

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
KEITH FABER



Tuscarawas County
Job and Family Services

Performance Audit

July 2024

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
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OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
KEITH FABER



To the Tuscarawas County Community:

The Auditor of State's Office recently completed a performance audit of the Tuscarawas County Job and Family Services in Tuscarawas County. This review was conducted by the Ohio Performance Team and provides an independent assessment of the County's operations.

This performance audit report contains recommendations, supported by detailed analysis, to enhance the overall economy, efficiency, and/or effectiveness of the County's operations. This report has been provided to the County and its contents have been discussed with the officials and administrators. The County has been encouraged to use the recommendations and information contained in the report to make informed decisions regarding future operations.

It is my hope that the County will use the results of the performance audit as a resource for improving operational efficiency as well as service delivery effectiveness. The analysis contained within are intended to provide management with information, and in some cases, a range of options to consider while making decisions about their operations.

This performance audit report can be accessed online through the Auditor of State's website at <http://www.ohioauditor.gov> and choosing the "Search" option.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Keith Faber'.

Keith Faber
Auditor of State
Columbus, Ohio

July 25, 2024

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Tuscarawas County Job and Family Services

Performance Audit Summary

WHAT WE LOOKED AT

At the request of the Tuscarawas County Commissioners (the Commissioners), this audit reviewed the Tuscarawas County Department of Job and Family Services (TCJFS or the Department) departmental operations, financial management, and overall human resources. The goal of this audit was to provide Tuscarawas County and the Department with information and guidance to ensure the continued fiscal health of the organization.

TCJFS has had several financial difficulties historically, including having overdue bills. While the Department has worked with ODJFS to implement some changes, past due bills and emergency loans from the County General Fund of \$500,000 led to the County Commissioners requesting this Performance Audit.

County Departments of Job and Family Services (CDJFSs) are funded through a combination of federal funds, state funds, and local sources. These revenues allow counties to provide services to their residents in need. Federal and state revenues are largely allocated utilizing funding formulas to determine need in a given area. Federal revenues pass through the state, which distribute both federal and state revenues to counties. Local revenues can include mandated shares, other transfers from the County General Fund for operating support, local levies, and advances from the County General Fund that need to be repaid. Mandated shares are local contributions from a county's general fund required by the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) for the administration of services. CDJFSs can receive levy revenue for general human services or specifically for children services.

WHAT WE FOUND

In Ohio, all counties are required to offer Public Assistance, Social Services, Child Support Enforcement, and Workforce Development programs. These can be offered through the county department of JFS, or other county agencies. Due to this system being county-administered and state-supervised, the structure of County Departments of Job and Family Services (CDJFS) varies across the state. According to the County Commissioner's Association of Ohio, 47 counties offer all four programs through their single-county JFS, while 20 additional counties offer at least three programs through their single-county JFS. Five counties have at least three programs offered through a JFS office shared by multiple counties. Additionally, single-county JFSs offer 94.3 percent of county's Public Assistance programs, 69.3 percent of county's Social Services programs, 73.9

percent of county's Child Support Enforcement programs, and 77.3 percent of county's Workforce Development programs within their agency. We found that TCJFS had a structure unlike the majority of counties due to only offering two of the four programs required within each county: Public Assistance and Social Services. Other entities in the county offer Child Support Enforcement and Workforce Development, while the majority of CDJFSs offer at least one of these programs. This difference in organization may be contributing to differences in general departmental operation, financial management, and staffing. We also found that TCJFS had more costs associated with non-project work than the primary peers, suggesting that staff assignments may be less efficient than the primary peers.

When reviewing TCJFS's finances, we found that TCJFS's financial condition is generally less secure than that of both primary and local peers within Public Assistance and Social Services, with both funds having lower balances at TCJFS than peers. Additionally, we found that TCJFS does not meet all of the Government Finance Officers Association's recommendations for long-term financial planning and budget monitoring. Enhancing the long-term financial planning process will allow TCJFS to understand long-term trends and potential risks, improving the Department's ability to proactively address issues. Additionally, enhancing the budget monitoring process will improve accountability and facilitate communications with stakeholders.

Human resources typically encompass a significant portion of organization expenditures, including for TCJFS. We found that TCJFS is higher staffed in its Public Assistance and non-program divisions compared to primary peers. However, it is staffed significantly lower than primary peers in its Social Services division. Additionally, supervisors at TCJFS are supervising more staff on average than primary peers due to TCJFS having both fewer supervisors and more staff on average. TCJFS's utilization of overtime and compensatory time is in-line with best practices, suggesting TCJFS has controls in place to reduce the financial impacts of non-regular labor on the organization.

Finally, we reviewed factors that contribute to the recruitment and retention of staff, as well as the Department's finances. The Department conducts exit interviews but does not compile nor analyze reasons for employees leaving. Without knowing the most common reasons for employee turnover, the Department cannot effectively address concerns, which could lead to a reduction in institutional knowledge and an increase in costs associated with recruitment. Compensation is a key factor in recruiting and retaining staff. We found that TCJFS's most popular insurance plans are more generous and more costly than the local peer average while TCJFS salaries are generally less generous than the primary peer average for positions analyzed.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Key Observation 1: TCJFS's expenditures exceeded revenues within Public Assistance in 2022 and within Social Services in 2021. Operating deficits are not uncommon for counties from time to time, however TCJFS's comparatively lower fund balances compared to the peers has required transfers beyond the mandated share to maintain a positive fund balance. While it is not uncommon for counties to provide County General Fund Operating Support beyond the mandated share, TCJFS has also needed advances beyond the planned General Fund transfers that act as loans and are required to be paid back.

Key Observation 2: Underspending federal and state allocations results in TCJFS not fully utilizing the resources they have available. Conversely, overspending federal and state allocations requires those expenditures to be spent from county funds, with a few exceptions.

Key Observation 3: Department-wide, TCJFS's use of non-regular labor was in-line with best practices. However, usage rates of non-regular labor in Case Management 1 and Protective divisions exceed 5.0 percent usage in 2022 and partial-year 2023. When reviewing usage rates for these groups over time, both had peaks and valleys corresponding to departmental need. While usage rates for these groups slightly exceed best practices, these groups are faced with urgent and unpredictable tasks, and it is not unreasonable to have a slightly elevated use of non-regular labor.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: There were several elements of TCJFS's departmental structure that varied from primary peers. This includes the average span of control, the total chain of command, and the director's number of direct reports. Another component of departmental structure that is different at TCJFS compared to the peers is the departmental divisions. One of the most significant differences is the number of required programs offered at TCJFS compared to the primary peers. While TCJFS offers two programs, the primary peer average offering is three and a half programs. The way organizations are structured can significantly impact operations, and it is possible restructuring could lead to increased efficiencies, improved effectiveness, or reduced costs. The County and Department should determine whether changes to departmental operations could lead to increased efficiencies, improved effectiveness, or reduced costs.

Recommendation 2: TCJFS is higher staffed in its Public Assistance and non-program divisions compared to primary peers. However, it is staffed significantly lower than primary peers in its Social Services division. Additionally, supervisors at TCJFS are supervising more staff on average than primary peers. TCJFS should utilize the results of the staffing analyses, salaries analysis, and departmental operations analyses to determine whether to alter position roles and/or redistribute staff.

Recommendation 3: In 2023, 25.2 percent of TCJFS's Income Maintenance RMS observations were for non-project time compared to a peer average of 24.4 percent. 34.0 percent of TCJFS's Social Services RMS observations were for non-project time compared to a peer average of 26.8 percent. If TCJFS staff had assignments that resulted in a non-project observation rate equal to the primary peer average, there would be \$34,500 less in expenditures associated with non-project tasks for Income Maintenance and \$251,141 less in expenditures associated with non-project tasks for Social Services. TCJFS spent less time on project work as a percentage of their total time compared to primary peers, resulting in a lessened ability to utilize grants for directly serving program participants. TCJFS should identify whether changes need to be made to staff assignments in order to reduce the RMS counts associated with non-project time. Ensuring appropriate departmental structure and staffing, monitoring employee non-project time, and providing

appropriate RMS training may assist TCJFS in maximizing grant utilization and increasing positive impacts to program participants.

Recommendation 4: TCJFS does not meet all aspects of GFOA's best practices for long-term financial planning. TCJFS should adopt and implement policies that address these recommendations. Enhancing the long-term financial planning process will allow TCJFS to understand long-term trends and potential risks, allowing the Department to proactively address issues. Additionally, the long-term financial planning process encourages strategic thinking and provides guidance in decision making.

Recommendation 5: TCJFS does not meet all aspects of GFOA's best practices for budget monitoring. TCJFS should adopt and implement policies that address these recommendations. Enhancing the budget monitoring process will allow TCJFS to ensure plans are being implemented and goals are being met, could enforce accountability related to spending, and may facilitate timely and transparent communications with stakeholders.

Recommendation 6: TCJFS's most popular insurance plans are more generous and more costly than the local peer average. Meanwhile, TCJFS salaries are generally less generous than the primary peer average for positions analyzed. Because total compensation involves both salaries and insurance, the Department must consider the impact of its offerings to ensure it is competitive in the local market.

Recommendation 7: The Department conducts exit interviews but does not compile nor analyze reasons for employees leaving. The Department should compile reasons for employees leaving and analyze the most common causes to identify whether there are common issues contributing to turnover.

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Introduction

Ensuring that all residents have access to programs and services that can help to have healthy, safe, and stable lives is one of the purposes of government. Governments are often tasked with assisting individuals who are members of vulnerable populations that may need additional services to reach this goal. In Ohio, counties are required to administer four programs aimed at helping county residents enrich their lives or gain stability. These programs include public assistance, social services, child support enforcement, and workforce development.

Public assistance services provide cash, food, healthcare, or other resources to individuals and families in need. These services have the goal of providing individuals and families with the basics they need to survive, and eventually thrive. Social services include services to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and adults over the age of 60. Children services includes investigating reports of abuse, neglect, or dependency, working with families to lessen the risk of further abuse and neglect, and placing children in alternative care if necessary. Adult services include investigating reports of self-neglect, neglect, exploitation, or abuse. Child support enforcement programs include actions to ensure families are receiving the financial resources they are entitled to in order to care for their child, or children. Child support enforcement monitors these payments and collects past-due support. Finally, workforce development serves to provide support to jobseekers and employers within a county. These activities include opportunities for jobseekers to train and develop their skills as well as opportunities for employers to attract, retain, and develop employees.

These programs are state-supervised and county-administered. State supervision includes both the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) and the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM).¹ These agencies provide technical guidance and monitoring to TCJFS for public assistance and social services. Additionally, these state agencies can set programmatic policies in line with federal and state standards. ODJFS also provides pass-through subrecipient funding from the federal government. County Commissioners determine how the required programs are administered. Often, the County Department of Job and Family Services (CDJFS) administers public assistance, children services, child support, and workforce development programs. However, county commissioners may also designate standalone Public Children Service Agencies (PCSAs), Child Support Enforcement Agencies (CSEAs), and Workforce Development Agencies (WDAs) to fulfill those required county functions.

The Tuscarawas County Commissioners (the Commissioners) requested a performance audit of Tuscarawas County Department of Job and Family Services (TCJFS or the Department) operations. The Ohio Auditor of State’s Ohio Performance Team (OPT) conducted this performance audit of the departmental operations, financial management, and overall human

¹ H.B. 33 of 135th General Assembly created the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (ODCY). ODCY will facilitate and coordinate the delivery of children’s services in Ohio by January 1, 2025.

resources of TCJFS. The goal of this audit was to provide the Commissioners and the Department with information and guidance to ensure the continued fiscal health of the organization.

Tuscarawas County Job and Family Services

Tuscarawas County (Tuscarawas or the County) is a 571 square mile political subdivision in northeast Ohio that encompasses twenty-two townships, sixteen villages and three cities. The County’s 2022 estimated population was approximately 92,000, with a population per square mile of approximately 163. Compared to Ohio as a whole, Tuscarawas has a similar level of poverty and a lower median household income. The 2021 Census Poverty Estimates estimated the County’s level of poverty was 12.4 percent for all individuals and 16.1 percent for children 17 and under. This was similar to the Ohio estimate of 12.4 percent and 18.2 percent, respectively. Additionally, 2023 Census Population estimates the median household income to be \$61,953, 7.8 percent lower than Ohio’s median household income of \$66,990.



Tuscarawas County Department of Job and Family Services (TCJFS or the Department) is a CDJFS that administers public assistance and social services programs.² The general purpose of public assistance programs is to serve individuals in need of assistance by providing cash, food, healthcare, or other resources while social services ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and the safety and wellbeing of adults over 60 by investigating reports of neglect or abuse, working with families to develop family case plans or voluntary plans, and placing children in temporary or permanent custody. Examples of who receives the services and what these services are shown below.

Examples of Services Provided by TCJFS

Social Services

WHO	WHAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abused and neglected children; Foster children; Abused and neglected adults over 60 years old; and Foster and adoption families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child welfare; Elder welfare; Kinship placements; Foster care; and Adoption.

² Children Services and Social Services are often used interchangeably. Throughout this report, we will refer to Children Services programs as Social Services since it also includes Adult Protective Services.

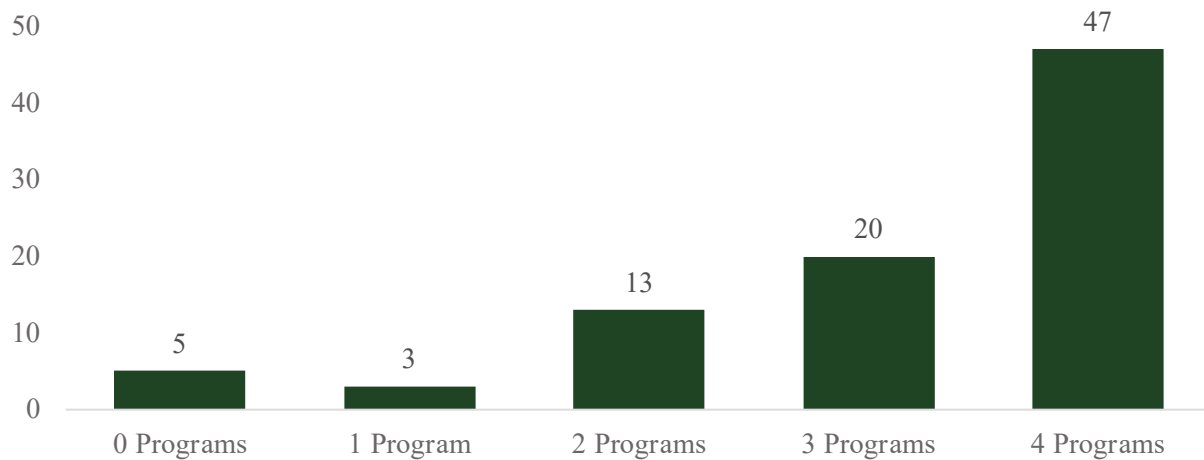
Public Assistance

WHO	WHAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals with limited financial resources; Individuals with disabilities; Families with dependents under 18 years old, or women who are at least 6 months pregnant; and Refugees within 12 months of arrival. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNAP; Cash Assistance; Medical Assistance; and Child Care programs.

Source: TCJFS and ODJFS

In Ohio, all counties are required to offer Public Assistance, Social Services, Child Support Enforcement, and Workforce Development programs. These can be offered through the county department of JFS, a multi-county JFS, or other county agencies. As seen in the chart below, more than half of the state's 88 counties offer all four programs through a single-county JFS department.

Count of Counties with 0 to 4 Programs in Single-County JFS

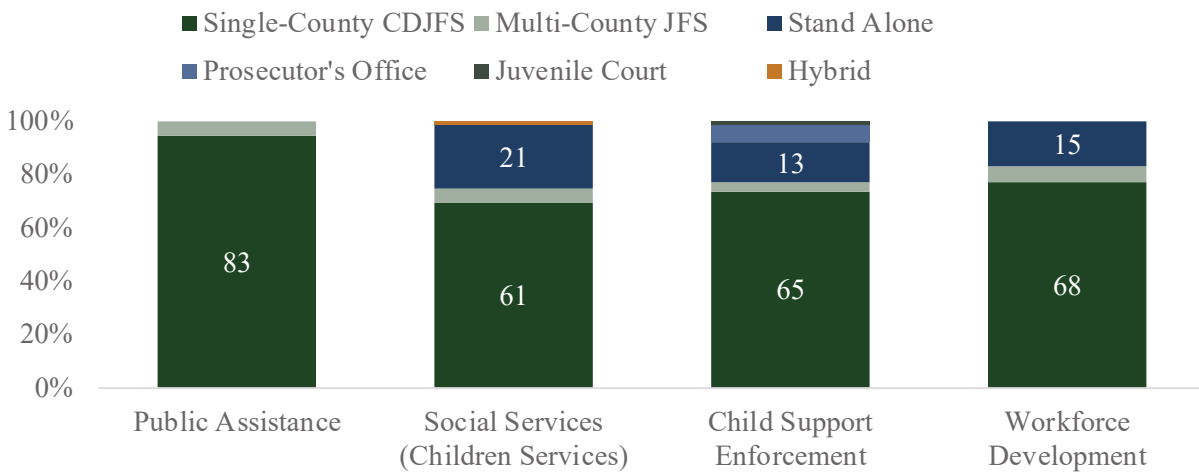


Source: CCAO Data Exchange

Of the 41 counties that do not offer all four programs through a single-county JFS department, there are 20 which provide 3 of the 4 programs, 13 that provide 2 of the 4 programs, and 3 that provide only 1 of the 4 programs. Notably, there are five counties that do not provide any services through a single-county JFS department. This is because these counties offer services through a multi-county JFS department. The multi-county JFS departments provide at least 3 of the 4 programs to the participating counties.

Because programs are not provided by the same entity in each county, we identified what the administrating agency for each program on the county level. The distribution of administrating county agency by program is below. This chart shows the count of counties using each type of administrating agency by program.

Distribution of Administrating County Agency by Program



Source: CCAO Data Exchange

In Ohio, all Public Assistance programs are provided by either a single-county or multi-county JFS department. Further, more than two-thirds of counties provide the remaining three services through the same single-county or multi-county department. TCJFS is in the minority as it offers only Public Assistance and Social Services programs. The County provides Workforce Development through a standalone OhioMeansJobs Center and provides Child Support Enforcement through the County Prosecutor’s Office.

