

# ANNUAL REPORT

2022/2023





# Table of **contents**



**RIVERSIDE COUNTY**  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

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Executive Message	02
Department Overview	04
Adult Services Division	06
Children's Services Division	14
Self-Sufficiency Division	22
Administrative Services Division	28
Finance & Forecasting Division	40
DPSS Investigations Unit	44
DPSS Executive Leadership Team	46
County Leadership	47



## Director's Message

Charity Douglas

### DEAR DPSS STAKEHOLDERS,

The Department of Public Social Services served 1.12 million lives in Riverside County during FY 22/23. While this annual report relies on numbers to summarize the volume and impact of our work, we know each of those numbers represents an individual: a child or an adult with unique needs and challenges. Meeting those needs with professional compassion and effectiveness is what the 4,700-member DPSS workforce does best every day. The DPSS leadership team is committed to supporting a vibrant and resilient workforce that tirelessly brings its very best to our communities.

In March, with endorsement from the Riverside County Executive Office and Board of Supervisors, DPSS launched the Office of Health

and Wellness to provide confidential coaching, resources and self-care activities that promote work-life harmony for staff who sometimes need a safe space to process the difficult circumstances they encounter. The OHW program is among the first of its kind in the state.

We also opened a campus near Banning for children and youth who are experiencing complex challenges in their foster placements. Alongside our many public partners, DPSS initiated pilot programs to improve outcomes in high-needs populations by streamlining access to health and human services. We laid strategic foundations for the future. We adapted and innovated as the COVID-19 crisis officially ended and we emerged from the historic global pandemic stronger than before. Most importantly, at DPSS we stayed true to our mission of improving the health, safety, wellbeing and independence of Riverside County's children, adults and families.

The Annual Report reflects some of the department's highlights for FY 22/23. I am grateful to belong to such a wonderful and dynamic team of big-hearted and caring professionals. Thank you to each DPSS team member, our county and community partners, for the dedication you each bring to our shared mission of serving and strengthening lives in the nation's tenth most populous county.

In Partnership and Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charity Douglas".

## Office of **Communication**



The newly established Office of Communication (OC) combines DPSS's communication resources, enhancing the capacity to inform the community about the department's transformative services. Bringing together public information, graphic design, and multimedia staff, the OC offers strategic communication, media relations, digital media, design, video, and more. In their first year, the team's internal communication efforts were recognized with a National Association of Counties Achievement Award and a Public Relations Society of America Inland Empire Chapter Polaris Award.

## Office of Health and Wellness **Brings Confidential Coaching, Wellness Resources to DPSS Staff**



The last quarter of FY 22/23 saw the launch of the new Office of Health and Wellness (OHW). The staff centered service was developed to enhance the well-being of the DPSS workforce by providing accessible, confidential coaching, resources and self-care tools. Deputy Director Lonetta R. Bryan, who heads the OHW, said the program reflects a longtime vision of the DPSS leadership team to foster a vibrant environment where staff are supported, acknowledged, valued and heard. A taskforce of social service professionals alongside the OHW team laid the groundwork for the office by adopting its mission, vision and values, establishing a logo and setting the stage for a staff governance council. The OHW formally began services to staff in the mid-summer 2023.



# Department Overview



## Mission

DPSS is dedicated to supporting and improving the health, safety, independence and well-being of individuals and families.

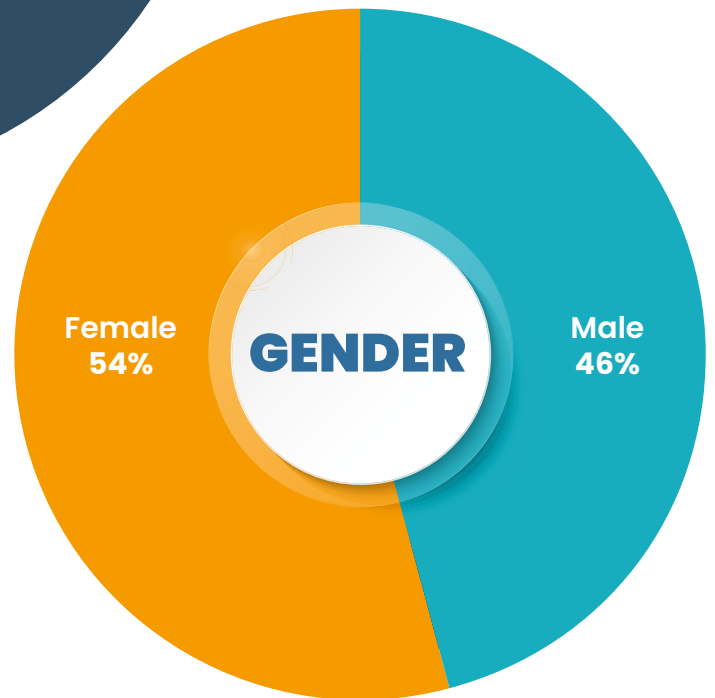
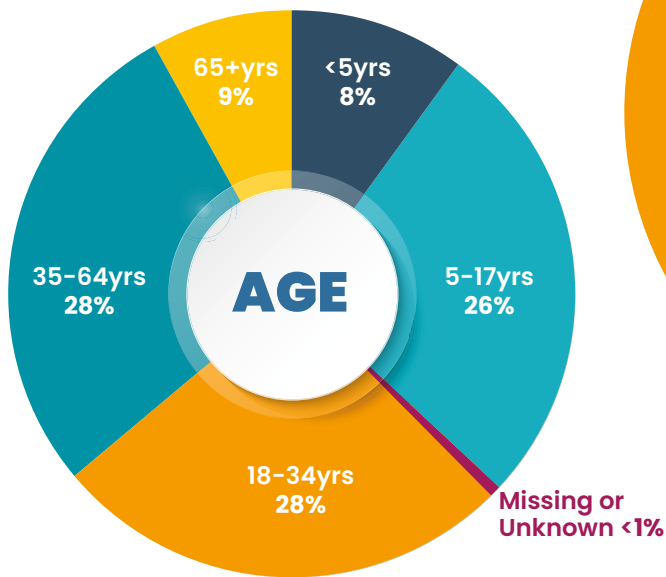
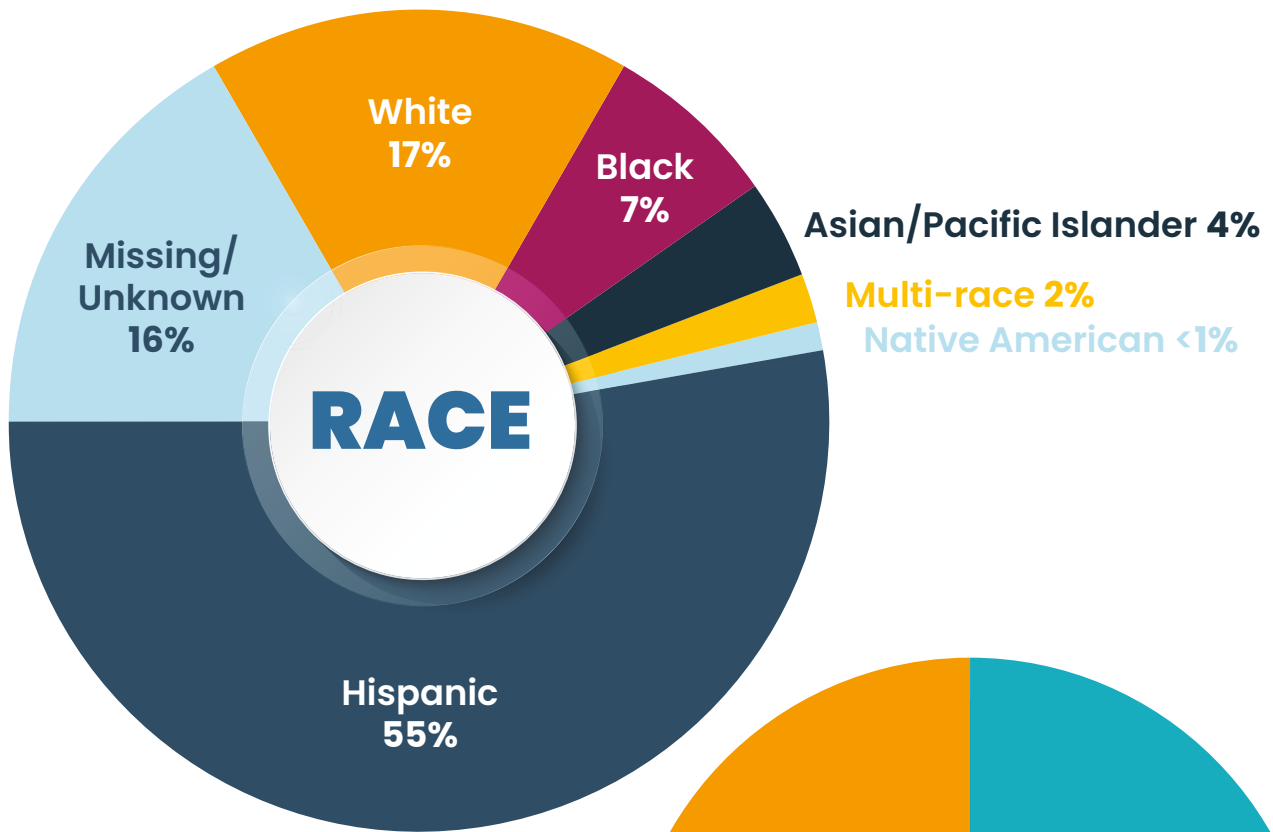
## Vision

DPSS is an innovative organization where caring professionals collaborate to provide the most effective solutions to customers.

