The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is responsible for managing a number of vital programs that directly affect the lives of Ohioans. These include cash and food assistance, job training and employment services, child care, unemployment insurance, child welfare and adoption, adult protective services, and child support programs.

Our mission is to improve the well-being of Ohio’s workforce and families by ensuring the safety of Ohio’s most vulnerable citizens, and promoting long-term self-sufficiency.

Most of our funding comes from the federal government. We’re responsible for distributing it to more than 150 partner agencies throughout the state, including:

- County departments of job and family services
- Public children service agencies
- Child support enforcement agencies
- Local workforce development boards
State fiscal year (SFY) 2020 was one that we won’t soon forget. It started out with historic investments in children services, a record child support collection rate, an updated In-Demand Jobs List, and a full slate of in-person visits and roundtable events with our county partners. Then, a little more than midway through the fiscal year, the COVID-19 pandemic knocked the entire nation off the beam.

Ohio received well-earned praise nationally for its quick response efforts. We know our quick actions flattened the curve and saved lives. However, like every other state in the nation, we experienced a surge in unemployment claims literally overnight, presenting historic challenges that no state had ever before experienced.

I could not be more proud of our talented, competent and experienced team and the work they put in – literally day and night – to serve Ohioans during this crisis. To name just a few of our many achievements:

- From March 15 through June 30, we paid more than $4.6 billion in regular unemployment benefits to more than 726,000 Ohioans and more than $3.2 billion in Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefits to more than 363,000 Ohioans.
- We applied for and received an $8.5 million National Dislocated Worker Grant that will help unemployed workers and employers impacted by COVID-19 and a $9.4 million grant to expand apprenticeship opportunities.
- We helped more than 900 employers implement SharedWork Ohio plans that avoided layoffs for more than 46,000 employees.
- During Ohio’s Stay at Home Order, we administered a Pandemic Child Care program that served more than 24,000 children of essential workers. In addition, by the end of June, more than 93% of Ohio’s Publicly Funded Child Care providers were participating in the Step Up To Quality program.
- We provided $254.5 million in food assistance to approximately 850,000 Ohio children who receive free or reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program.
- We received federal approval to allow Ohioans who are eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to use their Ohio Direction cards to purchase food online through Walmart and Amazon and have groceries delivered, if they choose.
- On four occasions in response to federal action during the pandemic, we issued mass food assistance payments totaling close to $80 million to nearly 480,000 SNAP-eligible households.
- We continued work on our federal Family First implementation efforts, Benefits Bridge research and strategic planning efforts.

These incredible results give me great confidence in the future. Please read on for more information about the many innovative ways the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services has served Ohioans during this historic time. On behalf of our entire team, thank you for the support, guidance and encouragement.

Kimberly Hall, Director
ODJFS supervises the state’s child protective services programs, which are designed to help children who have been or are at risk of becoming victims of abuse or neglect. Child protective services are administered locally by 88 county public children services agencies (PCSAs). County agencies investigate allegations of abuse and neglect and offer services for abused and/or neglected children and their birth, foster and/or adoptive families.

What happens after someone makes a report of child abuse or neglect?

After a PCSA receives a report of possible child abuse or neglect, a caseworker completes an assessment. If the report does not allege serious or imminent harm, the caseworker may guide the family to local social service programs that can reduce the risk of harm to the child and keep the family together. If the caseworker determines that the child cannot safely remain in the home, he or she then works with the family to find an alternative safe placement, preferably with relatives or another familiar setting, such as with a neighbor, family friend or another family within the same area and school district.

If this is not possible, the caseworker will work with the local court system to put the child in the protective custody of the PCSA. The PCSA may then place the child in a licensed foster setting. This might be a foster home, a residential group home or treatment facility, or an independent living program for youths ages 16 to 18.

In many cases, children are able to be reunited with their families. However, if a court determines that it is not in a child’s best interest to return home, the agency will try to find an alternative permanent placement, such as adoption or legal guardianship.

How is foster care regulated?

More than 16,000 Ohio children are in foster care. Suitable relatives and non-relatives must be licensed by ODJFS or approved by the PCSA. Licensing staff inspect all licensed foster care agencies and facilities and a sample of each PCSA’s foster homes. Private child-placing agencies, private noncustodial agencies and county PCSAs that operate residential programs must be licensed.

The goal of licensing is to determine whether agencies are fit to provide care. Placement settings are closely monitored for compliance with licensing rules. Licensing staff review each agency’s records and practices and provide guidance when necessary. Measures can be taken to revoke an agency’s license for noncompliance.

How can child abuse be reported?

Anyone who suspects a child is being abused or neglected can call one statewide toll-free number: 1-855-OH-CHILD (1-855-642-4453). Abuse or neglect also can be reported by directly contacting the law enforcement agency or PCSA in the county where the incident occurred or where the child and his or her parent, guardian or custodian live.
Kinship care refers to a temporary or permanent arrangement in which a relative, or any non-relative adult who has a long-standing relationship or bond with the child and/or family, has taken over the full-time, substitute care of a child whose parents are unable or unwilling to do so. Kinship care includes relationships established through an informal arrangement, legal custody, guardianship order, relative foster care placement or kinship adoption.

Regardless of the type of kinship care arrangement, the kinship caregiver’s voluntary commitment to devote their lives to the children in their care is a courageous, life-changing decision. Kinship care represents the most desirable out-of-home placement option for many children who cannot live with their parents. It offers the greatest level of stability by allowing children to maintain their sense of belonging and enhances their ability to identify with their family’s culture and traditions.

