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 facilities and administers the Child Care Scholarship program to help low income families afford quality child care so parents can work. The agency manages the ABC Quality child care rating and improvement system and the professional development system for South Carolina's child care workforce. For more information, visit **SCChildCare.org**.

Adult Advocacy/Domestic Violence Prevention

Adult Protective Services (APS)

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.

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.

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 or email: **ConstituentServices@dss.sc.gov.**

Reporting Abuse or Neglect

If you suspect abuse or neglect of a child or vulnerable adult, please call the 24-hour Abuse and Neglect Hotline at **1-888-CARE4US** (1-888-227-3487), or file a report online using the Abuse and Neglect Online Referral System at **benefitsportal.dss.sc.gov/#/ran/home.**

DSS
SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT *of* SOCIAL SERVICES
dss.sc.gov

State Fiscal Year 2026

ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2025 - JUNE 30, 2026

• Colleton County DSS
• Sandra m. Polk, Director
• 215 S. Lemacks Street
• Walterboro, SC 29488
• 843.584.4177

Honorable Members of the Legislative Delegation; County Council; County Administrator; Clerk of Court; Foreman of the Grand Jury:

In compliance with the Public Welfare Act of 1937, this Annual Report of fiscal activities is presented for the Colleton County Department of Social Services for the state fiscal year ending June 30, 2026.

We appreciate the local public and private agencies, churches, civic groups, news media, volunteers and concerned citizens who have supported our service to children and families. It is our hope that this Annual Report provides insight into our many responsibilities, accomplishments and contributions to the county and the State of South Carolina.

FINANCIAL DATA

(Provides selected, unaudited data for FY26)

Public Assistance Payments

SNAP Benefits (Food assistance)	13,961,730
TANF Assistance (Welfare)	190,699
Direct Client Services & Needs (Emergency assistance to support family stability)	4,150
Clothing Allowance (Children in foster care)	18,000

Personnel Summary

Total No. County Office Staff	39

(Does not include vacancies, temporary positions or regional program staff located in the county.)

As of June 30, 2026

DSS
SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT of SOCIAL SERVICES

MISSION

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

SCDSS 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.

Kinship Care/Foster Care/Adoption

Children who cannot safely remain in the home while DSS provides services to the family may enter foster care in the legal custody of DSS and be placed with relatives (kinship caregivers) or family friends who can step in to meet their needs while parents work with DSS toward reunification. Whenever kinship placement is not an option, children may be placed in a licensed foster home or group-care facility. 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.

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.