

1/25/00

Overview:

H&SS,

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ASSIST.

SFIN

FILE



Official Business

Alaska State Senate

Senate Finance Committee

Mail Stop 3100
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

AGENDA

January 25, 2000

9:00 a.m.

**Department of Health & Social Services
Division of Public Assistance
Review of FY'99 and FY'00 Programs and Results**

**Division of Public Assistance
Overview of Welfare Reform
January 25, 2000**

Topics of Discussion

- 1) Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP) Basics
- 2) Caseload Decline
 - Rate of Decline Continues
 - Comparison to Other States
- 3) Spending is Down
 - General Fund Savings
- 4) More Clients Working
 - Work Participation Rates
- 5) Performance Measures
 - High Performance Bonus
 - Food Stamp Accuracy Rate
- 6) Program Evaluation
- 7) Work Services
 - Case Management and Work Search
 - Child Care
 - Hard-to-Serve
 - Training Initiatives
 - Transportation
 - Mentoring
- 8) Workforce Development
 - AHRIC
 - WorkStar
 - One Stop Job Centers (AJCN)
- 9) The Future
 - Planning for the 5-Year Limit
 - Services for Hard-to-Serve clients
 - Post Employment Services
 - Targeted Training
 - Child Care
 - Welfare-to-Work Case Management Training
 - Transportation
 - Program Evaluation

DPA Monthly Caseload and Benefit Summary

December 1999

Page 2

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE PARTICIPATION RATE			
RATE	FOR MONTH	YEAR TO DATE	FFY 00 REQUIRED
Overall	38%	40%	40%
Two-Parent	46%	4.5%	90%

Work Activity Assignments	Dec-99
Temporary Assistance Clients	
Unduplicated total of clients assigned to 'countable' work activities:	3,773
Types of activities assigned:	
Unsubsidized Employment	59%
Work Experience	2%
Contracted Job Search	14%
Community Work Experience	10%
Vocational Education	17%
High School/GED	2%
<i>Percentages may not add up to 100% because clients may be assigned to more than one work activity.</i>	

Months Remaining on the TANF Time Limit

Temporary Assistance Non-Exempt Families		
Months Remaining	Number of Families	Percent of Cases
0 - 6	0	0.0%
7 - 12	0	0.0%
13 - 18	0	0.0%
19 - 24	11	0.2%
25 - 30	22	0.4%
31 - 36	1,706	33.9%
37 - 42	519	10.3%
43 - 48	587	11.6%
49 - 54	820	16.3%
55 - 59	1,374	27.3%
Total	5,039	100.0%

Families exempt from the TANF Time Limit include Child Only families and Adult Included families currently living in Exempt Native Villages.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE CASELOAD BY DPA SERVICE/CENSUS AREA		
DPA SERVICE AREA	CENSUS AREA	CASES
NOME	Nome Census Area	207
BETHEL	Bethel Census Area	409
	Wade Hampton Census Area	305
KENAI	Kenai Peninsula Borough	527
KOTZEBUE	Northwest Arctic Borough	129
KODIAK	Kodiak Island Borough	89
ALEUTIANS	Aleutians East Borough	14
	Aleutians West Census Area	7
BRISTOL BAY	Bristol Bay Borough	1
	Dillingham Census Area	132
	Lake & Peninsula Borough	30
PWS/COPPER	Valdez-Cordova Census Area	84
INTER-SOUTHEAST	Haines Borough	30
	Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	48
	Yakutat Borough	7
	Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area	82
JUNEAU	Juneau Borough	264
SITKA	Sitka Borough	62
KETCHIKAN	Ketchikan Gateway Borough	199
PRINCE OF WALES	Prince of Wales/Outer Ketchikan Census Subareas	62
	Mellakatla Indian Community Census Subarea	47
NORTHERN	Denali Borough	11
	North Slope Borough	28
	Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	15
	Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	95
FAIRBANKS	Fairbanks North Star Borough	552
ANCHORAGE	Municipality of Anchorage	2,974
MAT-SU	Matanuska-Susitna Borough	805
TOTAL		7,215

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE CASELOAD TYPES				
ONE PARENT	TWO PARENT	INCAPACITATED	CHILD ONLY	TOTAL ALL FAMILIES
4,922	1,003	89	1,201	7,215

Division of Public Assistance
Monthly Caseload and Benefit Summary
December 1999

PROGRAM CASELOAD	Current Month Dec-99	Last Month Nov-99	Last Year Dec-98	Percent Change 12/99 vs. 12/98	FY 97 Baseline (Pre-WR) Dec-96	Percent Change 12/99 vs 12/96
Alaska Temporary Assistance Program	7,215	7,068	8,388			
Athabaskan Self-Sufficiency Assistance Partnership	355	364	365			
Alaska TANF Programs Total	7,570	7,432	8,753	-13.5%	11,946	-36.6%
Adult Public Assistance	13,260	13,192	12,603	5.2%	11,550	14.8%
Food Stamps	13,189	12,774	14,363	-8.2%	16,375	-19.5%

PROGRAM EXPENDITURE	Current Year Dec-99	Prior Year Dec-98	Percent Change	FY 97 Baseline (Pre-WR) Dec-96	Percent Change 12/99 vs 12/96
Alaska Temporary Assistance Program	\$4,952.8	\$5,757.8	-14.0%	\$9,552.2	-48.2%
Adult Public Assistance	\$4,129.4	\$3,811.9	8.3%	\$3,693.0	11.8%
Food Stamps	\$3,791.5	\$4,246.6	-10.8%	\$4,382.6	-13.5%

**Temporary Assistance Families
Receiving Child Care Assistance In November**

Temporary Assistance Families
 Receiving Pass-Thru Payment

 Due to Child Support Collection in Month

 93% = 13%

Child Care Expenditures	Families served in month	Families on wait list
PASS I (Temporary Assistance)	966	n/a
PASS II (Transition to work)	605	n/a
PASS III (At-risk)	2,494	593
Total	4,065	593

Initial Applications by Region

	CURRENT YEAR Dec-99					PRIOR YEAR Dec-98				
	Central	Coastal	Northern	Southeast	Total	Central	Coastal	Northern	Southeast	Total
Temporary Assistance	631	387	137	150	1,305	607	349	184	139	1,279
Adult Public Assistance	140	123	103	45	411	171	138	93	53	455
Food Stamps	1,005	661	387	268	2,321	1,083	631	380	299	2,393
Total	1,776	1,171	627	463	4,037	1,861	1,118	657	491	4,127

Division of Public Assistance

FY00 Community Case Management and Work Search Grants and Contracts

Organization	Type	Location	Service	Months	FY00 Award
DPA Central Region					
Cook Inlet Tribal Council	G	Anchorage	RCM	600	\$861,400
Nine Star	C	Anchorage	WS	110	\$297,000
University of Alaska, Anchorage	C	Anchorage	CWE	50	\$50,000
University of Alaska, Anchorage	C	Anchorage	WS	110	\$297,000
Cook Inlet Tribal Council	G	Anchorage	WS	75	\$202,500
Human Resources	C	Mat-Su	WS	86	\$232,200
Job Ready Inc.	C	Anchorage	PECM	300	\$435,000
University of Alaska, Anchorage	C	Anchorage	PECM	300	\$435,000
Human Resources	C	Mat-Su	PECM	240	\$348,000
DPA Coastal Region					
Aleutian/Pribilof Island Association	G	Aleutian/Pribilof	CCM	34	\$75,800
Association of Village Council Presidents	G	Bethel	CCM	450	\$816,400
DOLWD	RSA	PWS/Copper River	CCM	52	\$112,200
Copper River Native Association	G	PWS/Copper River	CCM	29	\$59,700
DOLWD	RSA	Homer	CCM	77	\$154,000
Maniilaq Manpower	G	Kotzebue	CCM	90	\$162,200
DOLWD	G	Nome	CCM	120	\$119,994
Department of Education	RSA	Seward	CCM	32	\$64,000
DOLWD	RSA	Kenai	PECM	120	\$174,000
DOLWD	RSA	Kenai	WS	46	\$124,200
Kodiak Borough	C	Kodiak	CCM	100	\$215,500
Bristol Bay Native Association	G	Bristol Bay	CCM	180	\$376,400
DPA Northern Region					
Adult Learning Programs of Alaska	C	Fairbanks	WS	89	\$240,300
DOLWD	RSA	Northern	CCM	109	\$234,700
DOLWD	RSA	Fairbanks	PECM	180	\$261,000
DPA Southeast Region					
Tlingit & Haida	G	Inter-SE	CCM	66	\$122,500
DOLWD	RSA	Inter-SE	CCM	57	\$123,100
Metlakatla Indian Corporation	G	Metlakatla	CCM	38	\$65,200
Southeast Regional Resource Center	C	Prince of Wales	CCM	45	\$97,200
Center for Community	C	Sitka	CCM	35	\$110,000
DOLWD	RSA	Juneau	PECM	50	\$72,500
DOLWD	RSA	Ketchikan	PECM	60	\$87,000
Tlingit & Haida	G	Juneau	RCM	93	\$136,100
Southeast Regional Resource Center	C	Juneau	WS	40	\$108,000
Southeast Regional Resource Center	C	Ketchikan	WS	20	\$59,400
Total					\$7,329,494

G = Grant

C = Contract

RSA = Reimbursable Service Agreement

WS = Work Search

CCM = Comprehensive Case Management

RCM = Regular case Management

PECM = Post-Employment Case Management

DPA Welfare to Work Services Provided By Grantee and Contractors

To meet the challenges presented by welfare reform, the Division of Public Assistance (DPA) provides funds through grants, contracts and reimbursable service agreements (RSA) to community organizations, businesses, and partner agencies best situated to provide welfare to work services. The majority of the funding provided to these organizations purchases case management and Work Search services. DPA's new service delivery model ensures:

- A Work First! approach
- Community support and local involvement essential to the success of welfare reform.
- Application of local knowledge of the economy, businesses and culture that is best obtained through community based organizations
- Localized and de-centralized delivery of services that maximizes local knowledge and resources necessary to place clients into jobs or other meaningful work activities.

Work First

- Guiding philosophy successful in moving welfare recipients into employment
- Motto "a job, a better job, a career" (Even minimum wage jobs can be the stepping stone to a better job)
- Emphasizes fundamental value of work to enhance self-esteem and provide a good role model for children.
- The best way to learn about work is on the job and the best way to succeed in the labor market is to join it
- Testing the labor market is the best assessment of employability
- Job search is a central activity.