**Kinship Permanency Incentive Program**

The Kinship Permanency Incentive Program supports kinship caregivers by helping defray some of the costs of caring for children. Eligible caregivers receive a one-time payment to reduce the costs of the initial placement. They may receive up to seven subsequent payments every six months to support the stability of the child’s placement in the home. Participation in this program does not prevent families from also receiving child-only Ohio Works First cash assistance. To be eligible, a kinship caregiver must have:

- Legal custody or guardianship of the child on or after July 1, 2005.
- A gross family income of less than 300 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

**Kinship and Adoption Navigator Program**

Work is progressing on the Ohio Kinship and Adoption Navigator (OhioKAN) program, which will launch in five regions of the state in August 2020 before being implemented statewide. OhioKAN will offer more personalized help in directing kinship caregivers and adoptive parents to local resources and supports. It will be administered by 10 regional offices, each led by a director and a local advisory council. The program will partner with families to strengthen their networks and help them overcome challenges, by linking them to services and resources that can make it easier for them to care for children.

**Other Resources for Kinship Caregivers**

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services publishes an extensive guidebook for kinship families called “Relatives Caring for Children: Ohio Resource Guide.” To obtain a copy, call 1-866-886-3537 (option 4) or visit [jfs.ohio.gov/form08146](http://jfs.ohio.gov/form08146).
In Ohio, adoption services are provided by PCSAs, private child placing agencies (PCPAs) and private noncustodial agencies. ODJFS supports local agencies in their efforts to decrease the number of children waiting for permanent homes, to prevent discrimination in the placement of children, to identify and recruit permanent families who can meet each child’s needs, and to provide support to families to ensure the stability and well-being of the children in their care.

Adoption Subsidy Programs

More than 3,000 children in foster care are waiting for permanent homes. Several types of financial subsidies are available to help families meet the special needs of their adopted children:

- Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program
- Title IV-E Nonrecurring Adoption Expense Program
- State Adoption Maintenance Subsidy Program
- Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy Program
- Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance Program
- Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Connections to Age 21

Title IV-E Nonrecurring Adoption Expense Program

Nonrecurring adoption expenses are one-time expenses directly related to the legal adoption of a child with special needs. This federal program provides payment or reimbursement for such expenses as supervision of placements prior to the adoption, attorney's fees, court costs, transportation costs, and the reasonable costs of food and lodging.

Title IV-E Adoption Assistance

The federal Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program allows states to provide monthly subsidies to eligible families that adopt children with special needs or circumstances. In Ohio, PCSAs administer this program. Children receiving this benefit are automatically eligible for Medicaid coverage. Eligibility criteria include but are not limited to the following:

- Approved home study
- Matched with a prospective adoptive parent
- Meets the special needs requirement
- Age
- Citizenship
- Placed in the custody of a PCSA, PCPA or tribe at the time of the adoption proceedings

Children who are adopted independently may be eligible if they meet the special needs requirements. Children adopted internationally are not eligible. The amount of the monthly subsidy is determined through negotiation and mutual agreement between the adoptive parent(s) and the PCSA. The circumstances of the adoptive family and the special needs of the child are taken into consideration. The payment cannot exceed the foster care maintenance payment for the child, if applicable.

Families must apply for this subsidy prior to the finalization of the adoption. If the child is in the custody of a PCSA, the prospective adoptive parent(s) must submit an application to that PCSA. If the child is in the custody of a PCPA as a result of a court order or permanent surrender, then the prospective adoptive parent(s) must apply at the PCSA in the county where they live.

More Information

Obtain a copy of the “Ohio Adoption Guide” by calling (866) 886-3537, option 4, or by searching for JFS 01675 at jfs.ohio.gov/form01675. The back of the guide lists local agencies that you can contact for more information. You also can visit FosterAnd Adopt.jfs.ohio.gov for information about children needing forever families.
State Adoption Maintenance Subsidy

The State Adoption Maintenance Subsidy Program is a financial assistance program funded entirely by the state of Ohio. It provides monthly subsidies to families that adopt children with special needs who are ineligible for the Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program.

PCSA as administer this program. Eligible families receive a monthly payment and/or Medicaid coverage to help pay for the child’s mental, physical or rehabilitative needs. The following are the eligibility requirements:

- The adoptive family’s gross income must not exceed 120 percent of the median income of a family of the same size.
- The child must have been placed for adoption by a PCPA or a PCSA.
- The child must meet at least one of the state’s criteria for special needs.
- The prospective adoptive parent(s) must lack the economic resources to care for the child without financial assistance.

Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance

The Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance Program is an agreement between member states that ensures continued medical assistance for adopted children with special needs who move across state lines. Nearly all states, including Ohio, participate in this program.

Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy

The Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy (PASSS) program is another adoption subsidy program funded entirely by the state of Ohio. It offers eligible families financial assistance after adoptions are finalized to help pay for the treatment of physical, developmental, mental or emotional conditions for children they adopt.

PASSS is intended to pay for services not covered by other adoption subsidy programs, insurance programs or Medicaid. Usually, this includes mental health, respite care and counseling services. It may be used to pay for respite care and/or the maintenance costs of residential treatment programs. It will not cover educational or recreational services or activities solely designed to improve self-esteem.

