

Children, Adults and Families Mission, Goals and Historical Perspective

Mission

To improve family capacity to be self-sustaining while creating a safe and permanent living environment for children.

Through the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, DHS assists Oregonians with disabilities achieve and maintain employment and independence.

Goals

- ◆ To help people find and keep jobs and advance to better employment.
- ◆ To increase competitive job placements and increase wages earned for persons with disabilities.
- ◆ To expand program partnerships and increase the cultural competence of DHS staff and partners to better serve Oregon's diverse communities.
- ◆ To provide accurate, timely benefits that support Oregonians as they work toward family stability and economic independence.
- ◆ To help prevent the need for public assistance in future generations.
- ◆ To help protect children and promote child safety in their homes.
- ◆ To help children who are unable to live safely in their own homes to live in settings that provide safety, stability and continuity with their families.

Historical Perspective

In 2001, the Legislature passed HB 2294 and allowed the Department of Human Services (DHS) to integrate policy and program functions of the former Division of the State Office for Services to Children and Families (SCF) and the former Division of Adult and Families Services (AFS) into the new cluster of Children, Adults and Families (CAF). This cluster

coordinates: the child welfare programs of Protective Services, Out of Home Care and Adoptions; and the self-sufficiency programs of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Job Opportunity and Basic Skills (JOBS) Program, Food Stamps, Prevention Services, Employment Related Day Care, Emergency Assistance Services, Medicaid eligibility and the Refugee Program. In the early reorganization, field services were separate from the program and policies of CAF.

In January 2003, the field services were realigned with policy and program, creating a single cluster designed to enhance communication between program and field services and to promote efficiency in administration. Initially the field staff for Seniors and People with Disabilities (SPD) remained in CAF field services. In October 2003, field services for Seniors and People with Disabilities were reassigned to the SPD policy cluster.

When CAF policy and the field were realigned, the Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services was reassigned from the former field structure to CAF.

This document reflects the current organizational structure of CAF. While the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs) was reassigned within the CAF cluster, OVRs is the designated state unit that administers the state plan for vocational rehabilitation services.

Program Summary:

Self-Sufficiency

In **Self-Sufficiency**, the core services fall under seven general categories: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; Job Opportunity and Basic Skills; Emergency Assistance Services; Employment Related Day Care; Food Stamps; Prevention Services; and the Refugee Program.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides monthly cash assistance to low-income families. TANF replaced the former Aid for Dependent Children (ADC) program in 1996 under the federal welfare-reform law. Currently, Congress is considering TANF reauthorization. Depending on the federal direction, Oregon's TANF program may require substantial revisions.

The **Job Opportunity and Basic Skills (JOBS)** program is a part of TANF that focuses on preparing clients to enter the workforce, helping them find jobs and supporting them as they move away from TANF. The JOBS program also offers screening for, and referral to, supportive treatment services such as mental health and drug and alcohol treatment to clients who need these services in order to enter the workforce.

Emergency Assistance Services provide one-time cash assistance to help low-income families with short-term emergency needs. The regular Emergency Assistance program was dissipated as a result of Ballot Measure 30. The Temporary Assistance for Domestic Violence Survivors program focuses on providing emergency assistance to domestic violence survivors and their children.

Employment Related Day Care services help low-income working families and students pay their childcare bills. This program provides important supports for families exiting the welfare programs to take jobs as well as other working poor families.

The **Food Stamp** program is a cooperative federal-state program intended to provide for low-income households. Benefits are obtained through the state's Electronic Benefits Transfer System (EBTS) using the Oregon Trail Card.

Prevention Services provides support to local communities through teen pregnancy prevention services and the Community Safety Net.

The **Refugee Program** assists refugees to successfully resettle in this country by providing financial, work-attached, and acculturation services.

Child Welfare

In **Child Welfare**, core services fall under three general categories: Child Protective Services, Out-of-Home Care and Adoptions.

Child Protective Services handles child abuse and neglect reports. Child protective services are designed to ensure the safety of children, ages 0-18, and are a collaborative effort with local law enforcement agencies, courts, and treatment providers. As families are receiving child protective services from DHS, other entities may be involved in oversight and input. These entities might include; Judges, District Attorneys, Defense Attorneys, and Multi-Disciplinary Teams.

Also referred to as foster care, **Out of Home Care** is the program that provides a safe, temporary living arrangement for the abused or neglected child while the parent(s) receives support services from the child welfare agency and other treatment providers. This program area includes relative foster care, foster family care, childrens' group and residential care and independent living services for youth.

Adoption services include guardianships and adoptions. The federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997 mandated that public child

welfare agencies provide permanency for children within shorter time frames. These requirements were incorporated into Oregon statute in 1999.

Vocational Rehabilitation

In the **Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services**, the core service components are Basic Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Youth Transition Program, Supported Employment Services and the Independent Living Program.

Basic Vocational Rehabilitation Services is the federal/state funded partnership to assist eligible individuals with disabilities to prepare for and engage in gainful employment. Through this policy and funding partnership, OVRs provides an array of individualized services to meet the vocational rehabilitation needs of each eligible individual. Approximately 97 percent of all clients meet the federal definition for persons with severe disabilities. Consumers typically have multiple and complex disability issues that require a broad array of services, including professional counseling, evaluation of strengths and challenges, vocational skills training, and job placement and support services to achieve and maintain employment.

Youth Transition Program (YTP) services assist students with disabilities to bridge the gap between school and work by providing coordinated vocational rehabilitation services to students while in school and assuring a smooth transition to adult services and employment after school completion. OVRs youth transition services maximize the investment that special education has made in youth with disabilities. Currently, OVRs contracts with more than 40 school districts and community colleges to provide and coordinate these services with OVRs staff.

Supported Employment services are for individuals who have the most significant disabilities and who can obtain competitive employment in the community with intensive training and job coaching but need the provision of ongoing supports to retain their employment. Vocational rehabilitation

services, including job placement and job coaching at the worksite, are provided on a time-limited basis to the consumer. On-going services that support the individual and maintain the employment are provided by other human services, workforce or community partners.

The **Independent Living Program** assists individuals who have significant disabilities in maintaining or increasing their level of independence at home, in the community and in employment. Through a federal/state funding partnership, independent living services are provided through a network of community-based non-profit providers identified as Centers for Independent Living.

2003-05 Organization Chart

Children, Adults and Families



