

County of Ventura

Human Services Agency



2014-2015 *Annual Report*

Overview – Human Services Agency



The Human Services Agency strives to strengthen Ventura County by administering programs that have a positive impact on key community concerns including food insecurity, limited 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 a job, illness, or other challenges.

Services available to the community include:

- Low-cost health insurance and financial, housing, and food assistance for families and individuals
- Supportive services for seniors, adults, and children with disabilities
- Job preparation, training, and placement assistance for youth and adults
- Layoff aversion and workforce transition planning
- Child care assistance for working parents
- Veteran benefits and support services
- Referrals to other county agencies and partner organizations
- Emergency response to allegations of child and elder abuse and neglect
- Foster care placement, reunification of children with their parents, and adoption services

Ventura County
BOARD
of Supervisors,
CEO &
Human Services Agency
DIRECTOR

Steve Bennett
Supervisor, District 1

Kathy I. Long, Chair
Supervisor, District 3

Peter C. Foy
Supervisor, District 4

Linda Parks
Supervisor, District 2

John C. Zaragoza
Supervisor, District 5

Michael Powers
County Executive Officer

Barry L. Zimmerman
Director, Human Services Agency

Snapshot – Fiscal Year 2014-2015

Between 2006 and 2015, the economic crisis, slow recovery, and expanded program eligibility resulted in record numbers of residents accessing safety net services such as CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and In-Home Supportive Services. During that time period, the percentage of county residents receiving support services has grown significantly: from 1 in 10 in 2006 to 1 in 4 in 2015.



204,833 Helped **204,833** individuals receive health care through Medi-Cal benefits

77,778 Helped **77,778** individuals supplement their diets with CalFresh benefits

5,211 Investigated **5,211** reports of suspected child abuse or neglect during Calendar Year 2014

4,912 Assisted **4,912** individuals who receive In-Home Supportive Services

3,780 Responded to **3,780** allegations of adult abuse or neglect

116 Facilitated adoptions for **116** children

Human Services Agency
REVENUE
&
Expenditures

Fiscal Year 2012-2013
\$212.4 million

Fiscal Year 2013-2014
\$225.5 million

Fiscal Year 2014-2015
\$237.2 million

Revenue

Federal & State Funds.... \$219.3 million
County Funds \$17.9 million
Total \$237.2 million

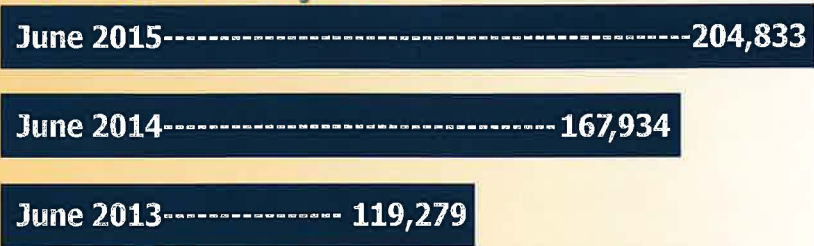
Expenditures

Staff Salaries & Benefits...\$98.0 million
Direct Client Assistance\$94.7 million
Services & Supplies \$44.5 million
Total \$237.2 million

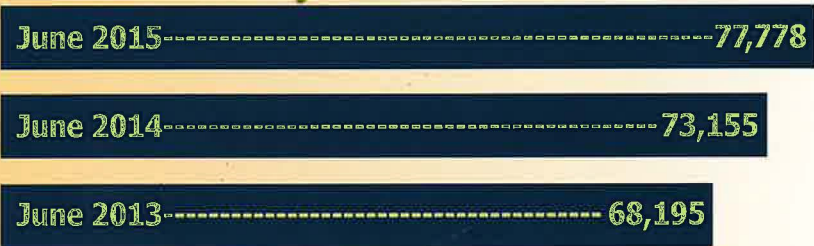
Profile – *Ventura County*

Key Caseload Trends – 2015

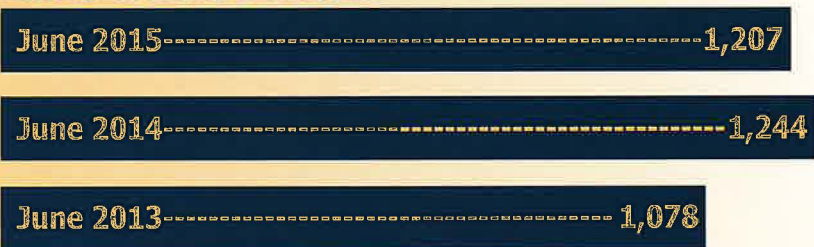
Medi-Cal Participants



CalFresh Participants



Child Welfare Cases



During the economic crisis, Ventura County experienced a rise in caseloads for many assistance programs such as CalWORKs, CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and In-Home Supportive Services. Current trends show caseloads in all of those programs, with the exception of CalWORKs, continuing to climb.

