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CLIENT SELF-SUPPORT  
SERVICES

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Texas Department of Human Services

## Client Self-support Services

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*Eligibility and employment staff are partners in helping families stabilize their lives, plan for their futures, and find the resources that will lead to independence.*

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**T**he U.S. Census Bureau reported that 2.1 million people joined the ranks of the officially poor in 1991, driving the number of Americans living in poverty to 35.7 million—the highest since Lyndon Johnson declared war on poverty in 1964. And although official figures aren't yet available, experts say things almost surely got worse in 1992, when unemployment was well above the previous year.

An estimated 100,000 of those new poor—mostly minority women, children, and elderly people—were Texans, pushing the state's total population living below the poverty line to 3.3 million. With the aging of the population and increase in minorities promising growth in the very populations most likely to be poor, the Texas Department of Human Services (DHS) continued its commitment to helping people break the cycle of poverty and become permanently self-sufficient.

Client Self-support Services (CSS) programs meet financial, nutritional, health, and other basic needs of low-income families, while also helping parents get the education and training it takes to succeed in the workplace and move toward long-term self-sufficiency. Child care, transportation allowances, and other support services help remove barriers that have prevented parents from returning to school or getting and holding down good jobs in the past.

CSS eligibility and employment staff are partners in helping families stabilize their lives, plan for their futures, and find the resources that will lead to independence. CSS programs likewise rely on partnerships with state and local agencies, as well as with employers, community leaders, service providers, and others in the private sector.

Interagency and community partnerships were refined and expanded during the past year, as staff continued to discover ways to deliver services more effectively and efficiently through cooperation. Noteworthy collaborative efforts of fiscal year 1992 included:

- approval of plans for the Texas Employment Commission (TEC) to provide employment services statewide to clients in both the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) and Food Stamp Employment and Training (E&T) programs beginning in fiscal year 1993, which will allow CSS staff to integrate and more effectively coordinate these services;
- adoption of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) planning cycle for local JOBS planning and CSS staff participation in the Texas Department of Commerce's (TDOC's) major planning conference in January 1992 and joint training workshops for local JOBS partners around the state;
- increase in collaborative efforts with the Texas Education Agency (TEA), whereby CSS and TEA staff participated in numerous joint training and planning projects; testing centers provided General Educational Development (GED) tests for JOBS clients under new agreements with DHS; and

local adult education cooperatives expanded their classroom hours and locations to serve JOBS clients, including offering some services at DHS offices;

- expansion of “one-stop shopping” sites that brought staff of various state and local agencies together to serve clients in single locations, including three client-access pilot projects started under the new Health and Human Services Commission to look at collaboration among agencies, co-location of agencies and services, and centralized intake of client data;

- increase in “outstationing,” which literally brings the services to the clients by locating CSS staff in health clinics, schools, public housing developments, and other places where many clients can be served;

- adoption of streamlined procedures for delivering federal nutrition programs to school children by working with TEA, as well as creation of the Interagency Council on Nutrition; and

