

Annual Report

2020



Alabama Department of Human Resources

Our Mission

To provide for the protection, well-being, and self-sufficiency of children and adults.

Cover photo illustration:

Photos from Adobe Stock, Pexels, and Unsplash

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KAY IVEY
GOVERNOR
STATE OF ALABAMA



A Letter From the Commissioner



Dear Governor Ivey:

In Fiscal Year 2020, the staff of the Department of Human Resources proved that, when faced with a challenge, Alabama will rise to it. The biggest challenge this year was handling the changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since staff at DHR are considered essential workers, our first challenge was making all the necessary changes so our employees could continue serving the public in six major program areas while maintaining safety for themselves.

Our employees overcame the challenges of the pandemic and found innovative ways to continue providing vital services to the people of our state. We are extremely grateful to our staff for their perseverance and commitment to our mission. One of the most challenging projects was the implementation of P-EBT (Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer program) for Alabama's children eligible for free and reduced-price lunch at school. Alabama DHR issued over \$144 million in benefits to 460,958 eligible children across our state. More than 245,000 of those children were not current benefit recipients and had to be added to our system.

Our Food Assistance Division also distributed supplemental allotments that allowed SNAP clients to receive the maximum benefit for their family sizes, regardless of their eligibility, which gave approximately \$296 million in additional benefits to families. In March 2020, Alabama became the third state in the nation to join the national SNAP Online Purchasing Pilot, allowing SNAP recipients to make grocery purchases online with their EBT cards. Alabama residents can currently purchase food online at Amazon, Walmart, and Wright's Markets, Inc.

In early 2020, many Alabama child care facilities suspended operations in response to the pandemic. The Child Care Services Division worked diligently to give providers needed guidance and support to reopen. At the height of the closures, only 12% of facilities were open. Alabama DHR created the Temporary Assistance for Stabilizing Child Care grants to provide funding for the reopening of facilities. By September 30, more than 75% of child care facilities had reopened and over \$10 million in financial assistance had been awarded to 844 child care providers. The department also provided child care funds for children of health care workers and first responders due to the pandemic.

Another major accomplishment is that for the third year in a row, DHR set a record for the number of foster children who found permanency through adoption. In FY 2020, a total of 814 foster children were adopted compared to 731 in FY 2019 and 710 in FY 2018. This continued progress reflects the great emphasis that Alabama DHR and our vital partners have placed on permanency for children in foster care. Those efforts also include the return of about 70% of foster children to biological relatives.

Each program administered by DHR has continued to improve throughout FY 2020, as you will see in this Annual Report. As you review this report, you will find that our employees are extremely dedicated to their work and to the goals of the department. We are so appreciative of our staff and proud of their continued success during a period of unprecedented challenges. I am certain they will continue to perform compassionate work in FY 2021 and beyond. On their behalf, I present to you this FY 2020 Annual Report.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy T. Buckner". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Nancy T. Buckner
Commissioner



About Alabama DHR

The Department of Human Resources traces its history back to the Department of Child Welfare, an agency created by the Legislature in 1919 to serve at-risk children and families. During the Great Depression in 1933, the department gained the additional responsibility of administering financial assistance to a struggling American public. In 1935 with the passage of the Social Security Act, the department and most of its duties were absorbed by the newly created Department of Public Welfare.

In 1955, the department was renamed the Department of Pensions and Security. The current name was adopted in 1986. Some programs have changed over the years to meet the evolving needs of Alabama. However, the agency's primary goal has always been and always will be to help people in need.

MAJOR PROGRAMS

The department's major programs include Family Services, Food Assistance, Child Support, Child Care Services, Adult Protective Services, Family Assistance, and Emergency Welfare Services.

DIVERSE RESPONSIBILITIES

DHR has some of the most diverse responsibilities of any public or private agency. The agency's number one legal responsibility is to prevent the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children and vulnerable adults.

The agency also plays a major role in assisting needy families through the administration of the Food Assistance Program and the welfare block grant. Support services are provided to help families become self-sufficient. Approximately one of every four Alabamians is affected directly or indirectly by DHR programs, services, or functions.

DHR BOARDS

DHR operates under the State Board of Human Resources. The governor, who serves as board chairperson, appoints the board members who serve six-year terms. The state board approves major administrative actions, including the appointment of the commissioner. The board also approves the agency's operating budget.

The 67 County Departments of Human Resources have boards that are appointed by county governments. City governments are involved in the appointment of county board members in a few populous counties.

REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

In FY 2020, DHR's revenues and expenditures totaled \$2,325,465,738, including more than \$1 billion in food assistance benefits. The federal government provided approximately 87% of the agency's funds. Sources of state dollars included the General Fund, the Education Trust Fund, whiskey and beer taxes, and other earmarked taxes.

Most of DHR's federal funding comes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

DHR averaged 4,162 employees in FY 2020, most of whom work in county offices. Social workers represent the largest category of DHR staff, although a variety of professions are represented within the agency.

DHR STATE BOARD

Governor Kay Ivey
Chairperson

Mr. Wayne Sellers
Vice-Chair

Ms. Leslie D. Sanders
Secretary

Ms. Kathy Sawyer

Dr. Charles R. Nash

Dr. Phillip B. Hammonds

Ms. Elizabeth C. Smithart

Nancy T. Buckner
Commissioner

Family Services

A record number of children from Alabama's foster care system found permanent homes in FY 2020. A total of 814 foster children were adopted, up from 731 in FY 2019 and 710 in FY 2018. This marks the third consecutive year in which DHR finalized a record number of adoptions. The record is the result of a joint effort between DHR and juvenile courts, probate judges, the Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parent Association, and other partners.

CHILDREN EXITING CARE

A total of 3,691 children exited DHR care during FY 2020, having achieved their permanency goals. Children typically exit care due to finalized adoptions, determinations that it is safe for them to return to their biological parents or relatives, and in some cases, when they reach the age limits set by state and federal law. DHR strives to provide continued support services to help children navigate this major transition.

DHR saw a slight decrease in children exiting care during FY 2020 because of COVID-19. This was due, in part, to the need to allow families additional time to access services that were delayed in some instances due to the pandemic.

Amount of Children Exiting Care



ADOPTION RECRUITMENT

DHR continues its partnership with the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption through its signature Wendy's Wonderful Kids program (WWK). This nationally recognized program has two primary DHR sites represented in north and south Alabama, although WWK recruiters serve children across the state.

A total of 22 WWK youths were matched in FY 2020, six of whom achieved permanency through finalized adoptions. Those served by these projects are older children, children with significant special needs, larger sibling groups, and other children who historically have been challenging to match.

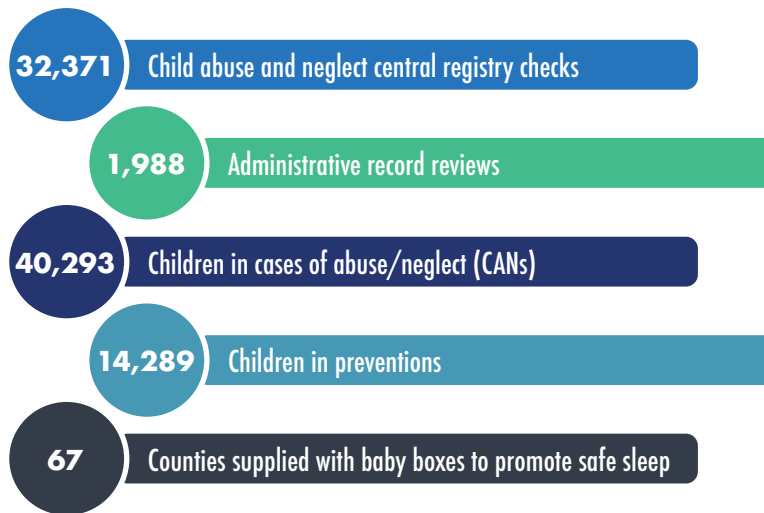
Heart Gallery Alabama has worked with DHR for over ten years, photographing and producing videos of children waiting for adoption. In addition to the website featuring these children, heartgalleryalabama.com, the organization presents on-site exhibits at various locations across the state. Heart Gallery Alabama partners with several TV network affiliates, as well as regional and statewide publications featuring children waiting for adoption. In addition to the Heart Gallery Alabama sites, Alabama's waiting children are featured on adoptuskids.org, adoption.com, and DHR's website.

