

SOCIAL SERVICES FUND SUMMARY

The Weld County Department of Human Services continues to adapt to the Legislative and Programmatic changes imposed on us from State and Federal levels. The funding for additional caseworkers, originally funded through SB 15-242 continues into Fiscal Year 2018-19, providing Weld County with funding for three additional positions, enabling the Department to assess and meet the needs of the community in a more deliberate and thorough manner. Concerns have been raised, both by counties and by the State of Colorado, as to the long-term sustainability of these activities, once the IV-E Waiver period is completed. The passage of the Family First Act provides a framework which may allow us to continue the creative practices we have implemented in recent years, without jeopardizing funding. The passage of SB 18-254 provides both opportunities and challenges in funding Child Welfare activities. Weld County is taking an active role in mitigating the challenges associated with the substantial increases in provider reimbursement that may result from the bill, while taking full advantage of the flexibility and emphasis on permanency included in the bill. Likewise, HB 18-1335 fundamentally transforms the way Low-Income Child Care services are authorized and funded. Weld County will continue to avail itself of all available resources to ensure that high quality care is available and affordable to families, as we both recruit new providers and encourage development of existing providers in the community.

The total Social Services Fund budget is \$43,480,800. The programs are funded by property tax of \$12,300,557, state and federal funds of \$31,686,679, and the potential increase of fund balance of \$506,436 to cover both anticipated and unanticipated cost overruns.

The State of Colorado has recently adjusted its Broad-based Categorical Eligibility requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) from 130% to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. We are anticipating significant increases in both the benefits paid out to families and the workload required of county eligibility staff, as a result. Likewise, the State recently approved a 10% increase in the monthly Basic Cash Assistance benefit payments to recipients under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program. This increase in expenditures, combined with the existing pressures of providing supportive funding for Child Welfare activities could mean a significant drain on the County TANF Reserves we have accumulated in the past few years. We will be watching this closely in order to adjust our usage of these funds for other purposes, such as Supportive Services and funding of Child Care activities, in order to avoid full depletion of the Reserve balance. Approximately 25% of Weld County residents are now enrolled in Medicaid.

The Department's focus on Prevention and Early Intervention continues and has resulted in a more inter-divisional approach to evaluating, meeting, and funding the needs of clients. The addition of a Family Resource Supervisor position will enable the Family Resource Division to better organize its staffing structure and service delivery processes to better meet the needs of the community.