

STRONGER FAMILIES FOR A STRONGER GEORGIA

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Interim Commissioner Gerlda B. Hines





Gerlda B. Hines

DHS Interim Commissioner

LETTER FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Innovation, customer service, collaboration: These were the themes of the Department of Human Services' (DHS) endeavors in State Fiscal Year 2018.

From the successful launch of Georgia Gateway, the largest IT project in state government history, which streamlined the administration of multiple economic assistance programs across the state, to the development of Georgia Memory Net, a project that will be the greatest expansion of access to dementia diagnosis and support Georgia has seen to-date—DHS has much to be proud of.

Each accomplishment detailed in the report that follows required DHS staff to think outside the box, to partner with the private sector and staff in other state agencies and to pay close attention to the needs of the more than 2 million people we serve each year.

As you will see in the report, our work has resulted in measurable progress. DHS has reduced employee turnover, increased access to meal programs for seniors and helped Georgians struggling to pay child support get back on their feet and avoid incarceration.

I am proud to have been a part of what we have done in the last year to make our agency more nimble, more efficient and more available to serve Georgians in their greatest time of need. I am also acutely aware of and prepared to take on the challenges we face in continuing to be there for families—to make them stronger so that our state can be strengthened as a result.

With the country's 11th fastest growing population of residents aged 60 and older, Georgia must be at the ready to support its "silver tsunami" of aging residents, who are, by age alone, more susceptible to exploitation, abuse and neglect and are more in need of support to age in the setting of their choosing.

More Georgians are going from job to job with little employment security. This means more parents ordered to pay child support will be out of the reach of wage withholding orders. We must consider how to shift our business model for this "gig economy" to continue getting children the support they deserve from both parents.

And as major changes loom for the administration of child welfare nationwide, Georgia must move quickly to develop policy and to prepare the workforce and its private sector partners to use evidence-based practices that prioritize prevention over a foster care intervention.

Each of our 9,400 staff embody the DHS vision of Stronger Families for a Stronger Georgia, and their commitment to serving Georgia's most vulnerable populations gives me confidence that we can face down each one of these challenges in the year ahead.

Thank you for your partnership, which has contributed to our past successes and will be integral to our success in the year to come.



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NOTE: The Division of Family & Children Services publishes a separate annual report, and only highlights of the Division's accomplishments are presented within the Department of Human Services' Annual Report.

Georgia Department of Human Services



DIVISION OF
AGING SERVICES



DIVISION OF
CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES



DIVISION OF
FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES

DHS BY THE NUMBERS

All figures are for State Fiscal Year 2018 (SFY 2018) unless otherwise noted.



527,927

Children served through Child Support Services in Federal Fiscal Year 2018 (FFY 2018)

14,006

Number of children in foster care in Georgia

18

Average number of cases a Child Protective Services worker manages at one time

3.98 million

Meals served to Georgians through congregate or home delivery services



126,364

Number of reports of abuse and neglect DFCS investigated

809,328

Average number of families that received medical coverage through Medicaid each month

714,772

Average number of food stamp (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP) cases each month

9,235

Average number of caregivers receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) each month to support a child relative in their home

\$736.77 million

Amount distributed through Child Support Services in FFY 2018

300,929

Parents under court order to make child support payments in FFY 2018

MAJOR EVENTS

IN SFY 2018

JULY 2017

- DHS is a key presenter at the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging's Annual Conference, highlighting Georgia's work in serving the state's older population
- Georgia Memory Net is established to assist in the detection, planning and treatment of Alzheimer's and related dementias.

OCT. 2017

- DHS receives two awards for the Child Support Mobile App from the National Association of State Chief Information Officers and the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA).
- DHS receives an award from APHSA for a key component of Georgia Gateway, which serves as a single point of access to manage benefits.

NOV. 2017

DFCS announces the number of adoptions increased by around 40 percent compared with the previous year thanks to an initiative called "There's No Place Like Home," which focuses on eliminating technical barriers to finalizing adoptions.

DEC. 2017

DFCS gives donated gifts to more than 9,100 kids in foster care. The gifts are collected by the Secret Santa program for Clark's Christmas Kids. Since the partnership with Clark Howard began in 1990, about 150,000 children have received gifts.

APRIL 2018

- Georgia Gateway wins a national award as the State IT Innovation of the Year at the fifth annual StateScoop 50 Awards
 - The Human Resources Personnel Action Self-Service System (HR PASS) goes live. The system modernizes, automates and standardizes most personnel processes for all divisions and offices in DHS.
- From left: Kathy Weiss, deputy CIO, and Jon Anderson, DFCS chief deputy division director, accept StateScoop 50 awards for the Georgia Gateway project.





AUG. 2017

- DCSS hosts the first livestreamed Fatherhood Conversation.
- A new DHS local office opens in Gwinnett County to serve more than 120,000 DFCS, DCSS and DAS customers.

SEPT. 2017

- Georgia Gateway is implemented statewide.
- Hurricane Irma leads to mass replacement of SNAP benefits in 71 counties.

JAN. 2018

- DHS joins other state agencies in responding to winter storms throughout north and coastal Georgia counties.
- The DCSS Employer Hub launches. The Hub processes Federal Income Withholding orders.

FEB. 2018

DFCS is awarded the GradNation Acceleration Grant by America's Promise Alliance to help improve high school graduation rates for Georgia's foster children.

MARCH 2018

DCSS expands the functionality of its mobile app, giving parents more tools to manage their child support cases. New features include document upload, driver's license reinstatement information, direct deposit changes and request to close cases.

MAY 2018

DFCS announces its State of Hope initiative, a collaborative public-private effort to provide community-based services that help to keep children in their local communities instead of the state foster system.

JUNE 2018

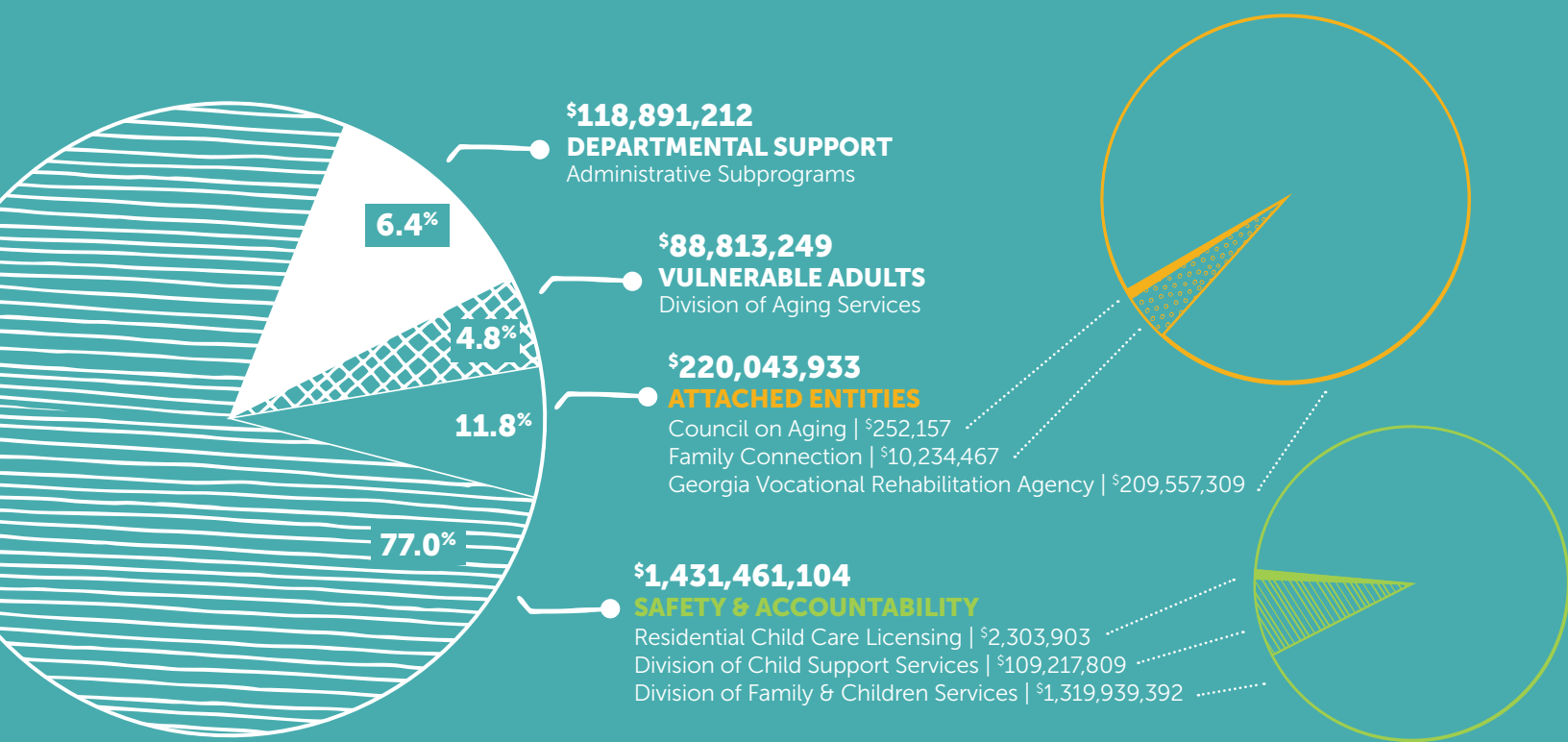
DHS unveils its new websites, which are designed to provide better customer service, particularly for mobile users.