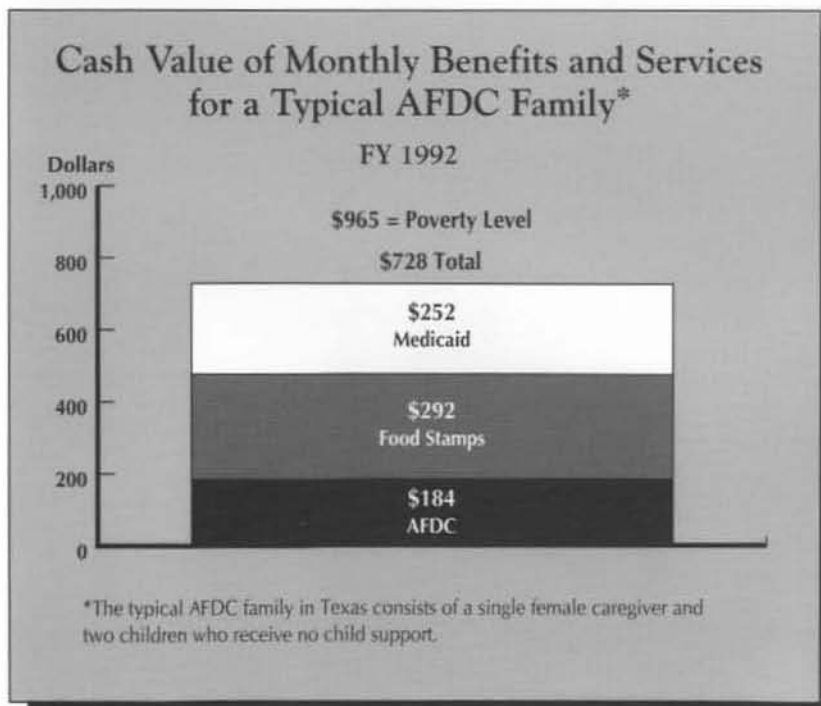
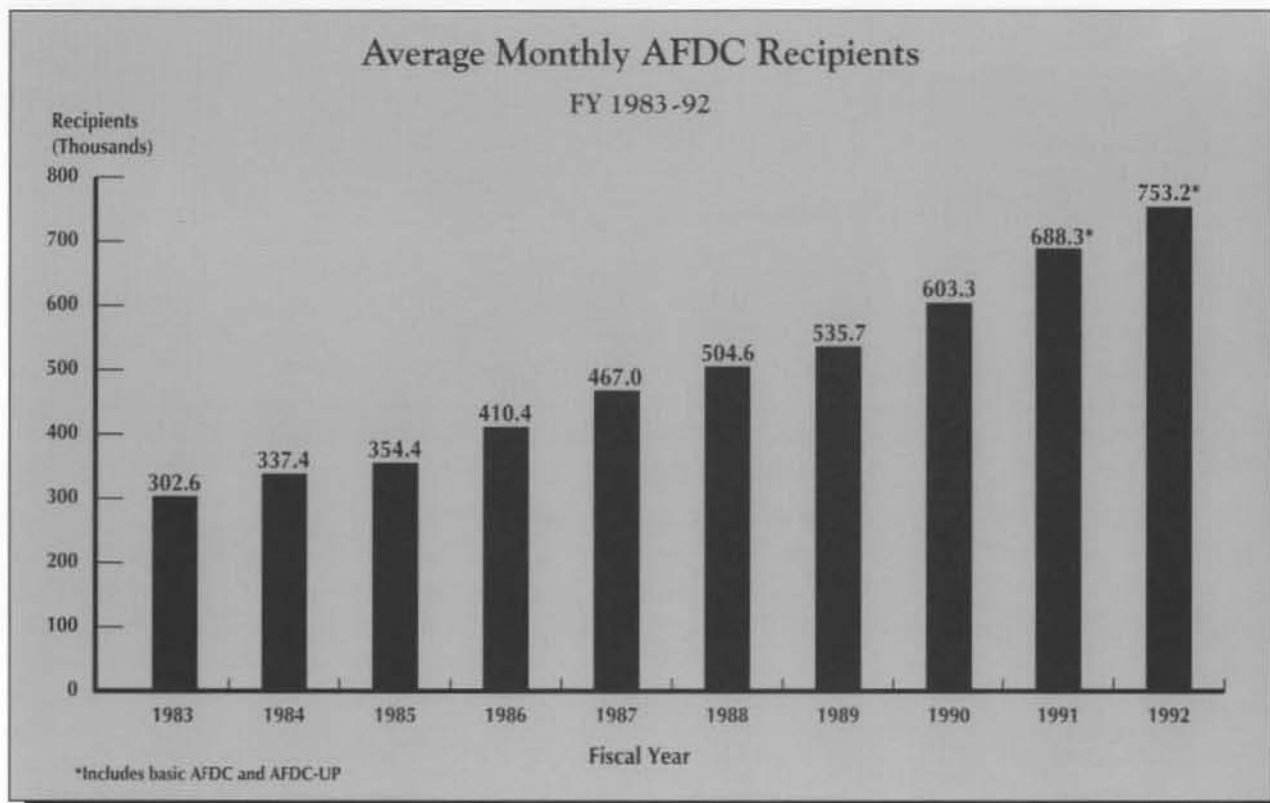
- progress on the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) project, a joint effort of DHS, the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, the State Treasury, and the Department of Information Resources. The EBT project will eventually replace food stamps and benefit checks with plastic debit cards and promises to lessen the stigma associated with public assistance, as well as reduce paper-work processing costs, waste, and fraud.

As in past years, the need for services provided by CSS programs continued to expand, while economic constraints challenged the agency’s ability to meet the demand. A major workload reduction effort and improved automation promise future relief, but the dedication of CSS staff continues to be the most indispensable factor in meeting the challenges ahead. Through their competence, diligence, and commitment to quality service, CSS staff continue to help less fortunate citizens break the cycle of poverty and make it on their own.

## Aid to Families with Dependent Children

**T**he AFDC program provides temporary financial and medical assistance to families with needy children who are deprived of parental support. Low-income children and their parents can receive monthly cash grants and Medicaid benefits under the AFDC program if one or both parents are absent from the home, deceased, or disabled. Two-parent households can receive assistance through the AFDC-Unemployed Parent (AFDC-UP) program while the primary wage-earning parent is temporarily unemployed. AFDC-UP assistance is limited to six cash payments in a 12-month period, although Medicaid benefits can continue throughout the year.

To qualify for AFDC, a family must include needy children and have less than \$1,000 in assets, excluding a home and one car with equity value of less than \$1,500. The typical AFDC family, a mother and two children, can have a net income of no more than \$184 a month after allowable deductions.



