

Sandusky County

Department of Job and Family Services



PUBLIC ASSISTANCE DIVISION

2024 Annual Report

The Public Assistance Division of Sandusky County Department of Job and Family Services administers programs which provide either cash, food or medical assistance to eligible individuals or families. Funding for these programs is from a combined source of federal and state dollars. An individual or family may receive one, two or all three programs, in any combination. These programs are:

1. Medicaid
2. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
3. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Ohio known as Ohio Works First (OWF)
4. Prevention, Retention, Contingency (PRC)

In 2024, there were 5,094 applications filed for public assistance benefits for Sandusky County residents, an average of 425 applications per month. One application may be used to apply for all programs. This application is either a paper application or an online application submitted through the state customer portal. If a customer wishes to apply for only Medicaid, that may be done by using a paper application, applying through the portal, calling the statewide Medicaid Hotline or by calling the agency Call Center.



Sandusky County participates in a Shared Services program, jointly sharing a call center phone system with eight other counties to better serve our applicants and recipients. The other counties consist of Carroll, Hancock, Harrison, Holmes, Marion, Knox, Morrow, and Wood. The benefits reflected in the annual report will be benefits which were processed for, or issued to, Sandusky County residents.

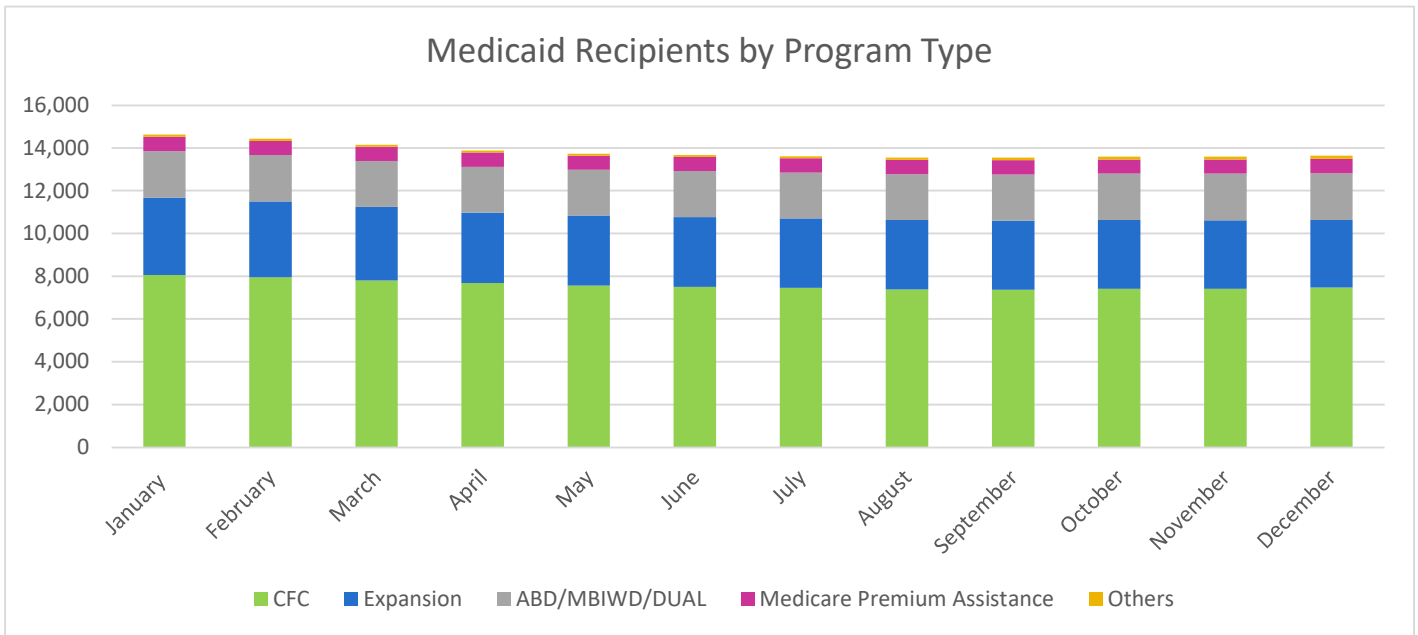
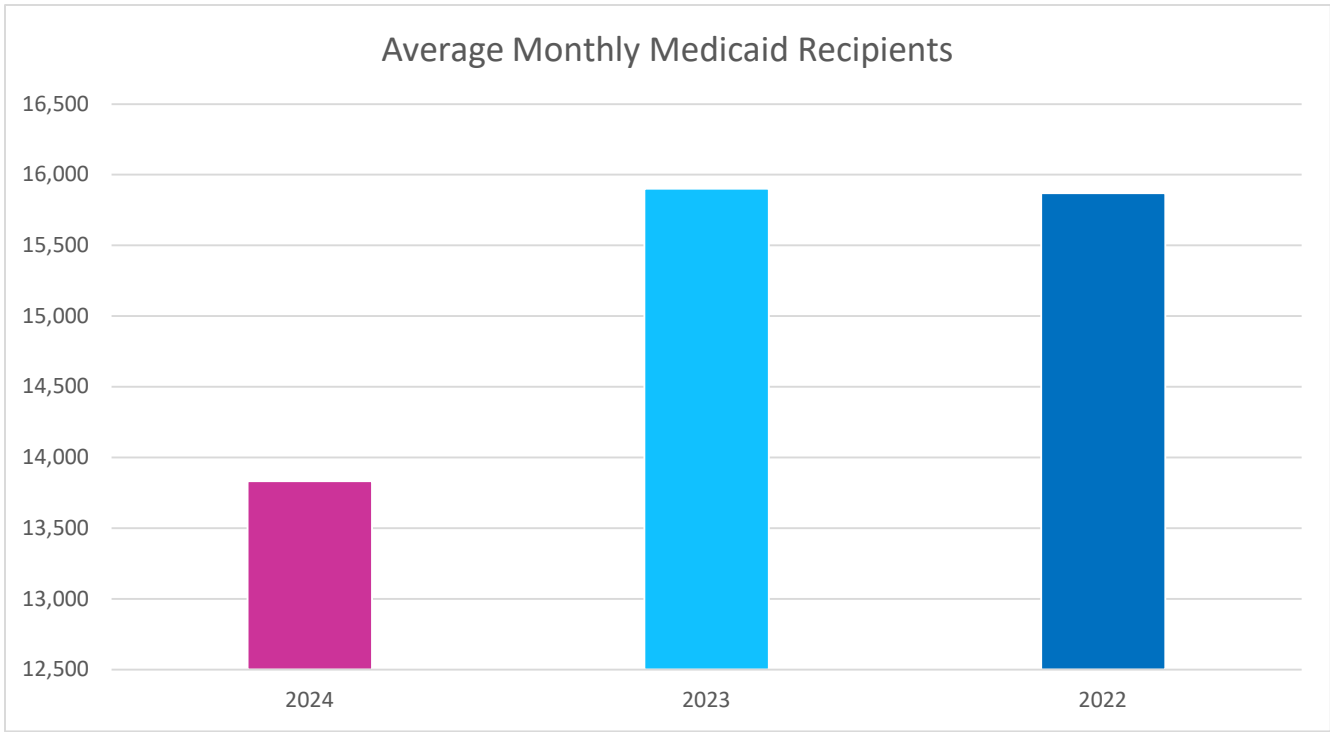
The agency has been fully re-opened to the public since 2021. The agency still has use of drop boxes and a drive thru option for submitting documents. Documents can also be submitted via email and through the self-service portal. Regulations regarding self-attestations for many eligibility factors have been diminished and processing of cases has gone back to times of pre-covid. Even though the agency re-opened to the public, many case managers choose to continue to work remotely on a hybrid schedule. This is possible through the use of the existing technology, with support from the state. Workers are required to come into the agency on the day when the unit's division meeting is held and when assigned particular duties which require a physical presence.