## Values

- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Respect
- Diversity
- Integrity
- Customer Focus
- Learning

# Who We **Serve**



Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

# Adult Services Division



Assistant Director's  
**Message**  
Todd Bellanca

Our Adult Services team improved the safety and well-being of thousands of at-risk elder and dependent adults in Riverside County this past year by focusing on Prevention, Purpose, People, and Process.

**Prevention** - We collaborated with the Board of Supervisors, County Executive Office, county departments, community partners, and our clients to prevent abuse and financial exploitation along with creating safer environments and effective interventions for those at-risk. Our caring professionals advocated relentlessly on behalf of those who needed our support.

**Purpose** - By aligning our values with organizational priorities, our team demonstrated purpose in housing hundreds of unsheltered seniors by helping them access resources and providing them with unwavering support. Our compassionate staff empowered thousands of aging and dependent residents to continue living more independently in their own homes and communities.

**People** - People are at the center of our processes. Those people make up the Adult Services workforce, our partners who provide essential services and support, and the people we are honored to serve.

**Process** - The Adult Services team continues to refine our processes as an outgrowth of our commitment to continuous quality improvement and best outcomes. We appreciate everyone's commitment and effort to support or seniors and dependent adults.

Thank you to each member of the Adult Services team for your dedication and passion to service others in need. It truly takes all of us working together to the enhance safety and well- being of others.



# Adult Protective Services Social Workers of the Year

**ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES SOCIAL WORKERS RESPOND** to reports of suspected abuse of dependent adults and seniors aged 60 and older. They investigate cases involving neglect, self-neglect and finances. They respond to at-risk adults living in private homes, hotels, hospitals, or who are at risk or experiencing homelessness. APS social workers are dedicated to creating an environment of stability and safety for Riverside County adults.



## APS Division Social Worker of the Year Emmanuel Baxa

**AN UNHOUSED MAN WHO'D BEEN ON THE STREETS** for nearly a decade finally let his guard down to APS social worker Emmanuel Baxa, who helped his client find permanent housing. Emmanuel's colleagues in CRIS say he treats all clients with dignity, respecting their right to self-determination and helping them to live an independent life. Emmanuel has housed over 76 seniors. Emmanuel is passionate about his community and takes his role as an advocate for a vulnerable population with tremendous pride. "I like working with people, whether young or old, being able to give some guidance and seeing that individual succeed," Emmanuel says.

## Regional Adult Protective Services Social Workers of the Year

- |                      |          |                            |          |
|----------------------|----------|----------------------------|----------|
| Vonree Traylor ..... | CIC      | Lourdes Gonzalez.....      | Region 5 |
| Antonio Rivera ..... | Region 1 | Lise Johnson-Grimble ..... | Region 6 |
| Rochiele Davis ..... | Region 2 | Belen Vargas .....         | Region 7 |
| Ruth Ochoa.....      | Region 3 | Michelle Cardona.....      | Region 9 |
| Karen Ruiz .....     | Region 4 |                            |          |

# Adult Protective Services Spotlights



## Law Enforcement Summit Strengthens Collaboration and Safety

The Adult Services Division & the Elder Abuse Forensic Center (EAFC) partnered with multiple agencies on October 5 to offer the Law Enforcement Summit in Riverside. The summit enhances collaboration between investigative agencies while providing training, resources, and updates that impact elder and dependent adult abuse investigations. Attendees included professionals from the following fields: law enforcement, the District Attorney's Office, state investigators, Department of Justice, Community Care Licensing and social services.

### ADULT SERVICES PROTECTIVE SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS FY 22/23



# Adult Protective Services Spotlights



## Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Symposium **Educates Community Partners**

The Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Symposium on June 1 aimed to engage community partners in their shared mission of safeguarding elder and dependent adults from abuse. More than 430 professionals representing multiple agencies that provide direct client services participated. The event showcased 25 breakout sessions delivered by representatives in the social services, law enforcement, and medical fields. Evaluations indicated a 95.6% success rate among attendees who cited the opportunity to learn, network, and access resources as a valuable benefit.



# In-Home Supportive Services Spotlights



## Crisis Response and Intervention Services (CRIS) Team **Houses Vulnerable Adults**

**CRISIS RESPONSE AND INTERVENTION SERVICES (CRIS) TEAM IS AN ONGOING PROGRAM** to eliminate senior and dependent adult homelessness. CRIS debuted in late 2018 with one supervisor and five social services practitioners. Today, CRIS has grown to six supervisors and more than 30 staff. The goal of CRIS is to permanently house homeless APS clients by collaborating on solutions with community and county partners while keeping the client in the center of the decision making. In 2023 the CRIS team permanently housed over 200 seniors and dependent adults.



*The CRIS teams partners to find solutions for senior and dependent adult housing needs.*

# In-Home Supportive Services

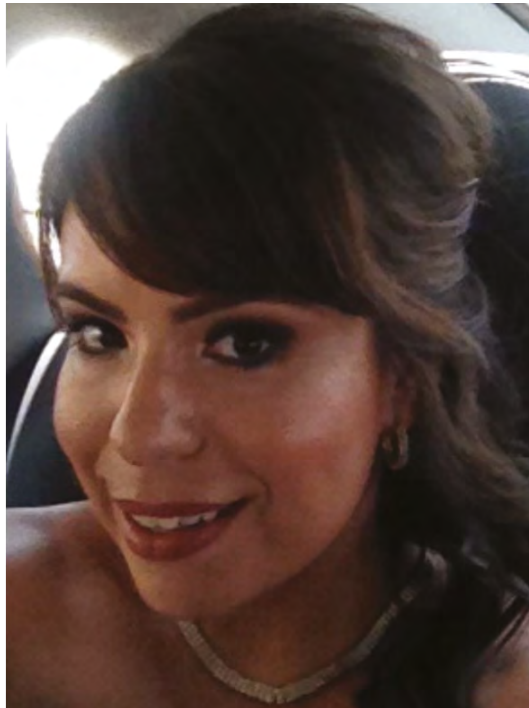
## IHSS Social Workers Help At-Risk Adults Stay Home



IHSS social workers are committed to the wellbeing of Riverside County's aging and dependent adults. They provide professional assessments of the needs of at-risk adults to ensure they receive in-home support that helps them live a more independent life in familiar settings, among family and friends. Social workers help safeguard vulnerable adults from fraud and abuse and provide access to a variety of resources, oversight and care.

### IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS FY 22/23





## IHSS Social Worker of the Year **Lizette Kim** Region 5

Lizette is committed to making sure her clients receive excellent customer service and she brings that same passion to her colleagues in the IHSS workforce. Her teammates credit Lizette with serving as a mentor and ensuring new staff receive support and have all their questions answered. Lizette also excelled in serving as an in-charge for her unit for four months. Lizette is the epitome of a well-rounded social worker who is focused on assisting wherever she can.

## Public Authority and IHSS Regions Social Workers of the Year

Jessica Diaz.....Public Authority	Michelle Roman ..... Region 3
Josiephine Manuel..... CIC	Cristal Arroyo-Martinez..... Region 4
Zarabeth Hurtado ..... Region 1	Jamiela Jones..... Region 6
Cathleen Kelly..... Region 2	Melanie Berg .....Region 7

# Public Authority **FY 22/23**



The DPSS Public Authority manages a registry that matches Riverside County residents enrolled in the IHSS program with a trusted in-home caregiver. IHSS services are primarily funded by the state Medi-Cal program. It offers many seniors and dependent adults an opportunity to remain in the safety and comfort of their own home rather than going to a residential or skilled-nursing facility.