AFDC grant amounts have not increased since fiscal year 1986. The average monthly grant amount is \$57.40 per recipient. At the current payment level, with the value of food stamps and Medicaid added, the average AFDC child lives in a home with income of 75 percent of the federal definition for poverty.

During fiscal year 1992, 263,633 families and 753,155 individuals received AFDC and AFDC-UP benefits in an average month, compared with 236,613 families and 688,254 individuals in 1991. Total AFDC payments rose from \$470.4 million in 1991 to \$515.5 million in 1992.

## Medicaid Services for Low-income Families

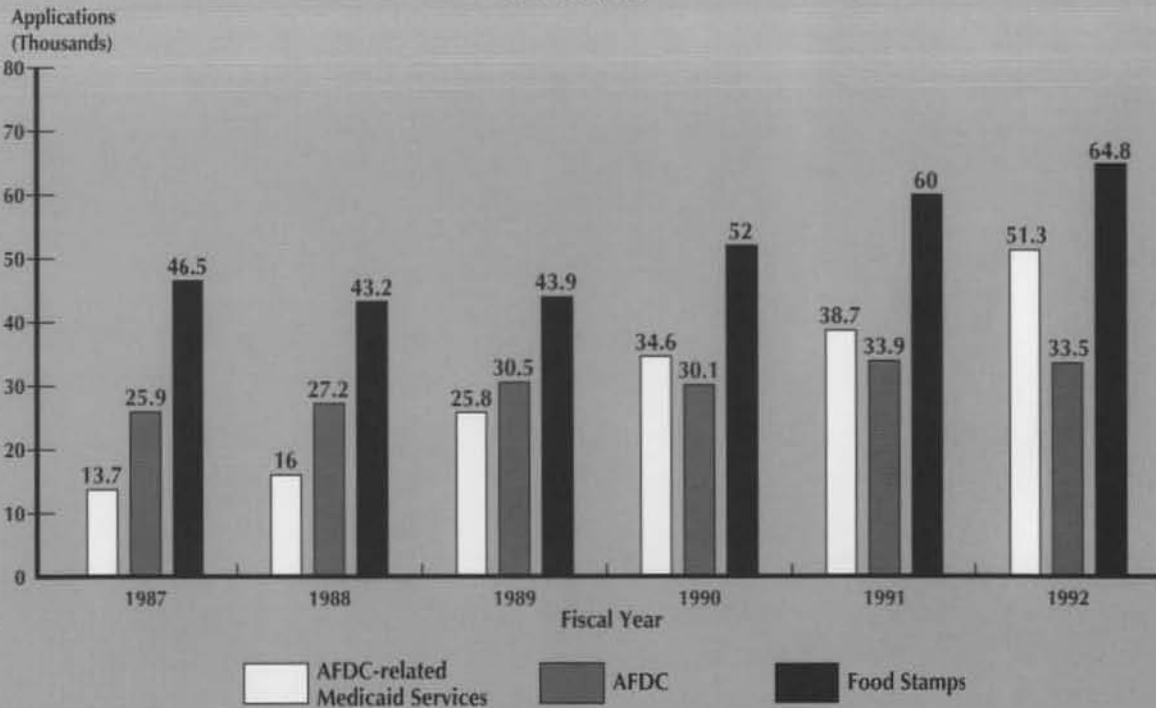
**M**any low-income families who do not qualify for AFDC still need help getting adequate health care. DHS administers Medicaid programs for children and pregnant women who are ineligible for AFDC; caregivers, single parents, and some two-parent families of deprived children; and aliens who meet all requirements except citizenship.

Appropriations from the 72nd Legislature enabled DHS to take advantage of federal options to increase the number of children and pregnant women who qualify for Medicaid. In December 1991, DHS began disregarding assets of pregnant women when determining their eligibility. In March 1992, DHS increased the income limits for determining eligibility of pregnant women and children less than a year old from 133 percent of the federal poverty level to 185 percent. This change was retroactive to December 1991.

In fiscal year 1992, Medicaid programs for low-income families provided coverage to an average of 397,496 recipients per month, compared with 264,832 the previous year. The total cost of Medicaid services for this group increased from \$944.7 million in fiscal year 1991 to \$1.3054 billion in fiscal year 1992.