Tuscarawas is part of Local Workforce Area 6, which includes Tuscarawas and Stark counties. The Local Workforce Area’s Workforce Development Board works with each county’s Commissioners to oversee the delivery of workforce development services. The Tuscarawas OhioMeansJobs Center provides in-personal and virtual services to employers and job seekers within the county. Examples of these services include career fairs, hiring events, and incumbent worker training.³ Child support services provided by the Tuscarawas prosecutor include, but are not limited to, establishing orders to pay support, maintaining records of collections and disbursement, and enforcing orders.

Administering programs include responsibilities such as setting local policies and procedures, conducting intake and eligibility determinations, monitoring cases, identifying placements, and submitting data to oversight agencies. This administration of human services can be costly. Generally, departments that provide these services can be funded through a combination of the

³ Services provided at each OhioMeansJobs Center are available at [the OhioMeansJobs Center Dashboard](#).

federal government, state government, local government, grants, or service fees. In cases where federal and state funds are not sufficient to cover expenditures, local funding must be used. Direct cash benefits paid to individuals are not included in these expenditures, except in some cases of the Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) program. TCJFS had deficit spending in 2023 that required emergency loans from the county general revenue fund.

Audit Methodology

Our performance audit was conducted at the request of the Tuscarawas County Commissioners. We identified three main areas for analysis that would provide the County and Department with data-driven information to be used for strategic decision making. Specifically, we reviewed the Department’s departmental operations, financial management, and human resources.

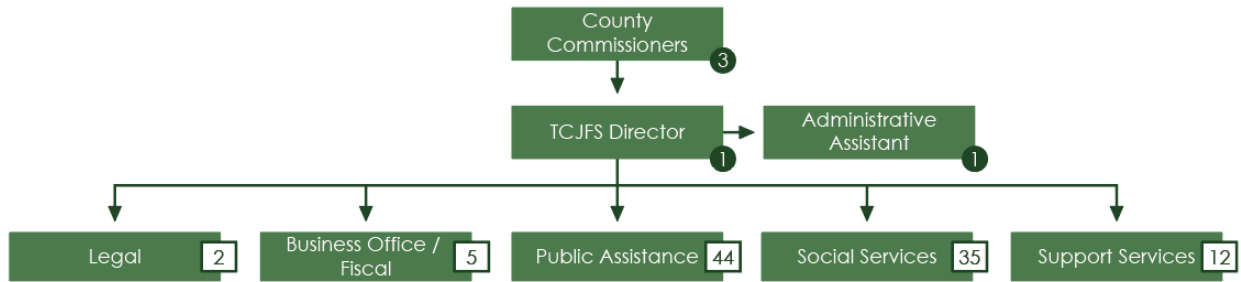
Our office used best practices, peer CDJFSs, and TCJFS’s historical data in our analyses. In consultation with the Department, two sets of CDJFSs were selected for comparisons contained in this report. A set of primary peers was selected to provide useful comparisons in the areas of departmental operations, financial management, and staffing. The selection of primary peers took into consideration key attributes of the community, including population estimates, poverty, median household income, and program participants. A second set of local peers was selected to provide comparisons in the areas of compensation (salaries/wages and insurance benefits). These CDJFSs are in the same geographical area as TCJFS and were selected specifically to provide context for local labor market conditions. See [Appendix A](#) for a list of primary and local peers.

Governance and Departmental Organization

The programs within TCJFS and other CDJFSs are state-supervised and county-administered. TCJFS reports to both the ODJFS and ODM. These agencies provide pass-through subrecipient funding, technical guidance, and monitoring to TCJFS for public assistance and social services. Additionally, these state agencies can set programmatic policies in line with federal and state standards. The Auditor of State also has some oversight responsibilities through Financial Audits of the county, including the CDJFS.

The next level of governance is the county’s Commissioners. Three Tuscarawas County Commissioners are elected by the residents of the county and are responsible for oversight of the CDJFS. This includes the ability to set local policies and procedures, as long as these do not conflict with state and federal law. TCJFS reports to the Tuscarawas County Commissioners, who approve components of TCJFS operations such as hires and financial decision making. This includes the hiring of the Director and the payment of bills. TCJFS’s Director oversees the Department’s operations, including 99 staff members. These staff members include the Administrative Assistant and five divisions: Legal, Business Office/Fiscal, Support Services, Public Assistance, and Social Services divisions. These divisions, and the number of staff in each, are shown below.

TCJFS Table of Organization



Source: TCJFS

Note: Numbers represent 2023 headcount

TCJFS’s Administrative Assistant’s responsibilities include but are not limited to administrative tasks, communicating with stakeholders, and handling some human resources tasks. The Legal division consists of two employees who provide legal services throughout the Department. TCJFS’s Business Office provides fiscal support to the Department and offers childcare licensing. Support Services consists of employees who have tasks to support general office functions, including clerical work, maintenance, and operation of vehicles. As discussed earlier, TCJFS’s Public Assistance and Social Services divisions deliver two of the programs required within the county.

As discussed previously, Tuscarawas County’s division of program administration is relatively unique within the state. According to the County Commissioners Association of Ohio’s 2022 County Data Exchange, there are only two counties (including Tuscarawas and Brown) that have Public Assistance and Public Children Services delivered by the CDJFS and Child Support Enforcement and Workforce Development delivered by other agencies. The entity that administers each required program within Tuscarawas County and primary peer counties is shown below.

TCJFS and Primary Peer Program Administration

County	Public Assistance	Public Children Services	Child Support Enforcement	Workforce Development
Tuscarawas	CDJFS	CDJFS	Prosecutor's Office	Standalone
Hancock	CDJFS	CDJFS	CDJFS	CDJFS
Jefferson	CDJFS	CDJFS	CDJFS	Standalone
Knox	CDJFS	CDJFS	CDJFS	CDJFS
Lawrence	CDJFS	CDJFS	CDJFS	Standalone
Miami	CDJFS	CDJFS	CDJFS	CDJFS
Washington	CDJFS	CDJFS	Standalone	CDJFS

Source: TCJFS and Primary Peer Tables of Organization

TCJFS’s organization will be discussed in more detail in the [Departmental Structure](#) section.

Efficient • Effective • Transparent

Finances

Financial Background

Generally, county commissioners are responsible for approving the budgets and allocations for CDJFS programs and appropriating county, state, and federal dollars. CDJFS use these funds to administer programs. The costs associated with administering programs include contract and purchased services, staff salaries and benefits, supplies and materials, and building and facility expenditures.

Typically, CDJFSs can use the following funds to administer programs: the Public Assistance Fund, Children Services Fund (which we will refer to as the Social Services Fund), Child Support Enforcement Agency Administrative Fund, and Workforce Development Fund. TCJFS operates out of two funds: the Public Assistance Fund and Social Services Fund. As shown below, these funds are supported by local, state, and federal sources.

A Note on Fiscal Years

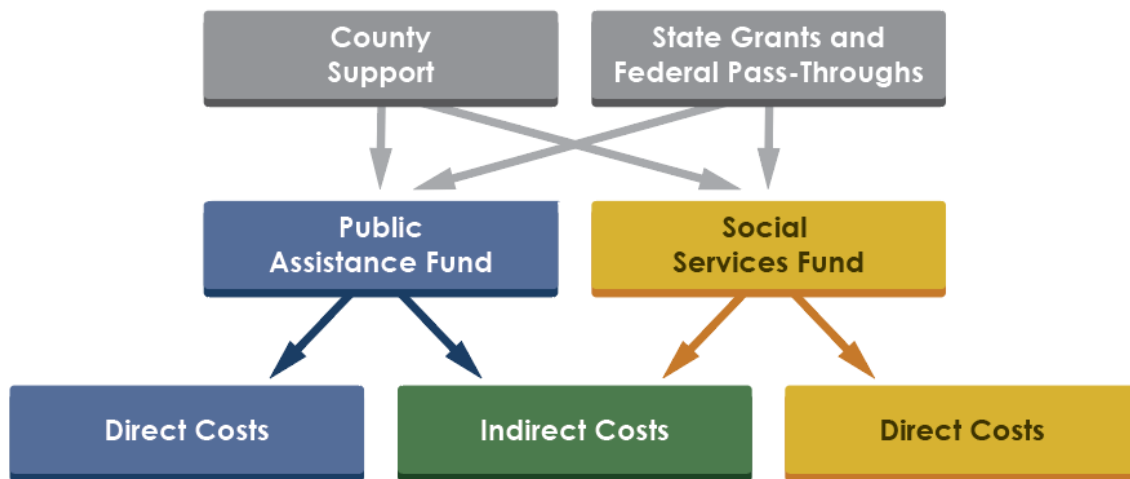
Financial data is often reported on a fiscal year basis rather than a calendar year basis. Fiscal years are not uniform, and Ohio operates on a different fiscal year from the federal government. Additionally, County Fiscal Years (CFY) follow the standard calendar year.

State Fiscal Year (SFY): Begins on July 1 and ends on June 30 of the following year, identified by the year end in June.

Federal Fiscal Year (FFY): Begins on October 1 and ends on September 30 the following year, identified by the year end in September.

Where no fiscal year is designated, a standard calendar year (CY) was used.

TCJFS General Flow of Dollars⁴



⁴ County Support includes support from the County General Fund and fees for services. For other counties that have levies, County Support may also include levy dollars.

Revenues

As discussed, CDJFSs are funded through a combination of federal funds, state funds, and local sources. In 2023, TCJFS had \$17,592,161 total revenues for Public Assistance and Social Services combined, according to the County's financial system. \$1,723,550 of these revenues were inter-fund transfers within the county. These inter-fund transfers include transfers from Social Services to Public Assistance to reimburse the Public Assistance fund for payments made for Social Services. Examples of this process include TCJFS utilizing the Public Assistance fund to pay for all staff salaries, then transferring the proportional salaries for Social Services from Social Services. Excluding these transfers to avoid double-counting revenues, total revenues were \$15,868,611. Examples of sources of funding for CDJFSs include the following:

- **Federal:** Grants and reimbursements for programs including, but not limited to, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Title IV- E of the federal Social Security Act.⁵
- **State:** State's share of county administration expenses for public assistance programs.
- **Local:** Local mandated share for public assistance programs as well as levy revenue, additional transfers from the county general fund that serve as operational support, fees collected for background checks, and advances from the county general fund that need to be repaid.

The following sections will discuss the process for distributing state and federal grants and reimbursements, explain the various types of local revenues, and finally will summarize the total revenues received by TCJFS.

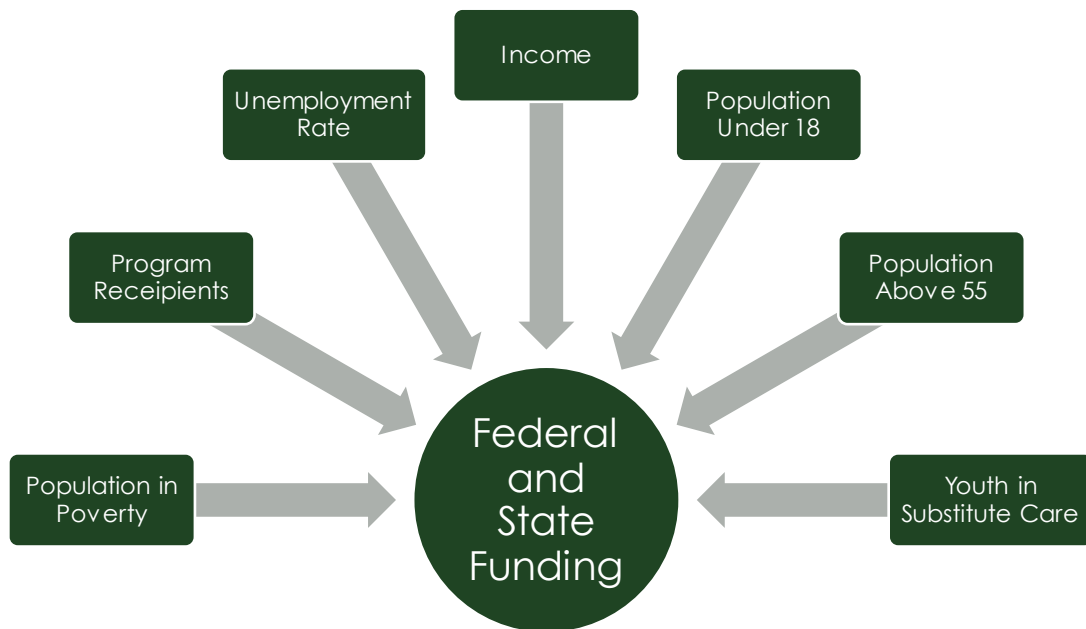
State and Federal Revenue

As discussed earlier, TCJFS receives a combination of federal and state funds from ODJFS and ODM to assist in its administration of the multiple state supervised programs aimed at providing support to Ohioans. The federal government contributes funds in the form of reimbursement and grants to the state. In addition to this federal support, the state budget includes appropriations from the general fund to supplement federal contributions.

The federal reimbursements and grants, along with the state funds from program appropriations, are channeled from the state agency to the county. The determination of this disbursement is a complex process in which dollars are allocated to counties using funding formulas. These formulas take into consideration many components intended to determine the level of need in a community.

⁵ Provides federal reimbursement for a portion of the maintenance, administration and training costs of foster care.

Examples of Factors Considered in Funding Formulas



Source: ODJFS eManuals, Chapter 6 County Funding Sources

TCJFS was allocated \$6,317,000 from federal grants in FFY 2023 and was allocated \$3,519,988 from state grants in SFY 2023. These are the most significant sources of funding for TCJFS. Since the county receives federal grants as pass-throughs from the state, the county financial system does not distinguish differences between state and federally sourced revenues. This means we could not illustrate TCJFS’s revenue by state and federal sources separately. Additional information about the results of these funding formulas is available in the [TCJFS Revenues](#) and [Grant Utilization](#) sections.

Local Revenue

In addition to the state and federal revenue, CDJFS also receive local dollars to support the cost of administering programs. Sources of local revenue include mandated shares, other transfers from the county general fund, and local levies.

Mandated Shares

Ohio counties are required to provide financial support for the administration of various programs offered through the CDJFS in the form of mandated shares. Mandated shares are local contributions from the County General Fund required by the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). Examples include mandated shares for Medicaid, food assistance, and disability financial assistance programs. These requirements are outlined in ORC Sections 5101.16 and 5101.163 and, like the state and federal allocations, are based on formulas. In 2023, Tuscarawas County provided \$222,239 in mandated shares to TCJFS.

Transfers from the County General Fund State and federal revenues provided will not always support operational needs of a CDJFS. As a result, counties often provide general fund transfers for operational support beyond the mandated share of expenditures. One way in which this support may be provided is through a direct transfer from the county general fund. TCJFS has previously received transfers from the county general fund for this purpose. These transfers are provided to support service delivery and are distinct from advances from the county general fund, which require repayment. The amount of revenue transferred from the county general fund equaled \$2.56 million in 2021, \$3.29 million in 2022, and \$3.20 million in 2023

Local Levies

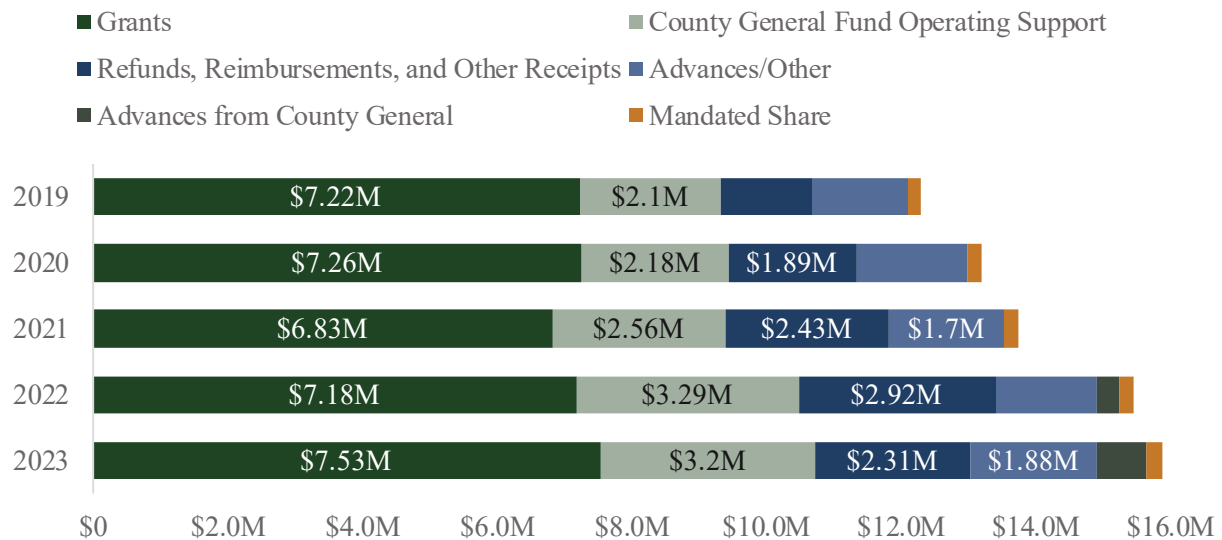
In addition to direct transfers from the county general fund, human service agencies can collect revenue generated from local levies to provide additional support for services. Levies for human service agencies are voted on and approved by county residents and cannot be utilized for the County's mandated share. These levies can be for specific purposes (developmental disabilities, behavioral health, and children services), or for general human services. The purpose of the general human service levy can include one or more of the following purposes: public assistance, human or social services, relief, welfare, hospitalization, health, and support of general hospitals. Levies specifically for developmental disabilities are for county developmental disabilities programs not offered by CDJFSs and behavioral health levies are for programs offered for county alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health programs outside of CDJFSs. Given this, there are two levies relevant to the four programs required to be offered by counties: children services and general human services.

Children Services levies are the most common type of levy related to the four required programs. As of 2023, 46 out of 88 counties in Ohio had an active Children Services levy according to the Ohio Department of Taxation. This includes four of six primary peers and four of six local peers. Three counties in Ohio currently have a general human services levy, which does not include any of the peers. Tuscarawas County does not currently have a general Human Services nor a Children Services levy to fund TCJFS.

TCJFS Revenues

In 2023, TCJFS had \$17,592,161 total revenues for Public Assistance and Social Services combined, according to the County's financial system. \$1,723,550 of these revenues were inter-fund transfers within the county, not including mandated share. Without these transfers, total revenues were \$15,868,611, with \$8,589,227 for Public Assistance and \$7,279,383 for Social Services. This is inclusive of federal, state, and local sources. As mentioned above, state and federal revenues could not be separated using the County's financial data as all revenue is passed through the state to the County. However, we can use the County's financial data to evaluate the sources of revenue by type.

