

Athens County Job & Family Services



2007-2008

Annual Report

Letter from the Director

Times are hard for many people in Athens County. Perhaps the hardest I have seen in the past thirty years. As always, the citizens of the county are willing to pull together to help our less fortunate neighbors. The services provided through our agency are one way in which we share with others. This report details the many services we provided during the past year.

Thank you for your continued support.

Jack Frech, Director

Serving the Poorest of the Poor

Ohio's cash assistance program for families with children is known as Ohio Works First (OWF). It is funded by the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. There are currently 130,000 children in Ohio who rely on the Ohio Works First cash assistance program. These children live in families who meet all of the rules for the "reformed" welfare system. Half of these children are living with their grandparents or other relatives.

A typical family of two on the Ohio Works First cash assistance program receives only \$336 a month in cash and \$298 in Food Stamps. When combined (\$634 per month), that is still \$533 a month below the federal poverty level. This means that the families of these children must make difficult choices between the necessities of food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and other basic needs.

The average OWF household size is now two, given the larger increase in child only cases. The most common OWF household consists of one or two children living with a relative caretaker, usually a grandparent. Of the roughly 80,000 households receiving OWF in June 2008, more than one-half (51%) were "child-only" cases, meaning that only the children in these households receive public assistance, not the adults. "Child-only" assistance groups have been steadily increasing over the past several years. More than 58% of OWF children are less than 13 years old. About 33% are under the age of six. Of the total caseload in June 2008, 74% were children.

We must place a greater priority on local, state and federal resources for the poorest of the poor. The gaping holes in the government safety net for Ohio families leaves many without sufficient income to meet their basic human needs of food, clothing, and shelter. Our government's failure to prioritize the needs of the poorest of the poor is causing increased hardships among those least suited to survive them. Simultaneously, other challenges facing many of these same families are growing worse as they must focus all of their energy on simply surviving. We must provide sufficient benefits through our safety net programs to meet all basic needs for these families. This is already a crisis for the people affected by these issues.



Mission

As the employees of the Athens County Department of Job & Family Services, we have been charged with the most serious and important responsibility in government, that of helping our fellow citizens who experience the despair of poverty, hunger, homelessness, and ill health.

We believe that our programs represent the conscience of society and that our strength lies in seeking a decent life for all.

Impacting Lives

During the past year, Athens County Job & Family Services has touched the lives of many county residents through our programs and services:

- ★ Financial Assistance: 27,031 people
- ★ Health Services: 21,742 people
- ★ Employment, Education & Training: 4,190 people; 1,392 gained employment
- ★ Community & Customer Service:
 - Received 227,382 phone calls
 - 55,360 visits to our agency
 - Involved in 68 community outreach events
 - Website had 15,293 visitors.
 - Voter registrations processed for 774 people.



Agency Expenditures

Expenditures

We are funded through a combination of Federal, State and County Government allocations that we administer. With funds that may be tailored to the needs of the community, we used them to create, support and deliver services to our poorest citizens.

Ohio Works First (OWF) Cash Assistance	\$ 2,785,446
Disability Assistance (Aged, Blind & Disabled)	392,618
Disability Medical Assistance (Aged, Blind & Disabled)	59,190
Prevention, Retention & Contingency (PRC)	1,248,395
Food Stamps	8,898,720
Medicaid	67,840,753
Contract Services	1,573,553
Administrative Costs	1,571,732
Direct Services	8,286,048
Child Support Enforcement	1,746,874

Fiscal Year July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008

\$ 94,403,329

Staffing

The agency employed 138 employees; in 4 buildings.

Contract Service Providers

- Appalachian Peoples Action Coalition
- Athens City-County Health Department
- Athens City School District
- Athens County Children Services
- Athens County Clerk of Courts
- Athens County Court of Common Pleas
- Athens County Family & Children First Council
- Athens County Juvenile Court
- Athens County Prosecuting Attorney
- Athens County Sheriff's Department
- Athens Farmers' Market
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters
- Buckeye Hills Hocking Valley Area Agency on Aging
- Edna Brooks Foundation
- Health Recovery Services
- Hocking College
- Hocking.Athens.Perry Community Action Agency
- OU College of Osteopathic Medicine
- OU COM Community Services Program
- OU Kids on Campus
- Retired Senior Volunteer Program
- Tri-County Career Center
- Tri-County Mental Health & Counseling
- Trimble Local Schools
- United Seniors of Athens County

Financial Assistance



27,031 people were served

Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) - Average of 29 providers/month received \$71,494 for food costs.
Assists child care providers with the cost of serving nutritious, well-balanced meals to children in daycare services.