About the Department of Human Services

The Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) employs about 9,400 people who serve more than 2 million Georgians each year. With an annual budget of \$1.86 billion, DHS delivers a 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 and Children Services (DFCS), though the DFCS director reports directly to and is accountable to the governor.



Vision

Stronger families for a stronger Georgia.

Mission

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



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 DHS.

Promote accountability, transparency and quality in all services we deliver and programs we administer.

Develop employees at all levels of the agency.

STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

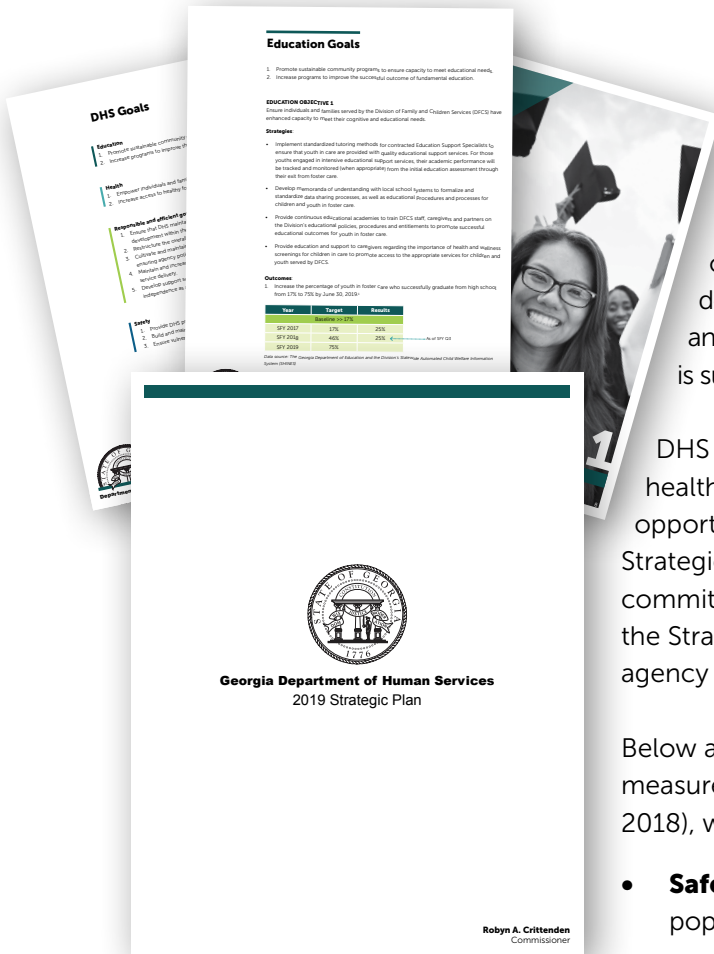
2017 - 2019 Strategic Plan Overview

The vision of the Department of Human Services is building stronger families for a stronger Georgia. In July 2016, DHS embarked on a three-year Strategic Plan (See Appendix A) in support of that vision and of goals set by Gov. Nathan Deal to improve service delivery to Georgia's most vulnerable residents. Developing strategies and regularly evaluating their effectiveness is essential to ensuring DHS is supporting individuals who seek to live safer, more independent lives.

DHS is committed to responsibly and efficiently making Georgia safer, healthier and better educated so the people we serve have the best opportunities possible to live fulfilling and independent lives. The DHS Strategic Plan is structured to implement specific initiatives to fulfill those commitments. This document is a status update on major initiatives of the Strategic Plan and a demonstration of how those initiatives improve agency processes and impact the lives of those it serves.

Below are goals the Department has set, along with examples of measured outcomes through the end of State Fiscal Year 2018 (June 30, 2018), which are set out on pages 12 through 15:

- **Safer Georgia:** Maintain programs that protect the vulnerable populations we serve while raising public awareness of the risks our constituents face.
- **Healthier Georgia:** Empower those we serve to live healthier lifestyles and be better nourished, and enhance services that lead to self-sufficiency.
- **More Educated Georgia:** Promote and increase programs that ensure capacity to meet fundamental educational needs.
- **More Responsible and Efficient Government:** Encourage and facilitate professional development within the organization, engage transparently with constituents and the public, and ensure compliance with the law.



DHS has a serious responsibility to ensure that vulnerable populations live safely. A basic need among seniors and adults with disabilities is to be protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation. In the case of child protective services, the Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS) must prioritize the safety of children and work with families to remove future threats to the children in their homes.

Ensure more timely investigations of abuse

DAS’ Adult Protective Services (APS) unit is charged with investigating allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation (ANE) of seniors and disabled adults. APS added 11 positions per year over three years and used regional data to concentrate staffing in areas of greater need to improve response times to ANE allegations.

Outcome: Increase the percentage of initial APS client visits that occur within 10 calendar days of intake from 90 percent to 95 percent by June 30, 2019.

Year	Target	Results
Baseline >>90%		
SFY 2017	93%	94.69%
SFY 2018	94%	94.50%

Increase children’s monthly visits with birth parents

Children are more likely to spend a shorter time in out-of-home care if parental visitation is more frequent. DFCS is responsible for initiating contact with parents and encouraging them to attend visits.

Outcome: Increase the percentage of monthly parent visits in child protective services and foster care from 87 percent to 95 percent for birth mothers by June 30, 2019.

Year	Target	Results
Baseline >>87%		
SFY 2017	87%	87.02%
SFY 2018	87.5%	88.00%

Good health is the cornerstone of self-sufficiency. Included in DHS’ commitment to the wellness of Georgia’s most vulnerable residents are strategies that promote access to health insurance for children in care and expand the Department’s involvement in initiatives that serve clients in need of a balanced meal.

Boost health coverage for youth in foster care

Ensuring youth in foster care have adequate resources for health care is key to providing youth with the best opportunity at a fulfilling life as an adult. DHS and the Division of Family & Children Services are exceeding goals for foster care youth receiving Medicaid or other types of health insurance.

Outcome: Increase the percentage of youth in foster care receiving Medicaid or other health insurance within six months of their 18th birthday from 45 percent to 85 percent by June 30, 2019.

Year	Target	Results
Baseline >>45%		
SFY 2017	45%	94%
SFY 2018	60%	92%

Make healthy food options available to more seniors

More than 300,000 Georgians age 60 and older face the threat of hunger. DHS’ Division of Aging Services is committed to improving vulnerable seniors’ access to healthy food options via home-delivered meals and in congregate meal settings at senior centers throughout Georgia.

Outcome: Increase the number of people served through congregate meal sites from 13,744 to 14,578 by June 30, 2019.

Year	Target	Results
Baseline >>13,744		
SFY 2017	13,744	15,271
SFY 2018	14,153	15,311

Outcome: Increase the number of people served through home-delivered meals from 12,445 to 13,203 by June 30, 2019.

Year	Target	Results
Baseline >>12,445		
SFY 2017	12,445	12,666
SFY 2018	12,818	13,645

More Educated Georgia

DHS supports programs at the local level that are proven to boost educational outcomes for children in foster care. These programs emphasize the importance of early childhood education and focus on the significance of a high school diploma and access to post-secondary opportunities.

Raise graduation rates for youth in foster care

DHS and DFCS recognize the difficulties children in foster care face when it comes to primary and secondary education. Historically, high school graduation rates for children in foster care have lagged far behind those of their peers.