## IHSS Caregivers Get **Trunk Loads of Appreciation**

### **MORE THAN 500 IHSS CAREGIVERS**

received fresh groceries, gift cards and tokens of appreciation at the November 2022 drive-through resource fairs at locations in the cities of Indio and Moreno Valley.

Hosted by the Riverside County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), Office on Aging, Foundation on Aging, and the In-Home Supportive Services Advisory Committee, the drive-thru resource fairs took place during National Family Caregivers Month which is celebrated each November. In FY 22/23, more than 40,000 IHSS caregivers provided support to 47,300 IHSS clients in Riverside County.



Caregiving is a nearly universal experience, and it is a heroic act of love.

**TIFFANY NELSON**

Supervising Program Specialist

“Caregiving is a nearly universal experience, and it is a heroic act of love,” said Tiffany Nelson, Supervising Program Specialist for the Public Authority at DPSS. “We are grateful to our caregiver heroes that work around the clock to ensure that our most vulnerable residents live healthily and with dignity in their homes.”

# Children's Services Division



## Assistant Director's Message

Bridgette Hernandez

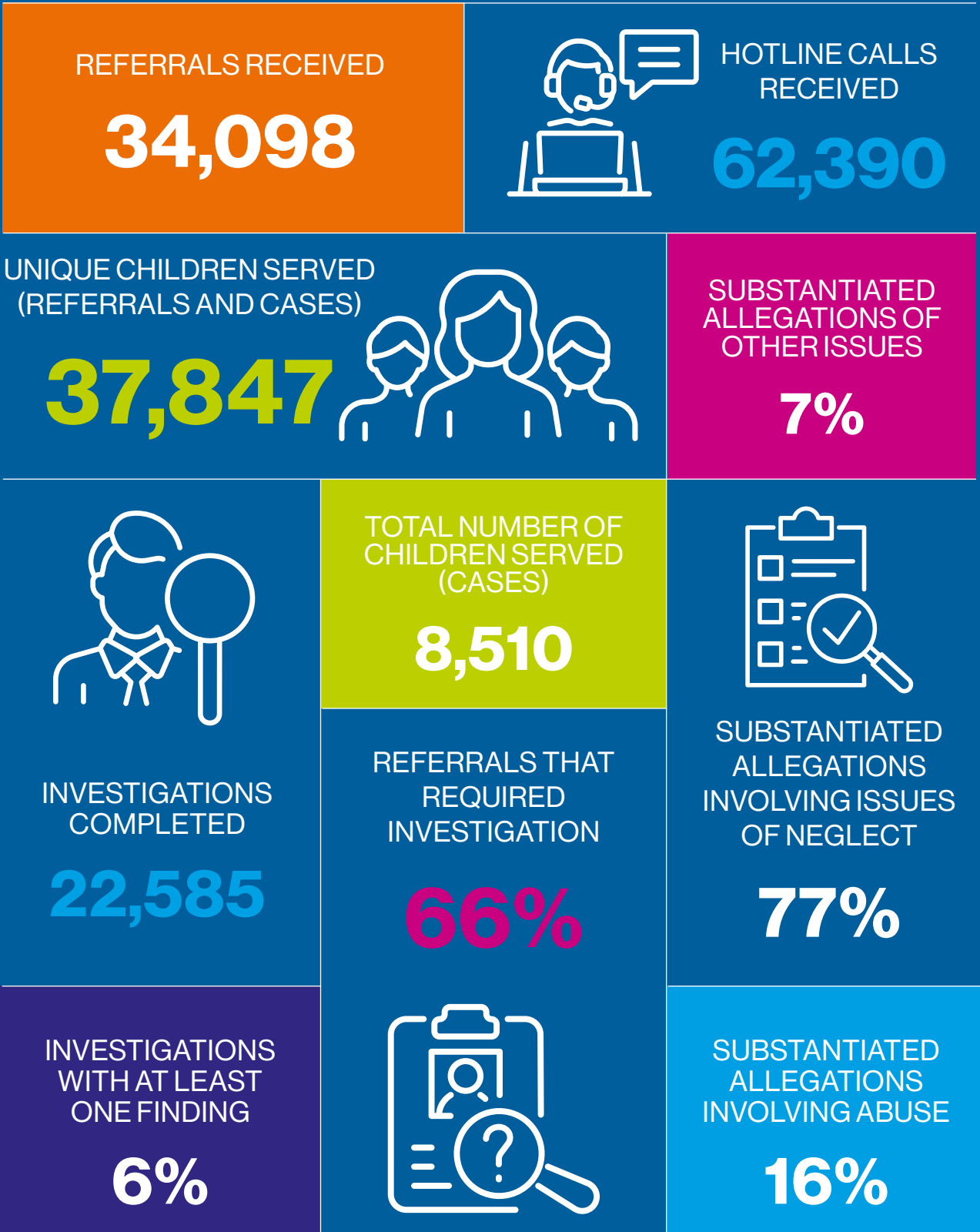
**SOME OF THE GREATEST REWARDS IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES** are strengthening at-risk children and families through resources and professional support, uniting waiting children with permanent loving families and protecting our youngest community members from abuse and neglect. The dedicated teams in Children's Services accomplished that mission in FY 22/23 – and much more. We collaborated with internal and external partners to introduce new solutions for youth in care who faced complex challenges in their lives. I am proud and grateful for the Children's Services team members who, each day, improve the well-being of Riverside County's children and families. The year ahead is much brighter for everyone because of you!





# CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## BY THE NUMBERS FY 22/23





# Children's Services Social Worker of the Year **Wendy Wilson, SSP III**

## Breaking Barriers for Children and Families

When she was just 10 years old, Wendy Wilson went to her school career day dressed as a “social worker.” Even back then, the 2023 Social Worker of the Year for Children’s Services Division knew what she wanted to be when she grew up. Wendy says she was inspired to this work by her dad, a district attorney’s investigator for Riverside County in the 1980s, who sometimes handled difficult child abuse cases. Now serving in the Diamond Valley Region, Wendy says respect is her key to working with children and families who might be struggling with abuse and neglect.

“You have to have respect,” Wendy says. “Everyone, no matter what they’ve done or what people have done to them – they’re human beings. Listen to them. Give them respect and compassion. It goes a long way.”

## CSD 2023 Social Workers of the Year By Region

Hannan Salem .....	Resource Family Approval	Anel Trevino .....	Court Services
Melissa Nayotl .....	Mid County	Kylie Padilla .....	West Corridor
Smitha Jetti .....	Special Operations & Adoptions	Sydney Woodfield.....	Southwest
Karla Rubio .....	Metro	Chandra Hejduk.....	Youth & Community Resources
Arlena Avina.....	Desert	Leia Neitzel.....	Command Post
Silvia Alvarez.....	Special Investigations	Cristal Ramirez.....	Placement
Erin Ellis .....	Valley	Quonteisha Wymb.....	Child Intake Center
Wendy Ingram.....	Policy & Technology		

# Children's Services **Spotlights**



## Project Graduate mentors inspire teens **to achieve high school graduation**

The Riverside County Bar Association and the Administration of the Courts partner with the DPSS Independent Living Program (ILP) to offer Project Graduate to interested youth aged 16 and older. A volunteer Educational Representative is appointed by the Court to mentor and advocate for the youth's educational needs. A monthly update on the youth's progress toward graduation is conducted at the Riverside Juvenile Court. Incentives are offered to support their success in the program.

A total of 13 students participated in Project Graduate during FY 22/23. Three of those participants successfully graduated high school. Project Graduate hosts an annual luncheon at the end of the academic year to celebrate students who graduated and to inspire students still in the program to work toward graduation. Graduates receive a new laptop and gift card incentives to celebrate their success.

## Annual CSEC conference combats commercial **sexual exploitation of children and youth**

“Let’s Start the Conversation” was the theme of January’s annual human trafficking forum, sponsored by the DPSS Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) program. Nearly 200 stakeholders attended the virtual forum, which focused on deterring sex crimes against children and preventing youth from falling victim to sex traffickers.

Panelists included representatives from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, Crime Survivors for Safety & Justice, the Organization for Social Media Safety and the Barbara Sinatra Children’s Center. Topics included grooming, male survivorship and services for



victims and trauma-informed care. The forum provided an opportunity for attendees to interact with local partners who play a vital role in the identification, prevention and intervention of human trafficking.