Statewide Adoptions Finalized by Fiscal Year



OFFICE OF CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

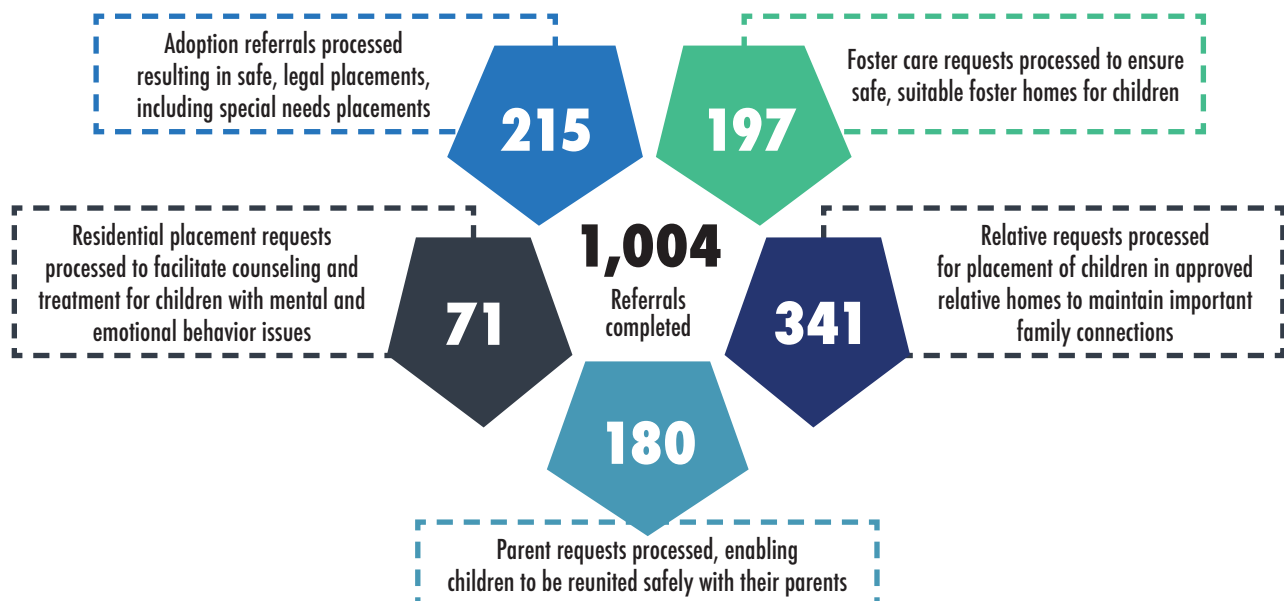
The mission of the Office of Child Protective Services (CPS) is to investigate and prevent abuse and neglect of children in Alabama. The primary functions of CPS include providing case consultation services, maintaining the Central Registry on Child Abuse and Neglect, and applying for and monitoring grants for protective services projects. The following data reflects the work of CPS in FY 2020:



INTERSTATE COMPACT ON THE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN

The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) law ensures that children receive the same protection and services when placed across state lines as they would if they had remained in their home state. Compliance with the Interstate Compact procedures, policy, and law is provided by the ICPC office within the Family Services Division.

In FY 2020, ICPC staff worked with the 67 Alabama county DHR offices, attorneys, child placing agencies, and all other 49 states to ensure safe and legal placements for children. The FY 2020 data below reflects this work:



OFFICE OF FINANCIAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The Office of Financial Resource Management works with county staff and contract providers of residential and therapeutic foster care to ensure that needed services are available for abused and/or neglected children and that policy is available so services are provided in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Alabama Medicaid Agency.

Revenues Received From the Alabama Medicaid Agency

PROGRAM	FY 2020
Targeted Case Management	\$15,821,988.64
Medicaid Rehabilitative Services	\$27,287,248.01
Total	\$43,109,236.65

OFFICE OF CHILD WELFARE ELIGIBILITY/IV-E

The Title IV-E program, authorized by Title IV, Part E of the Social Security Act, provides federal funds to assist with the maintenance and care of certain children in foster care or placed with adoptive families. The funding is also used for the training of staff who work with children and families and also for the administration of the program. In FY 2020, Alabama received approximately \$40 million in federal reimbursements, plus an additional \$1.2 million in retroactive claiming.

ALABAMA INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

Alabama's Independent Living Program assists foster youth between the ages of 14 and 21 in achieving permanency and preparing for successful transitions from foster care. Resources, services, and support are provided to promote healthy independence and to help these youths learn the skills to succeed as adults. Foster youth 18 years and older receive additional support to help them maintain safe and stable housing while attending school or starting a career.

FOSTERING HOPE SCHOLARSHIP

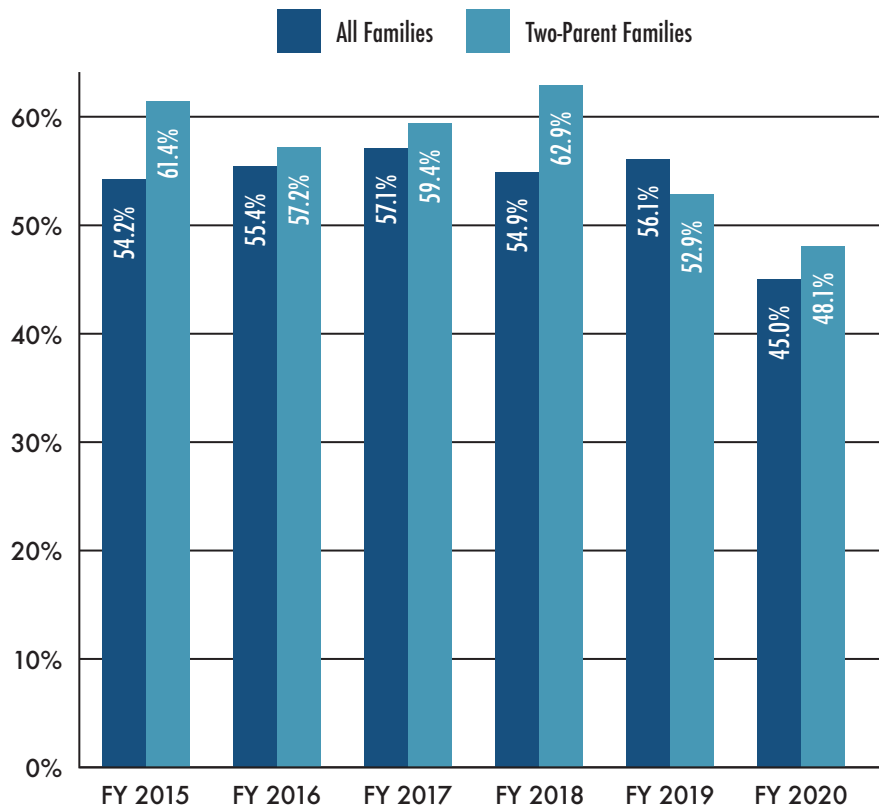
The Fostering Hope Scholarship program celebrated its fourth year with over 663 foster youths receiving this extraordinary post-secondary educational and vocational opportunity at 42 institutes across Alabama. These include two- and four-year colleges and universities, as well as technical and training schools.

Among the program's 2020 college graduates are 11 youths who received bachelor's degrees, 19 who completed associate degrees, and 16 who received certifications. In addition, a total of 152 youths completed high school in FY 2020.



Family Assistance

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF) WORK RATES



Families Transitioned off TANF Due to Employment



FY 2020 JOBS Facts

2,819

Average number of adults required to participate in the JOBS Program each month

26

Average number of two-parent families required to participate in the JOBS Program each month

256

Average number of adults who found employment each month

1,503

Monthly average of clients working

96

Average number of adults who participated in the Community Employment Program (CEMP)

312

Families transitioned off TANF due to employment



FY 2020 Family Assistance Program Statistics

7,196
Average
number of cases

\$189.90
Average monthly
payment per case

FATHERHOOD PROGRAMS

The Family Assistance Division collaborates with a network of statewide organizations, including the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention, to provide fatherhood services aimed at strengthening families. Currently, these services are available in 37 counties with approximately 1,500 participants in FY 2020. Participation decreased from the prior year due to COVID-19.

Program participants receive a wide range of services, such as training and coaching focused on job readiness and identifying career pathways that lead to job credentials. The programs also offer life skills training, along with support and education groups, to help men understand and embrace their roles as fathers, while also stressing the importance of child support payments and promoting the overall well-being of children.

13,032
Average number
of child recipients

58%
Average percentage
of child-only cases

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND ASSISTANCE

DHR's domestic violence prevention and assistance effort is managed by the Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ACADV). The program funded by DHR is known as SAIL, which stands for Special Assessment Intervention Liaison.

During FY 2020, ACADV received 1,477 referrals for domestic violence via SAIL, worked with 595 SAIL participants, helped 378 participants acquire employment, and provided financial assistance to 329 low-income participants.

Alabama Domestic
Violence Hotline:
1-800-650-6522

19.9%
Non child-only
cases receiving benefits
beyond 36 months



Food Assistance

The Food Assistance Division made temporary policy and procedural adjustments in FY 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (USDA-FNS) offered waivers to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) states to assist households during the pandemic.



COVID-19 POLICY ADJUSTMENTS AND WAIVERS

The following flexibilities were implemented in Alabama due to COVID-19:

Pandemic EBT Benefits:

Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) benefits were provided to households with children in grades K-12, Head Start, pre-K, and private schools who temporarily lost access to free or reduced-price school meals from the National School Lunch Program because of the pandemic.