Key Fiscal Year trends for 2014-2015 include the following:

- With the expansion of health care coverage under the Affordable Care Act, individuals receiving Medi-Cal increased 22 percent, rising from 167,934 in June 2014 to 204,833 in June 2015. During two open enrollment periods, a total of 45,073 residents obtained health care through a Covered California insurance plan
- Individuals receiving CalFresh benefits continued to climb, with the number of participants increasing from 73,155 in June 2014 to 77,778 in June 2015, an increase of over 6 percent
- Individuals receiving In-Home Supportive Services rose from 4,579 in June 2014 to 4,912 in June 2015, an increase of over 7 percent
- Comparing caseloads from June 2014 and June 2015, the monthly average of individuals receiving CalWORKs decreased by over 6 percent, falling from 14,446 to 13,504
- After rising for several years, child welfare cases began to stabilize with average monthly caseloads ticking down from 1,244 to 1,207

Human Services Agency
PROGRAM
*Participants**
BY CITY
June 2015

Camarillo	4.8%	Simi Valley	10.1%
Fillmore	3.2%	Thousand Oaks	7.6%
Moorpark	3.2%	Ventura	12.5%
Ojai	2.0%	Other	3.8%
Oxnard	42.9%		
Port Hueneme	3.5%		
Santa Paula	6.5%		

*Enrolled in Medi-Cal and other programs concurrently



Ventura County – *Real Cost Measure Budget*

In Ventura County, human service programs can provide a valuable foundation for communities to address the needs of vulnerable populations. When programs identify and provide the necessary tools to stabilize residents in need, the fabric of our community is strengthened. Locally, a network of strong government organizations and community partners working together can mitigate broader systemic issues and foster an environment in which everyone can thrive: families and caregivers can successfully nurture children, more residents can achieve and maintain economic viability, and housing can be found for people with limited resources and those experiencing homelessness.

A family of four (4)

(two adults, one infant, and one school-age child)

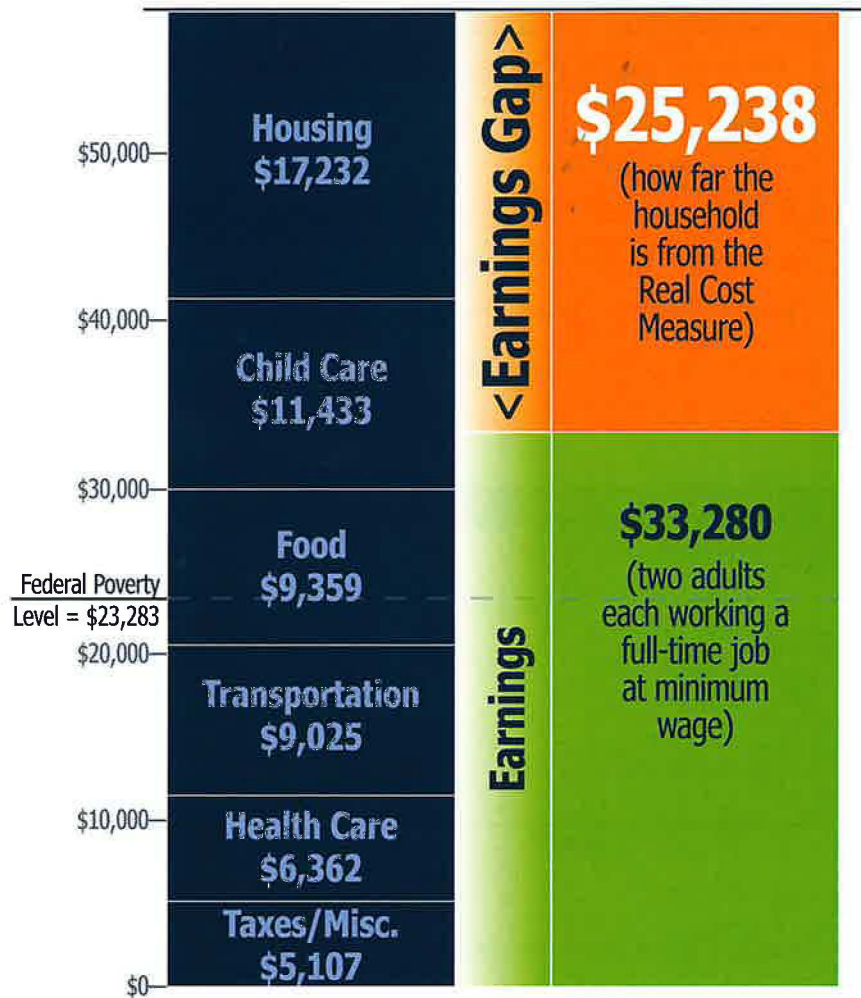
would need more than three full-time, minimum wage jobs to achieve economic security.

