

OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE

MISSION

The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), working in close collaboration with the Department of Labor and Office of Children and Family Services, 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, transitional support to welfare recipients while they are working toward self-sufficiency, and supportive services to low income households to help them avoid welfare dependency.

ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

Core responsibilities of the Office include providing policy and technical support to social services districts responsible for implementing welfare reform and administering programs that serve 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 \$4.2 billion is recommended from all funding sources in 2002-03 to support State Operations and Aid to Localities programs including Family Assistance, Safety Net, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Food Assistance (FAP), Home Energy Assistance (HEAP), child support enforcement and food stamp administration.

Aid to Localities is funded by \$3.7 billion in Federal funds, General Fund dollars, and other revenue. Within this amount are economy-driven increases for direct welfare programs — Safety Net and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for the aged and disabled.

For State Operations, an appropriation of approximately \$459 million is recommended from all funding sources. These funds will support a workforce of approximately 2,510, 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 \$500 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.

State funding of \$36.5 million is appropriated for the cost of redesigning the Welfare Management System's (WMS) continued development of the Welfare-to-Work Caseload Management System, and related human services systems initiatives including CONNECTIONS case and fiscal management.

Specific priorities for the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance for 2002-03 are as follows:

- In partnership with local 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 recipients can transition to work and self-sufficiency and at-risk households can avoid welfare dependency;
- Build upon the substantial accomplishments of recent years by further strengthening child support enforcement to increase parental financial support for children;

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- 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 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.

OTDA programs also emphasize prevention of welfare dependency by providing work supports and services to at-risk households. These activities help families address life events that could otherwise jeopardize continued employment.

These new emphases have resulted in a dramatic decline in welfare caseloads. By August 2001, the decline in New York's welfare caseloads since 1995 was 59.2 percent. Over 973,000 recipients had left the rolls, which were at their lowest point in 36 years. Prior to the September 11 World Trade Center disaster, additional caseload reductions were expected in 2002-03. However, because of the difficulties resulting from the September 11 attacks and the subsequent declining national economy, a 1.9 percent increase is now projected in the welfare caseload during 2002-03.

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. Family Assistance cases began to reach their five-year limit on assistance on December 1, 2001.

All Family Assistance participants must 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. These measures help the new welfare system to foster recipient self-sufficiency.

Local social services districts are required to meet Federal work activity participation targets. Reflecting scheduled increases in work participation requirements in Federal law, for FFY 2002, districts must place at least 50 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.

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

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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. 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 and work requirements, if the district determines that these provisions would cause further risk or make it more difficult for the person to escape domestic violence.

Homeless families in the State's transitional and emergency shelter system also are expected to strive for self-sufficiency. These facilities can help homeless families achieve this goal by strengthening their independent living skills and helping them to acquire permanent housing. To this end, the Governor is proposing establishment of a new targeted housing subsidy program in SFY02-03. This initiative should not only broaden access to permanent housing, through the provision of an additional rent subsidy for longer-term homeless families, but should curtail unnecessary use of more expensive emergency hotels and homeless shelters.

The Governor's welfare reform program has also 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 \$1.3 billion.

The Executive Budget continues to 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. OTDA also has embarked on new State-local partnerships to support Joint Enforcement Teams (JET) to increase criminal prosecutions for parents who refuse to pay child support. 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 providing 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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SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

Federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provides cash assistance to the aged, visually handicapped, and disabled. New York's SSI benefit is \$632 per month for an individual living alone in the community, including a January 2002 cost-of-living adjustment in the Federal portion of the grant. The State's SSI benefit currently is one of the highest nationally. The 2002-03 recommendation of \$633 million funds the State cost of SSI benefits for a projected 628,900 recipients. SSI and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) eligibility for disability claimants is evaluated by OTDA's Division of Disability Determinations (DDD).

STATE FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

New York's Food Assistance Program (FAP) purchases food stamps on behalf of immigrants age 60 through 67. Under provisions of Federal law, this vulnerable population no longer is eligible for federally funded food stamp benefits. Legislation enacted in 2001 expanded FAP eligibility to also include domestic violence victims.

The 2002-03 Aid to Localities recommendation will provide \$2.2 million in combined State and local funds for benefits to an estimated 5,000 immigrant seniors and domestic violence victims.