### Shift in Applications for Benefits Toward Medical Programs

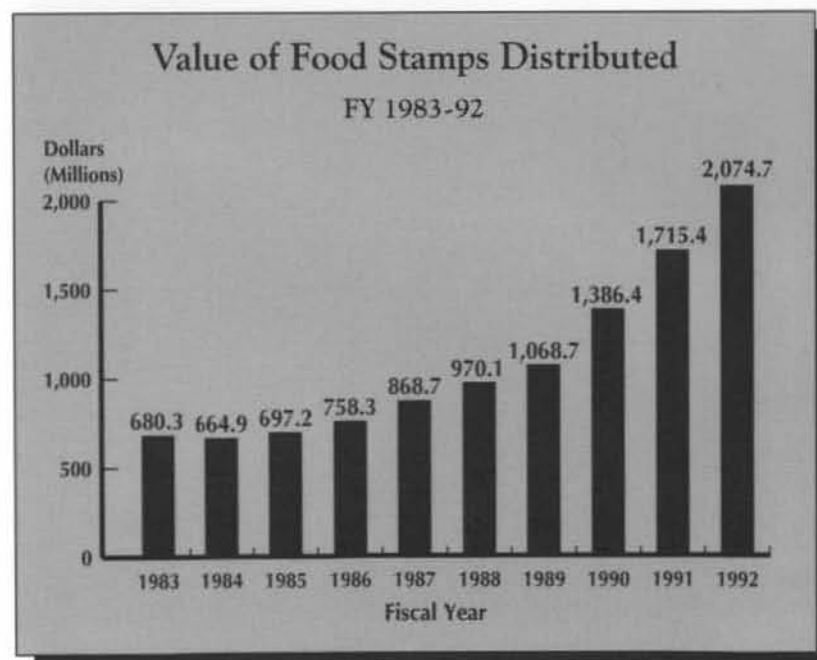
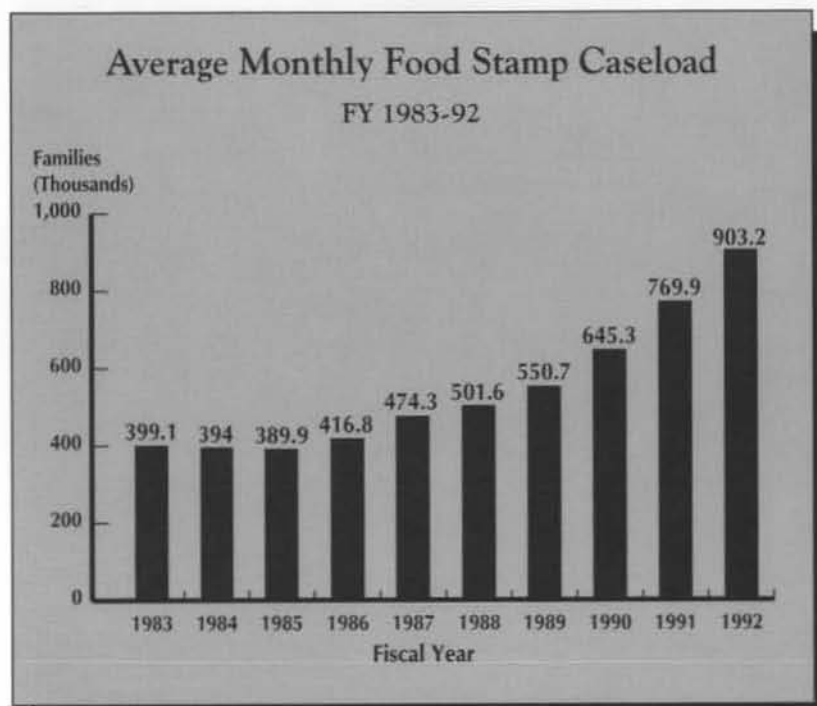
FY 1987-92



Beginning in FY 1990, applications filed in error were excluded from the count of applications received.

## Food Stamps

**T**he federal Food Stamp program supplements the diets of low-income families, elderly people, and single adults. Eligible households receive a monthly allotment of coupons that are used to purchase food at grocery stores and other food retailers.



To be eligible for food stamps, the people living in a household must have combined incomes of less than 130 percent of federally established limits for poverty and countable resources of less than \$2,000. Households with a member age 60 or older can have countable resources of up to \$3,000. The value of a home and its surrounding property and up to \$4,500 of the value of a vehicle are not counted as household resources. Households in which all members receive AFDC or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are eligible regardless of their incomes or resources. Each recipient's food stamp allotment is based on the number of people living in the household and their incomes after allowable deductions.

In fiscal year 1992, an average of 2.48 million people received food stamps each month, compared with 2.16 million a month the previous year. The total value of food stamps issued increased from \$1.7 billion in fiscal year 1991 to \$2.1 billion in fiscal year 1992. The average monthly allotment in fiscal year 1992 was \$69.66 per person, compared with \$61.40 in fiscal year 1991.

An automated program continued to provide benefits for SSI recipients who are elderly or disabled without requiring them to go into a local office to confirm their eligibility. A monthly average of 75,691 clients received their food stamps through this program in fiscal year 1992.

## Employment Services

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*Depending on their educational needs, JOBS participants can receive basic literacy instruction, complete high school, or earn a GED.*

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**D**HS neared completion of the second year of the JOBS program, which offers a range of education, training, and employment services to help AFDC clients prepare for and compete in the labor market and become self-sufficient.

