

BALTIMORE COUNTY
FISCAL YEAR 2010 RECOMMENDED BUDGET

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (031)

BUDGET SUMMARY

\$ in Thousands

PROPOSED CHANGE	GENERAL	SPECIAL	TOTAL	% Change Prior Year
FY 2009 - 2010 Change	\$ 471.2	\$ 250.8	\$ 722.0	5.4%
Recommended Reduction	-	-	-	
 BUDGET TRENDS				
FY 2008 Actual	\$ 5,764.0	\$ 5,132.6 ⁽¹⁾	\$ 10,896.6	
FY 2009 Approp.	6,213.4	7,124.7 ⁽²⁾	13,338.1	22.4%
FY 2010 Request	6,684.6	7,375.5	14,060.1	5.4%
Recommended	\$ 6,684.6	\$ 7,375.5	\$ 14,060.1	5.4%

⁽¹⁾ Reflects audited expenditures which differ from the amount reflected in the Executive's budget documents.

⁽²⁾ Adjusted for two supplemental appropriations totaling \$25,106 not reflected in the Executive's budget documents.

PERSONNEL

PROPOSED CHANGE	General Fund		Special Fund	
	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME
FY 2009 - 2010 Change	(2)	3	0	0
Recommended Reduction	0	0	0	0
 BUDGET TRENDS				
FY 2008 Actual	71	28	8	116
FY 2009 Approp.	71	28	8	114
FY 2010 Request	69	31	8	114
Recommended	69	31	8	114
 VACANCY DATA				
Positions Vacant as of May 1, 2009	2	1	0	19

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BUDGET SUMMARY:

The FY 2010 budget for the Department of Social Services is \$14.1 million, an increase of \$722,000, or 5.4%, over the FY 2009 budget. The General Fund portion of the budget increases by \$471,000, or 7.6%, while the Special Fund portion increases by \$251,000, or 3.5%. Most of the increase in the total budget is attributable to the Young Parent Support Center (YPSC) Day Resource Center costs being transferred into the Department's General Fund budget.

Exhibit 1			
FY 2010 Proposed Budget (\$ in 000's)			
How Much it Grows:	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Special Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
2009 Appropriation	\$ 6,213	\$ 7,125 ⁽¹⁾	\$ 13,338
2010 Request	<u>6,684</u>	<u>7,376</u>	<u>14,060</u>
\$ Increase	\$ 471	\$ 251	\$ 722
% Increase	7.6%	3.5%	5.4%
⁽¹⁾ Adjusted for two supplemental appropriations totaling \$25,106 not reflected in the Executive's budget documents.			
Where it Goes:			
General Fund:			
Personnel Expenses (excluding YPSC-Day Resource Center employees):			
Salary			\$83
COLA (2% beginning January 1, 2010)			41
Turnover			1
Overtime			(21)
YPSC Day Resource Center (including personnel expenses) ⁽¹⁾			231
Operating Expenses:			
Temporary staff (new document mgmt. system & customer service)			74
Emergency Assistance Funds (e.g., utility assistance, eviction prevention)			69
Conferences, Educational Assistance, Training			25
Parking, Facilities, and Equipment Rentals			10
Grants to Temporary Cash Assistance recipients for work-related items			(22)
Other Changes			(20)
General Fund Subtotal:			471
⁽¹⁾ Funded in General Grant Program (5902) prior to FY 2010.			

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Special Fund:	
The Emergency Food Assistance Program	\$95
School Based Services.....	70
Interagency Family Preservation Services	29
Job Network	25
Housing Counselor	17
General Administration	13
MD Energy Assistance	10
Family Investment Division.....	(11)
Young Parent Support Center	(27)
Other Changes	30
Special Fund Subtotal:	251
Total:	\$722

RECOMMENDED BUDGET REDUCTIONS

No recommended reductions.

SIGNIFICANT PROGRAM/POLICY INITIATIVES AND/OR CHANGES

1. Increased Funding for Emergency Assistance \$600,000

The Department's proposed FY 2010 budget includes \$600,000 for emergency assistance (e.g. utility assistance, eviction prevention), a \$68,500 increase over the FY 2009 budget. The Department advised that the average number of County-funded emergency assistance cases per month in FY 2009 is 45, 25% lower than last year's average of 60 per month. (However, the average number of State-funded emergency assistance cases per month in FY 2009 is 154, an 18.5% increase over last year's average of 130 per month.) The Department advised that it expects the average number of County-funded emergency assistance cases to increase by the end of FY 2009 due to the economic downturn; it also advised that it has utilized all of its available State funding and will use County funding for all assistance cases for the remainder of FY 2009. The

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Department expects to expend \$450,000 to \$475,000 of its \$531,500 emergency assistance budget in FY 2009. The \$68,500 increase in funding in the proposed FY 2010 budget is based on the Department's assumptions that the effects of the economic downturn will continue through FY 2010; the demand for emergency assistance will continue to climb, even if the economy begins to show signs of improvement; and funding available from the State to assist needy citizens in the County will remain flat. The emergency assistance is limited to one benefit per family in a 12-month period, and the benefit amount varies based upon the need.