## Community Partners Forum strengthens **services for at-risk children and families**

Nearly 300 human services professionals who focus on child abuse prevention convened at the Moreno Valley Convention Center in early November to focus on improving services and outcomes for Riverside County’s at-risk children and families. The annual Community Partners Forum was sponsored by DPSS, Riverside County Probation and HOPE Collaborative for Child Abuse Prevention.

Riverside County Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) team members were keynote presenters. They shared QPI principles to highlight the importance of supporting children in the child welfare system by establishing partnerships between birth parents and resource families. Panel members included a birth father, resource parents and

a Parent Partner. Their discussion centered on identifying resources, skills, and services to support families and provide them with the tools and connections to successfully navigate the child welfare system by building strong relationships. The collaboration inspired hope and a vision of the positive outcomes that can be achieved by cultivating supportive relationships and community partnerships.

“We are all here for the same reasons,” said Bridgette Hernandez, assistant director of Children’s Services Division. “We all care about the children and families in our communities and our county. We all want what’s best for them. It’s amazing to see the excitement and presence of our partners. It’s fantastic to be together.”

# Annual Adoption Day in November puts focus on permanency and love



**341**

adoptions finalized in FY 22/23

“

*When I was younger, I always wanted to be adopted. But as I grew older, I gave up on that dream. When I met my parents, they reminded me of everything I wanted in a family, everything I dreamed of as a child, and they opened that door up for me again*

**JESUS NEGRETE (18)**  
on the day of his adoption

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY HELD ITS ANNUAL ADOPTION FINALIZATION DAY** at court houses in Riverside and Indio the first Saturday in November. Adoption Finalization Day is a momentous time when a child legally becomes a permanent member of their adoptive family.

While adoptions are finalized throughout the year, the special event draws attention to the importance of family and permanency for children and teens. A total of 80 children and youth were adopted by 50 families during the day's proceedings.

It was a day 18-year-old Jesus Negrete once believed would never happen for him. Jesus was adopted by Brian and Chandra Concannon. The Riverside couple, in their 60s, fostered Jesus for about a year and made the decision to adopt him.

“When I was younger, I always wanted to be adopted. But as I grew older, I gave up on that

dream,” Jesus said. “When I met my parents, they reminded me of everything I wanted in a family, everything I dreamed of as a child, and they opened that door up for me again.”

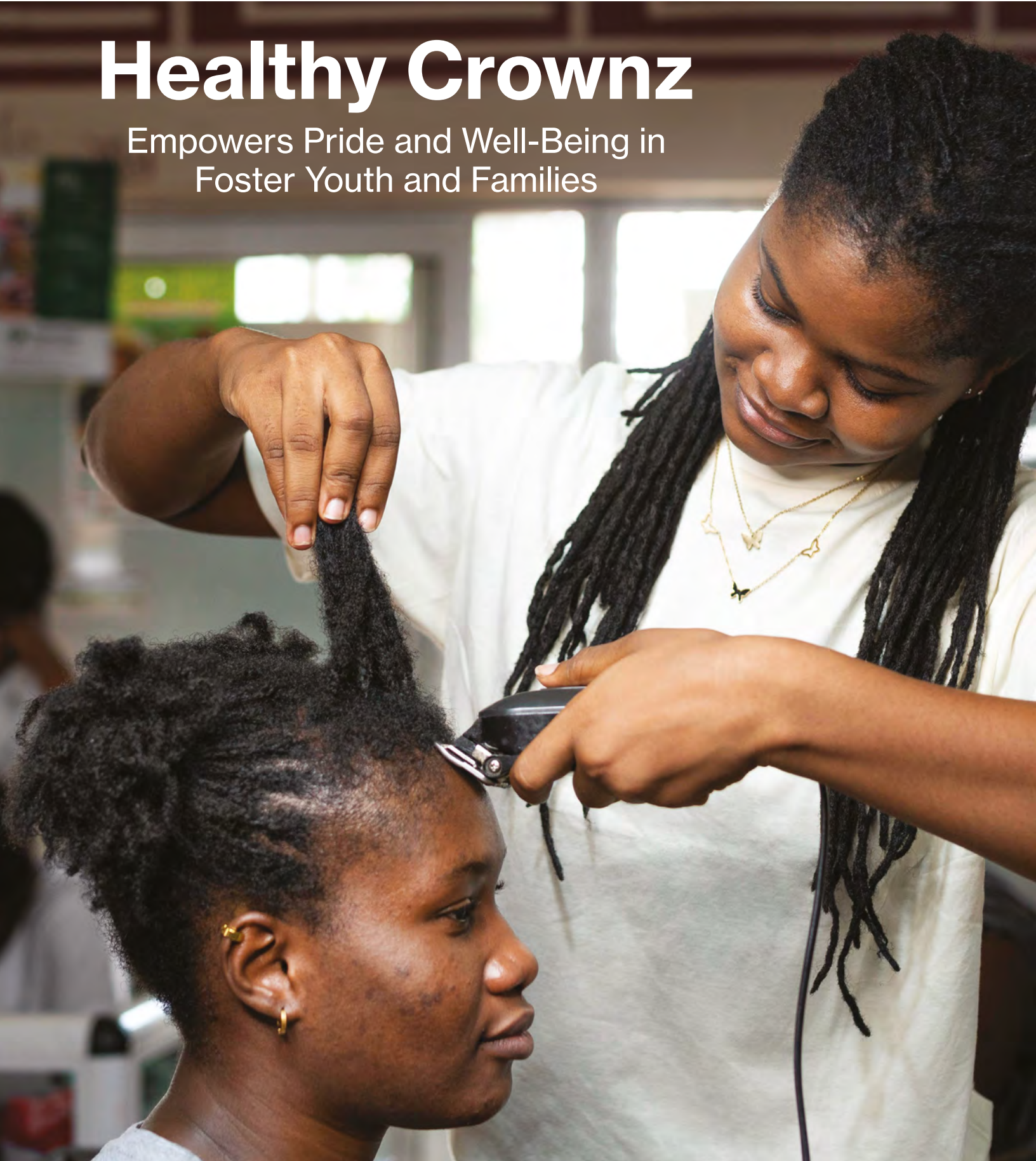
The 13th annual event was made possible by many agencies and individuals working together including county workers at all levels, court personnel, judges, adoption workers, and community-based organizations.

Six volunteer judges oversaw the adoption proceedings. Judge Mark Petersen, presiding judge of the Juvenile Court said: “the court recognizes how important it is for all involved agencies to come together and support the new beginnings each of these families will have as they move forward as a family.”

For information on fostering or adoption in Riverside County, call 1-800-665-KIDS (5437) or visit [rivcodpss.org](http://rivcodpss.org).

# Healthy Crownz

Empowers Pride and Well-Being in Foster Youth and Families





**IN LATE FEBRUARY 2023, DPSS COLLABORATED WITH RUHS FOUNDATION AND THE MSAADA FOUNDATION** to host the inaugural Healthy Crownz event. The day of free hair care and fun at Barbara's Beauty Salon in Moreno Valley, catered to children in out-of-home care. Nearly a dozen stylists, barbers, and braiders generously volunteered their time and expertise to provide washing, cuts, braids, and styling. More than 50 children and their foster families participated in the heartwarming and meaningful day. Face painting, dress and curls, and a game truck added to the fun. The

commitment of volunteers and organizers made Healthy Crownz possible.

Events such as Healthy Crownz are instrumental in fostering community bonds, forging partnerships, and extending crucial resources and support to those who need it most. By empowering children through personalized hair care and offering them a memorable and enjoyable experience, community partners and volunteers contributed to their well-being and sense of empowerment.

# Self Sufficiency Division



## Assistant Director's Message

Allison Gonzalez

The increase in enrollment in our Self-Sufficiency programs during FY 22/23 is a direct result of the consistent and expanded access our teams are bringing to communities across Riverside County.

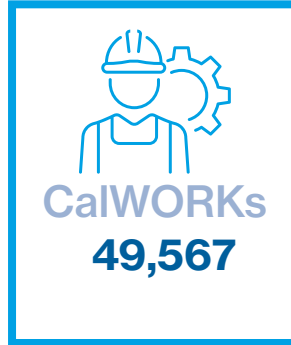
Roughly one in three of Riverside County's 2.5 million residents accessed at least one Self-Sufficiency program during the year. Whether it's health coverage, food assistance, workforce development, housing support, childcare or general aide, we are making sure resources are available when hardships arise or disasters strike. We are strengthening our partnerships with other county and community agencies to ensure our customers have seamless pathways to solutions that promote their overall health safety and well-being. Thank you to the Self-Sufficiency team for your commitment to excellence and community service.