Work Search

- Cornerstone of DPA's "work first" approach to welfare reform
- Moves clients into the workforce as quickly as possible
- Activities conducted in group settings and model the day-to-day requirements of a job.
- Attendance is for four weeks, five days a week, up to eight hours per day
- Assesses skills, interests, aptitudes and employment barriers
- Uses workshops, lectures and other training modules to prepare clients to successfully find and keep employment
- Job club and peer mentoring
- Job search monitored by the Work Search provider
- Coaching, matching and placement of clients into employment

Case Management: The one-on-one interaction between a case manager and a client, in which the case manager is responsible for managing and arranging services that help the client move along the path from welfare to work. The case manager:

- Assesses client employability
- Helps develop the client's Family Self Sufficiency Plan (FSSP)
- Links clients to resources that support self-sufficiency
- Monitors family's progress in meeting self-sufficiency goals
- Assists in job referral
- Authorizes supportive services that assist clients in their efforts to prepare for, seek and retain employment.

DPA has defined three categories of Case Management:

- *Regular Case Management* is provided in service areas where Work Search is available to clients through another contract or grant. Regular case managers work with a caseload of clients who are either employed or unemployed.
- *Post Employment Case Management* is provided in service areas with Work Search and consists of a caseload of employed clients needing extra support to maintain their current jobs and/or to find better employment. Post employment case managers perform all the duties of the regular case managers, plus they assist employers who may need help with an individual client/employee.
- *Comprehensive Case Management* is provided where Work Search is not available for a caseload composed of both employed and unemployed clients. The comprehensive case manager performs all the duties of the regular and post employment case managers, plus appropriate functions that are part of Work Search.

DPA TRAIN TO HIRE INITIATIVE

Objective:

To provide short-term training for demand occupations that encourage employers to hire Temporary Assistance clients.

Principles:

1. Focus on demand occupations with potential for full time employment
2. Short-term training (between 2 to 12 weeks)
3. Employer assures hire of successful trainees
4. Small group training (5-10 participants)
5. Guarantee employer involvement through training designed to meet employers' needs
6. Employer-based training curriculum

Employer Incentives:

1. Meets the demand for trained employees
2. Cost sharing of training with DPA
3. Potential Tax Credits
4. Good public relations for employers
5. Ongoing case management and other services to support working clients
6. Transitional services to clients when employment leads to case closure

Training Options:

1. Employer training programs
 - Employer has formal training program
 - DPA pays training per capita training costs
2. Employer-based Vendor training
 - Employer(s) without formal training program
 - Collaborate with Vendor to develop and present curricula
 - DPA pays training per capita training costs
3. Subsidized OJT

Successful Models:

Employer Training Programs

National Bank of Alaska

- 2 Training sessions provided by NBA
- Clients pre-screened and referred by DPA and Service Providers
- 14 clients attended the training - 11 hired by NBA.

Providence Hospital

- 5 Training sessions administered by Providence Hospital for Certified Nursing Assistants
- Clients pre-screened and referred by DPA and Service Providers
- 47 clients attended training, 34 completed training all were hired



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Donated car jump-starts welfare-work program

By MARTHA BRISTOW
Staff Writer

It was a 45-below twist to a story with a happy ending: Lavoris Cofey was supposed to get a car Thursday, but the vehicle would not start because it had not been plugged in.

Still, Thursday was a superlative day for Cofey. It was her 36th birthday and the dawn of a new, independent life with a donated 1991 Ford Taurus—once it thaws—courtesy of Love In the Name of Christ.

The agency is a clearinghouse for local churches that matches needs in the community with volunteer services and donated goods.

"I thank God for the blessing of Love INC to be able to bless others," Cofey said during a brief ceremony at the agency's new, under-renovation headquarters at 1231 Noble St.

As ice fog swirled outside the window, Cofey accepted a symbol of Fairbanks car ownership: a new blue extension cord.

Cofey is a single mom who completed certified nursing assistant training through the Welfare to Work program. She is the first person to receive a car through a Love INC plan to help people join or rejoin the work force, said Terry Reichardt, the agency's executive director.

When Cofey first contacted the agency a year ago, she needed transportation to her classes. Later, when she got a job in an assisted-living home, she needed a ride to and from her 4-to-midnight shift. She also needed help getting her three kids to day care.

At first, Love INC plugged Cofey into a network of volunteer drivers who provide almost 600 rides every month, said Cornelia Stubblefield, the agency's transportation coordinator.

"We've found that transportation is such a problem for people who are making the transition to work," said Katie Ziesmer, Love INC project coordinator. "These people on low income just pour their money into cabs."

Love INC started its transportation program six years ago and enlarged it about 18 months ago. Stubblefield constructs a schedule that matches the needs of 67 clients with shifts covered by 83 volunteer drivers. The drivers provide rides to work, medical appointments, job interviews and other important commitments.

The transportation is friendly and dependable, Cofey said. "I've never been late to work," she said.

The drawback to the volunteer-driven transportation program is that people become dependent on it, Reichardt said. "We've got to move people off of the transportation program and on to independence."



Sam Hensel/News-Miner

GOOD TIMING—Love In the Name of Christ Executive Director Terry Reichardt gives an extension cord to Lavoris Cofey to use with her car that Love INC gave her Thursday in the agency's new offices on Noble Street. The extension cord is important because the car, a 1991 Ford Taurus donated to Love INC, would not start since it was not plugged in the night before. "I thank God for the blessing of Love INC to be able to bless others," said Cofey, who celebrated her 36th birthday Thursday.

In the past year, Love INC launched the Vehicle Incentive Plan. Working with the Department of Public Assistance, the agency matches donated cars with people who need them.

People who donate cars to a nonprofit agency can de-

duct the donation from their income taxes, Reichardt said.

Although the people who receive the cars don't have to invest any money up front, they do have to invest time and effort. Cofey, for instance, had to attend

See WELFARE, Page A-8

WELFARE: To work

Continued from Page A-1

a series of "Quality Life" workshops offered by Love INC to clients and to the general public. The workshops include "Stretching Your Money," "Cooking on a Tight Budget" and "Purchasing and Caring for a Car."

Cofey describes the workshops as "awesome," especially the one about saving money.

"That I needed. I really needed it," she said. "I've got money saved up, and I've never had money saved up before."

Over the next year, Cofey will meet with a volunteer mechanic who will teach her the fine points of vehicle maintenance and make sure her Ford Taurus is running well. At the end of a year, if Cofey

completes all of the training, Love INC will remove its lien from the vehicle title.

Having a car will make an immense difference in her life, Cofey said. For one thing, she'll save on cab fare. Even though she had rides through Love INC for work, she occasionally called a cab to transport herself and children. It's not unusual to spend \$30 for one outing, she said.

She'll also be able to take more university classes, to further her career.

"This is the beginning of a new year and it looks very promising," Cofey said.



M.A.S.C.O.T. buses will be making over 400 stops daily!! Throughout Alaska's Mat-Su Valley, bus stop locations have been placed at many key locations. These include residential areas, medical facilities, senior centers, local businesses, health and social services, as well as recreational areas.

M.A.S.C.O.T. is a Non-Profit organization in Alaska with the goal:

To provide a reliable, accessible, cost efficient, and effective transportation system which will increase the mobility of Mat-Su Valley residents and visitors.

Our Commuter service has been established to encourage a reduction in the number of drive-alone trips, essentially decreasing the number of vehicles on our roadways.

This service makes connections twice daily with Anchorage People Movers buses at the Eagle River Transfer Center.

All M.A.S.C.O.T. buses are wheelchair accessible!



M.A.S.C.O.T. has advertising space available on the inside as well as the outsides of our buses.

SCHEDULES:

Mat-Su Valley Service and Commuter Service

GENERAL INFO/CUSTOMER SERVICE

LINKS

Alaska Temporary Assistance Program Evaluation

Purpose of the project:

- To learn more about the status of families that have left the Temporary Assistance Program, and the reasons why some have returned.
- The information will be used to strengthen the program in the goal of moving families toward self-sufficiency.

Evaluators: Institute for Circumpolar Health Studies and the UAA School of Social Work, in consultation with a Citizens Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee will work with the evaluators to:

- monitor the course of the evaluation project,
- assist the evaluators in the analysis and interpretation of data,
- review and comment on evaluation findings and recommendations.

Timelines: October 1999 – August 2000 (first draft report)

Budget: \$249,625

Primary research question:

- Is the Department of Health and Social Services achieving the goal of moving recipients into jobs so they can support their families?

Evaluation Objectives:

- To assess the characteristics of families who have left the welfare roles (leavers) since July 1997.
- To learn more about families who have moved into jobs to support their families.
- To identify those factors associated with staying off welfare.
- To compare leavers with those families that have returned to the welfare roles after a period of absence (returners).

What are we measuring? – evaluation constructs:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| ▪ Basic leaver information | ▪ Current & past employment | ▪ ATAP services received |
| ▪ Leaver demographics | ▪ Other sources of income | ▪ Other services received |
| ▪ Child care | ▪ Housing | ▪ Transportation |
| ▪ Health factors | ▪ Client perceptions | ▪ Rural issues |

Method:

- Conduct client survey
- Review case files
- Analyze with DPA administrative data and other data available to DPA