Under this program, over 460,900 Alabama school children secured access to meals they normally would have received at school.

P-EBT benefits were designed to cover meals missed since the onset of statewide school closures on March 18, 2020, through the end of the school calendar year on May 29, 2020. The total issuance for this program was \$144,279,786.

Emergency Supplemental Allotments:

The division received approval from USDA-FNS to issue emergency supplemental allotments to households participating in SNAP.

These supplements bring the monthly allotments of households receiving SNAP benefits up to the maximum amounts for their household sizes due to COVID-19.

The emergency supplements are automatically issued to active SNAP households via their EBT cards. The total benefits issued through this provision from March to September 2020 was \$296,451,118.

Suspension of Face-to-Face Interviews:

The USDA-FNS approved the suspension of face-to-face interviews through June 30, 2021. Initial and recertification interviews are completed by phone to ensure the safety of SNAP clients and staff during the pandemic.

Interview Adjustment Waiver:

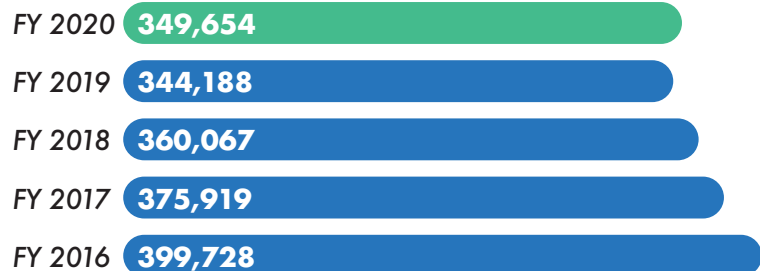
The division received approval from USDA-FNS to waive the interview process for initial, expedited, and recertification applications, due to the pandemic.

Households that meet the waiver criteria are not required to interview at the time of initial application or recertification, if the applicant's identity is verified and all other mandatory verifications are completed. Expedited households that meet the waiver criteria can be awarded SNAP benefits before completing an interview.

Implementation of ABAWD Good Cause:

In accordance with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, individuals who are otherwise subject to the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) time limits for receiving SNAP benefits were granted a "good cause" exemption due to COVID-19. This exemption applies to all ABAWDs, meaning they can continue to receive SNAP benefits during the pandemic.

Average Household Participation in Food Assistance Program



ONLINE PURCHASING BEGINS IN ALABAMA AND EXPANDS DURING PANDEMIC

In 2014, the Farm Bill authorized the USDA to conduct a pilot for Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) online purchasing, which would allow clients to use SNAP and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits to make online purchases. Alabama was selected by USDA-FNS as one of seven states to participate in the pilot.

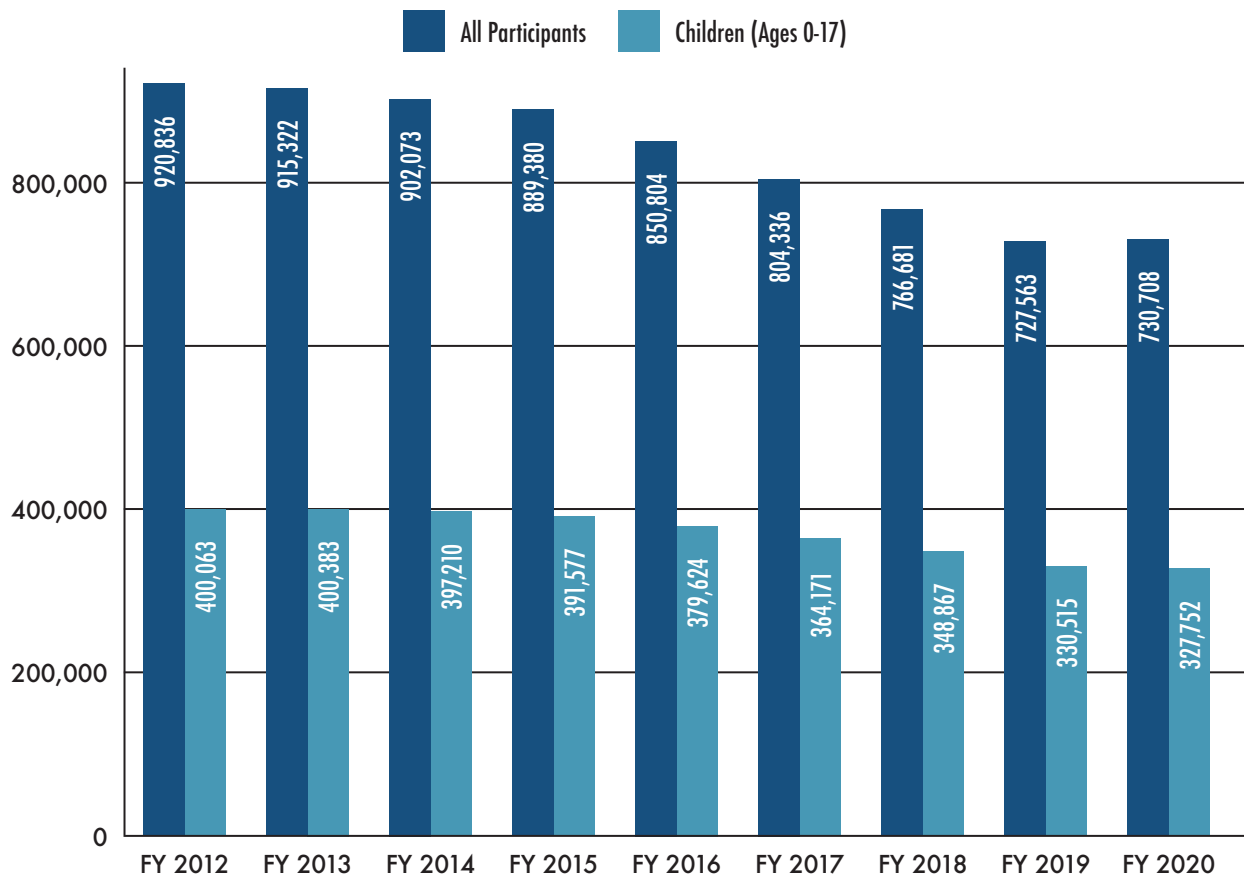
On March 4, 2020, Wright's Market, an independent grocery store in Opelika, began offering Lee County SNAP recipients the option to purchase goods online with their EBT cards. Wright's Market was the first and remains the only independent grocery store participating in the nationwide EBT online purchasing pilot.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the state sought to offer clients across all of Alabama the option to make online purchases with their EBT cards from the safety of their homes. Therefore, on March 26, 2020, Amazon started offering an online purchasing option for SNAP recipients throughout the state. Then, on April 1, 2020, Walmart started participating in the program, too.

Alabama is pleased to offer this option for SNAP clients as families across the state are asked to practice social distancing and remain home as much as possible to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

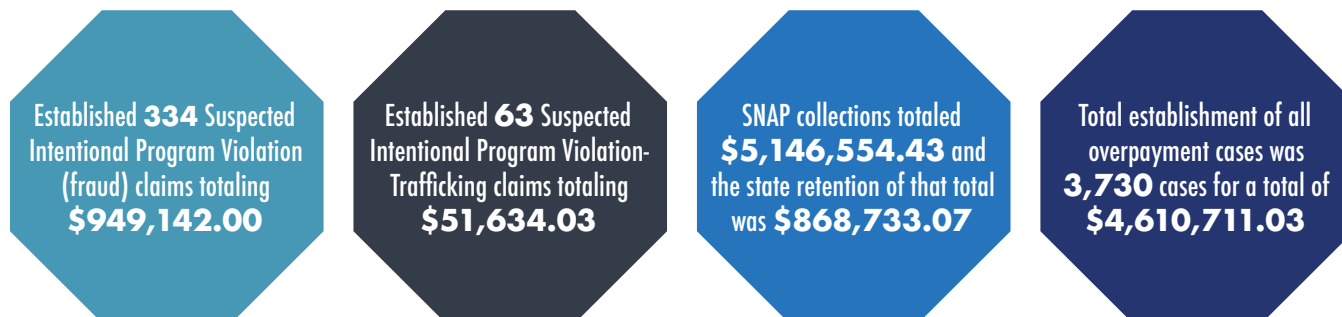


AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL SNAP PARTICIPANTS AND CHILDREN



PROGRAM INTEGRITY FOR SNAP

The following data reflects the division's work to protect the integrity of the SNAP program during FY 2020:



EXPANSION OF THE A-RESET PROGRAM

DHR's Food Assistance Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) program, known as Alabama Resources for Enrichment, Self-Sufficiency, and Employability Training (A-RESET), continued to expand in FY 2020 for the benefit of eligible SNAP recipients. This included the addition of seven new A-RESET partners.

