

1985 ANNUAL REPORT

MADISON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

JAMES L. COVERT
COMMISSIONER



MADISON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

PHONE
366-2211

JAMES L. COVERT, COMMISSIONER

IN REPLY
PLEASE REFER TO:

P O BOX 637

WAMPSVILLE NEW YORK 13163

April 4, 1986

Don R. Callahan, Chairman
Madison County Board of Supervisors
Wampsville, New York 13163

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Attached is the Department of Social Services Annual Report for 1985.

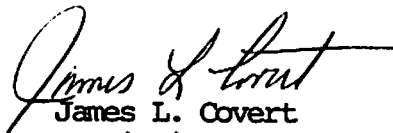
Essentially, the year turned out to be rather routine, with no big swings in either direction:

- We did, and likely always will, suffer staff turnover, but not to the extent of some previous years. This is a continuing problem that impacts upon every function of the agency. Of significance, however, is the increasing difficulty in recruiting new employees. It appears that fewer people are taking the civil service tests, and more often than not, we are forced to hire people in a provisional status. If those hired do not place in the top three when the test is given, we have then wasted most valuable time training an employee we cannot keep.
- The public assistance caseload (ADC and HR) trended downward the entire year. This is most encouraging, and continuing economic improvement should carry this trend forward. One vital factor in this downward trend has been our increased effort devoted to employment programs. New York State realizes the value of these programs, and I expect enhanced financial assistance in the coming year. You will note that these programs resulted in a savings of almost 314 thousand dollars this past year.
- Conversely, the Medicaid caseload continues its upward trend. This, of course, is our most expensive program, accounting for more than fifty percent of the total agency budget. There are efforts underway, both nationally and state-wide, to impose greater controls over these costs. I believe they will be slow in coming, however, and we will continue to see the upward spiral in this program.

- Child Welfare services also continue to trend upward. The average number of children placed in care increased over 1984, as well as the number of child abuse reports. It is significant that the seriousness of the reports is trending upwards as well.
- Recent changes in federal laws regarding child support collections will have a positive impact upon the amounts collected. These changes did, however, require an increase in support collections staff.
- The addition of a second fraud investigator provided the results expected. Collections from repayment agreements, criminal arrests, and sanctions totalled approximately \$50,000 more than in 1984.
- Finally, the agency finished the year with a \$320,495 surplus in local costs.

While the savings just mentioned are due in part to the decrease in caseloads, they also reflect the county's good fortune of having a diligent, conscientious staff administering the various programs. Given the turnover, the doubling up of responsibilities, the increased state and federal requirements, the people have performed exceptionally well.

Sincerely,


James L. Covert
Commissioner

JLC/et

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DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

PERSONNEL - STAFFING OVERVIEW:

In 1985 three people retired from the Social Services Department, two were laid off, one terminated, and five resigned. Also, a Social Welfare Examiner requested a nine-month leave of absence in order to complete requirements for a Bachelor's Degree.

The vacancies were left at all levels - a Case Supervisor, Grade B; three Caseworkers, a Senior Support Investigator, a Senior Social Welfare Examiner, two Social Welfare Examiners, a Senior Clerk, and two Account Clerk-Typists. These vacancies created a ripple effect in that the Case Supervisor vacancy was filled by one of the caseworkers, a Caseworker position was filled by one of the examiners as was the Senior Examiner and Senior Support Investigator positions. Several of the clerical staff people were promoted to examiners.

Three positions were added in 1985 - a Caseworker in the Child Protective Unit, a Caseworker in the Adoption and Foster Care Unit, and an Account Clerk-Typist in the Support Collections Unit. These positions were added in order to manage increased demands on caseworker staff and because of federal legislation which increased the duties of the Support Collections Unit.

The contract with the Sheriff's Department was expanded to include an additional Deputy to be used in the Fraud Investigations Unit.

The two Energy Resource Workers were reclassified as Social Welfare Examiners. This is the same grade of pay but the change in title was consistent with their job duties and created greater flexibility in staffing. In the summer months when the HEAP application rate decreased, they were able to handle other emergencies and regular public assistance applications when necessary.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT:

As in previous years, contracted training has been used to great advantage to better prepare the employees for the jobs they face. Trainers from SUNY Albany came to give three on-site training sessions to the Public Assistance examiners in designated problem areas. The emphasis was on corrective action in order to reduce the error rate.

Two Medicaid examiners were sent to the Training Institute operated by SUNY Buffalo. Buffalo also offered a Foster Parent-Train the Trainer session which was attended by a caseworker in our Foster Care Unit.

A new Child Protective caseworker was sent to the CPS Core Curriculum offered by Cornell University. All of this training was at no cost to the county or was the cost of mileage reimbursement only.

Training sessions offered by the Central New York Coalition for Local Government which employees attended included Dealing with the Difficult Public, Performance Appraisal, Telephone Etiquette, Conflict Management, Affirmative Action, Advanced Management Training, Stress Management, Managing for Excellence, Crisis Management in Mental Health, Decision-Making, and Improving the Performance of the Problem Employee.