Medicaid

Medicaid is the largest program administered by this department, both in number of recipients and in the cost of the program. The expansion of Medicaid in 2014 saw a substantial increase in the number of recipients. Medicaid recipients are low-income individuals of all ages. Based upon the population estimate from the US Census Bureau, 27% of the residents of Sandusky County are Medicaid recipients. Due to the Public Health Emergency ending, recipients of Medicaid were able to be terminated for failure to follow through with the redetermination process and for being over income. As a result, there was a 10% decrease in Medicaid expenditures. The expenditures listed here are the cost of payments to the Managed Care Plans for coverage of the recipients or for Fee for Service payments. Actual expenditures to providers based upon paid claims in not included in these totals.

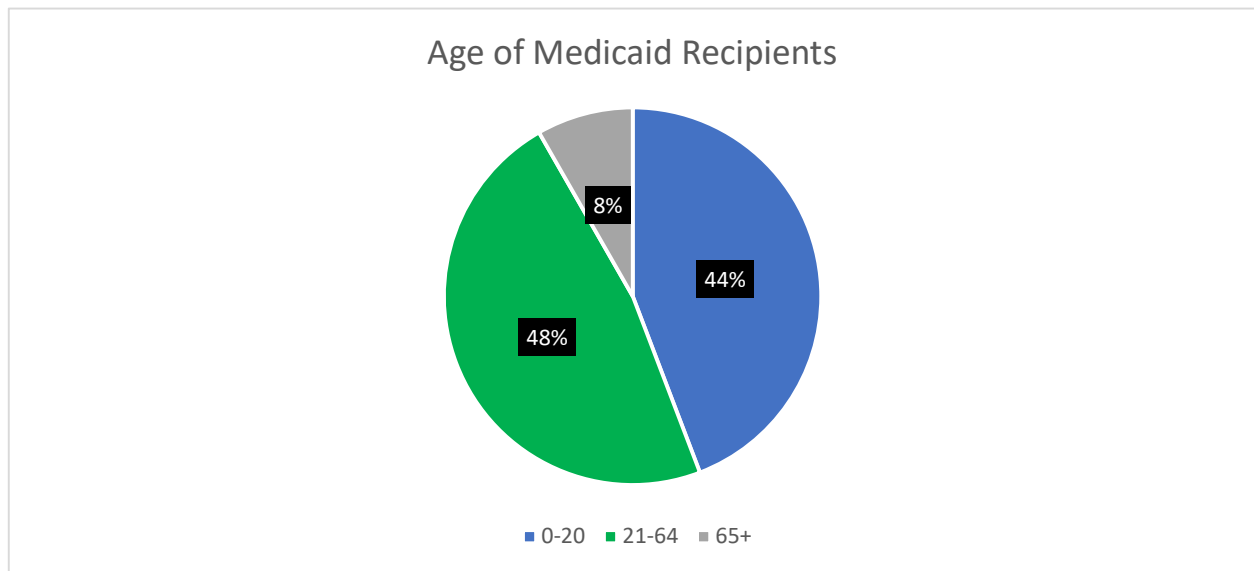
Medicaid Recipients

	2024	2023	2022
Average Monthly Medicaid Recipients	13,833	15,901	15,871
Recipient Difference in Relation to Prior Year	13.91% Decrease	.18% increase	7.63% increase
Average Monthly Expenditure	\$14,747,525	\$10,378,960	\$11,594,057
Annual Expenditure	\$176,970,301	\$124,547,523	\$139,128,690



Eligibility for Medicaid is determined based upon program requirements. Every individual is required to meet financial eligibility standards. Other eligibility requirements exist such as age or disability. The category for which one is determined to be eligible determines the funding stream for payment and the amount of federal reimbursement. The majority of the Medicaid recipients are categorized as those in the ABD/MBIWD/DUAL group. The

Covered Families and Children group includes not only the Medicaid eligible children 0-20, but also the parents of these children, who reside in the same household. Expansion recipients are those who are generally 21-64, who would not have qualified for Medicaid prior to the expansion of the program in 2014. Those individuals who have been determined disabled by Social Security or are over the age of 65 make up the third category of recipients. MPAP individuals (Medicare Premium Assistance Program) receive only Medicare Premium assistance, the payment of their Part B premium and/or their cost-sharing portion. Other includes recipients of Alien Emergency Medical Assistance and other recipients who cannot be categorized in the other programs.

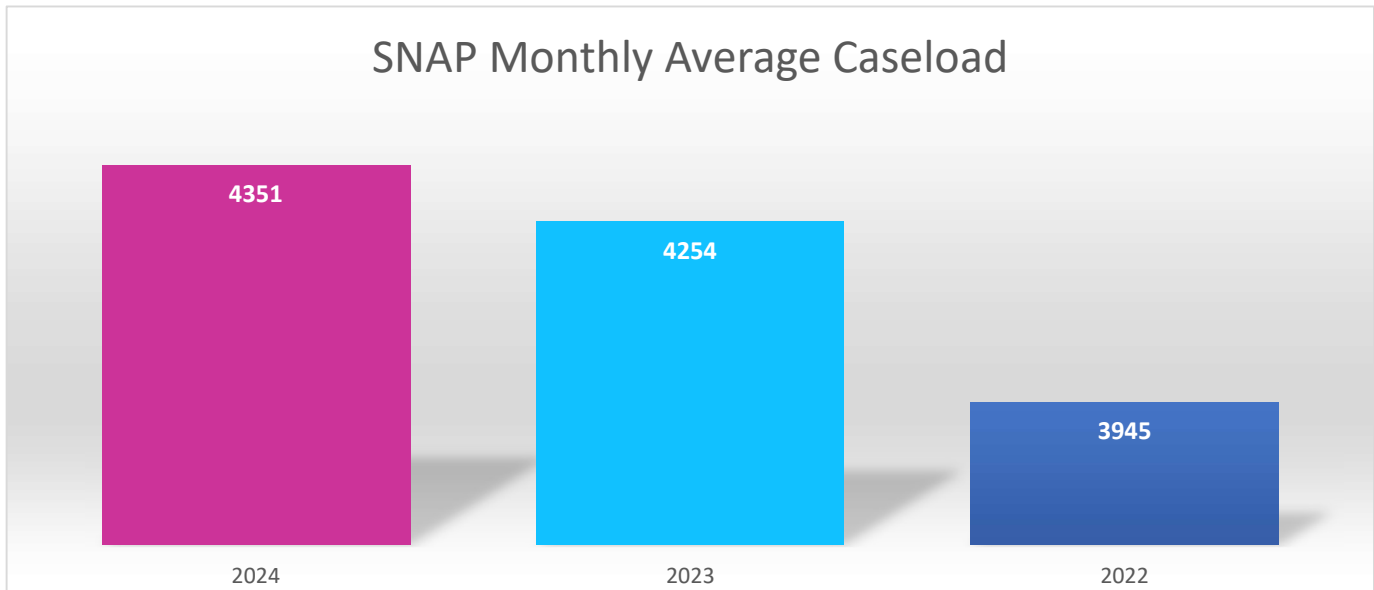


Recipients 0-20 and 21-64 years of age are very similar in percentages. The smallest group is those over 65, but they tend to have the more expensive health care needs.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

This program provides food assistance to individuals and/or families via the Ohio Direction Card System (EBT Card). The federal government (through the Congressional Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023) ended the extra COVID SNAP benefits, known as SNAP Emergency Allotments, in 2023, which eliminated roughly 6.6 million in snap benefits for the year and brought families closer to pre pandemic levels.