In a pilot program underway in metro Atlanta counties since 2016, DFCS has been testing practices to see what efforts are most effective in engaging foster youth in their education. Strategies include:

- Offering roundtables in which youth in care can talk with adult supporters and caseworkers about their goals and the paths they would like to take after high school.
- Working to reduce the number of times youth go through the trauma and distraction of moving from one place to another.
- Rewarding improvement in school attendance.
- Intensifying tutoring for youth who are struggling with their schoolwork.

Outcome: Increase the percentage of youth in foster care who successfully graduate from high school from 17 percent to 75 percent by June 30, 2019.

Year	Target	Results
Baseline >> 17%		
SFY 2017	17%	25%
SFY 2018	46%	25%

Help children in care improve achievement

The primary mission of the DFCS Educational Programming, Assessment and Consultation (EPAC) Services Unit is to improve reading and math abilities of children ages 5-18 in foster care. EPAC provides diagnostic educational assessments, tutoring and connection to community-based educational support.

Outcome: Increase the percentage of EPAC referrals for youth in foster care from 46 percent to 90 percent by June 30, 2019.

Year	Target	Results
Baseline >> 46%		
SFY 2017	46%	55%
SFY 2018	68%	76%

More Responsible & Efficient Government

DHS has concentrated on developing talent and modernizing the process for hiring, recruiting and retaining DHS employees. The Department also works to cultivate and maintain a positive relationship with the public and key stakeholders with customer-centered, responsive policies and practices, and it takes the lead on initiatives that promote self-sufficiency and independence as an alternative to incarceration.

Recruit and retain talent

DHS continues to work to improve employee development and retention. Key initiatives implemented in SFY 2018 were:

- Advancing the onboarding process from paper to digital, dramatically reducing the time it takes to fill a position after it is posted
- Establishing awards programs that recognize exceptional work of employees statewide

Outcome: DHS has exceeded its target to maintain the staff annualized turnover rate at 20.68 percent or lower.

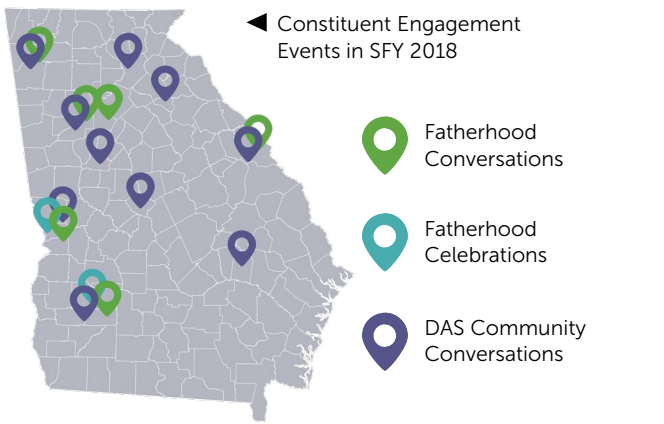
Year	Target	Results
Baseline >>20.68%		
SFY 2017	20.68%	19.93%
SFY 2018	20.68%	13.50%

Boost child support payments through PACs

The Parental Accountability Court program is a joint effort of the Division of Child Support Services and Superior Court judges to offer alternatives to jail that help chronic nonpayers of child support make regular payments. The program’s success is shown in increased child support collections from parents who otherwise would be unable to pay.

Outcome: Increase collections from parents in PAC to \$1,166,390 by Sept. 30, 2019. (DCSS runs on the Federal Fiscal Year, which runs from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30.)

Year	Target	Results
Baseline >>\$547,489		
FFY 2017	\$737,489	\$1,463,013
FFY 2018	\$999,763	\$1,629,280



Engaging with constituents statewide

In SFY 2018, DHS hosted events to show its work and hear back from constituents in communities throughout Georgia. Chief among these were events to raise awareness about the DCSS Fatherhood program, which helps parents who are under court orders to pay child support connect with opportunities for better employment. Also, the Division of Aging Services hosted community conversations around the state to gather and act on public input for refining the Division’s plan to address communities’ needs for their aging populations.



DIVISION ACCOMPLISHMENTS





DIVISION OF AGING SERVICES

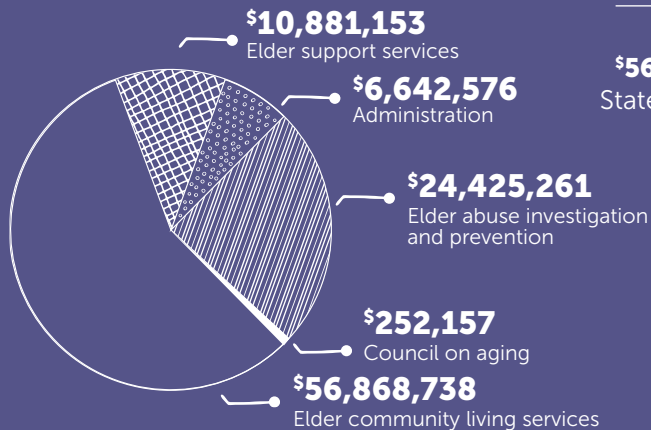
Mission

The Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Aging Services (DAS) supports the larger goals of DHS by assisting older individuals, at-risk adults, persons with disabilities, their families and caregivers to achieve safe, healthy, independent and self-reliant lives.

Vision

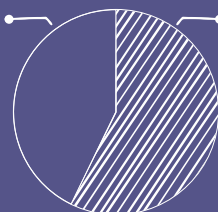
Living longer, living safely,
living well.

Budget Highlights



\$56,795,729
State Funding

\$42,274,156
Federal Funding



For SFY 2018 expenditures,
see Appendix D.

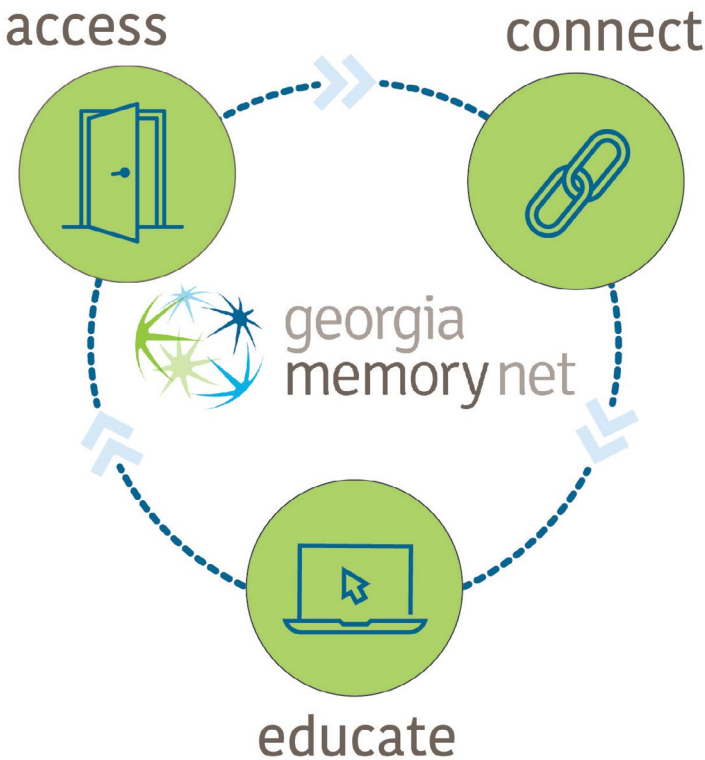


DAS Accomplishments

Georgia Memory Net expands access to dementia diagnosis

Georgia has the nation’s 11th-fastest growing 60-and-older population. It is estimated that by the year 2025 there will be more than 190,000 Georgians with Alzheimer’s, a growth of 50,000 over 2016. In Georgia, an estimated 80 percent of seniors with self-reported cognitive impairment have not been evaluated or treated, according to researchers with Emory University.