PASSS is available to all adoptive families, with the exception of stepparent adoptions, regardless of the type of adoption (international, attorney, public or private agency). Eligibility criteria include but are not limited to the following:

- The child must have a physical, developmental, mental or emotional condition considered a special need. The child does not have to meet the federal or state definitions of special needs.
- The child’s special need must have existed before the adoption was finalized or must have been caused by a pre-adaptive condition.
- The child must be younger than 18, or younger than 21 and have a mental or physical disability.
- The family must have explored other sources of assistance but found them to be inadequate or not available to meet the child’s needs.
- The expenses must be beyond the economic resources of the adoptive family.
- The child must not be in the custody of a PCSA or PCPA.
- The family must live in Ohio.
Title IV-E Adoption Assistance
Connections to Age 21

Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Connections to Age 21 is Ohio’s newest adoption subsidy program. It provides financial assistance to eligible families who adopt children at ages 16 or 17 from foster care, enter into a Title IV-E Adoption Assistance agreement, and continue to support those children as they transition to adulthood. Young adults participating in the program must provide proof of at least ONE of the following:

- Completing secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential
- Enrolled in an institution that provides post-secondary or vocational education
- Participating in a program or activity designed to promote, or remove barriers to, employment
- Employed for at least 80 hours a month
- Incapable of doing any of the above activities due to a medical condition, as documented by a qualified practitioner.

For eligible families, Adoption Assistance Connections provides monthly subsidy payments, Medicaid coverage and referrals to resources up to age 21. Proof of eligibility must be provided every six months. Families can reapply any time up until the young adult’s 21st birthday if they were previously found to be ineligible.

For more information or to apply, call (866) 635-3748 or email AdoptionAssistanceToAge21@jfs.ohio.gov. Completed applications and supporting documentation can be sent to this address:

ODJFS – OFC – AAC
P.O. Box 183204
Columbus, Ohio 43218-3204
More than 1,000 young people in Ohio age out of foster care each year without finding permanent homes. To help ease that transition, Ohio’s 88 county PCSAs provide a variety of independent living services. In addition, ODJFS offers a voluntary program called Bridges for emancipated foster youth ages 18, 19 and 20.

**Independent Living Services**
Ohio’s PCSAs provide independent living services to youth ages 14 to 18 in foster care to help them learn skills they’ll need to live on their own. These services include: life-skills development training; education and vocational training; preventive health activities; financial, housing, employment and education assistance; self-esteem counseling; and help developing positive relationships and support systems. All county PCSAs also offer independent living services to help young adults ages 18 to 21 who formerly were in foster care with rent and other costs. For more information, contact your county PCSA. Contact information can be found at [jfs.ohio.gov/county](http://jfs.ohio.gov/county).

**Education and Training Voucher Program**
To help with educational expenses, the federal Education and Training Voucher Program provides federal assistance for those who aged out of foster care or were adopted after age 16. Up to $5,000 is available to eligible youth each year until they turn 23. To qualify, they must enroll in a full-time post-secondary education or training program by age 21, continue to be enrolled, and make satisfactory progress. Funding may be used to pay for tuition, room and board, student loan repayment, books and supplies, transportation, and other related expenses.

**Medicaid**
Youth formerly in foster care are eligible for their states’ full Medicaid coverage, regardless of their income, up until age 26.

**Bridges**
Bridges allows young people who age out of foster care to request supports toward independence any time up until their 21st birthday. It promotes education and employment and encourages youth to pursue careers that can sustain them for a lifetime. Those eligible can use the program’s supportive services as often as they like, as long as they meet at least one of the following requirements:

- Enrolled in an educational program
- Working at least 80 hours a month
- Participating in a program or activity to remove barriers to employment
- Have a medical condition that prevents them from attending school or working.

ODJFS administers Bridges through a contract with The Child and Family Health Collaborative of Ohio, which works in partnership with provider agencies throughout the state. Through regular meetings with Bridges liaisons, participants develop goals, learn skills and access services. Financial assistance also can be provided for housing, utilities, food, clothing, transportation and personal incidentals, based on need.

Bridges builds on the independent living services provided by Ohio’s PCSAs. For more information—including contact information for the regional Bridges offices—visit [bridgestosuccess.jfs.ohio.gov](http://bridgestosuccess.jfs.ohio.gov).
ODJFS offers financial assistance to eligible parents to help them with child care costs while they engage in work, education or job training. This assistance allows low-income parents to find and keep jobs, and it ensures that their children have access to an early care and education experience they need to succeed in school.

Who can receive child care assistance?
To become eligible for publicly funded child care, a family’s income must be below 130 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. After that, families may remain eligible unless their income becomes greater than 300 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

Families can be eligible for coverage of all or part of their monthly child care expenses. To apply for child care benefits, families can complete the online application at ssp.benefits.ohio.gov or mail, email or fax an application to their local JFS agency. Families can find more information at jfs.ohio.gov/CDC.

Items needed to determine eligibility include verification of a qualifying activity, such as employment or current education training, household income and household composition. County JFS agencies determine families’ eligibility for the program. A family co-pay, to be paid to the child care program, is determined based on the family’s size and income. ODJFS then makes payments to providers for the costs of care, based on established rate guidelines.

More than 116,000 Ohio children received financial assistance for child care each month prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program serves children of all ages, from infants to preschoolers to school-age children who need care before and after school.

How is child care assistance paid?
Ohio uses an electronic time, attendance and payment system to record children’s time and attendance and issue payments to programs. Parents track their child’s attendance at the child care programs using the automated system. ODJFS issues direct deposit payments to programs to pay them for the time the children are in care. The automated system is easy to use, reduces fraud and greatly increases payment accuracy.

How does ODJFS prevent child care fraud?
ODJFS monitors data in the time, attendance and payment system for irregularities. The agency may investigate those irregularities, as well as any reports of potential fraud. ODJFS also educates parents and caretakers on the appropriate use of the system. Anyone who suspects child care fraud should report it at jfs.ohio.gov/fraud.