Depending on their educational needs, JOBS participants can receive basic literacy instruction, complete high school, or earn a GED. Clients also can get training in specific job skills, along with help preparing for and finding a job. In fiscal year 1992, the program was available in 82 counties, which contained 89 percent of the adult AFDC population. Beginning in fiscal year 1993, JOBS will include 87 counties, encompassing 90 percent of the adult AFDC population.

To qualify for an enhanced federal matching rate on state funds appropriated for the JOBS program, states must meet an escalating participation rate based on the pool of eligible clients. Texas exceeded the federal participation rates in both fiscal years 1991 and 1992 thanks to staff efforts and increased coordination with the agencies that provide the education and training resources JOBS clients need to become self-sufficient.

Several changes in how JOBS services are delivered were approved this year and will go into effect in fiscal year 1993. While DHS staff will continue to provide case management for JOBS clients, employment preparation and job placement services will be provided through an interagency agreement with TEC. This arrangement will allow DHS to serve JOBS and Food Stamp E&T clients through a single service-delivery system.

Under the new service-delivery system, DHS case managers will continue to help JOBS clients develop service plans for achieving self-sufficiency. For education or training, clients will be referred to public schools, adult education cooperatives, community colleges, or providers funded by JTPA. JTPA is administered at the state level by TDOC and locally by Private Industry Councils made up of community representatives.

When JOBS clients are ready for employment services, they will be referred to TEC for job readiness activities, such as life skills training, job preparation classes, job search skills training, volunteer work experience, or on-the-job training. TEC also will help clients find employment through individual and group efforts.

During fiscal year 1992, DHS contracted with TEC to serve Food Stamp E&T clients in 53 counties. In six counties, the Texas Association of Private Industry Councils served Food Stamp E&T clients through subcontracts with JTPA providers.

Depending on their needs, Food Stamp E&T clients receive directed job search, job search training, vocational training, and volunteer work experience. During the past year, DHS expanded services for Food Stamp E&T clients by increasing the number of job search seminar sites.

In fiscal year 1992, 79,478 AFDC clients participated in JOBS, compared with 47,252 in fiscal year 1991. Of those, 16,405 obtained employment, compared with 7,586 the previous year. In Food Stamp E&T, 166,025 clients participated this past year, compared with 186,034 in fiscal year 1991; 31,192 obtained employment, compared with 37,605 the previous year. Expenditures for JOBS totaled \$17.2 million, compared with the previous year's \$8.3 million. Expenditures for Food Stamp E&T totaled \$14.4 million, compared with \$12.0 million for fiscal year 1991.

## Child Care

**C**hild-care services are available through DHS to children in danger of abuse or neglect and children of low-income parents who need child care while their parents work, seek work, or receive education or training leading to employment. Child care is provided from birth through age 12, and care may be extended to age 19 for children with disabilities.

Since March 1991, child care has been provided through the Child Care Management Services (CCMS) system. All DHS-administered child-care funds flow through 25 CCMS contractors, who manage child-care services in 27 service-delivery areas statewide. These contractors enter into vendor agreements with licensed or registered child-care providers and refer eligible children for care. They manage child-care funding from several DHS funding sources, recruit caregivers, manage waiting lists, and offer training to providers.

In response to requests for technical assistance from other states, DHS sponsored a conference on the CCMS system in January 1992. More than 150 participants from 13 states attended the conference. Presentations covered CCMS concept design, automation, and funds management.

Child-care funding increased significantly in fiscal year 1992 with the implementation of the Child Care and Development Block Grant. In addition to increasing services, DHS funded special projects designed to improve the quality and availability of child care in Texas. Some of these projects focused on comprehensive early childhood development, collaborative early childhood care and education planning, school-age programs, and caregiver training.

DHS continued to work with other state agencies to coordinate services for children. The newly authorized State Advisory Committee on Child Care Programs, which includes child-care advocates, providers, educators, parents, and others interested in children's services, helped DHS plan child-care services. DHS was also advised by the Texas Child Care Planning Council, a group of child-care advocates and professionals representing public and private agencies. The council made recommendations concerning use of the



Child Care and Development Block Grant and helped increase interagency collaboration.

In fiscal year 1992, funding for all child-care services came to \$174.5 million, compared with \$78.6 million in fiscal year 1991. A daily average of 49,714 children received services, compared with 27,165 children in fiscal year 1991. Even with these increases in expenditures, the agency was only able to serve about 4 percent of all the children potentially eligible for state-funded child care during 1992.

## Refugee Assistance

**R**efugee assistance helps refugees become self-sufficient as quickly as possible after arrival in the United States. The program is authorized and funded by the federal Refugee Act of 1980, which was amended by the Refugee Assistance Extension Act of 1986.