In SFY 2018, The Georgia General Assembly appropriated \$4.12 million to develop Georgia Memory Net (GMN), taking a major step toward better understanding and responding to the impact of Alzheimer’s and related dementias in the state. The project will provide access to early detection and diagnosis and support for those living with dementia as well as their care partners. (See Appendix J)



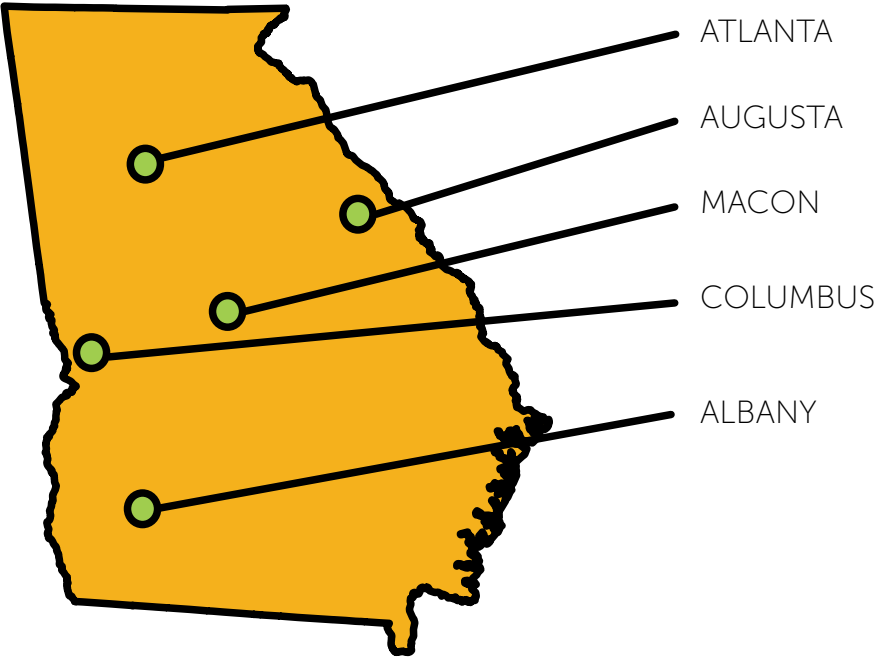
Key elements of Georgia Memory Net’s work

GMN is training Memory Assesment Clinic (MAC) providers and staff, primary care providers (PCPs) and community partners to ensure better care and connections with support networks.

The training includes familiarity with the cognitive assessment that is available as part of the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit, as well as with the diagnostic protocol.

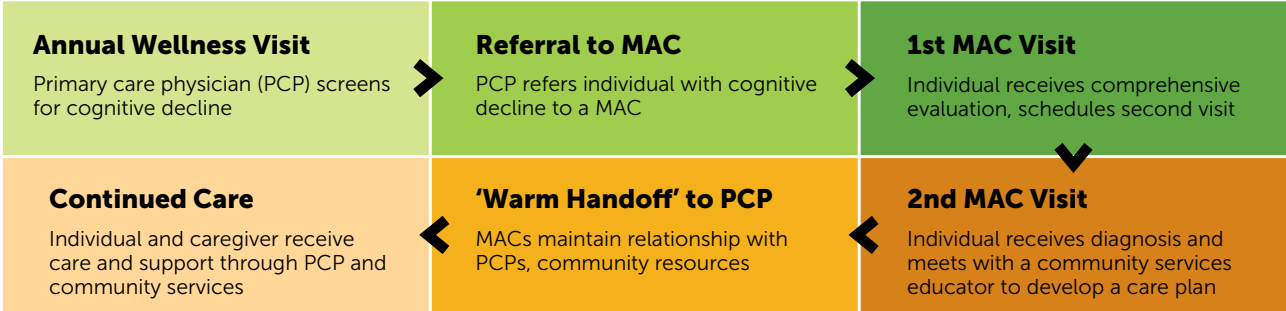
GMN will collect de-identified diagnostic data to share with the Georgia Alzheimer’s Disease Registry, designed to monitor prevalence of Alzheimer’s and other dementias in Georgia.

MACs around the State



◀ Five Memory Assessment Clinics (MACs) have been established, each linked to an academic health care institution. A key goal of GMN is to place all Georgians within a 90-minute drive of a clinic where they can receive an accurate diagnosis and referrals to supportive services.

How the GMN process works, from first screening to continued care



This flow chart demonstrates the Georgia Memory Net experience from the individual’s perspective.

DAS Accomplishments

Division of Aging Services unveils first-ever state plan on senior hunger

The Department debuted the state’s first-ever plan to address senior hunger in September 2017 at its second annual Senior Hunger Summit, a gathering of policymakers, business leaders and aging advocates from across the state. Georgia ranks near the bottom of states for food security among seniors. With the plan, the Department is seeking solutions to the hunger issues that more than 300,000 older Georgians face.

Among the focus areas of the plan were the health impact of senior hunger, food waste and reclamation, and meeting the community’s needs. (See Appendix F)



Working on recommendations from the state plan, in SFY 2018, the Division:

Hired a DHS senior hunger coordinator to manage all state senior hunger plan initiatives.

Identified coordinators in each of the state’s 12 service regions to support a local hunger coalition to help address senior hunger at the community level. The coalitions will connect the state’s aging network with corporate, nonprofit, faith-based, civic and health care entities, as well as older adults and their caregivers to address senior hunger.

Expanded the What A Waste program to ensure best use of existing resources and shared best practices in congregate meal settings.

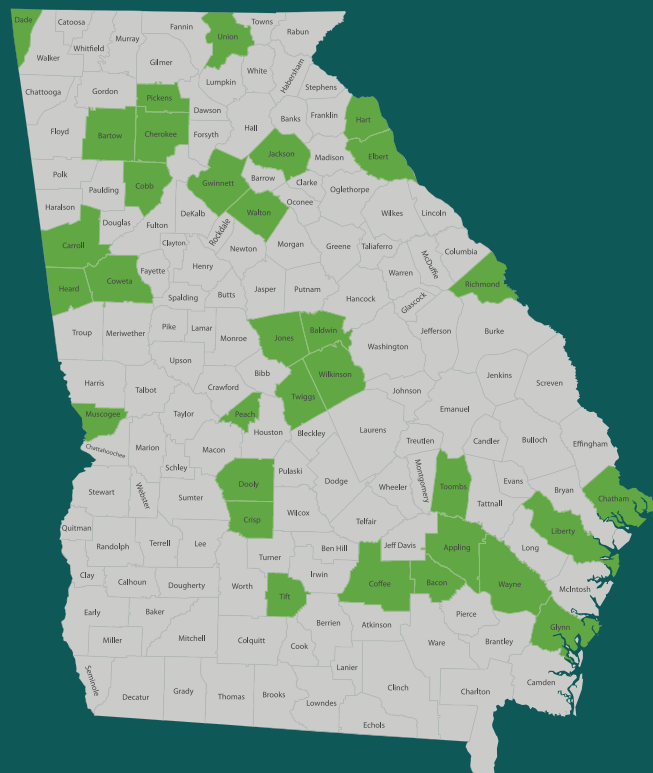
Planned for “seed money” grants to support the work of addressing senior hunger in the state’s 12 service regions in SFY 2019.

In an initiative called What A Waste, NFESH teams analyzed plate waste and pan waste at 27 senior centers around the state over 45 days. The analysis revealed that, with no changes, more than 36 tons of food would have been wasted in a year at those sites alone.

The foods most wasted were the most nutritious – vegetables and main course. In a year, this waste alone would have equaled 42,000 meals.

The analysis allowed senior center staff to make better informed decisions in ordering and preparing food that meets the nutritional needs of older Georgians. Most of the 27 sites reduced either pan waste, which is prepared food that goes unserved, or plate waste, which is served food that goes uneaten.

In an effort to address senior hunger in Georgia communities and improve nutrition for older adults who come to the state's senior centers for meals, the Division will expand the NFESH project to four more sites in North Georgia in SFY 2019.



The 36 senior centers participating in the NFESH What A Waste initiative are located in 32 Georgia counties. Nine centers were part of the pilot phase in SFY 2017 and 27 were added in Phase 2, in SFY 2018.

DAS Accomplishments

Mini-grants raise profile of assistive technology

In SFY 2018, The Division of Aging Services awarded mini-grants to four Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) in south and west Georgia to raise awareness of assistive technology (AT), which helps individuals who have trouble with mobility, vision or hearing loss and other issues live at home for as long as possible. In-person AT demonstrations and outreach events funded by the mini-grants reached 252,394 people.

All 12 of the state's AAAs have AT toolkits for public demonstrations. (See Appendix D). Nine AAAs have labs in which people can try out equipment that could enhance their quality of life and independence. A lab in the Coastal Area Agency on Aging allows visitors to enter a studio-style apartment and experience the ways AT can be used in real life, trying out items such as a Robo-Twist jar opener or non-slip plates and bowls.