2019-2023 Public Assistance and Social Services Sources of Revenue⁶



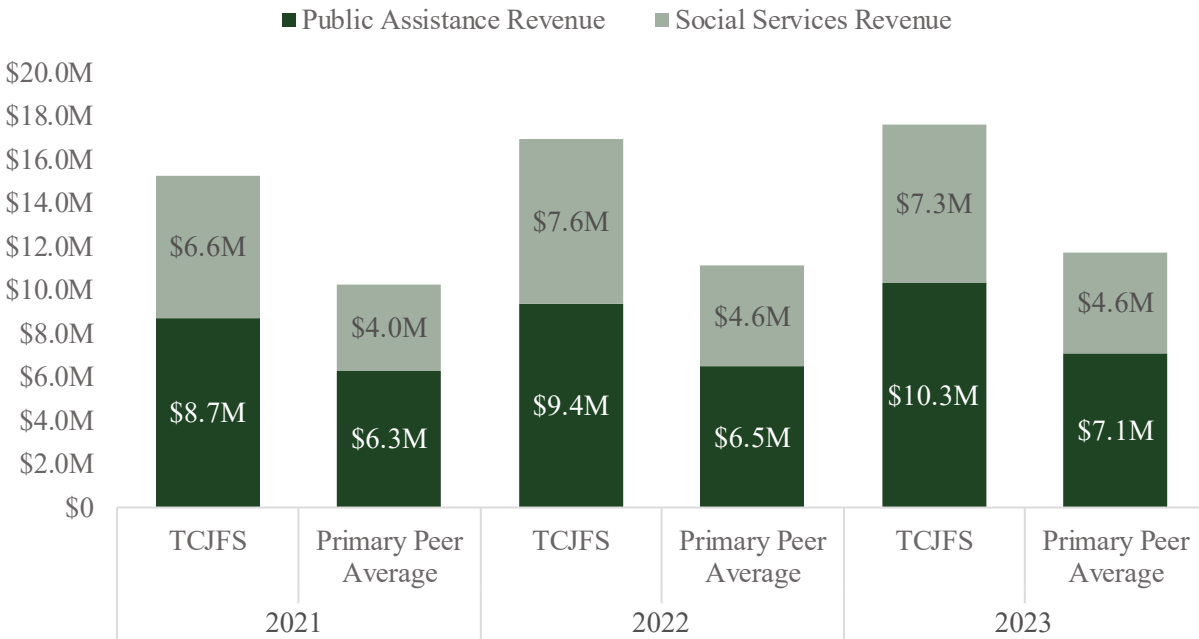
Source: County Auditor Financial System

TCJFS’s largest source of revenue in each of the last five years was Grants, making up 58.9 percent of total revenue in 2023. Examples of revenues in this category include state and federal grants. County General Fund Operating Support makes up the next largest portion of revenue in each of the last five years. This includes transfers made from the County General Fund to cover program expenditures not covered by state and federal revenues. Refunds, Reimbursements, and Other Receipts made up 18.1 percent of revenues in 2023. Advances/Other include items such as state payments and were 14.7 percent of 2023 revenues. Mandated Shares are the county share of administrative costs and represent 1.7 percent of total revenue in 2023. Finally, Advances from the County General Fund are revenues that will need to be repaid. TCJFS received Advances as 5.7 percent of non-Transfer revenue in 2023.

As discussed earlier, federal and state allocations of grants are based on a variety of factors that are based on the level of need in a community. The 2021 through 2023 annual Public Assistance and Social Services revenues for TCJFS and the primary peer average, including transfers, are shown on the next page.

⁶ The Transfers account was excluded. Some categories were combined for the purposes of this graphic. See **Appendix C** for a detailed table of revenues. County General Support includes transfers from the County General Fund excluding mandated shares.

Public Assistance and Social Services Revenue Comparison



Source: County Financial Information System, CR520

TCJFS’s Public Assistance, Social Services, and total annual revenues were higher than the primary peer average for every year analyzed. While TCJFS’s revenues increased by \$2.3 million, or 15.2 percent from 2021 to 2023, the average peer revenues increased by \$1.4 million, or 13.9 percent. These figures can also include local support, as well as transfers from other funds. Additionally, it is important to note that these revenues are not normalized, meaning that actual averages are used without directly adjusting for factors such as population size. As discussed earlier, the majority of revenues are from federal and state sources which utilize variables that represent demand for services. However, there are scenarios unique to each county that contribute to total revenues, which include general support from the county, human services or children services levies, and emergency advances.

Revenue in the Public Assistance and Social Service funds are used to pay both direct and indirect costs associated with administering programs. These costs are broken down in the following section, [Expenditures](#).

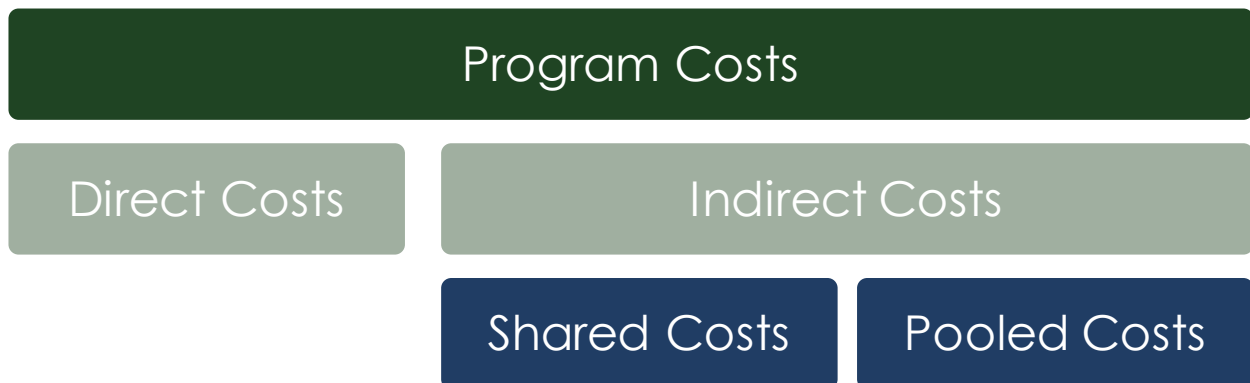
Expenditures

In 2023, TCJFS had \$17,834,785 total expenditures for Public Assistance and Social Services combined, according to the County’s financial system. \$1,660,000 of these expenditures were inter-fund transfers within the county. Without these transfers, total expenditures were \$16,174,785.

As discussed earlier, dollars are required to be separated by fund and program to ensure resources are being utilized for the intended purpose. Due to this, there are additional considerations when discussing expenditures at a CDJFS. There are two main categories of expenditures: direct costs and indirect costs.

- Direct costs are those costs that can be identified specifically with a particular cost activity, or that can be directly assigned to such activities relatively easily with a high degree of accuracy.
- Indirect costs are those costs that benefit more than one or all Federal awards and may be allocated as such using an approved method. Indirect costs can be divided into two categories: shared costs and pooled costs.
 - Shared costs include those that are incurred for a common purpose that benefit more than one major function and are not readily assignable to any specific cost center such as compensation for non-program staff, utility costs, and equipment.
 - Pooled costs include the compensation for program staff not assigned to a particular grant and the costs to administer programs.

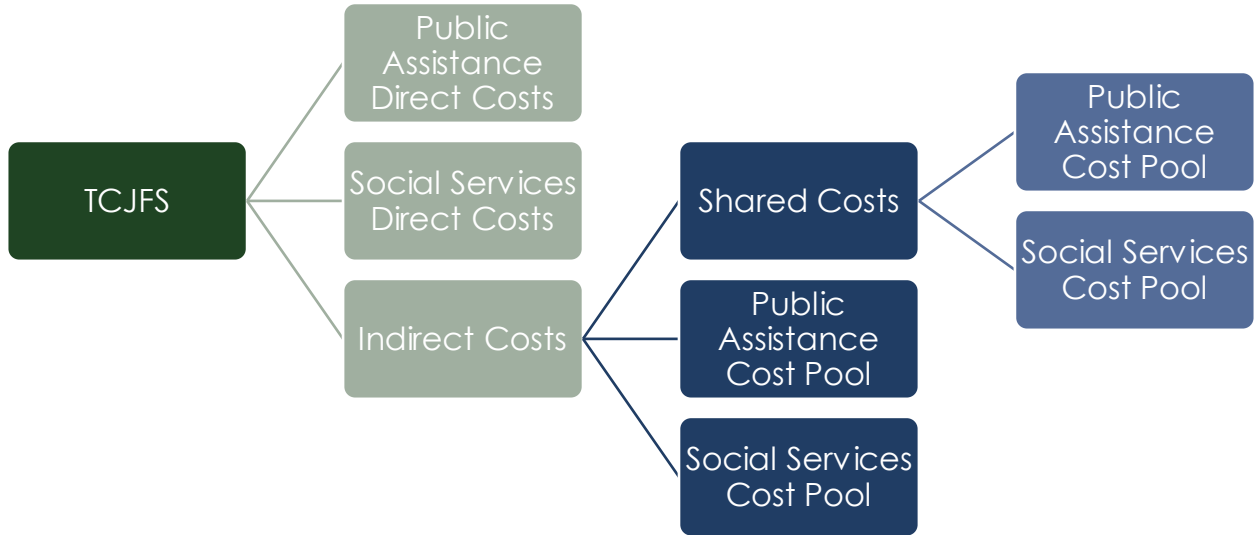
Program Cost Allocation



Source: Auditor of State

To distribute shared costs to the various cost pools within a CDJFS, ODJFS utilizes the average number of Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) serving each program⁷. This process results in the allocation shown below.

TCJFS Cost Allocation Process

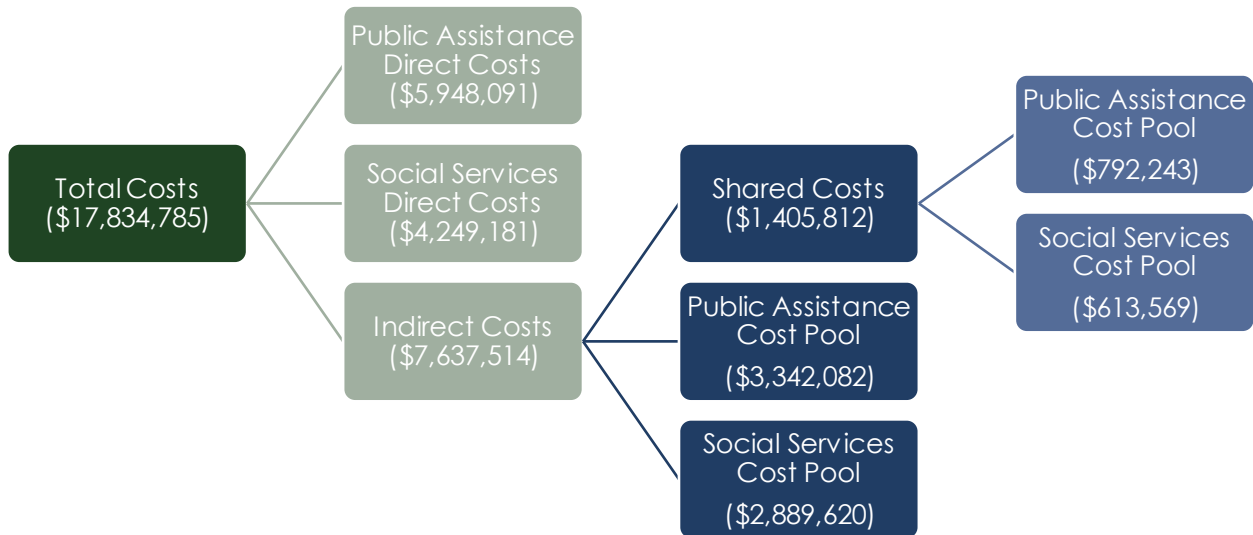


Source: Auditor of State

Once costs are allocated to specific cost pools as shown above, a process called Random Moment Sampling (RMS) is used to allocate shared costs to specific grants. RMS utilizes random surveys sent to employees to track what they are spending their time on. This process includes selecting the program and activity associated with their task and uploading supporting documentation. Quarterly, the results of RMS are compiled and used to distribute shared costs (including the costs not associated with projects) across grants. The graphic below shows TCJFS's cost allocation following this process, using data from County Financial Information System's CR520 and CR404.

⁷ See [Staffing](#) for more information about TCJFS's FTEs.

2023 TCJFS Cost Allocation



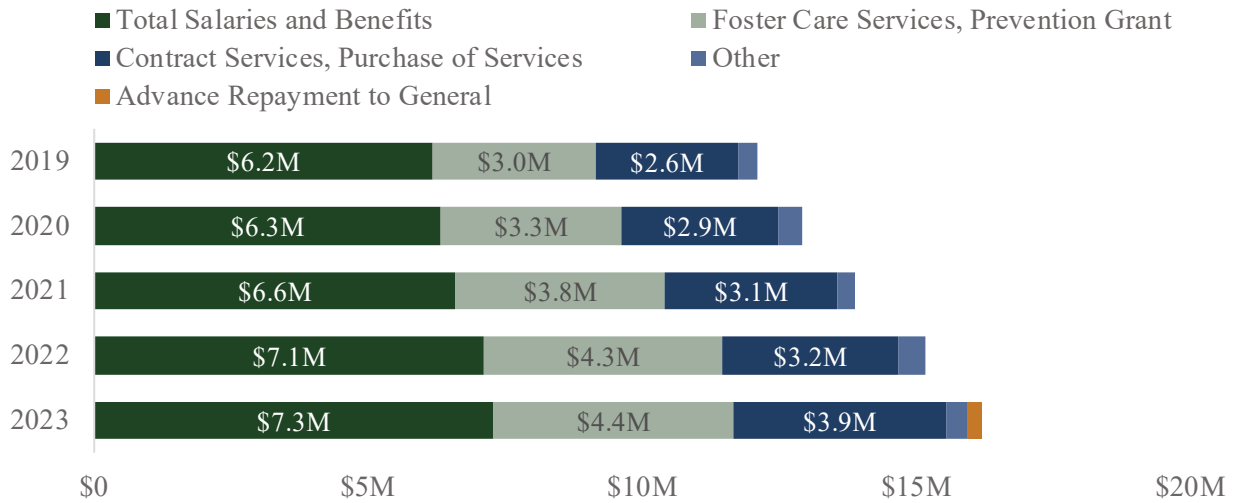
Source: Auditor of State, CFIS

As shown above, TCJFS had \$17,834,785 in total expenditures with \$10,197,272 in direct costs and \$7,637,514 in indirect costs. Total direct and indirect costs for Public Assistance were \$10,082,415, while total direct and indirect costs for Social Services were \$7,752,370. See [Non-Project Time](#) for additional information about RMS and the distribution of shared costs.

TCJFS Expenditures

Overall, TCJFS Public Assistance and Social Services combined expenditures have increased annually over the past five years. These funds are combined for this view since TCJFS utilizes the Public Assistance fund to pay for some Social Services expenses, which are later reimbursed through transfers. These transfers were removed for the analysis shown below.

2019-2023 Public Assistance and Social Services Expenditures⁸



Source: County Auditor Financial System

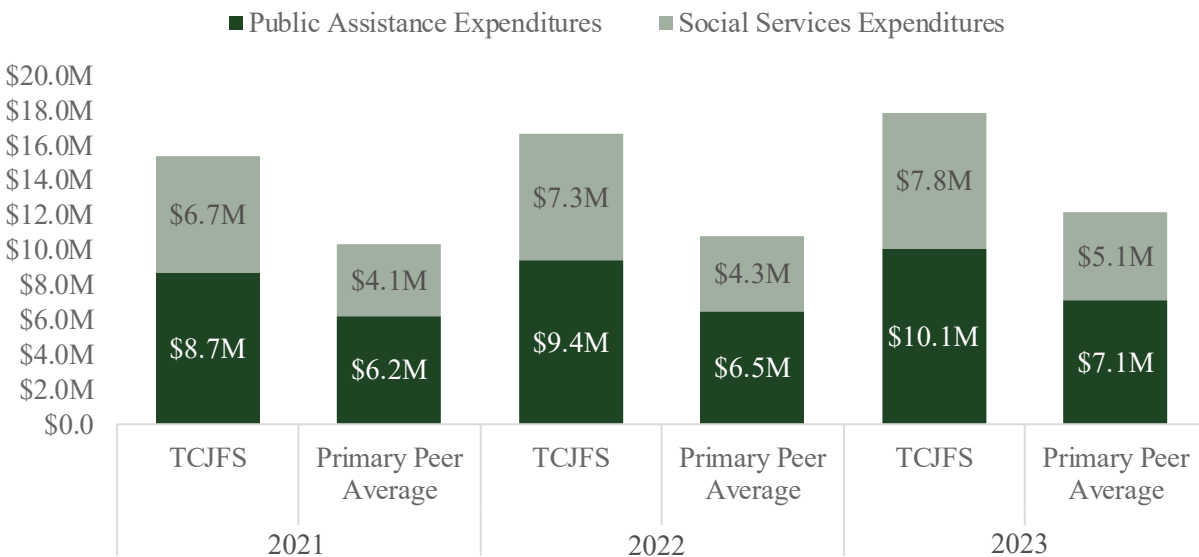
Note: Other category includes Public Assistance, Travel/Expenses, and Equipment, Supplies, and Facilities

Total Salaries and Benefits include all staff at TCJFS and are the largest portion of expenditures, making up \$7,276,448 or 45.0 percent of 2023 expenditures for both Public Assistance and Social Services. Foster Care Services include the costs of administering foster care within the county, including paying foster parents for placements. These costs made up \$4,397,503 or 27.2 percent of 2023 expenditures. Contract Services, Purchase of Services includes payments to companies and individuals for services rendered for TCJFS. This represented \$3,858,459 or 23.9 percent of 2023 expenditures. Advance Repayment to General includes those monies repaid for emergency loans previously advanced to TCJFS from the County. TCJFS paid back \$241,130 in 2023, making up 1.5 percent of expenditures.

The 2021 through 2023 annual Public Assistance and Social Services expenditures for TCJFS and the primary peer average as reported in CFIS are shown below.

⁸ These expenditures exclude Transfers.

Public Assistance and Social Services Expenditures Comparison



Source: County Financial Information System, CR520

TCJFS’s Public Assistance, Social Services, and total annual expenditures were higher than the primary peer average for every year analyzed. On average, peer expenditures have increased annually for each fund at a higher rate than TCJFS expenditures. While TCJFS’s expenditures increased by \$2.4 million, or 15.8 percent from 2021 to 2023, the average peer expenditures increased by \$1.9 million, or 18.2 percent. These expenditures are not normalized, and some differences are expected due to the different levels of demand for services in each county.