On Sept. 1, 1991, responsibility for the Refugee Resettlement program was transferred from DHS to the Office of the Governor. Under a cooperative agreement, DHS continued to administer the Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance and the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor programs.

Cash and medical assistance for refugees is limited to their first eight months of residence in the United States. A monthly average of 1,723 refugee clients received financial and medical services at an estimated cost of \$5.1 million in fiscal year 1992.

The Unaccompanied Refugee Minor program operates through a contract with Catholic Counseling Services of Dallas. The contract provides foster care and other child welfare services to children deemed eligible through the national program.

The Office of the Governor assumed administration of the Refugee Social Services program, the Targeted Assistance program, and Refugee Special Projects. The Job Links program, which provides employment services for refugee clients in Dallas and Beaumont, was administered by DHS through March 31, 1992.

## Family Health Services

**R**egistered nurses in Family Health Services (FHS) teach Medicaid clients, primarily those receiving AFDC, how to use Medicaid and other health resources properly so they can eventually manage their own and their families' health care independently. FHS nurses teach and counsel clients on how to stay healthy, prevent diseases and illnesses, use health resources and the health-care system correctly, and benefit from various services available from DHS and other sources.

When appropriate, FHS nurses refer clients to other programs within DHS for help getting food stamps, employment services, and child protective ser-

vices, and also for help handling problems with eligibility or replacement of Medical Care Identification Cards. Referrals are also made to other agencies and services, such as TDH, family planning agencies, the March of Dimes, the American Red Cross, community health programs, battered women's shelters, public housing programs, and other organizations and resources that provide services not covered under Medicaid.

Clients are referred to FHS nurses by staff in CSS direct-delivery programs, Purchased Health Services, Recipient Utilization Control, and other DHS programs, as well as by community agencies. Clients also may request FHS services themselves.

Besides individual and family counseling, FHS nurses make group presentations on health care and FHS services to Medicaid clients, DHS staff, staff from other agencies, and members of community organizations. The nurses also participate in health fairs, community activities, and collaborative efforts with other health-care professionals to promote and improve health services for DHS clients.

During fiscal year 1992, FHS nurses provided a total of 39,406 health-care educational services to Medicaid clients, providers, and staff from DHS and other agencies. Of these, 5,280 were individual sessions with 4,022 Medicaid families. Expenditures were \$747,314 in fiscal year 1992.

## Teen Parent Initiative

**S**ince 1986, the Teen Parent Initiative has provided services focused on teen pregnancy and parenting. DHS has operated two major demonstrations, a number of smaller projects across the state, and legislatively mandated support services.

Project Redirection provides comprehensive services to pregnant and parenting teens throughout El Paso County. Case managers help participants use existing educational, health, and employment services. Project staff also work with schools and teen fathers, and promote activities designed to prevent initial unwanted pregnancies.

In Houston, comprehensive services are provided at two alternative school sites and a community-based multi-service center. Services include case management, prenatal care, child health, and parenting education. In other parts of the state, DHS supports a variety of smaller community projects aimed at preventing or responding to teen pregnancy.

DHS provides staff support to the Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenthood Advisory Council (APPAC), which coordinates the teen pregnancy policies and programs of state and local agencies and advises the boards of DHS, TDH, and TEA on teen pregnancy issues. APPAC membership includes representatives of 10 state agencies and several non-governmental groups.

During fiscal year 1992, APPAC conducted a planning process that will lead to a Texas Summit on Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention in October 1992.

The School-age Pregnancy and Prevention Clearinghouse is a focal point for information about services related to teen pregnancy. Documents produced by DHS are sent out on request, and a variety of regular and special reports are available, including a teen pregnancy directory of services and a compilation of statewide teen birth statistics.

## Emergency Assistance

**T**he Emergency Nutrition and Temporary Emergency Relief Program (ENTERP) offers short-term help for people who are homeless or who find themselves suddenly unemployed or in crisis situations. A cooperative effort by state and local governments, the program provides food, clothing, shelter, utilities, and other basic necessities. County offices and non-profit agencies contract with DHS to deliver services.

ENTERP funds are allocated for each of Texas' 254 counties on the basis of county poverty and unemployment rates. No county is allocated less than \$1,000. The funds are offered first to the county government, which can operate the program directly or name another agency to provide services to county residents. To qualify for ENTERP state funds, the contractor who provides services to county residents also must contribute equal matching dollars from local, federal, or private sources.

Local contractors determine the types and frequency of ENTERP services, as well as client eligibility criteria, to ensure that the program meets local needs. However, services cannot be denied to anyone whose family income is at or below 75 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

During fiscal year 1992, local contractors in 243 counties provided ENTERP services to more than 414,703 people at a cost of \$4.78 million. As part of the realignment of health and human services mandated by the 72nd Legislature, ENTERP will be transferred to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) on Sept. 1, 1992.

