



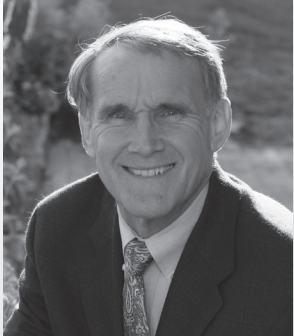
# ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2009 – JUNE 2010





# VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS & CEO



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Supervisor, District 3  
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County of Ventura CEO  
Marty Robinson

On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, I am pleased to recognize the work of the Human Services Agency employees and the services they provide to the residents of Ventura County. Due to the continuing economic recession, this past year has brought unprecedented challenges to many in our community. The Human Services Agency has been a source of information and service for residents who have never had to seek public assistance in the past. I commend the efforts of the agency to increase access to information by providing a stronger presence on the County's website and the linkage to eligibility information.

Ventura County continues to be challenged with high unemployment rates. Now, more than any time in recent history, the skills, compassion and links with tangible services provided by the Human Services Agency are critical to the welfare of our community.

Included in this report are summaries of the Human Services Agency's programs and services such as: Job & Career Centers that provide support with pathways to independence; Nutrition & Health Care through our Healthy Families programs; and assisting elders, the homeless, and veterans meeting basic needs for safety, food, shelter, and medical care. These services build trust in our community by helping Ventura County residents develop the skills that lead to a safer and more productive life.

With the partnership of many nonprofit organizations the Human Services Agency will continue to provide County-wide services for foster children and families, the unemployed, homeless, dependent adults, veterans and families in crisis.

The Board of Supervisors is honored to support the dedicated individuals and organizations that provide assistance to the most vulnerable in our community, and work to enrich our quality of life in Ventura County.

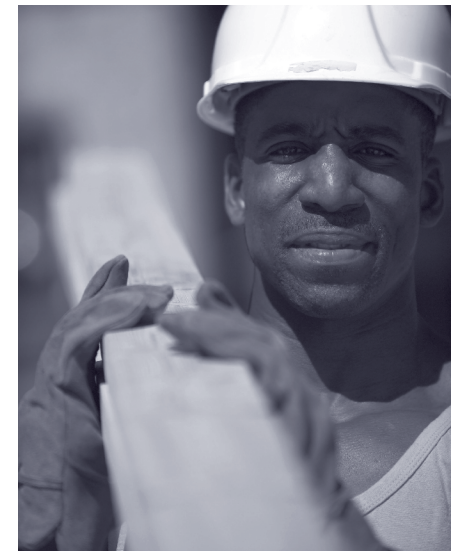
A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathy I. Long".

Kathy I. Long, Chair, 2010  
Supervisor, Third District



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# HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY OVERVIEW



Human Services Agency  
Director  
Barry L. Zimmerman

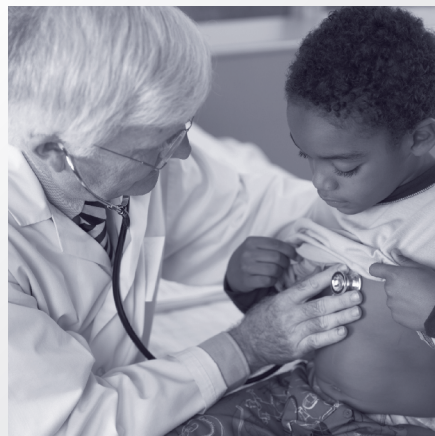
The Human Services Agency strives to strengthen Ventura County by administering programs that have a positive impact on key community concerns, including food insecurity, access to health care and insurance, child and elder abuse, unemployment and homelessness.

The Human Services Agency serves as a foundation for improved career paths, and family lives, and as a safety net for individuals facing temporary setbacks due to loss of employment, illness or other challenges.

Services available to those who qualify include:

- Financial assistance, low-cost health insurance, and housing assistance for families and others
- Supportive services for seniors and adults with disabilities
- Job training and placement for youth and adults
- Career education services for job seekers
- Layoff aversion and workforce transition planning
- Child care assistance for working parents
- Veteran's benefits and support services
- Referrals to other County agencies and partner organizations

## Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Snapshots...



**110,628**

Assisted an average of 110,628 clients receive health care through Medi-Cal benefits



**42,979**

Provided employment assistance to 42,979 adults and youth at Job & Career Centers



**53,930**

Assisted an average of 53,930 clients each month supplement their diets with Food Stamp benefits





**5,749**

Investigated 5,749 reports of suspected child abuse or neglect during Calendar Year 2009



**3,772**

Assisted an average of 3,772 clients receive In-Home Support Services monthly



**2,272**

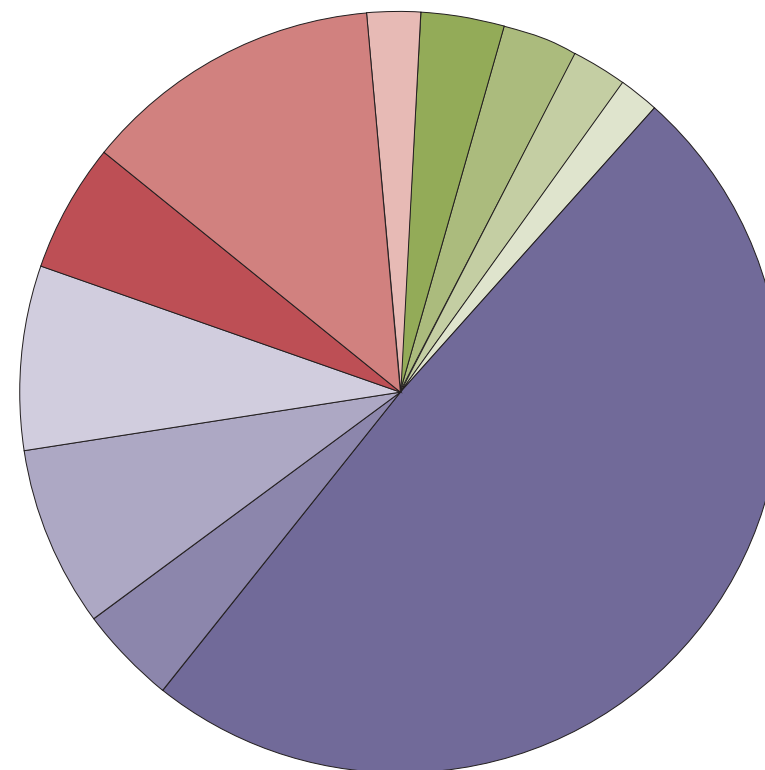
Responded to 2,272 allegations of adult abuse or neglect



**83**

Facilitated adoptions for 83 children

**County of Ventura, Human Services Agency  
Percentage of Individuals Receiving Assistance\* by City – June 2010**



Camarillo .....	3.7%	Oxnard.....	47.6%	Thousand Oaks ...	5.7%
Fillmore.....	3.4%	Port Hueneme.....	3.9%	Ventura .....	13.0%
Moorpark.....	2.6%	Santa Paula.....	7.5%	Other .....	2.6%
Ojai.....	1.6%	Simi Valley .....	8.4%		

\*Programs include CalWORKs, Food Stamps, General Relief, Medi-Cal, CAPI, and Foster Care (duplicated, meaning that individuals may receive one or more service).