**Alaska Department of Health & Social Services
Division of Public Assistance
Performance Measures**

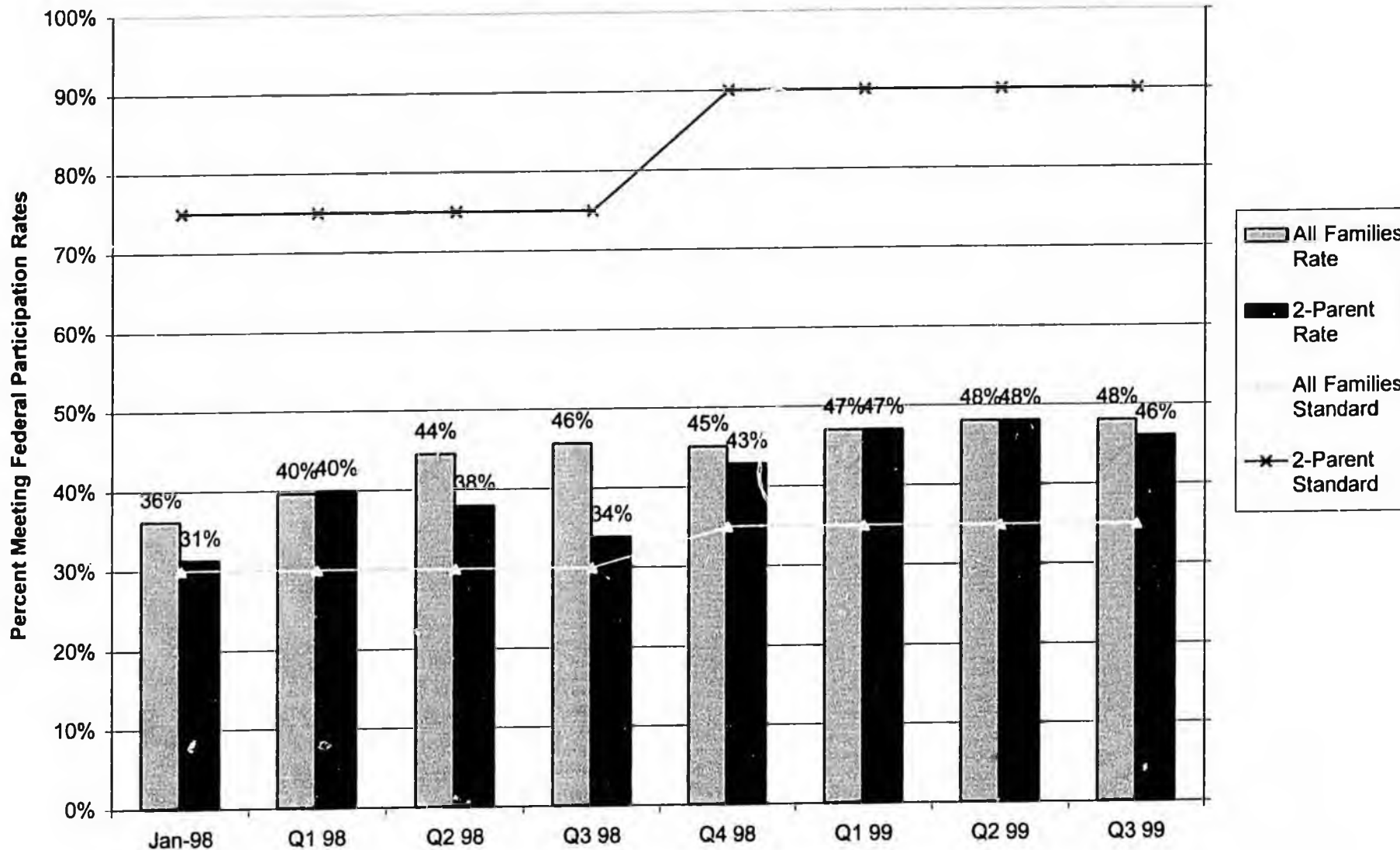
PROGRAM OBJECTIVE: Client reaches highest level of economic self-sufficiency.

DESIRED OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
Increase the percentage of Temporary Assistance clients who obtain paid employment.	Percentage of Temporary Assistance adults with earned income. Percentage of closed Temporary Assistance cases with earned income. Percentage of Temporary Assistance clients with hours of paid employment greater than an average of 30 hrs./week. Rate of job-entry for Temporary Assistance adults in the fiscal year.
Increase the percentage of current and former clients who retain paid employment.	Rate of increase in total earnings of employed Temporary Assistance adults. Rate of job retention of Temporary Assistance adults.
Increase the percentage of Temporary Assistance children who receive Child Support from absent parents.	Percentage of Temporary Assistance families receiving child support. Percentage of Temporary Assistance families with earned income <u>and</u> child support. Percentage of <u>closed</u> Temporary Assistance cases with earned income <u>and</u> child support.
Clients obtain high quality jobs.	Percentage of employed Temporary Assistance families with employer provided health insurance. Average hourly wage of working Temporary Assistance adults.

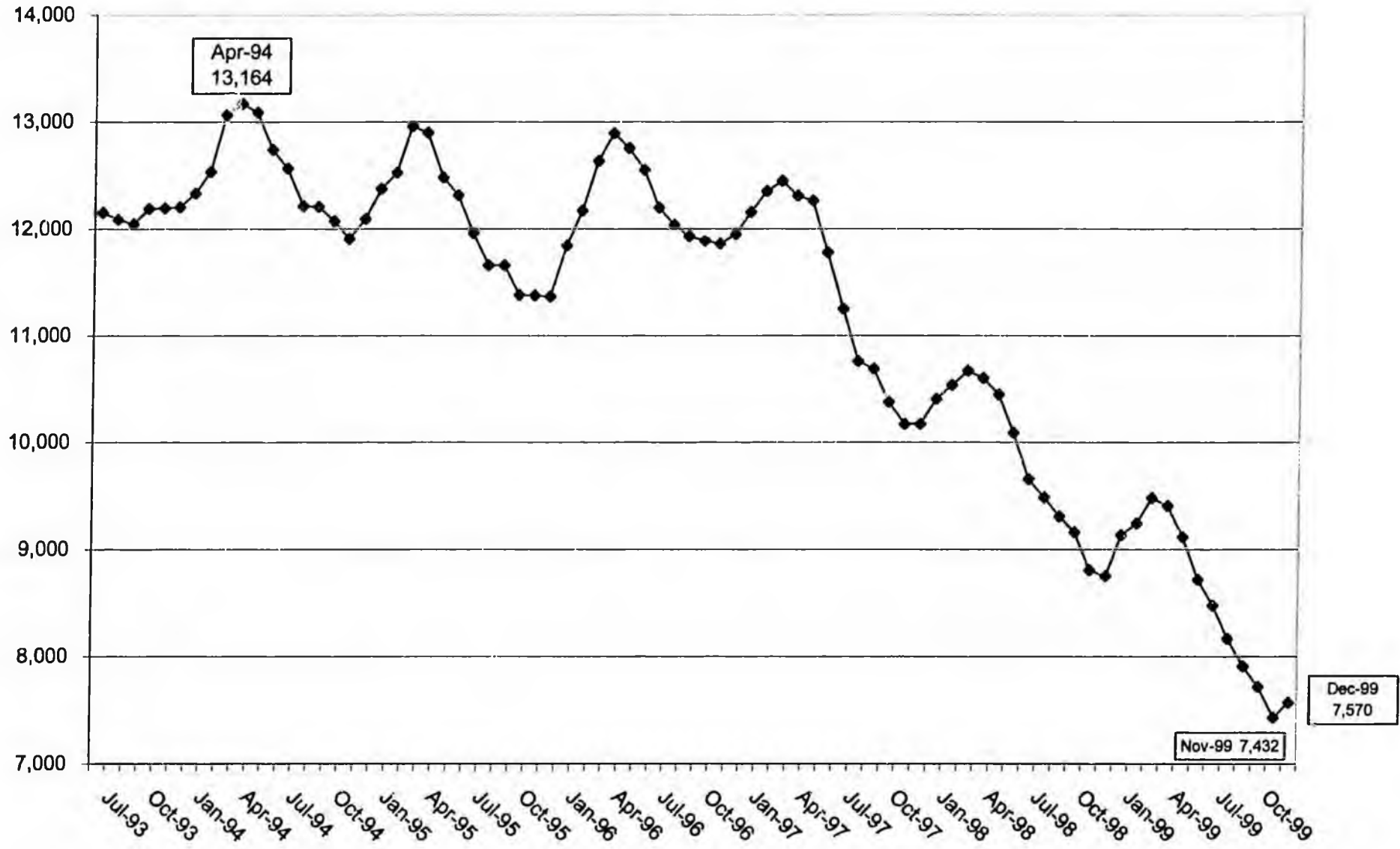
PROGRAM OBJECTIVE: Responsible stewardship.

DESIRED OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
Benefits are timely.	Percentage of Customer Service Assessments reflecting timely benefits.
Benefits paid are accurate.	Food Stamp payment accuracy rate. Temporary Assistance payment accuracy rate.
Clients participate in work activities.	Percentage of Temporary Assistance families participating in federally countable work activities. Percentage of clients not participating in work activities because of lack of child care
All overpayments are repaid.	Percentage of overpaid Temporary Assistance dollars collected from families. Percentage of overpaid FS dollars collected from families.
Clients become self-sufficient before the 5 year Temporary Assistance time limit.	Percentage of families with benefits for 60 months or more.

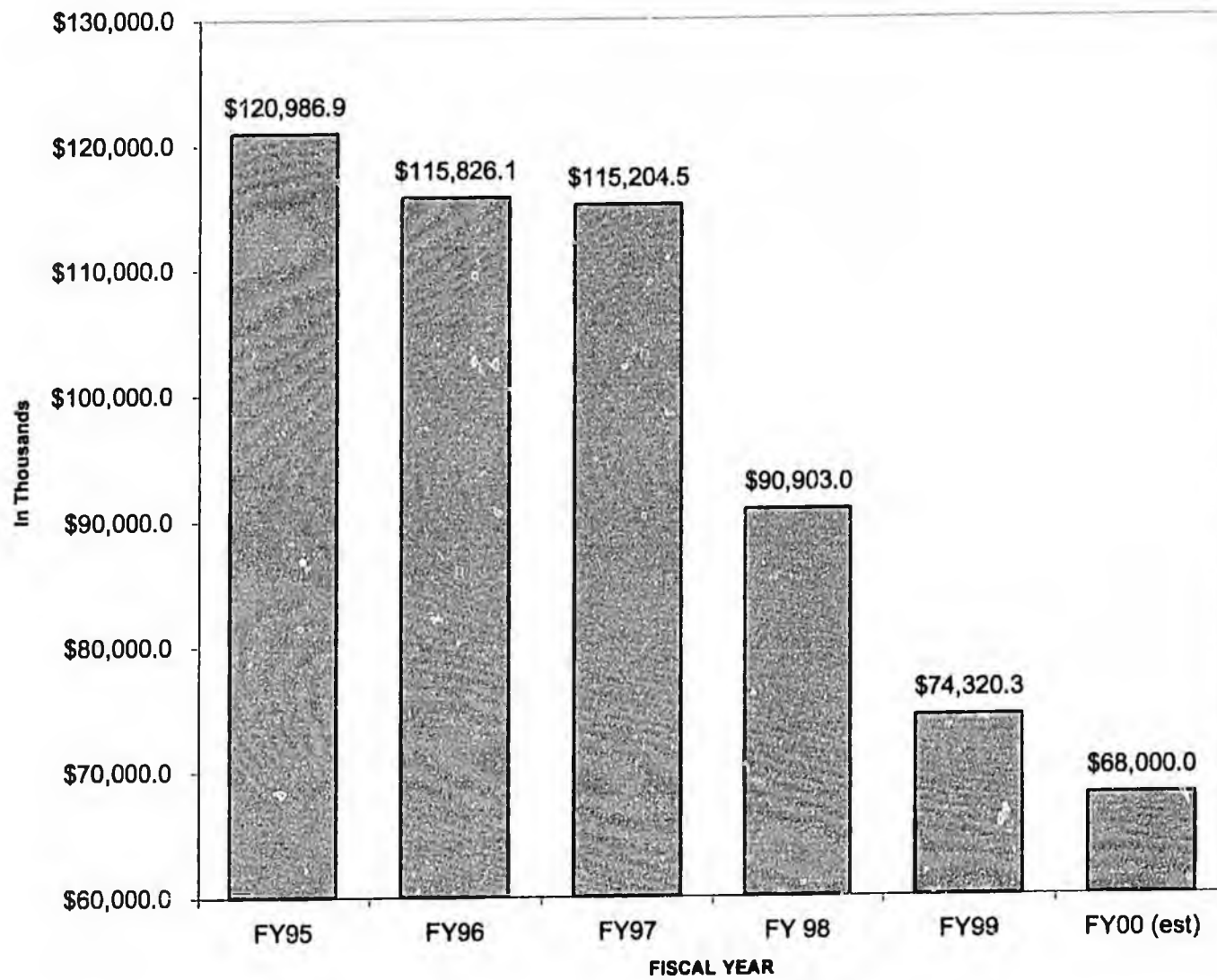
Alaska Division of Public Assistance Performance Measures Federal Work Participation Rates



