

County of Stafford  
Board of Social Services

Minutes

The Stafford County Board of Social Services held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Monday, September 25, 2023, in the DSS/Procurement Conference Room of the Stafford County Government Center. The meeting convened at 10:00 a.m.

**Members Present:** Fred A. Donahoe, Chairman; Gary F. Snellings, Member; and Darrell E. English, member Board of Supervisors.

**Staff Present:** Michael J. Muse, Director; Marcy T. Bruce, Assistant Director; Jodi P. Long, Administrative Office Manager; and Jennifer S. Frias, Administrative Analyst.

The following business was discussed and acted upon on September 25, 2023:

**Approval of Minutes:**

On a motion by Mr. English, seconded by Mr. Snellings, the minutes from the July 24, 2023 Board meeting were approved as submitted.

- **Follow-up to Anonymous Letter:**

Mr. Muse advised the Board, leadership met with the staff person who the letter was directed to and held a meeting with the entire Adult Services/Adult Protective Services Team to address any concerns. There is a follow-up meeting scheduled on September 29, 2023.

- **Board Organization Issues:**

The Board opted to appoint Gary Snellings as vice-chairperson and discussed the possibility of adding new members and the frequency of meetings. The Board has opted to investigate how other local boards operate before making any decisions. Chairman, Fred Donahoe's term on the board ends December 31, 2023. He has opted to seek approval from the Board of Supervisors to serve another term.

**Foster Care Statistics:**

Mr. Muse reviewed with the Board statistical data relative to the foster care program. The following information was reported for July 2023 and August 2023:

|                                   | July | August |
|-----------------------------------|------|--------|
| Number of Children in Care        | 51   | 55     |
| Number of Approved Resource Homes | 46   | 46     |
| Number of Resource Homes in use   | 24   | 26     |

Mr. Muse also reported the total number of children receiving adoption subsidy and/or supportive services from Stafford DSS adoption staff for July 2023 and August 2023:

| July | August |
|------|--------|
| 95   | 95     |

### **Benefit Programs Statistics:**

The statistical reports for benefit programs were mailed to the Board members for the months of July 2023 and August 2023. (See Attachments A & B).

- **Medicaid Unwinding:**

Due to Medicaid Unwinding, processing Medicaid renewals is time consuming. The agency is struggling to keep pace with the required number of renewals to be completed. Stafford DSS was provided \$94,000 additional funds to pay staff overtime for processing Medicaid cases/renewals. An emergency part-time Benefit Programs Specialist II has been hired to assist with this caseload.

- **Replacement of VaCMS:**

Mr. Muse advised the Board that VDSS and Commissioner Avula have asked Governor Youngkin to include funding for the replacement of VaCMS (Benefits - Case Management System). The DSS Board will write a letter to the Governor supporting the replacement of the system.

### **FY 2024 State Budget/FY 2025 County Budget:**

Members of Virginia's General Assembly and Governor Youngkin adopted a state budget for FY 2024. This includes an increase retroactive to July 1, 2023 to Foster Care Maintenance and Adoption rates of the same percentage as the 5% pay increase to State employees in the prior fiscal year. Additionally, a supplementary pay increase of 2% was approved for state supported local employees (effective December 1, 2023), bringing the total increase to 7% for FY 2024. The funding for additional CPS workers was not approved.

All County Departments have begun working on budget submissions for FY 2025. All proposals are due to the budget office by October 16<sup>th</sup>. The County Administrator has requested budgets to remain level. The proposal from DSS, will include new position requests and will be discussed in an upcoming leadership meeting.

### **Sick Leave Bank:**

Mr. Muse provided the Board with copies of the DSS Sick Leave Bank policy (Attachment C). As highlighted in the policy, only updates were made to clarify differences based upon Plan 1, Plan 2, and Hybrid participants.

### **Recruitment Update:**

A new Family Services Specialist II in Foster Care has begun employment today. A candidate for the vacant Family Services Specialist in AS/APS has accepted the offer and is scheduled to begin employment on October 30<sup>th</sup>.

Due to a resignation, there is a vacant Family Services Specialist III in Foster Care. We are readvertising the position.

Due to a resignation, there is a vacant Human Services Assistant II in Foster Care. Interviews have been completed and references are being checked.

There is one vacant Benefit Programs Specialist II position due to a resignation. Interviews have been scheduled on September 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.

The second round of first interviews will be scheduled soon for the new FY 2024 approved Family Services Supervisor (AS/APS) position.

Due to a resignation, there is a vacant Administrative Program Assistant II position. An offer has been made to a candidate.

Due to a resignation, there will be a vacant Self-Sufficiency Specialist II position effective October 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Next Meeting**

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 23, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. in the DSS/Procurement Conference Room.

As there is no further business, the Board adjourned.

