

2012 ANNUAL REPORT



Working Today for a Better Tomorrow



For several years now, Hamilton County Job and Family Services has had to find ways to be adaptable while keeping our commitment to Hamilton County families and children.



We have dealt with changes in services, cuts in staff and rising numbers of recipients. In the past five years, the number of food assistance recipients we serve has risen 88 percent and the number of Medicaid recipients has risen 40 percent. During this time, we have had fewer resources available to us than in the past, but we have continued to serve the community.

Although efficiency has been our focus for some time, 2012 was clearly a year of innovation.

New technology – from iPads for our Children's Services caseworkers, to a document imaging system in Public Assistance, to new online reporting and automated calculators in Child Care – allowed our workers to accomplish more in less time.

But we also looked critically at what we were doing well and how we could improve.

2012 was a banner year for our Workforce Development section as they took over operation of the SuperJobs Center from a private vendor. Since the SuperJobs Center has re-opened in July, we have continually received positive feedback from consumers who not only receive help finding a job, but are able to find a job quicker and more easily than they expect. And the nearly \$500,000 saved by operating the center with HCJFS staff will be re-invested into more direct services for the community.

We have also improved operation of our public assistance unit, and in 2012 – despite record numbers of recipients – we led Ohio metropolitan counties in processing applications and re-applications in a timely manner. Our efforts have been so successful that we have since shared our techniques with other counties to help them work faster as well.

Similarly, we took a hard look at our Children's Services unit and made a number of changes to ensure children are safe. A new quality assurance unit will add an additional layer of protection.

And in Child Support, new programs are focused on ensuring fathers can be a positive influence in their children's lives through regular visitations and classes.

Day-to-day, we continue to deliver services to help Hamilton County families. Every day this agency works to ensure children and elderly residents are safe, families are fed and healthy, and adults are employed.

I am confident 2013 will be no different. We will continue to look for more ways to adapt by meeting challenges with innovation and new ways of thinking, while delivering the services necessary to help Hamilton County families and children seek a better life.

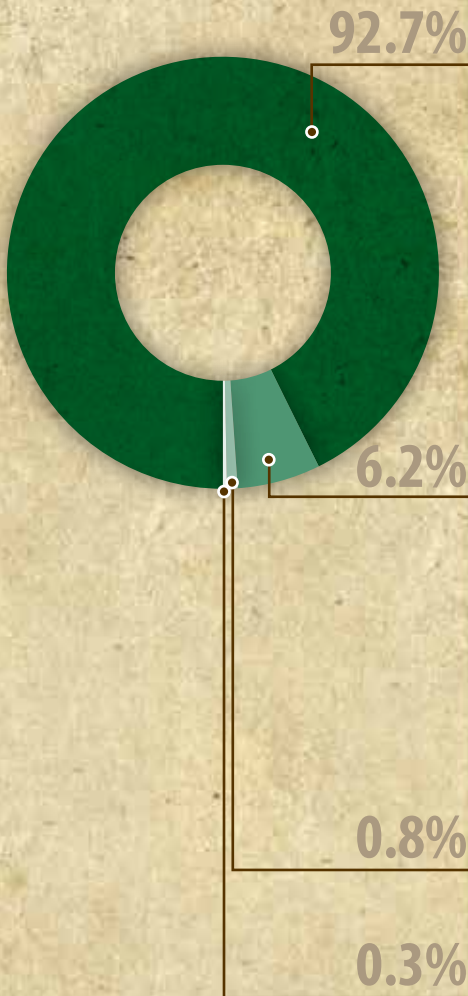
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Moira Weir".