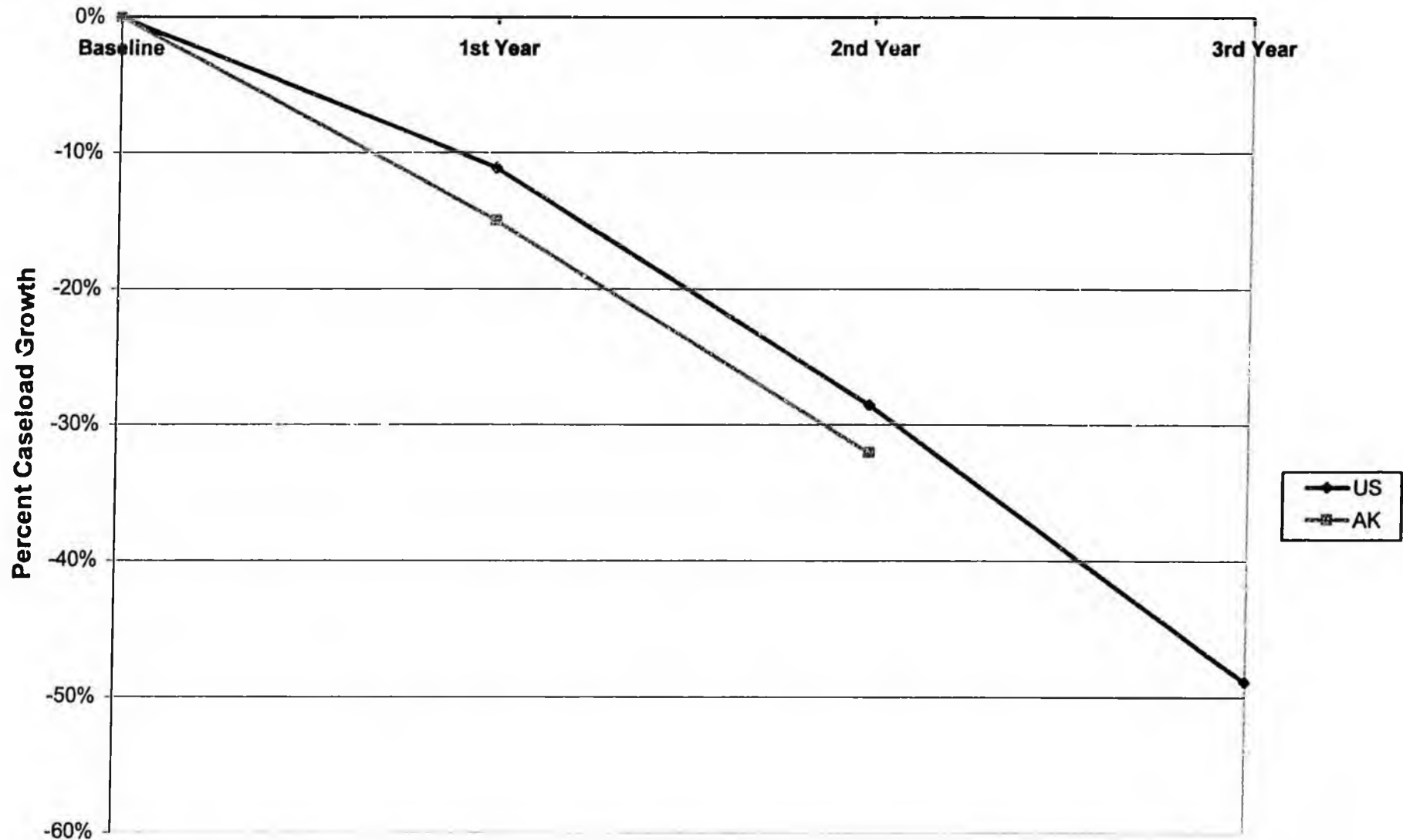
AFDC/ATAP Caseload FY94 - Present



AFDC/ATAP Cash Benefit Expenditures



Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Percent of the Caseload Growth by Program Year



The baseline for the U.S. is from January 1996 and the baseline for Alaska is January 1997.
The final year's data for both Alaska and the entire U.S. is from June 1999

What can you offer?

Here's a list of possible resources you or your team might offer through a Family Pathfinders team:

- help arrange for child care, housing or transportation;
- be a friend to talk things over with;
- provide tutoring for family members;
- provide computer tutoring;
- help a family organize its finances and budget;
- help provide clothing, grooming items and household articles;
- help complete job applications, resumes and help develop interview skills;
- help find and maintain a suitable job.

Family Pathfinders

Mission Statement

Family Pathfinders is a partnership of civic groups, businesses, congregations and state government agencies working with welfare families to help free them from dependence on public assistance.

Contact:

Family Pathfinders
Norma Carter, Coordinator
Beyond Shelter Program
3710 East 20th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99508-3418

(907) 276-3046 phone

(907) 276-2472 fax

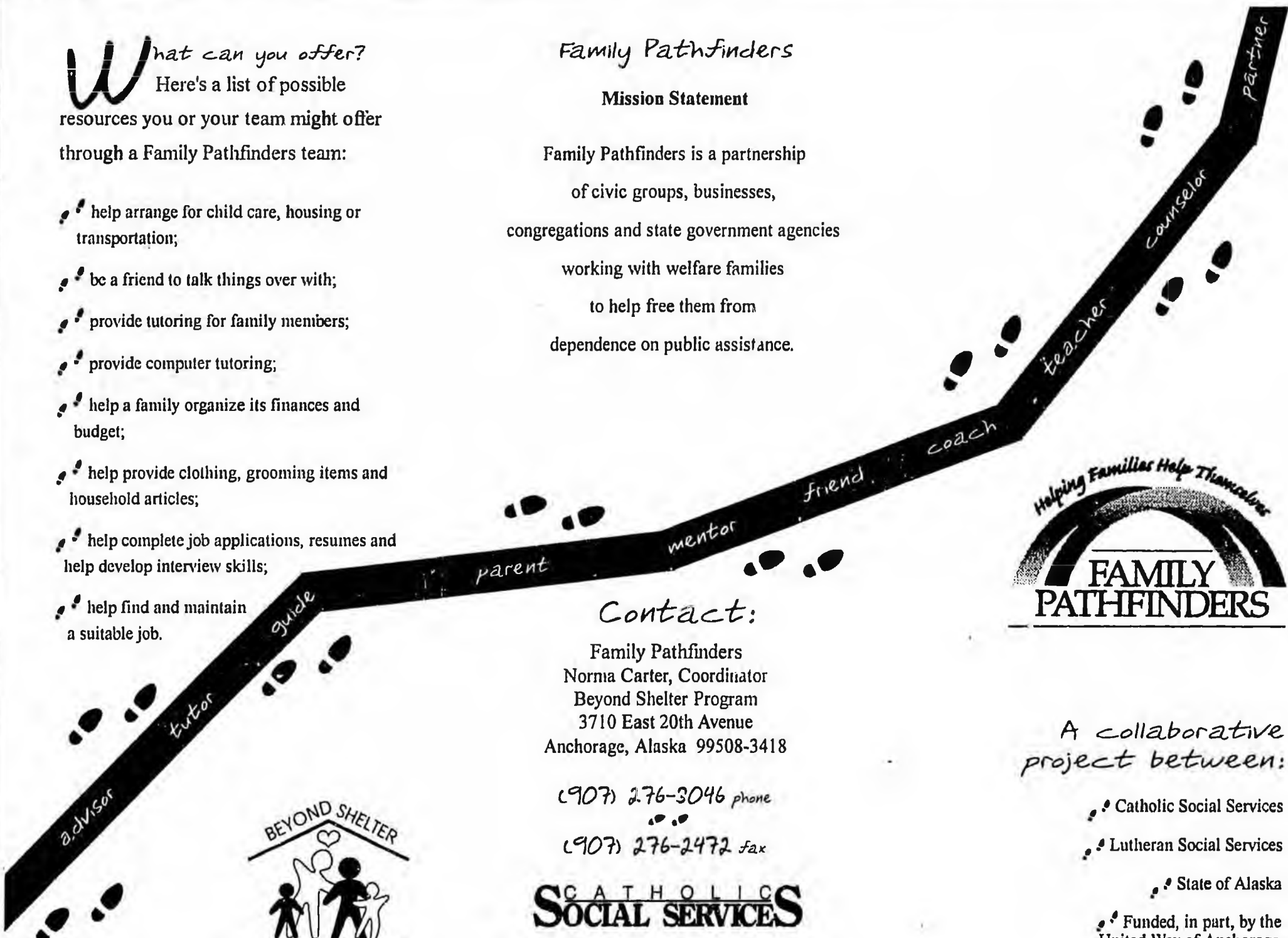
**CATHOLIC
SOCIAL SERVICES**

 A United Way Agency



A collaborative project between:

- Catholic Social Services
- Lutheran Social Services
- State of Alaska
- Funded, in part, by the United Way of Anchorage



Just think about ...

the one person who stands out in your life as a great mentor. Do you recall a teacher whose advice you could always count on? Was it a friend who would drop everything when you had a problem and just needed someone who would listen? Or, does a family member fit the description of that close confidante who can always be counted for non-judgemental support? Maybe you are, or can be, that person for someone else!

Can you imagine...

where you might be if you didn't have a network of friends, family members or others to lean on every once and a while — someone to provide you with moral support, personal and professional experience, referrals to services, practical advice, and sounding boards for your own ideas.

You just feel better knowing they are a part of your life and you are a part of their's. After all, personal and professional contacts are among the most important ingredients to a productive and successful life.

Family Pathfinders.

The Family Pathfinders project supports families in their path from welfare dependence to independence. Mentor teams work with selected families to provide a support system and help ensure their chances for success.

