

Frequently Asked Questions about APS Transition

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Thanks to everyone who sent questions to the Adult Protective Services Transition E-Mail at apstransition@dhr.ga.gov

Below are some questions and answers on the communications we have received so far. The questions are listed first, in quotes, with answers following in ***bold italics***.

Questions:

1. "How will APS coverage be handled in smaller counties that do not have a full-time APS worker? We have a very small APS caseload and all the workers rotate taking APS cases."
2. "Has any thought been given as to how this transition will work for smaller counties with multi- program services workers which includes some workers who may be carrying APS/ CPS caseloads? Will the Office of Aging have multi- county workers to work these APS cases in the smaller counties that do not have case loads large enough to have a full time worker to give to the Office of Aging but do have a small APS case load? Thanks"
3. "I'm sure there are more questions than answers right now but wanted to share from a small county perspective the impact of the APS separation. Small counties (at least the two I am responsible for) do not have the luxury of specializing workers for one program. The worker who covers APS also has other responsibilities. They rotate intake coverage and are on-call for after hours coverage for CPS. They are trained in CPS. In xxxxx County's case - there is no APS worker to offer up. Will APS be covered by existing APS workers assigned to Office of Aging? In xxxxx County's case, the APS worker does primarily carry an APS caseload but is in rotation for intake and after hours on call. Transitioning this worker to OOA will impact the CPS coverage/assistance for the office."
4. "Our county is allocated 1.25 positions for APS. However, due to the activity and volume of our APS cases, we have to use a CPS position to assist in APS. This needs to be considered when looking at staffing for APS for the transition. Our APS cases cannot be handled by only 1.25 positions. Please let me know if you need any further explanation."

5. "I am concerned about the APS positions over and above the 168 line staff now working in the different counties. What will become of them?"

6. "Will my position transfer to DAS?"

Answers to questions 1-6: *The new APS structure under the Division of Aging Services (DAS) will consist of geographic regions corresponding to the planning and service areas covered by the 12 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). With this regional approach, an individual worker may investigate and/or case manage APS clients from more than one county (typically adjoining counties). Some county DFCS offices with small APS caseloads currently have no fulltime APS worker to transfer to DAS. For these counties, fulltime APS workers will be assigned to cover all the APS cases in the region, as described above. While a regional approach is a new concept for APS, it has proven successful in service delivery with many programs in Georgia and other states. We have not completely finalized the APS structure, but hope to have this in place by mid-May. We are working to assure that all APS cases are covered, even in counties that currently have to call on CPS staff to fill in. Once the transition has occurred, all APS staff members will be dedicated to APS cases only (100% APS). All non-APS related duties would need to be redirected to other DFCS staff. We anticipate that one of more of these regions will be clustered together under a managing supervisor. We expect to transfer well over 250 full-time-equivalent positions.*

Questions:

7. "As an APS case manager, I was wondering if there will be additional job openings/opportunities for APS supervisors since many of our present supervisors are shared with either the CPS units or Placement units."

". . . are there going to be other supervisory positions either locally or regionally?"

Answers to questions 7-8: *We are in the process of identifying existing APS employees. Once we complete this step, the individuals identified will have the opportunity to make a lateral transfer from DFCS to the Division of Aging Services. Workers making this lateral transfer will not be required to 'reapply for their jobs', although they will need to update their personnel files for payroll purposes by*

submitting a completed application form. As we confirm the names of the APS employees who are transferring to DAS, we may have some unfilled positions for case managers, supervisors, and state office staff members. We will fill these vacancies using a competitive process and hope to make job announcements in the coming weeks. At this time DAS plans to post APS job vacancies at www.dhrjobs.com. Once the Transfer of APS is made to DAS all APS Supervisors will supervise APS staff exclusively.

Question:

9. "I have a couple of questions. How & when will the Program Administrator be selected? Where will they be housed? How will supervisory positions or other administrative positions be posted, or will they?"

Answer: *As indicated in Acting Commissioner Greene's April 7 memorandum (sent to DFCS, the Division of Aging Services (DAS) and the Area Agencies on Aging) the Division of Aging Services plans to establish an APS Section with a Program Administrator as Section Manager who will report directly to the Division Director. The Division of Aging Services will fill this vacancy using a competitive process and hopes to make this job announcement in the coming weeks. At this time the DAS plans to post all APS job vacancies at www.dhrjobs.com. The APS Section and its Program Administrator will be housed at the Division of Aging Services at Two Peachtree Street.*

Question:

10. "Will there be an APS supervisor in each county? Or will there be APS regional supervisors? If yes to any of the questions above, when will those positions be advertised?"