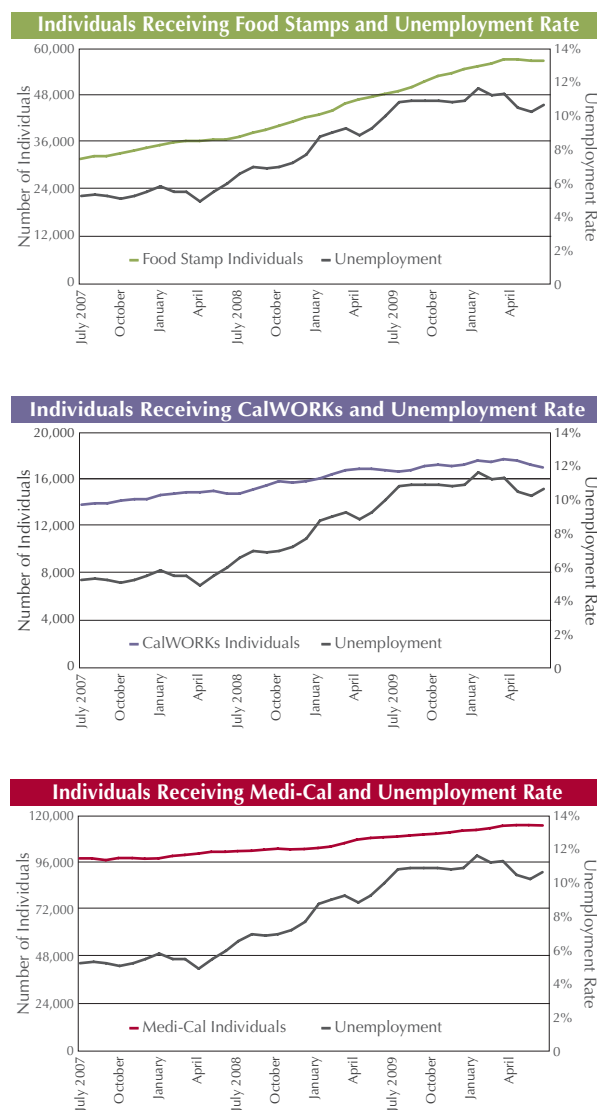
# VENTURA COUNTY PROFILE

Over the past several years, the effects of the nation's persistent recession have steadily risen and continue to take a toll on Ventura County's residents. High unemployment and a weak economic climate have combined to cause caseloads to reach unprecedented levels for programs offering support services to vulnerable populations. There is mounting evidence that the recession has the potential to erase decades of improvement for the most vulnerable groups—children, the elderly and the poor. Recent data trends and research reveal:

- The rate of the nation's children living in poverty increased in 2008 to 19 percent. According to the Foundation for Child Development, in 2010 the nation will experience its highest child poverty rate in 20 years, with almost 22 percent of youth living below the poverty line. This will be the highest rate among America's peer nations. California's rate is currently 18.5 percent and Ventura County's is 10.7 percent.
- According to adjusted estimates, 8.2 million Californians—nearly one-quarter of the non-elderly population—lacked health insurance for all or part of the year in 2009. In Ventura County, 21.2 percent, or close to 159,000 residents, were uninsured all or part of 2009. This is an increase of 4 percent from 2007.
- Unprecedented changes have occurred in the lives of older Americans, who must continue working due to higher costs of living, inadequate retirement benefits and declines in benefit pension plans. According to the Elder Economic Security Index, 39 percent of all elders age 65 and over in Ventura County do not have enough income to meet their most basic needs for housing, food, transportation and health care. This means that over 31,000 elders in the County are struggling to make ends meet.

While local economists indicate that the economy is in recovery mode, they also forecast a slow and challenging process that will likely drag into the latter half of 2012. In past recessions, the positive impacts of economic

recoveries are typically delayed: unemployment has been slow to rebound and poverty levels have been even slower to decline. Given these historical trends, the demand for services such as Food Stamps, CalWORKs, and Medi-Cal is expected to continue rising through 2011 and possibly beyond.



Historically, changes in the country's economic conditions have increased participation in programs such as Food Stamps, CalWORKs and Medi-Cal. During a recession, where the numbers of unemployed and poor people escalates, the Food Stamp program typically reflects the most dramatic increases in recipients. Mirroring historical trends at the state and national level, the local economic downturn has triggered the most significant utilization of Food Stamps and Unemployment Insurance Benefits among all safety net programs. In Ventura County, the number of Food Stamps participants has grown by 66 percent since the official start of the Great Recession in December 2007.



## Ventura County's Cities: June 2010 Economic Climate and Human Services Profile

The table below captures a June 2010, city-by-city overview of economic factors such as unemployment, real estate foreclosures, homelessness, and poverty, as well as the number of residents receiving services and the dollar amount of those benefits.

	Unemployment Rate <sup>1</sup>	Number of Foreclosures <sup>2</sup>	Poverty <sup>3</sup>	Median Earnings per Person <sup>4</sup>	Homeless Persons Count <sup>5</sup>	Persons Receiving CalWORKs <sup>6</sup>	CalWORKs Payments Issued <sup>7</sup>	Persons Receiving Food Stamps <sup>6</sup>	Food Stamp Payments Issued <sup>7</sup>	Persons Receiving Medi-Cal <sup>8</sup>	Medi-Cal Benefits <sup>8</sup>
Ventura County	10.6%	1,327	8.7%	\$41,530	1,815	17,026	\$3,110,529	56,508	\$7,608,479	113,471	\$44,253,690
Camarillo	7.6%	114	4.3%	\$47,712	15	553	\$108,851	2,023	\$264,429	4,266	\$1,663,740
Fillmore	14.6%	22	n/a	n/a	5	587	\$105,612	1,926	\$249,757	3,799	\$1,481,610
Moorpark	9.9%	67	2.9%	\$48,265	1	323	\$63,906	1,375	\$181,143	3,157	\$1,231,230
Ojai	12.1%	27	n/a	n/a	52	291	\$57,844	941	\$131,387	1,718	\$670,020
Oxnard	14.4%	362	14.3%	\$29,789	520	8,043	\$1,452,047	25,426	\$3,410,036	55,601	\$21,684,390
Port Hueneme	12.4%	50	12.6%	\$39,013	9	843	\$147,421	2,458	\$327,933	4,085	\$1,593,150
Santa Paula	17.3%	43	15.6%	\$27,212	54	1,374	\$229,802	4,306	\$584,580	8,366	\$3,262,740
Simi Valley	8.8%	265	5.2%	\$48,790	229	1,185	\$238,508	5,292	\$707,671	9,103	\$3,550,170
Thousand Oaks	8.3%	203	4.4%	\$55,436	106	731	\$142,592	2,914	\$397,144	7,104	\$2,770,560
Ventura	9.6%	174	11.2%	\$41,167	601	2,709	\$495,725	8,588	\$1,185,104	13,060	\$5,093,400

<sup>1</sup> Employment Development Department June 2010.

<sup>2</sup> RealtyTrac data for July 2010.

<sup>3</sup> 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Poverty Status data.

<sup>4</sup> 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Median Earnings data.

<sup>5</sup> County of Ventura, 2010 Homeless Count, Findings by Jurisdiction.

<sup>6</sup> Public assistance data for June 2010. City totals do not sum to the Ventura County total because the Ventura County total includes cities, communities, and unincorporated areas.

<sup>7</sup> Total aid payment by city for June 2010. City totals do not sum to the Ventura County total because the Ventura County total includes cities, communities, and unincorporated areas.

<sup>8</sup> California Department of Health Care Services, FY 2009-10 Cost Per Eligible based on May 2009 estimate.