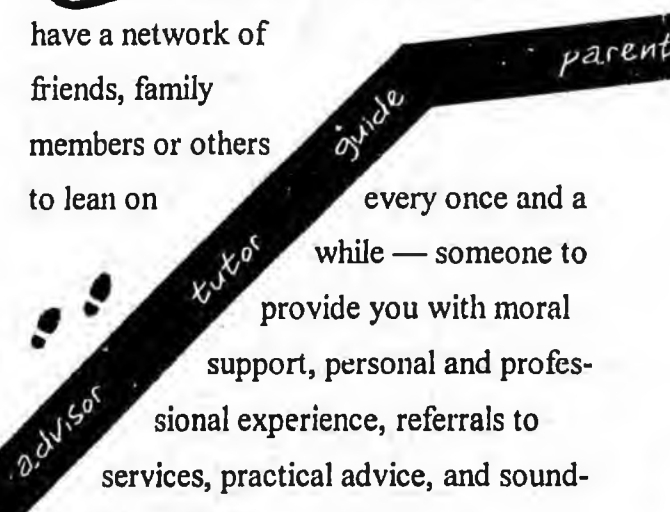
Team up!

Family Pathfinder teams are comprised of individuals from families, civic groups, businesses, state government agencies and the faith community. When a team is formed, the group completes its eight-hour training, and is matched with a family to support and connect to the community.

This is too easy!
Team members are asked to make the following commitments:



- work in a team for at least 12-months;
- attend regular meetings with the team and family;
- maintain a respectful relationship with the family;
- be honest with the family about what commitments can realistically be made;
- refrain from providing professional services, such as counseling, to the family even if you are trained in those areas;
- involve others to meet specific needs for the family.



Mission Statement

SHOULD;

Briefly state WHY department exists,
Highlight UNIQUE contribution of department,
Unify the core services/service groups,
Be memorable and usable

SHOULD NOT;

Be list of everything we do,
Include statements of values,
Include “qualifiers” of who well/good ,
Contain language that is vague and unclear.

Mission Statement – Example (OASAS)

WHY the agency exists

Assist Clients in becoming “Self Sufficient”

Not WHAT you do;

Provide local assistance,
Distribute state aid

Not how WELL you do things;

Excellence
Quality

Not statements of HOW;

Through partnerships
Valuing diverse perspectives

What's IMPORTANT to measure?

Results.....not Activities

Result: The intended "outcome" of the effort.

Activities: The things done to accomplish the "outcome".

EXAMPLE - JOBS Training

Result = Person gets a Job



Activities = Person's case is established
Person is trained
Person receives child care assistance
Person is taught interviewing skills
etc.....

KEY QUESTIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS ?

1. What's your Mission?
2. What are your programs and how do they contribute to the Mission?
3. Who are your customers?
4. What are your Program Outcome Performance Measures?
5. How did you do last year?
6. What do you intend to do differently this year?
7. What are your strategies/priorities for this next year?
8. Which measures are you going to use to validate _____ and monitor our investment? _____
9. * *Is there duplication between agencies?*
10. * *Are other options viable to accomplish these outcomes?*

Mission Statement

SHOULD;

Briefly state WHY department exists,
Highlight UNIQUE contribution of department,
Unify the core services/service groups,
Be memorable and usable

SHOULD NOT;

Be list of everything we do,
Include statements of values,
Include “qualifiers” of who well/good ,
Contain language that is vague and unclear.

Mission Statement – Example (OASAS)

WHY the agency exists

Assist Clients in becoming “Self Sufficient”

Not WHAT you do;

Provide local assistance,
Distribute state aid

Not how WELL you do things;

Excellence
Quality

Not statements of HOW;

Through partnerships
Valuing diverse perspectives

What's IMPORTANT to measure?

Results.....not Activities

Result: The intended "outcome" of the effort.

Activities: The things done to accomplish the "outcome".

EXAMPLE - JOBS Training

Result = Person gets a Job

Activities =
Person's case is established
Person is trained
Person receives child care assistance
Person is taught interviewing skills
etc.....



KEY QUESTIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS ?

1. What's your Mission?
2. What are your programs and how do they contribute to the Mission?
3. Who are your customers?
4. What are your Program Outcome Performance Measures?
5. How did you do last year?
6. What do you intend to do differently this year?
7. What are your strategies/priorities for this next year?
8. Which measures are you going to use to validate _____ and monitor our investment? _____
9. * *Is there duplication between agencies?*
10. * *Are other options viable to accomplish these outcomes?*

Welfare Reform Status Report

The First Two Years

Fiscal Years 1998 & 1999
(July 1, 1997 - June 30, 1999)

1999 UPDATE

INSIDE THIS REPORT

Introduction	1
Second Year Statistics	2
Workforce Development	4
Work Services	6
The Safety Net	8
Future Challenges	10

INTRODUCTION

Alaska has completed the second year of its new welfare program. As a result of welfare reform, the dramatic decrease in welfare caseloads seen across the nation is happening in Alaska. While caseloads and spending are down and more recipients are working, challenges still persist in helping the remaining Alaskan families off welfare and into self-sufficiency.

Alaska's welfare reform law was signed by Governor Knowles in June of 1996, and two months later President Clinton signed the federal welfare reform law. The new state and federal laws which took effect on July 1, 1997, replaced the AFDC program with the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP or Temporary Assistance).

Alaska has adopted a "work first" approach which emphasizes quick entry into the workforce for most recipients,

backed by services which help recipients retain jobs and attain better jobs. The threat of time limits and federal requirements for work participation underscore the importance of a strong employment emphasis.

The AFDC program was funded on a 50% federal and 50% state basis with the total amount dependent on the size of the caseload. Under the new program, federal funding comes in a fixed amount known as the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant and the state is required to match at least 80% of the federal level.

Due to declining caseloads and the reduced demand for cash benefit payments, millions of dollars have been made available to provide child care and work services for recipients and to supplant state funds for other services which has helped to



reduce the state's budget deficit.

While the success chronicled in last year's *Welfare Reform Status Report* has continued through the second year, the challenges remain as well. As the caseload declines, those recipients with the greatest barriers to employment continue to need help. And the 60-month lifetime time clock keeps ticking.

The ultimate success of welfare reform will depend on helping low-skilled welfare recipients into employment and self-sufficiency before their clock runs out.

WELFARE REFORM IN ALASKA

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Welfare caseload has declined 26% from June 1997.
- Welfare savings for Fiscal Year 1999 topped \$41 million.
- Since July 1997, 4,000 families have left welfare for jobs.
- The welfare caseload has dropped to its lowest level since February 1991.

New welfare reform laws have changed welfare by:

- Imposing a 5-year lifetime limit on benefits
- Requiring most recipients to be in a work activity within two years
- Requiring minor parents to live with their parents or another safe home, and to finish high school

- Diverting applicants from welfare by addressing immediate needs
- Reducing benefits to two-parent families in the summer and to families with low housing costs
- Requiring all recipients to develop a family self-sufficiency plan

- Allowing families more earned income so that it pays to work
- Penalizing recipients for quitting or refusing to take a job
- Enabling communities to play a greater role in the delivery of welfare-to-work services

Second Year Statistics

Welfare Caseload Down



SECOND YEAR STATISTICS

HIGHLIGHTS

Two years of welfare reform in Alaska have brought some remarkable achievements.

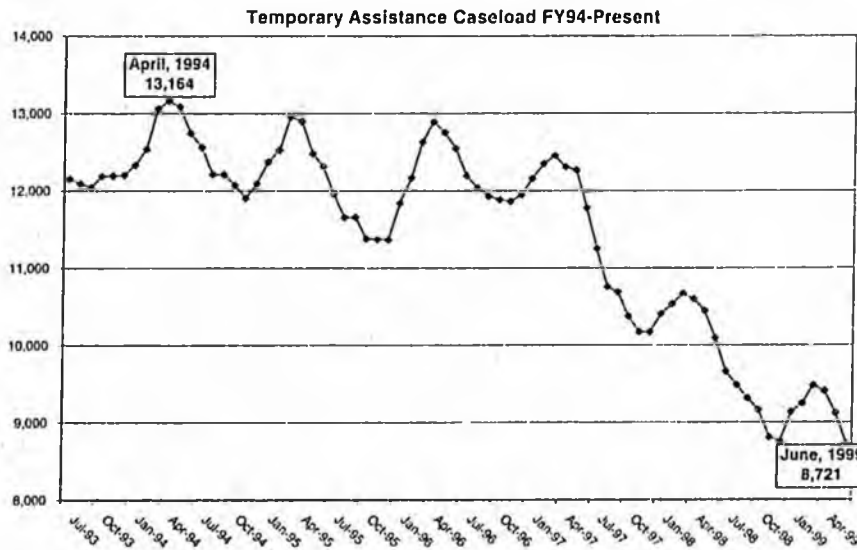
The new rules under welfare reform, the commitment of state public assistance workers and community contractors and grantees, a focus on work and personal responsibility, and a strong Alaska economy have yielded great results.

Highlights from the first two years of welfare reform include:

- The Temporary Assistance caseload has dropped 26%, from June 1997 to June 1999;
- Since July 1997, 4,000 families have left public assistance for jobs;
- Over 54% of Temporary Assistance adults are assigned to work activities;

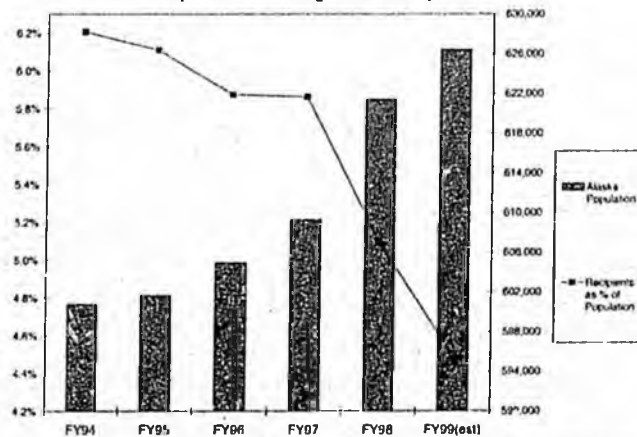
- In two years, the State saved over \$41 million in welfare benefits; and
- Welfare reform has saved \$32.3 million in state general fund dollars in Fiscal Year 2000 alone.

CASELOAD CONTINUES TO GO DOWN



In June of 1999, the Temporary Assistance caseload declined to 8,721, its lowest point since February, 1991 when two parent families were first being added to the AFDC program. This figure is 34% below the historical peak in April of 1994. The greatest decline began in February 1997 when the first ATAP provisions began to take effect. In spite of the overall decline, winter upswings are an inevitable result of Alaska's seasonal economy.

