:

- Increased employee satisfaction from 66 percent in 2015 to 71 percent in 2017
- Implemented market-based salary increases for frontline workers

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

In State / Federal Fiscal Year 2017:

- Reduced case manager turnover from 32 percent to 29 percent
- Trained all staff on Solution-based Casework (SBC), which is the first step to becoming certified in Georgia's new practice model for child welfare
- Expanded support to relative caregivers of youth in foster care by hiring additional staff, called Kinship Navigators
- Increased the percentage of children in foster care placed with relatives from 19 percent to 29 percent

### **GOALS FOR SFY18**

- Further reduce employee turnover to 18 percent
- Increase the percentage of children placed with relatives by 10 percent
- Implement an electronic reimbursement option for foster parents

## OFFICE OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

In State / Federal Fiscal Year 2017:

- Successfully launched, piloted and implemented a new integrated eligibility system – Georgia Gateway – that streamlines access for all statewide eligibility programs
- Expanded the SNAP work requirements to a total of 24 counties, which limits SNAP eligibility to three months of a 36-month period for recipients categorized as “Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents” (ABAWD) unless the recipient is working or engaged in a work-related activity
- Implemented a ‘go-green’ paperless option for SNAP, Medicaid and TANF notifications, improving speed and accuracy of notice delivery and providing new opportunities for cost savings

### **GOALS FOR SFY18**

- Increase productivity and user efficiency of the new Georgia Gateway system
- Expand the SNAP work requirements to an additional 69 counties
- Pilot expansion of education and training program for SNAP recipients who are not categorized as ABAWD to help increase self-sufficiency of recipients

**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Division of Family & Children Services

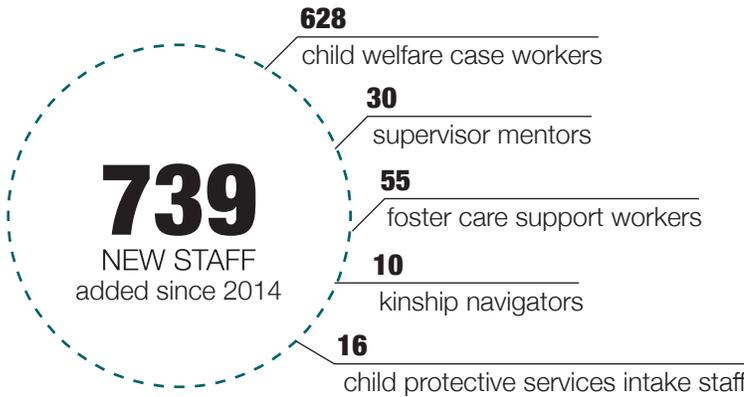
# Child Welfare Services

Strengthening Georgia by protecting its children from abuse and neglect.

