Georgia Department of Human Services
Fiscal Year 2017 Fact Book
In 2017, the Georgia Department of Human Services continued its work to protect and enhance the well-being of more than 2 million people across the state. Thanks largely to our dedicated staff and the continued support of elected officials, these efforts will continue this year.

Under Gov. Nathan Deal’s leadership, the state remains steadfast in addressing the current needs of Georgia’s most vulnerable residents and preparing for challenges that lie ahead. Georgia’s population is growing larger and older. It is our responsibility to anticipate and meet the needs of the people we serve: children, families, seniors, adults with disabilities and their caregivers.

Only through efficient and effective delivery of services can the Department continue to promote safety and self-sufficiency and to empower individuals and families to live their best lives.

By embracing innovative technologies, the Department has streamlined interactions with our customers to reduce wait times and increase efficiency and accountability. Georgia Gateway, our new integrated eligibility system, provides customers with a single point of entry to apply for benefits across multiple state agencies. Our child support mobile phone app allows parents to manage their child support accounts with ease.

By focusing on training and retention of qualified staff, we have improved our service to customers.

We have become more responsive to reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation through increased staffing and training in Adult Protective Services. Efforts to arrest case manager turnover in child welfare are resulting in the development of a more experienced child welfare workforce and promise to bring more consistency to casework, allowing staff to build trust and partner with families in ways that make children safer and families stronger.

By expanding partnerships with community partners, higher education, health care providers and other nonprofit and corporate entities, we are laying the groundwork to ensure that our most vulnerable residents’ lives are safer, more independent and more fulfilling.

Looking ahead to the new year, the Department will continue to be proactive in helping Georgians reach their full potential. With the continued support of Gov. Deal, members of the General Assembly, community partners and our staff, we are building stronger families for a stronger Georgia.

Sincerely,

Robyn A. Crittenden
Commissioner, Georgia Department of Human Services

Virginia Pryor
Interim Director, Division of Family & Children Services
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

DHS Contacts: Quick Reference

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

GENERAL INFORMATION 1-844-694-2347 (1-844-MYGADHS)
Statewide toll-free number for customers who need assistance from the Division of Child Support Services, Division of Aging Services or the Office of Inspector General

AGING SERVICES 1-866-552-4464
Statewide toll-free number serving older adults and individuals of all ages with disabilities for information and to make reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation of adults. Callers may leave messages 24 hours per day.

DHS CONSTITUENT SERVICES 404-651-6316
For information, questions and complaints regarding Aging Services, Child Support Services and DHS enterprise functions
Email: CustomerServiceDHS@dhs.ga.gov

DIVISION OF FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES

OFFICE OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE (OFI) 1-877-423-4746
Statewide toll-free number for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/food stamps), Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and general inquiries.
OFI only: Self service available 24 hours per day.
Agents are available 7:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

CHILD WELFARE
Child Protective Services (CPS) 1-855-422-4453
Statewide toll-free number for all reports of child abuse and neglect, 24 hours per day, 7 days a week
Email: CPSIntake@dhs.ga.gov
Adoptions & Foster Care 1-877-210-KIDS (5437)
For information, call or visit fostergeorgia.com or http://itsmyturnnow.dhs.ga.gov.
Call center hours are Monday - Thursday: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday: closed

DFCS CONSTITUENT SERVICES 404-657-3433
For information, questions and complaints regarding OFI Programs & Child Welfare.
Email: Customer_services_dfcs@dhs.ga.gov

All hours of operation are Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., unless otherwise noted.
About the Division of Aging Services

The Division of Aging Services (DAS) supports older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers through a variety of services such as home-delivered meals, legal assistance and Medicare counseling. The Division also investigates cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation of elder persons and adults with disabilities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In State Fiscal Year 2017 (SFY17):

- Awarded AARP Bank Safe grant to fight financial exploitation of vulnerable adults
- Investigated 19,306 new Adult Protective Services reports
- Held the second annual Senior Hunger Summit
- Served 15,026 more meals than in SFY 2016 through congregate and home-delivered meals
- Money Follows the Person (MFP) transitioned 218 individuals from nursing homes into community settings, saving the state approximately $7 million by avoiding more costly facility care
- GeorgiaCares volunteers saved Medicare consumers more than $32 million in out-of-pocket expenses
- Added two new assistive technology labs in the Southwest Georgia (SOWEGA) and River Valley Area Agency on Aging (AAA) regions and funded expansion projects to increase geographical coverage of assistive technology in the Three Rivers and Southern AAA regions
- Through the Aging & Disability Resource Connection (ADRC), 72,617 older individuals were counseled on home and community based services (HCBS) options
- HCBS served 30,832 clients, 16,559 of which received more than one service, allowing them to remain in the setting of their choice