AFDC/ATAP Recipients as Percentage of Alaska Population



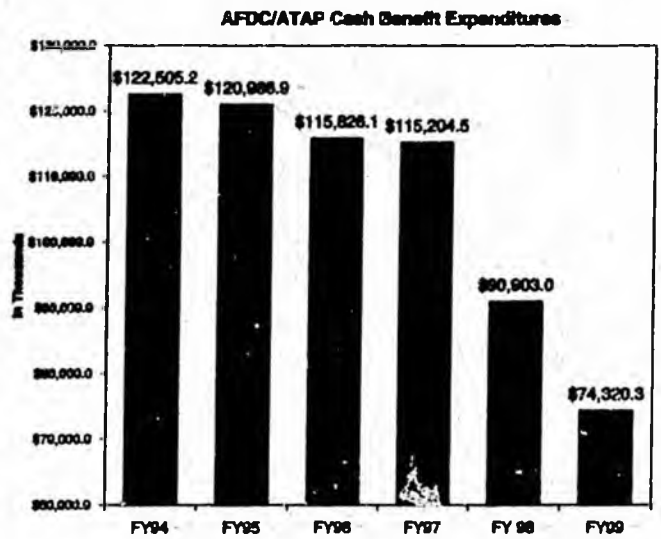
Alaska's overall population has been steadily growing in recent years. At the same time, the welfare caseload has been declining. Thus, the percentage of Alaskans on Temporary Assistance has dropped significantly in the past two years.



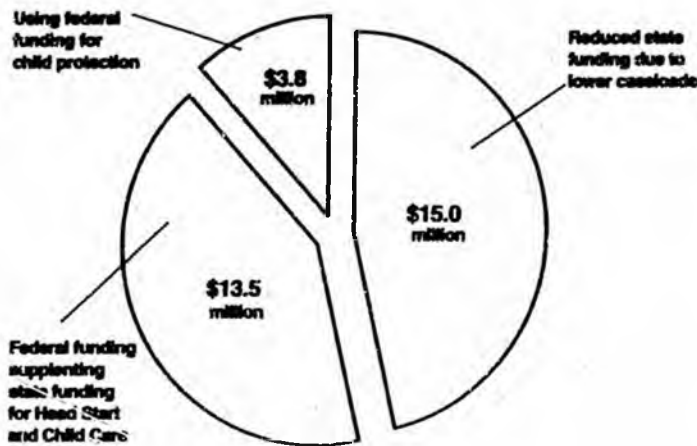
SPENDING IS DOWN



Spending on welfare payments to recipients is down. In FY99, these expenditures declined to \$74.3 million, a 35% reduction from FY97. Lower expenditures can be attributed to more recipients leaving welfare for work, fewer applicants, more recipients working, and benefit cuts to two-parent families in the summer and to families with lower housing costs.

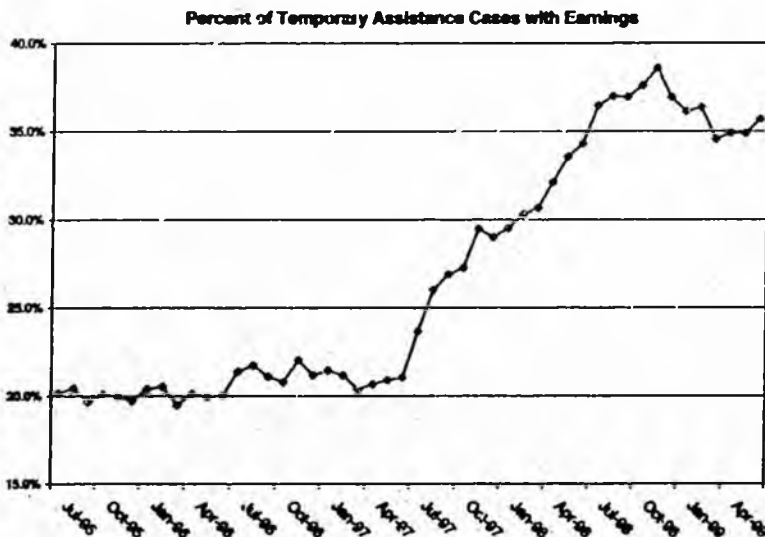


FY2000 State General Fund Savings: \$32 Million



Welfare reform has saved millions of state general fund dollars at a critical time of high budget deficits. Comparing what was spent in FY97 to the amount appropriated for FY 2000, the general fund savings will reach \$32.3 million for FY 2000 alone. This sum is composed of several factors including: reducing the required state effort to the floor; using federal TANF dollars to the maximum allowed to supplant general funded child care and Head Start programs; and using federal TANF dollars to the maximum allowed to provide additional child protection services that would otherwise be funded with state funds.

MORE RECIPIENTS ARE WORKING



The main welfare reform provisions took effect in July of 1997. Since that time the percentage of welfare recipients in a job has increased dramatically. However, as the caseload declines to those recipients with the greatest barriers to employment, it becomes more difficult to achieve high percentages of working recipients.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ALASKA'S ECONOMY



The Alaska economy plays an important role in the success of welfare reform. Jobs created over the last two years have helped caseloads shrink and future economic growth should add to this trend.

Last year's growth was the

third strongest in the 1990s.

Today's economy continues to add jobs; more people are employed now than were employed a year ago.

New Alaska jobs grew by 2.5% in 1998, providing much needed opportunities for welfare recipients. Alaska's economy should continue to grow through 2000, although job growth in 1999 and 2000 will be among the slowest in Alaska during the last 10 years, according to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

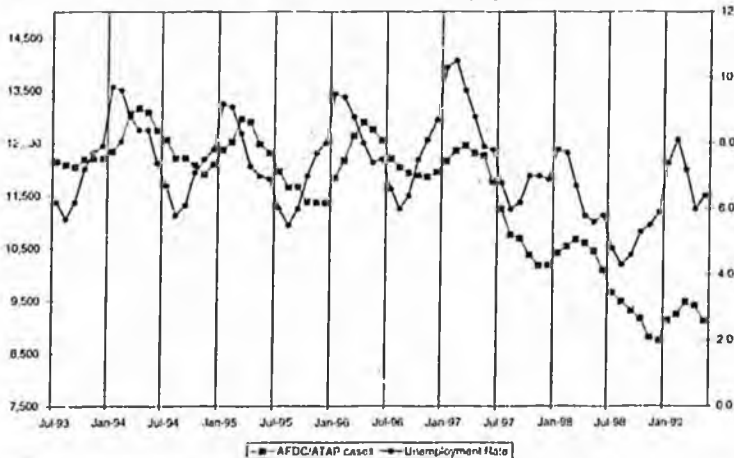
A contracting oil and gas industry and the associated impacts in other sectors of the economy will contribute to slower job growth. In addition,

Alaska's public sector is expected to lose jobs in the next two years. Some of these job losses will be due to privatization and others are expected as a result of revenue-related downsizing.

Another bright spot for Alaska's economy is the unemployment rate, which for the first time since Statehood, remained below 8 percent six years in a row, and averaged 5.8 percent in 1998.

The graph shows that the Temporary Assistance caseload follows and is directly related to the unemployment rate in Alaska. The graph also shows the seasonal nature of both welfare and unemployment.

Alaska AFDC/ATAP Caseload vs. Unemployment Rate



ALASKA HUMAN RESOURCE INVESTMENT COUNCIL & DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

There are big changes in Alaska's workforce development arena. The consolidation of state workforce development agencies and the implementation of the Federal Workforce Investment Act hold the promise of improved training and other employment services for both job seekers and employers.

Legislation passed last session and signed by Governor Knowles consolidates most of the state's workforce development programs into the newly renamed Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOL). The job training programs housed in the former Department of Community and Regional Affairs were

moved as was the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Adult Basic Education. Work services funded through the TANF block grant remain with DPA although DOL continues to provide many services for welfare recipients under agreement with DPA.

Alaska's job training efforts are coordinated by the Alaska Human Resource Investment Council (AHRIC). The Council consists of private sector employers, union officials, educators and state officials.

The AHRIC is currently implementing the new Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which consolidates job training and vocational

education programs, provides more local control of the State's job training delivery system, and is designed to meet both the needs of employers and job seekers.

The AHRIC is coordinating a public planning process to create a five-year strategic plan for workforce development, involving local elected officials, partner agencies, community based organizations, and individuals. The AHRIC will continue to support welfare reform through the planning process. The deadline for WIA implementation is July 1, 2000.



ALASKA JOB CENTER NETWORK – ONE-STOPS

The continued success of welfare reform in Alaska depends on the coordination of agencies that focus on job training, development and placement for recipients.

The Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN) is Alaska's version of the national "one stop" career center system. Its goal is to bring together services for jobs, job training and human services with an eye to increasing cost effectiveness and improving customer satisfaction.

In 1999, all of Alaska's one stops will be asked to meet state standards for Job Centers established by the Alaska Human Resource Investment Council. Antici-

pated to receive certification for meeting those standards are at least 10 full service Job Centers and more than 18 Satellite Job Centers serving smaller communities.

There are several Job Centers up and running in communities across the state;

- Ketchikan Job Center;
- Juneau Job Center;
- Mat-Su Job Center;
- YK Delta Job Center;
- Eagle River Job Center;
- Fairbanks Job Center;
- Kenai Pen. Job Center;
- Anchorage Job Center, Muldoon;
- Anchorage Job Center, 8th Avenue; and
- Anchorage Job Center, Midtown.

The first Anchorage Job Center opened in the Muldoon Mall and a Fourth & Gambell location will open in the fall of 1999. An additional Anchorage Satellite is planned for Mt. View.

All Centers offer a customer service orientation and will provide job and career information, job referrals, skills training, temporary assistance and welfare-to-work programs. Public access computers help customers learn computer skills or access the Internet to facilitate job search.



WORKSTAR AND JOB DEVELOPMENT

The private sector has stepped up to the challenge of welfare reform in Alaska. Most of the jobs which have helped poor Alaskan families off welfare have come from private businesses. Much credit for this goes to Governor Knowles' WorkStar Steering Committee.

Welfare changes created a unique opportunity for the state and business to partner in moving welfare recipients into the workforce. WorkStar is a business-led effort to advise the State on the employer's perspective on hiring welfare recipients. WorkStar members come from the largest employers in the state and small businesses as well. Most of these employers have hired welfare recipients.

WorkStar steering committee members include:

- Jacob Adams, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation

- Pam LaBolle, AK Chamber of Commerce
- Eleanor Andrews, Andrews Group
- Carl Marrs, Cook Inlet Region, Inc.
- Dennis Bird, FedEx
- Richard Near, Safeway
- Charles Bundrant, Trident Seafoods
- Jamie Slack, VECO
- Jane Crane, ARCO
- Suzanne Sloan-Rust, K-2 Aviation
- Charlie Curtis, NANA
- Bob Southall, Hilton Hotel
- Susan Denison, Providence
- Mano Frey, AK AFL-CIO
- Fran Webber, NBA
- Kitty Farnham, BP

WorkStar accomplishments include the following:

- Held five job fairs around the state;
- Attended four trade shows to meet employers; and
- Solicited and selected WorkStar Employer and

Employee of the Year award to be given Fall 1999.