Various staff members attended the New York Public Welfare Association conferences, the Employment Conference, the Welfare Fraud Conference, Home Energy Assistance Conference, and Corrective Action Conference.

Also, New York State Department of Social Services held regional meetings for Public Assistance, Medicaid, and WMS in order to clarify program and regulation changes. These meetings and the conferences are very helpful in that they allow the staff to meet representatives from State DSS face-to-face. Problems can be discussed candidly and communication lines are opened for further use.

The staff development function here continues mainly to be one of coordination; that of connecting employees with the appropriate available training.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

The Public Assistance unit began 1985 with 708 active cases, and ended with 654 (462 ADC, 192 HR). Despite this decrease in actual cases, the number of transactions per case increased, due in part to the requirements of the Deficit Reduction Act of 1984. For example, in December 1984, there were 577 P.A. case transactions, but in December 1985, 841 P.A. case transactions took place. These transactions involve such things as issuing supplements, which are required because of monthly reporting and retrospective budgeting. Also, support disregard checks must be issued, which involves refunding to the recipient the first \$50 of support we received on their behalf for the previous month. Various changes in the Medicaid and Food Stamp programs had an impact on the workload. Public Assistance HEAP checks were issued for the 85-86 season in December.

The use of certification guides for both new and recertified cases was implemented by the state in August. The purpose of these guides is to assist in checking documentation and determining resources, household composition, and past, present and future sources of income. The use of the guides is expected to reduce errors on the agency's part; however, the time required to interview and process a case has increased.

The change in who must apply, as defined in the Deficit Reduction Act of 1984, took effect August 1, 1985. This required a review of all P.A. cases, to determine if other household members not on assistance would be required to apply. Under this change of the definition of the "filing unit", half-siblings and their parents living with persons on assistance were required to apply for assistance, or the entire case closed.

A court case (Abbott vs. Perales) resulted in further changes to the "filing unit" definition, effective December 1985.

In an attempt to cope with the increased workload, a change was made in the P.A. unit's make-up. Now there are two units, each with one eligibility worker and three undercare workers. A pre-screener provides the initial contact with public assistance applicants. Each unit has one clerk assigned to it. A senior examiner supervises each unit. During 1985, one P.A. supervisory position was vacated twice, and is currently being filled by a former Medicaid examiner.

The HEAP unit was split between the two P.A. units for supervisory purposes. From November through April the HEAP workers process applications from walk-ins, as well as mail-in applications, from persons receiving NPA food stamps, and from senior citizens (which are taken by the Office for the Aging). In the less active months, these two examiners assist with regular public assistance duties, especially energy-related emergency applications.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

The Medicaid unit began 1985 with 906 regular M.A. cases and 683 MA-SSI. The caseload rose throughout the year, ending 1985 with a total of 1,607 cases. The unit is composed of one senior examiner, one clerk, and six examiners; however, the high rate of staff turnover resulted in only three experienced examiners remaining with the unit. Two examiners continue to handle all nursing home cases and the growing MA-SSI caseload.

The state's emphasis on identifying and utilizing third party health insurance, and a new requirement for re-submission of applications for the aid to disabled category, combined with implementation of the automated SDX on the WMS computer system kept the Medicaid staff busy throughout the year.

The Lynch vs. Rank lawsuit required a review of cases back to April 1977 in which SSI eligibility stopped for a variety of reasons, including increased social security income or resources. Using a complicated formula, financial eligibility for Medicaid had to be redetermined and restored for these cases.

The Brill vs. Perales case changed the definition of chronic care for individuals and married couples. Nursing home cases had to be reviewed under this court case, retroactive to August 1, 1982. The Social Security cost of living increase for January 1986, although performed by the WMS computer system late in December 1985, involved the examiners rebudgeting the majority of cases involved, when verification of the actual amounts was received.

Implementation of the new certification guides for new case openings and recertifications increased the amount of time needed for interviewing and case processing. Hopefully, these documentation guides will assist in reducing the number of errors in cases.

FOOD STAMPS

The Food Stamp unit ended 1985 with 1,135 active non-public assistance cases, down from 1,281 for the same period in 1984. This decline is attributed to the improving economy, as well as the Food Stamp Job Search Program, required of all individuals 18-60 who are without income and able to work. A ninety-day sanction for voluntarily quitting a job without good cause became effective January 1, 1985. This sanction applies to the entire household, not just the individual who quit, and resulted in some reduction of the caseload.

Of some effect on the size of the caseload also was the requirement that the support disregard money paid to a public assistance recipient under DEFRA be counted as income for the food stamp program, with a special one month retrospective budgeting method.

Several changes in program standards, involving the entire caseload, took place during the year. In January, the cost of living increase in social security benefits lowered food stamp allotments to social security recipients. Income eligibility limits increased as of July 1, 1985. Effective October 1, the amount of benefits (Thrifty Food Plan) households could receive, as well as the shelter or dependent care and standard deduction for each household, increased.

Some staff turnover took place during the year, with two examiners and one clerk being replaced.