SNAP	2024	2023	2022
Average Program Blocks	4,351	4,254	3,945
Caseload Difference in Relation to Prior Year	2.25% Increase	7.54% decrease	5.15% increase
Average Monthly Expenditure	\$1,044,336	\$1,087,531	\$1,487,139
Annual Issuance	\$12,532,033	\$13,050,381	\$17,845,671
Issuance Difference in Relation to Prior Year	4.05% Decrease	31.04% decrease	12.41% increase



The unduplicated count of recipients of SNAP for 2024 was 8,793 individuals.

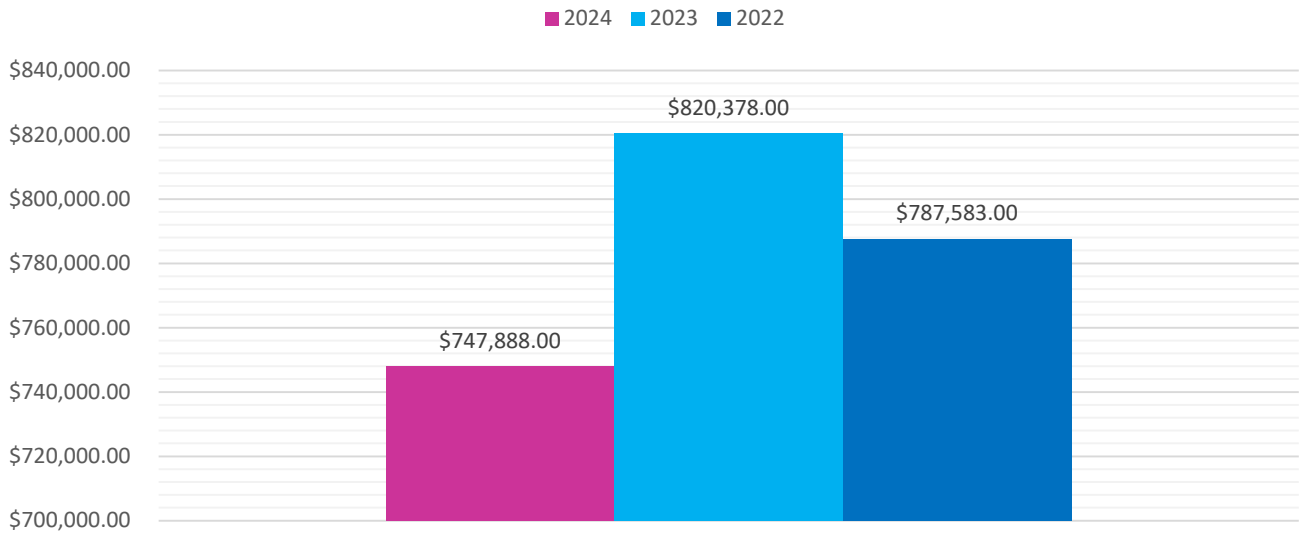
SNAP	2024	2023	2022
SNAP Expenditures			
Total Issuance	\$12,532,033	\$13,050,381	\$17,845,671
Average Monthly Allotment Per Case	\$240	\$255	\$376
Average Monthly Allotment Per Person	\$109	\$114	\$180
SNAP Recipients			
Average Cases Per Month	4,351	4,254	3,945
Average Persons Per Month	9574	9508	8,278

Ohio Works First (OWF)

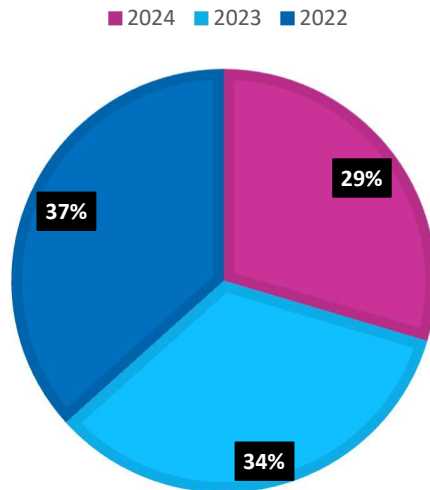
The program provides financial assistance to families with children and/or pregnant women. This program requires a work activity unless the individual meets an exemption. Cash assistance may be time-limited to 36 months in the lifetime of an adult recipient. The majority of the cases are child-only cases, either due to a disabled parent in receipt of Supplemental Security Income, or the adult in the household is not the parent, but a caretaker relative, legal guardian or legal custodian.