What happens to providers who commit fraud?
Child care providers who commit fraud may be:
- Terminated from the program
- Forced to repay any amounts improperly received
- Excluded from the program for five years

In addition, they can face prosecution and, if convicted, can be banned from the program.

Child Care Eligibility Ranges and Sample Co-pay Amount

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>130% FPL Initial Monthly Income Eligibility 10/1/19</th>
<th>300% FPL Maximum Ongoing Monthly Income Eligibility 10/1/19</th>
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<th>Sample Family Size of 3 (parent + 2 children)</th>
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ODJFS and county JFS agencies are responsible for licensing and inspecting all child care settings in Ohio, from large child care centers to family child care homes, to ensure that minimum health and safety guidelines are met. Every day in Ohio, an estimated 285,000 children are cared for in settings outside the home that are licensed by the state of Ohio. Families can search a database of licensed providers—and view past inspection reports—at jfs.ohio.gov/CDC.

How often are child care programs inspected?

All child care centers are inspected three times in their first year. After that, they’re inspected at least once annually and any time a complaint is received. Type A and Type B Homes are inspected at least twice a year and any time a complaint is received. Type A Homes care for seven to 12 children or more than three children under age 2. Type B Homes care for one to six children as long as no more than three are under age 2. All inspections are unannounced.

What happens if problems are found during an inspection?

Our goal is to work with providers to help them become compliant with licensing rules. Programs not in compliance at the time of an inspection must submit corrective action plans. In addition, programs with many violations will receive timely follow-up inspections and guidance, as needed. In most cases, ODJFS considers license revocation only when a provider has repeated serious violations that they are unable or unwilling to correct. However, the agency may immediately suspend a license if the local children services agency gets a complaint of abuse or neglect, if a child is seriously injured or dies, if someone affiliated with the program is charged with abuse or neglect or fraud, or if ODJFS determines that the program has created a serious risk to the health or safety of children in care.

Step Up to Quality

Step Up To Quality is Ohio’s quality rating system for child care programs. ODJFS and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) now use a comprehensive, one- to five-star rating system to assess ODJFS- and ODE-licensed early childhood programs that choose to exceed minimum health and safety standards. Starting in September 2020, all child care programs that receive state funding will be required to participate in Step Up To Quality. Ratings are posted online, and parents can use them to choose the program that is best for their child. Highly rated programs require continuing education for teachers and staff, use child assessments to guide learning and development, and take additional steps to help prepare children for kindergarten. For more information, visit earlychildhoodohio.org.

Did you know?

- Ohio has more than 5,000 licensed child care programs.
- Any provider caring for more than six children—or more than three children under age 2—must be licensed.
- ODJFS investigates all complaints regarding unlicensed child care programs caring for more than six children or more than three children under age 2.
- The state’s preschool programs are licensed by the Ohio Department of Education.
The child support program ensures that children receive the financial and medical support they are legally entitled to so that their basic needs for food, clothing and shelter can be met. Ohio’s child support program is administered locally by 88 county child support enforcement agencies (CSEAs). The Office of Child Support provides leadership and guidance to the county agencies and processes support payments for more than 1 million Ohio children.

What services do CSEAs provide?
- Location of noncustodial parents
- Paternity establishment
- Establishment and enforcement of financial and medical support orders
- Review and possible modification of support orders

What services are not provided?
- Assistance with visitation and custody issues
- Assistance with divorce actions
- Spousal support establishment or order modification
- Services for unborn children

Who is eligible for child support services?
Anyone who completes an application for services is eligible for child support assistance from their local CSEA. Recipients of public assistance are automatically referred for services to establish a paternity and support order.

Where to go for child support services?
Contact your county CSEA. To find the CSEA in your county, call (800) 686-1556 or visit jfs.ohio.gov/county.

How is child support established?
Child support may be ordered by a CSEA or a court. Child support orders are based on a mathematical formula using the financial circumstances of both parents and guidelines found in the Ohio Administrative Code. These guidelines take into consideration factors such as other dependents, child care costs, and Social Security benefits the child may be receiving on behalf of one of the parents. Support orders also determine the person(s) responsible for providing health care coverage for the child.

What happens when support isn’t paid?
Failure to pay child support can result in a variety of enforcement actions, including:
- Credit reporting
- License suspension (driver, professional, recreational)
- Increase in the amount of income withholding to pay arrears
- An order requiring the parent to seek work
- Intercept of Ohio lottery or racino/casino winnings
- Intercept of state and federal income tax refunds
- Bank account seizure
- Intercept from Social Security, workers’ compensation or insurance proceeds
- Contempt action filed in court
- Passport denial
ODJFS oversees the state’s adult protective services program, which helps vulnerable adults age 60 and older who are in danger of harm, are unable to protect themselves, and may have no one to assist them. The agency plans and develops programs and provides technical assistance to county staff. The county JFS agencies receive and investigate reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable adults and evaluate the need for protective services.

What is elder abuse?
Typically, elder abuse refers to the intentional abuse, neglect or exploitation of a vulnerable adult. The most common types of elder abuse reported in Ohio are neglect, self-neglect, exploitation, and emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

- **Neglect** happens when a caretaker refuses or fails to provide a vulnerable adult with food, shelter, health care or protection.
- **Self-neglect** occurs when an older adult cannot or does not provide him- or herself with necessary care to avoid injury or illness.
- **Exploitation** is when a person steals, misuses or conceals a vulnerable adult’s funds, property or assets.
- **Emotional abuse** can include verbal threats, intimidation, put-downs, name-calling, insults, humiliation, harassment, and isolation from friends and family.
- **Physical abuse** is when someone uses coercion or inflicts injury by punching, pushing, slapping, kicking, restraining, cutting, burning or using objects as weapons.
- **Sexual abuse** can be any type of nonconsensual touching, fondling or sexual activity that is forced or threatened.