# HEALTHY FAMILIES: FOOD STAMPS & MEDI-CAL

With the slowly recovering local economy, making ends meet and budgeting for necessities like food and health care continues to be difficult for low-income families and those of modest means. The Food Stamp program, known nationally as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP, helps qualified low-income families purchase nutritious food at neighborhood grocery stores by using Electronic Benefits Transfer cards. Medi-Cal provides low-cost health insurance to qualified children under 21, seniors over 65, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, and other groups.

## FOOD STAMPS

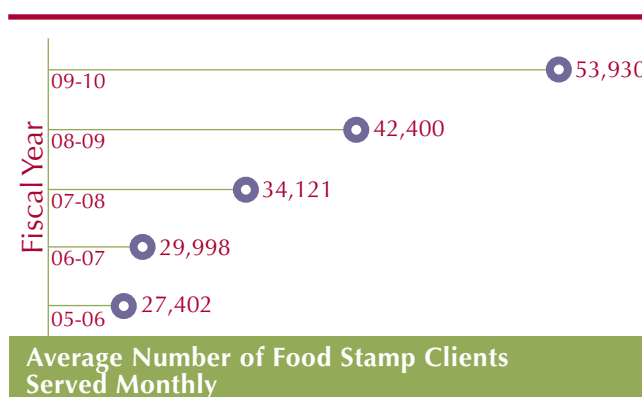
According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the Food Stamp program has shown its effectiveness in recent years by responding rapidly to the country's economic recession. The 2009 Recovery Act boosted recipients' monthly Food Stamp allocations, effectively putting more money for food into the hands of the county's poorest families. Starting in April 2009, a family of four on Food Stamps began receiving an average of an additional \$80 extra each month.

Since June 2009, applications for Food Stamps have continued to rise, with the number of recipients increasing to 56,491 in June 2010. Ventura County's caseload has been increasing for a number of years, and since June 2008 has grown by nearly 57 percent. Despite rising applications and caseloads, the Human Services Agency processed the average application in 10 days, well under the 30 day time limit mandated by the State. While caseload growth in recent years has been impacted by increased outreach activities, more households are becoming eligible due to the recession. As of June 2010, the

average size of Ventura County families receiving benefits was 2.2 with a monthly benefit of approximately \$295.

Money from the Food Stamp program circulates quickly through the economy, with 80 percent of all Food Stamp benefits redeemed within two weeks and 97 percent spent within a month. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) calculates that for every \$5 of Food Stamp spending, there is \$9.20 of total economic activity, as grocers and farmers pay their employees and suppliers, who in turn shop and pay their bills. During Fiscal Year 2009-2010, recipients throughout the County received and spent over \$91 million dollars of Food Stamp benefits. For the month of June 2010, the total was \$7,608,479.

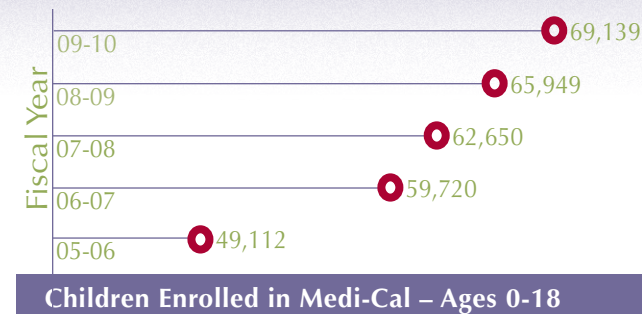
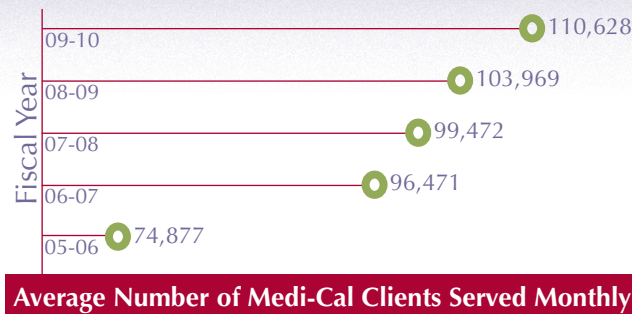
The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 calls for policymakers to assess the results of programs, and one important measure of a program's performance is its ability to reach targeted populations. The main purpose of the Food Stamp program is to permit low-income households to obtain a more nutritious diet by increasing their purchasing power. The Human Services Agency has focused efforts on ensuring that eligible residents living below the poverty rate are enrolled in Food Stamps. The enrollment rate has been steadily rising, and during Fiscal Year 2009, an average of 53,930 residents per month received Food Stamp benefits, representing 65 percent of the people in poverty identified in the American Community Survey.



To be eligible for Food Stamps, a family's monthly gross income must be below federal poverty thresholds. For a family of 3, the threshold is approximately \$1,984.



Medical costs and the cost of health insurance have been rising faster than wages.



## MEDI-CAL

Providing adequate health care coverage for all residents of Ventura County is challenging. According to the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 21.2 percent of people in Ventura County, or around 159,000 residents, do not have year round health insurance; most are not eligible for public insurance programs. This is an increase of 4 percent over last year's figure, indicating that persistent high unemployment or decisions to drop privately-purchased health care plans may have caused residents to continue losing health care coverage.

Medical costs and the cost of health insurance have been rising faster than wages, and many residents find it difficult to afford routine medical care and preventative screenings. The Human Services Agency administers the Medi-Cal program, which implements the federal Medicaid safety net health care program in California and provides low-cost health insurance to qualified

residents. Services covered under Medi-Cal include regular doctor visits, hospitalization, immunizations, and preventative care. During the past year, the Human Services Agency has improved customer service by launching a centralized Medi-Cal mail-in center, streamlining the process for clients to apply for benefits by mail. This process streamlines operations for staff and reduces both the number of office visits and lobby wait time for clients.

Since June 2009, the number of individuals receiving Medi-Cal benefits through the Human Services Agency rose from 107,700 to 112,690—an increase of 4.6 percent. In spite of the challenges of increasing caseloads, client service has remained consistent and the average Medi-Cal application was processed in 30 days, well under the 45 day time limit mandated by the State. During the past year, Medi-Cal clients received over \$500 million dollars worth of health care services.



# PATHWAYS TO INDEPENDENCE: EMPLOYMENT & BUSINESS

As the economy slowly rebounds, most experts anticipate that the growth during the first few years of the recovery will not substantially reduce unemployment. In fact, forecasts predict that California's annual unemployment rate will remain above 10 percent through 2012. At the same time, continued weakness in the job market is likely to depress workers' earning and incomes, while the ranks of those experiencing long-term unemployment is of epic proportion. In June 2010 there were 952,000 people out of work more than 6 months while a year ago, 460,000 Californians—less than half the current population—fell into the long-term unemployed category.

The June 2010 unemployment rate in California was 12.3 percent, up from 11.6 percent in June 2009. California's non-farm payrolls lost 27,600 jobs during the month with all industry sectors suffering job deficits. Over the past fiscal year, Ventura County has continued to experience high unemployment with the County marking a rate of 10.6 percent and five cities experiencing double-digit unemployment rates for June 2010: Santa Paula (17.3%), Fillmore (14.6%), Oxnard (14.4%), Port Hueneme (12.4%) and Ojai (12.1%).

During Fiscal Year 2009-2010, the number of individuals receiving CalWORKs ticked upward to 17,012, an increase of around 1 percent. The Human Services Agency helped CalWORKs clients secure some 1,750 employment placements. An average of 924 children in over 531 families received subsidized day care each month so that their parents could work or participate in work-related activities.