The Department should be prepared to discuss:

- ***The amount of State funding available to the County for emergency assistance in FY 2009 versus FY 2010;***
- ***When it expects additional State funding to be available; and***
- ***Whether the assistance provided meets the needs of the community.***

OTHER ISSUES

2. Increased Demand for Social Services, Increased Department Workload

The Department advised that due to the recession, it is experiencing a significant increase in the demand for its assistance programs. The Department advised that, for all assistance programs in FY 2009, it is receiving an average of 6,178 applications per month, approximately 16% of which are from first-time applicants. The Department advised that it has reached an all-time high for the number of eligible Medical Assistance and Food Stamp cases; at the end of March, the Department was serving approximately 42,000 Medical Assistance cases and 22,000 Food Stamp cases. In addition, as of March 31, 2009 the Department had received 32,921 applications for energy assistance programs in FY 2009; it received 30,502 in the entirety of FY 2008. Over 100,000 Baltimore County residents are currently receiving at least one financial benefit from the Department.

To address the increased demand for social services, the proposed FY 2010 budget includes \$174,720 for 8 temporary clerks; the Department advised that it will reassess its workload mid-year to determine if additional temporary clerks are needed. In November 2008, the Council approved a supplemental appropriation of \$100,800, which allowed the Department to hire 10 temporary clerks

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in December to assist with customer service functions. Six of the clerks were budgeted through the end of the fiscal year, while the other four were budgeted for three to four months.

The Department further advised that in January 2007, each of its caseworkers, on average, was responsible for managing an on-going caseload of 837 cases, but each is now responsible for managing an average of 1,042 cases, a nearly 25% increase. The Department anticipates that financial assistance caseloads will continue to rise as the economy continues to struggle, and it anticipates that the caseloads will decline slowly even as the economy improves.

The Department advised that the State's hiring freeze has also negatively impacted the Department's ability to deliver assistance to needy citizens, with over 3,000 applications per month that the Department is unable to process within the State's 30-day standard. The Department advised that as of the beginning of April, 45 of the 187 State positions that had been allocated to the Department at the beginning of FY 2009 were unavailable to respond to requests for assistance and process benefits. Twenty-four of the 45 positions have been abolished. Of the remaining 21, the Department advised that it has now received 11 exemptions from the freeze and is recruiting to fill those positions; the Department is waiting for a response to their request to fill the remaining 10 positions.

The Department is also working with other County agencies to assist needy citizens in applying for financial benefits. The Department will be providing training and consultation for the State Department of Human Resources' on-line application process for all major benefit programs, known as SAIL (Service Access and Information Link), to the Departments of Health and Aging, the Office of Workforce Development, and Library staff.

The Department should be prepared to discuss:

- ***When it expects to receive notice from the State regarding the 10 vacant positions;***
- ***When it expects to fill the 11 vacancies the State has exempted from the freeze;***
- ***How quickly the additional employees will reduce the backlog of assistance applications; and***
- ***The adequacy of fiscal resources to meet the increased demand for services.***

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3. Technological Improvements

In order to streamline the process of applying to the Department for financial assistance, the Department is implementing a new Document Management System with support from the Office of Information Technology (OIT). The Department advised that Federal and State policies require a significant amount of documentation concerning an applicant's personal and financial situation when applying for assistance. The Department further advised that, given the high volume of applications as well as the personnel shortage, documents are, on occasion, lost or not provided to caseworkers in a timely manner. The new Document Management System allows documents to be scanned into an automated database, catalogued for easy retrieval, and made available to staff via an online network; the Department expects this new system will allow benefits to be processed more accurately and more quickly. The system is currently being piloted in the Towson office, with plans to expand the system to the four additional district offices. The Department advised that the system's approximate cost of \$266,000 was funded through OIT's Enhanced Productivity Through Technology Initiative and Equipment Financing funds. The first year software maintenance was included in the purchase price, and future maintenance costs will be funded through the OIT operating budget.

The Department is also participating in the development of an enhanced County website page. The new website feature, entitled "Baltimore County Cares!" is an interagency initiative that will direct needy citizens and professionals to information about available services and benefits. This new feature is expected to be operational in June.

