



*Delaware Health and Social Services*

***Department of Health and Social Services***

***Division of Social Services***

**Joint Finance Committee Hearing  
Fiscal Year 2017**

***Ray Fitzgerald***

Division Director

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

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Senator McDowell, Representative Smith, other members of the Joint Finance Committee, and everyone else present, my name is Ray Fitzgerald and I am the Director of the Division of Social Services. I would like to introduce Tom Hall, the Deputy Director of the Division and Tom Jones, the Division's Chief of Administration. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Information pertaining to our Division's FY '17 Governor's Recommended Budget can be found in the attached Budget Overview handout.



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## **DSS Mission Statement**

To provide prompt, respectful, and accurate services that promote the potential for self-sufficiency for all Delawareans.

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Our mission statement is displayed and along with our tag line “Deliver, Support, and Serve” as well as our nine (9) guiding principles, “Respect, Customer Focus, Diversity, Continuous Improvement, Professional Development, Teamwork, Collaboration, Integrity, and Community Involvement” are the guideposts as the Division’s management and staff make decisions every day in pursuit of positive customer service outcomes.



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## **Pursuit of Excellence in Customer Service**

- **Our customers.**
- **Amazing staff at all levels.**

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Valuing and meeting the needs of our customers is our Division's most important objective. We understand that the vulnerable citizens who rely on the services we provide are our most important customers. The Division of Social Services also strives for continuous improvement in customer service. The most important tool in our toolbox to meet customer service expectations lies with our staff. Our staff members have done an amazing job under extreme circumstances meeting customer service expectations. The next few slides give examples of why I feel this way.



## Pursuit of Excellence in Customer Service (cont'd)



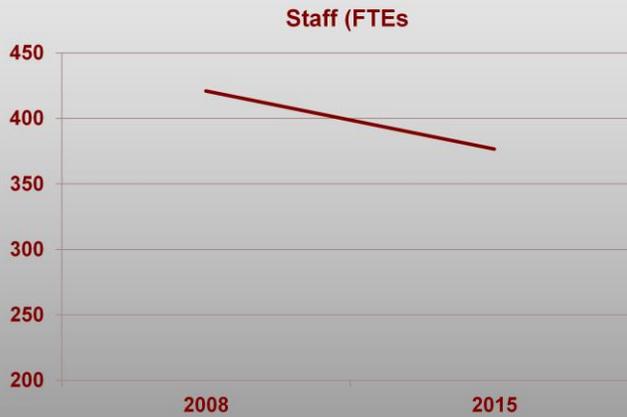
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Since 2008 the State's SNAP/Food Stamp client volume has increased by almost 100% (2008 - 77,259; 2015 - 150,521). The Medicaid client volume has increased by more than 40% during the same period (2008 - 156,159; 2015 - 224,198).



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## Pursuit of Excellence in Customer Service (cont'd)



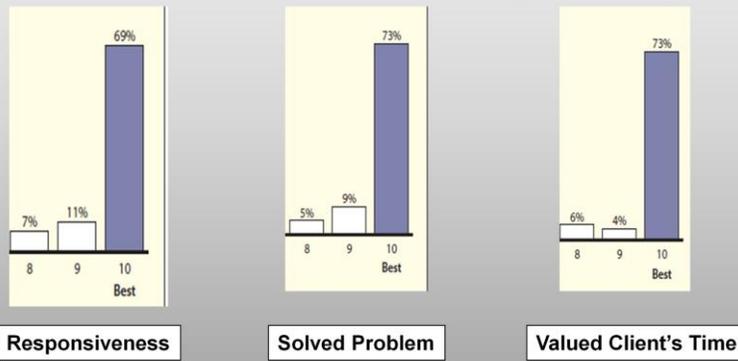
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At the same time the Division's staff complement has declined (2008 - 421; 2015 - 376.5).



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## Pursuit of Excellence in Customer Service (cont'd)



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In pursuit of excellent customer service, the Division hired a consulting firm, Iknow, LLC, to help us find ways to manage our work better. Iknow also worked with our clients and staff to develop a random client survey to help the Division understand the client's in-office experience so we can make client centered improvements at all of our locations.

An aggregate of the results of the surveys we have conducted so far are displayed above and in subsequent slides.

Over 300 clients were surveyed at multiple DSS offices in New Castle and Kent Counties over two (2) months. Using a rating system from 1-10 with a best rating of 10:

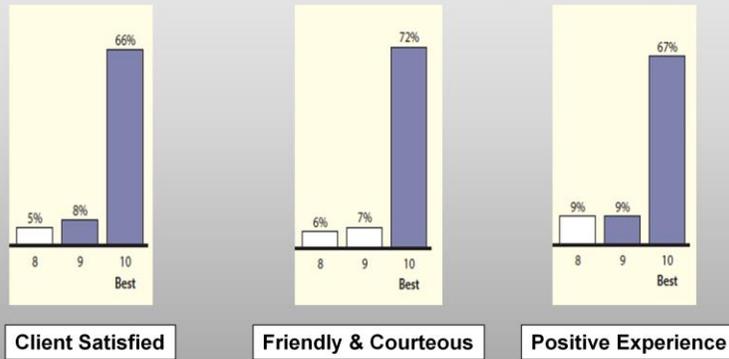
69% of the clients surveyed gave DSS staff a 10 rating for being responsive to their needs and concerns.

73% of the clients surveyed gave DSS staff a 10 rating for answering their questions or solving their problems.

73% of the clients surveyed gave DSS staff a 10 rating for valuing their time by working efficiently.



## Pursuit of Excellence in Customer Service (cont'd)



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66% of the clients surveyed gave DSS staff a 10 rating relative to their satisfaction with the results of their visit.