In June 2018, the AT program at River Valley Regional Commission was featured on a TV show that reached 250,000 viewers.

success story: assistive technology

Simple solution allows Valdosta senior to get back in the game

Ms. L. had been very active in her local senior center in Valdosta when, inexplicably, she began to withdraw. Staff began to notice that the once-active bridge player was only attending the senior center once per week and had stopped staying for bridge after her meal. When asked about her lack of participation, Ms. L. said rheumatoid arthritis had made it impossible for her to hold a deck of cards. She attended the senior center for socialization and had always looked forward to playing the game with her friends; but, because she could not hold a deck any longer, Ms. L. began to avoid participation.

After hearing this, the staff immediately offered for her to visit the local assistive technology (AT) lab where she could seek a piece of technology that would restore her sense of independence.

At the AT lab, Ms. L. found a card player holder. For \$7, Ms. L. was able to regain a key social connection and began returning to the senior center every weekday. She now receives a hot meal five days per week and is able to happily play cards with her friends once again.



Older Adults Cabinet works on priorities

Co-chaired by First Lady Sandra Deal and then-DHS Commissioner Robyn A. Crittenden, Georgia's Older Adults Cabinet (OAC) prioritized three areas in SFY 2018: fighting abuse, neglect and exploitation, easing access to services and developing a workforce to serve Georgia's aging population. (See Appendix K).

Formed in January 2017, the Cabinet is a forum for policymakers, leaders of state agencies and others to share ideas to improve the well-being of Georgia's older residents.

In SFY 2018, the OAC:

- Raised awareness of abuse, neglect and exploitation among Georgia's aging population.
- Identified the need to promote the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) to better serve Georgia's aging population.
- Identified Hope Career Grants as an opportunity to develop Georgia's workforce to serve older adults

DAS Accomplishments

SFY 2018 Clients Served by Planning and Service Areas

(See Appendix D)

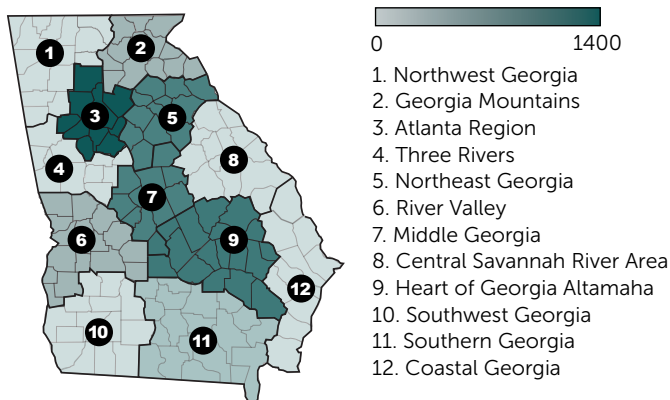
Region	Aging and Disability Resource Connection	GeorgiaCares	Home and Community Based Services	Money Follows the Person	Nursing Home Transitions	Adult Protective Services
Atlanta Region	36,996	N/A	9,982	50	19	6,177
Central Savannah River Region	8,781	N/A	2,349	17	11	1,152
Coastal Georgia Region	5,030	291	2,334	9	10	1,203
Georgia Mountains Region	7,110	1,837	2,837	8	4	1,329
Heart of Georgia Region	3,539	243	1,333	19	11	664
Middle Georgia Region	7,624	1,214	1,755	16	12	1,102
Northeast Georgia Region	6,385	1,174	2,533	13	13	1,194
Northwest Georgia Region	6,744	968	3,136	20	11	1,970
River Valley Georgia Region	4,254	1,054	1,455	17	8	779
Southern Georgia Region	8,570	1,712	1,709	18	14	951
Southwest Georgia Region	6,340	2,005	2,141	8	11	750
Three Rivers Region	5,914	1,454	2,346	19	9	1,069
State DAS/CILS*	0	82	0	50	44	0
Georgia Legal Services Program*		2,224				

*Centers for Independent Living, Concerted Services and Georgia Legal Services Program are specific to GeorgiaCares, Money Follows the Person and Nursing Home Transitions.

An aging Georgia will need more access to services

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates 20 percent of Georgia's population will be 60 or older in 2030, compared with about 16 percent in 2012. As the state's aging population grows, so will demand for services. (See Appendix D). The number of seniors requesting home-delivered meals continues to rise. Despite increased funding in SFY 2018, the monthly average number of seniors on the waiting list for home-delivered meals was 2,782 — up from 2,585 in SFY 2017.

Home-delivered meals wait list



Partnerships are essential to the Department's strategy to meet rising demand for services. To strengthen its work on aging issues, DAS partners with law enforcement and multidisciplinary teams — groups like AARP and the National Foundation to End Senior Hunger, and universities like Emory University and Georgia Tech — to orchestrate projects such as Tools for Life, an assistive technology initiative, and Georgia Memory Net, a program that addresses Alzheimer's and related dementias. As DAS faces future large-scale challenges, public and private partnerships will be more important than ever.

Transportation will continue to be a complex issue

In a report prepared for DAS, researchers at Georgia State University's Georgia Health Policy Center found that more than 196,000 Georgians age 70 and older have an unmet transportation need. (See Appendix G). The researchers also looked at the unmet transportation needs of seniors in rural areas, and found very few transportation services for older adults, other than the DHS Coordinated Transportation System, exist outside metro Atlanta. Rural services typically include voucher and volunteer programs, as well as demand-response services, which unlike fixed-route services, are often limited to such purposes as medical appointments and require riders to call in advance.

Ultimately, easing access to transportation will require local, flexible approaches. Three major barriers are lack of funding, lack of available transportation in some areas of the state and the remoteness of some consumers from transportation services. Potential remedies could be expansion of volunteer and voucher programs and utilization of different types of vehicles based on factors like distance and the purpose of the trip.

Transportation by the numbers:

- **263,000** Georgians age 70+ do not drive.
- **5,800** nondrivers age 70+ met their transportation needs via public transit.
- **23,000** nondrivers age 70+ met their need by walking.
- **37,877** clients were served by DHS- and Department of Community Health-funded transportation services.





DIVISION OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

Mission

Our mission is to increase the reliability of child support paid by parents when they live apart from their children by:

Locating parents

Establishing paternity

Establishing and enforcing
fair support orders

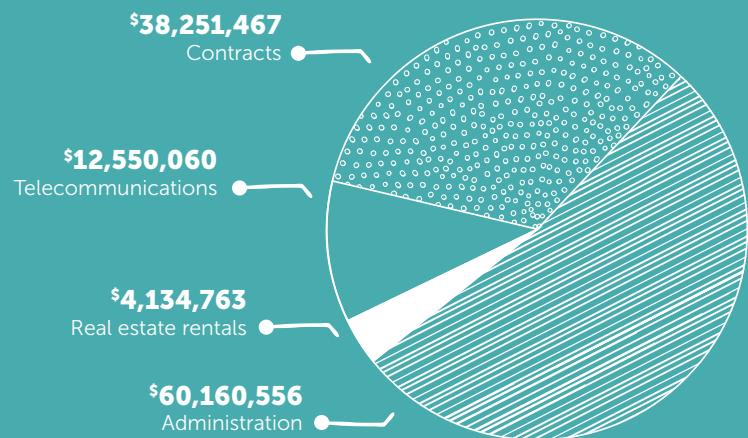
Increasing health care
coverage for children

Removing barriers to payment by
referring parents to employment
services, supporting healthy co-parenting
relationships, supporting responsible
fatherhood, and helping to prevent and
reduce family violence.

Vision

By emphasizing customer service and adhering to its fiscal responsibility, the DHS Division of Child Support Services strives to set a national standard for collections and best practices on behalf of children who deserve financial, emotional and parental support.

Budget Highlights



See Appendix L

DCSS Accomplishments

DCSS On the Go app updated, wins awards

DCSS On the Go is a full-service mobile application that puts everything parents need to manage their child support cases in the palm of their hand. Georgia is the first state to deploy a full-service mobile app to serve individuals with state-administered child support cases. (See Appendix L).

