

County of Stafford
Board of Social Services

Minutes

The Stafford County Board of Social Services held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Monday, March 24, 2025, 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, Vice Chairman; and Darrell E. English, member Board of Supervisors.

Staff Present: Michael J. Muse, Director; Marcy T. Bruce, Assistant Director; Ronald S. Lynch, Assistant Director; Jodi P. Long, Administrative Office Manager; and Harris W. Hawks, Family Services Specialist III.

The following business was discussed and acted upon on March 24, 2025:

Approval of Minutes:

On a motion by Mr. Snellings, seconded by Mr. English, the minutes from the January 27, 2025, Board meeting were approved as submitted.

- **Board Composition:**

Last January, the Board discussed the possibility of adding new members. Mr. Snellings spoke with the County Attorney's office about the DSS Board structure and was advised it can be an unlimited odd number of members. Any change in the board structure would have to be approved by the Stafford County Board of Supervisors. The DSS Board will discuss further in January 2026.

Mr. Muse shared a letter with the Board from Empowerhouse expressing appreciation for the \$1000 donation made from Stafford DSS.

Foster Care Statistics:

Mr. Muse reviewed with the Board statistical data relative to the foster care program. The following information was reported for the months of January 2025 and February 2025:

	January	February
Number of Children in Care	75	75
Number of Approved Resource Homes	52	53
Number of Resource Homes in use	30	30

Mr. Muse reported the total number of children receiving adoption subsidy and/or supportive services from Stafford DSS for the months of January and February 2025:

January	February
82	81

The month of May is National Foster Care Appreciation Month. A dinner will be held on May 16, 2025 at Augustine Golf Club to thank all of our resource parents.

Benefit Programs Statistics:

The statistical report for benefit programs was mailed out to the Board members for the month of January 2025. The statistical report for February 2025 was handed out to the Board. (See Attachments A & B)

Mr. Muse reviewed a letter with the Board from Planning District 16 Hunger Action Coalition. (See Attachment C)

Closed Session:

On a motion by Mr. English, seconded by Mr. Snellings, the Board went into executive/closed session to discuss the following confidential business:

Item #1 – Harris W. Hawks, Family Services Specialist III, presented to the Board for approval, the adoption of one child in Foster Care, pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(4)

Item #2 – Harris W. Hawks, Family Services Specialist III, presented to the Board for approval, the adoption of one child in Foster Care, pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(4)

Item #3 – Personnel Matter, pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1)

The Board certifies that only the items outlined in the motion for executive/closed session were in fact discussed. On a motion by Mr. Snellings, seconded by Mr. English, the Board exited closed session.

Item #1 – On a motion by Mr. English, seconded by Mr. Snellings, the Board approved the adoption.

Item #2 – On a motion by Mr. English, seconded by Mr. Snellings, the Board approved the adoption.

Item #3 – On a motion by Mr. English, seconded by Mr. Snellings, the Board approved the sick leave bank request.

FY 2026 County/State Budgets:

On March 4th, the County Administrator presented his proposed FY 2026 budget to the Board of Supervisors. Two new positions for DSS and a 2.75% pay increase for all county employees were included in the proposal. The cost of health insurance is proposed to increase for the county with a portion of the increase being passed to employees.

Governor Youngkin's proposed budget includes funding for 72 new CPS positions statewide for local DSS agencies and a 3% pay increase for all state employees and state supported local employees.

Special Welfare Fund Update:

Mr. Muse advised the Board the balance in the Special Welfare Fund was approximately \$371,226 as of July 2024 and approximately \$369,457 as of December 2024.

Recruitment Update:

Due to a resignation, there is one vacant Family Services Specialist II (Adult Services/Adult Protective Services) position. Applications are being accepted.

Due to a resignation, there is a vacant Family Services Specialist II (In-Home) position. Interviews are scheduled on March 28th.

Due to resignations, there are two vacant Benefit Programs Specialist II positions. Applications are being accepted.

Due to separation, there is one vacant Family Services Specialist II (Foster Care) position. Interviews have been completed, and reference checks are being conducted.

Due to a resignation, there is one vacant Family Services Specialist III (Child Protective Services) position. Interviews are being held today.

