

OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE

MISSION

Working in close collaboration with the Department of Labor and Office of Children and Family Services, the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) helps needy adults and families achieve economic self-sufficiency through work, job training, and child support enforcement. The Office also provides economic assistance to aged and disabled persons who are unable to work, and transitional support to welfare recipients while they are working toward self-sufficiency.

ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

Core responsibilities of the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance include providing policy and technical support to social services districts responsible for implementing welfare reform and administering programs serving the homeless and refugees. Through its Division of Disability Determinations, the agency also evaluates the medical eligibility of disability claimants for Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance.

FISCAL BACKGROUND AND BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

A total of \$4.8 billion is recommended from all funding sources in SFY 2000-2001 to support State Operations and Aid to Localities programs including Family Assistance, Safety Net, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Food Assistance Program, Home Energy Assistance (HEAP), child support enforcement and food stamp administration.

Aid to Localities is funded by \$4.3 billion in Federal funds, the General Fund, and other revenue. Within this amount, the General Fund cost for direct welfare programs — Family Assistance and Safety Net — will decrease by approximately \$89 million in 2000-2001 reflecting continued welfare caseload declines and available Federal funding. Partially offsetting this decrease are increases in General Fund spending for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for the aged and disabled.

For State Operations, an appropriation of approximately \$555 million is recommended from all funding sources. These funds will support a workforce of approximately 2,468, including 1,360 federally funded positions in the Division of Disability Determinations.

The recommended \$77 million General Fund appropriation includes funding for staff and other costs related to the oversight of social services district administration of public assistance and child support enforcement programs; administrative hearings for public assistance, Food Stamp, and Medicaid applicants and recipients; and operation of the major computer systems supporting public assistance programs. Approximately \$435 million in Federal funds and other revenues are recommended for the administration of the Division of Disability Determinations, the Home Energy Assistance program (HEAP), and the Bureau of Refugee and Immigration Affairs.

Approximately \$210 million in State and Federal funds are appropriated for the costs of the redesign of the Welfare Management System (WMS) and development of the Welfare-to-Work Caseload Management System. WMS is the primary data management tool used by districts to support eligibility determinations and other critical welfare administration activities.

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Specific priorities for the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance for 2000-2001 are as follows:

- In partnership with social services districts, the Department of Labor and the Office of Children and Family Services, operate programs enacted through the State Welfare Reform Act of 1997 so that the welfare system can more effectively transition participants to work and self-sufficiency;
- Develop and implement regulations and administrative policies consistent with the objectives of welfare reform;
- Improve, redesign, and more effectively use technology, information, and communication to support program operations; and
- Continue to strengthen program integrity and anti-fraud activities throughout the welfare system.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The welfare system in New York State has changed in basic philosophy and approach, bringing to fruition the overall objectives of State welfare reform. These changes include transforming welfare into a system of temporary income support while recipients secure employment and child support payments; promoting individual responsibility; and providing social services districts with the flexibility, incentives, and rewards they need to effectively administer a work-oriented welfare system. The system has evolved from one that focused primarily on determining client eligibility and distributing benefit payments to one that now focuses on securing alternative non-welfare means of income support such as employment, child support, or temporary assistance.

The new emphasis has resulted in a dramatic decline in welfare caseloads. The total public assistance caseload in New York State in 2000-2001 is projected at 850,000 recipients, a decrease of 70,000 persons from 1999-2000. When compared to caseload levels in January 1995, welfare caseloads are projected to decline by over 820,000 recipients as of March 31, 2001, or by approximately 49 percent.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE

The Family Assistance program provides employment assessments, support services and time-limited cash assistance to eligible families with children while the parent acquires the necessary work skills to secure and retain employment.

With certain statutorily prescribed exceptions, those who receive benefits must participate in work activities to remain eligible. Cash benefits for Family Assistance participants are limited to a cumulative period of five years. If the head of a Family Assistance household is unable to become employed during this period, the family is limited to non-cash benefits through the Safety Net program (discussed below) while the head of household continues to search for a job.