In order to make this expansion less taxing, A-RESET leveraged existing partnerships to petition subcontractors to provide eligible services. Partnership expansions included:

- » **Sylacauga Alliance for Family Enhancement, fiscal agent for the Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers**
 - » Obtained a grant from the Toyota Foundation to use as a source of non-federal funding to assist in expanding A-RESET
 - » Was appropriated funding from the Alabama legislature for FY 2021 that will be used to increase services eligible under A-RESET
- » **The Daniel Payne College Village Foundation**
 - » The Jimmie Hale Mission
- » **United Ways of Alabama**
 - » Salvation Army of Mobile
 - » United Way of Central Alabama
 - » United Way of Etowah County
 - » United Way of West Alabama

» Alabama Community College System

- » 24 community colleges became eligible to provide services
- » New services included Ready to Work and Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC)

Due to COVID-19, participation levels in FY 2020 decreased. Many providers had to shut down completely for a period of time, in accordance with state mandates. Some providers were eventually able to deliver services virtually. Many participants, however, did not have the means to participate virtually.

As a result of the unexpected circumstances, a total of 2,556 SNAP recipients were able to take advantage of services offered through A-RESET in FY 2020. The program has since made it possible for providers to continue offering services virtually and to help participants obtain the means to participate in this manner.

A-RESET is also a component of the governor's integrated workforce initiative (Success Plus), designed to add 500,000 highly skilled Alabamians to the state's workforce by 2025. Increasing SNAP E&T partnerships has been instrumental to providing services for participants to gain skills, which in return has made this initiative a success.

With the addition of these new partners, the state can offer more intense education, training, and case management services to even more SNAP clients who are ready for A-RESET. DHR will work with partners to ensure they have the tools needed for increased participation, as continued expansion is expected in FY 2021. Greater participation means heightened success not only for A-RESET, but also for the state of Alabama.

Child Support Enforcement

The Child Support Enforcement Division served families in 196,185 cases during FY 2020. Throughout the year, the division continued to collaborate with partners in an effort to provide consistent support payments for children served by DHR. The division remains focused on establishing paternity, locating absent parents, collecting and distributing payments, and emphasizing the importance of parents meeting the needs of children, both financially and emotionally.

The division's partnerships include federal, state, and county child support staff, district attorneys, private attorneys, judges and other court officials, law enforcement officials, insurance companies, hospitals, the Center for Health Statistics, the Department of Labor, the Family Assistance (TANF) program, Medicaid, Child Welfare, the Social Security Administration, the Department of Corrections, non-custodial parents, and numerous contractors.

CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS

The division saw an increase in collections during FY 2020 with a total of \$425 million collected. This total amounts to \$48 million more than the prior fiscal year.

The increase is attributed to the effectiveness of automation and the dedicated efforts of DHR child support staff.

PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT

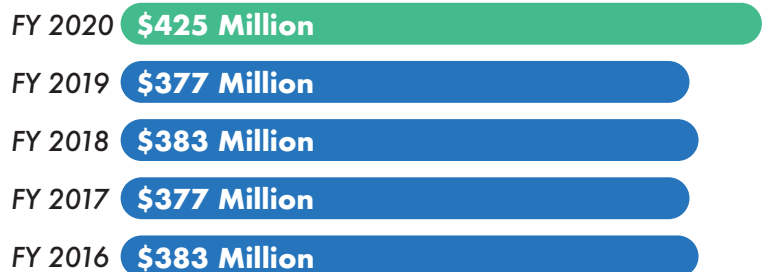
Program performance in paternity establishment continues to exceed 95%.

Paternity and court order establishment, along with collection efforts, help families develop lasting relationships and raise children out of poverty by guiding families toward self-sufficiency.

NEW PAYMENT METHODS

The division introduced two new payment methods in FY 2020 for use by non-custodial parents and employers. ExpertPay and MoneyGram are two easy and convenient methods to submit child support payments electronically or with cash.

Collections



Paternity Establishment



Adult Protective Services

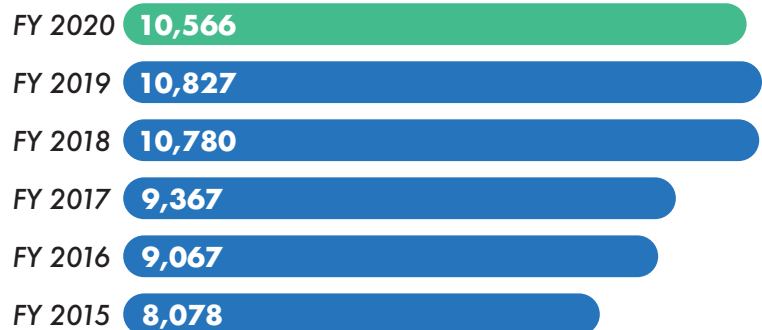
Adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation (AANE) reports and preventions continue to impact Alabama's adult population. DHR's Adult Protective Services Division (APS) received 10,566 referrals consisting of preventions and AANEs during FY 2020. The total number of AANEs received was 8,687 and the total number of preventions received and assessed during the reporting year was 1,879.

Preventions include assessments of situations where there are concerns that abuse, neglect, or exploitation would occur unless assistance is provided. FY 2020 shows a decrease in APS reports received, possibly due to vulnerable adults being shut in and having less contact with potential reporters as a result of COVID-19.

APS anticipates a 10% to 15% increase in abuse, neglect, and exploitation cases for FY 2021, as more adults are expected to live longer.

The public continues to be educated through public service announcements about elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Reports



ALABAMA SPIRIT OF ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES AWARD

Mrs. Raven Boswell, a licensed social worker with Pike County DHR, was presented with the 2020 Alabama Spirit of APS Award during the APS Legal Conference on August 20, 2020, in Birmingham.



Deputy Commissioner Karen Smith presents the 2020 Spirit of APS Award to Raven Boswell at the APS Legal Conference on August 20, 2020, in Birmingham.

Since beginning her career with Pike County DHR in 2013, Mrs. Boswell has worked closely with law enforcement, attorneys, judges, health care providers, placement resources, and the community while pursuing her goal of protecting vulnerable adults. She has developed an invaluable rapport with community stakeholders who recognize her diligence and reliability when advocating for adults in the community.

Mrs. Boswell played an instrumental role assisting with the closure of an unlicensed group home where more than 20 vulnerable adults were mistreated and neglected.

Her hard work earned her additional honors at the national level when she was named the 2020 recipient of the Spirit of the National Adult Protective Services Association Award.

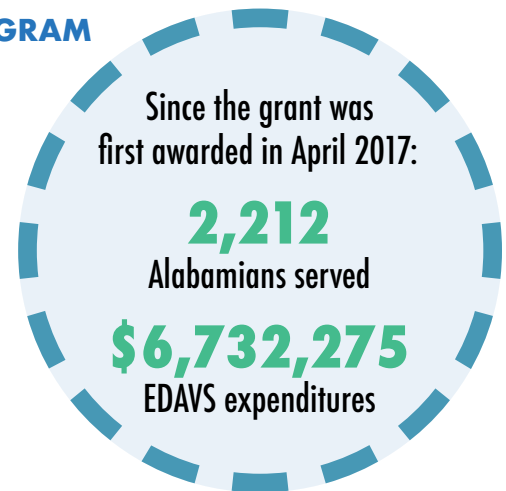
Her dedication to the APS program has greatly benefited Alabama citizens.

ELDERLY AND DISABLED ADULT VICTIM SERVICES PROGRAM

APS was again awarded a subgrant through the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs Victims of Crime Act grant program that allows funding to enhance and provide direct services to victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The project, named the Elderly and Disabled Adult Victim Services program (EDAVS), has provided APS with the opportunity to offer both in-home and out-of-home placement services for clients through homemaker and sitter services when an offender or caregiver has been removed or is unable to provide care. This effort seeks to avoid unnecessary out-of-home placements.

EDAVS also provides short-term funding for adult victims requiring out-of-home placement at facilities including nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and adult foster care facilities.



WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

Governor Kay Ivey declared June 15, 2020, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) in Alabama to help raise awareness about the mistreatment of the elderly population. APS state and county departments participated in WEAAD activities throughout June, thinking outside the box and practicing social distancing due to COVID-19.

A total of 47 DHR county offices hosted events throughout the month to commemorate the day of awareness. Activities included decorating community buildings in purple – the color designated for elder abuse awareness – local press releases, public service announcements, proclamation signings, workshops, meetings with community agencies and partners, food and toiletry drives, and distribution of COVID-19 care packages to senior citizens. The county offices also used these activities as an opportunity to recruit adult foster care homes.



Barbour County DHR



Limestone County DHR



Mobile County DHR



Shelby County DHR

Child Care Services

The Child Care Services Division is the state's Child Care and Development Fund administrator, responsible for the child care subsidy program and quality initiatives. In addition, the division is responsible for monitoring and licensing child care centers and homes for compliance with minimum standards.

