



*The South Carolina Department of (SCDSS) serves South Carolina by promoting the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and vulnerable adults, helping individuals achieve stability and strengthening families.*

*This mission is accomplished through the core principles of competence, courage and compassion.*

## **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

### **CHILD WELFARE**

#### **Child Protective Services (CPS)**

CPS investigates reports of suspected child abuse and neglect by parents, guardians, and caregivers. After receiving a report, the DSS Intake Unit decides whether the report meets the state law's definition of child abuse and/or neglect. Accepted reports are investigated and, when allegations are substantiated, services are offered to children and families with a goal of lowering risk and increasing the family's ability to protect children. In many cases, a safety plan can be developed with a protector or kinship caregiver to ensure the child's safety and well-being while DSS works with the family.

#### **Foster Care/Adoption**

Children who cannot safely remain in the home while DSS provides services to the family are placed in the legal custody of DSS. Children may be placed in a licensed foster home or group-care facility that can best meet their needs while their parents work with DSS toward reunification. When children in foster care cannot be reunited with their biological families, permanency is sought through termination of parental rights and adoption. Youth remaining in foster care receive assistance to make a successful transition into adulthood.

### **ECONOMIC SERVICES**

#### **TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)**

TANF is South Carolina's welfare program which provides temporary financial assistance to needy families with dependent children who meet federal eligibility guidelines. [Apply online for benefits.](#)

#### **SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)**

SNAP benefits, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, provide eligible, low-income households with nutrition assistance by increasing the household's food purchasing power. SNAP benefits are issued monthly to the recipient's EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer) card. [Apply online for benefits.](#)

## **ECONOMIC SERVICES** *(continued)*

### **Work Programs / SNAP Education and Training**

Employment training and job search assistance are available to SNAP recipients, which may help some recipients satisfy the work requirement for time-limited benefits. Services are provided by DSS county office staff as well as through partnerships with other state agencies and community-based organizations.

### **Claims**

The Benefit Integrity Unit is responsible for the collection of SNAP and TANF claims of overpayment or fraud. The Unit leads the Southeast and nation in ensuring benefits are administered according to federal regulations.

### **Early Care and Education**

SCDSS is the licensing and regulatory agency for child care providers and administers the SC Voucher program to help low income families afford quality child care so parents can work. The agency manages the ABC child care quality rating program and the professional development system for South Carolina's child care workforce.

## **ADULT ADVOCACY/DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION**

Adult Protective Services (APS) protects the health and welfare of elderly, disabled and vulnerable adults who are 18 or older and victims of actual, or potential abuse, neglect, self-neglect or exploitation. DSS contracts with local shelters and community agencies throughout the state to prevent or reduce the incidence of domestic violence.

## **CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Child Support Services Division provides administrative services to obtain child support. Services include establishing, modifying, and enforcing support obligations, locating parents and establishing paternity. There is no cost to apply for these services. [Apply for services and check case information online.](#)

## **OFFICE of GENERAL COUNSEL (OGC)/ COUNTY LEGAL SUPPORT**

The OGC is responsible for the overall leadership of DSS Legal Operations. Trial attorneys prosecute a wide range of child abuse and neglect cases and adult protective service cases. These attorneys also handle cases to the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court. Each region has an experienced Area Attorney who helps guide and mentor the trial attorneys who represent the local DSS county offices.

## **OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL (OIG)**

The OIG exists to increase accountability and oversight of the major program functions and operations of the DSS statewide system. The OIG consists of complaint intake and investigations, audits, quality improvement, compliance, and policy units as well as a law enforcement liaison. [Online Contact Form](#)

## **CONSTITUENT SERVICES**

The Constituent Services Unit assists members of the public who have questions or concerns about DSS programs and services. For general information or help resolving an issue, call (803) 898-7601. [Online Contact Form](#)

## DSS Leadership Contacts:

**Chief Transformation Officer** - Steven Ferruffino (803) 898-1805 [Steven.Ferruffino@dss.sc.gov](mailto:Steven.Ferruffino@dss.sc.gov)

**Child Welfare** – Emily Medere, Deputy Director (803) 898-1370 [Emily.Medere@dss.sc.gov](mailto:Emily.Medere@dss.sc.gov)

**Foster Parent Liaison** - Brianna Kaldenbach, Program Coordinator- (803) 898-4174 [FPhelp@dss.sc.gov](mailto:FPhelp@dss.sc.gov)

**Economic Services** – Amber Gillum, Deputy Director (803) 898-7474 [Amber.Gillum@dss.sc.gov](mailto:Amber.Gillum@dss.sc.gov)

**SNAP/TANF**- Erika Anderson, Director- (803) 898-7228 [Erika.Anderson@dss.sc.gov](mailto:Erika.Anderson@dss.sc.gov)

**Early Care and Education**- Michelle Bowers, Director- (803) 898-7307 [Michelle.Bowers@dss.sc.gov](mailto:Michelle.Bowers@dss.sc.gov)

**Adult Advocacy** – Kelly Cordell, Director (803) 898-7654 [Kelly.Cordell@dss.sc.gov](mailto:Kelly.Cordell@dss.sc.gov)

**Child Support** – Tim Mose, Director (803) 898-9240 [Timothy.Mose@dss.sc.gov](mailto:Timothy.Mose@dss.sc.gov)

**Legislative Liaison/Communications** – Connelly-Anne Ragley (803) 898-4357 [Connelly.Ragley@dss.sc.gov](mailto:Connelly.Ragley@dss.sc.gov)

## DSS Facts & Resources:

DSS employs more than 4200 professionals across the state and operates a county office in each of the state's 46 counties.

DSS serves 1 in every 6 South Carolinians.

**Abuse/Neglect Reporting:** The statewide, 24/7 hotline for reporting abuse/neglect is 1-888-CARE-4-US (1-888-227-3487). Non-emergency reports of abuse and neglect can be made **online**. For emergencies, please contact 911 or your local law enforcement office.

**Foster Care Data Dashboard:** Daily data on the number and demographics of children in foster care in South Carolina, by county. <http://reports.dss.sc.gov/SSRSReportServer/Pages/ReportViewer.aspx?/Foster+Care>

**Adult Protective Services Dashboard:** Current number of open services provided by DSS to protect vulnerable adults from harm caused by themselves or another person. <https://dss.sc.gov/about/data-and-resources/adult-protective-services-dashboard/>

**Child Support Dashboard:** Provides a visual map of total collections, caseloads, and key demographic stats (age, gender and race) for custodial/non-custodial parents as well as child support collections distributed to families via active cases: <https://dss.sc.gov/about/data-and-resources/child-support-collections-dashboard/>

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