## SELF-SUFFICIENCY SERVICES

BY THE NUMBERS FY 22/23 MONTHLY AVERAGE PERSONS SERVED



## CalWORKS Sparks **Can-Do** in Clients

CalWORKs is a multi-faceted program which provides financial support to low-income families with children. The program works in conjunction with CalFresh and Medi-Cal to ensure a family's basic needs of food, housing, and health care coverage are met. CalWORKs families have access to subsidiary programs including temporary and permanent homeless assistance, subsidized childcare, and the Welfare-to-Work Employment Services program. The multi-pronged approach of CalWORKs instills a Can-Do mindset to help clients become independent of public assistance.



## Valley Wide Employment Expo **Links Jobs and Seekers**

The 27th Valley Wide Employment Expo took place in late 2022 after a two-year break during the COVID-19 pandemic. The event at Fantasy Springs Casino attracted 610 job seekers, 90 employers, and provided opportunities for over 150 job openings. The expo offered an ideal

setting for job seekers to access an abundance of resources and opportunities. Community involvement, which included media, business leaders, government leaders, and collaboration with Riverside County partners was key to the success of this event.

# WELFARE-TO-WORK

Connects CalWORKs Families to Employment, Stable Housing and Education



The Welfare to Work (WTW) program strives to stabilize families by connecting them to employment, housing, and educational opportunities. Through programs such as Expanded Subsidized Employment (ESE), the Housing Support Program (HSP) and educational partnerships, families can work towards their goal of self-sufficiency.

**MARK HODGE, NOW A FULL-TIME ELIGIBILITY TECHNICIAN WITH DPSS, WAS CONNECTED TO SERVICES WHEN HIS FAMILY EXPERIENCED HARDSHIPS BECAUSE OF THE PANDEMIC. HE SHARES HIS STORY BELOW:**

“When COVID-19 came along, the country shut down and all our clients were staying home so our business dried up. We had to apply for services to keep our heads above water. Part of the Welfare to Work program policy was for my wife and I to find work. My Employment Services Counselor offered me a chance to work with the County of Riverside as a TAP employee. My wife was also able to start the RCOE Dental Assistance program. I never thought I would need to use the services from those programs myself to help my family. They had me enroll in the Housing Support Program and helped my family catch up on back rent. Without their help or the help from those outstanding programs, I really have no idea where we would be.

I promoted to a full-time county employee. I am now able to pass on the knowledge I learned to customers coming in to find some kind of help. I have been able to help families coming in start the path of self-sufficiency. To see the stress on these parents' faces turn to excitement was awesome because there was a way out and they felt the County of Riverside was there to help. It made me feel good as I felt I was doing some good in the world. Between the County of Riverside and their hard work, they were making stride in their lives. I can honestly say that the HSP and WTW programs offered by the County of

Riverside are life savers. They saved my family's life and the work the programs are doing is saving the lives of needy families throughout Riverside County. I will always support those programs because they are what is right within the government. Helping families find self-sufficiency, like mine, is irreplaceable.”



*Mark Hodge*

**EXPANDED SUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT (ESE)**

- Over 400 DPSS customers became employed through our Expanded Subsidized Employment (ESE) program. ESE has a tremendous impact on DPSS customers, increasing household income, providing work experience toward a career path, and improving the quality of life for the whole family.

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION (RCOE)**

- Through our collaboration with the Riverside County Office of Education, 50 DPSS customers completed Pharmacy, Medical, Dental Assistant and Patient Care training programs leading to opportunities and careers in the medical field. This partnership creates a clear path to self-sufficiency for our customers and their families and provides our partners in the medical field with a talent pipeline to fill critical openings that support the services they provide to our communities.

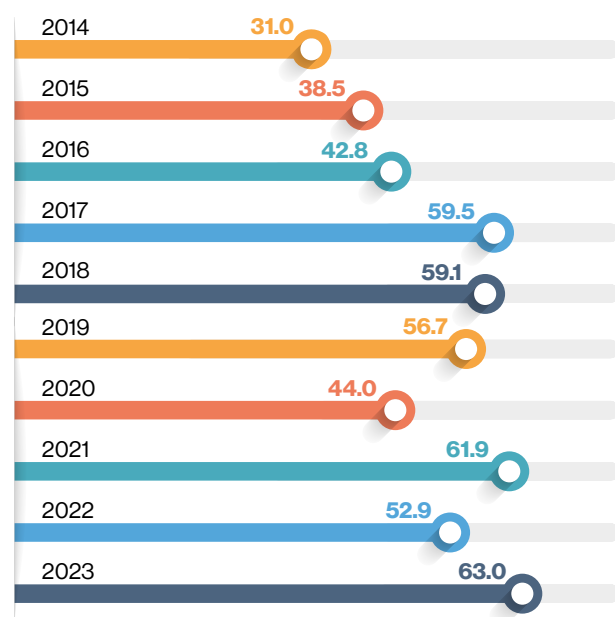
**HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM (HSP)**

- The HSP offers Riverside County CalWORKs families experiencing or at-risk for homelessness support in obtaining temporary, permanent, and stable housing. Over 350 families were connected to permanent and stable housing during the fiscal year, receiving rental subsidies through

the program to help them stabilize, with eligible families transitioning to other programs such as Section 8. The HSP also assisted 66 families with eviction prevention services, allowing them to maintain their current housing.

**WORK PARTICIPATION RATE (WPR)** – 63 %  
Weighted WPR for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023 (October 2022 – September 2023) was an all-time high.

**Work Participation  
All Families Rate**



## Community Outreach Branch

**THE COMMUNITY OUTREACH BRANCH (COB) TEAM CONTINUES TO ENHANCE OUTREACH**

activities through transparent pathways to access Self-Sufficiency programs and services to support each customer we serve.

During FY 22/23, COB attended 350 outreach events and reached approximately 65,000 participants. We expanded our mobile outreach services by including the CalWORKS and General Assistance programs and an EBT machine into our vans.

Highlights for this fiscal year includes the September 2022 Hemet Fire Outreach, COB provided emergency 3-day support to impacted residents. Shortly thereafter, we educated the community on the Medi-Cal expansion for adults over 50 and provided enrollment access at the TODEC Perris event. Both events allowed our team to serve our most vulnerable population, including elderly, unhoused, individuals with a disability, farm workers and non-citizens.

# Community Outreach Branch Brings Resources and Hope

## Senior Program Specialist Brings Access to Vulnerable Communities

Marivel Castaneda is determined to help individuals and families in Riverside County access the Self-Sufficiency programs they need to improve their health and well-being. With more than 20-years' experience, the Senior Program Specialist leads the department's Community Outreach Branch (COB). COB continues to expand its presence and assistance in underserved communities by forging strong connections with local partners.

Marivel's colleagues and customers say she listens carefully and helps customers find the right pathways to programs. "She sets an example and meets each customer in their own space," says one of Marivel's supervisors. "Her dedication is demonstrated in her tireless efforts to educate the community about how to access safety-net services."

Marivel frequently conducts presentations for external community organizations and safety-net partners. She is committed to delivering excellent customer service and bringing quality customer service to both English and Spanish-speaking populations.



# Administrative Services Division



## Assistant Director's Message

Carl Letamendi

**THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES TEAM WORKS EFFECTIVELY** behind the scenes delivering day-to-day business solutions, strategic planning, policy and operational support to the department's internal partners, external customers and community stakeholders. The four branches of the Administrative Services Division: Workforce Development, Operations and Infrastructure Support, Administrative Management and Support, Strategic Planning and Analytics, collaborate across DPSS to ensure the success of our shared mission to protect and uplift vulnerable children, adults and families in Riverside County.

Over the past fiscal year, Administrative Services implemented a comprehensive strategic plan to promote continuous quality improvement and strengthen our role as an integrated partner within our organization and Riverside County's Human Services portfolio. Our teams were instrumental in working with internal and external partners to open the new Harmony Haven Children and Youth Center, which serves youth experiencing disruptions in their care.

Whether we were helping a social worker access a county vehicle, repairing and re-opening a public building, setting up community mass care shelters, training a professional workforce or delivering the mail, the contributions of the approximately 400-member Administrative Services team empowered DPSS to serve 1.12 million lives over the year. Thank you to each member of our team for bringing your very best to our colleagues and communities each day.