OWF	2024	2023	2022
Average Monthly Caseload	192	219	238
Caseload Difference in Relation to Prior Year	13.13% Decrease	8.32% Decrease	4.73% Increase
Average Monthly Expenditure	\$62,324	\$68,364	\$65,631
Annual Expenditure	\$747,888	\$820,378	\$787,583
Expenditure Difference in Relation to Prior Year	9.25% Decrease	4.08% Increase	6.49% Increase

OWF Expenditures



AVERAGE MONTHLY OWF CASELOAD

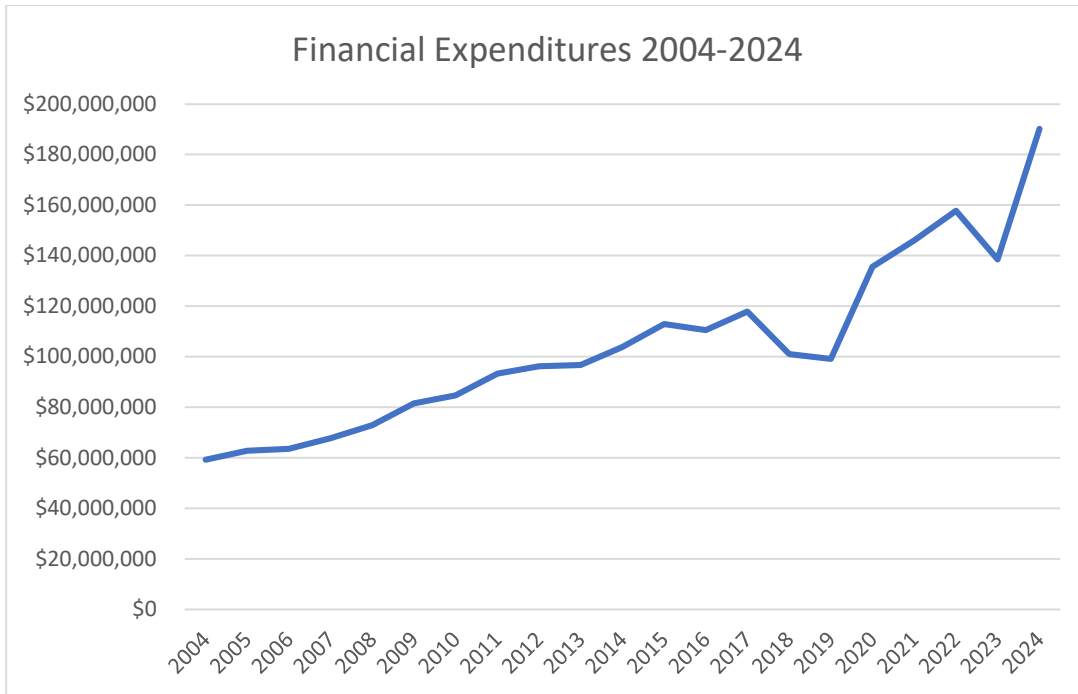


The unduplicated count of recipients for 2024 was 328 individuals receiving OWF cash assistance.

History of Financial Assistance Expenditures

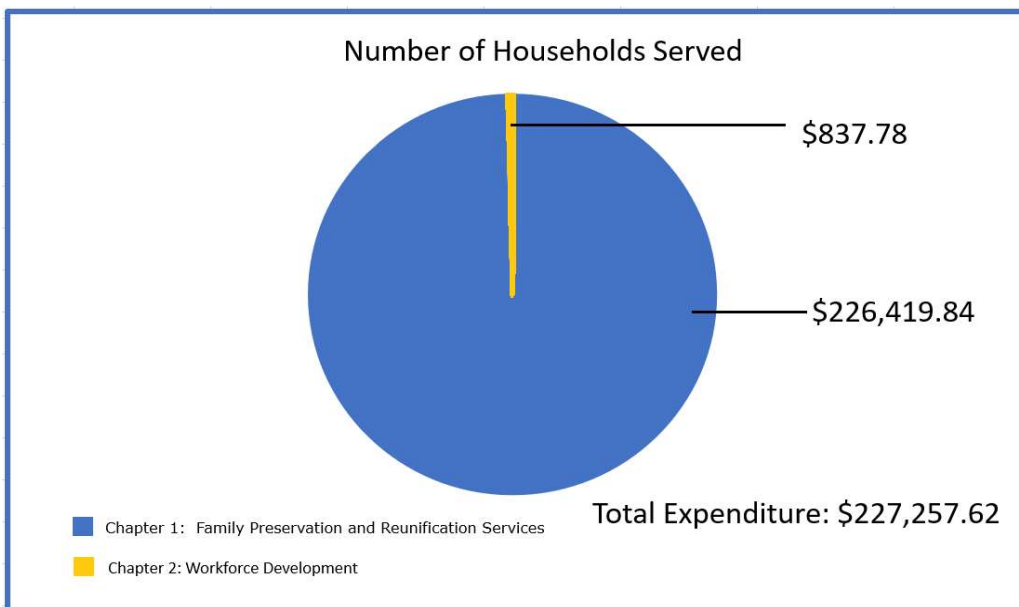
OWF, Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program,
Disability Financial (program ended 12/31/2017) and Disability Medical
Assistance (program ended 11/1/2009)
(Excluding administrative costs)