The new welfare system fosters recipient self-sufficiency. All Family Assistance participants undergo an assessment of their employability skills and training needs and, unless disabled, must participate in assigned work activities. Participants are covered by a larger and greatly strengthened earned income disregard than was historically the case and may retain a higher level of savings and other resources to help the transition from welfare.

Social services districts are required to meet Federal work activity participation targets. The Federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) recently announced that New York exceeded these Federal standards for Federal Fiscal Year 1998. Reflecting scheduled increases in work participation requirements in Federal law, for FFY 2000, districts must place at least 40 percent of all family assistance cases in an allowable work activity for not less than 30 hours per week. State law places the focus of participant employment plans directly on work or work-like activities such as job training, community service, or workfare. This approach will position the State to continue to meet or exceed required employment targets in future years. Under Federal law, the targets increase incrementally

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until the year 2002 when 50 percent of the Family Assistance caseload must participate in work activities for not less than 30 hours per week.

The Governor's welfare reform program also fosters individual responsibility to help break the cycle of long-term dependency. All applicants and recipients are required to participate in screening and assessment to determine if the need for welfare results from use of illegal drugs or excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages. If a participant is unable to work because of such circumstances, he or she is referred to an appropriate treatment program and welfare benefits are restricted to non-cash assistance. Students in Family Assistance cases participate in Learnfare to encourage school attendance and teen parents must attend high school or other approved education programs to receive welfare benefits.

Welfare reform also requires each social services district to screen its Family Assistance caseload for domestic violence. Acting through its designated domestic violence liaison, each district informs the individual of voluntary services which may be available. Districts waive application of welfare program rules, including but not limited to child support cooperation, work requirements, and residency requirements, if the district determines that these provisions would cause further risk or make it more difficult for the person to escape domestic violence.

The Governor's welfare reform program has strengthened child support enforcement. Improvements include automated updating of child support awards to reflect inflation; interstate reciprocity in child support proceedings; a strengthened role for child support staff in welfare case processing; and administrative authority for social services districts to order genetic tests, subpoena information, and collect relevant data from Federal, State and local agencies. These measures have helped to increase total child support collections to their current level of over \$1 billion.

For SFY 2000-2001, the Governor is proposing to increase the maximum monthly amount of child support (from \$50 to \$100) that can be passed-through to a custodial parent receiving family assistance and to strengthen provisions relating to medical support enforcement. The Executive Budget would also re-invest Federal incentive bonuses in child support initiatives to strengthen performance in "hard-to-collect" cases, update asset information on non-custodial parents, expand private health care coverage for children in support cases, and expand the "Celebrating Fatherhood" media campaign to encourage voluntary compliance. These initiatives will further strengthen the child support enforcement system, thus helping to ensure that parents provide for the income support of their children.

Welfare reform also protects taxpayer investments in the welfare system by strengthening sanctions for persons who refuse to comply with work requirements and prohibiting welfare payments to fugitive felons, persons who have been convicted of a felony and failed to abide by the terms of their probation or parole, or who have been convicted of fraudulently seeking to obtain benefits in two or more states.

SAFETY NET PROGRAM

Article XVII of the State Constitution requires the State and its social services districts to provide for the needy. State welfare reform meets this obligation through the Safety Net program for persons who are not eligible for Family Assistance or Supplemental Security Income.

Safety Net participants, primarily single adults and childless couples, can receive cash allowances for a two year period after which benefits can be provided on a non-cash basis. Other groups that may receive non-cash benefits include families that have exhausted their five year limit on Family Assistance, certain non-citizens, households where the adult is unable to work because of substance abuse, and households where the adult has refused to participate in drug/alcohol screening or treatment. In addition to providing for essential needs, the Safety Net is a work program which provides such services as job search, work training, and workfare. Unless prevented from doing so by a physical or mental disability, Safety Net participants must engage in assigned work activities to receive assistance.