# Administrative Management and Support Branch

The Administrative Management and Support Branch is made up of three distinct units: Eligibility Administrative (EAS), Internal Services (IS), Program Development and Grants Management. AMSB strengthens DPSS divisions and programs through bid solicitation and procurement, and quality control and integrity of benefit programs. The team accesses public and private grants to fund existing programs and new initiatives.

FY 22/23	
Contracts/MOUs/State Agreements Managed	734
Dollar Amount of Contracts/MOUs/State Agreements	\$109 Million
Purchase Orders Issued	1582
P-Card Transactions by Buyers	4250
Vital Records Request	1560
Vehicles in DPSS Fleet	503
Vehicle Maintenance Coordinated	1404
Gen 30 Reports Approved	1919
Travel Requests Processed	1440
Flight Reservations	816
Rental Car Reservations	1023
Hotel Reservations	806
Registrations (Conferences, etc)	421
Travelers Processed (ex. SW + clients)	1852
New Contracts Assigned	104
MOU's/MOA's Assigned	26
Amendments/Renewals	108
Form 11s Adopted	43
Bid Solicitations Posted	14



## Internal Services Unit

Internal Services is the primary source for contract and solicitation of services, procurement, travel requests, vehicle management and vital records requests. Strong support and outstanding customer service from the Internal Services team improves the daily workflow and allows staff to focus on their tasks and the many needs of our customers.

# Program Development and Grants Management

The Program Development and Grants Management unit promotes the mission of DPSS by expanding the department's resources through federal, state, and local funding grant opportunities. PDGM also administers the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program, and Community Care Expansion, with a combined budget of \$13 million. CEE provides funding to keep qualified adult and senior care facilities open and serving vulnerable adults.

Grant Applications Submitted **11** | Grants Awarded **\$26 Million**



## Eligibility Administrative Services

The Eligibility Administrative Services team promotes public trust by reviewing and determining the accuracy and eligibility of program benefits provided to DPSS customers. By identifying error trends and ensuring program integrity, the EAS team assures Adult Services, Children's Services, and Self-Sufficiency programs are meeting State and Federal standards.

Income Eligibility Verification Systems (IEVS) Cases Reviewed .....	292,315
Quality Control-Work Participation Rate Reviews .....	1,784
Quality Control-CalFresh Cases Reviewed .....	559
Administrative Hearings.....	6,145
<b>TOTAL CASES REVIEWED .....</b>	<b>300,803</b>



# Operations and Infrastructure Support Branch

The OIS Branch supports DPSS with Facilities, Technology and Support Services, Independent Review Group, Program Technology and CalSAWS. These teams equip frontline workers with the tools and resources they need to complete their jobs while providing oversight to ensure the responsible use of funding.

## DPSS Facilities

The Facilities team supports the department with a variety of functions including building improvements, building maintenance, mail and supply delivery, records management, print services, and building safety and security. The Facilities team knows their work provides a vital link between DPSS facilities and the staff and visitors who access them.



FY 22/23	
DPSS Buildings	36
Pieces of Mail Processed	817,106
Total Square Footage of DPSS Facilities	1.2 million
Self Sufficiency Applications Printed	401,400
Records Management Files Purged	91,174
Facilities Support Work Orders Completed	5,294
Office Supplies Requests Completed	1,047
Planning Projects Completed	70
Long-term Case Records Stored	1.2 million
Geographic Information System Requests Closed	5,593

## A \$1.5 million annual savings for the department

The La Sierra Consolidation project was finalized. Lobbies were reconfigured to meet the needs of the Children's Services and Self-Sufficiency divisions, and to enhance customer services by consolidating space and decommissioning another building in the La Sierra region.



## Technology and Support **Services Unit**

FY 22/23	
Computer Hardware Requests Processed	7,971
Software Requests Processed	6,713
Mobility Related Requests Processed	3,486
Upgraded All Out-of-Date Cell Phones	2,352

**WHEN STAFF NEED HELP WITH SOFTWARE**, computers, cell phones, printers, scanners and headsets, they call Technology and Support Services. TSS keeps DPSS equipment running smoothly and efficiently, making sure all systems are compatible and compliant with county policies. The TSS team understands how important reliable technology is to the mission-critical services of DPSS.

## Program **Technology**

Collaboration and leadership from the Program Technology team paved the way for the statewide automated welfare system known as CalSAWS, a one-stop shop that streamlines customer applications and access to self-sufficiency services. The team also helps customers recover self-sufficiency benefits that are lost or stolen. They know their work keeps our customers connected to the help they need when they need it.

FY 22/23	
Security Administration Actions	10,468
Electronic Benefit Transfers (EBT) Theft Claims Processed	5,179
Service Tickets Processed	8,665



EBT theft claims climbed from less than 10 to more than 1,000 per month in FY 22/23



## Independent Review Group

The IRG team ensures DPSS' clients receive the services they requested by conducting contract performance audits and other engagements required by state and federal regulations. By accurately and responsibly tracking assets and providing oversight of resources, the IRG ensures DPSS is operating with the highest levels of transparency, accountability and public trust.

Assets Managed **42,528**

Audits Completed **45**



## Workforce Development **Branch**

**THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BRANCH SERVES DPSS AND THE COMMUNITY** through three primary units: Human Resources (which is being renamed in 2024 to the Employee Success Center), Staff Development, and Mass Care. Our teams engage the community and DPSS workforce with innovative systems to attract top-notch employees to support their professional experiences. When Riverside County households are facing displacement disasters, our competent and compassionate Mass Care team is there. By supporting a vibrant and well-trained staff, the Workforce Development branch is also supporting the wellbeing of our many communities and residents.

## Human **Resources**

(Being renamed **Employee Success Center** in 2024!)

In FY 22/23, the Human Resources team found better ways to serve employees at all levels, from recruitment, onboarding, recognition, evaluation, training and development through retirement. Specialized units in Human Resources include Employee Development, Compliance Services, Employee Services, and the Policy team, which oversee nearly 200 department policies and conduct administrative hearings on behalf of DPSS customers. Together, DPSS Human Resources – soon to be the Employee Success Center – is strengthening our workforce and fostering a culture where each team member feels safe, valued, and supported.

# 4,740+

DPSS Employees Served  
in FY 22/23

Human Resources Recruited  
and hired more than 300 Social  
Services Practitioners III, and  
Eligibility Technicians I/II  
in FY 22/23.

**THE ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY TEAM** deployed a more efficient process to reduce the comment period on all policy products by 10 days and spearheaded the department's first joint policy development between Adult, Children's and Self-Sufficiency divisions.

## Staff Development

Equipping DPSS staff with the tools, resources, and competencies to support the health, safety and well-being of individuals and families in Riverside County is the focus of our mission in Staff Development. Our trainers employ virtual and in-person teaching modalities to impart skills, knowledge and abilities to our newest employees all the way to the department's executive leaders. By supporting the continuous growth and success of the DPSS workforce, the team at Staff Development is strengthening individuals and families in Riverside County and beyond.



*Jesus Rodriguez*  
**Trainer of the Year**



Virtual and In-Person Classes Held **3,723**

Staff Attending Online and In-Person Trainings **85,402**



# Mass Care Services

## Sheltering Communities from Disaster

*As Mass Care responders, we can provide residents a moment of peace and a safe place to go during a time of stress and uncertainty, when needed.*

**TRACEY NESDALE**  
Employment Services Counselor

DPSS Response Partners include American Red Cross, Riverside County Emergency Management Department, Riverside University Health System (RUHS) Public Health and RUHS Behavioral Health, Riverside County Animal Services, Riverside County Office on Aging, the Salvation Army, DPSS Adult Services, In-Home Supportive Services and the Special Investigations Unit.

**WHEN RIVERSIDE COUNTY RESIDENTS ARE FACING DISPLACEMENT FROM NATURAL OR MANMADE DISASTERS**, the DPSS Mass Care team is there to address their need for safety. DPSS is the lead organization for Mass Care in Riverside County. In FY 22/23, its capabilities were stretched as teams assisted households that experienced displacement from hazmat incidents, wildfires and floods.

DPSS staff volunteers who make themselves available to residents and communities in crisis provide mass care and social service support at the shelters. During a tumultuous year, Mass Care volunteers worked around the clock to offer comfort and a welcoming, safe place to those who were displaced. As part of the greater Riverside County and DPSS communities, the Mass Care team is committed to offering care with compassion in all areas of human services.