The Human Services Agency operates several Job & Career Centers in Ventura County. By aggressively connecting families to resources that

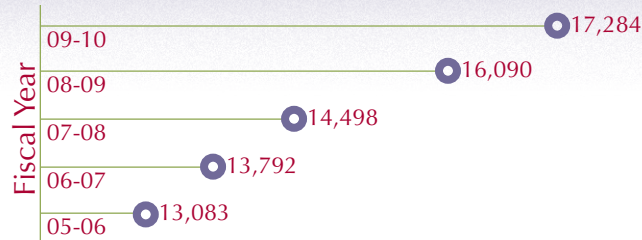
The Human Services Agency helped CalWORKs clients secure some 1,750 employment placements.

include vocational training, transportation, and childcare, the Human Services Agency is helping to remove barriers to employment. During Fiscal Year 2009-2010, the Human Services Agency delivered employment and career services through the Job & Career Centers to nearly 43,000 individuals, who accessed career center services just under 140,000 times. Over 2,700 job seekers attended one of 308 career services workshops that offered assistance with resume writing, online job searches and interview skills. Additionally, the Human Services Agency implemented California's "Elevate America" initiative, a program that offered vouchers for online Microsoft courses and certification exams. Over 2,800 vouchers were issued for the online self-guided trainings which were designed to improve job seekers skills.

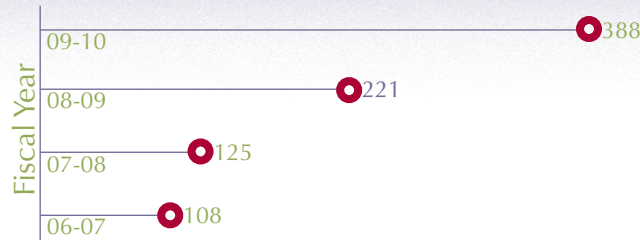
In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2008 the Ventura County Work Participation Rate (WPR) for all CalWORKs families was 20.8 percent and the WPR average for the State of California was 25.9 percent.







Average Number of CalWORKs Clients Served Monthly



Average Number of General Relief Cases Served Monthly

General Relief consists of direct payments to landlords for housing, utilities and incidentals, and is considered a loan.

For several years, efforts in Ventura County to increase the WPR have centered on improving data collection and reporting, reducing non-participation by moving clients into activities sooner, re-engaging sanctioned clients, and utilizing structured activities that lead to employment and help clients meet federal WPR requirements. As a result, preliminary reconciliation reports for FFY 2009 indicate that the County has improved to a twelve month average of 26.5 percent.

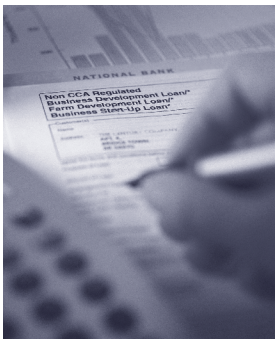
## GENERAL RELIEF PROGRAM

The Human Services Agency's General Relief program provides assistance to indigent adults who have no dependent children, lack financial support from relatives or friends, and are ineligible for all other types of public assistance programs. The General Relief program helps adults who may be struggling

to find housing, employment, or other revenue to sustain their economic independence. The aid is short-term, considered a loan, and consists of direct payments to landlords for housing, utilities and incidentals.

To be eligible, an applicants' household income must be within allowable limits, with real and property value not exceeding \$1,000, and available cash on hand and in saving accounts not to exceed \$100. General Relief recipients deemed able to work must actively seek employment to maintain their eligibility for assistance.

Over the past several years, economic conditions have triggered a rise in the number of Ventura County residents receiving General Relief assistance. The average monthly General Relief caseload rose from 221 in Fiscal Year 2008-2009 to 388 in Fiscal Year 2009-2010.



# WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD (WIB)

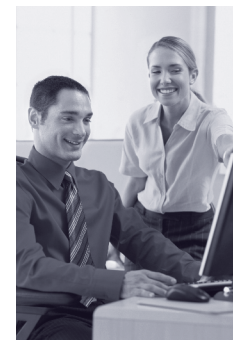
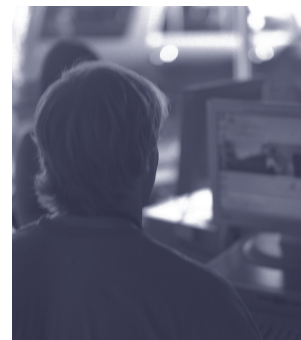
Appointed by the Board of Supervisors and, in accordance with the Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and State requirements, the 36 members of the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) represent businesses, local educational institutions, labor organizations, community-based organizations, economic development agencies, government agencies, and One-Stop partners in Ventura County. The WIB is responsible for planning, policy, and oversight for federally funded WIA programs and services in Ventura County and acts in accordance with federal, State and County regulations.

The One-Stop Job & Career Center system provides services and programs that help to strengthen job seeker readiness for local employment opportunities. Adults, youth, dislocated workers and employers are able to access information and services online through the Virtual One-Stop (VOS) system and at several Job & Career Centers located across the County.

During the 2009-2010 program year, Workforce Investment programs:

- Served 42,979 customers with employment and career services through the Job & Career Centers and in WIA-funded adult and dislocated worker programs.
- Served 1,217 youth (14-24 year-olds in-school and out-of-school) in WIA-funded programs and through access to employment and career services through the Job & Career Centers' internet-based employment services system - Virtual One-Stop.
- Exceeded WIB standards and achieved a higher-than-100 percent success rate for adults, dislocated workers and youth in 11 of 15 categories of WIA Common Measures performance.
- Provided Rapid Response consulting and other support for businesses reporting a total of more than 1,554 impacted employees. More than 720 of the impacted employees participated in Rapid Response programs and services. These individuals were referred to career transition assistance and Job & Career Center services.

- Provided layoff aversion services to 117 businesses, helping to retain 87 at-risk jobs.
- Provided funding and oversight for three special workforce-related projects: New Start, which assimilates parolees into the workforce; Disability Navigator, which helps clients with special needs; and the Work Readiness Project, a pilot program for foster youth in the juvenile justice system.
- Provided oversight at the One-Stop Consortium, comprised of the Business & Employment Services Department of the Human Services Agency, the Employment Development Department (EDD), and the County Superintendent of Schools Office. The Consortium operates the One-Stop Job & Career Centers. Services provided in 2009-2010 included:
  - » Recruitment events attended by 980 job seekers
  - » Improved client access to Internet job listings, career information, and community resources by enhancing the technology infrastructure
  - » Computer technology courses at no cost
  - » 308 employment services workshops, where 2,717 job seekers received assistance with resume writing, online job searches, interviewing and computer skills
  - » Access to employment services to more than 510 veterans registered through the Job & Career Center system





**D**uring the economic downturn in the past year, the Human Services Agency focused on strategically allocating financial resources and expanding partnerships with both County agencies and community organizations to provide safety net services for vulnerable County residents.

## SPOTLIGHT

### Short Term Benefits Program

Launched in February 2010, the non-recurring, short term benefits program operates as a partnership between the Human Service Agency, FOOD Share, and Goodwill to distribute food boxes to CalWORKs and other eligible clients. Eligible families were provided with a voucher for two boxes of non-perishable food packaged by FOOD Share workers. The food boxes were distributed with assistance from participants in Ventura County's Subsidized Work Program. Approximately 7,800 food boxes were distributed through some food pantry sites, Goodwill stores and County facilities.