ADULT AND FAMILY SERVICES

During 1985, Adult Services Unit continued to provide services as illustrated on the Services Chart. There was a slight shift resulting from a June case review. Those cases formerly reported under Adult Protective Services that had stabilized were transferred to appropriate other services. This is reflected in the increase of foster care of adults, home management and preventive services. It is felt that this establishes a more accurate picture of service provision.

The unit's employment section has been very active with on-going and new projects. A total of 225 public assistance recipients received employment services in 1985. This resulted in a savings of \$313,991.68. Activities included are in check pick-up, job search, work experience, job club, and employment referrals.

In addition to employment services for public assistance individuals, 308 food stamp clients were placed in the Food Stamp Job Search Program. The total savings was \$35,163.

In the area of training and education, the unit supervised the placement of 25 clients in basic education and high school equivalency class, 49 clients in post-high school programs, and 20 clients in Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. All these programs are aimed at preparing or retraining individuals for employment.

February saw the opening of Utica School of Commerce's office assistance program in Oneida. This created the opportunity for public assistance individuals to receive specialized training. A total of 31 recipients have enrolled.

In May, the Department received a demonstration grant. In cooperation with the Oneida Area Day Care Center, we started the development of day care

homes and expansion of day care centers. This program serves both public assistance and income eligible individuals. It is designed to provide county-wide quality care for children while parents are working.

SERVICES PROVIDEDADULT

	<u>No. Recipients</u>	<u>No. Hours</u>
EDUCATION	2	3
EMPLOYMENT	22	158
FAMILY PLANNING	0	0
FOSTER CARE - ADULTS	36	235
HEALTH RELATED	18	389
HOME MANAGEMENT	24	440
HOMEMAKER	7	110
HOUSEKEEPER/CHORE	2	50
HOUSING	8	136
INFORMATION & REFERRAL	1,202	1,203
PREVENTIVE - ADULT	4	37
PROTECTIVE - ADULT	95	2,276
TRANSPORTATION	2	13
PERSONAL CARE SERVICES	0	0
SERVICES TO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	2	8

CHILD WELFARE

The number of children in foster care ranged from 22-30 at any given time. There were 58 different children placed into foster homes in 1985 for a variety of reasons. Approximately half of these placements were child protective in nature due to physical abuse, sexual abuse, and/or neglect of these children. There were 4 voluntary placements of children into foster care; 2 of these placements were precipitated by a parent's serious illness; the other two were placed because their parents could not cope with their problem behavior.

The remainder of the foster care placements came through the court system as the results of PINS and juvenile delinquent proceedings.

The PINS and JD children placed in 1985 ranged from 12 to 15 years of age. Those children placed into foster care for protective reasons ranged from infants through 17 years of age. The age group of the children placed as a result of PINS and JD proceedings are reflective of the obviously very different reasons for protective placements as opposed to placements of children who are legal offenders or are ungovernable.

Institutional placements stayed at a rather stable figure, 10-13, in spite of our efforts to maintain children in foster homes. More children were ordered into placement because of more severe behavior problems. Our effort to acquire a specialized foster home with extra services did not materialize until July. At that time we borrowed a foster home from Onondaga County. With persistence and gentle persuasion, the foster mother decided to become certified by our agency. She is very experienced with JD/PINS boys and has an ability to be confrontive with problems, yet maintains a warm, caring concern for the individual. Incidentally, Madison County has the third busiest Family Court in the Sixth Judicial District.

We have lost several foster parents during this past year through age, discovery that the 24-hour a day care of children infringes on their privacy, and the more difficult behavior problems we encounter. We are ending the year with 14 certified homes, the lowest ever in my experience with the agency. We are anticipating an increase in this number with the enthusiasm of a professional recruiter, which will be funded 50% by DFY funds.

ADOPTION AND DAY CARE:

Adoption group home studies were conducted two different times for 8 weeks. Starting dates were June 19th and October 30th. Mrs. Carol Thompson retired on May 1st, but volunteered during the summer class as co-facilitator for the group. In mid-August Kitty Gagnier joined Child Welfare in the adoption area. Three placements have occurred during the year.

The adoption worker also has been involved in day care home certifications after they have been screened by the Oneida Area Day Care worker. Ten homes are certified.

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING:

In 1985 training and orientation for foster parents, foster children, prospective foster parents and parents of teenagers in placement took place.

On July 19, 1985, a program, "Communication", was presented to foster parents by the Agree Organization from Oneonta. This was preceded by a covered-dish supper. Prior to this, the afternoon was devoted to a "Sexuality and Communication" program presented by George DeHass and Mary Barnhill and also by Agree to teenagers in foster care.

An orientation meeting was held October 22nd for six prospective foster families. Training sessions for existing foster parents were held October 24 and October 30. These sessions covered the topics "Anger and Its Behavior

Characteristics" and "Lying/Stealing and Its Behavior Characteristics".

January 23rd and October 30th were starting dates for parenting skills training sessions run by Dave Blaisdell, Community Representative from Berkshire Farms. Each of these programs were 8 weeks in duration and the training was provided primarily to the parents of teenagers in the Berkshire facility.