GOALS FOR SFY18

- Convene stakeholders in policy, health care, government and nonprofit sectors for the first ever Georgia Dementia Summit on Nov. 28, 2017, in Macon
- Develop and implement the purchase and use of assistive technology as a service delivery option to increase independence among consumers and their care partners
- Award up to 50 grants for statewide senior center innovations. These grants are awarded to every Area Agency on Aging and include ideas like: classes, outdoor dining, assistive technology and website creation
- Increase the number of Adult Protective Services clients who are referred to community based services
- Implement the State Plan to address senior hunger
- Implement training for using standard medical expense deduction on senior SNAP applications
- Implement person-centered focus training across all DAS sections
- Develop Decision Tree Tool for assistive technology in partnership with Georgia Institute of Technology’s Tools For Life program to assess the effectiveness of reducing care needs for consumers and their care partners
- Partner with Georgia Veterans Affairs Medical Centers to improve outreach to veterans
- Expand employee training to include National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) certification for all Adult Protective Services case managers and National Guardianship Association certification for all Public Guardianship Office case managers within two years
The Aging Network

Georgia’s Aging Network provides an array of services to help older adults maintain independence and remain safely in their homes and communities. Through the 12 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), as shown in the map below, the Division provides the following services:

**AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CONNECTION**

The Aging and Disability Resource Connection serves as the main referral source to all services provided through the AAAs. The ADRC database houses more than 26,000 resources that help individuals maintain independence and stay in their homes and communities for as long as possible. Trained counselors provided information, referrals and assessments to 95,610 Georgians in SFY17. Those services include:

- **GeorgiaCares** is a federally funded program providing personalized counseling, education and outreach to assist Medicare beneficiaries with health care questions. GeorgiaCares empowers seniors to prevent health care fraud and teaches Medicare beneficiaries how to protect their personal identity and guard against fraud and abuse.
  
  To learn more, visit [www.mygeorgiacares.org](http://www.mygeorgiacares.org).

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- **Home and Community-Based Services** allow Georgians aged 60 or older to receive services while living in the setting of their choosing. These services include nutrition assistance, help with routine household tasks, home modification and installation of emergency response systems. The program also supports caregivers and provides wellness programs that increase the ability of older adults to perform everyday activities and remain in their homes.

  - Nutrition Assistance: 2,434,726 meals were served to Georgians through the Division’s home-delivered meal program in SFY17.
  - An additional 1,478,072 meals were provided to Georgians through a community-based congregate meal program supported by the Division.

- **Caregiver Support** Services to caregivers include adult day care, respite care, case management and counseling, support groups, material aid, homemaker and personal care, and education and training. The Division uses Care Consultation, an evidence-based information and coaching service, to empower caregivers to understand care options and manage care more effectively.

  In SFY17, DAS continued its implementation of the Alzheimer’s Disease Support Services Program grant. In coordination with the AAAs and the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving, this project includes expansion of Care Consultation; expansion of Powerful Tools for Caregivers, an evidence-based support and education program; development of 18 webinars for professionals and caregivers; providing Dealing with Dementia, a caregiver program, to Spanish-speaking caregivers; and enhancing long-term sustainability efforts of caregiver programs.

To find out about aging services in your area, call 1-866-552-4464.

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**GEORGIA CARES**

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To learn more, visit [www.mygeorgiacares.org](http://www.mygeorgiacares.org).

**ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY**

The Division continues to support the use of assistive technology (AT) and contracts with AAAs across the state to establish AT labs. Assistive technology is any item or piece of equipment that increases, maintains or improves the functional capabilities of an individual, allowing him/her to continue performing daily tasks and maintain independence. Currently, AT labs are located in the Northwest Georgia, Southern Georgia (2 locations), Three Rivers, River Valley and Southwest Georgia Council on Aging, Legacy Link, Inc. and Heart of GA AAAs and at Cobb County Senior Services. The development and expansion of additional labs are planned for SFY18.

**MONEY FOLLOWS THE PERSON**

The primary goal of the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program is to transition eligible individuals from long-term care facilities into community settings. In SFY17, MFP helped 218 Georgians transition back into their communities from long-term acute care facilities. A total of 1,524 have returned to the community since July 2011.
**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**DAS**

Strengthening Georgia through services that give older Georgians and adults with disabilities independence and dignity.

**ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

Adult Protective Services (APS) investigates allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of adults, and seeks to prevent the recurrence of abuse, neglect or exploitation through the provision of protective service interventions.

When assessing the need for interventions, investigators consider an adult’s right to personal autonomy and self-determination while using the least restrictive method of providing safety.