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Participants in both Family Assistance and Safety Net can be exempt from work assignments, or given limited work activities, if necessary because of a medically verifiable physical or mental impairment. The social services district is responsible for determining if such a disability exists. In making this determination, the district must consider information provided by the participant's treating physician, but also can conduct its own medical examination.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

Federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provides cash assistance to the aged, visually handicapped, and disabled. New York's SSI benefit, is \$599 per month for an individual living alone in the community, including a scheduled January 2000 cost-of-living adjustment in the Federal portion of the grant. The State's SSI benefit currently is one of the highest nationally. The 2000-2001 recommendation of \$621 million funds the State cost of SSI benefits for a projected 610,440 recipients.

STATE FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The State Welfare Reform Act of 1997 created New York's Food Assistance Program, (FAP) for non-citizens who lost Federal Food Stamps solely due to their alien status. FAP was designed to target the most vulnerable immigrants — children, disabled adults, and persons 60 years of age or older. On November 1, 1998, Federal Food Stamps were restored to children, disabled adults, and those over age 67. The 2000-2001 Aid to Localities recommendation provides \$8.2 million, combined State and local funds, to continue food benefits to an estimated 5,000 immigrant seniors who remain ineligible for the Federal program.

ALL FUNDS APPROPRIATIONS

<u>Category</u>	<u>Available 1999-00</u>	<u>Appropriations Recommended 2000-01</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Reappropriations Recommended 2000-01</u>
State Operations	\$493,023,000	\$555,010,000	+\$61,987,000	\$384,590,000
Aid To Localities	4,400,350,000	4,256,931,000	-143,419,000	3,404,160,000
Capital Projects	32,000,000	30,000,000	-2,000,000	139,903,000
Total	<u>\$4,925,373,000</u>	<u>\$4,841,941,000</u>	<u>-\$83,432,000</u>	<u>\$3,928,653,000</u>

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ALL FUND TYPES LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT BY PROGRAM ANNUAL SALARIED POSITIONS

Program	2000-01 Recommended Average Fill Level				Change
	Available 1999-00	Personal Service (Regular)	Maintenance Undistributed	Total Recommended 2000-01	
Administration					
General Fund	180	180	....	180	....
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	133	....	133	133	....
Special Revenue Funds - Other	59	....	59	59	....
Child Support Enforcement					
General Fund	57	....	....	....	-57
Special Revenue Funds - Other	....	57	....	57	+57
Disability Determinations					
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	1,360	1,360	....	1,360	....
Special Revenue Funds - Other	111	....	111	111	....
Executive Direction					
General Fund	21	21	....	21	....
Legal Affairs					
General Fund	164	164	....	164	....
Refugee and Immigrant Affairs					
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	19	19	....	19	....
Shelter and Supported Housing					
General Fund	22	22	....	22	....
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	2	....	2	2	....
System Support and Information Services					
General Fund	193	163	30	193	....
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	30	30	....	30	....
Special Revenue Funds - Other	19	19	....	19	....
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs					
General Fund	59	59	....	59	....
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	21	....	21	21	....
Special Revenue Funds - Other	18	....	18	18	....
Subtotal, Direct Funded Programs	2,468	2,094	374	2,468	....
Suballocations:					
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	18	....	....	18	....
Total	2,486			2,486	....

STATE OPERATIONS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY FUND TYPE APPROPRIATIONS

Fund Type	Available 1999-00	Recommended 2000-01	Change
General Fund	\$67,408,000	\$76,559,000	+\$9,151,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	320,570,000	347,870,000	+27,300,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	104,045,000	129,581,000	+25,536,000
Internal Service Funds	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total	\$493,023,000	\$555,010,000	+\$61,987,000

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STATE OPERATIONS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS

<u>Program</u>	<u>Available 1999-00</u>	<u>Recommended 2000-01</u>	<u>Change</u>
Administration			
General Fund	\$19,964,000	\$18,019,000	-\$1,945,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	7,000,000	7,000,000	.....
Special Revenue Funds - Other	18,850,000	18,850,000	.....
Internal Service Funds	1,000,000	1,000,000	.....
Child Support Enforcement			
General Fund	4,164,000	.....	-4,164,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	2,300,000	2,900,000	+600,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other .....	.....	25,000,000	+25,000,000
Departmental Administrative Reimbursement			
General Fund	-61,926,000	-62,462,000	-536,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	65,495,000	66,031,000	+536,000
Disability Determinations			
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	162,500,000	169,200,000	+6,700,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	10,400,000	10,400,000	.....
Executive Direction			
General Fund	1,686,000	1,684,000	-2,000
Legal Affairs			
General Fund	11,185,000	11,367,000	+182,000
Refugee and Immigrant Affairs			
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	2,270,000	2,270,000	.....
Shelter and Supported Housing			
General Fund	1,357,000	1,338,000	-19,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	500,000	500,000	.....
System Support and Information Services			
General Fund	86,275,000	101,655,000	+15,380,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	140,000,000	160,000,000	+20,000,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	6,800,000	6,800,000	.....
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs			
General Fund	4,703,000	4,958,000	+255,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	6,000,000	6,000,000	.....
Special Revenue Funds - Other	2,500,000	2,500,000
Total	<u>\$493,023,000</u>	<u>\$555,010,000</u>	<u>+\$61,987,000</u>

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STATE OPERATIONS — GENERAL AND OFFSET FUNDS SUMMARY OF PERSONAL SERVICE APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES 2000-01 RECOMMENDED

Program	Total Personal Service		Personal Service Regular (Annual Salaried)		Temporary Service (Nonannual Salaried)	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	\$8,789,000	-\$118,000	\$8,675,000	-\$207,000	\$83,600	+\$83,600
Child Support Enforcement .....	.....	-2,961,000	.....	-2,961,000	.....	.....
Executive Direction	1,340,000	-2,000	1,255,500	-46,500	83,000	+49,000
Legal Affairs	8,408,000	+182,000	8,118,000	-8,000	.....	.....
Shelter and Supported Housing	1,199,000	-19,000	1,184,000	-34,000	.....	.....
System Support and Information Services	9,060,000	-164,000	8,750,000	-191,000	.....	.....
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs	3,656,000	+255,000	3,196,000	+8,000	440,000	+227,000
Total	\$32,452,000	-\$2,827,000	\$31,178,500	-\$3,439,500	\$606,600	+\$359,600

Program	Holiday/Overtime Pay (Annual Salaried)	
	Amount	Change
Administration	\$30,400	+\$5,400
Executive Direction	1,500	-4,500
Legal Affairs	290,000	+190,000
Shelter and Supported Housing	15,000	+15,000
System Support and Information Services	310,000	+27,000
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs	20,000	+20,000
Total	\$666,900	+\$252,900

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STATE OPERATIONS — GENERAL AND OFFSET FUNDS SUMMARY OF NONPERSONAL SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE UNDISTRIBUTED APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES 2000-01 RECOMMENDED

Program	Total		Supplies and Materials	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	\$9,730,000	-\$1,827,000	\$150,300	.....
Child Support Enforcement .....	.....	-1,203,000	.....	-\$34,000
Executive Direction	344,000	.....	22,200	+200
Legal Affairs	2,959,000	.....	137,500	-21,000
Shelter and Supported Housing ...	139,000	.....	10,400	.....
System Support and Information Services	92,595,000	+15,544,000	414,100	.....
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs	1,302,000	.....	25,000	+23,400
Total	\$107,069,000	+\$12,514,000	\$759,500	-\$31,400

Program	Travel		Contractual Services	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	\$183,300	.....	\$5,530,900	+\$898,000
Child Support Enforcement .....	.....	-\$57,800	.....	-446,200
Executive Direction	61,100	+300	235,000	.....
Legal Affairs	116,100	-17,000	2,639,400	-22,300
Shelter and Supported Housing ...	35,500	.....	87,800	.....
System Support and Information Services	154,100	.....	2,943,400	.....
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs	200,000	-10,200	987,000	-100,200
Total	\$750,100	-\$84,700	\$12,423,500	+\$329,300

Program	Equipment		Maintenance Undistributed	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	\$1,220,500	+\$1,150,000	\$2,645,000	-\$3,875,000
Child Support Enforcement .....	.....	.....	.....	-665,000
Executive Direction	25,700	-500	.....	.....
Legal Affairs	66,000	+60,300	.....	.....
Shelter and Supported Housing ...	5,300	.....	.....	.....
System Support and Information Services	209,400	.....	88,874,000	+15,544,000
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs	90,000	+87,000
Total	\$1,616,900	+\$1,296,800	\$91,519,000	+\$11,004,000