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

During 1985 there were 420 reports received from the State Central Registry. This is an increase of 23 over 1984. The 36.2% of indicated cases shows a slight but steady increase each of the past four years.

Abuse and/or neglect petitions filed in Family Court increased dramatically. In 1984, there were 20 petitions filed. In 1985 there were 50 petitions filed resulting in 36 foster care placements. Of these children, 8 were returned home, four were placed with relatives, and 1 was placed for adoption. Twenty-three remained in foster care at the end of the year. Of those remaining in care, 10 were sexually abused. There were 11 sex abuse petitions involving 15 children filed and 1 physical abuse petition involving 2 children. The remainder of the petitions were neglect.

We have noticed an increase in the number of seriously disturbed younger children being placed. We have had 2 youngsters at Hutchings for a period of time for treatment and 2 boys and 1 girl are either in or awaiting placement in the new therapeutic foster home program.

Due to the increased number of foster care placements, combined with children placed in previous years remaining in protective foster care, we now have 2 foster care workers and 5 workers doing investigations and service to children in their own home.

We now have 2 part-time parent aides rather than 1 full-time person. The same number of families are receiving this service. During 1985 a skilled learning class was held for 6 parents. This will be continued and will now be taught primarily by the parent aides rather than the Child Welfare and Child Protective supervisors. The class was well received. There are several families where the parent aide service has either precluded

the need for foster care placement or hastened the children's return home from foster care.

We have referred several families to the Systematic Training for Effective Parenting program, run by Catholic Charities and Cooperative Extension. Again in 1985, the service provider most used has been Madison County Mental Health both for individual and group counseling. We view their new group for perpetrators of sexual abuse a much needed service in light of the increased cases of this type.

We continue to rely heavily on the State Police BCI in the taking of statements and making arrests in sexual abuse cases and on the Madison County Sheriff's Department for assistance in making protective removals.

1985 CHILD ABUSE AND MALTREATMENT REGISTER REFERRALS

MONTH	IND.	UNF.	TRANS.	FFLR	REPEAT CALLS		SECONDARY RESPONSIB.	ADD'L. INFO.	DUPLICATE	PENDING
					IND.	UNF.				
JAN.	6- 7	15-19	2-2	1	2- 4	4- 4	1-2	0	0	0
FEB.	9-17	11-20	1-1	0	0	3- 5	3-6	0	0	0
MARCH	14-19	13-33	0	0	4-12	3- 9	3-4	0	0	0
APRIL	8-15	18-37	2-4	1	1- 2	1- 3	0	0	0	0
MAY	8-12	23-40	1-2	0	3- 6	3-11	5-5	0	3-7	0
JUNE	5- 8	12-28	0	1	3- 6	3-11	1-1	1-1	1-1	0
JULY	14-28	23-50	0	0	1- 2	4- 9	3-6	0	2-2	0
AUGUST	10-19	18-39	3-6	2	4- 7	2- 5	5-9	3-6	1-1	0
SEPT.	12-27	18-25	3-4	1	0	3- 6	3-3	1-1	1-1	0
OCT.	9-21	16-31	1-5	0	1- 1	2- 6	3-3	1-1	2-3	0
NOV.	3- 8	5- 7	3-5	0	0	4- 7	4-4	0	1-1	10-17
DEC.	2- 2	4- 8	2-6	0	2- 3	1- 1	3-3	1-1	1-2	16-22
TOTAL	100-183	176-337	18-35	6	21-43	33-77	34-46	7-10	12-18	26-39

1st number in each column - families
2nd number in each column - children

IND. - Indicated cases
UNF. - Unfounded cases

TRANS. - Transferred out of county.

FFLR - Forward for Local Review. Agency's option for follow-up.

SECONDARY RESPONSIB. - Secondary Responsibility. Part of the family resides in our county.
(Primary responsibility rests with the county where the child resides.)

CHILD SUPPORT

1985 has proven to be the year for the child. The child support amendments have had a major impact on our operations and will benefit our children immensely.

We saw an increase of over 380 cases during 1985. We are anticipating a larger increase in the upcoming year due to the new laws requiring the publicity of our services.

Collections totalled \$950,828.02. Of this figure, \$34,399.00 was retained by the county as reimbursement for AFDC benefits. \$29,601.00 was retained as an incentive payment for our AFDC collections. This will be rising for as of 10/1/85 we will be paid an incentive on our CSS (private) and foster care collections. \$67,765.00 was disbursed to AFDC clients due to the \$50.00 disregard requirement. This has drastically reduced the amount of monies retained by the county and increased our administrative costs.

We realized an increase of \$12,000.00 by intercepting New York State and Federal income tax refunds from those respondents delinquent in paying for AFDC clients. Beginning this year we will also be intercepting the refunds of those respondents delinquent in private cases. This will result in additional collections and increased incentive payments.

There has been a major change in our operations with the Family Court due to the amendments. We now have a hearing examiner deciding all support and voluntary paternity matters. The Court has also established an expedited process which requires an immediate order of support while determining the final decision. This will preclude the loss of monies during the delay. Changes in the law also required the development of new forms, petitions,

and evidential material that must be submitted to the courts.