How much does it actually cost to live in Ventura County?

Can a family of four with two adults working full time at minimum wage make ends meet? Recently, the United Way of California issued a report titled "Struggling to Get By," offering a more comprehensive approach in calculating what it takes to move from poverty to economic stability. The report introduces the Real Cost Measure, a basic needs budget approach which—unlike the FPL calculation—includes all of the costs families must address such as food, housing, transportation, child care, out-of-pocket health expenses, and taxes. In Ventura County, the Real Cost Measure budget for a family of four—2 adults, 1 infant, 1 school age child—is \$58,518.

Ventura County Real Cost Measure Basic Needs Budget = \$58,518

(two adults, one infant, and one school-aged child)



Percentage of
Ventura County
households below the
Real Cost Measure =

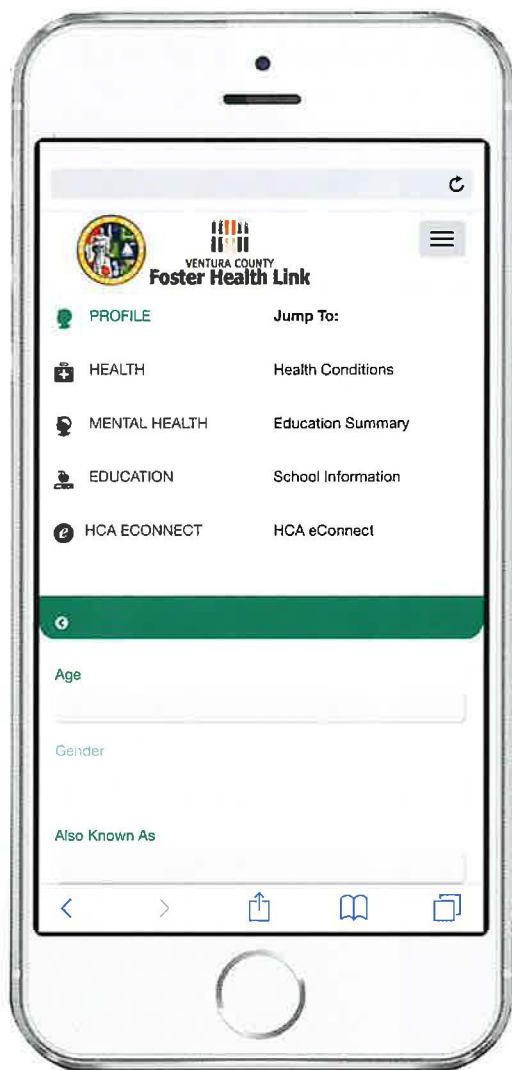
25%

**Ventura
County**

Total Ventura County
households below the
Real Cost Measure =

53,738

Foster Health Link – *Comprehensive information for better health decisions*



Ventura County's innovative Foster Health Link web site and mobile application are designed to engage foster parents and relatives more fully in supporting the health needs of foster children by giving these caregivers easy, secure, electronic access to health information about the children in their care.

Foster parents and relative caregivers play critical roles in helping Ventura County's 1,000 foster children thrive until they can reunite with their biological parents. These caregivers bring foster children to doctor's visits and dental appointments, pick up prescriptions, and stay up at night to console sick children. They are often the first to recognize when a foster child needs extra help or may be experiencing a health issue, but they may be the last to get access to important health documents. With critical roles to play on foster children's care teams, foster parents need current and accurate health information about the children in their care.

With Foster Health Link, caregivers can securely access current health information kept in the state's child welfare system for foster youth about immunizations, medical conditions, medications, dental exams, Medi-Cal insurance, school, special education plans and more 24/7 from a computer or mobile device. Additionally, Foster Health Link pulls e-records from the Ventura County Health Care Agency's patient portal for all foster children through age 11 who have received care within the Ventura County Medical Center system of hospitals, clinics, and specialty services. This information includes real-time summaries of doctor visits, lab results, medical conditions, immunizations, medications, and more.