CHILD CARE LICENSING

In FY 2020, licensing consultants made 2,755 visits to licensed child care centers and exempt programs that participate in the subsidy program. They also made 1,173 visits to licensed day care homes to determine compliance with minimum standards, license new facilities, renew licenses of existing facilities, investigate complaints, provide consultation to child care staff, and to monitor compliance with the health and safety guidelines for facilities participating in subsidy. Visits to child care facilities were significantly reduced during the past year as many providers closed amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

EARLY HEAD START-CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) program provides high-quality child care and comprehensive services to low-income infants, toddlers, and their families. The EHS-CCP program has partnership sites in 23 counties in child care centers and family child care settings.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR STABILIZING CHILD CARE

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, DHR established the Temporary Assistance for Stabilizing Child Care (TASCC) grant program in July to help stabilize open child care providers and to encourage others to reopen.

Grant amounts were based on the daytime licensing capacity of each child care provider. Allowable expenditures for the grant funds included: retaining or hiring employees, substitute teacher pay, classroom materials and supplies, unreimbursed food, facilities costs, tuition relief for families, and supplies for adhering to guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Alabama Department of Public Health.

844 TASCC grants totaling **\$10,334,300** were awarded to Alabama child care providers in FY 2020

As of Sept. 30, 2020:

1,288

Licensed centers

662

Licensed child care homes

469

Church-exempt
child care facilities

EHS-CCP in FY 2020

566 children

Total funded enrollment

344 children

Funded enrollment in
child care centers

222 children

Funded enrollment in
family child care homes

37

Family child care homes

18

Child care centers

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

In FY 2020, the Child Care Subsidy Program increased enrollment to nearly 48,000 children prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. There continues to be no waitlist for parents needing to apply for child care assistance. The exit eligibility for subsidy participating families changed in February 2020 to 170% of the federal poverty level, thereby increasing the availability of slots in order to serve more low-income families.

The Child Care Services Division was provided funding of nearly \$65 million from the CARES Act to support the child care community. The division created a three-prong plan to support child care providers and families, which included:

1. Providing weekly sustainability payments to child care subsidy participating providers from March 15, 2020, to July 31, 2020, regardless of the facilities being open or closed. From March 15 through April 4, providers were paid based on full enrollment. Beginning April 5, sustainability payments equaled 50% of the pre-COVID subsidy enrollment. These payments amounted to over \$40 million.
2. Offering paid child care to health care workers and first responders from April 22, 2020, through December 31, 2020, with a possible extension. More than 1,600 families were participating as of September 30, 2020.
3. Awarding grants to all licensed child care facilities to offset expenses as a result of the pandemic. More than \$10 million has been awarded.



41,445

Children enrolled in the subsidy program as of September 30, 2020

\$168,953,261

Dollars reimbursed to child care providers in FY 2020

ALABAMA QUALITY STARS

The Alabama Quality STARS QRIS (Quality Rating and Improvement System) was fully implemented to include family and group child care homes in FY 2020 after the completion of the pilot project in November 2019. In order to reach more providers, orientation and training sessions have gone virtual while assessments and reviews continue to be in person. As of September 30, 2020, there are a total of 87 STAR-rated centers.

STAR Rating Statistics for Centers



Field Administration

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

During FY 2020, the division continued partnerships with professional social work education programs in Alabama to provide training and education to current and prospective child welfare social workers via the Title IV-E Traineeship Agreement. Through these partnerships, child welfare staff received social work licensure preparation and training on cultural competence and social work ethics in child welfare.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted training, causing some events to be postponed or converted to a virtual format. In October 2019, DHR sponsored the 18th Annual Fall Social Work Conference in partnership with the University of Alabama School of Social Work. In addition to training opportunities, the Title IV-E Traineeship Agreement supported the infusion of child welfare content into professional social work education programs and stipend support for professional social work students interested in child welfare careers.

The division also continued to provide support for DHR's Social Work Licensure Initiative in FY 2020. Social work licensure supervision was provided to approximately 120 licensed employees in accordance with state law and the Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners Administrative Code. Staff Development transitioned to an online platform in mid-2020 to provide necessary face-to-face licensure supervision safely.

OFFICE OF TRAINING

The Office of Training continued to develop, administer, and evaluate training modules for DHR's online learning management system, known as LETS (Learning, Education, and Training System). The system aids in the development of over 4,000 DHR employees.

This work included assisting training divisions within DHR's program areas as they delivered trainings with LETS. By providing training online, the department reduces travel expenses and time away from work for trainers and participants, while offering more standardized training. LETS also tracks instructor-led trainings to maintain a complete training history for employees.

The Office of Training also continued to administer the Child Abuse Mandated Reporters Training and the Adult Abuse Mandated Reporters Training for the citizens of Alabama through DHR's public training website, training.dhr.alabama.gov.



SHELTERING AND MASS CARE TASK FORCE

Commissioner Buckner chaired the annual Sheltering and Mass Care Task Force (SMCTF) meeting on November 13, 2019. DHR coordinates with state agencies and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) to prepare for sheltering and mass care of evacuees and displaced individuals during disasters and governor-ordered mandatory evacuations.

EMPLOYEE SAFETY

The Office of Emergency Welfare Services (EWS)/Safety collaborated with the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) to provide on-site safety training. ALEA conducted Run, Hide, Fight active shooter trainings at county offices, emphasizing the importance of personal safety and reporting suspicious activity to law enforcement.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Division staff participated in Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) exercises and trainings during FY 2020, including the annual hurricane exercise, conducted virtually due to COVID-19.

Staff also supported or deployed to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), county EOCs, and AEMA division offices to support response and recovery operations associated with the following emergency management events in FY 2020:

- » **February 5-6:** Severe Weather (Flooding)
- » **March 13:** COVID-19 Pandemic
- » **April 12:** Severe Weather (Tornado Warning)
- » **April 19:** Severe Weather (Tornado Watch)
- » **August 21:** Tropical Storm Laura
- » **September 13:** Hurricane Sally

EWS/Safety participated in quarterly Functional and Access Needs in Disasters (FAND) meetings co-chaired by the Governor's Office on Disability (GOOD) and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH).

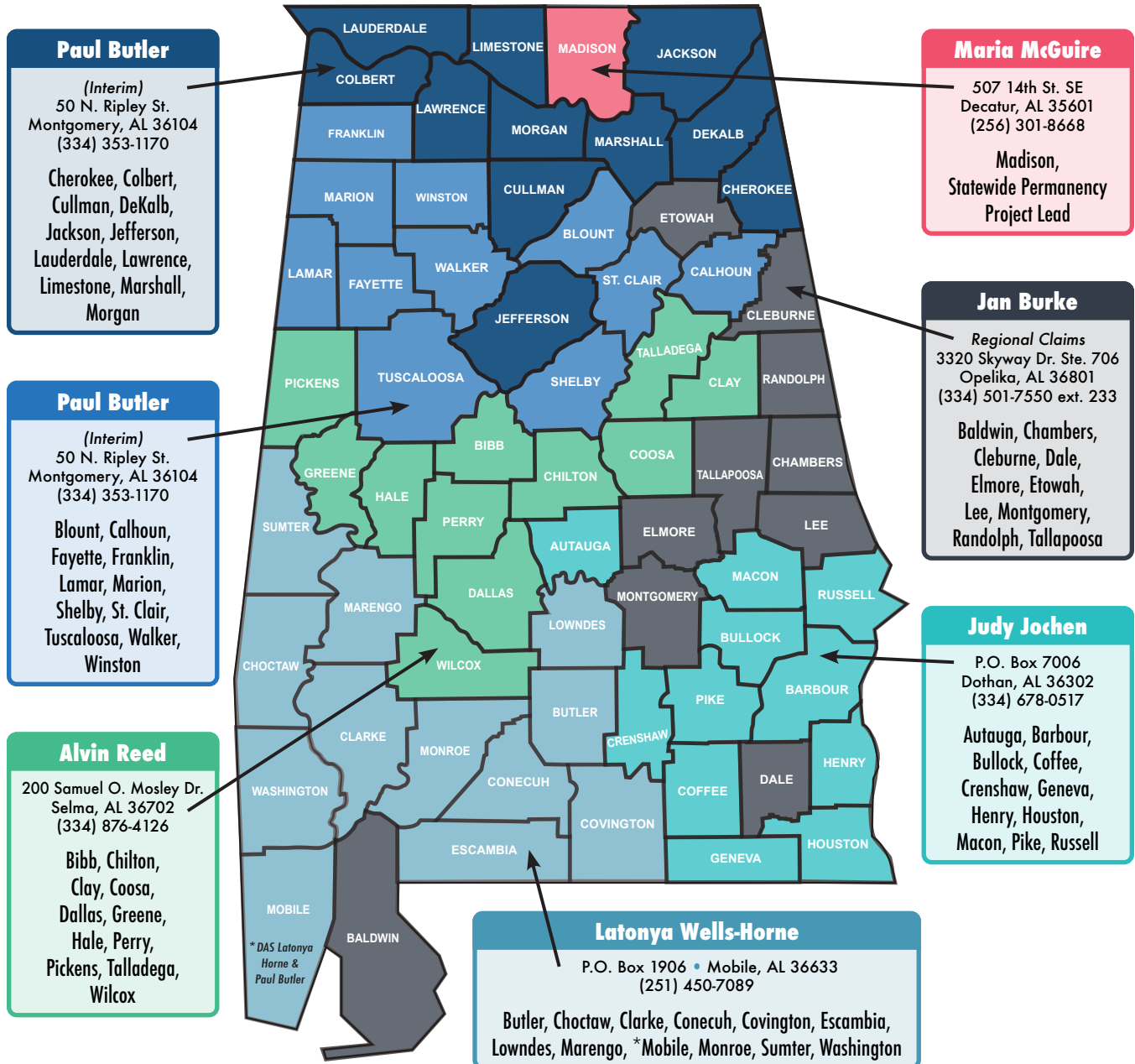
EWS/Safety also hosted biannual mass care conference calls in coordination with ADPH's Center for Emergency Preparedness and AEMA. Sheltering and mass care support agencies provided updates on emergency preparedness activities undertaken to prepare for all-hazards responses.