Moira Weir

2012 FINANCIAL REPORT

EXPENDITURES



INCOME MAINTENANCE

Financial Assistance	
Cash Assistance (TANF/OWF)	\$ 36,974,757.00
Food Assistance	\$ 232,940,293.00
Disability Assistance	\$ 1,372,389.00
Medicaid	\$ 1,267,464,716.00
Medicaid Transportation	\$ 9,795,832.35
Child Care	\$ 98,596,160.00
Program Delivery / Administration	\$ 28,698,888.58
Income Maintenance Subtotal	\$ 1,675,843,035.93

SOCIAL SERVICES

Maintenance of Children	
Protective Services (Including placement services)	\$ 63,568,589.20
Mental Health Services (Formerly Residential / Managed Care)	\$ 35,202,066.05
Program Delivery / Administration	\$ 13,737,416.20
Social Services Subtotal	\$ 112,508,071.45

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

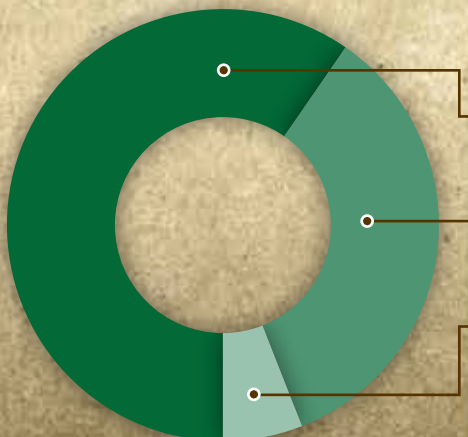
Program Delivery/Administration	\$ 14,504,909.88
--	-------------------------

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

Program Delivery/Administration	\$ 5,300,024.24
--	------------------------

TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 1,808,156,041.50
---------------------------	----------------------------

REVENUE



Federal Government	60%	\$ 1,077,949,468.56
--------------------	-----	---------------------

State of Ohio	34%	\$ 622,205,232.19
---------------	-----	-------------------

Hamilton County	6%	\$ 108,001,340.75
-----------------	----	-------------------

TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 1,808,156,041.50
----------------------	----------------------------



MISSION AND STATISTICS

Our Mission: We, the HCJFS staff, provide services for our community today to enhance the quality of living for a better tomorrow.

Hundreds of thousands of Hamilton County residents stream through the Department's doors every year. These 2012 numbers help put the work in perspective.

- **One in 3* Hamilton County residents** – at least 276,193 – was involved in a Child Support case.
- **One in 5 residents** – 171,131 – was covered by Medicaid.
- **One in 6 residents** – 135,280 – received food assistance.
- **One in 11 children** – 16,912 – was involved with Children's Services.
- **One in 28 residents** – 28,793 – participated in a workforce development program.
- **One in 38 residents** – 17,570 – received cash assistance.
- **One in 12 children** – 16,000 – received child care assistance monthly.
- **One in 224 elderly residents** – 477 – was involved with Adult Protective Services.

*Numbers rounded to nearest whole number

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

16,912 children served or 1 in 11 Hamilton County children.

The Children's Services Division is legally responsible for taking reports of child abuse, neglect and dependency; investigating those reports and taking whatever steps necessary to keep children safe. In 2012, the county's 24-hour child abuse hotline – (513) 241-KIDS – received 65,000 calls, resulting in 5,013 allegations of abuse or neglect.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Investigates allegations when children are found to be at significant risk of harm
- Involves families and community partners in decision-making that affects children
- Provides services to help families, such as drug abuse treatment, emergency housing, mental health counseling and parent training
- Places children who cannot be safe in their own homes into temporary care with relatives, foster parents, or institutional settings
- Provides training in independent living skills for older teens
- Helps foster children find adoptive families



Each year, Children's Services hosts a Celebration of Dreams ceremony to honor the achievement of foster youth graduating high school.

2012 HIGHLIGHTS

New Technology – While innovation happens in many ways, technology is an ever important part of that picture. In 2012, 102 children's services workers received iPads, allowing them to access information, obtain forms and file reports from the field. The HCJFS Information Systems staff also developed a process to pre-load case information sheets, saving additional time. The new technology



Thirteen children joined seven permanent, loving families in a November mass adoption ceremony. While adoption finalizations are normally confidential, these seven families agreed to share their story with the public.

permits caseworkers to complete paperwork more efficiently allowing more time for their primary duty – keeping children safe.