On March 31, 2010 Congresswoman Lois Capps and County Supervisor John Zaragoza visited FOOD Share, highlighting the program as an excellent use of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds and a fine example of county government partnering with local community-based organizations to meet pressing public needs.



### Subsidized Work Program

Launched in February 2010, the subsidized work program placed eligible CalWORKs clients at job sites for three to six months to increase their marketable job skills. The subsidized work program:

- Helped clients with limited work experience develop employment skills;
- Placed approximately 424 CalWORKs clients;
- Offered jobs with wages ranging from \$8/hr. to \$11/hr.

To date, 935 CalWORKs clients were referred to the program, and Goodwill – the County's subsidized work experience contractor – placed 502 clients at over 90 job sites as office assistants, receptionists, food service workers, and warehouse workers.

Goodwill also provided job readiness workshops to prepare clients for employment. Approximately 85 percent of the program's participants were 100 percent wage subsidized, meaning that employers did not have to pay any wages to their work experience participants. Worksites were developed in a variety of occupations to match the participant's interest and skill level.

The goal of the project was for participants to obtain unsubsidized employment by the end of their work experience period. Long term goals for participants were to become self sufficient and not dependent on public assistance.

In February, United States Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis visited the County to tour the Oxnard Job & Career Center to greet clients and learn about local job training programs.



# SPOTLIGHT

## Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program

Through the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009, the Ventura County Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) is making federal funds available to local residents who would be homeless but for this assistance. The intent is to help with housing stability.

County and city government have joined efforts to operate HPRP, ensuring that eligible County residents receive help when they need it most. Eligible HPRP applicants may receive various types of assistance, including:

- eviction prevention rental payment
- rental deposit
- short-term rental payment
- credit counseling
- utility deposit
- utility payment
- moving and storage costs
- case management

Case managers work closely with clients to develop and implement a service plan to ensure that they receive full benefits. Through HPRP, clients are stabilized in housing and assisted comprehensively to help ensure that they do not face homelessness again.

From October 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) distributed \$430,170 in assistance to 561 people in 200 households. The following are just a few examples of County residents who have benefited from HPRP; names and details have been changed to ensure confidentiality.



James and Maria, a couple with two young children, fell behind on their rent when their landlord claimed that their money order for the rent had never arrived. HPRP eviction prevention funds helped James, a veteran who served several years overseas and now works full-time, and Maria, who recently secured employment, avoid eviction.

Paul had never applied for government assistance, but when he found himself facing eviction following a recent lay-off from work and the death of his wife, he sought help through HPRP. Initially, Paul discovered that he was not eligible for HPRP due to his relatively high monthly rent. However, Paul worked with an HPRP social worker to develop a plan for securing a lower-cost rental. Paul's property manager allowed him to move to a smaller unit within the same apartment complex, and accepted HPRP funds to bring Paul's rent current. Now, Paul is able to focus on his job search – and go through the grieving process – with the stability and security that a home offers.

Bonnie, a single mother with a toddler, works full-time to support her son but lives paycheck to paycheck. When her employer closed for two weeks during the holidays leaving Bonnie without a paycheck, Bonnie fell behind on her rent. With a little help from HPRP, Bonnie avoided eviction and is now current with her rent.



# SPOTLIGHT

## Financial Empowerment Partnership

Earn It! Keep It! Save It! is a community partnership led by United Way Ventura County, the Business & Employment Services Department of the Ventura County Human Services Agency, Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation, and the IRS and was formed in 2005 to increase awareness of and access to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The program also provides electronic filing of income taxes free of charge. "Earn It! Keep It! Save It!" helps taxpayers with earnings below \$49,000 to file their income taxes and access the federal tax credits to which they are entitled.

Earn it.  
Keep it.  
Save it.

The Financial Empowerment Partnership received a \$25,000 IRS VITA grant for 2010 to target low-income households. In 2007, 23.9 percent of the population in Ventura County was below the 200 percent poverty level and 52 percent of income earners earned at or below \$41,646.

During January through April 2010, 30 volunteer tax preparers filed 734 returns at seven Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites located at El Concilio, the Housing Authority in Oxnard, the Housing Authority in Ventura, and the West Oxnard, Ventura, Santa Clara Valley and East County Job & Career Centers.

Total amount of tax refunds to clients .....	\$1,158,073
Number of returns filed.....	766
Total amount of EITC returned to clients.....	\$553,857
Number of clients receiving EITC .....	295
Total amount of Child Tax Credit returned to clients .....	\$279,263
Number of clients receiving Child Tax Credit.....	217
Average Annual Gross Income of clients (AGI).....	\$16,277
Number of clients direct depositing refund check.....	296
Value of volunteer labor.....	\$38,250

This year's results represent an increase over last year of 20 percent in the number of returns filed, 58 percent in the amount of total refunds and 54 percent in the amount of EITC.

## Foster Parents for Special Teens Program

Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) is a new and specialized foster care program for teens that began this past year in Ventura County. The MTFC program operates through the collaboration and partnership of Children & Family Services and Aspiranet Foster Family Agency.

MTFC is an innovative and collaborative approach to foster parenting and targets teens exhibiting behavioral and emotional challenges who have been in and out of foster care throughout their lives. Trained MTFC parents collaborate with a professional team to execute a well-coordinated individualized treatment plan and receive support 24/7. MTFC placement is short-term, generally only lasting six to nine months.

The goals of the MTFC program are to:

- Provide a structured and loving home environment
- Surround teens with positive role models and separate them from negative peers
- Successfully reunite foster teens with a permanent family (birth, relative, or foster) within in a relatively short period of time
- Promote self esteem and social acceptance
- Help a teen discover his or her own inner hero



# SPOTLIGHT

## Cost Saving Project with Ventura County Health Care Agency



Ventura County's Human Services and Health Care agencies are continuing their collaborative efforts to identify patients who have large unpaid bills and are making a special effort to enroll them in Medi-Cal or low cost insurance programs. The two agencies have created a shared web-based database where patient billing information, application status and other vital information can be shared in real time. Early efforts

have resulted in the collection of hundreds of thousands of dollars through Medi-Cal that would otherwise been absorbed by the VCMC.

In order to maximize client services and revenue, the Human Services Agency staff partner with the Health Care Agency to obtain Medi-Cal services for hospital patients while they are still in-patients. Since the two agencies previously did not have shared database containing information about admissions, insurance coverage, general patient status and discharge details, staff created shared workspace on the County's intranet that both groups can review and update. Privacy concerns are mitigated because the Health Care Agency obtains client releases before requesting Medi-Cal status information. The collaboration has been tremendously successful, with tangible results:

- Medi-Cal approval rates have increased because the Health Care Agency is referring cases quickly and verification is being obtained from the patient or family while the patient is in the hospital.
- High Dollar Cases previously denied because patients released from the hospital could not be located are now reviewed and patients' family members are contacted. From July 1 to October 31, 2009 the Health Care Agency was reimbursed more than \$721,000 from Medi-Cal for patients who had no insurance when they entered the hospital. These "self-pay" patients were transitioned to Medi-Cal, which benefits the patient and helps the hospital receive payment for medical services that most "self-pay" patients cannot afford.
- The Health Care Agency is reimbursed more quickly. Previously, the Health Care Agency billing department relied on clients to notify them of their Medi-Cal approval, so they did not receive notice until two weeks after the case approval - if the client followed through. Now, the Human Services Agency HSA notifies the billing department as soon as cases are approved, speeding up reimbursements.