Additionally, staff collaborated with ADPH, AEMA, and the American Red Cross to identify and survey additional mass care and medical needs shelters (MNS). The ADPH Medical Needs Shelter Planning Work Group, which includes DHR and other state partners, conducted site visits to potential MNS locations to meet with local sheltering partners and discuss agency roles, responsibilities, and shelter operations.



Damage along the Gulf Coast following Hurricane Sally. Photo: Hal Yeager/Governor's Office

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALISTS



Quality

OFFICE OF BEHAVIORAL SERVICES

The Office of Behavioral Services provides training on parenting techniques specific to behavior management and individualized behavioral consultation to the families and children served by DHR.

During FY 2020, the team consulted on 209 individual cases across the state and completed 56 Tools of Choice behavior management courses in 25 different counties.



OFFICE OF CHILD WELFARE TRAINING

The Office of Child Welfare Training (OCWT) is responsible for training all new child welfare staff and supervisors. OCWT also provides certification training for agency providers and foster parents.

In response to COVID-19 safety concerns, in-person training for child welfare workers was suspended between March and September 2020. Striving Toward Excellent Practice (STEP) training modules for new employees and Trauma Informed Partnering for Safety and Permanence (TIPS)/Deciding Together trainings were converted to a virtual format so ongoing training could resume safely.

OCWT Training Statistics for FY 2020

TRAINING	NUMBER OF CLASSES	NUMBER OF STAFF/ PROVIDERS TRAINED
STEP: Foundations	18	226
STEP: Intake	7	52
STEP: Investigation	8	81
STEP: Case Management	9	92
STEP: Adoption	3	9
Supervisory Management	1	13
TIPS	3	60
TIPS/Deciding Together	3	39
Total	52	572

OFFICE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Office of Quality Assurance provides feedback to the department on the performance of the state's child welfare system by completing Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSR) utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and completing stakeholder interviews in every county annually.

Despite the many challenges presented during FY 2020, the Office of Quality Assurance was able to adapt the review process to ensure all CFSR activities were completed. During FY 2020, all districts were reviewed twice with 138 OSRIs completed.



OFFICE OF QUALITY CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE

The Office of Quality Child Welfare Practice provides feedback and supports counties with regard to best practices in the following ways:

- » Conducting random record reviews across the state. During FY 2020, 360 cases were reviewed in 16 counties. There are 15 reviews completed across the state each calendar year.
- » Completing peer reviews with child welfare supervisors, giving feedback on case reviews and providing observation and feedback on individual worker conferences and unit meetings. Additionally, support is provided to supervisors regarding county data utilization to enhance the ability to monitor child welfare practice.
- » Facilitating training on Meaningful Caseworker Visits and Comprehensive Family Assessments/Individualized Service Plans.
- » Providing support to counties as they develop their County Improvement Plans (CIP) twice per year. These plans are a guide for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) in each county.

Quality Child Welfare Practice Specialists also provide ongoing support with activities included in the Program Improvement Plan (PIP).



OFFICE OF CONSTITUENT SERVICES

The Office of Constituent Services receives and responds to calls from constituents who have concerns involving child welfare issues. The office accepts constituent communications by phone, email, and mail. The information received is entered into a data system to monitor the types and volume of concerns, as well as their statuses.

Specialists within the unit also complete the Multidimensional Assessment Tool (MAT) for children in care, which assesses the level of care or type of placement a child may need. During FY 2020, the unit completed 214 MAT assessments for children in care.

Finance

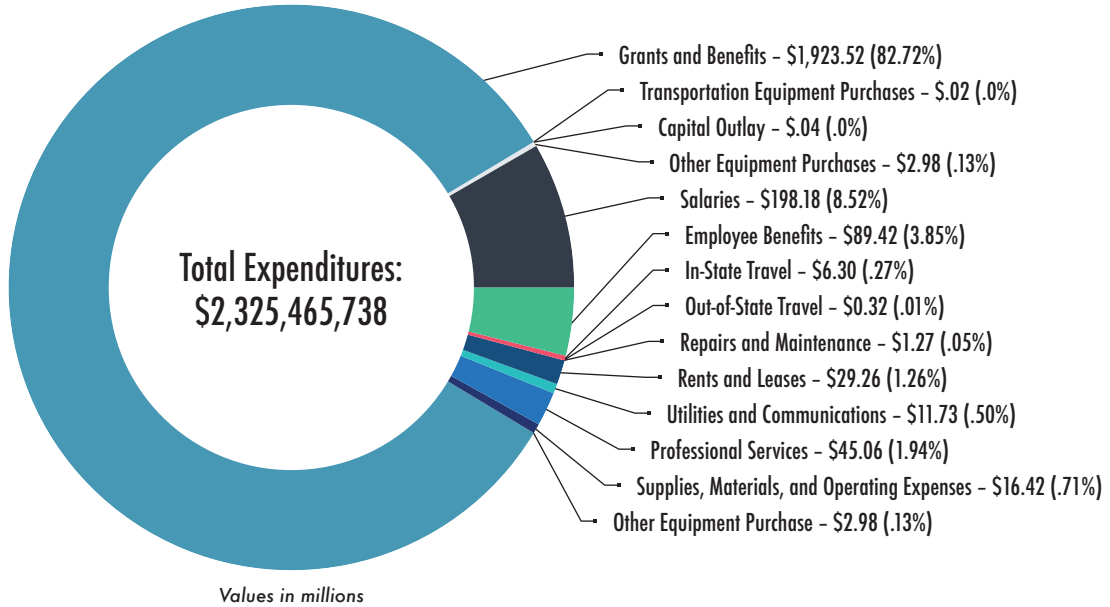
SOURCES OF FUNDS

FEDERAL AND LOCAL FUNDS	AMOUNT	STATE FUNDS	AMOUNT
Federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families	\$83,605,244	Transfers from MNC Agencies	\$369,811
Federal Title IV-B Funds	\$7,556,143	Foster Care Trust Fund	\$31,949
Federal Title IV-D Funds	\$54,606,787	General Fund Transfer	\$76,374,529
Federal Title IV-E Funds	\$69,767,885	Education Trust Fund Transfer	\$31,424,165
Federal Title XIX Funds	\$61,946,415	Whiskey Tax	\$59,636,802
Federal Social Services Block Grant - Title XX	\$41,839,843	ABC Profits	\$579,382
Federal Child Day Care Discretionary Funds	\$143,113,141	Beer Tax and Fortified Wine Tax	\$11,156,851
Federal Child Day Care Mandatory Funds	\$16,441,707	Confederate Pension Fund	\$20,773,500
Federal Child Day Care Matching Funds	\$21,024,216	Sales Tax	\$1,322,000
Federal USDA Funds	\$1,464,431,620	Sales Tax - Foster Care	\$500,000
Federal Child Abuse Grant	\$598,555	Food Assistance Issuance	\$66,477,080
CCDF COVID-19	\$43,974,720	Tobacco Tax	\$2,394,543
Early Head Start Grant	\$10,361,065	Contractor's Gross Receipts	\$6,390,972
Child Support Interest and Fees	\$497,811	Other State Funds	\$1,476,624
Thomas Foundation Grant	\$140,000	Children First Trust Fund	\$10,422,408
Other Federal Funds	\$3,421,376	Unencumbered Balance Forward	\$12,808,594
		Total Sources of Funds	\$2,325,465,738