What happens after a report is received?
An adult protective services caseworker will review the report to see if enough information exists to open an investigation. The report is categorized as either “emergency” or “nonemergency.”

In an emergency case, the older person’s condition poses a risk of immediate or irreparable physical harm or death. Emergency cases require an investigation to begin within 24 hours.

All other reports are nonemergency. These require an investigation to begin within three working days.

The caseworker has 30 to 45 days to complete the investigation. At the end of the investigation, the caseworker determines whether the older person is at risk of harm and in need of protective services.

What protective services can be provided?
Victims of elder abuse may need help with an assortment of medical, social and/or legal problems. Services can include help with food, clothing and/or medical care; housing services; counseling or casework services; mental health services; home health care; homemaker services; legal services; and/or guardianship.

How can elder abuse be reported?
Anyone who suspects that elder abuse may be occurring can call one statewide toll-free number 24 hours a day, 365 days a year: 1-855-OHIO-APS (1-855-644-6277). Elder abuse also can be reported at aps.jfs.ohio.gov or to a county JFS agency, visit jfs.ohio.gov/county.
ODJFS supervises several programs to fight hunger in Ohio, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps), the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). SNAP is the largest and most widely known of these programs. All three are designed to help low-income Ohioans stretch their food budgets and buy healthy food.

How does CSFP work?
The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) provides low-income Ohioans age 60 and older with a monthly box of food. All have incomes at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. The food is distributed in partnership with regional food banks.

How can an individual apply for CSFP benefits?
Contact your county department of job and family services. To find your nearest county office, go to jfs.ohio.gov/county.

How does TEFAP work?
The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) provides food through food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters for families with incomes below 230 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

How can an individual apply for TEFAP benefits?
Contact your county department of job and family services. To find your nearest county office, go to jfs.ohio.gov/county.

How does ODJFS prevent food assistance fraud?
Although intentional program violations account for a very small percentage of benefits paid, ODJFS takes fraud very seriously, and we have a variety of measures in place to prevent it. Here are a few:

• We have automated data checks with a variety of partners, including the IRS, Social Security Administration, State Wage Information Collection Agency, Bureau of Workers’ Compensation, the Public Assistance Reporting Information System and several other sources.
• We partner with the U.S. Food and Nutrition Service and the Ohio Department of Public Safety to identify and investigate retailer fraud.
• We investigate when individuals request multiple replacement cards.
• We widely promote that “Fraud Costs All of Us” and encourage anyone who suspects fraud to report it at jfs.ohio.gov/fraud.
How does SNAP work?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides an average monthly benefit of about $124 to about 1.6 million Ohioans. To qualify, the gross monthly income of the household must be under the 130 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. Some households may qualify if they have incomes over 130 percent if someone in the household is over age 60 or disabled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assistance Group Size</th>
<th>130% FPL Gross Monthly Income Eligibility Standard 10-1-19</th>
<th>SNAP Maximum Monthly Allotment 10-1-19</th>
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Benefit amounts are based on household size, expenses and, in some situations, resources. The household size includes the number of people in the household who purchase and prepare food together. Household expenses include rent or mortgage payments, gas, electric, water, sewer, phone and medical expenses (for those who are disabled or over age 60), as well as any child support or child care payments. Household resources include cash, savings and stocks.

Does SNAP have work requirements?

Yes. Able-bodied adults ages 18 to 50 without dependents are required to participate in employment and training programs and participate in work activities for at least 20 hours a week. The goal is to provide not only a nutritional benefit, but job training and work experience to help them build a path out of poverty. About 25 percent of SNAP recipients work or live in a household where someone works. About 75 percent have some form of income or live in a household where someone has income.

How can individuals apply for SNAP benefits?

Individuals can apply for SNAP benefits online at Benefits.Ohio.gov or at their county JFS agency. To find your county agency, visit jfs.ohio.gov/county. Once you apply, a decision will be made within 30 days, and you will receive a benefit determination notice in the mail. If you are determined eligible, benefits will be deposited onto an electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card, also known as the Ohio Direction Card. The benefits cannot be spent on alcohol, tobacco, restaurant food or other prohibited items. Questions regarding the Ohio Direction Card, benefit balance and/or benefit issuance date may be directed to (866) 386-3071.
The federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides funding for programs to assist qualifying low-income families with children. TANF programs must fulfill at least one of the following four purposes:

• Provide assistance to needy families so children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives
• End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage
• Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies
• Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families

What are TANF funds used for?
Ohio uses TANF funds for a variety of services and supports, including the following:
• Cash assistance through the Ohio Works First program
• Work supports (such as help with transportation) through the Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) program
• Publicly funded child care
• Aid to children at risk of abuse and neglect
• A variety of other services

How does ODJFS prevent public assistance fraud?
ODJFS provides training and technical assistance to county JFS agencies to reduce both fraud and erroneous payments. Individuals who are found to have committed fraud must repay the benefits. In addition, they:
• May have future state tax returns garnished
• Can be banned for life from the program
• May face prosecution

ODJFS encourages anyone who suspects fraud to report it at jfs.ohio.gov/fraud.
Ohio Works First (OWF) is the financial assistance portion of Ohio’s TANF program, which provides cash benefits to very low-income eligible families for up to 36 months. Cash benefits may be extended past the 36-month time limit in certain circumstances. Federal law requires that adults who receive Ohio Works First and are able to work must participate in work activities. Allowable work activities include on-the-job-training, community service, education directly related to employment, a Work Experience Program (WEP) and unsubsidized employment.