# ASSISTING ELDERS, THE HOMELESS, AND VETERANS

Meeting basic needs of the elderly, dependent adults, homeless and veteran residents is always challenging, and during the recent economic downturn the Human Services Agency has seen a rise in caseloads and requests for assistance from all of these populations. Data trends indicate that the senior population is rapidly growing, forecasting an increased need for services to seniors in the coming years. According to the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging, 19 percent of the County population will be 60 or older by the end of this year. By 2030, 29 percent of the population will have reached the age of 60.

## ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

It is Ventura County's responsibility to ensure that elder residents are protected from abusive relatives, friends, caregivers or strangers. Abuse can be physical, sexual, financial or psychological, and in Ventura County financial abuse, which is often difficult to detect and prosecute, is the leading form of abuse. The primary goals of Adult Protective Services are to respond rapidly to allegations of abuse or neglect and to help make clients' environments safer immediately, while implementing plans to reduce the risk of repeated abuse or neglect. Victims of abuse may receive short-term assistance services such as emergency shelter, meals, transportation, medical, and mental health services.

In order to increase public awareness about elder abuse and to facilitate more effective service delivery, the Human Services Agency continued outreach efforts, expanding awareness education to utility and financial institutions that often have frequent contact with the elderly. Presentations focusing

on preventing and detecting elder abuse and neglect were conducted for approximately 2,000 residents in both the public and private sector.

In Fiscal Year 2009-2010, the Human Services Agency responded to 2,272 allegations of adult abuse or neglect and over 3,060 requests from the public for information and referrals. Adult Protective Services served an average of 339 clients each month and cases reached an all-time high of 403 in June 2010. One hundred percent of referrals were responded to within 3.6 days, significantly surpassing the State mandate of 10 days. Additionally, Human Services Agency data showed that 99.7 percent of adults who experienced abuse/neglect by others remained safe during the following year.

## PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR & PUBLIC GUARDIAN

The Public Guardian oversees the care of people, usually the elderly, who are unable to care for themselves. The Public Guardian functions as the legally-appointed guardian or conservator of persons found by the Superior Court to be unable to properly care for themselves or their finances. Most referrals for investigations come from Adult Protective Services, local law enforcement agencies, or the Superior Court, but any interested party may submit a referral to the Public Guardian.



In Ventura County, financial abuse is the leading form of elder abuse.

The Public Guardian oversees two types of conservatorships: Probate and Lanterman-Petris Short (LPS). Probate conservatorships are for vulnerable adults with limited ability to make decisions due to a health condition which is not expected to improve. LPS conservatorships are for people who are gravely disabled due to serious mental disorders or chronic substance abuse. Referrals to the LPS conservatorship program originate from the psychiatric hospital where a client is receiving treatment. In the past year, the Public Guardian managed 190 LPS conservatorships and 57 Probate conservatorships.

The Public Administrator investigates and administers the estates of persons who die without a will or an appropriate person willing or able to act as the administrator. The Public Administrator's functions include searching for existing family members, making burial arrangements, and arranging for the payment of debts, sale of personal and real property, and distribution of assets. In the past year, the Public Administrator managed 70 estates for decedents.

## IN-HOME SUPPORT SERVICES

In-Home Support Services are designed to assist seniors, children and adults with disabilities receive care in their homes. Quality, cost-effective alternatives to institutionalized care are in high demand and help participants improve the quality of their daily lives while remaining in the comfort of their own homes.

In Ventura County, In-Home Support Services caseloads have grown by 22 percent since Fiscal Year 2006-2007, and with the County's growing senior population, that trend is projected to continue. In Fiscal Year 2009-2010, caseloads for In-Home Support Services reached an all-time high of 3,844 in June 2010 and over the course of the year served an average of 3,772 clients each month. During the year 92 percent of client reassessments were completed in a timely manner.

The In-Home Support Services Quality Assurance program serves two important functions within the IHSS program. The quality assurance activities ensure that

the In-Home Support Services program is meeting the needs of its clients in a uniform manner consistent with State regulations and legislative mandates. Secondly, a core function of the Quality Assurance program is early prevention and detection of fraud. These activities work in conjunction with the prevention and detection activities of program social workers, managers, and fiscal/payroll operations.

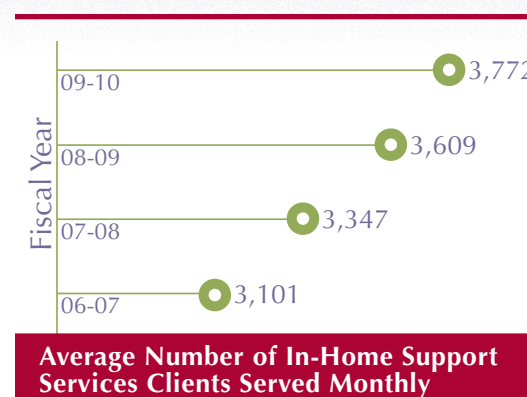
In Fiscal Year 2009-2010, the Quality Assurance program completed 633 desk reviews and interviewed 50 clients in their homes. A key element in reviews is the accurate authorization of hours based on client need in accordance with State regulations. Of those cases reviewed, it was determined that 97 percent were assessed correctly. When there is an instance of overpayment, the excess funds are returned to the County through a payment plan which is monitored for compliance. Forty-one percent of the overpayments identified this past year have been collected.

## PUBLIC AUTHORITY FOR IHSS

The Public Authority was established in 2003 to improve the quality of in-home support for both providers and clients, and allows In-Home Support Services recipients to remain safely in their own homes and avoid institutionalization. The role of the IHSS Public Authority is to act as the employer of record for caregivers, conduct provider recruitment, maintain a Registry of screened providers, refer providers to IHSS recipients, and conduct caregiver trainings.

In a continued effort to provide advanced training to caregivers, the Public Authority opened the Provider Resource and Training Center last year and hosted the 4th Annual Caregiver Conference for close to 190 providers.

It is important for clients in need of in-home support to be matched with



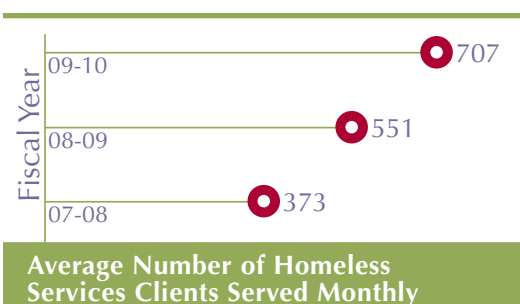


a caregiver as quickly as possible. Last year, two-thirds of recipients were matched with a provider within 15 days and 86 percent were matched within 30 days.

## HOMELESS SERVICES

For the past several years, the persistent national recession and slow economic recovery have triggered an increase in unemployment and foreclosures that has been accompanied by a rise in homelessness. The Homeless Services program helps homeless clients achieve self-sufficiency by securing health care benefits, employment services and stable housing. In Fiscal Year 2009-2010, the Human Services Agency served an average of 707 homeless clients each month, an increase of 28 percent from last year's average. Much of the increased caseload consisted of newly-homeless clients served with limited term federal funding.

