



Department of Social Services Semi-Annual Report

Report Period: January 1, 2017 through June 30, 2017

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County of San Luis Obispo

Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles

The County of San Luis Obispo is a local government agency made up of dedicated elected officials, skilled employees, and devoted volunteers who are committed to public service. Together, they provide a variety of essential public services that contribute to a safe, healthy, livable, prosperous and well-governed community.



County of San Luis Obispo

Department of Social Services

Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles

The San Luis Obispo County Department of Social Services provides public services that promote self-sufficiency, health and well-being. These programs help ensure the protection of children, the elderly and dependent adults, and provide a safety net for individuals and families who need assistance with basic necessities, such as food, housing and health care.

Mission

We partner with the community to enhance self-sufficiency while ensuring that safety and basic human needs are met for the people of San Luis Obispo County.

Vision

A responsible and caring community:
Safe, Resilient and Healthy

Guiding Principles

We strive to eliminate poverty and abuse.

We believe all people have strengths.

We work together to assist in removing barriers and finding solutions.

We strive to meet the unique needs of each community, family, and individual.

We commit to fairness and equality.



Recent Efforts and Changes

Bringing Families Home

In June of 2017, San Luis Obispo County was one of only twelve Counties in the State of California selected to receive funding under the State's innovative Bringing Families Home program. Through a competitive application process, Counties had the opportunity to apply for funding as part of this 2-year program.



The Bringing Families Home program is designed to assist parents in the Child Welfare System with securing appropriate and safe housing. While homelessness alone is not a reason for a child to be removed from their family and placed in the foster care system, children cannot be returned from the foster care system into homelessness. Because of this, children can stay in foster care longer than needed while their family searches for secure housing. In San Luis Obispo County securing housing can be quite challenging, as our local vacancy rate is only 1.3%! As anyone who has searched for housing recently can attest, this makes our local housing market highly competitive with multiple families vying for the same home. Because of this competitive market, families who may have additional barriers to housing such as an inconsistent work history or credit blemishes are often left out.

San Luis Obispo County will serve at least 50 families in the Child Welfare system under the Bringing Families Home program.

Modeled after the County's successful CalWORKs Housing Support Program, the Bringing Families Home program utilizes a "housing first" approach that offers both supportive services *and* intensive case management with the goal of securing stable housing. Services provided will be family centered and needs driven, tailored to meet each family's specific set of circumstances.



The Department of Social Services is truly grateful to have been selected to receive funding for this vital program. Being able to meet the need for housing support for families involved with Child Welfare Services will mean that children will spend less time in the foster care system, and be able to get home to their families sooner.

Recent Efforts and Changes

CalFRESH – Same Day Applications (SDA)

CalFresh (previously known as Food Stamps) is a nutrition program that can help households buy healthy foods. Federally, the program is called SNAP. It is funded by the federal government. CalFresh benefits are issued on an EBT card that works like a debit card and can be used at most grocery stores and many farmers markets to purchase food.

In January of 2017, DSS launched a new process for Same Day Applications (SDA) for Cal Fresh applicants. This process allows an applicant to complete the application process within the same day. This prevents applicants from having to return another day, which may cause hardship due to transportation or time restraints. This new process is available between the hours of 8 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Same Day Appointments will be offered to applicants who wish to apply for NACF, NACF/MC, EXCF or EXCF/MC.

If applicant chooses SDA services, ERS will meet with them for interactive interview and will review applications for any clarification or missing information. Once this is complete, they may potentially be approved for benefits and go home with an EBT card that same day.

Same Day CalFresh Applications January - April 2017*

Office	Total CF Applications	Processed as Same Day
Paso Robles	323	171
Atascadero	280	91
San Luis Obispo	213	86
Morro Bay	90	51
Arroyo Grande	649	227
Nipomo	139	28
Totals	1694	654
*Data is from each office.	Since the start of the 16/17 FY, there has been a consistent decrease in the number of denied applications.	7/2016 77% denied at application 4/2017 41% denied at application

Recent Efforts and Changes

IT redesign 2017

2017 has seen a completely new management team for IT. The team has some exciting plans for improving IT responsiveness and service delivery. Some of the changes being implemented include:

- **Reorganization of units and responsibilities with an eye to improved efficiencies**
- **Creation of a single point of contact for ALL IT issues and questions for ease of access and improved communication**
- **New Data Bases for MEDS transaction and Help Requests to provide enhanced information on trends and issues and to monitor the performance of the units**
 - **Available data identifies training needs for IT units to receive**
 - **Trends and issues reported allow for specific and focused trainings to improve staff performance**
- **Continued clarification of unit responsibilities and cross-overs to improve communication both within IT and with the department overall**
- **Enhanced Information Reporting capabilities through CalWIN Business Intelligence as well as through external data base (CIS/CMIPS/CMS) enhancements provided by in-house programmers**
- **New and improved documentation of processes for all systems used and supported by IT – for onboarding procedures; systems security; help desk issues; and EDMS**

Recent Efforts and Changes

Family Stabilization Parent Partners

The Family Stabilization Services (FSS) program added an essential component this year by developing two positions into FSS Parent Partners. Modeled after the Child Welfare Services (CWS) Parent Partner role, these FSS Parent Partners work with parents in the FSS program to provide peer mentorship and coaching. They assist parents in navigating the multiple social agencies, programs, systems and resources available in San Luis Obispo County that can be challenging to manage, especially when experiencing a crisis.

Family Stabilization Services (FSS) are a part of CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work (WTW), which is the employment and training program for cash aid. FSS are designed to ensure a basic level of stability within a family prior to, or concurrently with, participation in WTW activities by supporting families to address barriers that may prevent them from being able to obtain or keep employment. Supports include intensive case management and resources and referrals for identified counseling services and peer mentorship. On average San Luis Obispo County serves approximately 70 families through the FSS program.

CalWORKs recipients that are experiencing an identified situation or crisis that interferes with their ability to participate in the Welfare-to-Work program, may be eligible for the Family Stabilization Services program. These situations include but are not limited to:

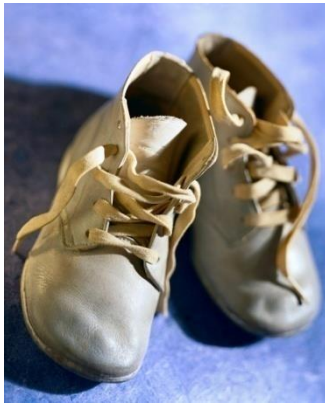
- Homelessness (or risk of homelessness)
- Child Specific Concerns
- Lack of Parenting Support
- Lack of Safety due to Domestic Abuse
- Mental/Behavioral Health Needs
- Substance Abuse Needs

FSS Parent Partners have first-hand knowledge and experience with many of the systems and resources that FSS families can utilize during their journey through Welfare to Work. FSS Parent Partners use their knowledge and experience to help other parents to understand how governmental systems work and to navigate the system, helping to build their pathway to success. They provide peer support in coping with stressful situations and accompany parents to necessary meetings as requested. Navigating timelines, stressors and the requirements of many agencies, can be daunting and overwhelming.

The FSS Parent Partner roles are designed to support and empower low-income parents with hope, resources and support to meet their goals; realize their strengths; and ultimately become self-supporting.

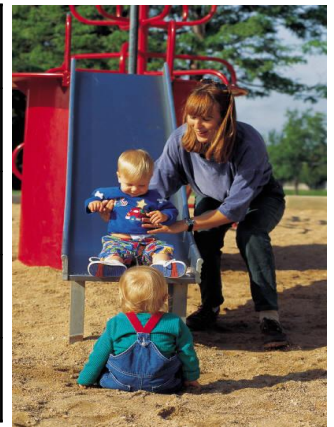
Statistics

Caseload Averages Per Month



Child Welfare Services	Referrals Received	344
	Referrals Responded by CWS	285
	Family Maintenance Cases	83
	Family Reunification Cases	189
	Permanency Planning Cases	251

Participant Services	CalWORKS	1,680
	CalFresh (Food Stamps)	10,343
	Medi-Cal Only*	29,296
	Foster Care	321
	General Assistance	368



Adult Services	In-Home Support Services (IHSS) - Applications	77
	In-Home Support Services (IHSS) - Active Cases	1,855
	Adult Protective Services (APS) - Investigations	218
	Adult Protective Services (APS) - Number Served	492

*Categorically eligible Medi-Cal (associated with CalWORKS and Foster Care cases) is no longer being considered in the Medi-Cal caseload average.