Child Care Assistance - Average of 249 children/month were served by professional child care providers.
Athens County parents/guardians who are working or in school can get help to pay for child care with a certified provider.

Child Support Enforcement - 4406 open active cases with 6140 children involved.
The program's goal is to ensure that all children are supported financially by both parents. Services include: location of non-custodial parents; paternity establishment; establishment and modifications of child support orders; collection of child support payments and/or alimony; and enforcement of child support orders, medical support orders and alimony.

Computers for Families Project - 344 computers were given out to families.
Athens County families who meet TANF guidelines are eligible to receive a free personal computer for home use.

Disability Assistance (DA) - Monthly average of 312 recipients.
Provides cash and/or medical assistance to disabled individuals not eligible for other cash/medical assistance.

Emergency Food Line - Distributed 3,057 food boxes to 2,394 households; made up of 6,746 people.
The Food Line is responsible for screening telephone requests, determining eligibility, maintaining records and directing those in need to a food pantry distribution site.

Fast & Free Tax Assistance Center - Completed and filed 3,005 tax returns.
Provides free online tax preparation assistance utilizing IRS-certified volunteers to electronically file tax returns during tax filing season. Services are available to Athens County residents filing basic returns.

Food Stamp Program (Ohio Direction Card) - Monthly average of 7,919 people received benefits.
Food Stamp benefits can be used to buy food or food products intended for human consumption. In Ohio, Food Stamps are issued through the Ohio Direction Card, an electronic benefits debit card.

Ohio Works First (OWF) Program - Monthly average of 1,626 people received cash benefits.
OWF is a time-limited (36 months lifetime limit) cash assistance program for households with dependent children. The major goal of OWF is to help participants move toward employment.

Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) Program - 1,972 people received assistance.
A group of emergency and short-term assistance programs to help families with dependent children or a pregnant woman present in the household. The need should be emergent, unforeseeable and unavoidable. The assistance may be necessary for the health, safety and well being of the family, to prevent them from coming onto Ohio Works First, or to help gain or retain employment.

Transportation Services - 1,020 direct transports made; 18,318 gas vouchers issued; 301 bus tickets issued.
Transportation is available within Athens County to medical appointments and public agencies for recipients of Medicaid or Title XX eligible (over age 60 or income eligible). Vouchers to cover gas expenses or bus tickets are also available for medical appointments.



Health Services

21,742 people received services

Adult Protective Services (APS) - Served an average of 82 clients per month.

Referrals are taken from anyone having reasonable cause to believe an adult, age 60 or older, is being abused, neglected or exploited. The intent is to assist adults who are in danger of harm, unable to protect themselves and have no one else able to assist them.

County Medical Services (CMS) - Referrals for CMS were 1,126; submitted for disability determination was 673

Provides medical benefits for clients while going through the application process for disability determination.

Dental Program - 1,357 people served with 1,410 dental appointments.

Provides a case management approach linking Medicaid-eligible clients in need of dental service. Appointment reminders, appropriate referrals, transportation, and other support services are provided. Dental education is provided to clients, schools and community groups. For a client not Medicaid-eligible, attempts are made to link the client with dental care.

Healthchek - Monthly average of 4,996 children in Medicaid program; 1,494 had healthchek visits.

A group of prevention and treatment services through Medicaid, for children up to the age of 19, to get or stay healthy.

Homemaker Home Health Aide Program - Monthly average of 57 clients had 2,452 home visits.

Provides homemaker and home health aide services to clients 60 years of age and older.

Medicaid - Monthly average of 10,732 clients received Medicaid coverage.

Health care coverage for certain low-income and medically vulnerable people. Medicaid programs include coverage for: families, children & pregnant women; aged, blind and people with disabilities; women with breast/cervical cancer; and Institutional Care.

Medicare Premium Assistance Program - Assisted 1,827 clients.

Assists Medicare recipients with limited income and assets by paying the cost of Medicare premiums, deductibles, and coinsurance.

Planet Teen: Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program - 1,632 individuals received information.

