



Serving Counties Since 1886

Children and Youth Services

Since the enactment of Act 30 of 1991, the Department of Public Welfare and the county children and youth and juvenile probation office agencies have followed a needs-based plan and budget process. This process allows counties to express their funding requirements to DPW to attempt to meet the needs of children, families and communities, as well as the mandates of state and federal law. This has been an evolutionary process and one that has brought, over the years, considerably more federal and state financial resources to bear on the needs of Pennsylvania's neglected, abused, and delinquent children and their families.

Unfortunately, the federal/state/county cost-sharing ratio has not always kept pace with the increased needs, entitlements, and mandates addressed by counties. It is the counties, the service delivery component of the state and county partnership, who are the ones who pay the bills up front. It is not unusual for counties to wait three months or longer for reimbursement from state or federal funding sources. We are currently working with the Legislature and DPW to restructure the reimbursement process to counties by proposing an increase in the quarterly advances to better reflect county expenditures and to reduce the stressors on county cash flow.

Counties are dependent upon local property taxes to fund their fair share of the C&Y budget. The federal share of the C&Y budget is decreasing while the state and county share is increasing. The needs of clients, however, do not diminish based upon the availability of funding. In fact, during times of reduced funding, the only variable becomes the priority order of who is and who is not served, and society's tolerance for either the resultant pain and suffering, or the increased juvenile crime in the community.

The varying eligibility criteria and reimbursable rates among the various state and federal revenue sources, as well as different fiscal calendars for federal, state and county funding, magnifies the impact of any federal or state change in funding and cash flow at the county level.

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We ask DPW and the Legislature to continue to assist counties in finding ways to fairly, adequately, and predictably address and fund C&Y services.

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