Grant Utilization

As discussed earlier, CDJFSs can only use dollars available from grants for their intended purpose. The following table shows how TCJFS utilized the federal grants under the Public Assistance Fund in FFY2023.

Federal Fiscal Year 2023 – Public Assistance Federal Grant Utilization

Name	Allocation	Usage	Usage Rate
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	\$791,625	\$660,761	83.47%
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	\$1,402,599	\$1,269,934	90.54%
Child Care and Development Block Grant	\$102,019	\$102,019	100.00%
Social Services Block Grant	\$1,046,423	\$1,046,423	100.00%
Children's Health Insurance Program	\$1,561	\$0	0.00%
Medical Assistance Program	\$2,329,693	\$2,264,040	97.18%
Total Federal Public Assistance	\$5,673,919	\$5,343,177	94.17%

Source: CFIS Over/Under December 2023

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The following table shows how TCJFS utilized the federal grants under the Social Services Fund in FFY2023.

Federal Fiscal Year 2023 – Social Services Federal Grant Utilization

Name	Allocation	Usage	Usage Rate
MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program	\$64,097	\$64,097	100.00%
Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Medical Assistance Program	\$62,148	\$62,148	100.00%
The Chafee Program	\$5,298	\$5,298	100.00%
Foster Care Title IV-E	\$28,706	\$18,317	63.81%
Adoption Assistance	\$96,975	\$96,928	99.95%
Title IV-E Prevention Program	\$358,861	\$416,545	116.07%
Total Federal Social Services	\$643,080	\$688,309	107.03%

Source: CFIS Over/Under December 2023

In FFY2023, TCJFS utilized 94.2 percent of federal allocations in Public Assistance and 107.0 percent of federal allocations in Social Services. This resulted in \$330,742 in underspending for Public Assistance and \$45,228 in overspending for Social Services. As discussed in [Revenue](#), some grants will reimburse overspending, while other grants will require local contributions to offset the overspending.

The following table shows how TCJFS utilized the federal grants under the Social Services Fund in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2023.

State Fiscal Year 2023 – State Grant Utilization

Name	Allocation	Usage	Usage Rate
Public Assistance	\$2,142,913	\$2,225,713	103.86%
Social Services	\$1,377,075	\$1,374,740	99.83%
Total State	\$3,519,988	\$3,600,453	102.29%

Source: CFIS Over/Under December 2023

In SFY2023, TCJFS utilized 103.9 percent of state allocations in Public Assistance and 99.8 percent of state allocations in Social Services. This resulted in \$82,800 in overspending for Public Assistance and \$2,335 in underspending for Social Services.

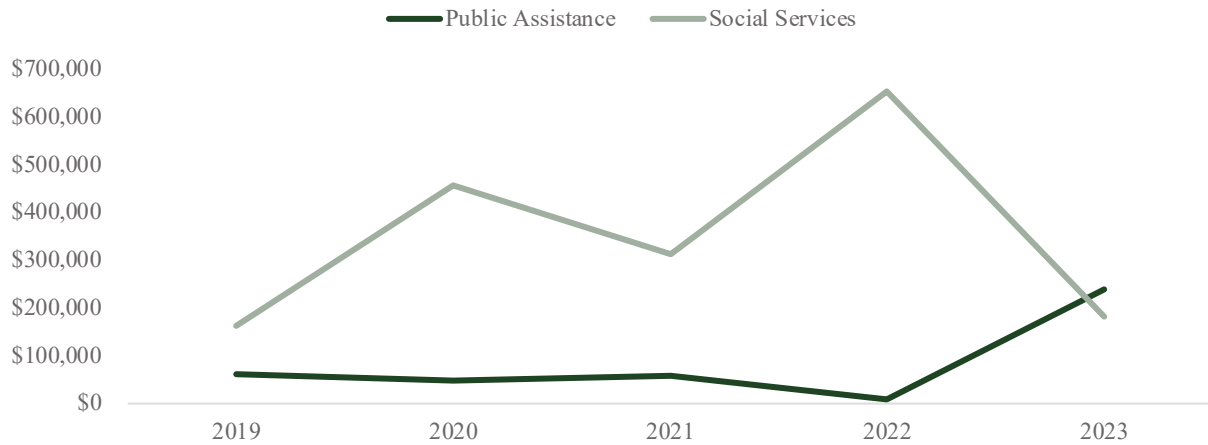
Fund Balances

The ending fund balance is the result of the sum of the beginning fund balance, revenue, and expenditures over a period of time. According to the Government Finance Officer Association (GFOA), governments should maintain adequate levels of fund balance to mitigate current and future risks, including revenue shortfalls and unanticipated expenditures. Adequate levels of fund balances vary based on the unique circumstances of each entity, but GFOA recommends governments define a minimum amount of funds for structural balance.

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The Department has had a relatively stable annual ending fund balance in Public Assistance, with a decrease in 2022 followed by an increase at the end of 2023. The annual ending fund balance has generally been higher but more volatile in Social Services. There was a sharp decline from 2022 to 2023. The year-end balances for each fund are below.

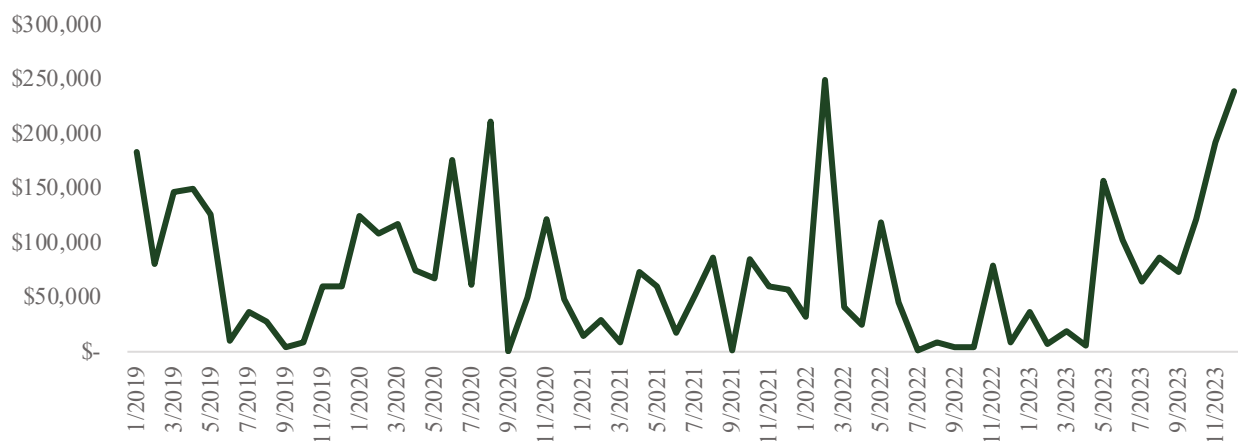
2019-2023 Public Assistance and Social Services End Fund Balances



Source: County Financial Information System, CR520

Looking at the ending balances for the Public Assistance fund on a more detailed basis, we can see that there is some volatility month to month.

2019-2023 Public Assistance Ending Fund Balances



Source: County Financial Information System, CR520

TCJFS had deficit spending in 2021 and 2022 but grew its Public Assistance fund ending balance in 2023. Overall, primary peer average revenues exceeded expenditures in 2021 and 2022, but expenditures exceeded revenues on average in 2023.

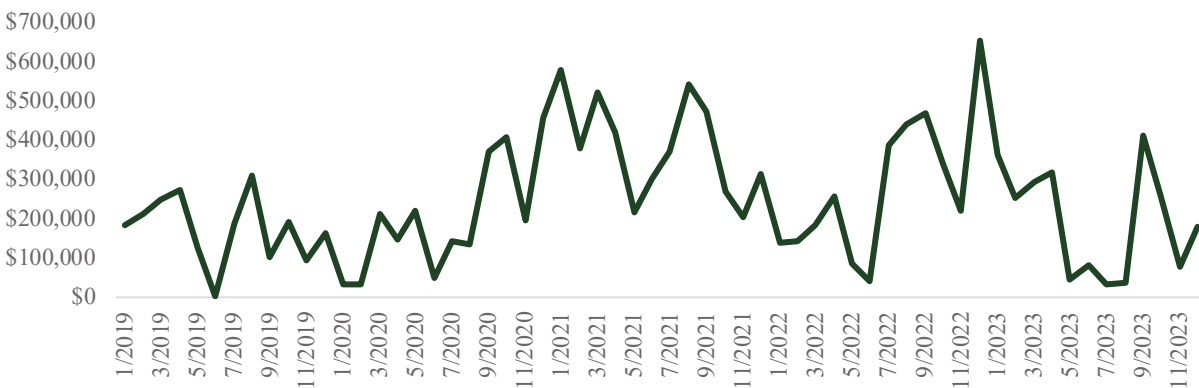
2021-2023 Public Assistance Fund Primary Peer Comparison

	Year	Beginning Balance	Revenues	Expenditures	Ending Balance
TCJFS	2021	\$48,802	\$8,696,671	\$8,688,450	\$57,023
	2022	\$57,023	\$9,352,427	\$9,400,706	\$8,744
	2023	\$8,744	\$10,312,777	\$10,082,415	\$239,106
Primary Peer Median	2021	\$135,380	\$5,920,067	\$5,935,542	\$246,483
	2022	\$246,483	\$5,745,389	\$5,694,057	\$182,692
	2023	\$182,692	\$6,388,810	\$6,278,972	\$154,710

Source: CFIS CR520

Looking at the ending balances for the Social Services fund on a more detailed basis, we can see that there is also some volatility month to month.

2019-2023 Social Services Ending Fund Balances



Source: County Financial Information System, CR520

TCJFS's Social Services expenditures exceeded revenues within Social Services in 2021 and 2023. Overall, primary peer average expenditures also exceeded revenues in 2021 and 2023.

2021-2023 Social Services Fund Primary Peer Comparison

	Year	Beginning Balance	Revenues	Expenditures	Ending Balance
TCJFS	2021	\$455,973	\$6,573,964	\$6,716,536	\$313,400
	2022	\$313,401	\$7,592,165	\$7,251,792	\$653,773
	2023	\$653,773	\$7,279,384	\$7,752,370	\$180,787
Primary Peer Median	2021	\$800,702	\$4,154,482	\$3,924,227	\$1,148,031
	2022	\$1,148,031	\$4,579,134	\$4,245,635	\$2,014,867
	2023	\$2,014,867	\$4,845,674	\$5,377,214	\$1,871,843

Source: CFIS CR520

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While it was not uncommon for primary peer expenditures to exceed revenues in these funds, the available fund balances to cover those differences have been higher at peers than TCJFS.

The revenue within the Public Assistance and Social Service Funds are comprised of multiple sources including local, state, and federal revenue. With these sources having different fiscal years, these ending fund balances may not represent a true "end" to all grants. However, monitoring balances, even at a snapshot in time, can assist in ensuring resources are being utilized in a fiscally responsible manner. The recommendations within this report will provide TCJFS and the County with methods to maintain solvency in the future.

Summary of Audit Results

The Ohio Auditor of State's Ohio Performance Team (OPT) conducts performance audits of government entities and provides data-driven analyses and recommendations which can assist officials in improving the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of organizations.

At the request of the Tuscarawas County Commissioners (the Commissioners), this audit reviewed the Tuscarawas County Department of Job and Family Services (TCJFS or the Department) departmental operations, financial management, and overall human resources. The goal of this audit was to provide Tuscarawas County (Tuscarawas or the County) and the Department with information and guidance to ensure the continued fiscal health of the organization.

Our office used best practices, peer CDJFSs, and TCJFS's historical data in our analyses. In consultation with TCJFS, two sets of CDJFSs were selected for comparisons contained in this report. A set of primary peers was selected to provide useful comparisons in the areas of departmental operations, financial management, and staffing. The selection of primary peers took into consideration key attributes of the community, including population estimates, poverty, median household income, and program participants. A second set of local peers was selected to provide comparisons in the areas of compensation (salaries/wages and insurance benefits). These CDJFSs are in the same geographical area as TCJFS and were selected specifically to provide context for local labor market conditions. See [Appendix A](#) for a list of primary and local peers.

We found that TCJFS had a structure unlike the majority of counties due to only offering two of the four programs required within each county: Public Assistance and Social Services. Other entities in the county offer Child Support Enforcement and Workforce Development, while the majority of CDJFSs offer at least one of these programs. This difference in organization may be contributing to differences in general departmental operation, financial management, and staffing. The costs associated with staff are a significant portion of total expenses in most organizations, including TCJFS. TCJFS is higher staffed in its Public Assistance and non-program divisions compared to primary peers. However, it is staffed significantly lower than primary peers in its Social Services division. Additionally, supervisors at TCJFS are supervising more staff on average than primary peers due to TCJFS having both fewer supervisors and more staff on average. We also found that TCJFS had more costs associated with non-project work than the primary peers, suggesting that staff assignments may be less efficient than the primary peers.

When reviewing TCJFS's finances, we found that TCJFS's financial condition is generally worse than that of both primary and local peers, with lower fund balances in both Public Assistance and Social Services. Additionally, we found that TCJFS does not meet all of the Government Finance Officers Association's recommendations for long-term financial planning and budget monitoring.

Compensation is a key factor in recruiting and retaining staff. We found that TCJFS's most popular insurance plans are more generous and more costly than the local peer average while TCJFS salaries are generally less generous than the primary peer average for positions analyzed.

Turnover can be costly for any organization, including TCJFS. During the course of the audit, there was turnover in key positions and supervisors reported difficulties resulting from staff turnover. While the Department conducts exit interviews, it does not compile nor analyze reasons for employees leaving. Without knowing the most common reasons for employee turnover, the Department cannot effectively address concerns, which could lead to a reduction in institutional knowledge and an increase in costs associated with recruitment. Finally, TCJFS's utilization of overtime and compensatory time is in-line with best practices, suggesting TCJFS has controls in place to reduce the financial impacts of non-regular labor on the organization.

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: There were several elements of TCJFS's departmental structure that varied from primary peers. This includes the average span of control, the total chain of command, and the director's number of direct reports. Another component of departmental structure that is different at TCJFS compared to the peers is the departmental divisions. One of the most significant differences is the number of required programs offered at TCJFS compared to the primary peers. While TCJFS offers two programs, the primary peer average offering is three and a half programs. The way organizations are structured can significantly impact operations, and it is possible restructuring could lead to increased efficiencies, improved effectiveness, or reduced costs. The County and Department should determine whether changes to departmental operations could lead to increased efficiencies, improved effectiveness, or reduced costs.

Recommendation 2: TCJFS is higher staffed in its Public Assistance and non-program divisions compared to primary peers. However, it is staffed significantly lower than primary peers in its Social Services division. Additionally, supervisors at TCJFS are supervising more staff on average than primary peers. TCJFS should utilize the results of the staffing analyses, salaries analysis, and departmental operations analyses to determine whether to alter position roles and/or redistribute staff.

Recommendation 3: In 2023, 25.2 percent of TCJFS's Income Maintenance RMS observations were for non-project time compared to a peer average of 24.4 percent. 34.0 percent of TCJFS's Social Services RMS observations were for non-project time compared to a peer average of 26.8 percent. If TCJFS staff had assignments that resulted in a non-project observation rate equal to the primary peer average, there would be \$34,500 less in expenditures associated with non-project tasks for Income Maintenance and \$251,141 less in expenditures associated with non-project tasks for Social Services. TCJFS spent less time on project work as a percentage of their total time compared to primary peers, resulting in a lessened ability to utilize grants for directly serving program participants. TCJFS should identify whether changes need to be made to staff assignments in order to reduce the RMS counts associated with non-project time. Ensuring appropriate departmental structure and staffing, monitoring employee non-project time, and

providing appropriate RMS training may assist TCJFS in maximizing grant utilization and increasing positive impacts to program participants.

Recommendation 4: TCJFS does not meet all aspects of GFOA's best practices for long-term financial planning. TCJFS should adopt and implement policies that address these recommendations. Enhancing the long-term financial planning process will allow TCJFS to understand long-term trends and potential risks, allowing the Department to proactively address issues. Additionally, the long-term financial planning process encourages strategic thinking and provides guidance in decision making.

Recommendation 5: TCJFS does not meet all aspects of GFOA's best practices for budget monitoring. TCJFS should adopt and implement policies that address these recommendations. Enhancing the budget monitoring process will allow TCJFS to ensure plans are being implemented and goals are being met, could enforce accountability related to spending, and may facilitate timely and transparent communications with stakeholders.

Recommendation 6: TCJFS's most popular insurance plans are more generous and more costly than the local peer average. Meanwhile, TCJFS salaries are generally less generous than the primary peer average for positions analyzed. Since both components are important when considering total compensation, the Department should evaluate both in conjunction with one another when making changes.

Recommendation 7: The Department conducts exit interviews but does not compile nor analyze reasons for employees leaving. The Department should compile reasons for employees leaving and analyze the most common causes to identify whether there are common issues contributing to turnover.

Recommendation 1: Evaluate Departmental Structure

There were several elements of TCJFS's departmental structure that varied from primary peers. This includes the average span of control, director's number of direct reports, the total chain of command, and department divisions. The way organizations are structured can significantly impact operations, and it is possible restructuring could lead to increased efficiencies, improved effectiveness, or reduced costs.

Impact

The way in which an organization and its departmental subcomponents are structured impacts the organization's performance, ability to adapt to internal and external factors, control its costs, and ultimately its ability to meet strategic objectives.

Background

TCJFS employs 100 full-time employees across five divisions. Supervisors within each division have authority to manage staff and report to TCJFS's director who oversees all five divisions.

The Society of Human Resource and Management (SHRM) identifies five key elements that make up an organization's structure within its Understanding Organizational Structures report. These include job design, departmentation, delegation, span of control, and chain of command.

Methodology

This performance audit focused on four of the elements from SHRM's Understanding Organizational Structures: departmentation, delegation, span of control, and chain of command. We identified these components for TCJFS and primary peers using tables of organization, payroll reports, and discussions with TCJFS and peers. We compared TCJFS's organizational and departmental structure to the primary peers.