DPSS Mass Care Volunteers **300**  
Disasters **14**  
Mass Care Shelters **14**



## Strategic Planning and **Analytics Branch**

The Strategic Planning and Analytics Branch collaborates with executive leaders and stakeholders to facilitate implementation of DPSS' strategic initiatives. Our collaborative approach in partnering with colleagues across the department, county, and community reflects our commitment to providing tailored expertise assistance in achieving key initiatives. Our collaborative spirit and strategic processes ensure that DPSS divisions, stakeholders and customers benefit from a unified and forward-thinking perspective.

The Strategic Planning and Analytics Branch consists of two units: Office of Strategy and Project Management and Office of Research, Analysis and Decision Support (RADS).



## Office of Strategy and Project Management

The Office of Strategy and Project Management builds department-wide management capabilities by leading organizational processes (including operationalization of strategic planning, enterprise project management, and data-driven organizational performance reviews), overseeing internal and external consulting services and building capability in continuous process improvement.

In FY 22/23, the OSPM team trailblazed new paths by supporting continuous quality improvement services to improve system processes. This involved embedding Lean principles and training to enhance efficiencies and services. OSPM worked closely with executives and staff on a variety of ad hoc projects including the development, troubleshooting and launch of the new DPSS Intranet site; high-profile executive reports; key performance indicator dashboard, and interdepartmental data-based program evaluations.

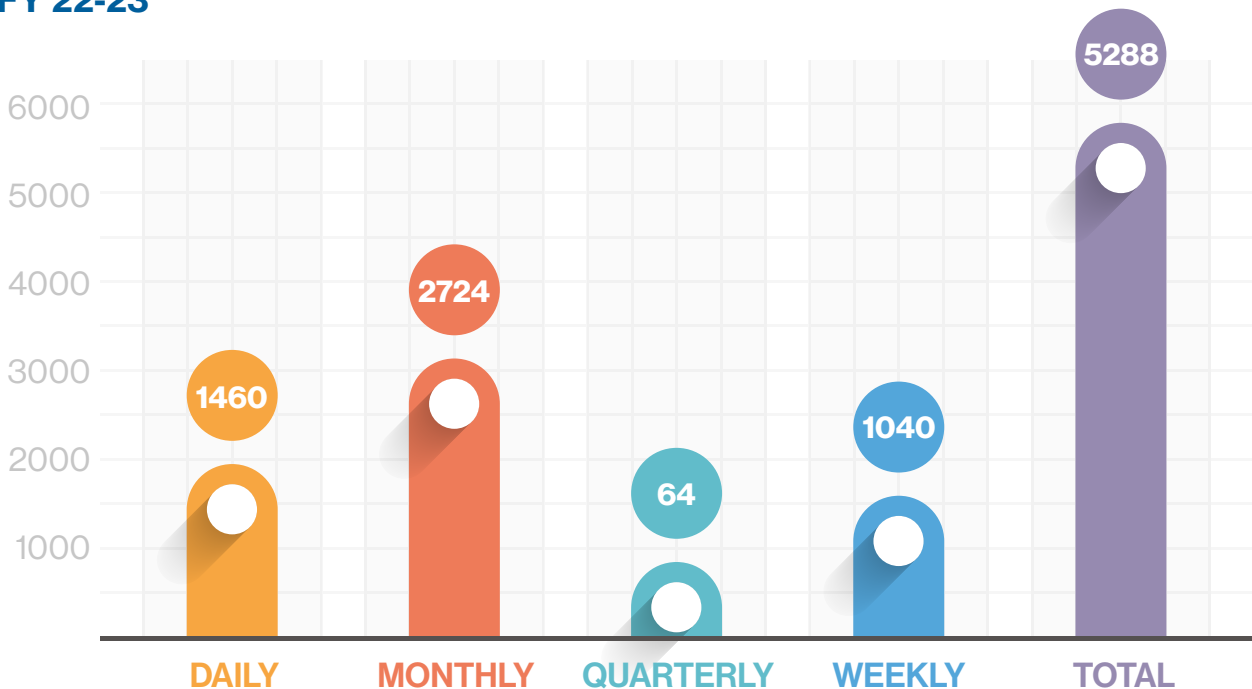


# Office of Research, Analysis and Decision Support

Data-informed decision making is essential to the success of DPSS services and programs. The RADS team provides quality and timely data to inform programs, leadership and policymakers about the challenges and needs of DPSS customers.

In FY 22/23, RADS processed 150 new ad hoc reporting requests; ran a total of 267 ongoing reports on a daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis, conducted recurring data sharing with 27 Riverside County school districts to support direct certification for free or reduced price school lunches; evaluated services of 31 contracted providers to children and families in Child Protective Services; and shared data to support CalWORKs and Medi-Cal service recipients including agreements with the Inland Empire Health Plan, First 5 Riverside, Molina Health Care, and the Riverside County Office of Education.

## Reports Run By RADS FY 22-23



# Finance and Forecasting Division

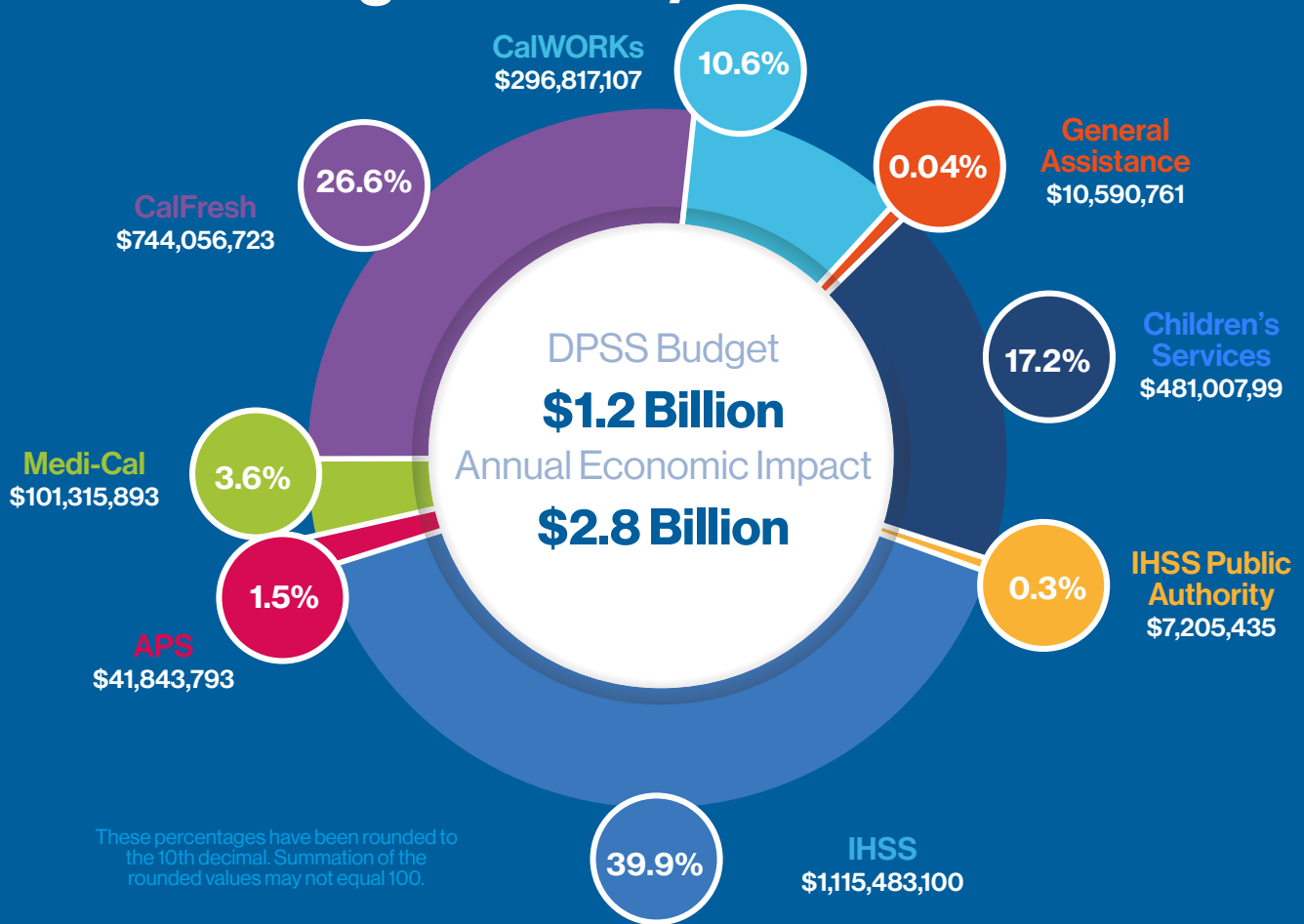


Assistant Director's  
**Message**  
Monica Bentley

The Finance and Forecasting Division (FFD) provides budgeting, financial analysis, and accounting services to facilitate the delivery of social services to Riverside County residents. Although our team works behind the scenes, we focus each day on delivering the highest level of customer service to our internal and external customers. Knowing our team plays a role in bringing vital resources to individuals and families in need is one of the most fulfilling aspects of our work. We are honored to serve in DPSS among colleagues who also are passionate about improving and empowering lives in communities across Riverside County.



