

Tioga County Department of Social Services

2023 Annual Report Legislative Bullets

Children and Adult Services

Staff Development

- 889 participants attended 527 state-sponsored virtual trainings, totaling 4089 hours
- 528 participants attended 51 local-sponsored trainings, totaling 918.25hours
- 30 new hires completed New Employee Orientation totaling 120 hours of training

Child Protective/Preventive Services

- 1155 hotline reports received: 847 investigative, 308 Family Assessment Response (FAR)
 - 154 alleging drug use
 - 138 alleging domestic violence

Foster Care/Adoption/Home Finding

- 22 Foster Care Admissions: 20 abuse/neglect, 2 Juvenile Delinquents
- 17 Foster Care Discharges: 9 reunited with parent, 7 adoption and 1 to Kinship Guardianship
- 3 Tioga County youth were in detention for a total of 73 days
- 4 children freed for adoption

CAC and Safe Harbor

- The CAC serviced 69 children and their families.
- 51 youth served by the Safe Harbor program

Adult Protective Services

- Received 348 Adult Services referrals
- Received 179 Adult Protective referrals

PINS Diversion

- PINS Diversion received 82 phone inquiries and completed 68 intakes for the year. This resulted in 22 cases being opened for the year. The remaining cases were informational and referred out for community- based services.

Goals for 2024

Continue to fully implement the Blind Removal Process and the Kinship Firewall process:

- Blind Removals – a process where an identified team meets to discuss whether a child needs to be removed from their home. All identifying information is protected to prohibit bias in decision making.
- Kinship Firewall – This is a process by which a review is conducted, and approval is required at any time a child is removed or moved from placement to placement to ensure that there are no family members or fictive kin that would be suitable for placement rather than a non-familial setting.

Accounting/Systems/Resource and Recovery/Fraud Activities for 2023

- The Accounting Department participated in the Annual State Single Audit. The programs tested were TANF, Foster Care and the Adoption Assistance Programs. They audited 40 TANF cases, 6 Foster Care cases and 6 Adoption cases. There were no significant findings.
- Accounting continued to face the challenge of turnover resulting in a loss of experienced staff with institutional knowledge, familiarity with specific accounting processes, software, and organizational nuances, an increased workload on remaining staff, and finding qualified and experienced candidates.
- Accounting submitted claims for approximately \$10,780,000 in state and Federal reimbursements.
- Systems is responsible for metering mail for almost all county departments including offices at the HHS Complex, Sheriff's Office, Treasurer's Office, DMV, and other departments. The mail department metered over 120,800 pieces of mail in 2023.

Resource and Recovery

- In 2023, \$580,624 was collected against estates and \$93,884 was recovered against Medicaid for a total of \$674,508

Fraud and FEDS

Fraud Referrals:

119 Received (In agency 62, Electronic 44, Support Collection 4, Public 9)
97 Unfounded
7 Pending
15 Agency Repayments
\$ 26,591.00 in SNAP monies

Front End Detection (FEDS):

62 Received (21 Unfounded, 41 Founded)
\$199,368.00 6 Month Projected Savings

Employment and Transitional Supports

HEAP

- The HEAP Unit processed 8142 benefits resulting in allocations of \$4,119,553.
- HEAP also assisted 67 homeowners with the repair or replacement of their primary heating equipment, for a total of \$199,151.31.

Temporary Assistance and Employment Unit:

- In 2023, the Tioga Career Center's reception signed in 4,544 walk-in customers, up from 4,101 in 2022.
- In 2023, the Tioga Career Center's reception answered and assisted 8,647 incoming phone calls, down from 9,029 in 2022.
- The total number of averaged Cash Assistance cases decreased from 210 in 2022 to 200 in 2023.
- The Daycare caseload was comprised of an average of 170 cases serving an average of 315 children up from 119 cases and 208 children in 2022.
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SNAP/Medicaid Unit

- The average monthly number of individuals receiving SNAP (Food Stamps) benefits in 2023 was 4,647 (approximately 1,642 of these were children).
- The monthly average of the total number of Tioga County individuals on Medicaid in 2023 was 14,522.
- The average number of Chronic Care (nursing home, assisted living and waiver programs) Medicaid cases was 230 per month for 2023.

Successes:

- Maintained a high level of customer service despite staffing challenges, meaning citizens of Tioga County were provided with housing, food, health insurance, child care and heat

Goals:

- To seek out qualified employees, become fully staffed, and retain the staff we have.
- To continue to work with the State as they "unwind" policies in that were put in place during the public health emergency.
- Continue succession planning, as several knowledgeable employees prepare for retirement.

Child Support Enforcement Unit (CSEU)

- The Child Support Enforcement Unit collected \$5,127,141 in 2023.
- The Child Support Enforcement Unit filed a total of 527 petitions in 2023, compared to 673 in 2022.

Youth Bureau

- Youth Development Program allocations of \$34,950 were distributed to 11 Community Organizations and Municipal Recreational Programs, in addition to Youth Sports & Education Opportunity funds of \$15,220 that were distributed.

Tioga Career Center

- Provides a variety of seamless customer-driven employment services to both businesses and individual job seekers in the greater Tioga County area.
- Collaborating with Tioga County School Districts with transitional and supportive services for students
- Services for employers:
 - Job postings, hiring events, on-the-job training opportunities
 - Job Fairs with free advertising on radio, newspaper, and social media