The Department should be prepared to discuss:

- ***The timeframe for and associated cost of expanding the Document Management System to the district offices;***
- ***How effective the Document Management System has been in streamlining the application process; and***
- ***The agencies involved in and information to be provided through the enhanced website page.***

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4. Interagency Coordination of Services

The Department is collaborating with the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) and the Offices of Workforce Development (OWD) and Community Conservation (OCC) to enhance employment and training opportunities for low-income families. These opportunities include:

- Maryland RISE, a statewide program which focuses on helping cash assistance recipients and non-custodial parents who have difficulty paying court-ordered child support find work and additional job training;
- Weatherization project, a statewide program utilizing federal funding (through OCC) to promote energy efficient homes for low-income families with welfare-to-work and other employment and training funding streams. The Department will refer cash assistance recipients and non-custodial parents to training from CCBC for the various jobs that are part of the weatherization project, including home energy auditors and construction workers, and provide up to four months of wage subsidies during the training period;
- Systems Navigator and Training Grant, a grant opportunity from the State Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation that will allow OWD to employ staff who will assist clients in accessing various County services as well as provide funding for enhanced skills training; and
- Summer Youth Employment: The Department will work closely with OWD to identify youth from families receiving financial assistance and from foster care for summer employment opportunities, including opportunities in the Department's offices.

The Department should be prepared to discuss:

- ***The number of clients it expects to serve with each initiative;***
- ***Additional interagency initiatives it is contemplating; and***
- ***The amount of grant funding it expects the County to receive for each initiative, and whether County funds will also be contributed.***

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5. Gift Card Audit

According to an October 2008 audit report of the Department's use of gift cards and bus tokens, the Department did not maintain accurate, complete or reliable records; did not adequately safeguard all gift cards and bus tokens against loss, misuse, or theft; did not establish adequate segregation of duties; and did not establish written policies and procedures to guide employees in the use of gift cards and bus tokens.

To address these findings, the Department advised that it has, in conjunction with the Office of Budget and Finance (OBF), developed procedures for maintaining and issuing merchant gift cards and bus tokens. The purchasing and storage of gift cards and bus tokens is now handled by OBF rather than the Department. OBF issues gift cards and bus tokens to the Department upon receipt of a Distribution Request Form that is signed by the Department's Assistant Finance Officer. The form is also signed by the Director of Budget and Finance.

The Department advised that it does not budget a specific amount of funds to be used for gift cards and bus tokens. Typically, gift cards are purchased from funds designated for client assistance. The Department advised that the program manager determines the amount, if any, that will be expended for gift cards and bus tokens on behalf of the program's clients.

The Administration should be prepared to discuss:

- ***The specific policies and procedures it has implemented to properly safeguard gift cards and bus tokens;***
- ***Whether weekly gift card reconciliations have revealed continued procedural deficiencies; and***
- ***Whether it is regularly monitoring the use of gift cards, and, if so, what these monitoring efforts have revealed.***

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APPROPRIATION DETAIL						
		FY 2008 ACTUAL	FY 2009 APPROP	FY 2010 REQUEST	NET CHANGE	
					AMOUNT	%
<u>Social Services - 031</u>						
<u>General Fund</u>						
3102	Adult Foster Care	\$ 148,819	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ -	0.0%
3103	Welfare to Work	419,757	447,000	425,000	(22,000)	-4.9%
3107	Foster Parent Recruitment/ Support Program	9,751	16,650	16,000	(650)	-3.9%
3111	Emergency Funds/ Housing for the Homeless	508,479	531,500	600,000	68,500	12.9%
3112	Domestic Violence/ Sexual Assault	132,099	132,100	130,000	(2,100)	-1.6%
3113	Day Resource Center-YPSC	-	-	231,473	231,473	NA
3114	In-Home Care Program	217,732	232,925	231,415	(1,510)	-0.6%
3115	Volunteer Program	70,058	75,611	77,243	1,632	2.2%
3116	Adult Services	621,243	720,510	755,764	35,254	4.9%
3117	General Administration	1,482,097	1,385,857	1,400,202	14,345	1.0%
3118	SPPA Program	219,723	247,264	249,017	1,753	0.7%
3119	Children's Services	362,123	375,285	386,305	11,020	2.9%
3120	Family Investment Division	647,967	800,519	887,619	87,100	10.9%
3121	Family Services	924,110	1,098,143	1,144,588	46,445	4.2%
	General Fund Total	<u>5,763,958</u>	<u>6,213,364</u>	<u>6,684,626</u>	<u>471,262</u>	<u>7.6%</u>
<u>Special Fund</u>						
3115	Volunteer Program	-	27,626	30,139	2,513	9.1%
3117	General Administration	-	127,968	141,181	13,213	10.3%
3120	Family Investment Division	-	145,249	134,382	(10,867)	-7.5%
3111021	School Based Services	1,167,601	1,228,661	1,298,798	70,137	5.7%
3111022	Infant and Toddler	120,945	139,465	146,815	7,350	5.3%
3111023	In-Home Care Services	90,484	162,912	170,425	7,513	4.6%