During Fiscal Year 2009-2010, the Human Services Agency continued its operation of the RAIN Transitional Living Center, which provides transitional housing and assistance for families and single adults in Ventura County. Over



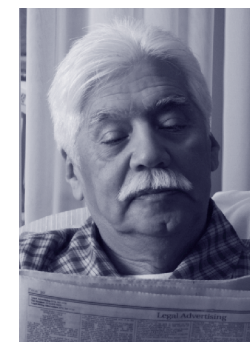
the course of the past year, RAIN operated at 88 percent occupancy and provided stable housing for approximately 133 clients.

During the past year, the staff at RAIN implemented a number of programs that help residents improve skills that will assist their paths to self-sufficiency. The Adult Literacy program, spearheaded by volunteers, was launched to develop reading skills and a School on Wheels program ensures that children maintain a connection with teachers from previous schools. The Human Services Agency also began a supplementary meal reimbursement nutrition program, funded by the USDA, for children and adults with disabilities. This program improves the quality of food for the residents of RAIN while helping to develop nutritious eating habits.

## VETERAN'S SERVICES

The Human Services Agency recognizes the courageous service of Ventura County veterans and works hard to help them access the benefits they have earned. The Veterans Services Office helps these men and women, as well as their families, gain access to financial assistance and medical treatment.

In Fiscal Year 2009-2010, the Human Services Agency served over 2,900 veterans and their families. Approximately 1,500 claims were filed on their behalf, primarily for federal Veterans Affairs benefits. Those claims resulted in over \$3.1 million in benefits for local veterans.

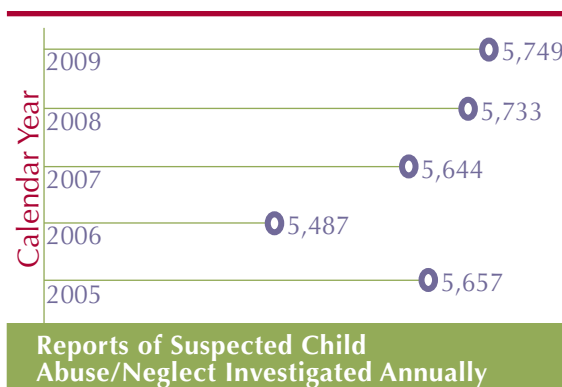


# SAFE COMMUNITIES: CHILDREN & FAMILIES

The Human Services Agency recognizes that the best way to ensure the safety and well-being of children is to assist families with basic needs before conditions worsen and the potential for child abuse/neglect rises. When abuse/neglect does occur, however, social workers fulfill the Human Services Agency's federal and State mandates to protect children through services and programs based upon the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Family-to-Family philosophy. Family-to-Family reflects the well-founded belief that children develop best in families, and that they thrive when supported by their communities, including child welfare agencies.

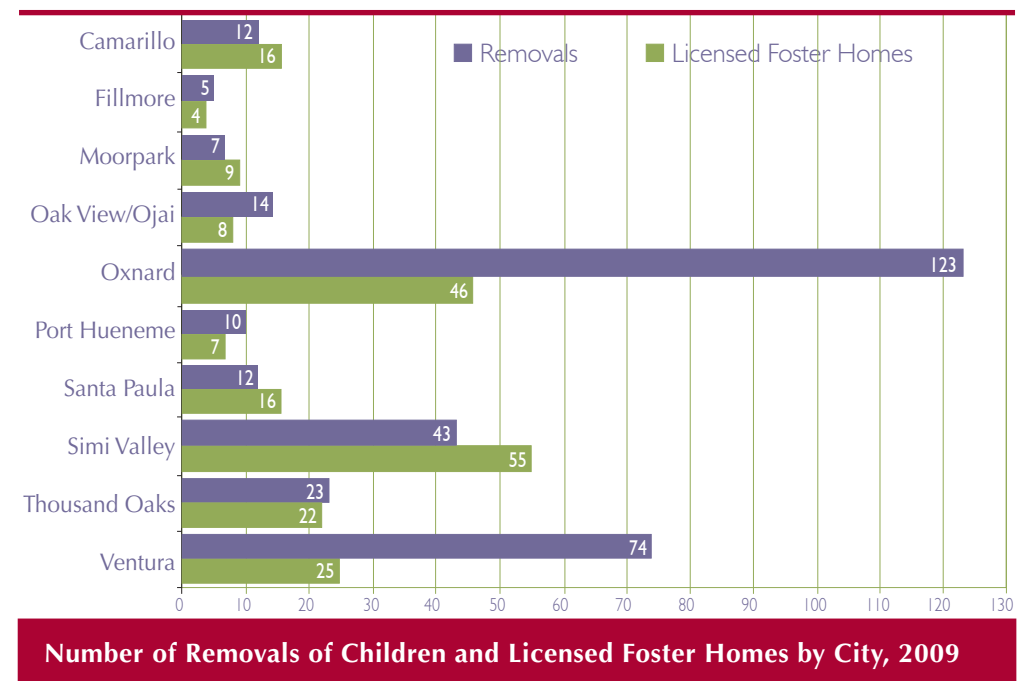
For the past year, the Human Services Agency has operated two programs to prevent child abuse: Pathways and SafeCare. Pathways is a preventative approach to ensuring safety that expands the ability of child welfare to respond to reports of possible child abuse and neglect. Pathways enables child welfare, in collaboration with the community, to address a family's needs before problems escalate and helps families stay together, grow stronger and, ideally, prevent future involvement with the child welfare system. SafeCare is an evidence-based, parent-training curriculum for parents who are at-risk or have been reported for child maltreatment. In Fiscal Year 2009-2010, 349 families were referred to the Pathways program while 56 were referred to SafeCare.

During times of unemployment and economic stress, HSA is mindful that children can be at risk.



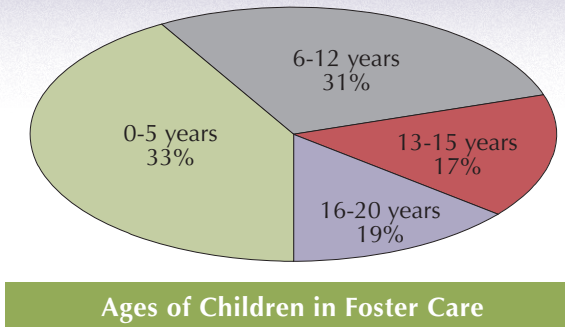
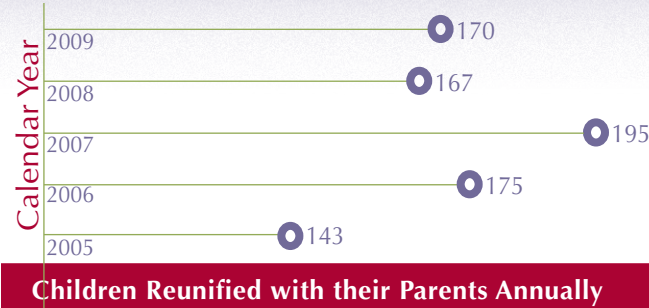
During times of unemployment and economic stress, the Human Services Agency is mindful that children can be at risk. In 2009, the Human Services Agency investigated 5,749 reports of suspected abuse/neglect. Recent data for the report period ending December 31, 2009 show that 99.5 percent of child abuse and neglect referrals classified as "Immediate Response" received an in-person investigation within 24 hours. Data for the same time period showed that 93.7 percent of child abuse and neglect referrals classified as "10-day" were investigated in-person within the 10-day time frame.