Next Meeting

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 28, 2025 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 January 2025

Attachment A

I. New Applications	Current Month	Prior Month
	Jan-25	Dec-24
SNAP	457	396
PA	98	110
Medicaid	608	550
TOTAL	1,163	1,056

II. Undercare		
SNAP	5350	5,354
TANF	259	256
Medicaid	16,960	16,857
TOTAL	22,569	22,467

III. Repayments		
TANF	\$0.00	\$0.00
SNAP	\$1,012.00	\$1,068.00
Day Care	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$1,012.00	\$1,068.00

IV. SNAP Issued		
Household	4,966	5,041
People	12,156	12,395
Amount	2,106,118.00	2,166,821.00

Fuel/Crisis/Cooling		
Denied	39	39
Approved	7	3
LIHEAP Pending	29	20
LIHEAP Total	75	62
PIPP Approved	27	32
PIPP Denied	38	26
PIPP Pending	61	63
PIPP Total	126	121

Prior Year	Prior Year	3 Yr. Average
Jan-24	Jan-23	24,23,22
551	545	517
118	98	105
551	521	560
1,220	1,164	1,182

5,371	5,140	5,287
234	279	257
17,801	17,391	17,384
23,406	22,810	22,928

\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
\$2,140.95	\$1,128.20	\$1,427.05
\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
\$2,140.95	\$1,128.20	\$1,427.05

4,925	4,810	4,900
11,879	11,615	11,883
\$2,121,185.00	\$3,018,486.00	\$2,415,263.00

59	68	55
7	12	8
2	14	15
68	94	76
0	0	9
0	0	13
0	0	20
0	0	42

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

Submitted by:

Cynthia Mabery, Benefit Programs Supervisor

2/28/2025

Board Report for February 2025

Attachment B

I. New Applications	Current Month	Prior Month
	Feb-25	Jan-25
SNAP	399	457
PA	106	98
Medicaid	425	608
TOTAL	930	1,163

II. Undercare		
SNAP	5325	5350
TANF	261	259
Medicaid	16,872	16,960
TOTAL	22,458	22,569

III. Repayments		
TANF	\$147.34	\$0.00
SNAP	\$8,750.00	\$1,012.00
Day Care	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$8,897.34	\$1,012.00

IV. SNAP Issued		
Household	4,940	4,966
People	12,157	12,156
Amount	2,085,661.00	2,106,118.00

Fuel/Crisis/Cooling		
Denied	38	39
Approved	15	7
LIHEAP Pending	41	29
LIHEAP Total	94	75
PIPP Approved	16	27
PIPP Denied	17	38
PIPP Pending	95	61
PIPP Total	128	126

Prior Year	Prior Year	3 Yr. Average
Feb-24	Feb-23	24,23,22
427	406	411
97	74	92
405	342	390
929	822	893

5,321	5,197	5,281
234	274	256
17,906	17,549	17,442
23,461	23,020	22,979

\$0.00	\$0.00	\$49.00
\$1,317.62	\$1,455.31	\$3,840.97
\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
\$1,317.62	\$1,455.31	\$3,889.97

4,846	4,865	4,884
11,772	11,692	11,874
\$2,073,218.00	\$3,136,644.00	\$2,431,841.00

70	78	62
12	45	24
7	11	20
89	134	106
39	0	18
29	0	15
4	0	33
72	0	66

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

Submitted by:

Cynthia Mabery, Benefit Programs Supervisor

3/15/2025

FREDERICKSBURG REGIONAL FOOD BANK

Locust Grove • Stafford • Caroline
Spotsylvania • King George • the
City of Fredericksburg

MEMBER OF
FEEDING
AMERICA

Attachment C

January 24, 2025

Dear Delegate Cole,

As organizational members of the Planning District 16 Hunger Action Coalition and affiliated citizens of that region, we are writing on behalf of the more than 33,000 food-insecure residents within PD16. Your constituents are among those facing uncertainty about the adequacy of their nutritional health, and because of their circumstances, we appeal to you to be mindful of legislative measures that could provide valuable support to them during this session.

Survey Results

To underscore the need for initiatives that can support those facing food insecurity, we share with you some key results of a survey that our Coalition conducted with 650 people who sought charitable food assistance in October and November 2024.

- 1) Thirty-four (34) percent of those surveyed pursue that assistance several times per month to try to obtain adequate food supplies for their families.
- 2) While the top two reasons cited for needing food assistance are the high cost of food due to inflation (341 respondents) and low-wage jobs (207 respondents), other factors affecting more than 100 respondents include the high cost of housing (186) and unemployment (125).
- 3) Healthier, fresher foods such as meats, dairy products, and fresh fruits and vegetables are the most desired and needed commodities from charitable assistance.