72% of clients surveyed gave DSS staff a 10 rating for staff friendliness and courteousness.

Finally, 67% of clients surveyed gave DSS staff a 10 rating for their overall interaction with DSS.

The results are encouraging and are a testament to the commitment and professionalism of our staff in achieving this level of client satisfaction, given the current workload and other challenges. Ultimately our goal is that 100% of our clients rate their in-office experience 10 in all areas. We are encouraged by the results, and we will continue to improve the service we provide to our clients.



# Volume/Integration/Complexity

**Counts of clients by benefit combination**

<u>% of total</u>	<u>Individuals</u>	<u>Combination</u>
46.83	140,293	MA-FB
32.59	97,638	MA
6.54	19,599	MA-CC-FB
6.18	18,519	MA-Cash-FB
4.62	13,833	FB
1.65	4,950	MA-CC-Cash-FB
0.66	1,990	MA-CC
0.29	873	MA-Cash
0.22	652	MA-CC-Cash
0.16	470	CC-FB
0.15	464	CC
0.09	274	Cash-FB
0.01	27	Cash
0.00	8	CC-Cash-FB
	299,590	Total Population

**Legend**

CC- Childcare  
 FB- Food Benefits  
 Cash- TANF/GA  
 MA- Medicaid

The current slide is included to present a snapshot of the types and combinations of cases in our case complement. Our policies and programs are very complex. The Division’s staff members must provide integrated service delivery for very different benefit programs. This snapshot, from earlier this month, provides an unduplicated breakout of our recipients.



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## **Promoting Self-Sufficiency**

- **Employment & Training**
- **Delaware WONDER Program**
- **Creating Employment Opportunities**

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Issuing benefits to our clients is only half of our mission. The DSS is committed to supporting our clients as they strive for self-sufficiency and take steps to learn skills that can lead to employment. Our TANF cash assistance recipients and adults without children who receive SNAP benefits are required to participate in our Employment and Training program offerings as a condition of continued eligibility, unless a disability is documented.

To represent the Division's commitment to promoting self-sufficiency for our clients, we applied for and were awarded a \$16.8 million dollar grant from the Food and Nutrition Service designed to test employment and training models that could potentially be mandatory for SNAP recipients nationwide. Our program is called Delaware WONDER (Work Opportunity Network to Develop Employment Readiness). The program started on 2/01/2016 and offers Manufacturing (Kraft Foods), Construction Trades (Eastside Rising), Culinary Arts (Food Bank of Delaware), and job search paths to our clients. We hope to serve between 5,000-6,000 SNAP clients over the three-year operational period.

The Division has a long standing program called the Work Experience Program. This program offers volunteer opportunities for clients to work in our offices to develop skills and relationships that will help them not only obtain employment but also to develop the skills necessary to sustain employment. During the Last fiscal year 74 clients participated in this program which led to full-time employment for 37 clients with the DSS or other employers.



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## Promoting Self-Sufficiency (cont'd)

- **CAI Partnership**



- **Hiring Vets with Disabilities**

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In keeping with the Governor's focus on employing our residents with disabilities, DSS entered a continuing partnership with CAI and Specialisterne in 2012 to hire, as contract employees, workers who have autism to complete the Division's document imaging work. The last fiscal year the Department expanded the program to other Divisions within the Department.

The Division also maintained our program to recruit and hire disabled veterans. Currently we have two (2) disabled veterans on staff, and we plan to expand the program in the next fiscal year.



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## **Promoting Self-Sufficiency (cont'd)**

- **Partnerships with Retailers**
- **Summer Meals**
- **Client Access**

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The DSS receives an annual grant from the Food and Nutrition Services to provide nutrition education for targeted low income populations throughout the State. We partner with the University of Delaware, Delaware State University, Nemours, and the Food Bank of Delaware to provide this service. Under this grant this year the Division is allocating grant funds, to partner with the Retailers' Association, to develop a program to provide nutrition education to the clients who visit our local offices. We will also develop and share information with clients designed to teach them how to stretch the food dollar, so they can maximize their limited resources.

This year represents the fourth year that DSS was awarded the Summer Electronic Benefit grant from the Food and Nutrition Services. The program provides \$30 or \$60 per child in the summer to families who received Free and Reduced Priced Meals during the school year. Delaware is authorized to provide this service to 17,000 students this year. Data shows that this program creates food security for participating families during the summer.

Ensuring that clients have access to our services is paramount to our mission to promote self-sufficiency. During the current fiscal year, Delaware received a food stamp bonus award of \$323,955 for achieving a program access rate greater than 95%. The program access rate is calculated by dividing the number of SNAP participants in the State by the estimated number of SNAP eligible people in the State. Delaware traditionally has one of the highest access rates in the nation.



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## **Technology Updates**

- **System Modernization**
- **Benefits**

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The final implementation of our system modernization project is scheduled for June of this year. This five-year project has been challenging but, as we approach the end of project life cycle, we expect that the finished product will be worth the effort. In November 2015, we initiated our third system upgrade related to the system modernization project. Soon after the upgrade in November we discovered some problems impacting child care providers and recipients that we were able to address within weeks of the upgrade. We have experienced other system challenges that our team is diligently working on to meet the needs of our customers. Addressing the challenges has been a team effort. The Department identified and provided additional resources to meet the challenges. Other Divisions within the Department provided staff to help manage the work. Our contractors and consultants doubled their project resources to ensure we meet project demands.

We expect the upgraded system will result in increased citizen access to information through the creation of online accounts; improved efficiency by creation of a worker dashboard to track and manage work more effectively; and automation of reports and processes. In the aggregate, our goal is to improve the service we provide to all of our customers.



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**THANK YOU!**

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I've tried to highlight the current status and short-term future of the Division of Social Services. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.