The Support Collections Unit now has the authority to process income executions against those delinquent payors. This also includes attaching an additional amount of money for the monies past due. This repeals our previous procedures to petition the courts for such relief. Our clients will not only benefit from the assurance of the support being paid, but also the law now requires employers to submit payments at the same rate the respondents are paid. Although this eases the enforcement of support orders and has the potential to increase collections, it encumbers our staff due to the administrative process.

We anticipate an increase in paternity cases for the law now allows for paternity to be established on children up to the age of 21 years versus the previous limit of 10 years.

Child support is no longer taken lightly. The laws have increased our authority to collect child support. The combination of this and support from our administration will create the potential for additional revenue for the county.

FRAUD UNIT

The Fraud Unit logged 1,145 referrals in 1985, down 106 compared to 1,251 in 1984.

January	82	April	114	July	144	October	112
February	115	May	122	August	131	November	117
March	111	June	129	September	127	December	111

TOTAL: 1,145

The unit negotiated \$65,904.09 in signed repayment agreements for 1985. In 1984 we negotiated \$37,573.19. There was an increase of \$28,330.90 of the monies to be repaid and/or recouped.

REPAYMENT AGREEMENTS

<u>Month</u>	<u>Open</u>	<u>Closed*</u>	<u>Confession of Judgment</u>	<u>Totals</u>
January	1,416.99	1,312.66	2,008.06	\$ 4,737.71
February	3,801.02	2,768.84	1,121.78	7,691.64
March	553.00	496.55	2,765.85	3,815.40
April	2,796.58	2,766.73	8,262.63	13,825.94
May	2,718.54	1,475.69	0	4,194.23
June	368.00	831.10	0	1,199.10
July	4,031.34	2,514.45	0	6,545.79
August	1,483.03	1,867.12	2,050.10	5,400.25
September	1,898.34	2,762.08	0	4,660.42
October	1,073.63	2,018.16	0	3,091.79
November	1,999.74	3,280.97	0	5,280.71
December	2,061.97	3,399.14	0	5,461.11

*Cases no longer receiving public assistance, but still owe DSS.

TOTAL: \$ 65,904.09

Criminal arrests and activities were up in 1985 from 1984. In 1984, the unit made 14 criminal arrests which resulted in \$11,390.00 being ordered in restitution to the department. In 1985 the unit made 16 criminal arrests which resulted in \$16,272.74 being ordered in restitution to the department.

CRIMINAL ACTION

	<u># of Cases</u>	<u>PA</u>	<u>PA-FS</u>	<u>NPA-FS</u>	<u>MA</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Arrests	16	12,522.74	1,356.00	2,394.00	0	\$ 16,272.74
Dismissed by D.A.'s Office	1	879.30	179.00	0	0	1,058.30
Repayment in Lieu of Criminal Charges per D.A.	2	498.82 0	106.00 0	0 0	0 432.37	604.82 432.37

In 1985, the unit began working closely with the Employment Unit. The Employment Unit started processing job search forms to the Fraud Unit for verification that the clients were actually looking for work. Investigations proved that there was false information reported on the job search forms that were submitted by the clients and therefore the clients were sanctioned until they agreed to comply with departmental rules and regulations. The savings due to these sanctions totalled \$15,816.00. We started this procedure in March, 1985.

March	\$ 1,014.90	August	\$ 1,784.30
April	2,091.10	September	1,288.80
May	1,659.50	October	1,505.80
June	1,769.70	November	1,334.80
July	2,032.30	December	1,334.80

TOTAL SAVINGS: \$15,816.00

MEDICAL AUDIT

The Medical Audit unit remained with two persons: a Medical Worker, supervising, and an Account Clerk-Typist. The Account Clerk-Typist's position changed persons during the year due to an internal promotion.

The duties in the unit were essentially the same except for the addition of: 1) collecting and preparing medical records for audit and quality control for possible determinations of disability; and 2) inclusion of transportation billing in the MMIS system.

The persons who may be disabled are reported by NYSDSS Audit and Quality Control every six months. This report comes from the paid Medicaid claims file and lists everyone who is in a non-federal category and has Medicaid expenditures over \$5,000 in a six-month period. Every case on the report must be researched for possibility of disability. The consents for release of information are then obtained from the persons, medical records collected, and submitted to Albany (NYSDSS) for determination. A monthly reporting of the cases is made to Audit and Quality Control, Syracuse, until completed. 90% of these cases end up being "No Action" (no decision) for lack of available relevant information or denied because the condition is not severe enough.

The prior approval/on-line system (transportation and personal care) was implemented on 12/1/85. This means that commercial transportation now gets paid via McAuto Systems Group, who pays all Medicaid bills. It is a part of the MMIS system and is data entered by this unit. The bills are paid according to our data entry.