Who is eligible for OWF?
Families with children that meet the “gross monthly income test” may be eligible. Gross monthly income includes both earned and unearned income, including Social Security benefits, pre-tax wages and child support. Since 2016, the gross monthly income limit for a family of three has been $840. This typically increases annually. If an OWF applicant works and pays for child care, the child care cost may be deducted. Resources such as a car or home ownership are not considered when determining eligibility.

Other potentially eligible individuals include minor children living with guardians other than their parents (child-only assistance), women who are at least six months pregnant, some unmarried minor parents and certain pregnant minors. Approximately 13,000 adults and 89,000 children are in the program.

How much are payments?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assistance Group Size</th>
<th>OWF Initial Monthly Income Eligibility Test 7/1/20</th>
<th>Maximum Monthly OWF Payment 1/1/20</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$532</td>
<td>$302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$1,279</td>
<td>$729</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Assistance Group Size of 3 Individuals</th>
<th>Monthly Family Income</th>
<th>Monthly OWF Payment 1/1/20</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$505</td>
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<td>$200</td>
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<td>$330</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$866</td>
<td>$197</td>
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How can individuals apply for OWF Benefits?
Individuals can apply for OWF benefits online at Benefits.Ohio.gov or at their county JFS agency. To find your county agency, visit jfs.ohio.gov/county. Once you apply, a decision will be made within 30 days, and you will receive a benefit determination notice in the mail. If you are determined eligible, benefits will be issued through either the Ohio Pathway card, which is a pre-paid debit MasterCard, or deposited directly into a checking or savings account. The Ohio Pathway card can be used at MasterCard member banks, ATMs and any retailers that accept MasterCard.
ODJFS oversees a variety of free employment-related services for Ohioans. Many of these are provided by a network of 22 comprehensive and 66 affiliate OhioMeansJobs centers, which offer career planning, job training and other employment services to Ohioans looking for work and to employers seeking workers. Computers and phones are available for free to complete online training, prepare resumes, and search and apply for jobs. ODJFS also operates OhioMeansJobs.com, which offers many of the same services as the centers.

Labor Market Information
In partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor, the ODJFS Bureau of Labor Market Information (LMI) collects and analyzes industry, occupational and employment information. LMI provides statistics about employment levels, unemployment rates, wages and earnings, employment projections, and career information.

Services for Individuals
Many employment services—including educational assistance, career planning, training, supportive services and job placement— are made possible by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WIOA programs serve adults, youth ages 14 to 24 with barriers to employment, and dislocated workers (individuals who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own).

Services for Employers
Employers can contact their local OhioMeansJobs center or OhioMeansJobs.com for free help with a variety of employment needs, including:
- Posting job openings
- Finding skilled candidates
- Establishing an apprenticeship or internship program
- Connecting with educators and job training programs
- Applying for training programs, hiring incentives and tax credits
- Organizing job fairs or mass recruitment events
- Researching wage trends and economic indicators
- Learning about accommodating employees with disabilities

How can individuals access services?
Contact an OhioMeansJobs center near you. Find locations at jfs.ohio.gov/WIOAmap or by visiting OhioMeansJobs.com and clicking on the “OhioMeansJobs Centers” icon. Bring documentation of age, family income, and citizenship or authorization to work.

OhioMeansJobs.com
OhioMeansJobs.com is Ohio’s online career and employment center. At any given time, it lists more than 100,000 job openings; approximately half of those pay at least $50,000 a year. The website also has:
- A resume builder and rater
- A budget calculator
- Skill and interest assessments
- Online tutorials
- Free GED and college entrance practice tests
- An interviewing practice tool
- Information about in-demand careers with links to local training programs and scholarships
- Special sections for veterans, students, unemployment claimants and workers with disabilities
To help more Ohioans break the cycle of poverty, ODJFS offers the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP). The program provides case management and wrap-around supportive services to help eligible 14- to 24-year-olds learn skills, find employment and build career paths that will sustain them for a lifetime. Participants are given a wide range of services to support goals outlined in their individual opportunity plans. This could include support to obtain a high school diploma, job placement, work experience, and/or other supportive services such as child care or transportation.

Who is eligible?
The following individuals ages 14 to 24 are required to participate in CCMEP:

- Low-income in-school youth and out-of-school youth considered to have a barrier to employment and registered for a WIOA program.
- Participants in the Ohio Works First (OWF) program who are work-eligible.

In addition, some other 14- to 24-year-old recipients of OWF benefits or services funded by the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program may volunteer to participate.

What is required of participants?
Individuals participating in CCMEP must commit to participating in the activities outlined in their individual opportunity plans for at least 20 hours a week. In addition, they must engage with their case managers at least every 30 days.

What services can participants receive?
CCMEP offers a range of services to help participants achieve the goals in their individual opportunity plans. These can include:

- Tutoring or study skills training
- Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services
- Paid and unpaid work experiences, including summer jobs, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training opportunities
- Occupational skills training
- Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation activities
- Leadership development opportunities
- Adult mentoring
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Financial literacy education
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Supportive services such as access to drug and alcohol abuse counseling, transportation, child care and/or other services

How can individuals participate?
Contact an OhioMeansJobs center or county department of job and family services and provide proof of the following:

- Age (such as a birth certificate, driver’s license, government ID, work permit, or school record or ID card)
- Citizenship status/authorization to work in the U.S. (such as a Social Security card, JFS 13187, permanent resident card or unexpired refugee travel document)
- Selective service registration for males (such as selective service card or verification from sss.gov)
- Family income (such as pay stubs, bank statements, low-income Housing Authority verification, other public assistance records, free or reduced-price lunch completed application or approval letter)
ApprenticeOhio programs offer a combination of paid on-the-job training, related technical instruction and mentoring for skilled occupations. The programs emphasize learning by doing, and they are thriving. Ohio ranks second in the nation for the number of registered apprentices, with more than 19,000 enrolled.