Foster parents and transitional-age foster youth participated in focus groups to provide input into the design and content of Foster Health Link. As Foster Health Link is released to caregivers, system data and survey information will be collected to ensure the site meets caregivers' needs. The architecture of Foster Health Link allows for additional information—such as school records and a portal that gives transitional-age foster youth access to their own information—to be included in future phases. Ventura County stands ready to offer Foster Health Link as a state-wide model for engaging foster parents in the provision of quality care.

“I appreciate the easy access to information that I haven't always had when I needed it. I also like having so much information so accessible, including case numbers and immunization records...that I may need to supply to schools and clinics...”

In partnership with



Fiscal Year 2014-2015 – Accomplishments

Provided services to more than
204,000

Medi-Cal clients under the Affordable Care Act's expanded eligibility criteria, further reducing the number of uninsured county residents.



Assisted VITA program participants with filing 2,246 free tax returns, a 14 percent increase from the prior year. The total tax refunds amounted to \$2,639,986, with 642 filers receiving the Earned Income Tax Credit, which represents

\$1,213,298
for low-income households

Re-established Team Decision Making, encouraging a broader range of perspectives and supports when determining the best way to

**keep children safe
and families intact**

Helped 205 of 428 participants obtain employment within 30 days of completing CalWORKs Job Club or Work Experience site activities.

49%

Housed
84
families

during the first year of the CalWORKs Housing Support Program, ensuring housing stability for families as they work to secure and maintain steady employment.



Expanded outreach efforts to Veterans and their families through participation in community meetings as well as countywide distribution of a newspaper insert describing available services and benefits. Local veterans were connected with the Department of Veterans Affairs benefits equating to an economic impact of over

\$25.5
million dollars



Earned the **Kofax® Transform Award** and a California State Association of Counties Challenge Award for innovations in the use of "paperless" technologies to support efficient and effective client services.



COUNTY OF VENTURA

Watch our Annual Report
video here:

www.vchsa.org/report

County of Ventura
Human Services Agency

(866) 904-9362 Toll Free
www.vchsa.org

State & Local Outlook – *Human Services Agency*



In June, Governor Jerry Brown signed the 2015-16 state budget package which calls for \$115 billion in spending and makes several significant advances. It creates California's first-ever state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) as an "add on" to the successful federal EITC. The budget also expands comprehensive health care coverage to undocumented immigrant children from low-income families. Other advances include funding for more than 16,000 additional subsidized child care and preschool slots as well as greater support for services for children in the child welfare system. The advances reflected in the 2015-16 state budget add to those made in recent years, including new revenues provided by Proposition 30's temporary tax increases and the expansion of Medi-Cal as part of federal health care reform.

At the same time, however, the state's economic gains remain uneven, and the budget package leaves much undone in rebuilding critical safety net services battered by cuts during and after the Great Recession. The budget fails to significantly strengthen the state's welfare-to-work program while maintaining cash assistance for low-income seniors and people with disabilities at recession-era lows. Left in place are previous cuts to Medi-Cal payment rates and benefits.*

Legislatively, several new bills will make significant changes to the child welfare system in the coming year. AB 403 is a comprehensive reform effort to ensure that youth in foster care have their day-to-day physical, mental, and emotional needs met and that they have the chance to grow up in permanent and supportive homes. AB 403 addresses these issues by giving foster families targeted training and support to better care for youth living with them. The bill also advances California's long-standing goal to move away from the use of long-term group home care by increasing foster youth placements in family settings. Current group homes will transition into places where youth who are not ready to live with families can receive short term, intensive treatment. Additionally, the Legislature has passed a package of three bills aimed at reducing the amount of psychiatric medication prescribed to children in California's foster care system. In the coming year, Ventura County will begin the process of implementing these enhancements as part of the Continuum of Care Reform of the child welfare system.

*Source: "First Look: The 2015-16 State Budget." California Budget and Policy Center. June 2015.

Fiscal Year 2015-2016 *Initiatives*

- Begin the planning process to implement Continuum of Care Reform of the child welfare system
- Pilot new Whole Person program strategies designed to address needs comprehensively
- As a recipient of a Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking (PACT) grant, begin to implement a state and county level coordinated cross system, inter-agency collaborative model that effectively serves child labor and sex trafficking victims
- Explore new self-service options for clients, including clients' submission of documents using image capture functionality on mobile devices
- Continue collaborations with county partners on the Homeless Continuum of Care



COUNTY OF VENTURA