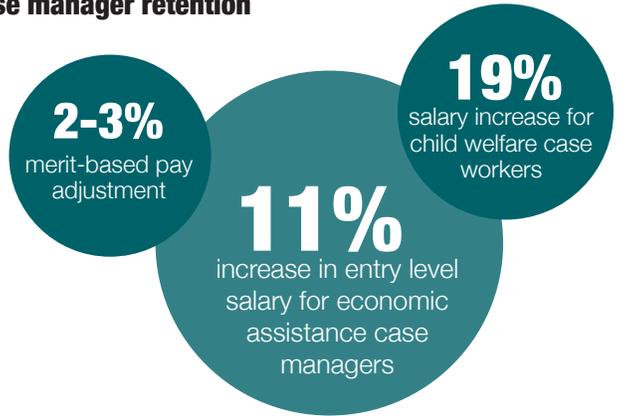
## Investment in our Workforce



### Robust workforce development



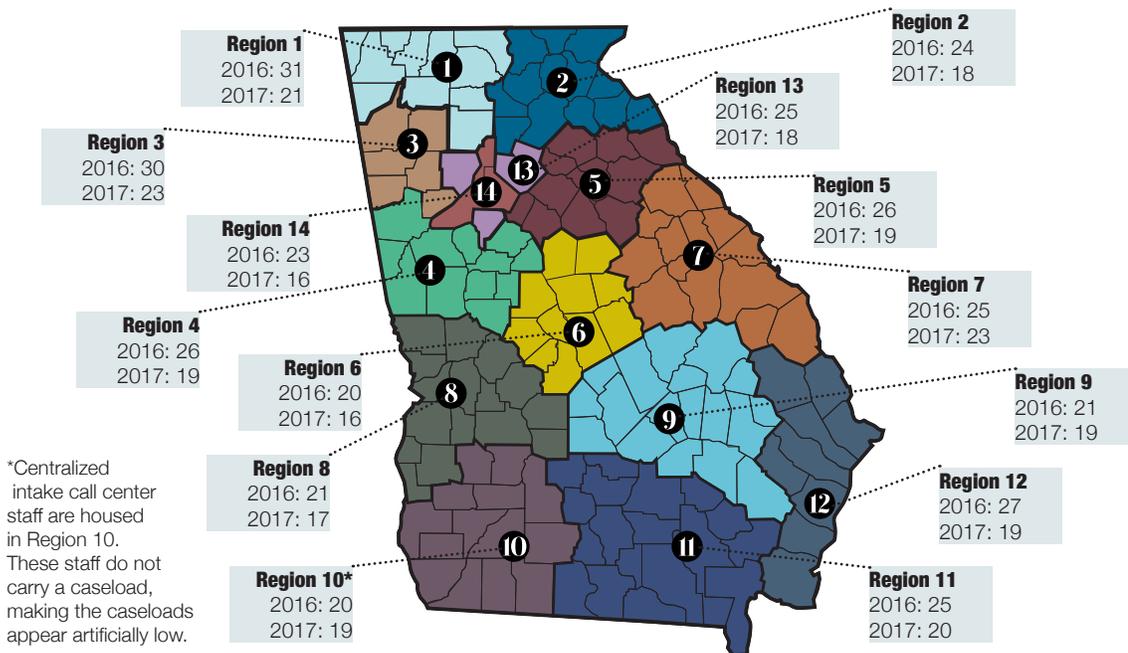
### Case manager retention



## Building a Robust Workforce Bolsters Support for Families

Increased staffing and efforts to arrest case manager turnover are allowing the Division to cultivate a more experienced workforce and improve agency decision-making in critical situations regarding child safety. With an improvement in caseloads, the Division has greater capacity to monitor children in vulnerable situations. Additionally, efforts to retain caseworkers brings consistency to casework, allowing staff to build trust and partner with families in ways that make children safer and families stronger.

### AVERAGE CASELOAD FOR CASE MANAGERS BY REGION



**122,344**

Number of reports of abuse and neglect investigated in SFY17

**\$33,326**

Starting salary for a child protective services caseworker

**19**

Average caseload for a child protective services worker statewide

**29%**

Turnover rate for child welfare employees

»» To report abuse or neglect call **1-855-GACHILD** (1-855-422-4453). ««

Virginia Pryor, Interim Director

Jeff Lukich, Chief of Staff | Jon Anderson, Chief Deputy Director | Carol Christopher, Deputy Director | Keith Bostick, Deputy Director

**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Division of Family & Children Services



# Foster Care and Adoptions

# 13,516

Approximate number of children in DFCS custody as of December 2017

Approximately **400** foster youth in Georgia are available for adoption and waiting on a family to call their own.

**1,184** children transitioned from state custody into adoptive families in SFY17.

## Reasons for Entry

Top 5 reasons children entered DFCS custody (SFY17):

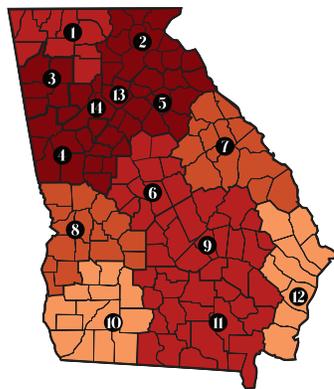
<b>NEGLECT</b>	3,629
<b>SUBSTANCE ABUSE</b>	2,951
<b>INADEQUATE HOUSING</b>	1,638
<b>INCARCERATION</b>	885
<b>ABANDONMENT</b>	670

## Children placed outside region

Steady growth in Georgia's foster care population has increased the need for foster homes statewide. As a result, a growing number of children who have had to come into foster care have been displaced from their communities.

Keeping children connected to their communities limits the trauma of foster care and supports successful outcomes for families.

The map to the right shows where the most children are placed outside their region and where the need for foster homes is greatest.



- 0-10% placed outside region
- 11-20% placed outside region
- 21-30% placed outside region
- 31-40% placed outside region
- 41-50% placed outside region

Those interested in foster parenting can call **1-877-210-KIDS** or visit **fostergeorgia.com**