ALL FUNDS APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Category	Available 2001-02	Appropriations Recommended 2002-03	Change	Reappropriations Recommended 2002-03
State Operations	421,494,000	458,755,400	37,261,400	381,784,000
Aid To Localities	3,997,300,000	3,744,653,000	(252,647,000)	5,881,980,000
Capital Projects	30,000,000	30,000,000	0	136,643,000
Total	<u>4,448,794,000</u>	<u>4,233,408,400</u>	<u>(215,385,600)</u>	<u>6,400,407,000</u>

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ALL FUND TYPES PROJECTED LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT BY PROGRAM FILLED ANNUAL SALARIED POSITIONS

Program	Full-Time Equivalent Positions (FTE)		
	2001-02	2002-03	FTE Change
	Estimated FTEs 03/31/02	Estimated FTEs 03/31/03	
Administration			
General Fund	174	172	(2)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	98	98	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	63	63	0
Child Support Enforcement			
Special Revenue Funds - Other	61	70	9
Disability Determinations			
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	1,360	1,360	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	111	111	0
Executive Direction			
General Fund	19	18	(1)
Legal Affairs			
General Fund	160	158	(2)
System Support and Information Services			
General Fund	117	115	(2)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	16	16	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	55	55	0
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs			
General Fund	46	44	(2)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	21	21	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	148	148	0
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of			
General Fund	18	17	(1)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	29	29	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	15	15	0
Total	<u>2,511</u>	<u>2,510</u>	<u>(1)</u>

STATE OPERATIONS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY FUND TYPE APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Fund Type	Available 2001-02	Recommended 2002-03	Change
General Fund	34,330,000	74,209,400	39,879,400
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	257,170,000	245,242,000	(11,928,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Other	128,994,000	138,304,000	9,310,000
Internal Service Funds	1,000,000	1,000,000	0
Total	<u>421,494,000</u>	<u>458,755,400</u>	<u>37,261,400</u>

Adjustments:	
Recommended Deficiency	
Temporary and Disability Assistance, Office of	
Special Revenue Funds - Other	<u>(1,088,000)</u>
Appropriated 2001-02	<u>420,406,000</u>

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STATE OPERATIONS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Program	Available 2001-02	Recommended 2002-03	Change
Administration			
General Fund	19,340,000	20,123,000	783,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	7,000,000	7,000,000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	11,350,000	16,795,000	5,445,000
Internal Service Funds	1,000,000	1,000,000	0
Child Support Enforcement			
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	3,100,000	3,100,000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	25,930,000	26,908,000	978,000
Departmental Administrative			
Reimbursement			
General Fund	(67,357,000)	(70,557,000)	(3,200,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Other	70,926,000	74,126,000	3,200,000
Disability Determinations			
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	163,300,000	150,000,000	(13,300,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Other	10,400,000	8,900,000	(1,500,000)
Executive Direction			
General Fund	1,802,000	1,760,000	(42,000)
Legal Affairs			
General Fund	12,811,000	12,147,000	(664,000)
System Support and Information Services			
General Fund	61,414,000	105,163,000	43,749,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	75,000,000	75,000,000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	6,800,000	6,800,000	0
Temporary and Disability Assistance			
Programs			
General Fund	4,569,000	4,191,000	(378,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	6,000,000	6,000,000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	2,500,000	3,500,000	1,000,000
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of			
General Fund	1,751,000	1,382,400	(368,600)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	2,770,000	4,142,000	1,372,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	1,088,000	1,275,000	187,000
Total	<u>421,494,000</u>	<u>458,755,400</u>	<u>37,261,400</u>

STATE OPERATIONS - GENERAL AND OFFSET FUNDS SUMMARY OF PERSONAL SERVICE APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES 2002-03 RECOMMENDED (dollars)

Program	Total		Personal Service Regular (Annual Salaried)	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	9,593,000	(517,000)	9,464,651	(531,349)
Executive Direction	1,427,000	(41,000)	1,337,380	(46,120)
Legal Affairs	9,240,000	(642,000)	8,932,804	(659,196)
System Support and Information Services	8,050,000	1,642,000	7,736,400	1,669,000
Temporary and Disability Assistance				
Programs	3,198,000	(376,000)	2,709,800	(404,200)
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	1,113,000	(336,000)	1,098,000	(336,000)
Total	<u>32,621,000</u>	<u>(270,000)</u>	<u>31,279,035</u>	<u>(307,865)</u>

Program	Temporary Service (Nonannual Salaried)		Holiday/Overtime Pay (Annual Salaried)	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	94,090	10,490	34,259	3,859
Executive Direction	88,054	5,054	1,566	66
Legal Affairs	0	0	307,196	17,196
System Support and Information Services	0	0	313,600	(27,000)
Temporary and Disability Assistance				
Programs	467,000	27,000	21,200	1,200
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	0	0	15,000	0
Total	<u>649,144</u>	<u>42,544</u>	<u>692,821</u>	<u>(4,679)</u>

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STATE OPERATIONS - GENERAL AND OFFSET FUNDS SUMMARY OF NONPERSONAL SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE UNDISTRIBUTED APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES 2002-03 RECOMMENDED (dollars)

Program	Total		Supplies and Materials	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	11,030,000	1,300,000	150,300	0
Executive Direction	333,000	(1,000)	22,200	0
Legal Affairs	2,907,000	(22,000)	137,500	0
System Support and Information Services	97,113,000	42,107,000	414,100	0
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs	993,000	(2,000)	18,000	0
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	269,400	(32,600)	17,400	0
Total	<u>112,645,400</u>	<u>43,349,400</u>	<u>759,500</u>	<u>0</u>