## Assistance to Legalized Aliens

**T**he federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 established the State Legalization Impact Assistance Grant (SLIAG) program to help defray state and local government costs for providing health care, public assistance, and educational services to eligible legalized aliens (ELAs). DHS is reimbursed 100 percent for state and local funds spent serving ELAs through Medicaid health-care and family planning services, Social Service Block Grant family planning services, vendor drug services, and disaster relief services. DHS funnels the local SLIAG reim-

bursments to counties for county indigent health-care services, ENTERP services, and city or county public assistance programs.

During fiscal year 1992, DHS identified six more SLIAG-reimbursable services: long-term health care, foster care, integrated eligibility, medical transportation, food stamp administration, and Lower Rio Grande Valley cancer transportation. DHS continued efforts to identify and claim all SLIAG-reimbursable funds and encouraged more city and county participation. State SLIAG reimbursements increased from \$1.9 million in fiscal year 1990 and \$6.8 million in 1991 to \$17.9 million in fiscal year 1992. Through extensive outreach efforts, local government participation increased by 50 percent. More than \$5.5 million was reimbursed to Texas cities and counties in fiscal year 1992, compared with \$2.3 million and \$640,000 in fiscal years 1991 and 1990, respectively.

## Energy Assistance

**T**he Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps eligible households pay for home energy costs. State warrants mailed to participants are payable to gas or electric suppliers, local housing authorities, or in some cases, the heads of the households. Benefits are issued once in the winter and once in the summer. About 524,955 households received benefits in winter 1992, compared with 449,857 the previous winter. About 266,914 households were served in summer 1992, compared with about 261,450 the previous summer. Funding this fiscal year totaled \$28.4 million. Like ENTERP, LIHEAP will be transferred to TDHCA on Sept. 1, 1992.

## Native American Restitutionary Program

**T**he Native American Restitutionary program provides energy-related assistance to the three Texas Indian tribes: the Alabama-Coushatta Indian Tribe in Livingston; the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas in Eagle Pass; and the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo (Tigua Indians) in El Paso. Created by the 70th Texas Legislature, it is financed through the Governor's Energy Office with oil overcharge funds.

Since 1988, \$609,000 in oil overcharge funds have been appropriated for tribal energy projects. The tribes agreed to divide the funds equally, regardless of tribal enrollment or reservation size.

The tribal governments use grant funds for energy-related projects, including emergency relief and energy crisis intervention; low-income home energy assistance; weatherization and rehabilitation of community facilities; tribal government and community energy and fuel consumption; and other approved energy conservation programs.

## Special Nutrition Programs

### Child and Adult Nutrition

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*The federal Summer Food Service program bridges the nutritional gap during holidays and the summer for children through age 18.*

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**D**uring fiscal year 1992, Special Nutrition Programs (SNP), formerly Nutrition and Emergency Services, was established as a department within CSS. SNP staff administer eight U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs, including six child and adult nutrition programs and two food distribution programs.

The absence of the National School Lunch program during the summer months places many low-income families who depend on school meals in nutritional jeopardy. The federal Summer Food Service program bridges the nutritional gap during holidays and the summer for children through age 18.

In fiscal year 1989, SNP and the Texas Association of Community Action Agencies undertook a campaign to increase program sites and participation by low-income children. Beginning in fiscal year 1990, information about the program has accompanied June warrants for food stamps and AFDC, including a hotline number so clients can locate the sites nearest their homes. About 8,500 hotline calls were received in June 1992. Regional staff continued to promote the program, which received positive media coverage throughout the state. In fiscal year 1992, staff increased the number of sponsored sites so that more children could be served.

For fiscal year 1992, contractors will be reimbursed \$11.1 million for feeding about 110,484 children, compared with \$9.1 million for feeding about 97,568 children in 1991.

The federal Child and Adult Care Food program helps non-residential child and adult day-care centers provide nutritious meals to their participants. The program grew significantly during fiscal year 1992, when 98 contractors sponsored the participation of 10,664 child day-care homes for an increase of 649 homes over the previous year, and 419 contractors sponsored 1,148 child-care centers, an increase of 213 centers over the previous year. The number of participating adult day-care centers increased from 66 in fiscal year 1991 to 84 in fiscal year 1992. Contractors were reimbursed \$85.3 million this year for feeding about 87,940,964 meals to children and adults.

Schools and summer camps participating in the federal Special Milk program gave eligible children about 946,513 pints of milk this fiscal year. More than 155,271 children in private schools and residential child-care institutions received free or reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs in fiscal year 1992. (Children in public schools are served through TEA.) These programs subsidize breakfasts and lunches for all children enrolled in participating facilities, regardless of family income. Contractors were reimbursed about \$8 million for serving approximately 5 million meals to 155,271 children during fiscal year 1992.