Analysis

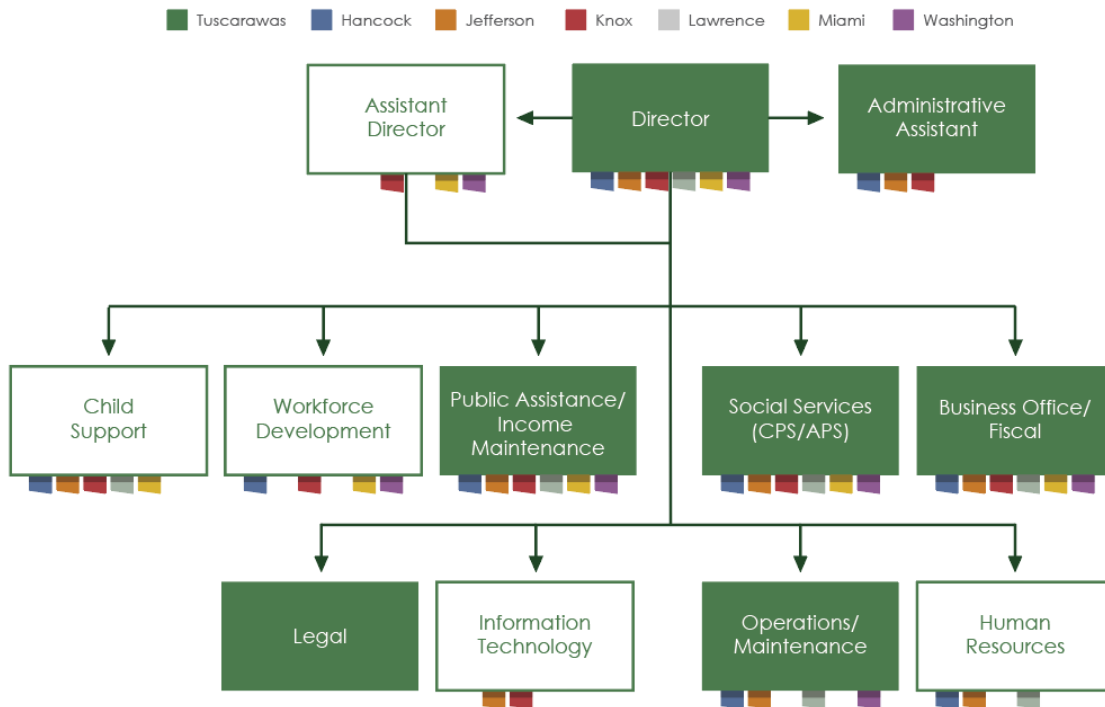
Departmentation

Departmentation is the way in which an organization structures its jobs to coordinate work. According to SHRM, there are three main categories of organizational structures: vertical (functional and divisional), vertical and horizontal (matrix), and boundary-less (modular, virtual, and cellular).

A functionally structured organization is the most common structure among modern organizations. This structure focuses on dividing staff and the work that they perform by hierarchal specialization. TCJFS and all primary peers utilize a functional structure.

TCJFS has five departments that make up its structure: Business Office/Fiscal, Support Services⁹, Legal, Social Services, and Public Assistance. Employees housed under each of these departments focuses on specialized tasks and reports directly to managers within their functional areas. The divisions at TCJFS and the primary peers are shown below. White boxes are divisions found at primary peers that are not found at TCJFS, while green boxes show divisions at TCJFS. Each peer has a colored tab that corresponds to whether they have each division.

TCJFS and Primary Peer Department Structure¹⁰



Source: TCJFS and Primary Peers

As discussed in the [Background](#) section and shown in the graphic, TCJFS offers two of the four programs required by counties (with the remaining two housed elsewhere in Tuscarawas County) while primary peers offer three or four programs. Tuscarawas County is also relatively unique within the state since only one other CDJFS offers just Public Assistance and Social Services. While this is not something that TCJFS can control, it may impact the efficiency of shared components of departmental operations. See [Staffing](#) for more information about how non-program staffing compares to primary peers. In addition to these program areas, some peers have a separate division for Information Technology and Human Resources, which TCJFS does not have. TCJFS is also the only county to have legal staff in a separate division.

⁹ The Support Services division was renamed in the graphic.

¹⁰ The names of some divisions were altered to reflect the shared responsibilities across counties.

TCJFS has an administrative assistant like three of the six peers. In most instances, peers have either an administrative assistant or an assistant director. When reviewing TCJFS’s administrative assistant responsibilities in conjunction with peer assistant director position descriptions, the positions have some similar responsibilities.

Span of Control

Span of control is the number of individuals who report to a single supervisor. Utilizing staff counts, TCJFS’s average span of control across all departments is 7 while the primary peer average is 4.9. This means that TCJFS supervisors are supervising 2.1 more staff members than the primary peers on average.

TCJFS and Peer Span of Control



Source: TCJFS and Primary Peer Tables of Organization and Payroll Reports

This difference is driven by TCJFS having more staff to supervise and having fewer supervisors than the primary peer average. TCJFS’s supervisee count of 87 is 28 percent higher than the primary peer average of 65.7. Additionally, TCJFS’s non-Director supervisor count is 12, which is 20 percent higher than the primary peer average of 14.67. See the [Staffing](#) section for additional information about staffing levels at TCJFS and primary peers.

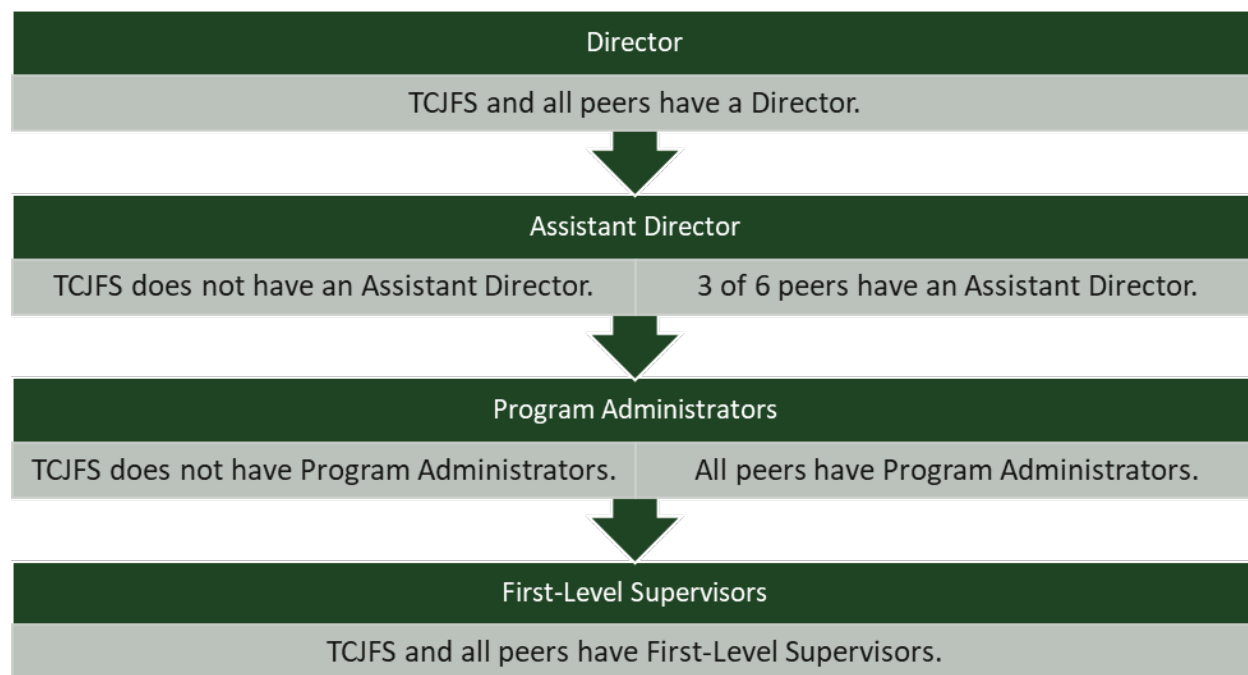
Looking at this data in more detail, we can see that TCJFS has a span of control of 7.8 for both Public Assistance and Social Services. Meanwhile, the primary peer average span of control is 6.0 for Public Assistance and 3.9 for Social Services. While TCJFS Public Assistance supervisors are only supervising 1.8 more staff than peers on average, TCJFS Social Services supervisors are supervising twice the number of staff than peers.

Chain of Command

The chain of command refers to the numbers of vertical levels of supervision in an organization that contribute to the overall supervisory structure. Reviewing the table of organization for TCJFS and primary peers, we found four levels of supervision: Director, Assistant Director, Program Administrator (or Second-Level Supervisors), and First-Level Supervisors. The Director is responsible for the oversight of the entire organization and supervises the Assistant Directors. The Assistant Directors in turn are responsible for the oversight of specific

departmental areas and supervise Program Administrators. The Program Administrators are responsible for the oversight of the First-Level Supervisors within a division. Finally, First-Level Supervisors are responsible for the oversight of individual contributors on the staff.

TCJFS and Peer Chain of Command



Source: TCJFS and Primary Peer Tables of Organization

TCJFS has two levels of supervisory structure which include the Director and First-Level Supervisors. On average, primary peers have 3.5 levels of supervisory structure, 1.5 levels more than TCJFS. This difference is due to half of the peers having an Assistant Director and all the peers having Program Administrators. One of the effects of this difference is TCJFS's director having more direct reports than the primary peer average.

Director Direct Reports

To assess delegation, we evaluated the director's direct reports, meaning the number of individuals who report directly to the director. TCJFS's director has 12 direct reports, not including the administrative assistant. The composition of these 12 direct reports includes all supervisors from TCJFS's various departments which are 4 Social Services Supervisors, 5 Eligibility Referral Supervisors, 1 Attorney Supervisor, 1 Support Services Supervisor, and 1 Fiscal Officer. The primary peer average is 5.8 direct reports, less than half of TCJFS's count. This means that TCJFS's Director is responsible for the oversight of more supervisors than primary peer directors.

Conclusion

There were several elements of TCJFS's departmental structure that varied from primary peers. This includes the average span of control, the total chain of command, and the director's number of direct reports. TCJFS supervisors are supervising 2.1 more staff members than the primary peers on average, due to both fewer supervisors and more staff. TCJFS has fewer supervisors overall due to a shorter chain of command resulting from the lack of an Assistant Director and Program Administrators. The lack of intermediary supervisory levels has also led to TCJFS's director has more than twice the number of direct reports compared to peers.

Another component of departmental structure that is different at TCJFS compared to the peers is the departmental divisions. One of the most significant differences is the number of required programs offered at TCJFS compared to the primary peers. While TCJFS offers two programs, the primary peer average offering is three and a half programs. As discussed in the [Background](#), Tuscarawas County is relatively unique within the state since only one other CDJFS offers just Public Assistance and Social Services. While this is not something that TCJFS can control, it may impact the efficiency of shared components of departmental operations. See [Staffing](#) for more information about how non-program staffing compares to primary peers.

The way organizations are structured can significantly impact operations, and it is possible restructuring could lead to increased efficiencies, improved effectiveness, or reduced costs. The County and Department should utilize the results of this analysis, the [Staffing](#) section, and [Non-Project Time](#) section to determine whether changes to departmental operations could yield improvements in these areas.

Recommendation 2: Determine Whether to Alter Staffing Assignments

TCJFS is higher staffed in its Public Assistance and non-program divisions compared to primary peers. However, it is staffed significantly lower than primary peers in its Social Services division. Additionally, supervisors at TCJFS are supervising more staff on average than primary peers. TCJFS should utilize the results of the staffing analyses, salaries analysis, and departmental operations analyses to determine whether to alter position roles and/or redistribute staff.

Background

Being appropriately staffed is essential to any organization. Having too many staff can pose a financial burden, while having too few staff can impact the delivery of services and overall performance. In 2023, the cost of staff salaries represented 30.4 percent expenditures while insurance costs represented 9.8 percent of expenditures. Total compensation was 45.0 percent of 2023 expenditures¹¹.

As discussed in the [Background](#) section, each CDJFS offers a variety of programs that fall under public assistance, children services, child support, and workforce development. Each of these programs typically have several measures of performance. These performance measures can provide insight into staffing efficiency.

As shown below, Medicaid and SNAP represent the largest portion of active program blocks at TCJFS and peers. Medicaid and SNAP make up 97.3 percent of active program blocks compared to a peer average of 98.4 percent.¹²

Two key performance metrics for Medicaid and SNAP are below.

2023 Performance Metrics within Public Assistance

Group	SNAP Application Process Timeliness	Medicaid Block Grant Completion
TCJFS	99.30%	97.60%
Peer Average	97.22%	98.08%
Difference Above/(Below) Peers	2.09%	(0.48%)

Source: ODJFS and Ohio Department of Medicaid

Counties are required to complete SNAP applications in a timely manner. TCJFS’s SNAP application timeliness was 99.3 percent in 2023, which was 2.09 percent higher than the peer

¹¹ These calculations exclude inter-fund transfers.

¹² A program block is a sub-section within an individual’s or group’s case that is specific to an eligibility program. Each case can have multiple program blocks.

average of 97.1 percent. Additionally, counties are required to complete Medicaid eligibility at a rate of at least 90 percent. TCJFS’s rate was in-line with the peer average, but significantly above the requirement.

One of the main programs within Social Services is adoption. As shown below, Tuscarawas County had more children available for adoption, children adopted, and children entering and exiting permanent custody.

2023 Adoption Metrics

Group	Available for Adoption	Adoption Finalized	Entered Permanent Custody	Exited Permanent Custody
TCJFS	28.00	20.00	22.00	23.00
Peer Average	24.00	14.25	14.75	16.40
Difference Above/ (Below) Peers	4.00	5.75	7.25	6.60

Source: ODJFS Data Portal

Title IV-E of the Social Security Act is pathway for federal reimbursement for a portion of the costs associated with foster care for children who meet specific federal eligibility requirements. Eligibility ratios represent the number of placement or adoption days that are reimbursable based on federal requirements, including family income standards.

2023 Average Quarterly IV-E Eligibility Ratios

Group	Foster Care	Adoption Assistance	Combined
TCJFS	54.53%	94.04%	82.91%
Peer Average	59.27%	94.03%	78.17%
Difference Above/ (Below) Peers	(4.74%)	0.01%	4.74%

Source: CFIS

As shown above, TCJFS had a lower percentage of reimbursable foster care placement days on average compared to peers, but a comparable number of reimbursable adoption days. This means that TCJFS has a greater percent of children in foster care that do not qualify under Title IV-E than the peer average. Since TCJFS had a high count of adoption days compared to foster placement days, this led to a higher combined ratio than the peer average.

Methodology

We utilized organizational tables and payroll reports from TCJFS and primary peers to establish a list of staff. This staff list included the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) value, division, and role of each staff member for each county.

We normalized Public Assistance and Social Service FTEs by using revenues for the respective programs at TCJFS and primary peers. Additionally, we normalized non-program staff using program FTEs for each county. Finally, we calculated supervisor-to-supervisee ratios for each county by dividing the sum of supervised FTEs by the sum of supervisor FTEs. The results for TCJFS were then compared to the primary peer average for each component.

Analysis

TCJFS Staffing Levels

At the time of our analysis, TCJFS had a total of 100 staff. Since all staff are full-time, this also resulted in 100 FTEs. The FTE count for each TCJFS division is shown in the table below.

TCJFS Staffing

Position Group	Staff and FTE Count
Director	1
Administrative Assistant	1
Business Office	5
Support Services	12
Legal	2
Public Assistance	44
Social Services	35
Total	100

Source: TCJFS

As discussed in the **Background** section, TCJFS offers two of the four required county programs: public assistance and social services. A high-level comparison of TCJFS and the primary peer average FTEs by non-program, public assistance, social services, and other programs is below.

High-Level FTE Comparison to Peers

	Non-Program	Public Assistance	Social Services	Other Programs
TCJFS	21.00	44.00	35.00	N/A
Peer Average	11.31	26.74	32.03	12.42

Source: TCJFS and Primary Peers

While primary peer counties were selected due to being similar to Tuscarawas County (see [Audit Methodology](#) for more information), there are still differences in the counties that need to be considered to make fair comparisons. To compare FTEs, we normalized staffing comparisons for public assistance, social services, and non-program FTEs. First, we normalized public assistance and social services FTEs by using respective revenues for each of these programs at TCJFS and primary peers. As discussed in the [Financial Background](#), federal and state funding

for programs offered at TCJFS and primary peers utilize formulas to calculate a level of funding that reflects the projected need in a given county.

The formula below shows the calculation within public assistance and social services.

Program Staff FTE Normalization Formula

$$\left[\frac{\left(\frac{\text{TCJFS Program FTE}}{\text{TCJFS Program Revenue}} \right)}{1,000,000} \right] - \left[\frac{\left(\frac{\text{Peer Average Program FTE}}{\text{Peer Average Program Revenue}} \right)}{1,000,000} \right] \times \left(\frac{\text{TCJFS Program Revenue}}{1,000,000} \right)$$

The results of this normalization for public assistance and social services are below.

Program Staffing Normalization

Program	TCJFS FTEs Per Million in Revenue	Peer Average FTEs Per Million in Revenue	Difference	Adjusted Difference in FTE
Public Assistance	4.27	3.94	0.33	3.38
Social Services	4.81	6.87	(2.06)	(15.00)

Source: TCJFS, Primary Peers, and CFIS

The adjusted difference in FTEs shows the normalized difference between TCJFS and the peer average based on the respective metric. Overall, TCJFS has 3.38 more FTEs in public assistance than the primary peer average would be at TCJFS’s funding level. TCJFS had 15 fewer FTEs in social services than the primary peer average would be at TCJFS’s funding level.

Non-program staff include those not within one of the four programs required within each county, Public Assistance, Social Services, Workforce Development, and Child Support Enforcement. Examples of non-program staff at TCJFS include vehicle operators and maintenance.

Non-Program Staff FTE Normalization Formula

$$\left(\frac{\text{TCJFS Non-Program FTE}}{\text{TCJFS Program FTE}} \right) - \left(\frac{\text{Peer Average Non-Program FTE}}{\text{Peer Average Program FTE}} \right) \times \text{TCJFS Program FTE}$$

Using this formula, we can have normalized non-program staffing. These non-program staff were normalized by the count of program staff FTE, as shown in the table below.

Non-Program Staffing Normalization

Group	TCJFS Non-Program FTEs Per Program FTE	Peer Average Non-Program FTE per Program FTE	Difference	Adjusted Difference in FTEs
Non-Program	0.27	0.16	0.10	2.17

Source: TCJFS and Primary Peers

The adjusted difference in FTEs shows the normalized difference between TCJFS and the peer average based on the respective metric. TCJFS has 2.17 more non-program staff than the primary peer average, given an adjusted count of program FTE. Several factors are likely contributing to this, including the programs offered at each county. As discussed in the [Departmental Structure](#) section, TCJFS offers two of the four programs required to be offered in every county, while the other two programs are offered by other agencies within the county. The primary peers offer an average of 3.5 of these programs.

Looking at all staff within each CDJFS, TCJFS has more supervisee FTEs than the peer average, but fewer supervisors than the peer average.