Closely aligned with WorkStar are the state's job development efforts. Department of Labor and Workforce Development staff working on behalf of DPA work full-time in developing relationships with employers encouraging them to hire recipients. These "job developers" sell the benefits of hiring welfare recipients including DPA screening and referral of prospective employees, tax credits, public recognition, and most importantly, hard working and loyal employees.

A toll-free number is available to employers to assist them in hiring someone off welfare.



WorkStar

To hire a
worker
call

888 838-JOBS

WORK SERVICES

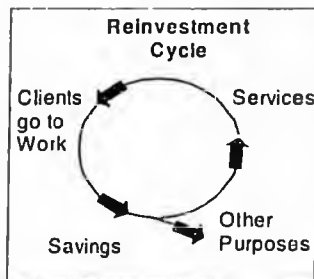
MORE WELFARE-TO-WORK FUNDING

The array of services intended to help recipients into the workforce are known as "work services". Most of the funding for these critical work services has come from the state's reinvestment plan.

care, case management, work search, transportation, training and job development. Funds come from the TANF block grant, state general funds and the federal Welfare-to-Work

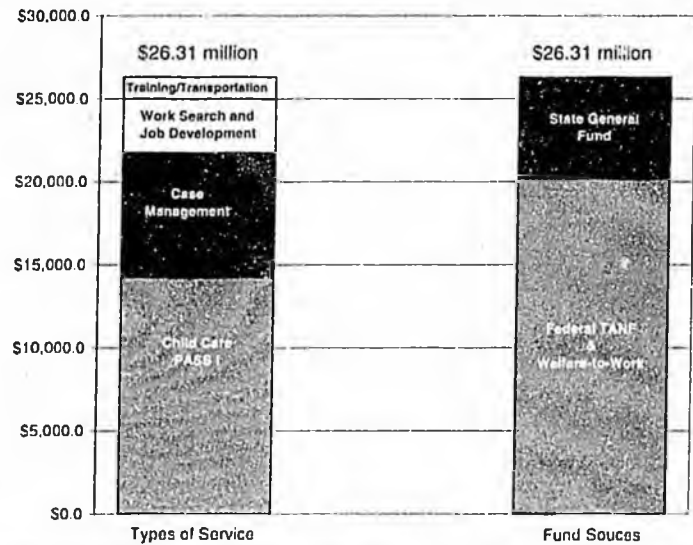
program. These services are administered by state agencies, non-profit community organizations, Native organizations and private businesses across the state.

As recipients left the caseload, savings in benefit dollars have been generated. A portion of the savings has been reinvested in services to help even more recipients off welfare which results in more savings, and the cycle continues. A significant portion of the savings have been used to help reduce the state's general fund deficit and to provide other state services.



For FY 2000, approximately \$26.3 million has been budgeted by DPA for services for recipients including child

FY2000 Work Services Funding



"Clients served" indicates the number of welfare recipients that the State is actively helping to work.

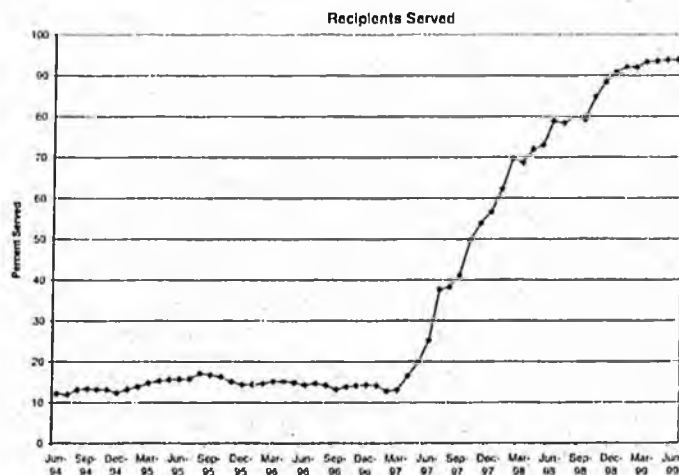


DIVISION OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

The Division of Public Assistance (DPA) plays the central role in the delivery of work services. As the state's TANF agency, DPA is responsible for federal funds which pay welfare benefits to eligible re-

ipients, provide work services and cover administrative costs. The federal TANF responsibilities also include meeting program requirements, performance mandates and reporting requirements. DPA is also the local administrative entity for the US Department of Labor's Welfare-to-Work (WtW) program. Both the TANF and WtW require the contribution of state general funds for which DPA is responsible as well.

Public Assistance, General Relief and Energy Assistance recipients. DPA also determines eligibility for the Medicaid and CAMA programs. A newer, expanded responsibility for the Division is in providing work services. Some of these services are provided in-house by DPA and Department of Labor and Workforce Development employees, but most services are provided through community grants and contracts administered by DPA. Since 1997, there has been a dramatic expansion in the number of recipients served by either state agencies or through grants and contracts.



As it has done for years, DPA is responsible for determining eligibility and paying benefits to eligible welfare (ATAP) recipients, and for Food Stamp, Adult

COMMUNITY GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

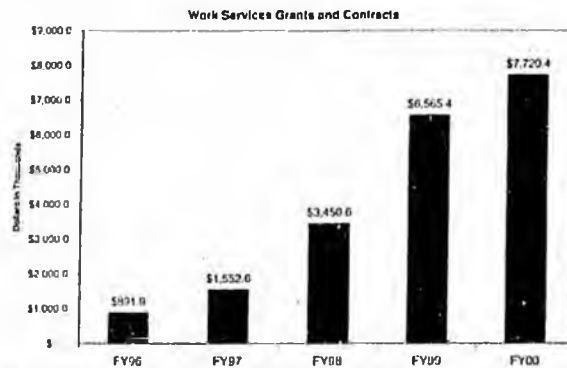
Most of the work services in Alaska are provided by community-based service providers under a grant or contract with DPA. Welfare reform would not be successful without the commitment of these organizations (see the roster of service providers) which serve Temporary Assistance recipients throughout all regions of the state. They are familiar with the local economy, job market, customs and culture and the needs of the community. Native organizations play a key role in providing services, particularly in rural Alaska.

Each grant or contract is performance-based with requirements that the provider serve a certain number of recipients

referred by DPA and reach certain percentages of recipients placed in a job or other work activity. The organization is expected to apply the "work first" approach.

Types of services provided include case management, work search, training, and transportation.

The amount of funding for community based work services has increased five-fold since FY97, the year immediately before welfare reform took effect. Funding for Native organizations has increased to over \$2 million in FY2000.



- Service Providers**
- Adult Learning Programs of AK
 - AK Vocational/Technical Center
 - Aleutian/Pribilof Island Assoc.
 - America Works Partnership
 - Assoc. of Village Council Presidents
 - Bristol Bay Native Assn.
 - Catholic Social Services
 - Center for Community
 - Cook Inlet Tribal Council
 - Copper River Native Association
 - Delta Mine Training Center
 - Dept. of Labor and Workforce Dev.
 - Foundation for Parents and Children
 - HRC, Inc.
 - IAM CARES
 - Job Ready Incorporated
 - Kodiak Island Borough
 - LOVE Inc
 - Manilq Manpower
 - Metlakatla Indian Community
 - Municipality of Anchorage
 - Nine Star Enterprises
 - Sitka Tours
 - SE Regional Resource Center
 - Tanana Chiefs Conference
 - Tanana Valley Comm. College
 - Tlingit & Haida
 - University of Alaska - Adult Learning Center

CHILD CARE

The success of welfare reform depends on the existence of accessible, affordable, quality child care for all low wage workers. The State of Alaska provides child care subsidies for these families through the Parents Achieving Self Sufficiency (PASS) program: PASS I for families receiving Temporary Assistance benefits, PASS II for families who are moving from reliance on TA, and PASS III for low-income families.

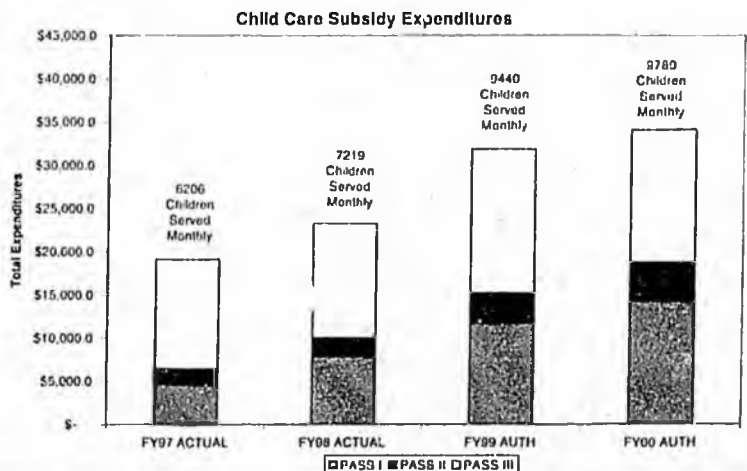
Over the past two years, total spending by the state on child care subsidies has grown by more than \$12 million - to nearly \$32 million in FY99. Funding for child care subsidies for Temporary Assistance recipients has grown from \$4.5 million in FY97 to almost \$12 million in FY99. During that same period, the average number of children served on a monthly basis by all subsidy programs increased

by 2,500. Since the cost of child care can often be more than 50% of the take-home pay for families moving from welfare to work, assisting parents pay for child care is extremely important to achieving the goal of self-sufficiency for Alaskan families.

Welfare reform efforts include 'parental choice' provisions, which allow parents expanded options in choosing child care, including care from relatives and friends. Many parents select providers who are exempt from licensing under state child care regulations. As a result, in 1998, the State of Alaska initiated a policy that all providers receiving child care subsidy payments must meet minimum health and safety standards and register with the state to provide child care. Since January, 1998, the number of registered providers has grown from

450 to 1400, increasing the supply of child care dramatically and allowing parents more options for their child care. During the same time, the state experienced a decrease of 55 licensed family child care homes.

The state's commitment to improving the quality, availability, and affordability of child care will continue to enhance efforts to move families from welfare to self-sufficiency.



THE SAFETY NET

The Temporary Assistance Program remains fundamentally a financial assistance program for poor Alaskans with children.