Madison County was fortunate this year to be able to add to its

transportation capabilities a wheelchair van with stretcher ability (ambulette) and a "Medicar" which operates as a taxi for those who do not have transportation of their own. These vehicles, through Hamilton Area Ambulance Service, have been very useful for the southern part of the county and have saved, and will continue to save, dollars spent on ambulances unnecessarily. The money savings is apparent when comparing an ambulance at the rate of \$65 base plus \$1.45 per mile to the wheelchair cab rate of \$15 base plus \$1.00 per mile.

Rapport between Madison County DSS and the provider community continues to be good. A lack of dental and medical providers to new patients continues to be a problem for many, but we have managed to get necessary medical care when critical. This unit has promoted and served the provider community well over the past year. Provider cooperation when we've needed special help for clients has been gratifying.

The Third Party Health Insurance (TPHI) program continues to expand, not only in this county, but at State level. At State level, automatic updating of Medicare for SSI recipients is being done monthly. Blue Cross/Blue Shield updating has begun, but is not total, and many problems have occurred. The State is in process of correcting and revising this procedure. It should be working by this spring or summer. Also, the State has begun automatic recoveries from Medicare. Automatic recoveries will begin this spring on Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and by summer, all commercial insurances should be in the program for direct billing.

There has been an increase in court orders directing absent parents to obtain or maintain health insurance for dependents. The court has also cooperated in ordering absent fathers to pay hospital costs associated with the delivery of their children.

RESOURCE DEPARTMENT

In 1985, the Resource Department was responsible for resource clearances, estates, fraud and non-fraud repayment accounts, accident liens, mortgages and other assets held by the Department of Social Services.

During 1985 the Resource Department handled 241 resource clearances from Public Assistance, Medicaid and Food Stamps. The majority of these were Medicaid. There were an additional 25 second mortgages taken on Public Assistance cases and 4 second mortgages satisfied. There were approximately 100 estate letters mailed in 1985 with payment received on 49. In the remainder of the cases, the majority had funeral expenses exceeding assets.

During the year the Resource Department worked closely with the DSS Attorney and the Fraud unit in order to unify the process of collecting monies and tracking repayment agreements. The data processing unit now generates a report for the Food Stamps unit as well as the Fraud unit so there are records of repayments in both offices.

The following is a breakdown of monies received by the Resource Department in 1985:

Fraud Accounts:	\$ 4,990.86
Non-fraud Accounts:	10,069.26
Estates:	79,419.78
Accident Liens:	4,719.00
Satisfied Mortgages:	3,587.99

WELFARE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

In 1985, procedures were implemented at the state and local levels to streamline WMS computer operations. These procedures included a change in the mass reauthorization options, a new screen for help in Medicaid budgeting, an automated SDX*, a new service plan format, and a new application register procedure. The influence of these changes on local staff was felt by many workers including data entry operators, welfare examiners and caseworkers.

Medicaid Budgeting (MABEL) Income-Averaging Screen

In April of 1985, a new budgeting screen for Medicaid was introduced. This allowed the worker to input up to eight weeks of a client's wages and obtain an average, weekly rate of pay. Formerly this average had to be obtained manually or with the use of a calculator, prior to the entry of the budget on the computer.

SDX/WMS Interface

In July, 1985, a procedure was implemented that allowed for the automatic opening, closing and modifying of WMS cases to assure that recipients of SSI benefits will receive their Medicaid eligibility. This procedure was hastily implemented on the state level due to the fear of federal sanctions. Although the automated process saves the worker very little time over the manual process, it is hoped that the procedure will be improved upon by the state in the coming months.

*The SDX, which stands for State Data Exchange, is a hard copy print-out of eligibility data on SSI recipients and applicants. The state provides this report with information it receives from the Social Security Administration.

Service Plans

August also brought a long-awaited change in the data entry forms for entering assessment service plans for child welfare clients. This change came from a need to achieve uniform timing between the due dates for the written UCR's (Uniform Case Recording) and the computer-entered OCRS forms (Child Care Review Service). This uniformity required that the OCRS assessment plan be completed at the same time as the UCR. Prior to this uniformity, a case could have had a UCR due one month and the system work due in another month. Since a delay in entering the OCRS plans may result in fiscal sanctions, this uniformity has made the timing of plans due easier to manage.

One-Page Application Turnaround Document (App. Tads.)

Another big change was implemented in August with the advent of the one-page application turnaround document known as the app.tad. This form is produced at the time of application registry along with a clearance report. The app. tad. is then encoded by the worker for the data entry of determinations made on Food Stamp, Medicaid, and Public Assistance cases. This form, along with the certification guides, replaced the 32-page WMS workbook. By keeping the data entry forms and the interview forms separate, it was believed that more time could be spent on the eligibility requirements during the interview.

Along with this form came an improvement in the data entry procedure. Instead of starting from scratch to enter the eligibility information, all demographic information entered at the time of the application registry is automatically generated onto the full data entry screens. Only corrections to this data had to be changed, and additional screens completed.

In order to produce this app. tad., one additional printer had to be installed in this agency. This was an easy process, since we already had

an extra terminal that could drive the new printer.