## SFY17 Adoptions by County

Appling	3	Emanuel	1	Monroe	4
Bacon	4	Evans	4	Montgomery	5
Baldwin	9	Fannin	9	Murray	11
Banks	9	Fayette	3	Muscogee	38
Barrow	12	Floyd	57	Newton	24
Bartow	50	Forsyth	10	Oglethorpe	4
Berrien	2	Franklin	7	Paulding	17
Bibb	22	Fulton	36	Peach	7
Brantley	8	Gilmer	4	Pickens	14
Brooks	6	Glynn	36	Pierce	4
Burke	2	Gordon	8	Polk	4
Butts	3	Grady	1	Putnam	1
Camden	16	Greene	1	Rabun	2
Candler	1	Gwinnett	44	Richmond	12
Carroll	6	Habersham	3	Rockdale	5
Catoosa	7	Hall	42	Schley	1
Chatham	15	Haralson	23	Spalding	18
Chattahoochee	1	Hart	1	Stephens	6
Chattooga	4	Henry	5	Sumter	6
Cherokee	33	Houston	9	Telfair	3
Clarke	27	Jackson	8	Terrell	3
Clayton	29	Jasper	1	Thomas	7
Clinch	6	Jeff Davis	2	Tift	12
Cobb	31	Johnson	1	Towns	4
Coffee	12	Jones	4	Troup	4
Colquitt	24	Lamar	4	Twiggs	3
Columbia	4	Lanier	6	Union	5
Cook	2	Laurens	9	Upson	12
Coweta	10	Liberty	6	Walker	31
Crawford	5	Long	1	Walton	8
Dade	2	Lowndes	12	Ware	12
Dawson	4	Lumpkin	8	Warren	2
Dekalb	42	Macon	1	Washington	3
Dodge	2	Madison	9	Wayne	2
Dooly	2	Marion	1	Webster	1
Douglas	16	McDuffie	5	White	8
Effingham	6	McIntosh	5	Whitfield	41
Elbert	3	Mitchell	8	Wilkinson	5

Virginia Pryor, Interim Director

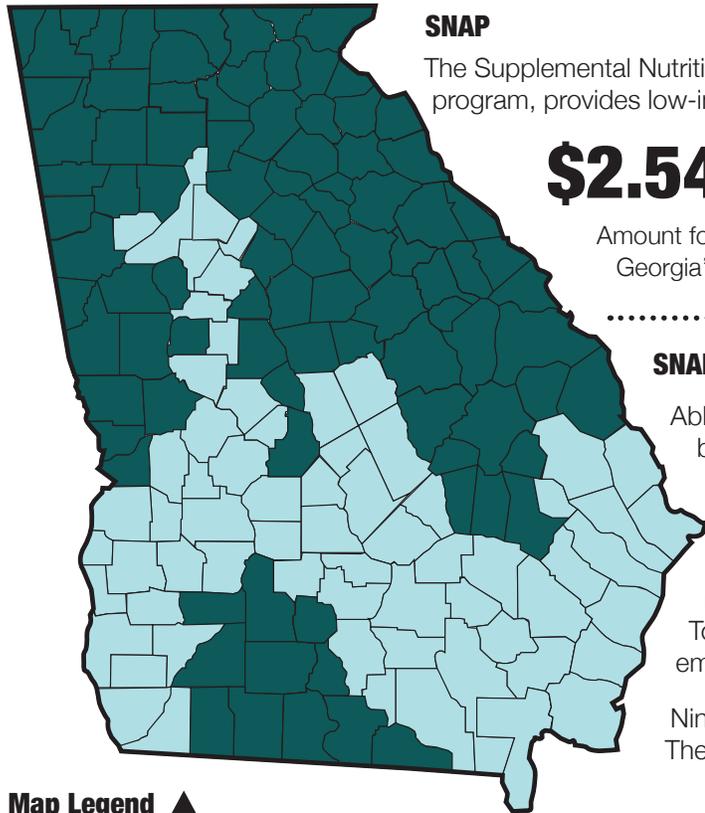
Jeff Lukich, Chief of Staff | Jon Anderson, Chief Deputy Director | Carol Christopher, Deputy Director | Keith Bostick, Deputy Director



# 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.

**\$2.54 billion**

Amount food stamps added to Georgia's economy in SFY17

**762,301**

households received food stamps each month



### SNAP Works | Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents

Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) are defined as between age 18-49, not pregnant, not residing in a household with a child under age 18, and mentally and physically fit for employment.

In time-limited counties, adults who are able to work can only receive SNAP benefits for three months in a 36-month period. To continue to receive benefits, the able-bodied adults must be employed or in a work-related activity for at least 20 hours/week.

Ninety-three counties will have SNAP ABAWD time limits in 2018. The Division plans to take the program statewide in 2019.

### Map Legend ▲

SNAP Works FFY2018 Service area effective Jan. 1, 2018

- 2018 Time-Limited 3/36 Counties
- ABAWD Waiver Counties

### Economic Impact of SNAP in Georgia

Every \$1 issued in SNAP benefits generates \$1.70 in economic activity.

## Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) provides time-limited cash assistance to Georgia's neediest families.

**\$207.85**

Average monthly benefit amount

**2,403**

were adult TANF recipients

**9,884**

TANF cases were child-only cases

## Medicaid

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.

**857,410**

◀ Average number of Georgia families receiving Medicaid services each month in SFY17.

In September 2017, Georgia implemented a statewide eligibility system, **Georgia Gateway**. The system is a collaborative system between multiple state agencies that determines constituents' eligibility for social benefits.

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

Virginia Pryor, Interim Director

Jeff Lukich, Chief of Staff | Jon Anderson, Chief Deputy Director | Carol Christopher, Deputy Director | Keith Bostick, Deputy Director