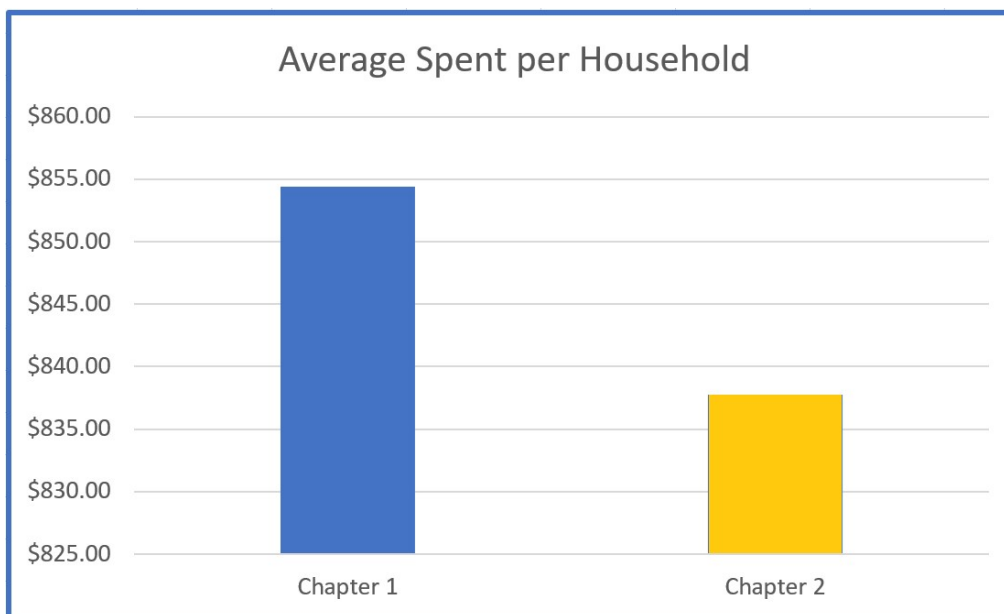
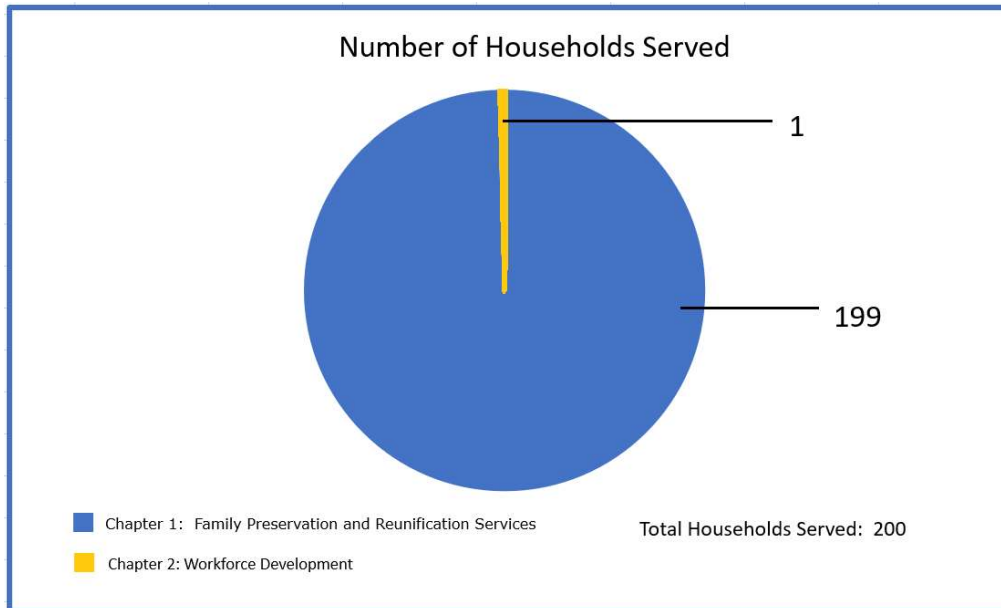
Year	Payment Amount
2004	\$59,282,751
2005	\$62,688,157
2006	\$63,495,940
2007	\$67,680,178
2008	\$72,844,595
2009	\$81,487,803
2010	\$84,710,107
2011	\$93,228,691
2012	\$96,172,544
2013	\$96,722,438
2014	\$103,833,784
2015	\$112,933,117
2016	\$110,467,328
2017	\$117,801,285
2018	\$101,007,922
2019	\$99,034,855
2020	\$135,554,083
2021	\$145,996,311
2022	\$157,761,944
2023	\$138,418,282
2024	\$190,250,222



Prevention, Retention Contingency

This program provides work supports and other services to help low-income families in times of need. The types of services offered are clothing and shelter, Domestic Violence housing relocation assistance, Disaster assistance, transportation (including auto repair expenses), and employment and training.