FACTS

- Released in **September 2016**
- Gained more than **79,000** active users in Federal Fiscal Year 2018
- Additional features debuted in **March 2018**

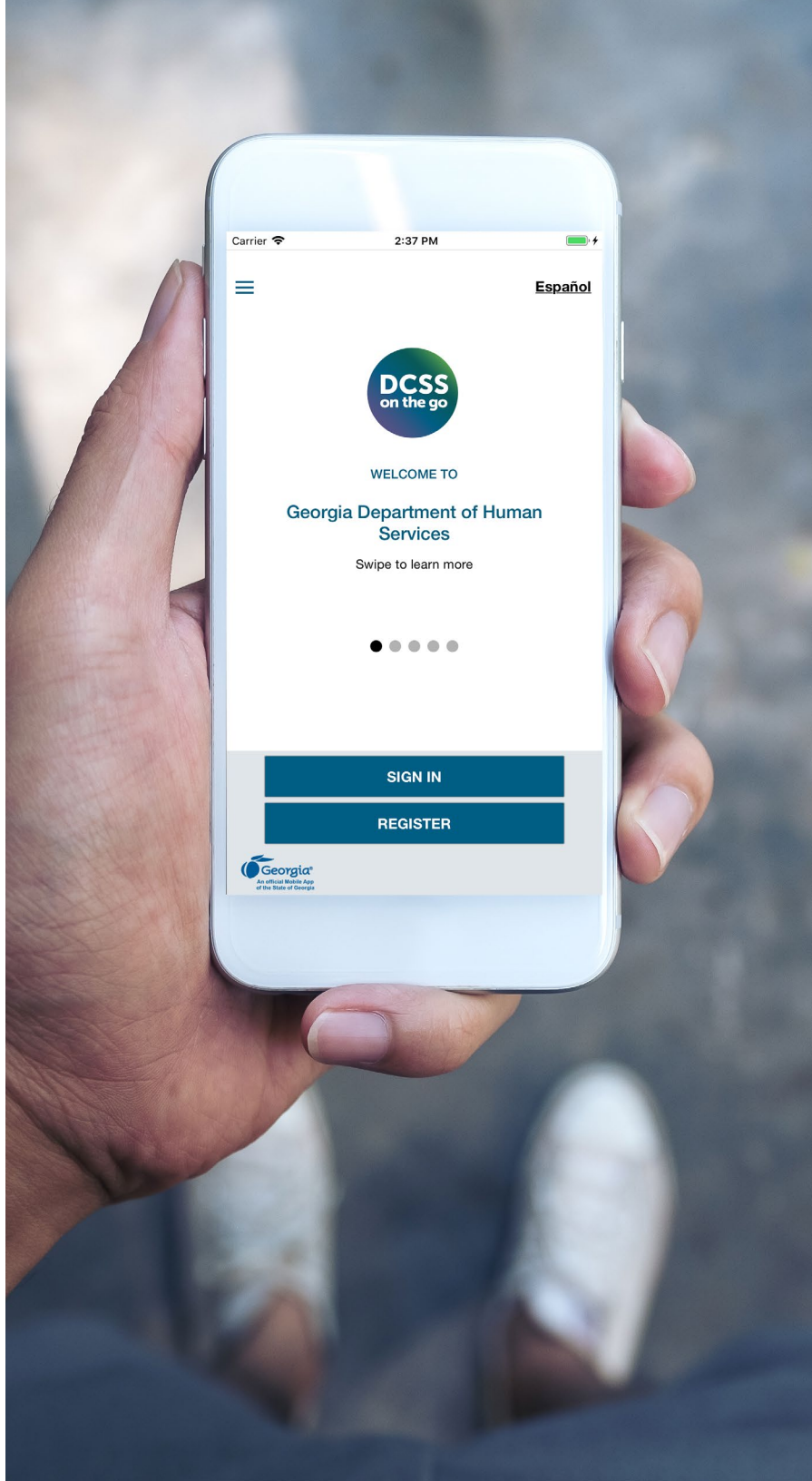
FEATURES

- Upload documents
- Request case closure
- Make direct deposit changes
- Submit payment
- View payment history
- Check case status
- View scheduled appointments
- Learn about driver's license reinstatement
- View case activity

AWARDS

The app won national awards in SFY 2018 from:

- The National Association of State Chief Information Officers
- The American Public Human Services Association



Participant says success began with 'small steps'

Richard, of Brunswick, who graduated from the Fatherhood program in October 2018, tells his story:

I am thankful for the many ways in which the Fatherhood program has helped me. I have made some awful mistakes in my life and was bound by the disease of addiction for many years. I ended up getting into trouble a few years back, which sent me to a correctional facility. As a result, I was also blessed to get into a rehabilitation program that saved my life.

By the time of my release in March 2018, I had fallen three years behind in child support. I also had not been able to see my twins or assist my ex-wife in raising them. When I was released, I enrolled in the Fatherhood program and worked closely with my Fatherhood agent, Ms. Johnson, who helped guide me in the steps I needed to take to gain employment and support my children emotionally and financially. Since enrollment, I have secured a very good job and have started making payments every week for my twins. I have also reached out and began communicating with my ex-wife. Soon, I expect that I will be seeing my kids again regularly, which gives me the opportunity to be the father that I need to be for them. I am taking small steps in this process, but I know that my overall goals are possible thanks to the Fatherhood program.

DCSS Accomplishments

Fatherhood program enrolls more than 6,500

Since 1997, the DCSS Fatherhood program has helped noncustodial parents avoid having to appear in court for contempt. It is an employment-based program that focuses on providing services that can help the noncustodial parent achieve self-sufficiency. The program offers driver's license reinstatement, GED enrollment, job training, job search/ placement, volunteer work opportunities, and support order modification, where applicable. (See Appendix N).

Fatherhood by the numbers:

6,511

participants enrolled in the program in Federal Fiscal Year 2018 (FFY 2018).

1,340

noncustodial parents enrolled in GED classes through the program in State Fiscal Year 2018 (SFY 2018).

1,178

parents enrolled in short-term training programs in SFY 2018, compared with 378 in SFY 2017.

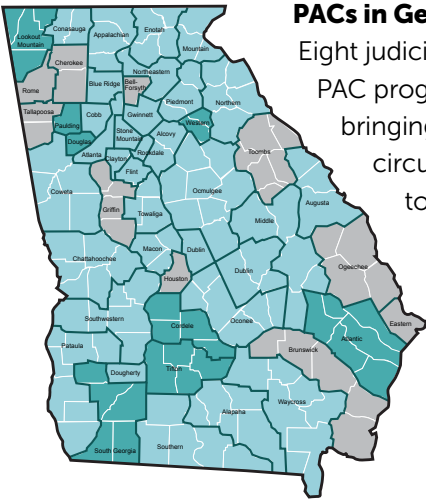


▲ Father and son attend a job fair at a Fatherhood Celebration in Albany in March 2018. In SFY 2018, DCSS hosted events in Albany and Columbus to introduce parents to the Fatherhood program, while also connecting them with job opportunities. [Source: WALB]

DCSS Accomplishments

Parental Accountability Court program expands

The Parental Accountability Court (PAC) program is a joint effort of the Division and superior court judges to offer an alternative to incarceration and 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 such as substance abuse, illiteracy and mental health issues. Each program, including services provided to participants, is tailored to the needs of the local community. (See Appendix M).



PACs in Georgia

Eight judicial circuits committed to join the PAC program in State Fiscal Year 2018, bringing the total number of participating circuits to 38. The Division's goal is to have a Parental Accountability Court in all 49 judicial circuits by the end of SFY2019.

- Judicial Circuits
- No Parental Accountability Court
- Parental Accountability Court
- Courts Added SFY2018

The PAC program has helped **6,212** participants avoid incarceration since SFY2012. In that time, the program has allowed DCSS to collect **\$6.6 million** in monthly support, benefiting **9,461** children who were not receiving regular support from both parents.

Program provides an 'opportunity to change'

Russell, who entered the PAC program in Waycross in January 2017 and graduated in April 2018, tells his story:

A few years back, I was involved in two serious car accidents. I found myself in a situation where I was getting behind on my responsibilities, which landed me in front of a judge for contempt of court. I guess I lost hope and the inevitable threat of incarceration was looming over me. My judge said to me, 'I am going to give you an opportunity to change this situation.' That is when I was enrolled into the PAC program.

In the program, I met a very special person that would change my way of thinking and how I navigate life's little problems, and her name is [PAC Program Coordinator] Heather Miller. She showed me that you can recover from a situation. It wasn't always easy but if you want it and you work hard enough, it will happen. While in the PAC program, I was introduced to a support program that, with a little effort, can change your circumstances for the better and prove that you're not alone.