Mass Reauthorizations

Up until September of 1985, each county had four options from which to choose on how they wanted to do their mass reauthorizations. Mass reauthorizations are those changes that are across the caseload, such as a raise in the public assistance allowance or an increase in Social Security benefits. With these changes the state can apply their knowledge and change the budgets of the affected recipients. The state also has the ability to change the payment lines on the authorization. Previously the workers would have to request that an authorization be printed and have it approved by the supervisor. In September, the authorizations were automatically "signed off" and we only had to request a print of the authorization. This procedure was a boost to our county in that it required less time and fewer cases were left in pending status. With the second mass reauthorization we received, it was arranged that the authorizations would be printed at our data processing site. The workers only had to file them.

Along with the mass reauthorizations came the posting of the payment lines for the IV-D pass-through. This involved the comparison of child support records with the WMS files at the state level. Any repayments to be made on open case files were automatically authorized. This procedure is completed on a monthly basis. Since this was a new regulation this year, it was a relief to see that so much of the process was automated. Workers still had to resolve any exceptions which often involved re-opening a case.

At this time, the coming year sees little in the way of any major changes to the WMS system. Efforts will continue to increase the efficiency of the existing system for the Social Services worker and to comply with state and federal regulations.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Net Local Cost
1985 Budget vs. Actual

	Budget	Actual	Surplus (Deficit)
General Administration	\$ 225,365	\$ 241,704	(\$ 16,339)
Aid to Dependent Children	617,450	264,594	352,856
Home Relief	391,100	303,959	87,141
Medical Assistance & MMIS	1,901,700	1,821,349	80,351
Purchase of Services	12,000	-4,622	16,622
Child Welfare (Foster Care)	94,400	88,452	5,948
Burials	36,300	26,456	9,844
Juvenile Delinquents	376,400	606,294	(229,894)
Emergency Aid to Adults	5,000	71	4,929
Energy Assistance Program	0	-1,141	1,141
Title IV-D Program	-23,000	-30,896	7,896
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	\$3,636,715	\$3,316,220	\$320,495

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

FISCAL

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Disbursements:

Personal Services	\$1,114,756	
Equipment	18,816	
Contractual	281,793	
Outstanding Encumbrances	0	
Employee Benefits	<u>372,297</u>	\$1,787,662

Credits:

State Reimbursement	\$ 540,645	
Federal Reimbursement	1,004,917	
Refunds	<u>396</u>	\$1,545,958

NET LOCAL COST		\$ 241,704
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	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Gross Cost	\$1,266,725	\$1,787,662	\$520,937	
Net Local Cost	\$ 166,591	\$ 241,704	\$ 75,113	

OLD AGE, BLIND, DISABLED
(SSI)

Disbursements:

None

Credits:

None

NET LOCAL COST

-0-

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Average Caseload	643	695	52	
Average no. Persons	679	731	52	
Gross Cost	-0-	-0-		
Net Local Cost	-0-	-0-		

AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN

Disbursements:

Cash Grants	\$1,997,904	
Vendor Payments	<u>240,577</u>	\$2,238,481

Credits:

State Reimbursment	\$ 637,064	
Federal Reimbursement	1,159,705	
Refunds & Repayments	<u>177,118</u>	\$1,973,887

NET LOCAL COST		\$ 264,594
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	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Average Caseload	551	542		9
Average no. Persons	1,625	1,575		50
Gross Cost	\$2,367,493	\$2,238,481		\$129,012
Net Local Cost	\$ 494,969	\$ 264,594		\$230,375
Average Cost per Case	\$ 4,297	\$ 4,130		\$ 167
Average Cost per Person	\$ 1,457	\$ 1,421		\$ 36

HOME RELIEF

Disbursements:

Cash Grants	\$474,100	
Vendor Payments	<u>74,407</u>	\$548,507

Credits:

State Reimbursement	\$220,128	
Federal Reimbursement	951	
Refunds & Repayments	<u>23,469</u>	\$244,548

NET LOCAL COST		\$303,959
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	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Average Caseload	211	173		38
Average no. Persons	434	317		117
Gross Cost	\$736,830	\$548,507		\$188,323
Net Local Cost	\$348,656	\$303,959		\$ 44,697
Average Cost per Case	\$ 3,492	\$ 3,171		\$ 321
Average Cost per Person	\$ 1,698	\$ 1,730	\$32	

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE & MMIS

<u>Disbursements:</u>	<u>Gross MMIS</u>	<u>Local Share MMIS</u>	<u>Local MA</u>
Nursing Home Care	\$ 5,641,350	\$1,052,024	
Hospital Care	2,743,189	432,848	
Physicians' Services	459,882	88,666	
Pharmacy & Drugs	81,511	14,366	\$ 2,598
Dentists	417,617	85,916	
Opticians & Optometrists	43,271	14,415	
Misc. (Clinics, prosthetic devices, etc.)	676,237	144,773	187,259
	<u>\$10,063,057</u>	<u>\$1,833,008</u>	<u>\$189,857</u>

Total Cost		\$10,252,914
Total Amount Paid from Local Funds		\$ 2,022,865

Credits:

State Reimbursement	\$66,164	
Federal Reimbursement	41,290	
Refunds & Repayments	<u>94,062</u>	\$ 201,516