The APS program receives $400,000 in Emergency Relocation Funds to provide emergency relocation services to individuals who need relocation from an abusive situation or for other emergency situations.

New APS Investigations in State Fiscal Year 2017 (SFY 17):

19,306

APS and guardianship positions funded in SFY 17:

201

**CONTACT**

Contact Adult Protective Services to report the abuse of older individuals (65+) and adults with disabilities (18+). Call 866-552-4464, and press Option 3.

**FORENSIC SPECIAL INITIATIVES UNIT**

The Forensic Special Initiatives Unit (FSIU) educates law enforcement, first responders, members of the legal community and others about ways to identify and respond to abuse, neglect and exploitation of at-risk adults. The FSIU also works with state agencies to coordinate the emergency relocation of abused and neglected adults.

**Unlicensed Personal Care Homes**

When older adults and adults with disabilities face abuse, neglect, or exploitation — particularly in unlicensed personal care homes — responders may need to move them quickly to a safe, accessible location.

The Division works with state agencies and other experts to develop coordinated response procedures and to identify emergency resources for vulnerable adults. In SFY17, APS relocated 95 individuals from unlicensed personal care homes.

**Financial Exploitation Training**

As of June 30, 2017, the Division and its partners trained 721 bank personnel and law enforcement officials on how to recognize, prevent and prosecute financial exploitation of vulnerable adults.

More than 777 charges were filed against nearly 560 individuals for abuse, neglect or exploitation of a vulnerable adult in SFY16, according to the Georgia Crime Information Center.

Source: NYS Elder Abuse Prevalence Study; Weill Cornell Medical College, NYC Department for the Aging; Lifespan; (2011)

For every one case of elder abuse that comes to the attention of a responsible entity, another 23 cases never come to light.

Law enforcement and other professionals who have received training from the FSIU to serve as At-Risk Adult Crime Tactics (ACT) Specialists

2,317 [as of SFY17]
The 2017 Georgia Senior Hunger Summit was developed with the vision of stamping out senior hunger in Georgia. Sponsored by the Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services, this year, the Senior Hunger Summit was held on Sept. 28-29, and brought together a diverse group of experts and policymakers to heighten awareness of senior hunger in Georgia, unearth issues accompanying the problem and to continue work on the first-ever state plan to fight senior hunger.

What a Waste

Like senior hunger and malnutrition, food waste in America is also a serious and growing problem. An estimated 40 percent of food produced in this country — more than 20 pounds of food per person per month — is never consumed by people. Put another way, Americans are throwing out the equivalent of $165 billion each year. Some of this waste is generated by senior nutrition programs. Data gathered by National Foundation to End Senior Hunger from individual senior nutrition programs in eight states, including Georgia, indicate that, on average, 15 percent of the meals prepared are regularly wasted by these nonprofit senior meal programs.

What A Waste assists senior nutrition programs in reducing food waste and improving nutrition services to the communities’ vulnerable older citizens. What A Waste can save resources, so senior nutrition programs can expand, ensure proper nutrition and create a sustainable new food source.

Approximately 5,790 people remain on the waiting list for home-delivered meals as of June 30, 2017.

Heat map of seniors on waiting list for meal delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area Agency on Aging</th>
<th>People waiting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta Regional Commission</td>
<td>853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Savannah River Area</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Georgia</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia Mountains</td>
<td>707</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heart of Georgia / Altamaha</td>
<td>623</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle Georgia</td>
<td>603</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northeast Georgia</td>
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<td>Northwest Georgia</td>
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<tr>
<td>River Valley</td>
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<td>Southern Georgia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Georgia</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Rivers</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special Initiatives

ALZHEIMER’S & DEMENTIA SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM

The Alzheimer’s Disease Supportive Services Program (ADSSP) ensures seamless, customer-focused and dementia-capable statewide access to a comprehensive array of home and community-based services and support to help persons with dementia and their caregivers. This program supports the goals of the Georgia Alzheimer’s and Related Dementias State Plan.

Objectives include:

- Expand dementia-related training for community partners across the state
- Expand access to Powerful Tools for Caregivers and Care Consultation evidence-based programs
- Provide appropriate assistive technology and training support to persons with dementia and their caregivers
- Redesign the state’s caregiver services policy to improve dementia-capability, including improved screening and assessment methods to identify unmet needs
- Expand service delivery to underserved populations

Outcomes include:

- Access to services staff, direct workforce staff, and community partner competency in serving persons with dementia and their caregivers
- Caregiver needs are evaluated accurately and they receive appropriate services to reduce burden and improve self-efficacy
- Consumers receive greater access to dementia-related assistive technology and evidence-based programs
- State policy is revised regarding dementia-capable services for persons with dementia and their caregivers