Department Services and Locations

Programs and Services

PARTICIPANT SERVICES (CASH, HOUSING, FOOD, AND MEDI-CAL BENEFITS)

CalWORKs: Temporary, time-limited cash assistance to families and children who are deprived of support or care due to the death, incapacity, unemployment, or continued absence of one or both parents.

Diversion: One-time cash assistance or services, when such services will prevent a family from needing to apply for ongoing cash assistance.

Welfare-to-Work Employment and Training Program: Training and/or education activities to assist adults who are receiving CalWORKs in finding employment and becoming self-sufficient. This program is mandatory for non-exempt adult CalWORKs participants.

Supportive Services: Services such as childcare, transportation, and work clothing, for adult CalWORKs participants seeking work, working, and/or in training.

CalWORKs Child Support: A program administered by the Department of Child Support Services to increase CalWORKs families' self-sufficiency by obtaining financial support from absent parents.

AFDC – Foster Care: Cash assistance to caretakers of foster children.

Medi-Cal: Comprehensive medical benefits to all public assistance recipients and to certain other eligible persons who do not have sufficient funds to meet the costs of their medical care.

CalFresh: Benefits for low income families to improve nutrition and food purchasing power.

General Assistance: Temporary assistance for needy persons not eligible for benefits through other Federal and State aid programs. Also provides for cremation services for indigent persons, when necessary.

For more information on program requirements and benefit levels, please visit our website at: <http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/dss>

Department Services and Locations

Programs and Services

CHILD WELFARE AND ADULT SERVICES PROGRAMS

Adoption Services: Finding safe, stable, permanent families for children who are unable to be reunified with their birth parents.

After 18 (Fostering Connections to Success Act): Providing services and financial benefits for youth in foster care past age 18. Formerly known as AB12.

Foster Home Licensing: Finding and licensing nurturing homes for foster children.

Child Welfare Differential Response: Responding to allegations of abuse or neglect in a timely and appropriate manner, in order to provide for the safety and stability of the children in our county.

Child Welfare Family Maintenance: Providing child welfare services to families, while the children remain in the home under the supervision of a Social Worker.

Child Welfare Family Reunification: Providing child welfare services after a child has been separated from his/her parents due to abuse or neglect, in order to stabilize the family and hopefully reunify the child back into the home.

Child Welfare Permanency Planning: Providing child welfare services to children who can not return to their birth parents' home. This may include adoption, guardianship, or the establishment of a planned permanent living arrangement for the child.

Adult Protective Services: Responding to allegations of abuse or neglect in a timely and appropriate manner, in order to provide for the safety and stability of the elderly and/or dependent adults in our county.

In-Home Supportive Services: Providing personal care services and domestic services to eligible elderly and/or disabled individuals in our county, to enable them to remain living in their own homes.

For more information on these and more programs, please visit our website at: <http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/dss>

Department Services and Locations

Office Locations

City	Office	Address	Phone #
Arroyo Grande	Dept. of Social Services Main Office	1086 Grand Ave.	805-474-2000
	South S.A.F.E. Family Resource Center	1086 Grand Ave.	805-474-2105
Atascadero	Dept. of Social Services Main Office	9415 El Camino Real	805-461-6000
	Dept. of Social Services Annex	9479 El Camino Real	805-461-6181
Morro Bay	Dept. of Social Services	600 Quintana Rd.	805-772-6405
Nipomo	Dept. of Social Services	681 W. Tefft St., Ste. 1	805-931-1800
Paso Robles	Dept. of Social Services Main Office	406 Spring St.	805-237-3110
	North County Job Center	534 Spring St.	805-237-3003
San Luis Obispo	Dept. of Social Services Main Office	3433 S. Higuera St.	805-781-1600 or 1-800-834-3002
	America's Job Centers of California	880 Industrial Way	805-903-1400

CHILD ABUSE REFERRALS: 1-800-834-5437

ADULT ABUSE REFERRALS: 1-805-781-1790

TO REPORT FRAUD: 1-800-781-1914