Improved Quality Assurance – Although random cases have always been pulled for review, an improved quality assurance unit adds another level of checks and balances to the Children's Services system. The unit will also help staff follow best practices.

More Children Served – In 2012, Children's Services had 2,245 children in custody at some point during the year, the highest number since 2002. More kids were also adopted. In 2012, 111 adoptions were finalized, the highest number since 2008.

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

477 investigations were conducted in 2012.

HCJFS Adult Protective Services (APS) operates (513) 421-LIFE, Hamilton County's 24-hour line for reporting elder abuse, neglect (by self or others) and exploitations of Hamilton County adult residents.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Identifies risks to the safety and well-being of abuse and neglect victims. Works to improve their situation by linking them to social service providers and other resources
- If necessary, helps identify a guardian through the courts for individuals who can no longer function on their own

2012 HIGHLIGHTS

Battled Financial Exploitation – In recent years, Adult Protective Services has been receiving more and more reports about financial exploitation, partly by encouraging local banks to report suspicious activity. This has led to thousands of dollars being returned to its rightful owner.



Brandy and Nick Pendleton didn't set out to adopt when they became foster parents, but now they are the proud parents of four boys.

A CHILDREN'S SERVICES SUCCESS STORY

Adopting four boys wasn't something that Brandy and Nick Pendleton planned when they signed up to become foster parents.

Brothers Dontai and Damarion were placed in the Pendleton's home with the plan to be reunited with their birth family after three months. Nine months later, Hamilton County took permanent custody, their birth mother surrendered her rights and asked the Pendleton's to adopt her sons.

"By that point, these boys were a huge part of our family, if not the definition of our family. When we told our family and friends, it was as if they had known all along that is the way it would work out. These were our kids! And the way to make that legal and forever is to adopt," Brandy Pendleton said.

Jaylin and Juvonte were placed with the Pendleton's in 2008 but returned to their birth family after three months. When they were placed back in foster care nine months later, they returned to live with the Pendleton's.

The two boys became part of the Pendleton's forever family in June of 2012.

"When we started out as foster parents we did not intend to adopt four kids. But God had other plans for our family and ultimately His plans won out," Pendleton said. "We couldn't have been more blessed to be a part of such great plans!"

CHILD SUPPORT

276,193 individuals served or 1 in three Hamilton County residents.

Child Support is money required by law to be paid by one parent to another to help cover the costs of raising their children. In 2012, Child Support collected \$129,627,234 in support, established paternity on 48,827 cases and created 58,690 support orders.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Enforces child support orders as set by a court or administrative hearing
- Participates in a variety of enforcement programs, including searching databases to find parents not paying child support, “freeze and seizing” bank account funds, participating in federal and state tax offset programs to intercept tax refunds, and suspending driver’s licenses of nonpaying parents
- Administers paternity tests to establish paternity
- Modifies child support orders when a paying parent’s income has increased or decreased significantly or other necessary changes

2012 HIGHLIGHTS

Highest Number of Collections per Employee – Despite having a much smaller department than five years ago, the Child Support unit collected nearly \$130 million in 2012 – a record for the highest number of collections per full-time employee. The Child Support unit continues to investigate additional tools to increase efficiency and collections.



The Child Support payment window moved from 800 Broadway to the main building, 222 East Central Parkway, in 2012.



Child Support consumers can now access their case online.

Access Visitation Grant – A father who is able to spend time with his children is more likely to care about their well-being and make child support payments. In 2012, Child Support received an Access Visitation Grant that now allows Child Support to offer supervised visitations to parents referred through Hamilton County Juvenile or Domestic Relations Court. Non-custodial parents are able to visit their children in a safe, relaxed and fun environment. A monitored exchange also allows a safe environment for kids to be dropped off and picked up for unsupervised visits.