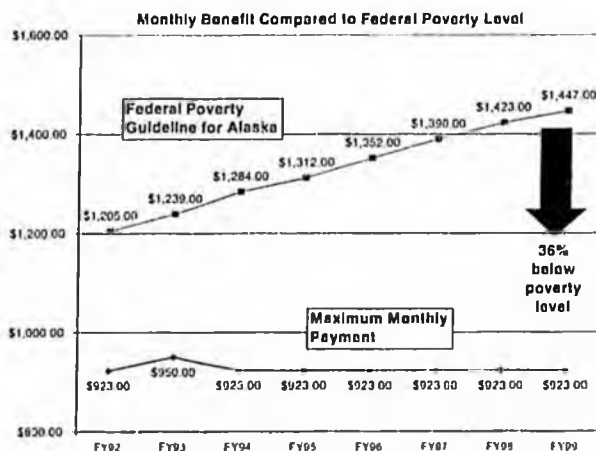
TEMPORARY CASH BENEFITS

While the focus of welfare reform has been on moving recipients from welfare to work, it is important to remember that the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program remains fundamentally a financial assistance program for poor Alaskans with children. A vast majority of the funding for ATAP is distributed monthly in cash benefits. DPA workers are dedicated to ensuring that

these benefits are paid accurately, in a timely fashion, and to families that are truly eligible to receive them. This importance of cash benefits to needy families and the state's ability to distribute them cannot be overlooked as welfare reform initiatives are pursued.

Cash benefits assist low income families with their most basic necessities: shelter, clothing, transportation

and food (the Food Stamp Program provides supplemental food for 70% of the ATAP caseload). Up until a change in state law in 1993, Alaska's benefit level tracked the federal poverty level under a cost of living adjustment. Since that time the buying power of the AFDC/ATAP benefit has eroded to 36% below the federal poverty level, as shown on the graph below.



Alaska's Monthly Benefit for a family of three is 36% below the Federal Poverty Level.



DENALI KIDCARE

One of the greatest worries parents have about leaving welfare for work is losing health insurance for their children.

Denali KidCare is a new State of Alaska program designed to ensure that children and teens of low-income working families can have the health insurance they need.

Denali KidCare evolved from the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 which created the Children's Health Insurance Program. Through a Medicaid expansion, eligi-

bility was increased to 200% of poverty for children through age 18. In the first four months, a total of 7,842 children have been enrolled in Denali KidCare. This represents 68% of the goal of enrolling 11,600 children through outreach efforts.

Through five outreach specialists hired for this program, a concentrated effort will occur this fall to enroll more children through schools. All districts in the state have been contacted by outreach specialists and packets will be sent containing posters, brochures, and

applications. Principals will distribute these materials at registration, open houses, and teacher orientation, and school nurses will have it year-round.

Applications for the free and reduced lunch program are available by calling the Denali Kid Care toll-free number at 1-888-318-8890.

As study after study shows, a healthy childhood is essential to both the physical and intellectual development of children. Health insurance can play a key role in that development.



CHILD SUPPORT

Child support collections are essential to the long-term success of welfare reform. The role of the Alaska Child Support Enforcement Division is to help ensure that single-parent families have enough resources to reach and maintain a level of self-sufficiency as they move away from public assistance. Without adequate child support, many of those families will face economic hardship as they hit their time limit on public assistance.

A recent University of Utah study pegged uncollected child support as a significant barrier to getting off welfare. It's the same message offered by a 1998 General Accounting Office report that said: "The increased emphasis on the temporary nature of (public) assistance makes child support, along with employment, a more important means for families receiving aid to become self-sufficient."

The Alaska child support agency collected \$81 million

in support payments in Fiscal 1999, a 60 percent increase over the \$50 million collected in Fiscal 1993. Much of that money went to public assistance cases, and the child support collections helped almost 5,600 families as they moved off public assistance in FY97-98 (the most recent statistics available).

In passing welfare reform laws, Congress and the Alaska Legislature recognized the need for enforcement of child support orders and gave the agency tools it needs to get the job done.

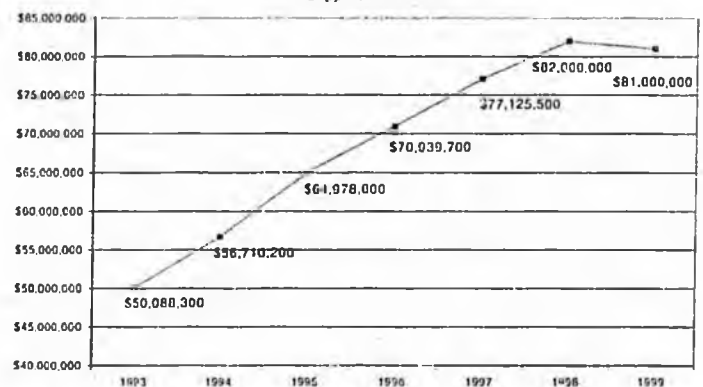
One of the latest additions is Alaska's new-hire reporting law that requires businesses to provide information on all new employees to the child support agency. In June alone, the child support agency received information on more than 12,000 newly hired employees in Alaska, and from that list found almost 2,000 parents who owed child support. This information enables the

agency to send out wage-withholding orders for those parents – something that would not have happened without the new law.

The child support agency continues to deal with a growing caseload – for even as families move off public assistance they remain as child support clients. As of June 30, the agency had established paternity and child support orders in 78 percent of its cases. The caseload generates a phenomenal amount of public contact. For example, in Fiscal Year 1998 the agency handled more than 1.1 million pieces of mail.



Child Support Collections



TEEN PARENT SERVICES

Teenagers who have children stand a greater chance of long-term dependency on welfare. That is why the Division of Public Assistance focuses services for teen parents on prevention of additional pregnancies, high school completion, self-supporting employment, and safe living arrangements.

In the last two years, grants were awarded to communities around the state for *Innovative Community-Based Services for Pregnant and Parenting Teens*. The focus of these grants is on preventing preg-

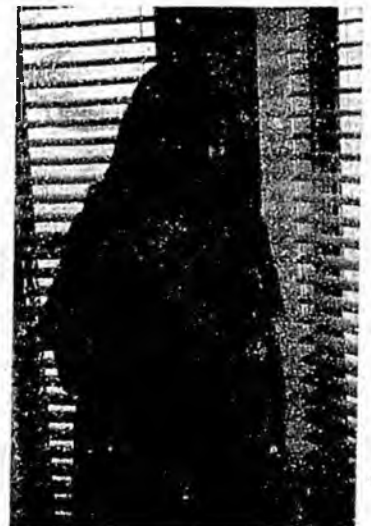
nant and parenting teens from becoming at risk of long-term poverty and welfare dependence.

In 1998, the State of Alaska joined other states in observing May as National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month. Communities around the state participated in annual activities that drew attention to teen pregnancy prevention efforts.

Year-round bi-monthly teleconferences are held for communities to promote connection, spring new

ideas, and inform others of state-wide activities.

Alaska's teen pregnancy rate has mirrored the recent national decline and has steadily declined over the past three decades. Alaska continues to be below the national average in teen pregnancies.



FUTURE CHALLENGES



The first two years of welfare reform in Alaska have been very successful by most measures. Yet, challenges remain in meeting federal performance requirements, in continuing to overcome the employment barriers for welfare recipients and in limiting the number of welfare recipients who face the elimination of benefits due to the five year limit.

Federal rules establish a very high requirement for two-parent families to be in an approved work activity. Alaska failed to meet the required 75% level for FY98 and is facing federally imposed penalties. Although Alaska has improved its performance for FY99, the requirement moves to 90% (this figure will be reduced due to Alaska's caseload decline). In response to the failed *two-parent rate*, more

effort will be focused on moving two-parent families into employment and other approved work activities.

As Alaska gains more experience in meeting the challenges of welfare reform, certain services are emerging as those most important in helping recipients toward self sufficiency. As mentioned earlier in the report, *quality child care and case management* are critical. *Post employment services* are essential to help working recipients keep their jobs and attain better jobs that allow them to leave welfare altogether.

Transportation has also been recognized as a significant barrier to employment for most recipients. The state will be devoting additional effort to meeting the transportation challenge. This includes coordinating with

local agencies to establish new or expanded public transportation systems, promoting responsible private vehicle ownership, assistance with car repairs and winterization, mobilizing volunteer organizations to provide transportation services, and helping clients to purchase their own vehicles.

Alaska, like many other states, is trying to learn more about the effectiveness of welfare reform and, in particular, what is happening to recipients who leave Temporary Assistance. DPA is contracting with the University of Alaska to do an *evaluation* regarding the characteristics and employment status of families who have left welfare. This information will be used to improve services so that more families can attain long term self-sufficiency.

NATIVE FAMILY

The Federal welfare reform law has a special provision for Native tribes and organizations. Under the new law, the 12 Alaska Native Regional non-profit organizations and Metlakatla Indian Community are given the option to run their own welfare program for Natives in their region. They are entitled to a slice of the state's TANF block grant based on a pro-rata share of Native recipients in the region. Federal funding is subject to approval based on a Native Family Assistance plan submitted by the Native organization to the Federal government.

For the past year the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC),

which operates in the Doyon region of interior Alaska, has managed their own program known as the Athabaskan Self-sufficiency Assistance Partnership (ASAP).

The state is providing additional funding under the ATAP law to supplement TCC as part of a two-year pilot program. Another organization, Tlingit & Haida in Southeast is also developing plans to run a Native Family Assistance Program as well.

It was not the intent of Congress to require tribes or Native organizations to run programs the same as the state. But in order for state funds to be used, the Native

ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

program must be significantly similar to the State's program. Governor Knowles has submitted legislation, HB98 and SB80, now pending in the legislature that would allow state funds to be spent for Native programs that are comparable, but not the same as ATAP.

This approach would not require additional state funding since state dollars are already being spent for these Native recipients. With the passage of this legislation, Native Family Assistance Programs in Alaska could be designed to be more culturally sensitive, locally controlled, flexible, and ultimately more effective without additional cost to the state.



THE CLOCK KEEPS TICKING!

The first two years of welfare reform in Alaska have shown success by: a reduced caseload, lower welfare benefit expenditures, more recipients in work activities, additional funding for child care and work services, the creation of new job opportunities, greater community involvement, and increased child support. While these are significant achievements, great challenges still remain.

As of the date of this report, many Temporary Assistance recipients in Alaska have only 34 months left in their lifetime to receive Temporary Assistance benefits. The clock is ticking fast, es-

pecially for those recipients who lack skills, have little work history or face other barriers to employment. It is the state's goal to not let anyone hit the 60-month limit without another means of supporting their families.

Of paramount concern is the well-being of the children in those families for whom the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program is intended to help. It will take the ongoing commitment of the state, communities, Native and other non-profit organizations, employers and political leaders to meet this challenge.

The mustering of resources through the reinvestment of saved benefit dollars and from other sources is essential to help recipients gain work skills and prevent their families from facing extreme hardship.

Welfare reform holds great hope for many low-income families in Alaska. Much has been accomplished, but there remains much to be done.



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