Department-Wide Supervisors and Supervisees

	Supervisee FTE	Supervisor FTE
TCJFS	87.00	13.00
Peer Average	64.84	15.58
Difference Above/(Below) Peers	22.16	(2.58)

Source: TCJFS and Primary Peers

As discussed in the [Department Structure](#) section, TCJFS supervisors supervise more staff overall than the primary peer average. When looking at FTEs instead of staff counts, we see a similar result.

Department-Wide Supervision Ratios

Group	Peer Ratio	TCJFS Ratio	Difference
Hancock	5.32:1	6.69:1	1.64
Jefferson	4.65:1	6.69:1	2.31
Knox	2.57:1	6.69:1	4.39
Lawrence	4.27:1	6.69:1	2.69
Miami	4.69:1	6.69:1	2.27
Washington	4.28:1	6.69:1	2.68
Average	4.30:1	6.69:1	2.40

Source: TCJFS and Primary Peers

Department-wide, including directors, TCJFS supervisors are supervising 2.40 more FTE than supervisors at the primary peers.

Conclusion

TCJFS has a total of 100 full-time staff, with 44 Public Assistance staff, 35 Social Services staff, and 21 non-program staff. When normalizing comparisons to peers using program revenues, Public Assistance has 3.38 more FTEs and Social Services has 15.00 fewer FTEs than the primary peer average. When normalizing non-program staff using program staff, TCJFS has 2.17 more FTEs than peers. Overall, TCJFS is slightly higher staffed in its Public Assistance and non-program divisions compared to primary peers and is staffed significantly lower than primary peers in its Social Services division. In addition to these FTE comparisons, we found that supervisors at TCJFS are supervising 2.66 FTE more staff than primary peers on average. TCJFS should utilize the results of the staffing analyses, salaries analysis, and departmental operations analyses to determine whether to alter position roles and/or redistribute staff.

Recommendation 3: Identify Methods to Reduce Non-Project Time

In 2023, 25.2 percent of TCJFS's Income Maintenance RMS observations were for non-project time compared to a peer average of 24.4 percent. 34.0 percent of TCJFS's Social Services RMS observations were for non-project time compared to a peer average of 26.8 percent. If TCJFS staff had assignments that resulted in a non-project observation rate equal to the primary peer average, there would be \$34,500 less in expenditures associated with non-project tasks for Income Maintenance and \$251,141 less in expenditures associated with non-project tasks for Social Services. TCJFS spent less time on project work as a percentage of their time compared to primary peers, resulting in a lessened ability to utilize grants for directly serving program participants. TCJFS should identify whether changes need to be made to staff assignments in order to reduce the RMS counts associated with non-project time. Ensuring appropriate departmental structure and staffing, monitoring employee non-project time, and providing appropriate RMS training may assist TCJFS in maximizing grant utilization and increasing positive impacts to program participants.

Background

As discussed in the [Expenditures](#) section, dollars are required to be separated by fund and program to ensure resources are being utilized for the intended purpose. Since there are indirect costs associated with TCJFS operations that benefit more than one major function and are not readily assignable to any specific cost center, the federal government requires states to choose a method to distribute these expenses to cost pools and grants.

First, FTEs are used to distribute shared costs to the program areas. Next, Random Moment Sampling (RMS) is used to distribute program costs to various grants accordingly.

Employees who are selected for RMS directly contribute to program functions. When an employee receives a notification they were selected for RMS, this is called an observation. The employee has 48 hours to complete their observation, which includes selecting the program and activity associated with the task they are currently completing. This selection then is required to have supporting documentation uploaded. These responses then go through an approval and quality control process.

Quarterly, the results of RMS are compiled and used to distribute program costs across grants. During this process, any costs associated with time not spent on a project area (for example, lunch and breaks) are distributed across all grants.

Methodology

We utilized two reports from the County Financial Information System (CFIS). These reports include the CR442, known as the RMS report, and the CR404, known as Allocated Costs by Program/Activity. First, we matched the records for the CR442 and CR404 to have both the

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distribution and costs of records. Then, we calculated the percentage of annual entries associated with administrative tasks, breaks, leave, and lunch breaks (non-project time) from the CR442. Using this calculation and the total allocation from the CR404, we then found the cost associated with this non-project time.

As discussed in the [Background](#), TCJFS offers two programs: Public Assistance (referred to as Income Maintenance in RMS reports) and Social Services while the peers offer additional services. Due to this, we only compared RMS results for Income Maintenance and Social Services to primary peers.

Analysis

Cost allocation is the way TCJFS and other CDJFSs distribute their indirect expenditures across multiple programs. As discussed in the Financial Background, TCJFS had higher expenditures across Public Assistance and Social Services programs when compared to the primary peers and when looking at indirect costs, in part due to the demand for services within the respective communities.

2023 Total Indirect Costs by Program Area

Category	TCJFS	Peer Average	Difference Above/ (Below) Peers
Income Maintenance	\$4,134,325	\$3,874,517	\$259,808
Social Services	\$3,503,189	\$3,112,341	\$390,848
Total	\$7,637,514	\$6,986,858	\$650,656

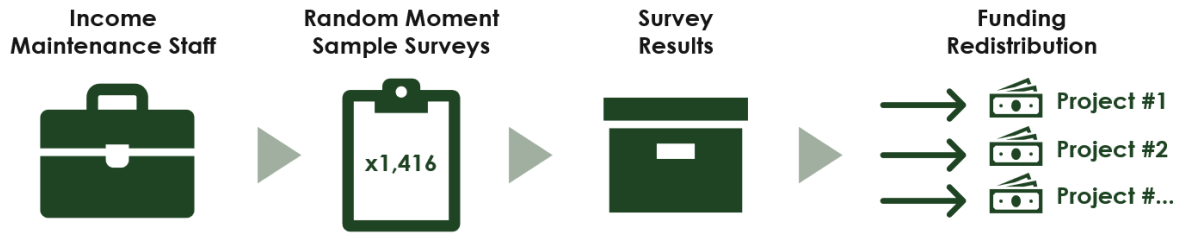
Source: CFIS

Generally, tasks recorded in RMS can be categorized into three categories: Projects, Administrative, and Breaks/Leave. The costs associated with project tasks will be distributed to the corresponding grant(s), while the costs associated with administrative tasks and breaks/leave (which we will refer to as non-project time) are redistributed across all grants.

The graphic below shows this cost allocation process. As TCJFS staff provide services, a selection will receive RMS surveys from webRMS. In 2023, Income Maintenance staff received 1,416 observations. The results of these observations are then used to distribute costs to individual projects.¹³

¹³ Examples of projects include TANF Case Management, Child Care, Adult Protective Services, and Child Welfare. Each project can be associated with multiple grants, and each grant can be associated with multiple projects.

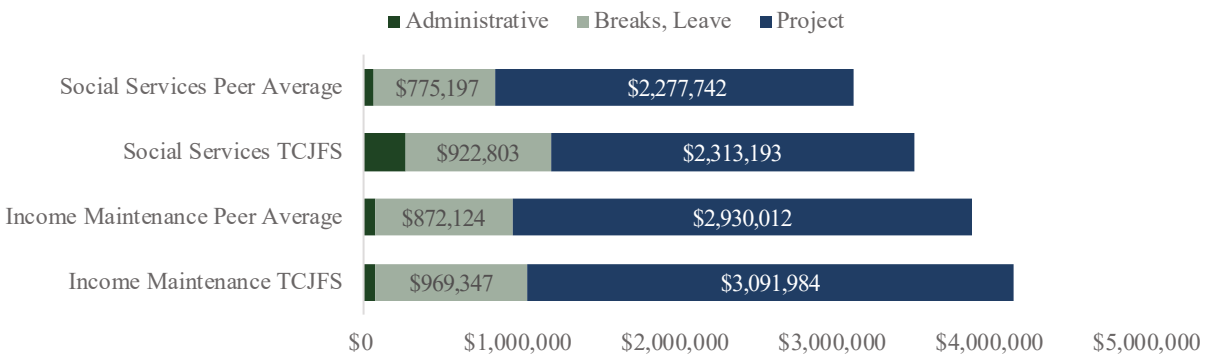
Allocation of Indirect Costs for TCJFS¹⁴



Source: Auditor of State

The indirect costs associated with Income Maintenance and Social Services is below.

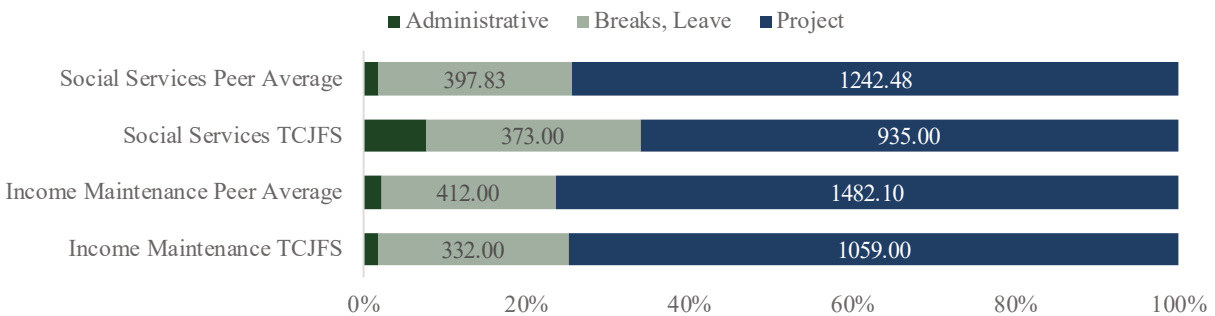
2023 Indirect Costs



Source: CFIS

TCJFS and the Primary Peer Average distribution of observations for both Income Maintenance and Social Services is shown below.

2023 Distribution of Hits



Source: CFIS

¹⁴ The number of surveys sent varies by CDJFS. TCJFS received 1,416 surveys for each program in 2023.

Utilizing the peer average distribution for income maintenance hits and TCJFS’s total indirect costs for income maintenance, we identified what TCJFS’s costs for each category would be if the distribution of costs were the same as the peer average.

2023 Normalized Total Indirect Costs for Income Maintenance

Category	TCJFS Indirect Costs	TCJFS Indirect Costs if at Peer Percentage of Time	Difference Above/ (Below) Peer Rate
Administrative	\$72,993	\$77,236	(\$4,243)
Breaks and Leave	\$969,347	\$930,604	\$38,743
Projects	\$3,091,984	\$3,126,485	(\$34,500)

Source: CFIS

When normalizing indirect costs on this basis, TCJFS is spending comparatively more on non-project tasks and less on projects for Income Maintenance.

Utilizing the peer average distribution for social services hits and TCJFS’s total indirect costs for social services, we identified what TCJFS’s costs for each category would be if the distribution of costs were the same as the peer average.

2023 Normalized Total Indirect Costs for Social Services

Category	TCJFS Indirect Costs	TCJFS Indirect Costs if at Peer Percentage of Time	Difference Above/ (Below) Peer Rate
Administrative	\$267,192	\$66,561	\$200,632
Breaks and Leave	\$922,803	\$872,294	\$50,509
Projects	\$2,313,193	\$2,564,334	(\$251,141)

Source: CFIS

TCJFS is also spending comparatively more on non-project tasks and less on projects for Social Services.

When normalizing indirect costs on this basis, TCJFS is spending comparatively more on non-project tasks and less on projects for both Income Maintenance and Social Services.

Conclusion

Expenditures are required to be separated by fund and program to ensure resources are being utilized for the intended purpose, however some TCJFs expenditures cannot easily be assigned to individual cost centers or grants. To help distribute costs across grants in a way that reflects the activities performed at TCJFS, the state utilizes a system called webRMS to survey staff at random times for information about what activities they are performing. These observations are used to distribute program costs across grants.

TCJFS had higher expenditures than the primary peer average across public assistance and social services programs overall, and when comparing indirect costs. Additionally, TCJFS had a higher percent of non-project observations. If TCJFS staff had assignments that resulted in a non-project observation rate equal to the primary peer average, there would be \$34,500 less in expenditures associated with non-project tasks for Income Maintenance and \$251,141 less in expenditures associated with non-project tasks for Social Services. As discussed in the [Financial Background](#) and [Grant Utilization](#) sections, grants can only be utilized for their intended purposes. This means that there is limited money available for TCJFS to use in providing services to county residents. While shifting assignments to reduce the percent of non-project observations would not necessarily directly save the Department money, it could allow TCJFS to use its grants to further serve program participants rather than using those grants to pay for administrative tasks, breaks, and leave.

TCJFS should utilize the results of [Departmental Structure](#), [Staffing](#), and this analysis to identify whether changes need to be made to staff assignments in order to reduce the RMS counts associated with non-project time. Ensuring appropriate departmental structure and staffing, monitoring employee non-project time, and providing appropriate RMS training may assist TCJFS in maximize grant utilization and positive impacts to program participants.

Recommendation 4: Follow Best Practices for Long-Term Financial Planning

TCJFS does not meet all aspects of GFOA's best practices for long-term financial planning. TCJFS should adopt and implement policies that address these recommendations. Enhancing the long-term financial planning process will allow TCJFS to understand long-term trends and potential risks, allowing the Department to proactively address issues. Additionally, the long-term financial planning process encourages strategic thinking and provides guidance in decision making.

Impact

Strong long-term financial planning practices will allow TCJFS to identify potential risks sooner and proactively address those risks. Long term planning could prevent TCJFS from issues with compliance from financial audits.

Methodology

For this analysis we held multiple interviews with TCJFS which included our initial planning interviews with the previous director, and then further interviews with the new director and the fiscal officer. We then compared practices to best practices for long-term financial planning. For each component of the best practice, TCJFS actions were classified into one of the following three categories: “meets”, “partially meets”, or “does not meet”. “Meets” means that TCJFS actions are completely aligned with the best practice component. “Partially meets” means that TCJFS actions are somewhat aligned with the best practice component. “Does not meet” means that TCJFS actions are not aligned with the best practice component.

Analysis

The Government Financial Officer Association (GFOA) publishes best practices for long-term financial planning. GFOA’s guidance lists the following components to include when planning:

- Achieve Organizational Alignment;
- Forecast Long-Term Revenue;
- Forecast Long-Term Expenses;
- Set Utility Rates;
- Identify Unfunded Liabilities;
- Determine Long Term Debt Capacity;
- Conduct Analysis of The Fiscal Environment; and,
- Determine Long-Term Financial Impact of Priorities and Goals.

Each relevant best practice component, examples of TCJFS’s policies and actions, and the determination of meeting best practice components are shown below.

TCJFS Policies and Actions Relevant to Long-Term Financial Planning

Best Practice Component	Example of TCJFS Policies and Actions	Meets?
Achieve Organizational Alignment	The County and Department have long-term financial goals that are aligned and have scheduled regular meetings to discuss these goals.	Meets.
Forecast Long-Term Revenue	The Department utilizes reports that do not include forecasted revenues.	Does not meet.
Forecast Long-Term Expenses	The Department utilizes reports that do not include forecasted expenditures.	Does not meet.
Determine Long Term Debt Capacity	The Department does not have a formal debt capacity plan, meaning they do not have an internal measure regarding how much debt that can be incurred.	Does not meet.
Conduct Analysis of The Fiscal Environment	The Department is conducting internal reviews, is working with ODJFS regarding its fiscal environment, and has cooperated with this performance audit.	Meets.
Determine Long-Term Financial Impact of Priorities and Goals	One of the Department’s primary goals is to reduce cash on hand to below a 10-day average, which would aid in future draw restrictions.	Meets.

Source: TCJFS

The Department meets three of six, or half of the relevant components of the GFOA’s best practices for long-term financial planning.

Conclusion

TCJFS does not meet all aspects of GFOA's best practices for long-term financial planning. TCJFS should adopt and implement policies that meet these recommendations. Specifically, TCJFS should forecast long-term revenues and expenditures and utilize these forecasts in long-term financial planning. TCJFS should also develop a formal debt capacity plan. Enhancing the long-term financial planning process will allow TCJFS to understand long-term trends and potential risks, allowing the Department to proactively address issues. Additionally, the long-term financial planning process encourages strategic thinking and provides guidance in decision making.

Recommendation 5: Follow Best Practices for Budget Monitoring

TCJFS does not meet all aspects of GFOA's best practices for budget monitoring. TCJFS should adopt and implement policies that address these recommendations. Enhancing the budget monitoring process will allow TCJFS to ensure plans are being implemented and goals are being met, could enforce accountability related to spending, and may facilitate timely and transparent communications with stakeholders.

Impact

Developing appropriate budgets and implementing them with fidelity can aid organizations in ensuring their spending is aligned with their priorities. Additionally, regularly monitoring budgets allows organizations the opportunity to identify any significant variations and make adjustments promptly. By identifying potential issues early, TCJFS may be able to prevent or reduce future deficit spending or balances.

Methodology

We conducted interviews with TCJFS staff and looked at any policies or procedures related to budget monitoring. Then we compared their practices to GFOA best practices. For each component of the best practice, TCJFS actions were classified into one of the following three categories: “meets”, “partially meets”, or “does not meet”. “Meets” means that TCJFS actions are completely aligned with the best practice component. “Partially meets” means that TCJFS actions are somewhat aligned with the best practice component. “Does not meet” means that TCJFS actions are not aligned with the best practice component. Additionally, we consulted with primary peers to discuss their access to county financial systems.

Analysis

TCJFS utilizes past expenditures and RMS projections to develop an annual budget for Public Assistance and Social Services. This budget is presented to the County Commissioners, who have the authority to approve or deny the budget.

The Government Financial Officer Association (GFOA) publishes best practices for budget monitoring. GFOA’s guidance lists the following components to include when monitoring budgets:

- **Elements Monitored:** Revenues (including sources of funds), expenditures (one-time, personnel, and non-personnel), operations, capital, economic trends, and performance measures.
- **Method of Analyzing:** Root Cause, time frame, requirements, and basis of comparison.

- **Level of Detail:** Fund, department, sub-department/division, function, object/account, and project/program/grant/activity (how to track revenues and expenditures of specific activities that need additional scrutiny or for reporting requirements).
- **Defined Roles:** Production, roles, and ownership.
- **Tools Used:** Electronic Systems, automation, overspend protection, consistency.
- **Communications:** Frequency and delivery.

Each best practice component, examples of TCJFS’s policies and actions, and the determination of meeting best practice components are shown below.