Classes To Help Fathers – Beginning in August 2012, Child Support began a partnership with the Ridge Project to offer fathers access to the “Tyro Dads” program. The program is designed to help low-income fathers work through their own obstacles, so they can become a positive influence in their children’s lives. The ten-week course helps fathers identify their own goals and address the obstacles before them by teaching personal responsibility and fatherhood principles.

New Ways to Access Your Case – The Child Support payment window was moved from 800 Broadway in Cincinnati to HCJFS’s main location, 222 East Central Parkway. The move allowed the agency to save nearly \$50,000 annually in rent and reinvest it in Child Support programs. Parents are also now able to access case information and their payment history through a state portal at www.childsupport.ohio.gov.



Caseworker Sara Day was able to deliver \$31,200 to a local mother after her ex-husband failed to make child support payments. She discusses the case with Section Chief Michael Patton.

A CHILD SUPPORT SUCCESS STORY:

One local mother received a check for \$31,200 when the Hamilton County Child Support Enforcement Agency was able to seize the money in her ex-husband's bank account to pay off his overdue child support.

"I'm in a better financial position because of it," the mother said. "We have a stove that all the burners work."

Caseworker Sara Day was part of a team of caseworkers who target bank accounts to try to collect from non-custodial parents who owe large amounts of money.

In this case, the father lived in another state – making it more difficult for Child Support to collect – and the mother had not received any child support since December of 2010.

By freezing the assets in the bank account and seizing the money, Day was able to deliver more than \$30,000 to the mother, leaving a balance of just \$22 owed.

A FAMILY AND ADULT ASSISTANCE SUCCESS STORY:

After receiving excellent customer service from HCJFS employee Donna Mueller, one consumer was so excited, she wrote a letter to the agency director.

"Ms. Donna Mueller was pleasant, listened to my story and my concerns, and answered every question making sure that I understood what the spend-down program was, how it works, and what to expect from this point forward..." she wrote.

The consumer's mother had been forced to go into a nursing home for rehabilitation. When she received a letter saying she would no longer receive full Medicaid, the consumer called JFS for information on the spend-down program.

The consumer left a message and Mueller called her back in less than 10 minutes.

Mueller took the time to answer any questions and explain everything in detail to the consumer so she knew what to expect.

"I was glad I could help her," Mueller said.

FAMILY AND ADULT ASSISTANCE

Family and Adult Assistance (FAA) is a combination of federal and state programs – food assistance, Medicaid and cash assistance – that provide basic support for children, families, pregnant women, elderly and disabled residents of Hamilton County.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Determines eligibility of applicants and recertifies consumers for cash assistance (Ohio Works First), food assistance, Medicaid and other services
- Refers applicants to Community Link for employment and self-sufficiency services
- Provides transportation to and from medical appointments for Medicaid-eligible consumers
- Investigates allegations of fraud

2012 HIGHLIGHTS

Number of Consumers Continues to Climb – In the past five years, the number of food assistance consumers has grown 88 percent from approximately 72,000 in 2007 to 135,000 in 2012. Similarly, the number of consumers receiving Medicaid has grown 40 percent in the past five years from about 127,000 in 2007 to 178,000 in 2012. In that same time, the number of employees has dropped almost in half.

Improved Use of Technology – In order to accommodate the rapid growth in consumers with fewer staff, Family and Adult Assistance has begun



A document imaging system, implemented in 2012, records all mail and documents electronically.



Hamilton County led metropolitan counties in the state in processing food assistance cases quickly in 2012. Eligibility decisions on initial applications were completed within 30 days in 98 percent of food assistance cases.

innovative uses of technology to improve the flow of information and increase efficiency. In 2012, FAA launched a new document imaging system to scan, organize and file consumers' documents as soon as they are received, allowing employees throughout the agency to view complete case files. The agency is now electronically managing workloads to ensure work is evenly distributed among staff. Electronic fraud detection also makes it easier for staff to identify suspicious activity and close a case, when necessary.