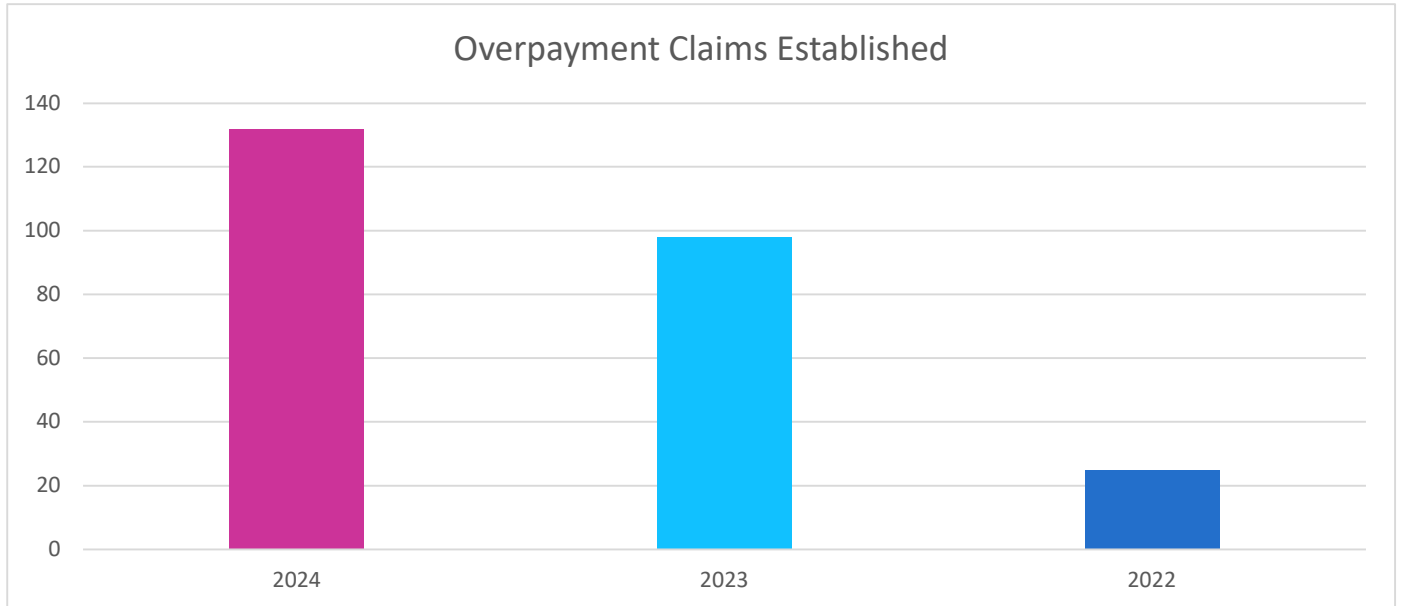


In 2024, Sandusky County spent a total of \$227,257.62 in PRC funds to help a total of 200 families. In 2023, 183 families were served. \$226,419. 84 was spent under Chapter 1 of the PRC plan which covers a range of services such as car repairs, home repairs, furniture, rental assistance, and school supplies. In 2024 \$837.78 was spent under Chapter 2 which covers work-related expenses such as uniforms. Services provided under these two chapters are designed to help families become stable so they can continue to provide a safe living environment for their children.

In previous years PRC funds were issued under Chapter 3 of the PRC plan which covers the needs of Kinship Care situations. This program, however, was eliminated by the state effective October 1, 2023.

Overpayment and Collection Activity

The county is required to pursue the collection of overpayments received by assistance groups for both household errors and administrative errors. Household errors occur when a customer does not provide accurate information regarding his/her situation or fails to report changes as required by regulations. The responsibility to report changes differs depending upon the program. Administrative errors occur at the agency level or for reasons beyond either the customer's or the agency's control. The Public Health Emergency played a huge role. Now that maximum allotments are not provided and Interim Reports are again required, the number of claims established has increased significantly.



There are multiple means available to the agency to collect overpayments. These collections can be for claims from previous years. In meeting this obligation, the agency collected the following amounts.