TCJFS Policies and Actions Relevant to Budget Monitoring

Best Practice Component	Example of TCJFS Policies and Actions	Meets?
Elements Monitored	TCJFS monitors revenue and expenditures, but does not monitor operations, capital, economic trends, and performance measures.	Partially meets.
Method of Analyzing	TCJFS monitors root cause and requirements, but not time frame or basis of comparison.	Partially meets.
Level of Detail	TCJFS monitors the budget utilizing several reports that include revenues and expenditures.	Partially meets.
Defined Roles	There were no formalized published policies regarding who is responsible for each report but may have informal practices.	Partially meets.
Tools Used	The tools that TCJFS use for generating automated reports are through CFIS, but this only partially meets GFOA criteria since some financial data recommended is only accessible through the County Auditor’s Office.	Partially meets.
Communications	Current practices include weekly meetings with the director and commissioners and regular communication between the Director and Fiscal Officer.	Meets.

Source: GFOA and TCJFS

The Department partially meets five of six components of GFOA’s best practices for budget monitoring and meets the remaining component.

Conclusion

TCJFS does not meet all aspects of GFOA's best practices for budget monitoring. TCJFS should adopt and implement policies that address these recommendations. Components of the budget monitoring process that could be improved include the elements monitored, the method of analyzing, the level of detail, role definition, and tools used. Enhancing the budget monitoring process will allow TCJFS to ensure plans are being implemented and goals are being met, could enforce accountability related to spending, and may facilitate timely and transparent communications with stakeholders.

Additional Consideration

Tuscarawas County's current financial system has limited capabilities for electronic integration, and therefore relies heavily on the transportation of physical papers and manual data entry. Additionally, the system has limitations regarding who can reasonably have direct user access. Due to this, departments within the county largely have to rely on monthly reports generated by the County Auditor's office and must directly contact the County Auditor's office if they need information outside of those reports.

Consulting the primary peers, four of the six peers have some form of direct access to their County's financial system without going through their County Auditor's office. Additionally, half of the peers do not have to print and physically transport paperwork, with two more only having to print and physically transport some documentation.

Primary Peer Interaction with County Financial Systems

County JFS	Direct Access?	Printing Required?
Hancock	Some	Some
Jefferson	Yes	No
Knox	Some	No
Lawrence	Yes	No
Miami	No	Yes
Washington	No	Some

Source: Primary Peers

During the course of the audit, Tuscarawas County indicated it was considering adopting a new county financial system. If Tuscarawas County is adopting a new financial system, it should consider the impact of features on departments within the county. Adopting a system with increased electronic capabilities and real-time access for county departments may lead to reduced costs associated with the physical movement of papers and may aid TCJFS in meeting GFOA best practices for budget monitoring.

Recommendation 6: Consider Salaries and Insurance in Conjunction for Future Planning

TCJFS's most popular insurance plans are more generous and more costly than the local peer average. Meanwhile, TCJFS salaries are generally less generous than the primary peer average for positions analyzed. Because total compensation involves both salaries and insurance, the Department must consider the impact of its offerings to ensure it is competitive in the local market.

Background

According to the 2023 State and Local Workforce survey, 56 percent of government organizations surveyed had a hard time filling human and social services roles. Given these staffing shortages, government organizations across the country have had to adapt their strategies for recruiting and retaining employees. Some of these strategies include conducting compensation or classification studies (65 percent), broad-based pay increases (62 percent), or changes to hiring requirements.

In conjunction with salaries and wages, insurance benefits make up a significant portion of the total compensation packages available for staff. When governments are evaluating strategies for recruiting and retaining staff, the design of the health insurance plan should be included. The 2022 Global Benefits Attitudes Survey found that 48 percent of respondents said health care benefits were an important reason why they joined their employer. Additionally, 46 percent said they would forgo added pay for a more generous health care plan.

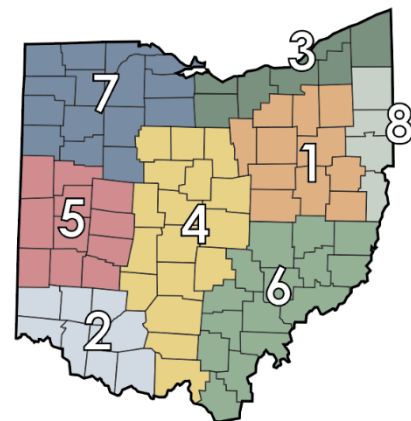
While it is important to have enough staff to accomplish organizational goals, it is also essential to staff at a level that is fiscally sustainable. Additionally, while having a competitive compensation package is important for attracting and retaining talent, the compensation package's impact on an organization's solvency should continue to be a consideration.

Methodology

Insurance

We compared the County's medical insurance premiums and costs to the State Employment Relations Board (SERB) regional peer average for counties as well as the averages of the local peer counties. Peer information was obtained through the FY 2023 SERB surveys. The County's combined medical and prescription plans were compared to 13 regional peer plans and 7 local peer plans.

This peer average excluded outlier counties whose plan costs were more than two standard deviations outside the mean.



Source: SERB

The SERB regions consist of several county groupings, which SERB’s Bureau of Mediation originally developed for the purpose of developing fact finder and conciliation panels.

Salaries

Using payroll reports, we first identified the most populated positions at TCJFS. We then identified comparable positions at local peers using Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs), position descriptions, and discussions with local peers. Next, we compared TCJFS salaries to the local peer average. Finally, we identified what TCJFS employees would make at the local peer average, which resulted in the total difference in salaries for those positions.

Analysis

Insurance

Tuscarawas County offers four combined medical and prescription insurance plans, which include three PPOs and one HDHP. TCJFS’s current CBA requires the department to offer every insurance plan offered to non-bargaining county employees. These insurance plans are available to all full-time employees. The number of TCJFS enrolled in each medical plan is below.

2023 TCJFS Staff Medical Insurance Enrollment

Insurance Plan, Type	Deductible	Number of TCJFS Staff Enrolled
PPO Plan 1	\$250/\$500	1
PPO Plan 2	\$200/\$400	53
PPO Plan 3	\$750/\$1,500	2
HDHP	\$1,500/\$3,000	29

Source: Tuscarawas County

The monthly PPO premiums and percent share for TCJFS, the regional peers, and local peers are below.

2023 Monthly Medical Premium Costs – PPO Plans

		TCJFS		Regional Peer Averages		Local Peer Averages		
		Costs	% Share	Costs	% Share	Costs	% Share	
PPO #1	Single Medical + Rx	Employer	\$750.37	88.0%	\$617.65	87.2%	\$612.30	87.3%
		Employee	\$102.33	12.0%	\$90.78	12.8%	\$89.06	12.7%
PPO #1	Family Medical + Rx	Employer	\$2,332.00	88.0%	\$1,757.70	86.5%	\$1,637.20	86.5%
		Employee	\$318.02	12.0%	\$274.90	13.5%	\$255.83	13.5%
PPO #2	Single Medical + Rx	Employer	\$651.73	93.0%	\$617.65	87.2%	\$612.30	87.3%
		Employee	\$49.05	7.0%	\$90.78	12.8%	\$89.06	12.7%
PPO #2	Family Medical + Rx	Employer	\$2,314.28	93.0%	\$1,757.71	86.5%	\$1,637.21	86.5%
		Employee	\$174.20	7.0%	\$274.90	13.5%	\$255.83	13.5%

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PPO #3	Single Medical + Rx	Employer	\$597.15	93.0%	\$617.65	87.2%	\$612.30	87.3%
		Employee	\$44.96	7.0%	\$90.78	12.8%	\$89.06	12.7%
	Family Medical + Rx	Employer	\$1,938.60	93.0%	\$1,757.71	86.5%	\$1,637.21	86.5%
		Employee	\$145.93	7.0%	\$274.90	13.5%	\$255.83	13.5%

Source: TCJFS and SERB

Our review of the Department’s PPO insurance plans found that, in addition to generally having a higher total premium than the regional and local peer averages, the coverage and provisions, such as deductibles and copayments, are typically more generous.

The monthly HDHP premiums and percent share for TCJFS and the regional peers are below.

2023 Monthly Medical Premium Costs – HDHP

		TCJFS		Regional Peer Averages	
		Costs	% Share	Costs	% Share
Single Medical + Rx	Employer	\$603.16	96.0%	\$590.00	92.7%
	Employee	\$25.13	4.0%	\$46.46	7.3%
Family Medical + Rx	Employer	\$2,018.38	96.0%	\$1,721.01	92.7%
	Employee	\$84.11	4.0%	\$136.36	7.3%

Source: TCJFS and SERB

The total premiums for Tuscarawas County’s single HDHP are slightly lower than the regional peer average, while the total family premiums are higher. Our review also found Tuscarawas County’s HDHP coverage and provisions, such as deductibles and copayments, are typically more generous.

The County also offers two dental plans and one vision plan, but these plans were not comparable to a sufficient number of peers for an analysis.

Salaries

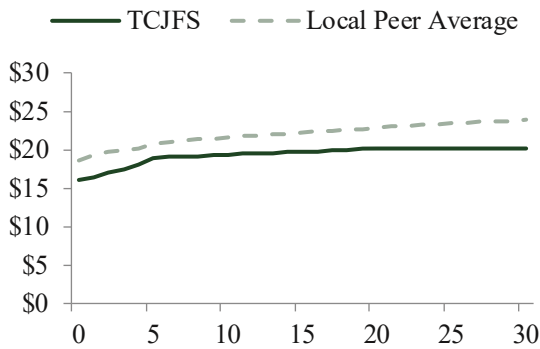
The following positions were identified for salary comparison between TCJFS and the local peers:

- Social Services Worker 1, 3, & 4;
- Social Service Supervisor;
- Income Maintenance Aide 2;
- Income Maintenance Worker 3;
- Clerical Specialist;
- Office Professional; and,
- Vehicle Operator.

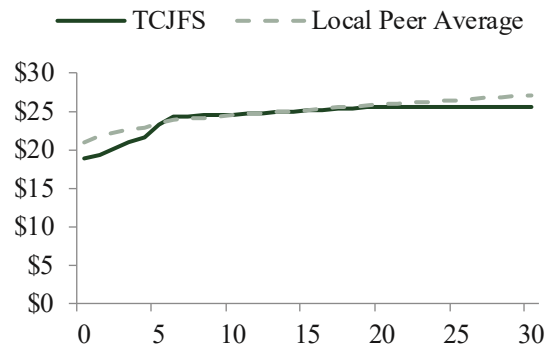
While Vehicle Operators were included in the original analysis, local peers did not have comparable positions. Additionally, since the Clerical Specialist and Office Professional are on the same salary schedule and peers typically identified one position for both responsibilities, those positions were combined.

First, we identified 30-year compensation based on salary schedules and longevity at TCJFS and local peers. The following series of graphs show the hourly wages for each position over 30 years.

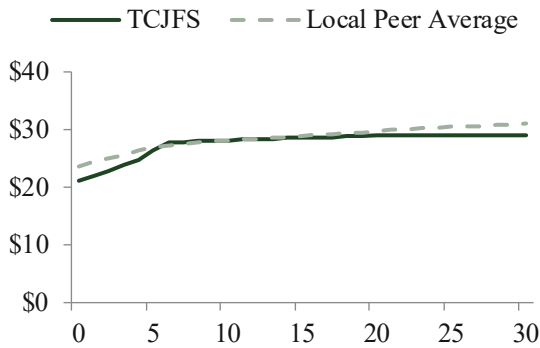
Social Services Worker 1



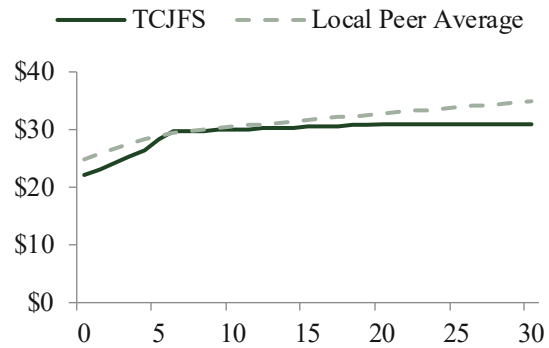
Social Services Worker 3



Social Services Worker 4



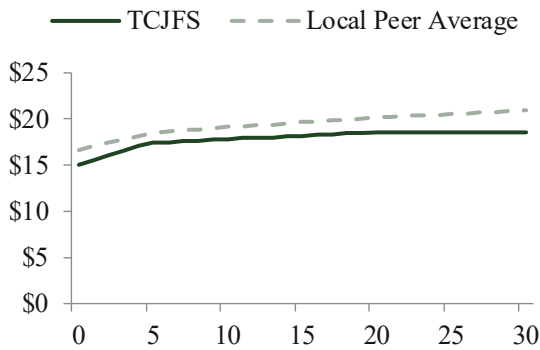
Social Service Supervisor



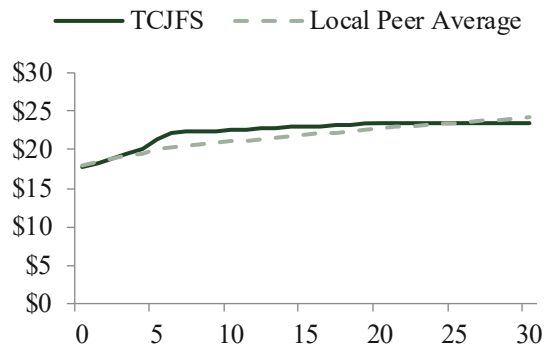
Source: TCJFS and Local Peers

Over a 30-year career, staff in Social Services Worker 1, 3, & 4, and Social Service Supervisor are making 2.5 to 12.1 percent less than the local peer average.

Income Maintenance Aide 2



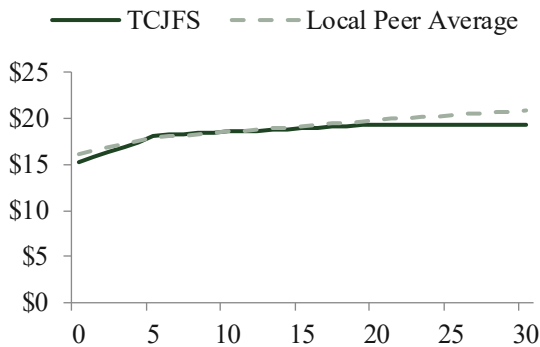
Income Maintenance Worker 3



Source: TCJFS and Local Peers

Over a 30-year career, staff in Income Maintenance Aide 2 positions make 8.2 percent less than the local peer average. Income Maintenance Worker 3 staff have a difference of 3.0 percent, which is in-line with the peers.

Clerical Specialist/Office Professional



Source: TCJFS and Local Peers

The difference of 2.6 percent for Clerical Specialists and Office Professionals over a 30-year career is in line with the peers.

Next, we identified the minimum and maximum base pay for TCJFS and the local peer average and median of minimum and maximum base pay. Excluding outliers, the minimum and maximum pay for all positions except Income Maintenance Worker 3 were lower at TCJFS than the local peers. The same comparison was then made incorporating longevity, and again, the minimum and maximum pay for all positions except Income Maintenance Worker 3 were lower at TCJFS than the local peers. See [Appendix D](#) for more information about this comparison.

Finally, we compared TCJFS actual wages for these positions to what staff members would be paid at a local peer average.

Comparison of TCJFS Actual Wages to Local Peers

Position	Total Staff	Client Total Wages	Peer Avg Total Wages	Annual Cost Difference	% Difference
Social Services Worker 1	6	\$127,418	\$144,367	(\$32,642)	(12.47%)
Social Services Worker 3	21	\$984,922	\$1,001,119	(\$16,197)	(1.63%)
Social Services Worker 4	3	\$84,596	\$89,477	(\$9,400)	(5.61%)
Social Service Supervisor	4	\$124,794	\$130,132	(\$10,281)	(4.19%)
Income Maintenance Aide 2	4	\$79,920	\$82,033	(\$4,069)	(2.61%)
Income Maintenance Worker 3	28	\$640,018	\$609,355	\$59,057	4.91%
Clerical Specialist/Office Professional	7	\$140,670	\$142,382	(\$3,296)	(1.21%)

Source: TCJFS and Local Peers

For these 73 staff members, TCJFS is paying \$16,828.89, or 0.5 percent less than the local peer average each year for the same level of tenure. This shows that TCJFS’s current wages for 73% of staff are in-line with the local peer average when considering tenure.

Conclusion

Tuscarawas County currently provides four medical and prescription combined plans: three PPOs and one HDHP. TCJFS’s current CBA requires the Department offer all plans offered to non-bargaining employees. We found that Tuscarawas County is paying a higher proportion and amount of premiums than the local and regional peers. Additionally, Tuscarawas County’s plan designs are typically more generous regarding provisions such as deductibles and copayments.

Comparing the salaries for the most populated positions at TCJFS to the local peer average of comparable positions, we can see that TCJFS salaries are typically less generous over a 30-year career. However, when comparing actual costs for 73% of positions based on current employee tenure, TCJFS is in-line with the peer average.

Evaluating salary and insurance offerings together could assist the Department in negotiating compensation packages that are competitive within the local market. This could assist the Department in attracting and retaining quality staff, while ensuring Department costs are in alignment with local peers.

Recommendation 7: Compile and Analyze Factors Contributing to Turnover

The Department conducts exit interviews but does not compile nor analyze reasons for employees leaving. The Department should compile reasons for employees leaving and analyze the most common causes to identify whether there are common issues contributing to turnover.

Impact

Identifying the top reasons for turnover within TCJFS can allow the Department to implement changes to address these issues. By doing this, TCJFS can reduce the costs associated with recruiting and training new staff.






Background

TCJFS had turnover in key positions during the course of the Performance Audit, and division supervisors indicated turnover was an issue in some operational areas. Maintaining an appropriate level of staffing is an essential component of any organization's ability to deliver services and fulfill their mission. If an excessive number of staff are leaving an organization, it can lead to a decline in institutional knowledge. Additionally, the recruitment and onboarding costs associated with hiring new staff can pose an additional burden to entities. Before an organization can address issues contributing to turnover, it must determine what the key drivers of turnover are. Employee surveys, interviews focus groups, and exit interviews are various techniques organizations can use to find out factors contributing to turnover. The top five issues contributing to turnover reported by the 2022 Better Workplaces on a Budget Survey were the following:

- Inadequate Total Compensation;
- Lack of Career Development and Advancement;
- Lack of Workplace Flexibility;
- Unsustainable Work Expectations; and,
- Uncaring and Uninspiring Leaders.

To address these top five issues, the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) identified top recommendations and alternative recommendations for organizations on a budget.