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STATE OPERATIONS — OTHER THAN GENERAL AND OFFSET FUNDS SUMMARY OF APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES 2000-01 RECOMMENDED

Program	Total		Personal Service	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	\$26,350,000	.....	\$600,000	.....
Child Support Enforcement	27,900,000	+\$25,600,000	.....	.....
Disability Determinations	179,600,000	+6,700,000	71,300,000	+\$4,600,000
Refugee and Immigrant Affairs	2,270,000	.....	.....	.....
Shelter and Supported Housing	500,000	.....	.....	.....
System Support and Information Services	166,800,000	+20,000,000	.....	.....
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs	8,500,000	.....	.....	.....
Total	\$411,920,000	+\$52,300,000	\$71,900,000	+\$4,600,000

Program	Nonpersonal Service		Maintenance Undistributed	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	\$250,000	.....	\$25,500,000	.....
Child Support Enforcement .....	.....	.....	27,900,000	+\$25,600,000
Disability Determinations	97,900,000	+\$2,100,000	10,400,000	.....
Refugee and Immigrant Affairs .....	.....	.....	2,270,000	.....
Shelter and Supported Housing .....	.....	.....	500,000	.....
System Support and Information Services .....	.....	.....	166,800,000	+20,000,000
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs .....	.....	.....	8,500,000	.....
Total	\$98,150,000	+\$2,100,000	\$241,870,000	+\$45,600,000

AID TO LOCALITIES ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY FUND TYPE APPROPRIATIONS

Fund Type	Available	Recommended	Change
	1999-00	2000-01	
General Fund	\$1,810,650,000	\$1,707,231,000	-\$103,419,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	2,493,500,000	2,453,500,000	-40,000,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	86,200,000	86,200,000	.....
Fiduciary Funds	10,000,000	10,000,000
Total	\$4,400,350,000	\$4,256,931,000	-\$143,419,000

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AID TO LOCALITIES ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS

Program	Available 1999-00	Recommended 2000-01	Change
Administration			
Special Revenue Funds - Other	\$65,000,000	\$65,000,000	.....
Child Support Enforcement			
General Fund	26,600,000	27,010,000	+\$410,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	72,000,000	84,000,000	+12,000,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	100,000	100,000	.....
Employment Services			
General Fund	50,650,000	47,278,000	-3,372,000
Food Assistance Program			
General Fund	4,100,000	4,100,000	.....
Special Revenue Funds - Other	4,100,000	4,100,000	.....
Food Stamp Administration Program			
General Fund	112,928,000	113,911,000	+983,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	214,000,000	219,000,000	+5,000,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	6,000,000	6,000,000	.....
Refugee and Immigrant Affairs			
General Fund	5,050,000	5,000,000	-50,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	41,500,000	41,500,000	.....
Shelter and Supported Housing			
General Fund	120,950,000	110,750,000	-10,200,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	20,000,000	20,000,000	.....
Special Revenue Funds - Other	10,000,000	10,000,000	.....
Temporary and Disability Assistance Administration			
General Fund	215,472,000	218,182,000	+2,710,000
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs			
General Fund	1,274,900,000	1,181,000,000	-93,900,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	2,146,000,000	2,089,000,000	-57,000,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	1,000,000	1,000,000	.....
Agency Trust Funds	10,000,000	10,000,000	.....
Total	\$4,400,350,000	\$4,256,931,000	-\$143,419,000

CAPITAL PROJECTS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS

Comprehensive Construction Program	Available 1999-00	Recommended 2000-01	Change	Reappropriations 2000-01
Information Management Technology Program				
Capital Projects Fund .....	.....	.....	.....	\$361,000
Supported Housing Program				
Capital Projects Fund .....	.....	.....	.....	13,750,000
Housing Program Fund	\$32,000,000	\$30,000,000	-\$2,000,000	125,792,000
Total	\$32,000,000	\$30,000,000	-\$2,000,000	\$139,903,000