

Budget Unit Brief

FY 2017



Field Operations

History and Purpose

The Field Operations appropriation to the [Department of Human Services](#) (DHS) provides funding for staff that directly and indirectly support the delivery of protective services, case management services, eligibility determinations, basic support services, and support for providers. In FY 2016, staffing levels were set at 1,300 employees located in 42 full-time county offices and 235 staff in centralized locations in Council Bluffs and Des Moines. The Department divides the Field Operations Unit into five service areas: Northern, Western, Eastern, Des Moines, and Cedar Rapids. In FY 2016, field staff consisted of Social Workers (22.0%), Abuse Assessors (13.0%), Income Maintenance Workers (37.0%), Supervisors (8.0%), Management (4.0%), and Support (16.0%). Some of the frequent activities performed by staff in these areas include:

- **Protective Services:** Specialized Social Workers perform child and dependent adult assessments when abuse is alleged. Generally, each worker has 12-14 new assessments each month. The assessments must be completed within 20 business days.
- **Child Welfare Case Management:** Social Work Case Managers support child welfare cases as well as adoptive placements, foster care licensure, and other related services. A case manager who handles only child welfare cases supports 29-34 children and/or families. For the other services, a case manager supports 114 children and/or families. Tasks include identifying child and parent needs, developing case plans, and connecting families with providers.
- **Eligibility Services:** Income Maintenance staff perform eligibility activities for Medicaid, Food Assistance, and Family Investment Program recipients. Tasks include reviewing eligibility information for completeness; cross-checking citizenship, income, and other information in multiple databases; and other duties as necessary.
- **Centralized Services:** The Customer Call Center receives over 28,000 calls monthly from clients that need to report eligibility changes. The Facility Unit supports Medicaid coverage for nursing facilities. The Child Care Assistance Unit determines eligibility for assistance as well as provider payment support. The Integrated Claims Recovery Unit researches and recovers payments due to error or fraud. Other groups determine eligibility for federal funding and support child care facility licensing.
- **Customer Service and Help Desks:** These small groups are subject matter experts in social work and eligibility matters and provide statewide support for frontline staff. Other groups support training, constituent contacts, legislation analysis, and budgeting.

Funding Sources

Field Operations is funded by state general funds and a blend of federal funds. The FY 2017 total budget for Field Operations was \$152.4 million.

State General Fund

An annual appropriation for Field Operations is provided in the Health and Human Services Appropriations Act. The General Fund appropriation for FY 2017 was \$54.4 million.

Federal Funds

Federal funds support this appropriation through a number of sources, including Title IV-B, Title IV-E, Title XIX, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Child Care Development Fund, and the Social Services Block Grant. In FY 2017, federal funding provided \$93.6 million of all field operations revenue. Federal funding also supports the Bureau of Refugee Services located within the Field Services appropriation. The primary function of this unit is to help non-English-speaking refugees find employment.

Related Statutes and Administrative Rules

Iowa Code sections [217.42](#), [217.43](#), [217.44](#), [234.12](#), [235A.14](#), , and [249A.3](#)
Iowa Code chapters [235B](#) and [239B](#)

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More Information

Department of Human Services Field Offices: http://dhs.iowa.gov/dhs_office_locator

LSA Staff Contact: Angel Banks-Adams (515-281-6301) angel.banks-adams@legis.iowa.gov