Attest:

  
Secretary

  
Chairman

# Board Report for July 2023

Attachment A

| I. New Applications | Current Month  | Prior Month    |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                     | Jul-23         | Jun-23         |
| SNAP                | 438            | 391            |
| PA                  | 84             | 93             |
| Medicaid            | 398            | 350            |
| TOTAL               | 920            | 834            |
|                     |                |                |
| II. Undercare       |                |                |
| SNAP                | 5,294          | 5,353          |
| TANF                | 265            | 261            |
| Medicaid            | 18,241         | 18,122         |
| TOTAL               | 23,800         | 23,736         |
|                     |                |                |
| III. Repayments     |                |                |
| TANF                | \$0.00         | \$0.00         |
| SNAP                | \$1,018.93     | \$1,029.56     |
| Day Care            | \$0.00         | \$0.00         |
| TOTAL               | \$1,018.93     | \$1,029.56     |
|                     |                |                |
| IV. SNAP Issued     |                |                |
| Household           | 4,781          | 4,844          |
| People              | 11,505         | 11,659         |
| Amount              | \$1,948,750.60 | \$1,980,536.00 |
|                     |                |                |
| Fuel/Crisis/Cooling |                |                |
| Application         | 152            | 167            |
| Denied              | 53             | 58             |
| Approved            | 70             | 82             |
| Pending             | 29             | 27             |
| Energy Share        | 0              | 0              |

| Prior Year     | Prior Year     | 3 Yr. Average  |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Jul-22         | Jul-21         | 23,22,21       |
| 408            | 321            | 389            |
| 93             | 62             | 80             |
| 313            | 373            | 361            |
| 814            | 756            | 830            |
|                |                |                |
| 4,779          | 3,939          | 4,671          |
| 249            | 215            | 243            |
| 16,061         | 13,825         | 16,042         |
| 21,089         | 17,979         | 20,956         |
|                |                |                |
| \$0.00         | \$0.00         | \$0.00         |
| \$1,312.86     | \$1,477.85     | \$1,269.88     |
| \$0.00         | \$0.00         | \$0.00         |
| \$1,312.86     | \$1,477.85     | \$1,269.88     |
|                |                |                |
| 4,540          | 3,740          | 4,354          |
| 11,094         | 9,053          | 10,551         |
| \$2,629,724.00 | \$2,030,585.00 | \$2,203,019.87 |
|                |                |                |
| 149            | 113            | 138            |
| 64             | 51             | 56             |
| 64             | 57             | 64             |
| 21             | 5              | 18             |
| 0              | 0              | 0              |

Please note that data is pulled from Data Warehouse system of the Fusion page from the state of Virginia.

Submitted by:

Angela Robinson, Benefit Programs Supervisor

# Board Report for August 2023

Attachment B

| I. New Applications | Current Month  | Prior Month    |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                     | Aug-23         | Jul-23         |
| SNAP                | 538            | 438            |
| PA                  | 114            | 84             |
| Medicaid            | 486            | 398            |
| TOTAL               | 1,138          | 920            |
|                     |                |                |
| II. Undercare       |                |                |
| SNAP                | 5,322          | 5,294          |
| TANF                | 259            | 265            |
| Medicaid            | 18,264         | 18,241         |
| TOTAL               | 23,845         | 23,800         |
|                     |                |                |
| III. Repayments     |                |                |
| TANF                | \$0.00         | \$0.00         |
| SNAP                | \$4,494.20     | \$1,018.93     |
| Day Care            | \$0.00         | \$0.00         |
| TOTAL               | \$4,494.20     | \$1,018.93     |
|                     |                |                |
| IV. SNAP Issued     |                |                |
| Household           | 4,857          | 4,781          |
| People              | 11,743         | 11,505         |
| Amount              | \$2,022,485.00 | \$1,948,750.60 |
|                     |                |                |
| Fuel/Crisis/Cooling |                |                |
| Application         | 226            | 152            |
| Denied              | 132            | 53             |
| Approved            | 94             | 70             |
| Pending             | 0              | 29             |
| Energy Share        | 0              | 0              |

| Prior Year     | Prior Year     | 3 Yr. Average  |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Aug-22         | Aug-21         | 23,22,21       |
| 489            | 437            | 488            |
| 113            | 76             | 101            |
| 411            | 459            | 452            |
| 1,013          | 972            | 1,041          |
|                |                |                |
| 4,903          | 3,997          | 4,741          |
| 256            | 216            | 244            |
| 16,270         | 14,045         | 16,193         |
| 21,429         | 18,258         | 21,177         |
|                |                |                |
| \$0.00         | \$0.00         | \$0.00         |
| \$1,329.00     | \$10,384.96    | \$5,402.72     |
| \$0.00         | \$0.00         | \$0.00         |
| \$1,329.00     | \$10,384.96    | \$5,402.72     |
|                |                |                |
| 4,609          | 3,785          | 4,417          |
| 11,208         | 9,202          | 10,718         |
| \$2,632,556.00 | \$2,060,519.00 | \$2,238,523.33 |
|                |                |                |
| 207            | 83             | 172            |
| 141            | 35             | 103            |
| 66             | 48             | 69             |
| 0              | 0              | 0              |
| 0              | 0              | 0              |

Please note that data is pulled from Data Warehouse system of the Fusion page from the state of Virginia.