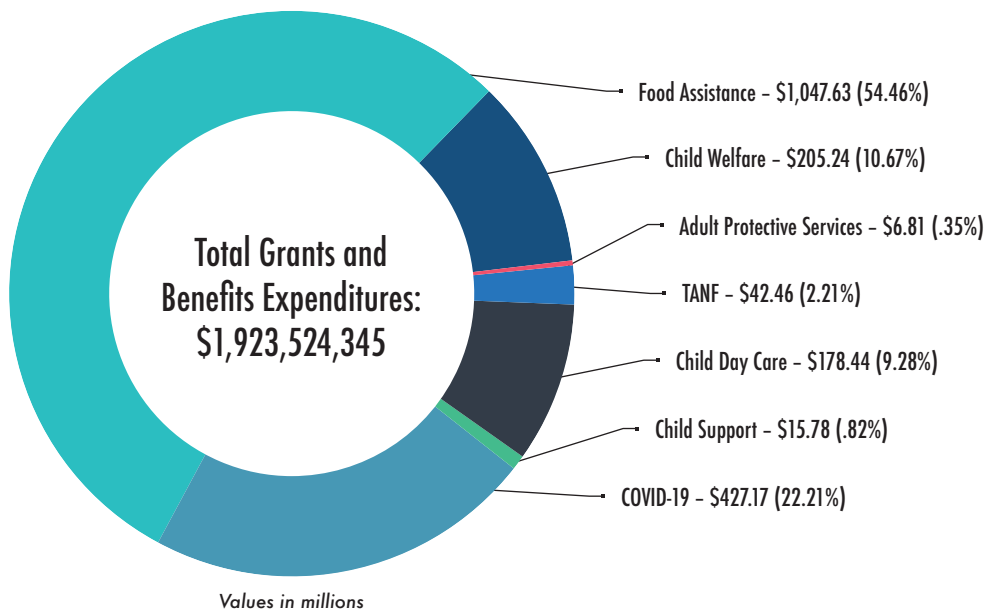
USES OF FUNDS

USE	AMOUNT
Salaries	\$198,175,105
Employee Benefits	\$89,452,077
In-State Travel	\$6,295,013
Out-of-State Travel	\$318,221
Repairs and Maintenance	\$1,272,714
Rents and Leases	\$29,259,381
Utilities and Communications	\$11,734,671
Professional Services	\$45,063,880
Supplies, Materials, and Operating Expenses	\$16,421,614
Transportation Equipment Operating Costs	\$906,155
Grants and Benefits	\$1,923,524,345
Capital Outlay	\$35,222
Transportation Equipment Purchase	\$24,616
Other Equipment Purchases	\$2,982,724
Total Uses of Funds	\$2,325,465,738

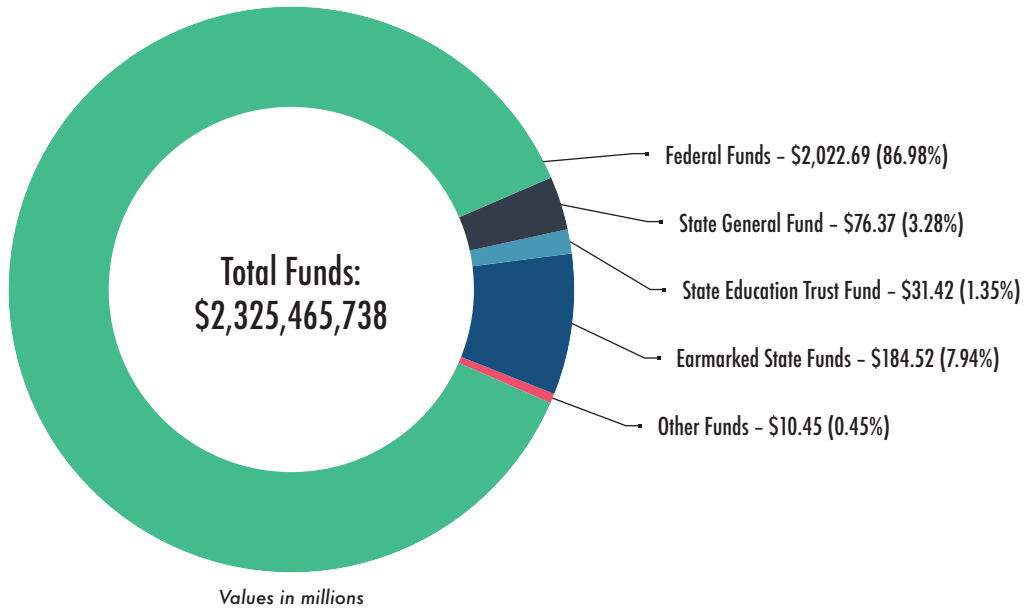
FY 2020 EXPENDITURES BY OBJECTS



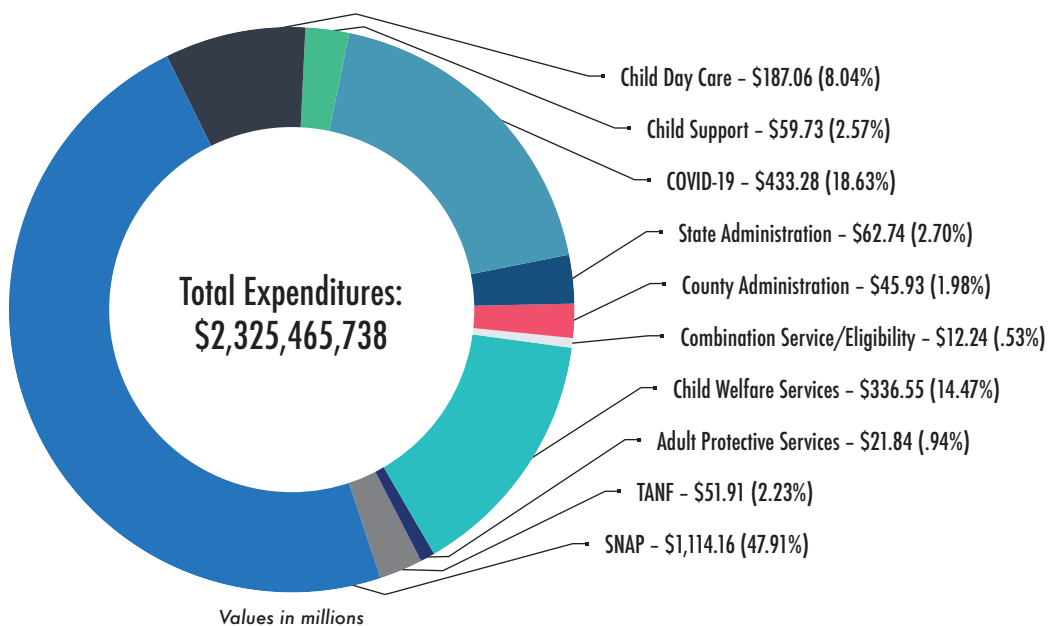
FY 2020 GRANTS AND BENEFITS BY PROGRAM



FY 2020 REVENUE SOURCES



FY 2020 EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTIONAL AREA



County Department Directory

With some exceptions, DHR's programs and services are provided by or through the agency's 67 County Departments of Human Resources. All DHR county departments have boards appointed by local governments. These County Boards of Human Resources are the hiring authority for the DHR county director.

AUTAUGA

Director: Onya Johnson
203 North Court Street
Prattville, AL 36067
(334) 358-5000

BALDWIN

Director: ReMigia Coleman
22259 Palmer Street
Robertsdale, AL 36567
(251) 945-2400

BARBOUR

Director: Ashley Brunson
276 Highway 239 South
Clayton, AL 36016
(334) 775-2000

BIBB

Director: Carla Emmons
84 Library Street
Centreville, AL 35042
(205) 926-2900

BLOUNT

Director: Catherine Denard
55 DHR Lane
Oneonta, AL 35121
(205) 274-5200

BULLOCK

Director: Tracy Larkins
201 North Powell Street
Union Springs, AL 36089
(334) 738-0111

BUTLER

Director: Jennifer Langford
182 West Adams Street
Greenville, AL 36037
(334) 382-4400

CALHOUN

Director: Courtney Clark
415 West 11th Street
Anniston, AL 36202
(256) 240-2021

CHAMBERS

Director: Julia Ann Hyde
410 9th Avenue SW
LaFayette, AL 36862
(334) 864-4000

CHEROKEE

Director: Michelle Fulmer
202 Dean Buttram Sr. Avenue
Centre, AL 35960
(256) 927-1440

CHILTON

Director: Marilyn Colson
324 Health Center Drive
Clanton, AL 35045
(205) 258-4900

CHOCTAW

Director: Arcetia Black
1003 Mulberry Avenue
Butler, AL 36904
(205) 459-9701

CLARKE

Director: Jaquel Taylor
22609 Highway 84
Grove Hill, AL 36451
(251) 275-7001

CLAY

Director: Kay Robertson
86930 Highway 9
Lineville, AL 36266
(256) 396-6800

CLEBURNE

Director: Marsha Busby
732 Oxford Street
Heflin, AL 36264
(256) 463-1700

COFFEE

Director: Deana Stinson
3881 Salem Road
Enterprise, AL 36330
(334) 348-2000

COLBERT

Director: Kelly Pearson
3105 George Wallace Boulevard
Muscle Shoals, AL 35661
(256) 314-4900

CONECUH

Director: Jodie Nata
856 Liberty Hill Drive
Evergreen, AL 36401
(251) 578-3900

COOSA

Director: Autumn White
300 South Jackson Street
Rockford, AL 35136
(256) 377-2000