Answer: *No, there will not be an APS supervisor located in every single county. APS supervisors will supervise a team of APS staff exclusively. We are in the process of identifying existing APS case managers and supervisors. Once we complete this step, the individuals identified will have the opportunity to make a lateral transfer from DFCS to DAS. Workers making this lateral transfer will not be required to 'reapply for their jobs', although they will need to update their personnel files for payroll purposes by submitting a completed application*

form. As we confirm the names of the APS employees who are transferring to DAS, we may have some vacant positions. We will fill these vacancies using a competitive process and hope to make job announcements in the coming weeks. At this time DAS plans to post APS job vacancies at www.dhrjobs.com.

Question:

11. "I think that it is very important that decisions be finalized as soon as possible and shared with current APS staff. There are many unanswered questions which does indeed lead to much anxiety. How many case managers and APS supervisors will be transferred to DAS?"

Answer: *We could not agree more - decisions need to be shared as soon as they are known. As you can imagine, though, transferring the APS program from DFCS to DAS is a complicated process that has to consider and resolve many issues: service delivery model, administrative support, financial resources, human resources, legal, information management, training and community education, among others. We are committed to sharing information as soon as it is fact and are trying to avoid sharing details that may later have to be rescinded or changed. Your questions and suggestions help assure that every issue is identified and considered. Your ongoing involvement will help assure the success of the transition. We also appreciate your patience as we work through all the issues to develop answers to your questions. The exact number of case managers and APS supervisors is not yet known.*

Question:

12. "How will you choose which APS staff will transition and which will not?"

Answer: *DFCS staff experienced in APS are being identified and will be offered the opportunity to transfer to Division of Aging Services. Once we complete this step, the individuals identified will have the opportunity to make a lateral transfer from DFCS to DAS. Workers making this lateral transfer will not be required to 'reapply for their jobs', although they will need to update their personnel files for payroll purposes by submitting a completed application form. As we confirm the names of the APS employees who are transferring to the Division of Aging Services, we may have some vacant positions which will be filled using a*

competitive process. We hope to make job announcements in coming weeks.

Questions:

13. "I have been keeping up with the information about all of the changes to come and have a few personal concerns. Do you have any idea at this time about how this change will effect Family Service Workers? I currently service all of our APS cases, and truly enjoy working with elderly people. But since I am not a casemanager, I did not know where I would fit in, in the changes to come. Or if there was some way I could apply to continue working with APS services possibly with DAS. Thank you for your time in reading my concerns and I hope to hear from someone soon."

14. "I READ ALL THE INFORMATION YOU SENT ABOUT APS WORKERS. I DON'T SEE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT FAMILY SERVICE WORKERS. WHAT IS OUR STATUS IN THIS TRANSITION?"

15. "Will there be transitioning of any of the FSWs to DAS? So far i am hearing "no"; that they will remain with OCP. They also provide a vital service to our elderly and/or disabled clients."

Answers to questions 13-15: *We are identifying all APS employees that will be required to provide Adult Protective Services to DHR clients. At this time we expect that all types of positions, including FSWs, will be transferred, though the exact number of each is not yet decided.*

Question:

16. "Is there another entity looking at the "disabled" client's needs as related to this transfer. They typically have less available for them than the 'elderly'."

Answer: *The Division of Aging Services appreciates the good questions about working with APS clients with disabilities. There are efforts underway in DHR to increase inter-divisional collaboration with the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Addictive Diseases. When APS is transferred to the Division of Aging Services, the division hopes to build on these efforts, continue them and hopefully enhance them. After the transition occurs, the Division of Aging*

Services plans to work more closely with APS staff on these issues.

Question:

17. "My position is funded with grant-in-aid money. How will this be effected when DAS takes over in July?"

Answer: *Funds already allocated in the DFCS budget for APS (grant-in-aid and other fund sources) will be transferred into the DAS budget and distributed among the object classes (Personal Services, Travel, etc.) in the DAS budget.*

Question:

18. "I have one question. How are the APS Case Manager Associates certified? The Child Protection Certification Program is in tact and underway for CPS workers. But, it is CPS specific. What about APS CMA's?"

19. "I have a question about certification. I am knowledgeable in several fields (investigations, FC, ongoing, adoptions and APS). The new certification form does not include APS case managers. Does this mean that once everyone is certified that we will be left out in the cold. Are we less important? What if I decide that I wish to seek employment again in Child Protective Services. I also hear that there will be step raises based on how well you perform on the test. What does that mean to APS who seem to be excluded?"

Answers to questions 18-19: *State level DFCS Adult Protective Services staff, and the APS Transition Team, recognize the benefits of Certification for staff. APS staff were involved in DFCS Social Services Certification back in the late 1980s. At this time, movement toward Certification of APS staff is not a part of the DFCS Office of Child Protection Certification process. The DFCS Restructuring transfers the APS program and staff to DAS at the same time it establishes the Office of Child Protection within DFCS. There is movement on the national level for APS Certification and it is our hope that once the APS Program transfers from DFCS to DAS that we will be able to pursue this very important initiative. The APS Transition Team*

has a Training sub-group to begin addressing this issue in the coming months.