Emphasizes refusals, delaying tactics and alternative actions that students can use to abstain or utilize protections. Also teaches interpersonal and social skills; and motivates students to resist or change high-risk behaviors.

Pregnancy Related Services - Monthly average of 83 pregnant women.

Provides enhanced support and linkage with resources, to ensure a healthy outcome for mother and baby.

School Wellness (school nurse for Trimble Local Schools) - 4,682 individuals; with 7,662 encounters.

Provides health services, wellness education and community referrals for all students in the Trimble School District.

SSI Case Management - Assisted 621 clients.

Assist individuals, applying or in receipt of disability financial assistance, who might be eligible for SSI/SSD and assists them in the initial application and appeal process as necessary.

Wellness Advocate - Worked with 37 clients.

Case management program for OWF recipients who are unable to work due to a disability and unable to meet their work requirements. Helps clients gain access to various supportive services including medical needs/education.

Employment, Education & Training

4,190 people assisted; 1,392 gained employment

Adult Basic & Literacy Education (ABLE) - 83 people earned their GED.

Provides free instruction for adults who wish to improve their basic academic skills and/or prepare to take the GED (General Equivalence Diploma) test.

Computer Lab & Computer Training - 338 people attended computer training.

The Community Computer Lab is free and open to the public at The Work Station. Computer classes are taught on a scheduled basis. There are 13 computers with a variety of software and Internet access. The lab is also used to assist individuals with resume and cover letter writing, as well as online job searches and posting of resumes.

Employment Services - 1,517 people were assisted by employment counselors; 1,278 gained employment.

Employment Counselors can assist with job searches, resumes and employability skills. Services are open to any resident of Athens County.

Job Skills Class - 118 people attended; 37 self-reporting employment.

Assists with job skill training and finding employment.

Seek Work Program - 164 people participated in the program.

Assists with finding employment for non-custodial parents who are having difficulty making child support payments because they are either unemployed or underemployed.

Work Experience Program (WEP) - 1,790 clients participated at 68 work sites.

Provides an opportunity for individuals receiving Ohio Works First or Food Stamp benefits to acquire valuable training, skill development, work experience and possible job placement. Participants are placed in job settings with community employers for a set number of hours per month, depending on their type of assistance. They are not paid wages, but receive public assistance during the time of their work experience.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA): Adult & Dislocated Workers - 105 people enrolled; 28 graduated and 76 gained employment. Nine training providers were utilized for WIA training services.

Program provides individuals with employment and training services to obtain a job or find a better job. Services include, but not limited to: resume preparation, job search and placement assistance, employment statistics information, initial assessment, information on various community programs and services.

- Training programs include: Natural Sciences, Health Sciences, Education, Hospitality, Police Science, Business, Human Services, Transportation and various technologies. 60% of participants are in the health care fields.
- Training providers include: Hocking College, Tri-County Adult Career Center, Ohio University, Washington State community College, Buckeye Hills, University of Rio Grande, Mid-East JVS, Southern State Community college, Pike County JVS; 85% of WIA participants participate in Athens County programs.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA): Youth Services - 50 In-School youth enrolled, with 13 graduating and 30 returning; 25 Out-of-School youth enrolled, 9 earned degrees, 1 earned GED; 18 youth enrolled in the summer employment program.

Program that provides employment and training opportunities to eligible youth. Serves ages 14 through 21 and requires that the youth is a low-income individual. Enrollment in this program is limited.

Office Locations:

County Home Building

(State Route 13, Chauncey)

provides child support and family services.

Family Services:

(740) 797-2523 or 800-762-3775

Child Support:

(740) 593-5046 or 800-436-8933

Denver White Building

(184 N. Lancaster St., Athens)

provides age, blind, disabled services and health services.

(740) 592-4477 or 800-338-4484

Administrative Office

(Connett Rd., The Plains)

provides agency administration and fiscal oversight

(740) 797-2523 or 800-762-3775

The Work Station

(70 N. Plains Rd., The Plains)

provides employment & education services.

(740) 797-1405 or 877-351-0405



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For additional information about our programs; publications and reports; additional statistics, data and more information on poverty related issues; and IRis, the Athens County on-line resource directory, visit our website or contact Community Relations at 740-797-2523 or 1-800-762-3775.

Athens County Job & Family Services is an equal opportunity employer and service provider.