NET LOCAL COST		\$ 1,821,349
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	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Average Caseload (MA Only)	886	904	18	
Average no. Persons (MA Only)	1,532	1,536	4	
Gross Combined Cost	\$9,375,791	\$10,252,914	\$877,123	
Local Funds Expended	\$2,142,510	\$ 2,022,865		\$119,645
Net Local Cost	\$1,967,069	\$ 1,821,349		\$145,720

MA Only + PA + SSI:

Average Caseload	2,292	2,316	24	
Average no. Persons	4,269	4,133		136
Average Cost per Case	\$4,091	\$4,427	\$336	
Average Cost per Person	\$2,196	\$2,481	\$285	

PURCHASE OF SERVICES

Disbursements: \$71,873

Credits:

State Reimbursement	\$57,214	
Federal Reimbursement	19,281	
Refunds & Repayments	<u>0</u>	\$76,495

NET LOCAL COST \$-4,622

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Gross Cost	\$44,996	\$71,873	\$26,877	
Net Local Cost	\$14,179	\$-4,622		\$18,801

CHILD WELFARE

(Foster Care)

Disbursements:

Boarding Homes	\$103,161	
Institutions	<u>166,796</u>	\$269,957

Credits:

State Reimbursement	\$ 90,018	
Federal Reimbursement	81,471	
Refunds & Repayments	<u>10,016</u>	\$181,505

NET LOCAL COST		\$ 88,452
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	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Average Caseload	39	44	5	
Gross Cost	\$254,284	\$269,957	\$15,673	
Net Local Cost	\$ 88,940	\$ 88,452		\$488
Average Cost per Case	\$ 6,520	\$ 6,135		\$385

BURIALS

Disbursements:

Cash Payments to Funeral Directors	\$29,803
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Credits:

State Reimbursement	\$3,347	
Refunds & Repayments	<u>0</u>	\$ 3,347

NET LOCAL COST	\$26,456
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	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Number of Burials	21	27	6	
Gross Cost	\$24,308	\$29,803	\$5,495	
Net Local Cost	\$21,693	\$26,456	\$4,763	
Average Cost per Burial	\$ 1,158	\$ 1,104		\$54

JUVENILE DELINQUENTS

Disbursements:

Boarding Homes	\$ 17,601	
NYS Division for Youth	436,532	
Homebound Detention Program	36,316	
Other Institutions	<u>244,599</u>	\$735,048

Credits:

State Reimbursement	\$110,086	
Refunds & Repayments	<u>18,668</u>	\$128,754

NET LOCAL COST		\$606,294
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	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Average Caseload	13	18	5	
Gross Cost	\$564,593	\$735,048	\$170,455	
Net Local Cost	\$376,128	\$606,294	\$230,166	
Average Cost per Case	\$ 43,430	\$ 40,836		\$2,594

EMERGENCY AID TO ADULTS

Disbursements: \$142

Credits:

State Reimbursement \$ 71

NET LOCAL COST \$ 71

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Gross Cost	\$1,260	\$142		\$1,118
Net Local Cost	\$ 629	\$ 71		\$ 558

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Disbursements: \$1,017,007

Credits:

Federal Reimbursement	\$1,015,399	
Refunds & Repayments	<u>2,749</u>	\$1,018,148

NET LOCAL COST \$ -1,141

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Gross Cost	\$802,275	\$1,017,007	\$214,732	
Net Local Cost	0	\$ -1,141		\$1,141

TITLE IV-D PROGRAM

Disbursements:

0

Credits:

Incentives

\$30,896

NET LOCAL REVENUE

\$30,896

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Net Local Revenue	\$21,701	\$30,896	\$9,195	

FISCAL SUMMARY

Disbursements:

General Administration	\$1,787,662	
Assistance to Aged, Blind, and Disabled	0	
Aid to Dependent Children	2,238,481	
Home Relief	548,507	
Medical Assistance & MMIS	2,022,865	
Purchase of Services	71,873	
Child Welfare (Foster Care)	269,957	
Burials	29,803	
Juvenile Delinquents	735,048	
Emergency Aid to Adults	142	
Energy Assistance Program	1,017,007	
Title IV-D Program	<u>0</u>	\$8,721,345

Credits:

General Administration	\$1,545,958	
Assistance to Aged, Blind, and Disabled	0	
Aid to Dependent Children	1,973,887	
Home Relief	244,548	
Medical Assistance & MMIS	201,516	
Purchase of Services	76,495	
Child Welfare (Foster Care)	181,505	
Burials	3,347	
Juvenile Delinquents	128,754	
Emergency Aid to Adults	71	
Energy Assistance Program	1,018,148	
Title IV-D Program	<u>30,896</u>	\$5,405,125

NET LOCAL COST		\$3,316,220
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	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Combined Gross Costs	\$15,438,555	\$16,951,394	\$1,512,839	
Gross Local Funds	\$ 8,205,274	\$ 8,721,345	\$ 516,071	
Net Local Cost	\$ 3,457,153	\$ 3,316,220		\$140,933