COVINGTON

Director: Lesa Syler
1515 MLK Jr. Expressway
Andalusia, AL 36420
(334) 427-7900

CRENSHAW

Director: Kristi Kitchens
25 Hospital Drive
Luverne, AL 36049
(334) 335-7000

CULLMAN

Director: Amy Smith
1220 St. Joseph Street NW
Cullman, AL 35055
(256) 737-5300

DALE

Director: Stephanie McKnight
513 Carroll Avenue
Ozark, AL 36360
(334) 445-4900

DALLAS

Director: Wanda Goodwin
200 Samuel O. Mosley Drive
Selma, AL 36702
(334) 876-4100

DEKALB

Director: Denise Raines
2301 Briarwood Avenue South
Fort Payne, AL 35967
(256) 844-2700

ELMORE

Director: Michelle Wood
8961 U.S. Highway 231
Wetumpka, AL 36092
(334) 514-3200

ESCAMBIA

Director: L. Lynn Barnes
326 Evergreen Avenue
Brewton, AL 36426
(251) 809-2000

ETOWAH

Director: Teresa Sauls
210 Hoke Street
Gadsden, AL 35903
(256) 549-4100

FAYETTE

Director: Jason Cowart
410 16th Street NE
Fayette, AL 35555
(205) 932-1665

FRANKLIN

Director: Amber Steward
737 Highway 48
Russellville, AL 35653
(256) 331-5900

GENEVA

Director: Jason Hughes
1831 West Magnolia Avenue
Geneva, AL 36340
(334) 684-5801

GREENE

Director: Wilson Morgan
36 Park Street
Eutaw, AL 35462
(205) 372-5000

HALE

Director: Mattie Harris
906 Wheelan Street
Greensboro, AL 36744
(334) 624-2583

HENRY

Director: Julie Lindsey
507 Kirkland Street
Abbeville, AL 36310
(334) 585-4100

HOUSTON

Director: Leslie Kelly
1605 Ross Clark Circle
Dothan, AL 36301
(334) 677-0400

JACKSON

Director: Marie McGuire (Interim)
305 Bingham Street
Scottsboro, AL 35768
(256) 575-6000

JEFFERSON

Director: Francine Fenderson
2001 12th Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35234
(205) 423-4500

LAMAR

Director: Randy Shelton
250 Springfield Road
Vernon, AL 35592
(205) 695-5000

LAUDERDALE

Director: Cynthia Bratcher
424 Veterans Drive
Florence, AL 35630
(256) 765-4000

LAWRENCE

Director: Sondra Landers
13280 AL Highway 157
Moulton, AL 35650
(256) 905-3100

LEE

Director: Lisa Kelley
1715 Corporate Drive
Opelika, AL 36801
(334) 737-7778

LIMESTONE

Director: Tracy Miller
1007 West Market Street
Athens, AL 35612
(256) 216-6380

LOWNDES

Director: Felicia Thomas
382 State Highway 97 South
Hayneville, AL 36040
(334) 548-3800

MACON

Director: Tonya Allen
404 North Main Street
Tuskegee, AL 36083
(334) 725-2100

MADISON

Director: Tonita Phipps
2206 Oakwood Avenue
Huntsville, AL 35810
(256) 427-6000

MARENGO

Director: Dawn Hewitt
701 South Shiloh Street
Linden, AL 36748
(334) 295-2000

MARION

Director: Kier Vickery
760 Industrial Drive
Hamilton, AL 35570
(205) 921-6000

MARSHALL

Director: Marguerite Rollins
180 Bluff Road
Guntersville, AL 35976
(256) 582-7100

MOBILE

Director: Stephanie Streeter
3103 Airport Boulevard
Mobile, AL 36606
(251) 450-7000

MONROE

Director: Jane Agee
25 Legion Drive
Monroeville, AL 36460
(251) 743-5900

MONTGOMERY

Director: Sharonda Pettaway
3030 Mobile Highway
Montgomery, AL 36108
(334) 293-3100

MORGAN

Director: Lainie Alexander
507 14th Street SE
Decatur, AL 35601
(256) 301-8800

PERRY

Director: Dorothy Carson
1609 Highway 5 South
Marion, AL 36756
(334) 683-5500

PICKENS

Director: Misty Renfroe
401 Tuscaloosa Avenue
Carrollton, AL 35447
(205) 367-1500

PIKE

Director: Patricia Faircloth
717 South Three Notch Street
Troy, AL 36081
(334) 807-6120

RANDOLPH

Director: Rhonda Brooks
865 Hillcrest Avenue
Wedowee, AL 36278
(256) 357-3000

RUSSELL

Director: Allison Bryars
1901 Opelika Road
Phenix City, AL 36867
(334) 214-5780

ST. CLAIR

Director: Cherri Pilkington
213 Fox Hollow Boulevard
Pell City, AL 35125
(205) 812-2100

SHELBY

Director: Kim Mashego
987 Highway 70
Columbiana, AL 35051
(205) 669-3000

SUMTER

Director: Della Whitfield
108 West Main Street
Livingston, AL 35470
(205) 652-5000

TALLADEGA

Director: Nicole Parker
1010 Ashland Highway
Talladega, AL 35160
(256) 761-6600

TALLAPOOSA

Director: Brenda Floyd
1279 South Tallassee Street
Dadeville, AL 36853
(256) 825-3700

TUSCALOOSA

Director: Joy Humphrey
3716 12th Avenue East
Tuscaloosa, AL 35405
(205) 562-6100

WALKER

Director: Randal Redmill
1901 Highway 78 East
Jasper, AL 35501
(205) 387-5400

WASHINGTON

Director: Ashley Carlock
14921 Saint Stephens Avenue
Chatom, AL 36518
(251) 847-6100

WILCOX

Director: Carol Dixon
231 Depot Street
Camden, AL 36726
(334) 682-1200

WINSTON

Director: Diane Watson
991 Highway 33 North
Double Springs, AL 35553
(205) 489-1500



State Office Directory

Administration

Commissioner	NANCY T. BUCKNER	(334) 242-1160
Chief of Staff/Ethics Officer	NANCY JINRIGHT	(334) 242-1160
Special Assistant	STAN LANDERS	(334) 353-5804
Deputy Commissioner for Family Resources	FAYE NELSON	(334) 242-9374
Deputy Commissioner for Children and Family Services	KAREN SMITH	(334) 353-3343
Deputy Commissioner for Field Administration.....	PAUL BUTLER	(334) 242-9277
Deputy Commissioner for Administrative Services.....	CONITHA KING	(334) 353-4804
Deputy Commissioner for Quality.....	SHEA COBB-ENGLAND	(334) 242-2079
Chief Legal Counsel	FELICIA BROOKS	(334) 242-9337

Division Directors

Administrative Hearings.....	LARRY LYNN	(334) 242-1325
Adult Protective Services	SAM SMITH	(334) 242-1355
Audit.....	SIMEON HERROD	(334) 242-1147
Child Care Services.....	JENNIFER CONNELL	(334) 353-4101
Child Care Services and Workforce Development	BERNARD HOUSTON	(334) 242-1425
Child Support	LATHESIA MCCLENNEY	(334) 242-9320
Civil Rights/Equal Employment.....	PATRICIA BROWN	(334) 242-1551
Communications.....	DANIEL SPARKMAN	(334) 242-1852
Emergency Welfare Services/Safety	PAUL SMELLEY	(334) 353-3387
Family Assistance	FAYE NELSON (Interim)	(334) 242-9374
Family Services	JAN CASTEEL	(334) 242-5759
Finance	NANCY SCHLICH	(334) 242-9492
Food Assistance	BRANDON HARDIN	(334) 242-1747
General Services	CONITHA KING (Interim)	(334) 353-4804
Governmental Relations.....	PRESTON HORNSBY	(334) 242-1854
Information Services.....	LISA TOWNSEND	(334) 353-0057
Management Analysis.....	CONITHA KING (Interim)	(334) 353-4804
Personnel	KELLY LEVER	(334) 242-1780
Program Integrity/Criminal History.....	STAN LANDERS (Interim)	(334) 353-5804
Quality Assurance.....	EMILY JONES	(334) 353-0301
Quality Control.....	JEREMY BARNES	(334) 242-1365
Resource Management.....	STARR STEWART	(334) 353-4744
Staff Development.....	MANDY ANDREWS	(205) 744-3924
Training.....	MELODY MESSICK	(334) 353-4118

General Information

Phone: (334) 242-1310

Fax: (334) 353-1115

communications@dhr.alabama.gov

dhr.alabama.gov

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: <http://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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The Alabama Department of Human Resources provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:

- Qualified sign language interpreters
- Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)

Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:

- Qualified interpreters
- Information written in other languages

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You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue SW., Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201, 1-800-868-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD). Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.



Alabama Department of Human Resources

50 N. Ripley St. • Montgomery, AL 36104 • dhr.alabama.gov