Overpayment Collections

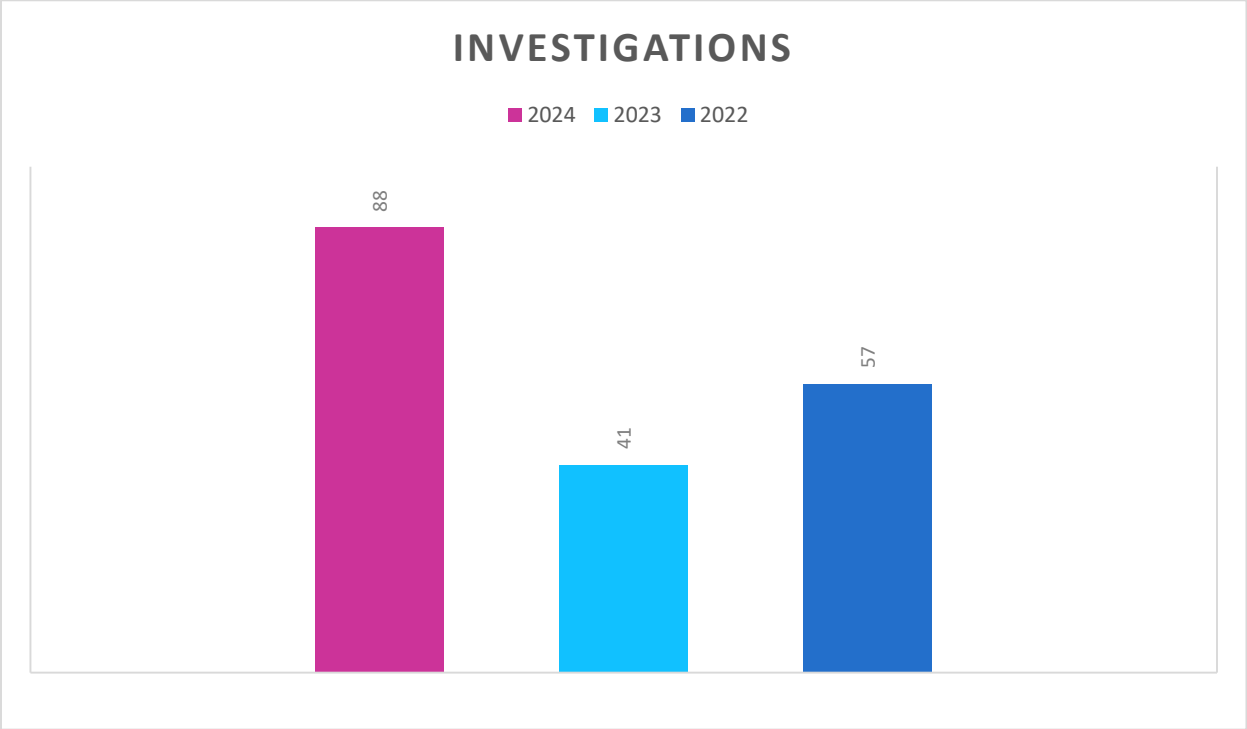
	2024	2023	2022
Cash – Total	\$11,353.49	\$7,025.69	\$9,728.01
SNAP	\$9,943.49	\$5,440.69	\$6,935.01
OWF	\$1,410.00	\$1,585.00	\$2,793.00
Recoupments - Total	\$18,387.00	\$17,189.00	\$7,784.00
SNAP	\$15,741.00	\$16,497.00	\$7,184.00
OWF	\$2,646.00	\$692.00	\$600.00
SNAP via Eppic	\$956.00	\$504.00	\$0.00
SNAP Under Issuance Offsetting	\$8,179.47	\$2,560.00	\$1,204.00
Cash Under Issuance Offsetting	\$670.00	\$2,277.00	\$203.00
STOP (Collection on cash claims through State offsetting)	\$1882.00	\$280.00	\$45.00
TOP (Collection on SNAP claims through federal offsetting)	\$43,348.86	\$16,191.21	\$24,583.76
Medicaid Collections	\$400.00	\$375.00	\$12.53
TOTAL	\$114,917.31	\$46,401.90	\$61,072.31

Agencies receive incentive monies for the collection of overpayments. The amount of the incentive varies with the program and the type of overpayment. For SNAP overpayments collection of an inadvertent household error overpayment results in 20% incentive returned to the county and for an intentional program violation the county receives 35%. When a Medicaid overpayment is collected, the Federal Share is 73.6%, the Non-Federal Share is 26.4% and the county receives 50% of the Non-Federal Share, with the remaining 50% going to the State. In 2023, Sandusky County received \$12,266.39 in incentives for collection of SNAP overpayments and \$52.76 for collection of Medicaid overpayments.

	2024	2023	2022
SNAP	\$12,266.39	\$6,078.41	\$7,695.93
Medicaid	\$52.76	\$375.00	\$12.53
TOTAL	\$12,319.15	\$6,453.41	\$7,708.46

INVESTIGATIONS

One of the responsibilities of the Public Assistance Division is to conduct an investigation when a fraud complaint is received by the agency. These referrals are received from agency case workers, contacts from the public via telephone calls and walk-ins, tips submitted to the agency website, and complaints made at the state level which are then funneled down to the agency. These investigations may or may not result in a referral for an overpayment or a change in the benefits currently being received by the household. In some instances, the customer was not required to report the change, but once the agency is aware of the change, action must be taken to adjust the benefits accordingly. The agency contracts with the Sandusky County Sheriff's Office for a deputy who is assigned to the agency to handle fraud complaints along with other duties such as building security and child support enforcement. In 2024, 88 investigations were conducted. Included in these numbers are SNAP benefits that were electronically stolen via skimming, cloning, or other fraudulent activities. FACT 95 (Replacement of Electronically Stolen SNAP Benefits) was passed on December 29, 2022, which included provisions for these stolen funds to be replaced with federal funds if the funds were electronically stolen between October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2024. On September 26, 2024, the Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act 2025 was signed into law, which then allowed states to replace stolen SNAP benefits through December 2024. In 2024, \$24,590 worth of stolen benefits were reissued to Sandusky County residents.



Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS)

IEVS Matches are received on a regular basis and indicate that a customer may be employed or may be in receipt of social security or unemployment compensation benefits. These matches are processed to establish whether the information is known to the agency. When the information is not known, this may have a direct impact on the customer’s continued eligibility for assistance. In many cases, any unreported information may result in the establishment of an overpayment claim.

IEVS Matches