How do ApprenticeOhio programs work?
Each ApprenticeOhio program is run by a sponsor: usually an employer, a group of employers or a labor/management committee. ODJFS oversees ApprenticeOhio, which registers programs that meet national criteria for quality and safety. Each program operates according to standards that the sponsor develops. Each apprentice learns skills needed for a job in the sponsor’s industry. Apprentices work under the supervision of a skilled professional, also known as a journey worker, and attend classes that involve discussion, reading and written work. They learn industry-accepted ways to perform jobs effectively and safely.

What are the advantages of ApprenticeOhio programs for individuals?
Apprentices earn while they learn the skills needed to build a successful career in an in-demand occupation. They receive:

- 2,000 hours or more of on-the-job training
- At least 144 hours a year of related instruction, typically at a local college or university
- A certificate recognized across the country

When they complete their programs, apprentices earn an average of $60,000 a year.

What are the advantages of ApprenticeOhio programs for employers?
Employers get qualified, motivated applicants trained to their specification. Apprenticeships are a low-cost way to develop a skilled workforce.

How can individuals find out about apprenticeship opportunities?
For a list of Registered Apprenticeship programs in Ohio, visit Apprentice.Ohio.gov. Click on “Apprentices” and then “Find your apprenticeship by clicking here.” Every program has its own enrollment procedures. Contact the program sponsors directly to ask if they have apprenticeship openings and how to qualify and apply for them. If you have further questions, contact one of the apprenticeship service providers listed at jfs.ohio.gov/apprenticeship/contactus.stm.

Did you know?
Ohio has 235 occupations that offer apprenticeships, in fields as diverse as aerospace, construction, energy, health care, manufacturing, computer programming and more.
The federal Trade program provides assistance to workers who have lost or may lose their jobs or who have had their hours or wages reduced because of foreign imports or shifts in production and/or services to a country outside the United States. The goal of the program is to get workers reemployed as quickly as possible.

Who is eligible?
To obtain services and benefits, workers must be part of a group of workers certified by the U.S. Department of Labor as adversely affected by foreign trade.

A petition requesting certification may be filed by a group of three or more workers, union or employer, state workforce official, OhioMeansJobs center operator or partner, or other authorized representative. To file a Trade petition, visit etareports.doleta.gov/petition. If a petition has been approved and the workers are certified as eligible, each worker in the group must individually apply.

How can individuals apply for benefits?
To find out if you are part of a group of workers covered by a certified Trade petition and apply for services and benefits, please send an email that includes your name, phone number and place of employment to Trade_Petitions@jfs.ohio.gov. To learn more about the program, visit omj.ohio.gov/Trade or call (888) 296-7541.

What services can participants receive?
Potential benefits include:
- Career counseling
- Skills testing and training (if necessary)
- Job search and relocation allowances
- Wage supplement for individuals age 50 and older
- Tax credits to provide health coverage
- Weekly cash payments if regular unemployment benefits are exhausted before finding work and if enrolled in approved training
- Other supportive services
The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services has bilingual outreach staff who help migrant and seasonal farm workers find jobs and agricultural employers find seasonal workers. Bilingual staff are stationed at OhioMeansJobs centers in Ottawa, Sandusky, Huron and Stark counties, where most of the migrant and seasonal farm work occurs.

Who is eligible?
Seasonal farm workers who—during the preceding 12 months—worked at least an aggregate of 25 or more days or parts of days in farm work, earned at least half their income from farm work, and were not employed in farm work year-round by the same employer.

Migrant farm workers travel for work and are unable to return to their permanent residence within the same day. Full-time students traveling in organized groups rather than with their families are excluded.

What services are available?
The outreach specialists can provide the following assistance:
- Help finding job opportunities
- Information about making Ohio the permanent resident state
- Information about training opportunities
- Referrals to social service agencies that provide migrant education, health care, legal and other services
- Help reporting and resolving complaints if a work or civil rights law has been violated
- Interpretation in more than 275 languages, through Vocalink language services

How can individuals apply for services?
Contact an OhioMeansJobs center near you. Find locations at [jfs.ohio.gov/WIOAmaphid](http://jfs.ohio.gov/WIOAmaphid) or by visiting [OhioMeansJobs.com](http://OhioMeansJobs.com) and clicking on the “OhioMeansJobs Centers” icon. Bring documentation of age, family income, and citizenship or authorization to work.
Unemployment insurance (UI) provides short-term income to unemployed workers who lose their jobs through no fault of their own. It reduces the hardship felt by families during periods of temporary unemployment, and bolsters local economies by maintaining the purchasing power of the unemployed workers. UI is financed by premiums paid by employers to both the federal and state governments. For more information, see unemployment.ohio.gov.

Who is eligible for UI benefits?
Unemployed Ohioans who:
• Are totally or partially unemployed through no fault of their own
• Worked at least 20 weeks in “covered employment” (for an employer required to pay UI taxes) during the last 12 months
• Earned at least $269 per week during that time

From March 14 to 21, 2020, the number of initial unemployment claims exploded by nearly 2,700%, from just over 7,000 to more than 196,000. Over the next 14 weeks, Ohioans submitted more initial claims for unemployment benefits than in the previous three years combined.