Had it not been for Judge Jeffrey Kight [Pierce County, Waycross Circuit], the PAC program and Heather, there is no doubt in my mind that I would be in jail and still no better off.

DCSS Accomplishments

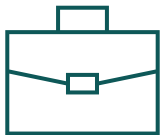


Employer-centered initiatives bolster vital relationships

Relationships with employers play an intricate role in the Division's work for Georgia families. DCSS is working hard to support employers whose partnership is vital. The centerpiece of the work is the statewide Employer Hub launched in January 2018. The Hub streamlines paperwork for Federal Income Withholding (FIW) and automates electronic wage withholding. It serves as a single point of contact for employers, giving them access to customer service agents who can help them comply with income withholding orders. The employer Hub is divided into three units: FIW support, employer outreach and audit performance. Each plays a critical role in working with and educating employers on income withholding processes.

DCSS held its first Employer Symposium in Waycross in June 2018 to help employers with questions about the income withholding process and discuss other issues related to child support. Symposiums will continue in the future, with the next one planned for the metro Atlanta in the spring of 2019. (See Appendix L).

Employer Hub by the numbers:



Processed more than **41,000** cases



Released more than **1,500** driver's licenses



Serviced more than **2,600** calls through the help line (rolled out in March 2018)

Challenges Ahead

DCSS will need to promote 'service' approach

The word "Enforcement" was replaced with "Services" in the Division's name nearly a decade ago, but the challenge remains to win back the trust of parents who have been court-ordered to pay child support and are wary of any contact with the state for fear of winding up in jail. The Division's outreach and communications are geared to emphasize to parents the positive aspects of providing financial and emotional support for their children. DCSS has launched and refined self-service options so parents can conduct most of their child support business without having to set foot in an office.

With the Fatherhood and Parental Accountability Court programs, DCSS helps parents overcome barriers to paying court-ordered child support. Self-service options like the award-winning DCSS On the Go mobile app affirm that the time parents spend with their kids and at their jobs is valuable. The Division will continue to be creative with outreach and communications, recognizing the critical need to build trust with parents as the department strives to build stronger families for a stronger Georgia. (See Appendix L).





Challenges Ahead

Evolving 'gig' economy could affect collections

More than 40 percent of U.S. workers will be independent contractors by 2020, according to the American Payroll Association. Parents with child support orders who participate in the "gig" economy, including driving for Uber, taking on chores through TaskRabbit or delivering food with GrubHub, eliminate the Division's ability to collect support through Federal Income Withholding (FIW) orders. Currently, 53 percent of Georgia child support cases are paid through FIW orders.

Child support cases in which parents are current on their payments have hovered at around 63 percent of Georgia cases for the past three years. That figure is slightly below the national average of 65 percent, and has remained flatter than expected.

It isn't clear how much "gig" jobs are affecting FIW and support in Georgia, but the implications of a slip in current child support are serious in a state with nearly 400,000 cases serving more than a half-million children.

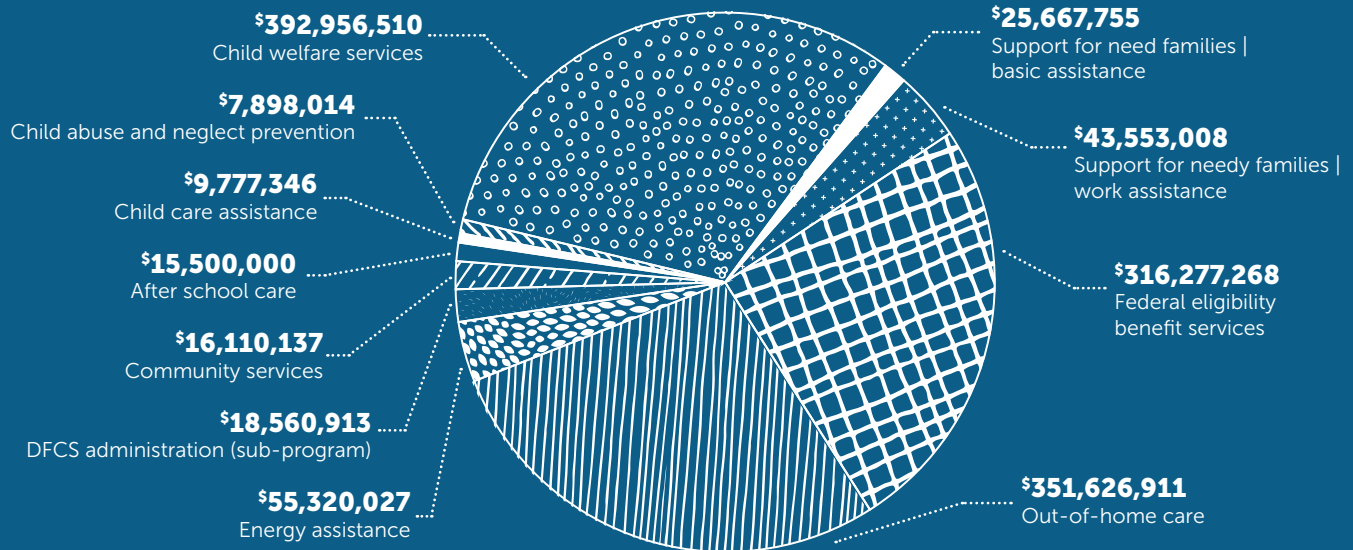
DCSS will need to delve into the implications for Georgia and shift its business model to continue to serve families in an ever-changing economy.





DIVISION OF FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES

Budget Highlights



The Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS) serves more than 1 million Georgians through its Child Welfare unit and the Office of Family Independence (OFI).

- Child welfare finds adoptive and foster homes for neglected children and investigates reports of child abuse.
- OFI accepts applications for Medicaid, assists low-income families with income supplements through Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and

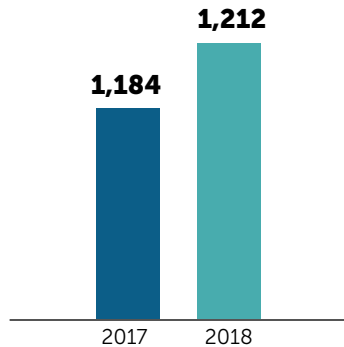
manages the SNAP (food stamp) program.

- OFI also provides eligibility determination services for SNAP, TANF, and the state's Medical Assistance/Medicaid programs through Georgia Gateway (see more about Georgia Gateway on page 41)

DFCS issues a separate annual report (Appendix B), which can be viewed at dfcs.ga.gov.

DFCS By the Numbers

Child welfare

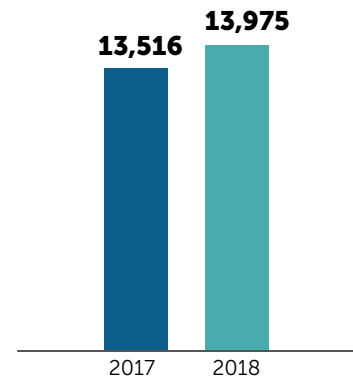


Adoptions increased in SFY 2018 to 1,212 from 1,184 in SFY 2017



1,590

Children available for adoption as of June 30, 2018



Children in foster care as of June 30, 2018



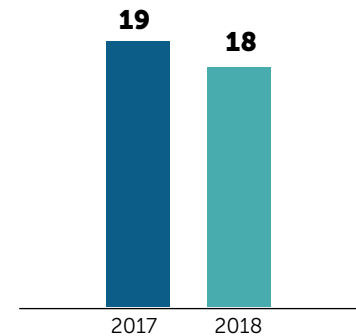
10,873

Children whose families were receiving services through the Family Preservation program as of June 30, 2018



49,897

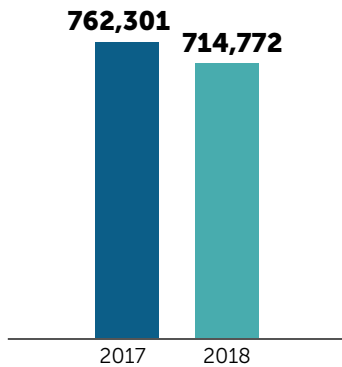
Children whose families were receiving shelter, food, parenting classes or health referrals through the Family Support program as of June 30, 2018



Average caseload for a DFCS child welfare caseworker has decreased to 18 since SFY 2017