DHS implemented a project this past year to allow children whose families receive food stamps to be directly certified for free meals in the National

School Lunch and School Breakfast programs. Working in partnership with TEA, DHS staff performed a computer match and informed school personnel which children were automatically entitled to receive free meals. Direct certification meant families didn't need to complete lengthy application forms to receive free meals, reduced staff time for processing applications, and, most importantly, allowed more eligible children to get free meals. This effort also brought more federal funding to Texas. To further boost participation in the lunch and breakfast programs, SNP staff mailed information about the programs with clients' August AFDC and food stamp benefits.

### **Nutrition Education and Training**

Nutrition Education and Training (NET) provides training in nutrition and food service management, as well as educational activities about nutrition for schools and child-care centers. NET seeks to improve children's nutrition through workshops, a lending library, and instructional materials. These services are provided for food service personnel, educators, parents, and children. The NET library collection also serves as the main clearinghouse for Texas School Food Service Association certification curriculum materials.

This fiscal year, 4,652 participants representing 878,087 children attended 225 workshops conducted by NET staff. NET's lending library circulated about 3,665 materials and served 351 patrons, who reached more than 18,255 children and educators.

### **Food Distribution and Processing**

This past year, SNP staff successfully piloted a system to distribute USDA-donated commodities through existing commercial channels. The system is scheduled for statewide implementation in fiscal year 1993. The commercial delivery system will allow schools and other agencies to have food delivered as often as weekly, compared with the current practice of picking it up monthly from warehouses. Perishable foods will be delivered in refrigerated trucks, which many schools and agencies do not have.

The new system will not only be more convenient for agencies, but will cut costs, too. All commodities will be delivered on a cost-per-case basis regardless of destination, which will equalize costs for participating agencies in a given area. Agencies can still choose to pick up their commodities for a fee that is slightly lower than the statewide charge for delivered goods.

SNP continued to receive authorization to transfer TEA's unused federal funds to DHS to pay for distribution to schools. As a result, schools were not assessed user fees, and available administrative funds covered the cost of distribution to charitable agencies.

Through the Food Distribution program, 2,097 agencies received 127.3 million pounds of USDA-donated commodities valued at \$70.1 million in fiscal year 1992. Schools participating in the National School Lunch program also benefit from the Food Distribution program. In fiscal year 1992, 12 proces-

sors used more than 1.31 million pounds of 9 different commodities to produce foods for school breakfasts and lunches.

Through the Emergency Food Assistance program, about 2,891,266 Texas households received 29.2 million pounds of donated foods valued at \$15.3 million this fiscal year. Donated foods included butter, flour, cornmeal, cheese, peanut butter, canned meats, canned fruits and vegetables, and raisins. However, not all items were available all the time, and some popular items, such as cheese, were no longer available.

In cooperation with the Texas Department on Aging, SNP participated in a USDA commodity demonstration project, which provided USDA-donated food to group sites serving meals to elderly people. In fiscal year 1992, SNP contributed 700,000 pounds of food valued at \$419,238, enabling 16 area agencies to serve more than 12.6 million meals to elderly Texans.

## Disaster Assistance

**S**ince 1974, the federal Individual and Family Grant program has provided more than \$99 million to more than 52,000 victims of floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, and other disasters when insurance and other avenues of recovery were exhausted. The maximum amount of assistance available to individuals or families increased this year from \$11,000 to \$11,500. Twenty-five percent of the grant amounts are drawn from the Governor's Emergency Contingency Fund and 75 percent from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Centralized program operations in Austin improve customer service and reduce administrative costs by providing ready access to automation, personnel, fiscal, and business management services. Computerized data on disaster victim cases is sent electronically from the FEMA regional office in Denton.

During fiscal year 1991, flooding in Cameron and four surrounding counties resulted in the second largest disaster in the history of the program in Texas. Processing of that disaster continued into fiscal year 1992. And the worst flooding in the history of Lake Travis occurred in December 1991. Victims of that disaster in 63 counties received 1,741 grants totaling \$5.9 million.

Harris, Liberty, and Tyler counties were declared a disaster area in March 1992 because of severe flooding. More than \$2.6 million in more than 935 grants was awarded to victims of those floods.

On June 27, 1992, the community of Fritch and nearby parts of Hutchinson and Carson counties were struck by a tornado and later officially declared a disaster area. One hundred sixty-five families received a total of more than \$580,000 in grants.

## Repatriation Program

**T**he U.S. Repatriation program provides ongoing and emergency services for U.S. citizens returning to Texas from a foreign country.

Ongoing services provide medical care, lodging, meals, transportation, and resettlement assistance. During fiscal year 1992, 55 individuals and families received these services. Participation was lower than in fiscal year 1991, when the Persian Gulf War brought an unusually large number of U.S. citizens and their dependents back to Texas.

Emergency repatriation services were not needed during fiscal year 1992 because there were no mass evacuations of U.S. citizens from foreign countries.