These survey results highlight several key elements worthy of consideration during this legislative cycle, including:

- 1) Supporting a well-equipped, well-funded, robust network of community pantries capable of operating across our region for the benefit of those needing food assistance.
- 2) Providing economic initiatives that can offset inflation impacts and provide living wage jobs.
- 3) Creating affordable housing alternatives.
- 4) Understanding that healthy food is often the first line of defense in supporting improved community health.

Recommended Legislative Priorities

We encourage your openness to three legislative initiatives as concrete steps toward achieving at least some of these elements. Our legislative priorities are: increased minimum SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) funding for seniors, a Medicaid nutrition benefit for new mothers, and adequate nutrition on Virginia's college campuses.

Increased Minimum SNAP Funding for Seniors

We advocate for advancing a measure that would increase the minimum monthly SNAP benefit for seniors 60 and older from the current rate of \$23 to \$50. Our senior population received great benefits from the pandemic-era policies that boosted SNAP benefits significantly, so the drop in benefits funding from pandemic levels to the current minimum of less than a dollar a day has been

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www.fredfood.org

particularly painful for a segment of the population most likely to be affected by fixed income circumstances. While \$50 per month is still only a modest benefit, boosting the minimum benefit to that level would expand the safety net for seniors and provide dietary benefits to a segment of the population that is particularly vulnerable to poor or inadequate nutrition.

Medicaid Nutrition Benefit to New Mothers

The data from our survey reinforced the importance of providing healthier food options for those using charitable food assistance services and supporting Food is Medicine programming across the Commonwealth with a goal of advancing healthy food access. One way to do so that we ask you to prioritize is the creative application of Medicaid funding to support in lieu of services alternatives that can support the dietary health of expectant mothers to ensure access to proper nutrition that can benefit their developing children.

Adequate Nutrition on College Campuses

We echo the Virginia Commission to End Hunger's call for legislative action to ensure adequate nutritional access for college students across the state. The existence of food insecurity for college students is often underappreciated because of the assumption that one's capacity to afford higher education is coupled with the capacity to afford necessities. However, schools in our region, like the University of Mary Washington and Germanna Community College, as well as campuses elsewhere, attest to the heavy reliance of students on the resources of on-campus food pantries as students struggle to afford their education and basic needs. We advocate for hunger-free campuses across the Commonwealth to support the holistic development of those pursuing higher education.

Concluding Invitation

We appreciate your consideration of these legislative initiatives as the key priorities to focus upon during this legislative cycle to support those facing food insecurity. We hope you will keep your constituents in these circumstances in mind as legislative initiatives that could positively impact them are introduced.

Please know that we would welcome the participation of you or a staff member in a roundtable discussion with members of the PD 16 Hunger Action Coalition during our monthly meeting in February. We offer this opportunity as a chance for a more in-depth discussion of our advocacy concerns and to afford a chance for questions and dialogue surrounding the issues framed in this letter.

Our roundtable will be held on Wednesday, February 19 from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. at St. George's Episcopal Church, 905 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg. RSVPs to attend can be addressed to our PD16 Hunger Action Coalition Chair Dan Maher, with the Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank at dmaher@fredfood.org or by phone at (540) 371-7666 x139.

In the meantime, we invite you to make reference to a [food security mapping tool](#) that has been developed for Planning District 16 as a way of gaining additional insight into the food security condition of our region.

Thank you for your service to our region. We hope you or a designee will attend our roundtable and we look forward to continued dialogue with you about the importance of food security for those you serve.

Sincerely,

Caroline County Department of Social Services
Central Virginia Housing Coalition
Community Foundation of the Rappahannock River Region
Community IMPACT Movement
Dr. Yum Project
Faith Housing Coalition
Fredericksburg Christian Health Services
Fredericksburg Department of Social Services
Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank
Healthy Generations
Hub of HOPE
Impact King George
Kevin Mielnik
King George County Department of Social Services
Legal Aid Works
Lindsey Epperson
Love Thy Neighbor Food Pantry
Micah Ecumenical Ministries
New Vision Community Outreach Association
Rappahannock Education Farm
SERVE
Spotsylvania County Department of Social Services
Stafford County Department of Social Services
St. Jude Catholic Church
The Table at St. George's
Virginia Community Food Connections