Program	Travel		Contractual Services	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	183,300	0	5,586,900	56,000
Executive Direction	51,100	0	234,000	(1,000)
Legal Affairs	86,100	0	2,617,400	(22,000)
System Support and Information Services	154,100	0	10,361,400	7,000
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs	104,000	0	820,000	(2,000)
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	81,500	0	126,200	(32,600)
Total	<u>660,100</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>19,745,900</u>	<u>5,400</u>

Program	Equipment		Maintenance Undistributed	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	1,220,500	0	3,889,000	1,244,000
Executive Direction	25,700	0	0	0
Legal Affairs	66,000	0	0	0
System Support and Information Services	209,400	0	85,974,000	42,100,000
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs	51,000	0	0	0
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	44,300	0	0	0
Total	<u>1,616,900</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>89,863,000</u>	<u>43,344,000</u>

STATE OPERATIONS - OTHER THAN GENERAL FUND AND OFFSET FUNDS SUMMARY OF APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES 2002-03 RECOMMENDED (dollars)

Program	Total		Personal Service	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	24,295,000	5,445,000	600,000	0
Child Support Enforcement	30,008,000	978,000	0	0
Disability Determinations	158,900,000	(14,800,000)	67,900,000	(4,500,000)
System Support and Information Services	81,800,000	0	0	0
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs	9,500,000	1,000,000	0	0
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	5,417,000	1,559,000	870,000	122,000
Total	<u>309,920,000</u>	<u>(5,818,000)</u>	<u>69,370,000</u>	<u>(4,378,000)</u>

Program	Nonpersonal Service		Maintenance Undistributed	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	250,000	0	23,445,000	5,445,000
Child Support Enforcement	0	0	30,008,000	978,000
Disability Determinations	82,100,000	(8,800,000)	8,900,000	(1,500,000)
System Support and Information Services	0	0	81,800,000	0
Temporary and Disability Assistance Programs	0	0	9,500,000	1,000,000
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of	405,000	65,000	4,142,000	1,372,000
Total	<u>82,755,000</u>	<u>(8,735,000)</u>	<u>157,795,000</u>	<u>7,295,000</u>

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AID TO LOCALITIES ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY FUND TYPE APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Fund Type	Available 2001-02	Recommended 2002-03	Change
General Fund	1,422,700,000	1,055,403,000	(367,297,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	2,478,200,000	2,629,500,000	151,300,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	86,400,000	49,750,000	(36,650,000)
Fiduciary Funds	10,000,000	10,000,000	0
Total	<u>3,997,300,000</u>	<u>3,744,653,000</u>	<u>(252,647,000)</u>

Adjustments:

Recommended Deficiency	
Temporary and Disability Assistance,	
Office of	
General Fund	(10,000,000)
Appropriated 2001-02	<u>3,987,300,000</u>

AID TO LOCALITIES ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Program	Available 2001-02	Recommended 2002-03	Change
Administration			
Special Revenue Funds - Other	65,000,000	30,000,000	(35,000,000)
Child Support Enforcement			
General Fund	27,010,000	27,700,000	690,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	84,000,000	100,000,000	16,000,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	300,000	150,000	(150,000)
Employment Services			
General Fund	47,278,000	67,040,000	19,762,000
Food Assistance Program			
General Fund	4,100,000	1,100,000	(3,000,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Other	4,100,000	1,100,000	(3,000,000)
Food Stamp Administration Program			
General Fund	113,911,000	106,681,000	(7,230,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	219,000,000	246,000,000	27,000,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	6,000,000	7,500,000	1,500,000
Temporary and Disability Assistance			
Administration			
General Fund	194,598,000	186,823,000	(7,775,000)
Temporary and Disability Assistance			
Programs			
General Fund	909,653,000	540,309,000	(369,344,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	2,121,700,000	2,230,000,000	108,300,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	1,000,000	1,000,000	0
Fiduciary Funds	10,000,000	10,000,000	0
Transitional Supports and Policy, Division of			
General Fund	126,150,000	125,750,000	(400,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	53,500,000	53,500,000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	10,000,000	10,000,000	0
Total	<u>3,997,300,000</u>	<u>3,744,653,000</u>	<u>(252,647,000)</u>

CAPITAL PROJECTS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Comprehensive Construction Program	Available 2001-02	Recommended 2002-03	Change	Reappropriations 2002-03
Information Management Technology Program				
Capital Projects Fund	0	0	0	361,000
Supported Housing Program				
Capital Projects Fund	0	0	0	3,250,000
Housing Program Fund	30,000,000	30,000,000	0	133,032,000
Total	<u>30,000,000</u>	<u>30,000,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>136,643,000</u>