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		FY 2008 ACTUAL	FY 2009 APPROP	FY 2010 REQUEST	NET CHANGE	
					AMOUNT	%
311024	VAWA Grant	66,877	88,411 ^(b)	97,524	9,113	10.3%
311025	Young Parent Support Center (Y.P.S.C.)	255,730	326,514	299,536	(26,978)	-8.3%
311026	Housing Counselor	107,195	102,373	119,065	16,692	16.3%
311027	S.A.F.A.H.	115,340	132,334	133,408	1,074	0.8%
311028	Reentry Trans. Housing/HPP	45,900	80,000	80,000	-	0.0%
311029	Job Network	1,443,959	2,013,366	2,038,851	25,485	1.3%
311030	Food Stamp Employ & Trng	105,295	146,590 ^(b)	147,588	998	0.7%
311031	TEFAP	31,050	45,249	140,000	94,751	209.4%
311032	Therapeutic Foster Care	300,351	506,455	505,200	(1,255)	-0.2%
311033	Maryland Energy Assist.	371,114	535,018	544,927	9,909	1.9%
311034	Juvenile Sex Offender Prog.	226,436	291,742	289,443	(2,299)	-0.8%
311035	Interagency Family Preservation Services	575,853	856,789	886,204	29,415	3.4%
311036	Homeless Family's Child- Care Program	20,030	19,500	19,500	-	0.0%
311037	Responsible Fathers Project	<u>88,433</u>	<u>148,526</u>	<u>152,511</u>	<u>3,985</u>	<u>2.7%</u>
	Special Fund Total	<u>5,132,593</u> ^(a)	<u>7,124,748</u> ^(b)	<u>7,375,497</u>	<u>250,749</u>	<u>3.5%</u>
	Total All Funds	<u>\$ 10,896,551</u>	<u>\$ 13,338,112</u>	<u>\$ 14,060,123</u>	<u>\$ 722,011</u>	<u>5.4%</u>

^(a) Reflects audited expenditures which differ from the amount reflected in the Executive's budget documents.

^(b) Adjusted for two supplemental appropriations totaling \$25,106 not reflected in Executive's budget documents.

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PERSONNEL DETAIL										
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		FY 2008 ACTUAL		FY 2009 APPROP		FY 2010 REQUEST		NET CHANGE	
		FULL	PART	FULL	PART	FULL	PART	FULL	PART
3102	Adult Foster Care	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3103	Welfare To Work Program	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3107	Foster Parent Recruitment/ Support Program	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3111	Emergency Funds/ Housing for the Homeless	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3112	Domestic Violence/ Sexual Assault Program	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3113	Day Resource Center-YPSC	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
3114	In-Home Care Program	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	0
3115	Volunteer Program	1	2	1	2	1	2	0	0
3116	Adult Services	9	1	10	1	10	1	0	0
3117	General Administration	20	7	19	7	19	5	0	(2)
3118	SPPA	3	2	3	2	3	2	0	0
3119	Children's Services	5	1	5	1	5	1	0	0
3120	Family Invest. Division	21	0	20	0	18	0	(2)	0
3121	Family Services	12	7	13	7	13	7	0	0
311021	School Based Services	7	11	7	11	7	11	0	0
311022	Infant and Toddler	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
311023	In-Home Care Services	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	0
311024	VAWA Grant	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	0
311025	Young Parent Supp. Center	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	0
311026	Housing Counselor	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	0

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		FY 2008 ACTUAL		FY 2009 APPROP		FY 2010 REQUEST		NET CHANGE		
		FULL	PART	FULL	PART	FULL	PART	FULL	PART	
311027	S.A.F.A.H.	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	
311028	Reentry Transitional Housing/HPP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
311029	Job Network	0	40	0	40	0	40	0	0	
311030	Food Stamp Empl. and Training Program	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	
311031	TEFAP	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	
311032	Therapeutic Foster Care	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	0	
311033	Maryland Energy Assistance	0	15	0	15	0	15	0	0	
311034	Juvenile Sex Offender Program	0	6	0	4	0	4	0	0	
311035	Interagency Family Preservation Services	0	14	0	14	0	14	0	0	
311036	Homeless Family's Child Care Program	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
311037	Responsible Fathers Project	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	
	Special Fund Total	<u>8</u> ^(a)	<u>116</u> ^(a)	<u>8</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	
	Grand Total	<u><u>79</u></u>	<u><u>144</u></u>	<u><u>79</u></u>	<u><u>142</u></u>	<u><u>77</u></u>	<u><u>145</u></u>	<u><u>(2)</u></u>	<u><u>3</u></u>	

^(a) Reflects unaudited position data in the Executive's budget documents.