Hamilton County Leads the State in Timeliness
 – Beginning in March, the agency also reached a 90 percent timeliness rate, meaning 90 percent of consumers who reapplied for food assistance and more than 96 percent of consumers who applied for the first time, received a determination within 30 days. Most of the individuals whose cases were not processed within 30 days had received an extension to submit the required documents. Hamilton County was the first metropolitan county in Ohio to pass the 90 percent mark and has since worked with other counties to teach best practices.

A WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS STORY:

Ever since Karlos Jordan rode with his cousin on his truck driving route five years ago, he knew he wanted to become a truck driver. However, after spending time in jail, he struggled to find a job and didn't know how to get into truck driving school.

"I was at my last wit's end," Jordan said.

Jordan was apprehensive when someone mentioned he should try the SuperJobs Center, but he decided to go anyway.

The SuperJobs Center helped Jordan apply and get in to a truck driving program to get his CDL license almost immediately. He was also able to get fuel cards to drive to and from school because it was so far away from where he lived.

After five weeks of schooling, Jordan passed the written and driving test and started working a week later.

"It changed my life all the way around," Jordan said.

Jordan now has a CDL license and his own truck. He said he owes his success to the SuperJobs Center.

"They do help a lot of people," Jordan said.

Jordan said the staff at the center took him from "just working to becoming a productive citizen".



Through the SuperJobs Center, Karlos Jordan was able to obtain his CDL license and fulfill his dream to be a truck driver.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

28,738 individuals served or 1 in 28 Hamilton County residents.

The Workforce Development unit helps Hamilton County residents join the workforce and move up the economic ladder.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Operates the SuperJobs Center designed to help Hamilton County residents find work through free educational workshops, career coaching, job leads and other Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services.
- Organizes WIA youth services, aimed at helping 16 to 21-year-old at-risk youth stay in school or alternatively, find a job.
- Oversees Community Link, a consortium of private agencies partnering with the agency to help public assistance recipients move toward independence.
- Administers Food Assistance Employment and Training (FAET), the work requirement program for food assistance recipients.

2012 HIGHLIGHTS

Operation of the SuperJobs Center – 2012 was a banner year for the Workforce Development division. On July 1, JFS staff officially took over operation of the SuperJobs one-stop employment center from a private vendor.

In 2012, the SuperJobs Center was successful in placing 1,688 people in new jobs. That's up from 2011 when 1,500 people were placed in new jobs. A number of factors contributed to the success:

- Hiring events – SuperJobs regularly partnered with local companies to connect employers to local candidates.
- The job board – Local employers worked with SuperJobs to feature job postings both at SuperJobs, 1916 Central Parkway, and online at www.superjobs.com.



Hamilton County Job and Family Services assumed operations of the SuperJobs Center in July of 2012. Previously the center had been operated by a private vendor.

- Career coaches – Job seekers were able to receive one-on-one assistance by signing up at the SuperJobs Center.
- Education and training – Through partnerships with Great Oaks and Cincinnati State, SuperJobs funded formal and technical education for job seekers.
- On-the-job training – SuperJobs worked with job seekers and employers to help pay up to half of the wages for job seekers working in new jobs locally.

Workforce Participation Rate – Since 2010, Hamilton County has consistently led Ohio's metropolitan counties in helping public assistance recipients find and keep work. But in 2012, the state had a major push to increase the workforce participation rate across the state. Hamilton County staff re-evaluated the tools, recommendations and best practices needed to increase the rate and helped the state avoid millions in federal sanctions.



Leisha Kennedy was able to land two part-time jobs through the SuperJobs Center, helping her move from relying on public assistance to supporting herself.

A WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS STORY:

Leisha Kennedy came to the SuperJobs Center looking to create a better life for herself and her children. With the help of the SuperJobs staff, she not only landed one job but two.

When Kennedy's son had been diagnosed with autism, she left her previous job to take time to work with him. She knew her unemployment would be temporary because she had to get back to work to take care of her family. But she struggled to find a job because she couldn't find child care and didn't have enough information on job openings.

Instead, she began receiving public assistance.

After a year of unemployment, Kennedy learned about the SuperJobs Center from someone she met while riding the bus.