DFCS By the Numbers

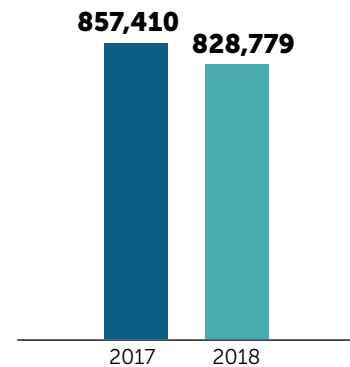
Family Independence



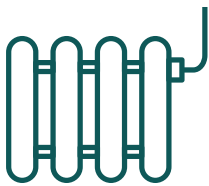
Monthly average number of households receiving food stamps has decreased 6 percent since SFY 2017



Average monthly SNAP benefit per household

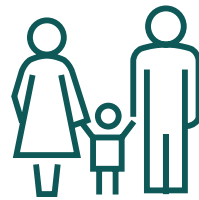


Number of families receiving Medicaid services each month has declined more than 3 percent since SFY 2017



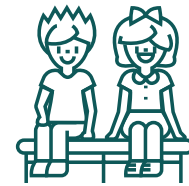
140,795

Number of households that received assistance from the federally funded Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program in the winter of 2017-2018



2,021

Monthly average number of caregivers receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to support a child relative in their home



9,235

Monthly average of TANF cases where only the children receive the TANF benefit

OTHER AGENCY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Other Agency Accomplishments

Georgia Gateway goes live, gains national recognition

Georgia Gateway, the state's automated system for making the benefits eligibility process a time-saver for constituents, went live in all 159 Georgia counties in September 2017. Gateway is the product of eight years of collaboration by five state agencies:

- Department of Human Services (DHS)
- Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)
- Department of Community Health (DCH)
- Georgia Technology Authority (GTA)
- Department of Public Health (DPH)

The largest information technology project in Georgia history, Georgia Gateway is a single point of access to benefits across multiple agencies and programs that serve more than 3 million people. Its universal identification tools reduce the potential for fraud, waste and abuse.

The system supports these benefits programs:



Since it began its pilot phase in February 2017, the system has processed more than 1.5 million new applications and 1 million renewals for its programs. In SFY 2018, the State of Georgia and the Department of Human Services received two national awards associated with Georgia Gateway:

- American Public Health Services Association (APHSA) Award for the Enterprise Master Person Index (EMPI), a key component of the implementation of Georgia Gateway
- StateScoop 50 Innovation of the Year Award for Georgia Gateway

(See Appendix B).

Other Agency Accomplishments

OIG employs faster, more effective tools in support of DHS

The DHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) has the responsibility of ensuring that all DHS programs and operational practices adhere to state and federal mandates for integrity, efficiency and accountability. In SFY 2018, OIG worked to streamline its own processes to make its roles in support of the Department’s work faster and more effective. The OIG office comprises five program units, two of which interface with the public: the Benefit Integrity and Recovery Unit and Residential Child Care Licensing.

RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE LICENSING

RCCL inspects, monitors, licenses and registers child care facilities, including child caring institutions, child placing agencies, outdoor child caring programs, children’s transition care centers and maternity homes.

In SFY 2018, RCCL:

- Launched a video complaint training module for surveyors, allowing them to train remotely.
- Fully implemented coordinated visits with DFCS and the Department of Juvenile Justice to reduce bureaucratic burdens on small businesses.

BENEFIT INTEGRITY AND RECOVERY UNIT

BIRU is charged with investigating reports of recipient fraud in public assistance programs such as foods stamps and TANF. Examples of suspected fraud include withholding or falsifying information to receive public assistance and trading or selling EBT cards in violation of program regulations.

In 2018, BIRU:

- Implemented a centralized payment processing center for collecting and posting SNAP and TANF overpayments, resulting in greater control and faster processing of payments. The center collected \$4.63 million in overpayments in SFY 2018.
- BIRU was ranked second in the southeast in FFY 2018 for the amount of collections recovered in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Mission

The Office of Inspector General proactively seeks to uncover fraud, waste and abuse by conducting independent and objective audits, investigations and other activities. The results have driven positive change in the management of DHS program administration and human capital management.

Programs

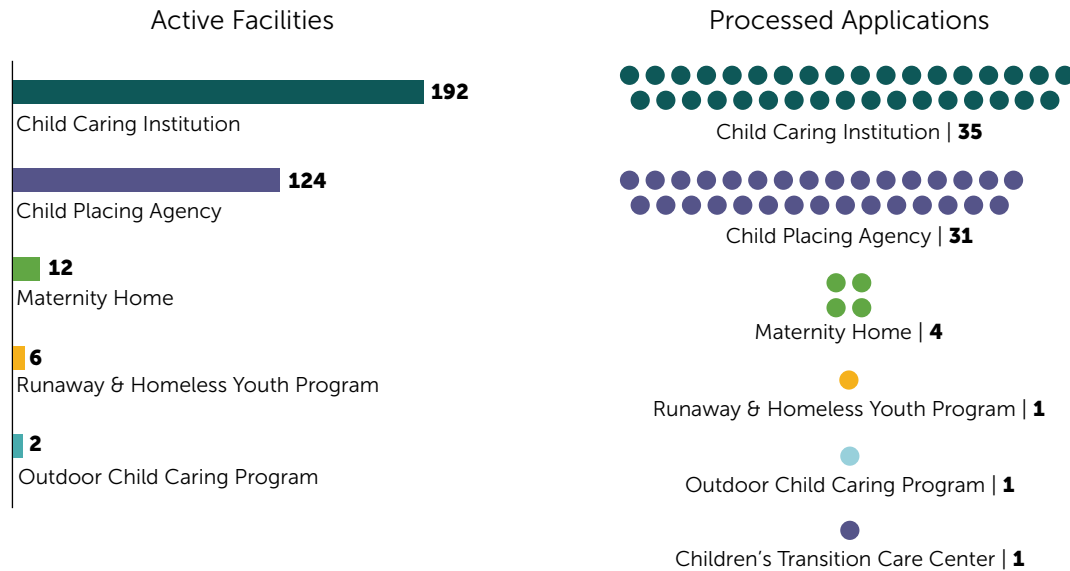
- Benefit Integrity & Recovery Unit
- Internal Audits
- Internal Investigations
- Residential Child Care

Functions

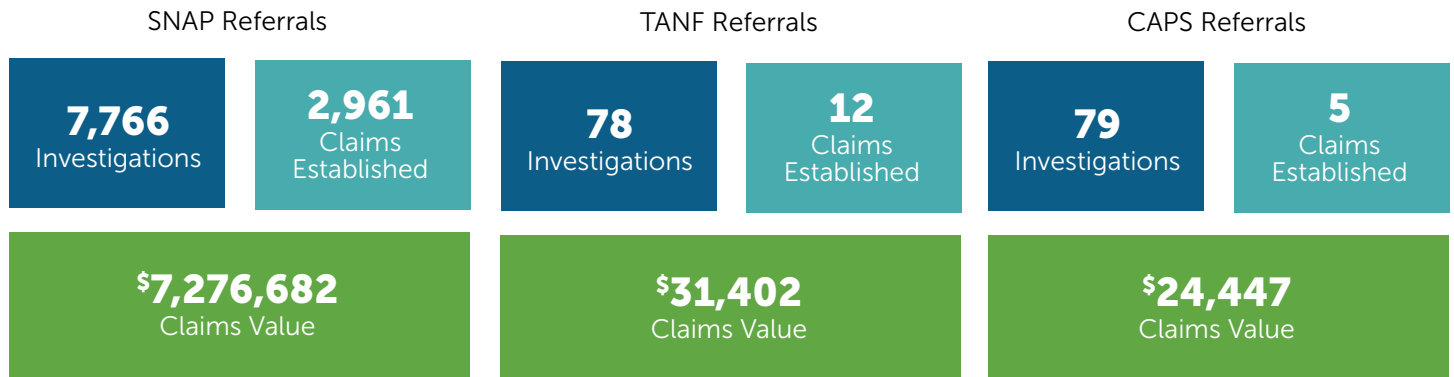
- Fiscal Operations
- Information Technology
- Legal Services and Policy
- Special Projects

Other Agency Accomplishments

RCCL highlights for SFY 2018



BIRU Snapshot for SFY 2018





DHS CONTACTS

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 & 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. – 2:00 p.m.

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, call or visit fostergeorgia.com or itsmyturnnow.dhs.ga.gov.

Call center hours are Monday - Thursday: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 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

All hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday unless otherwise noted.

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