Submitted by:

Angela Robinson, Benefit Programs Supervisor

## Stafford County Social Services Sick Leave Sharing Bank

### ***Objective***

Stafford County Department of Social Services' objective is to allow employees to participate in a manageable leave sharing program.

### ***Purpose***

Stafford County Department of Social Services seeks to provide a method of donation of annual leave credits only from DSS employees to other DSS employees to be used to cover absences due to a verified illness.

### ***Participation and Enrollment***

Any Stafford Social Services employee who earns annual leave may donate that leave to the Sick Leave Bank. A new regular full-time or regular part-time employee may join the Sick Leave Bank during open enrollment in September after the one year anniversary of their hire date. This donation is also available to hybrid employees.

All employees must donate a minimum of eight (8) hours of annual leave to join the Sick Leave Bank. An annual donation of eight (8) hours must be made in the enrollment month of September each year following initial participation to continue employee membership **(For Plan 1 and Plan 2 Participants)**. For Hybrid employees, this annual donation must be four (4) hours of annual leave in order to continue participation in the Sick Leave Bank. **For clarification, annual participation is from October 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year.**

When an employee uses the Sick Leave Bank, the employee is not eligible to request additional hours from the Bank until another **8 hours (Plan 1 and Plan 2 Participants) or 4 hours (Hybrid Participants)** of annual leave contribution is made.

There is no limit on the amount of annual leave hours that can be donated to the Sick Leave Bank.

## ***Procedures***

If an employee desires to make an annual leave donation, **it should be requested on the appropriate form found on the shared drive under DSS Sick Leave Bank.** All donated leave hours shall be maintained in a “Bank” with the appropriate record keeping.

\*Effective December 2005, if a Plan 1 or Plan 2 employee has unused annual leave subject to the use or lose, they may elect to put 50% in the Sick Leave Bank and add 50% to their own sick leave balance. If they choose, they can put 100% of the use or lose in the Sick Leave Bank. However, a Plan 1 or Plan 2 employee can only add 50% to their existing sick leave balance when they simultaneously put 50% in the Sick Leave Bank. The normal use or lose time period is as of the end of each September, **unless otherwise specified by the Board of Social Services.**

## ***Request for Leave from the Sick Leave Bank***

Before becoming eligible for a Sick Leave Bank donation, the employee shall have exhausted completely his/her sick leave, annual leave, compensatory leave, Floating Holidays, Hybrid P1 leave (personal) and Hybrid HS leave(sick).

There must be a waiting period of five (5) consecutive eight (8 hour) workdays of leave without pay before drawing from the Sick Leave Bank.

Any hybrid employee who has donated to the Sick Leave Bank and has exhausted all leave available to them, can apply for a donation from the Sick Leave Bank as long as they meet all “request” requirements. However, once the hybrid employee goes into the short-term disability status, the Sick Leave Bank will only cover the **percentage of hours** that short-term disability status does not cover.

When an employee desires to request donated leave from the Sick Leave Bank for a verifiable illness, a request must be made in writing to the Director. A doctor’s certificate or letter verifying the illness of the employee shall be submitted along with the request.

All letters of request for the use of the donated annual leave from the Sick Leave Bank shall be submitted to the Social Services Board for **consideration**.

Decisions shall be made based on the **number of hours** in the Sick Leave Bank and the **number of hours** requested by the individual. All leave requests must be made in eight (8) hour increments for full-time and part-time employees. Hybrid employees' leave should be requested in hourly increments to coincide with the percentage not covered by short-term disability.

According to guidelines set forth in the Local Departments of Social Services Administrative/Human Resources Manual, an employee receiving donated leave from the Sick Leave Bank, is considered to be on leave without pay. Therefore, the employee does not accrue leave during this period.

All guidelines set forth in the Local Departments of Social Services Administrative/Human Resources Manual will be strictly adhered to.

Should the hours in the Sick Leave Bank be exhausted prior to the month of September, The Local Departments of Social Services Administrative/Human Resources Manual also allows for **annual leave** donations to be made to a **designated** existing Sick Leave Bank member.

Stafford County Department of Social Services reserves the right to abolish the Sick Leave Bank at any time it considers the Sick Leave Bank no longer needed or inappropriate. Stafford County Department of Social Services does not assume responsibility for claims by any employee against the Sick Leave Sharing Bank. Revision: 9/01/23

\*A Hybrid employee is if the membership date in VRS began on or after January 1, 2014.