# Department of Public Social Services Total Budget FY 22/23



Requested Information	Total	Admin	Other
<b>The Total Budget Managed for the Department</b>	\$1,226,428,624		
Expense claims processed	\$ 1,209,890,691	\$ 754,764,648	\$ 455,126,043
Money recovered through collection	\$ 7,201,102		
Contract invoices processed	\$ 60,012,433		
<b>Final Expenditures by Category (benefits administered)</b>			
1. CalFresh	\$744,056,723	\$101,294,073	\$642,762,650
2. CalWORKs	\$296,817,107	\$95,160,564	\$201,656,543
3. General Assistance	\$10,590,761	\$1,906,507	\$8,684,253
4. CSD	\$481,007,99	\$252,278,536	\$228,729,458
5. IHSS Public Authority	\$7,205,435		\$7,205,435
6. Adult Services (IHSS)	\$1,115,483,100	\$38,861,703	\$1,076,621,398
7. APS	\$41,843,793	\$34,858,039	\$6,985,754
8. Medi-Cal	\$101,315,893	\$101,315,893	

# Principal Accountant and Team Expand Understanding of Staff Attrition



By enhancing and streamlining the Fiscal Attrition Report, Principal Accountant Padmapriya (Priya) Kedharnath and her team provided DPSS executives with a stronger tool for understanding attrition data and making decisions about recruitment and retention. Priya combined her knowledge of the Human Resources Management Systems with her technical skills to develop queries that offered greater detail for the reasons behind staff departures. She and her team created a report that separately showed the same level of detail for all staff transferring between divisions in DPSS. The reports allow program executives to monitor trends in length of service in addition to the reasons for their departure.

Priya and her team continue to collaborate with Program staff on additional changes that will meet their reporting needs. Phase II of the FFD Attrition Report is set to rollout in July 2023. The upcoming report will contain new elements, such as attrition data broken down by job classification for casework staff. The insights are invaluable when helping program executives identify classifications with the highest turnover rate and helping them tailor initiatives to improve retention.





## Internal Teams Collaborate on EBT Customer Service Solutions

When a spike in skimmed and scammed electronic benefit transfer claims (EBT) began in mid-June, teams from the Finance and Forecasting Division and Program Technology unit collaborated to improve the process of replacing customers' stolen benefits. The teams wanted to counter the exponential increase in criminal activity that resulted in 5,744 claims from victims of theft totaling \$3.626 million during FY 22/23. These funds were essential for low-income households to put food on their tables.

By working with Systems Accounting, the teams developed a new application in Access. The application was used to effectively manage the spike in demand during the initial impacts of widespread EBT skimming and scamming. Their tool bridged the gap until more robust tools could be implemented. Importantly, the application strengthened coordination between staff to help clients get their stolen benefits replaced accurately and timely.

Criminal activity  
resulted in  
**5,744 claims**  
from victims of theft  
totaling  
**\$3.626**  
**million**  
during FY 22/23.

# DPSS Investigations Unit



**THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES, INVESTIGATIONS UNIT** operates and performs in a multitude of various domains. Investigations employs Welfare Fraud Investigators and Investigative Technicians who contribute to the overall objective of combating welfare fraud and support the Self Sufficiency (SS) and Children's Services Divisions (CSD).

The Investigations Division is broken down by the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), Fraud Early Detection (FRED), Criminal Records Review Unit (CRRU), Investigations Criminal Records (ICR), MATCH unit and support staff. These units specialize in investigating preventative fraud, criminal fraud, administrative fraud, providing safety, security and special investigations for DPSS, criminal records reviews for CSD, missing child investigations for CSD, special security details for CSD and other various special assignments as needed by the department.

During FY 22/23, the Investigation Division underwent a shift and assumed an integrated role into the Harmony Haven Children and Youth Center, where court dependent minors are temporarily housed



## HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Hiring several new sworn and investigative staff and several promotions.
- Addition and graduation of two new Welfare Fraud Investigators from the Riverside County Sheriff's Basic POST Academy.
- Collaboration and creation of a special support team to assist Caregiver Recruitment and Retention Unit with CSD background checks.
- Sent several sworn and non-sworn staff members to the California Welfare Fraud Association Conference in Lake Tahoe, Ca.
- Ramped up EBT skimming operations and removed over 200 illegal cameras, skimmers and overlays.
- Piloted an IEVS Eligibility Technician embedded with the Investigations Division.

**WELFARE FRAUD INVESTIGATIONS:**

A total of 908 welfare fraud investigations were completed in FY 22/23. These investigations include criminal and administrative investigations of welfare recipients who primarily failed to report employment income, other sources of income and household composition changes among other fraudulent claims that effected eligibility for welfare benefits.

**PREVENTATIVE FRAUD:**

Preventative fraud investigations include focus reviews, home-call visits and ATM machine checks for skimming devices. These investigations are utilized to identify, disrupt and deter benefits fraud before or while it is actually occurring. Many of the criminal and administrative fraud investigation referrals stem from the work of the preventative fraud team. These investigations are primarily completed by FRED.

**SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS:**

Special Investigations include safety and security issues in DPSS buildings, threats to DPSS staff, missing child investigations, supervised visits for CSD, transportation of minors for CSD and other special circumstances. SIU completed 620 special investigations for FY 22/23.

**MATCH INVESTIGATIONS:**

MATCH investigations include the investigation of nationwide prisoner matches and fleeing felons, death of recipients receiving benefits, non-cooperative employer requests and other related assignments. The MATCH unit completed a total of 7,598 cases in FY 22/23.

**CRIMINAL RECORDS REVIEW UNIT (CRRU) INVESTIGATIONS:**

CRRU completes requests from CSD to run criminal background investigations utilizing the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications Systems and provides summarized reports to CSD for potential placements of minors throughout the county. These checks include Child in hand, Forthwith, Pre-juris, Adoption, FFA

and other checks as requested. Many of these requests come in after hours and on weekends, often requiring a completion time of two hours. The CRRU unit completed a total of 3,795 cases in FY 22/23.

**INVESTIGATIONS CRIMINAL RECORDS:**

The Investigations Criminal Records (ICR) unit has a multitude of functions ranging from clerical duties to records retention to running our agencies' dispatch center, to supporting SIU, FRED, CRRU and MATCH. Additionally, ICR members participate in special operations and training for our sworn staff. In FY 22/23, ICR had a total of 2,229 completions.

**TRAINING:**

The Investigations Division has a robust training unit entitled the Enforcement Tactics and Training Unit (ETTU). ETTU conducts POST required and non-POST training for sworn and non-sworn staff encompassing firearms, defensive tactics and control, simunitions, self-defense, legal updates, first aid/CPR and various other law enforcement training. Training is conducted on a quarterly basis and ensures our staff are prepared for any situation they may encounter. ETTU conducted 102 training hours in FY 22/23.



# DPSS Executive Leadership Team

## FY 22/23



CHARITY DOUGLAS  
Director



CARL LETAMENDI  
Assistant Director,  
Administrative Services



TODD BELLANCA  
Assistant Director,  
Adult Services



ALLISON GONZALEZ  
Assistant Director,  
Self-Sufficiency



BRIDGETTE HERNANDEZ  
Assistant Director,  
Children's Services



MONICA L. BENTLEY  
Assistant Director,  
Finance & Forecasting



# Riverside County Leadership

## FY 22/23



JEFF VAN WAGENEN  
County Executive Officer



JUAN PEREZ  
Chief Operating Officer



KEVIN JEFFRIES  
First District Supervisor



KAREN SPIEGEL  
Second District Supervisor



CHUCK WASHINGTON  
Third District Supervisor



V. MANUEL PEREZ  
Fourth District Supervisor



JEFF HEWITT  
Fifth District Supervisor



RIVERSIDE COUNTY DEPARTMENT  
OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

# DPSS

**4,700** employees

**\$2.8 Billion** annual economic impact

**\$1.2 Billion** budget

**1.12 Million** customers





**RIVERSIDE COUNTY**  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

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