Each month, approximately 30 Ventura County children need a temporary home to ensure their physical and emotional well-being. Many of the children receive care from their relatives or a family friend, but almost half need a foster family who can provide love and understanding during a difficult time in the child's life. Whenever possible, the desired outcome for foster children is reunification with





The Independent Living Program provides educational and vocational opportunities as well as life-skills training courses.



their biological parents. The Human Services Agency helped reunify 170 children with their parents during 2009 and also facilitated 83 adoptions.

Older youth participate in the Independent Living Program (ILP), which provides educational and vocational opportunities as well as life-skills training courses. Case management for these youth is focused on the individualized ILP outcomes detailed in each youth's Transitional Independent Living Plan. In Fiscal Year 2009-2010, an average of 83 youth per month participated in the ILP program. The Transitional Housing Plus Program helps provide housing for emancipated foster youth as they move towards self-sufficiency. The goal of the program is to provide a safe living environment while helping youth develop important life skills they currently may not have. Over the past year, Ventura County's housing program has been reorganized to provide for more youth. This past year, the Transitional Housing Plus Program has grown from serving an average of six youth each year to providing housing support for 20 youth at a time.

Children & Family Services Activity & Outcomes			
	2007	2008	2009
Hotline calls received	13,840	16,106	16,170
Referrals investigated	5,644	5,733	5,749
Children removed	314	329	368
Substantiated child abuse and/or neglect (per 1,000 children in Ventura County)	4.2	3.7	3.7
Foster youth in care (monthly average)	871	852	784
Foster youth reunified	195	167	170
Adoptions finalized	71	113	83
Adoption within 24 months	30.8%	43.0%	37.3%
Two placements or less (in foster care 12-24 months)	55.6%	64.4%	58.0%
Re-entry to foster care after reunification	17.4%	13.0%	12.6%



# HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY OUTLOOK

Economic forecasts indicate that local governments will be struggling with budget issues and funding shortages for at least the next two to three years. As the Human Services Agency prepares for additional years of unprecedented budgetary and “cost-of-doing-business” shortfalls, it is critical that the Agency continue to streamline processes, revamp current service models, and align existing resources strategically.

During the past year, the Human Services Agency has utilized Lean Six Sigma methodologies to develop an Agency wide project that will reduce costs, streamline operations and increase efficiencies. Enterprise Content Management (ECM) is a way of using technology to “go paperless” and store, organize, and manage documents electronically. Documents can include paper, e-mail, video, and many other digitally stored documents. The Human Services Agency’s project is in alignment with County-wide initiatives that encourage both “Green” and 21st Century business practices. Some of goals that ECM will achieve include: providing timely access to documents anywhere, anytime, by any authorized person; reducing costs related to records management and storage; reducing document/file access wait time; and reducing the risk

of document loss in situations involving ‘missing’ documents and disaster recovery. The system will also support a mobile workforce, allow for distributed service delivery and decentralized case management, and strengthen records management and retention.

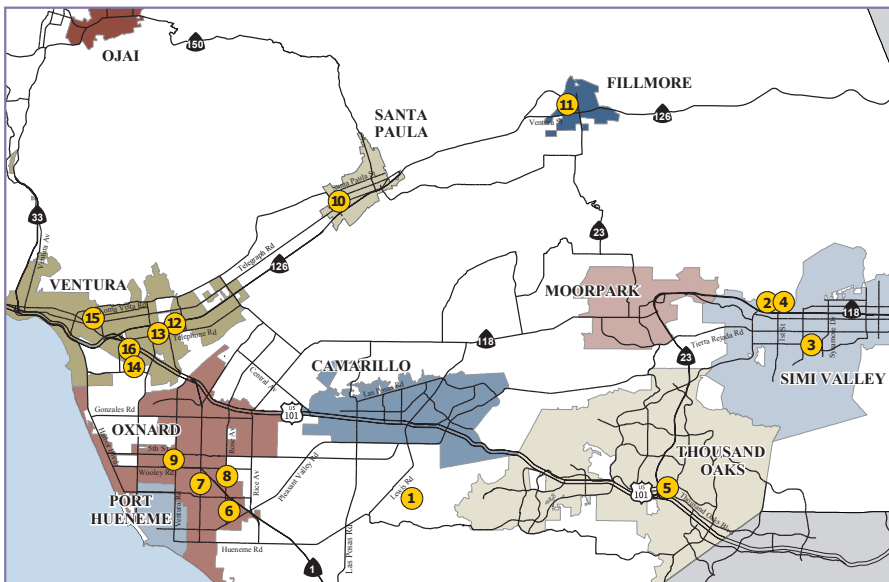
For the coming year, the Human Services Agency has begun implementing several initiatives to facilitate service delivery to an increasing number of clients. These strategies include:

- An online application system for Food Stamps and Medi-Cal that will become available to Ventura County residents in winter 2010
- A 24/7 toll-free telephone line that provides clients with self-service access to CalWORKs, Food Stamps, Medi-Cal, and General Relief information
- A centralized mail-in center for Medi-Cal and Food Stamp applications to provide better client service by reducing the number of office visits and lobby wait time
- Access to Human Services Agency programs and services in store-front offices in Thousand Oaks and Moorpark

## REVENUES & EXPENDITURES

	Fiscal Year 2009-2010	Fiscal Year 2008-2009	Fiscal Year 2007-2008
<b>Revenue Sources</b>			
Federal and State Funds .....	194.1 million .....	183.8 million .....	174.9 million
County Funds.....	13.1 million .....	11.2 million .....	10.7 million
Total Revenue .....	207.2 million .....	195 million .....	185.6 million
<b>Expenditure Categories</b>			
Staff Salaries and Benefits.....	79.9 million .....	79.8 million .....	77.7 million
Direct Client Assistance .....	86.4 million .....	79 million .....	72.1 million
Services and Supplies.....	40.9 million .....	36.2 million .....	35.8 million
Total Expenditures.....	207.2 million .....	195 million .....	185.6 million





COUNTY OF VENTURA

# HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY LOCATIONS & SERVICES

S E R V I C E S																
Bus Route*	Adoption Services	Adult Protective Services	CalWORKS	CAPL	Child Welfare Services	Employment Services	Food Stamps	Foster Care Services	General Relief	Health Care for Kids	Homeless Services	In-Home Support Services	Medi-Cal	IHSS Public Authority	Public Administrator & Public Guardian	Veteran Services
											0					
Bus Route*																
Simi Transit B <sup>i</sup>						●							●			
Simi Transit A, B, D			●					●		●	●			●		
Simi Transit B <sup>i</sup>			●				●									●
T.O. Transit 2, 3, 4			●				●									
Bus Route*																
Gold Coast Transit 8			●				●									●
Gold Coast Transit I, 3, 5											●					
Gold Coast Transit 8	0		●		●	●	●		●			0		●		
Gold Coast Transit 5			●				●									
Bus Route*																
Vista 126 <sup>i</sup>			●			●	●		●	●				●		
Vista 126			●			●	●		●	●				●		
Bus Route*																
Gold Coast Transit 6A, 6B																0
Gold Coast Transit 6A, 6B		0														0
Gold Coast Transit 6B					●				0							
Gold Coast Transit 6A, 6B											●					
Gold Coast Transit 6B			●	0		●	●		●				●	●	0	

\*Bus routes subject to change

<sup>1</sup>Within ½ mile

● Services available at this location.

- Limited hours of service. Call for more information.

● Countywide services available at this location.  
Call for more information.



## MISSION

We strengthen families, support self-sufficiency and promote safety, health and well being.



Human Services Agency  
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Toll Free (866) 904-9362

[www.vchsa.org](http://www.vchsa.org)