What can individuals receive?
The weekly benefit amount is typically half the claimant’s previous wages up to a set maximum, based on the number of dependents. The maximum weekly benefit is $647 for a claimant with three or more dependents. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, claimants could receive benefits for up to 26 weeks. However, the average duration was approximately 15 weeks.

What are claimants' responsibilities?
Prior to the pandemic, to stay eligible for benefits, claimants were required to:
• Conduct work-search activities with at least two separate employers each week
• Keep a detailed record of their job search
• Participate in reemployment services, as requested, including any appointments with OhioMeansJobs center employment specialists
• Be able, available and actively seeking work
• Accept any offers of suitable employment
• Report any wages or other income
• Visit OhioMeansJobs.com and create or upload a resume.
• If still unemployed at 20 weeks, take the Career Profile assessment at OhioMeansJobs.com to identify possible new careers

Did you know?
SharedWork Ohio is a voluntary layoff avoidance program that allows participating employers to temporarily reduce workers’ hours during times of reduced business activity. In return, those employees keep their jobs and receive prorated unemployment benefits for up to 52 weeks.

How can individuals apply for benefits?
Visit unemployment.ohio.gov and apply online anytime 24/7. Those needing special assistance may call (877) 644-6562, toll-free, or TTY (888) 642-8203.

Pandemic Unemployment Programs
For information about the new unemployment programs made possible by the federal CARES Act, visit unemployment.ohio.gov.
Unemployment insurance is financed by premiums paid by employers to both the federal and state governments, through the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) and the State Unemployment Tax Act (SUTA). FUTA taxes cover most of the administrative costs; SUTA taxes are deposited into Ohio’s UI Trust Fund to pay for the actual benefits.

**How are UI tax rates determined?**
The FUTA tax rate is the same for all employers: currently 6% of the first $7,000 in gross wages paid to each employee during the calendar year. However, employers receive a credit of 5.4% if their states’ unemployment systems meet all federal requirements and the employer has paid their state unemployment taxes. Ohio employers who have paid their state unemployment tax will pay a FUTA tax of 0.6% on the first $7,000 of wages, or $42 per employee.

SUTA tax rates are based primarily on each employer’s experience rating, which is a measure of how much an employer paid into Ohio’s UI Trust Fund and how much the employer was charged in benefits. Essentially, it ensures that employers that lay off larger numbers of workers will pay more in taxes. Ohio employers pay between .3 and 9.4% in SUTA taxes on the first $9,000 (2020) in gross wages paid to each employee during the calendar year.

**How and when are UI taxes paid?**
Employers pay FUTA taxes directly to the Internal Revenue Service annually. They pay SUTA taxes quarterly. ODJFS employers can file their quarterly returns, make payments and manage many other functions online through the Employer Resource Information Center (ERIC). For more information, visit [eric.ohio.gov](http://eric.ohio.gov). Employers also may file their current-quarter returns by visiting the Ohio Business Gateway at [business.ohio.gov](http://business.ohio.gov).

**How does ODJFS prevent unemployment fraud?**
The agency uses a variety of technological tools to detect false statements and unreported earnings. These include:

- New hire reports from employers
- Cross-matches with other government records
- Benefit Accuracy Measurement audits
- Work search audits
- Public tips by telephone, mail, fax or email

**Individuals who commit fraud:**
- Must repay the benefit and a 25% penalty fee
- May have federal and state income tax returns intercepted, wages garnished and court-ordered restitution imposed
- May be banned from collecting benefits for a period of time
- May face prosecution

**Employers who commit fraud:**
- Pay higher penalty tax rates
- Can face prosecution

**Did you know?**
Employers and the public can report fraud tips online at [unemployment.ohio.gov/fraud](http://unemployment.ohio.gov/fraud), by calling (800) 686-1555, or by email to [ucbenprotest@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:ucbenprotest@jfs.ohio.gov).
<table>
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<th>SFY 2018 Expenditures by Program Code Groupings</th>
<th>Federal Fund Group</th>
<th>General Revenue Fund</th>
<th>Dedicated Purpose Fund Group</th>
<th>Fiduciary Fund Group</th>
<th>Holding Account Fund &amp; Internal Service Activity Fund Groups</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>Family Assistance</td>
<td></td>
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<td>7625B OHIO WORKS FIRST CASH ASST.</td>
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<td>7675B CHILD PREV &amp; PROTECTIVE SRVS</td>
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<td>$ 90,759,790</td>
<td>$ 18,949,211</td>
<td>$ 12,959,450</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$ 122,668,451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7727B UNEMPLOYMENT COMP PGM MGMT</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Insurance Subtotal</td>
<td>$ 90,759,790</td>
<td>$ 18,949,211</td>
<td>$ 12,959,450</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$ 122,668,451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Support Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7775B PROGRAM MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$ 533,904</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>$ 365,973</td>
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<tr>
<td>7776B INFO SVCs PROGRAM MANAGEMENT</td>
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<td>$ 1,433,699</td>
<td>$ 19,037</td>
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<td>$ 1,283,783</td>
<td>$ 2,736,519</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Support Services Subtotal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$ 1,967,603</td>
<td>$ 19,037</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$ 1,649,755</td>
<td>$ 3,636,396</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>$ 2,396,464,920</td>
<td>$ 830,310,349</td>
<td>$ 88,312,955</td>
<td>$ 263,720,770</td>
<td>$ 1,649,755</td>
<td>$ 3,580,458,749</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

1) Expenditures reflect G/L expenditures coded under agency code JFS as of 7/28/20.