"I knew I had to get there and make a change for myself," Kennedy said. "I had to do SuperJobs."

When Kennedy went to SuperJobs, she was able to utilize many of the resources offered, including the classes and mock interviewing.

But Kennedy said it was the hiring events and her career coach that kept her motivated.

Within two weeks, Kennedy was offered two part-time jobs. Now, she is able to support herself and her children.

"I feel good about myself again," Kennedy said.

CHILD CARE

HCJFS Child Care Services partially covers the cost of child care for eligible low and moderate-income families. Parents can choose from a list of nearly 1,000 home providers certified by HCJFS or more than 350 centers licensed by the state.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Determines eligibility and processes applications for child care assistance
- Certifies Type B home providers (maximum of six children) and inspects the homes at least twice annually

2012 HIGHLIGHTS

Improved Technology – In late 2011, Child Care helped providers make a major switch from manual vouchers to automated swipe cards to track each child's attendance. Although there was extensive planning and preparation for the switch, additional technology was developed in 2012 to further improve the conversion and save time for Child Care caseworkers.

- First introduced in 2011, "Child Care Connections" received more than 32,000 submissions in 2012, saving time for both child care providers and HCJFS caseworkers. The online form allows both parents and providers to report when a child starts attending a new child care. By submitting the information online, providers do not need to call HCJFS to have caseworkers make the necessary changes.
- Child Care also worked in collaboration with Information Systems to create an "automated" pay adjustment calculator when a child care provider's payment is incorrect. With the help of the calculator, staff can quickly calculate the new pay and produce a form to send to the state without the extensive manual work that was previously required. The calculator has been so successful that it has been requested by other counties.
- Child Care also began the process of electronically "imaging" documents ensuring caseworkers can efficiently find case documents.



In February of 2012, Nolita Hines opened a Child Care Center in a former Big Lots. Hines now serves more than 150 kids. Most of the families receive publicly-funded Child Care benefits to help pay for their care.

A CHILD CARE SUCCESS STORY:

Parents receiving publicly-funded child care in Hamilton County can choose from a variety of child care options. Some child care providers take care of a few kids in their home, while others take care of hundreds of children in large centers.

Even when Nolita Hines first opened Kids Plus Learning Center in 2008 with her mom, it was never a small center. Hines said her willingness to work with parents and accept the publicly-funded child care provided by Hamilton County Job and Family Services meant her service was always in demand. Kids Plus was never visible from the street, but as word got out about the center Hines knew she would have to expand.

In February of 2012, Hines moved her center to a former Big Lots, with more visibility.

"We enrolled 50 or 60 kids that week," Hines said.

Kids Plus now serves nearly 275 children, and the majority of her families receive publicly-funded child care benefits to help pay for care. But despite the massive facility, the day care is still family-run and focused on individual attention.

HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Board of Hamilton County Commissioners oversees Hamilton County Job and Family Services, along with several other county departments. The 2012 Board of Commissioners included:

- Commissioner Greg Hartmann
- Commissioner Chris Monzel
- Commissioner Todd Portune

Job and Family Services has served Hamilton County since 1947. It has approximately 750 employees and helps hundreds of thousands of Hamilton County residents each year.

The agency is one of the few quadruple-combined public human services agencies in Ohio – providing public assistance, children's services, child support and workforce development programs to the community.

Among the agency's many duties: keeping children safe, adult protection, child care, child support enforcement, workforce development, providing cash assistance, food assistance and Medicaid assistance.

Job and Family Services is accredited by the Council on Accreditation, an international, independent, not-for-profit child and family service accrediting organization.



*Commissioner
Greg Hartmann*



*Commissioner
Chris Monzel*



*Commissioner
Todd Portune*



Web site: www.hcjfs.org

General Information: (513) 946-1000

Child Abuse Hotline: (513) 241-KIDS (5437)

Elder Abuse Hotline: (513) 421-LIFE (5433)



**222 E. Central Parkway
Cincinnati, OH 45202**