Recommendations to Address Causes of Turnover

	TOP RECOMMENDATION	ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATION
CHALLENGE #1 Inadequate Total Compensation 	Provide Total Reward statements. An individualized document can show all types of rewards in one place.	Increase pay transparency. Ensure employees know what is done to confirm pay fairness.
CHALLENGE #2 Lack of Career Development and Advancement 	Increase promotions from within. Promote internal candidates and publicize those promotions.	Publicize career paths. Finding and sharing common paths to promotions can be helpful.
CHALLENGE #3 Lack of Workplace Flexibility 	Employ a one-to-one approach. Be open to creative solutions that fit employees' unique situations.	Consider remote work (for some). Even in on-site companies, some workers can work remotely.
CHALLENGE #4 Unsustainable Work Expectations 	Conduct work reviews. Determine job activities that can be eliminated or reduced to alleviate overload.	Have leaders express gratitude. Recognition and thanks from VPs / execs can go a long way.
CHALLENGE #5 Uncaring and Uninspiring Leaders 	Define expectations for leaders. Have executive clearly state how they expect all managers to lead.	Manage leaders' weaknesses. Find ways to work around areas where a leader may struggle.

Source: Society for Human Resource Management

Methodology

We interviewed Department supervisors to identify difficulties arising from staff turnover. As a component of the salary analysis, we reviewed the average salary step and average time at TCJFS to identify average tenure for 73.0 percent of positions.

Additionally, we reviewed TCJFS's policies and procedures and conducted interviews with the Department, comparing these items and responses to the SHRM's Better Workplaces on a Budget recommendations.

For each component of the best practice, TCJFS actions were classified into one of the following three categories: "meets", "partially meets", or "does not meet". "Meets" means that TCJFS actions are completely aligned with the best practice component. "Partially meets" means that TCJFS actions are somewhat aligned with the best practice component. "Does not meet" means that TCJFS actions are not aligned with the best practice component.

Analysis

As bargaining unit TCJFS staff continue within a position, they progress through the available salary steps for that position. This data, and hiring dates were used to show tenure for positions that make up 73.0 percent of staff. The results of this analysis are below.

TCJFS Staff Tenure

Position	Total Staff	Average Salary Step	Average TCJFS Tenure (Years)
Social Services Worker 1	6	5.0	16.3
Social Services Worker 3	21	4.0	8.5
Social Services Worker 4	3	4.0	9.8
Social Service Supervisor	4	4.0	23.1
Income Maintenance Aide 2	4	5.0	7.2
Income Maintenance Worker 3	28	4.4	7.0
Clerical Specialist/Office Professional	7	4.7	8.6

Source: TCJFS

TCJFS had turnover in key positions during the course of the Performance Audit, and division supervisors indicated turnover was an issue in some operational areas. It is also important to note that supervisors indicated some newly vacated positions were not being filled due to financial difficulties. Due to this, more recent resignations may not be reflected in salary step and tenure averages.

We found that TCJFS does practice techniques for identifying issues contributing to turnover through exit interviews, but does not currently have a process to compile, analyze, and resolve those issues.

While the data does not currently exist to show the most common reasons for the organization's turnover, we decided to evaluate whether TCJFS's policies and actions meet the recommendations to address the top five issues nationally. The Department does meet several of the top or alternative recommendations for addressing the five most common causes of turnover. The most common issues, examples of what TCJFS does in regard to those issues, and whether TCJFS meets one or more recommendations is below.

TCJFS Policies and Actions to Address Causes of Turnover

Issue	Example of TCJFS Policies and Actions	Meets?
Inadequate Total Compensation	The collective bargaining agreement is public, so employees are able to compare pay fairness.	Meets.
Lack of Career Development and Advancement	TCJFS prefers to advertise and promote internally.	Meets.

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Lack of Workplace Flexibility	TCJFS offers flexible time, with supervisor approval. The county no longer offers remote work.	Partially meets.
Unsustainable Work Expectations	The Department conducts work reviews and offers recognition to employees.	Meets.
Uncaring and Uninspiring Leaders	The county commissioners meet with the director on a weekly basis, but they do not conduct evaluations for the director.	Partially meets.

Source: TCJFS

The Department does not fully meet all of the recommendations to reduce turnover. Additionally, since TCJFS does not currently compile causes for turnover, the Department cannot know whether its most common causes of turnover are aligned with the most common reasons as reported by the 2022 Better Workplaces on a Budget Survey.

Conclusion

The Department conducts exit interviews but does not compile nor analyze reasons for employees leaving. Without this information, the Department cannot know its most common causes of turnover. We compared the Department’s practices to SHRM’s Better Workplaces on a Budget recommendations for addressing the top five causes of turnover nationally and found the Department is meeting three of five recommendations and is partially meeting two of the five recommendations. The Department should compile reasons for employees leaving and analyze the most common causes to identify whether there are common issues contributing to turnover.

Client Response Letter

Audit standards and AOS policy allow clients to provide a written response to an audit. The letter on the following pages is the County's official statement in regards to this performance audit. Throughout the audit process, staff met with County officials to ensure substantial agreement on the factual information presented in the report.

TUSCARAWAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Chris Abbuhl – Greg Ress – Kristin Zemis

July 10, 2024

Mr. Keith Faber, State Auditor
Office of the Auditor of State
88 East Broad Street, 5th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Auditor Faber:

In June 2023 the Tuscarawas County Commissioners engaged with the State of Ohio Performance Audit Team to complete an objective review of Tuscarawas County Job & Family Services (TCJFS) operations, financial management and overall human resources. The goal of this project was to provide the County with information and guidance to ensure the fiscal health of TCJFS.

We are committed to providing the highest quality of services for Tuscarawas County and will incorporate your recommendations to increase efficiencies, improve service delivery effectiveness, reduce costs, and reach fiscal solvency.

We thank the State of Ohio Performance Audit Team for their time, hard work, and professionalism.

Sincerely,



Greg Ress, Vice President
Tuscarawas County Board of County Commissioners

cc: Veronica Spidell, JFS Director
Larry Lindberg, Auditor
Kris Lowdermilk, HR Manager

Appendix A: Purpose, Methodology, Scope, and Objectives of the Audit

Performance Audit Purpose and Overview

Performance audits provide objective analysis to assist management and those charged with governance and oversight to improve program performance and operations, reduce costs, facilitate decision making by parties with responsibility to oversee or initiate corrective action, and contribute to public accountability.

Generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS) require that a performance audit be planned and performed so as to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for findings and conclusions based on audit objectives. Objectives are what the audit is intended to accomplish and can be thought of as questions about the program that the auditors seek to answer based on evidence obtained and assessed against criteria.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with GAGAS. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Audit Scope and Objectives

In order to provide the Department with appropriate, data driven, recommendations, the following questions were assessed within each of the agreed upon scope areas:

Summary of Objectives and Conclusions

Objective	Recommendation
Departmental Operations	
How do Tuscarawas County’s Job and Family Services department management practices compare to peers and/or best practices?	R.1, R.3, R.7
Financial Management	
Are Tuscarawas County’s Job and Family Services financial condition and financial management practices appropriate compared to peers and/or best practices?	R.4, R.5

Human Resources	
Are Tuscarawas County’s Job and Family Services staffing levels appropriate when considering peer staffing levels and/or demand for services?	R.2
Are Tuscarawas County’s Job and Family Services non-regular labor expenditures appropriate considering its financial condition, peer expenditures, leading practices, and/or industry standards?	No Recommendation: TCJFS’s use of non-regular labor was appropriate compared to best practices.
Are Tuscarawas County’s Job and Family Services salaries and insurance costs appropriate in comparison to other government entities within the local market?	R.6

Although assessment of internal controls was not specifically an objective of this performance audit, internal controls were considered and evaluated when applicable to scope areas and objectives. The following internal control components and underlying principles were relevant to our audit objectives¹⁵:

- Control environment
 - We assessed the Department’s exercise of oversight responsibilities in regard to detecting improper payroll reporting and benefits administration.
- Risk Assessment
 - We considered the Department’s activities to assess fraud risks.
- Information and Communication
 - We considered the Department’s use of quality information in relation to its financial, payroll, staffing, and operational data.
- Control Activities
 - We considered the Department’s compliance with applicable laws and contracts.

¹⁵ We relied upon standards for internal controls obtained from *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government* (2014), the U.S. Government Accountability Office, report GAO-14-704G

Audit Methodology

To complete this performance audit, auditors gathered data, conducted interviews with numerous individuals associated with the areas of department’s operations included in the audit scope, and reviewed and assessed available information. Assessments were performed using criteria from a number of sources, including:

- Peer Counties;
- Industry Standards;
- Leading Practices;
- Statutes; and,
- Policies and Procedures.

In consultation with the Department, we selected counties similar in population and other demographics to form the peer group for comparisons contained in this report. These peers are identified as necessary and appropriate within the section where they were used.

For the purposes of this audit, two sets of peers were used for comparisons with Tuscarawas County. A set of “Primary Peers” were selected by examining with similar county population, children in poverty, median household income, SNAP active membership, and children in foster care. Additionally, these Primary Peers had CDJFSs that administer Social Services and Public Assistance programs. These factors were chosen due to their influence on the demand for services, and therefore impact on CDJFS operations. The following table shows the Ohio counties included in the Primary Peer group.

Primary Peers

County	2022 Population Estimate	2022 Children in Poverty	2022 Median Household Income	April 2022- March 2023 SNAP Sum of Active Members	2021 Children in Foster Care
Tuscarawas	91,937	3,349	\$58,282	118,182	171
Hancock	74,861	2,001	\$65,866	71,651	160
Jefferson	64,330	2,962	\$50,442	147,365	111
Knox	63,183	2,358	\$61,642	65,488	176
Lawrence	56,653	2,726	\$49,916	150,605	134
Miami	110,247	2,842	\$65,537	111,538	96
Washington	58,901	2,246	\$55,133	93,512	121

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, DataOhio, Annie E. Casey Foundation

In addition to the Primary Peers, a set of Local Peers were selected based on proximity to Tuscarawas County (shared boundaries) to allow for comparisons of salaries and benefits. While the table below shows the population estimates and operational factors for the surrounding counties, these metrics are included for informational purposes and were not considered in the local peer determination, as this peer set was selected specifically to provide context for the same local labor market conditions. The table below shows the local municipalities included in the peer group.

Local Peers

County	2022 Population Estimate	2022 Children in Poverty	2022 Median Household Income	April 2022- March 2023 SNAP Sum of Active Members	2021 Children in Foster Care
Tuscarawas	91,937	3,349	\$58,282	118,182	171
Carroll	26,659	1,080	\$56,287	34,170	31
Coshocton	36,571	1,648	\$50,135	67,993	96
Guernsey	38,098	1,843	\$50,599	71,160	150
Harrison	14,378	639	\$50,691	24,808	53
Holmes	44,390	1,751	\$70,027	13,040	51
Stark	372,657	13,376	\$59,205	591,483	625

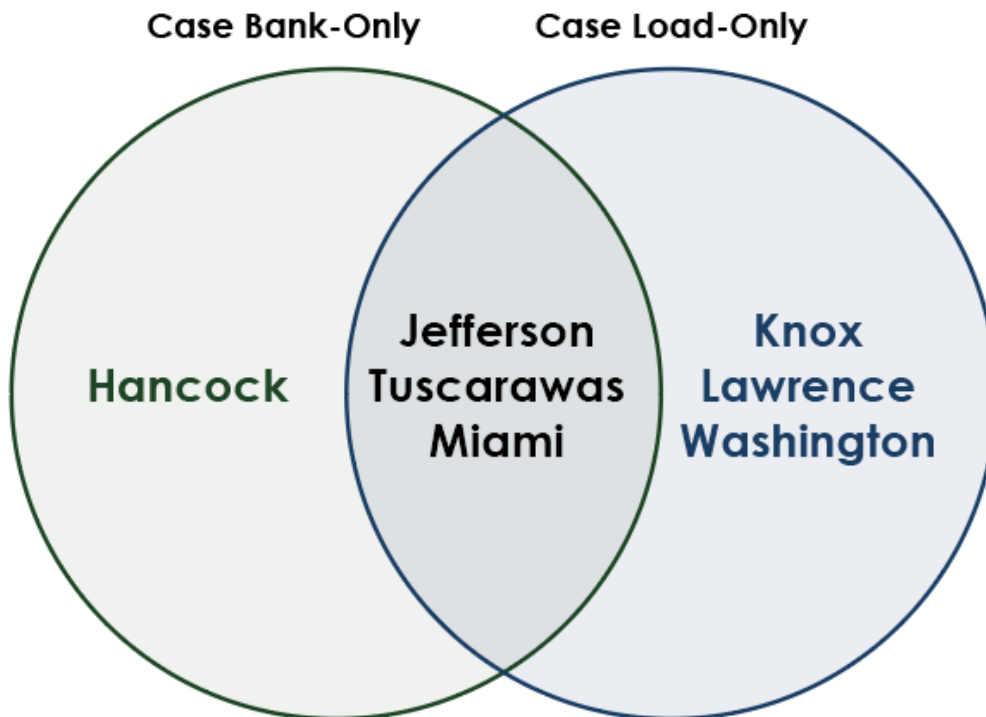
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, DataOhio, Annie E. Casey Foundation

Appendix B: Department Operations Services and Organization

Departmental operations are how an entity functions, including how it provides services to its clients. For TCJFS, this includes how it is serving the residents of Tuscarawas County in regards to case management practices and appointment format. Departmental operations are important because it can influence an entity’s financial condition and can impact how the entity is performing.

One of the components of how a CDJFS delivers services is through its case management model. Cases can be managed through a case bank, through individual staff caseloads, or through a combined case management model. A case bank is where cases are owned by multiple workers. Any of these workers can complete work for any cases within the bank as it is needed. An individual case load has one caseworker own multiple cases. Traditionally, any work that needs to be done on one of those cases is completed by the worker that owns the cases. TCJFS has a combined case management model, as shown below.

TCJFS and Primary Peer Case Management Models



Source: Ohio Benefits 2023 County Profiles

Two of TCJFS’s primary peers utilize a combined case management model, while the majority of primary peers utilize a case-load model.

Another way departmental operations impact how the public receives services is how potential and ongoing program participants can schedule appointments. The different types of appointment scheduling options include the following:

- **Call-in:** Client calls the CDJFS.
- **Walk-in:** Client visits the CDJFS without a scheduled appointment.
- **Scheduled in-person:** Client visits the CDJFS with a scheduled appointment.
- **Call-out:** CDJFS calls the client at a scheduled time.

TCJFS and peer appointment scheduling options are included in the table below.

Appointment Scheduling

County	Call-In	Walk-In	Scheduled In-Person	Call-Out
Tuscarawas	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hancock	✓	✓	✓	X
Jefferson	✓	X	✓	✓
Knox	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lawrence	X	✓	X	X
Miami	✓	✓	✓	✓
Washington	X	✓	✓	✓

Source: Ohio Benefits 2023 County Profiles

TCJFS offers appointments through calls to and from the Department, appointments scheduled in-person, and walk-in appointments. Only two primary peers, Knox and Miami, are reported to offer appointments through calls to and from the Department, appointments scheduled in-person, and walk-in appointments.

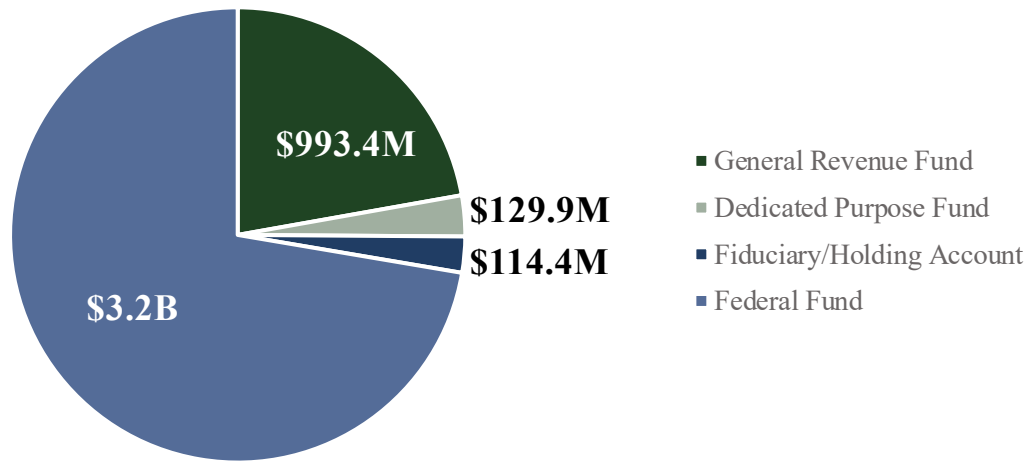
Appendix C: Financial Management

Governing State Agency Funding

As discussed in the [Background](#), TCJFS is supervised by and receives funds from ODJFS and ODM. ODJFS administers programs that provide support to Ohioans, including programs such as SNAP and child support enforcement. ODM is a joint federal-state program that provides health insurance coverage to low-income Ohioans.

In SFY 2023, ODJFS was appropriated \$4,473,491,224. The largest portion of these appropriations were from the federal fund, as shown below.

SFY 2023 ODJFS Appropriations

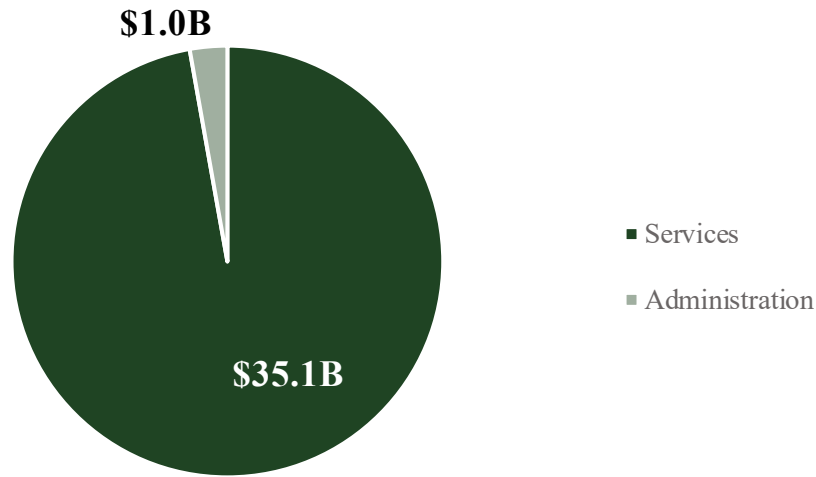


Source: ODJFS Greenbook

These dollars are appropriated to support state administration expenses, workforce area administration, and county administration.

According to the Legislative Budget Office’s Greenbook, Medicaid is the largest single state program and accounts for nearly 5 percent of Ohio’s economy. Eight state agencies receive appropriations for Medicaid, totaling \$36,131,066,780 in SFY 2023. The division of all agency appropriations by services and administration is shown below.

SFY 2023 All Agency Medicaid Appropriations

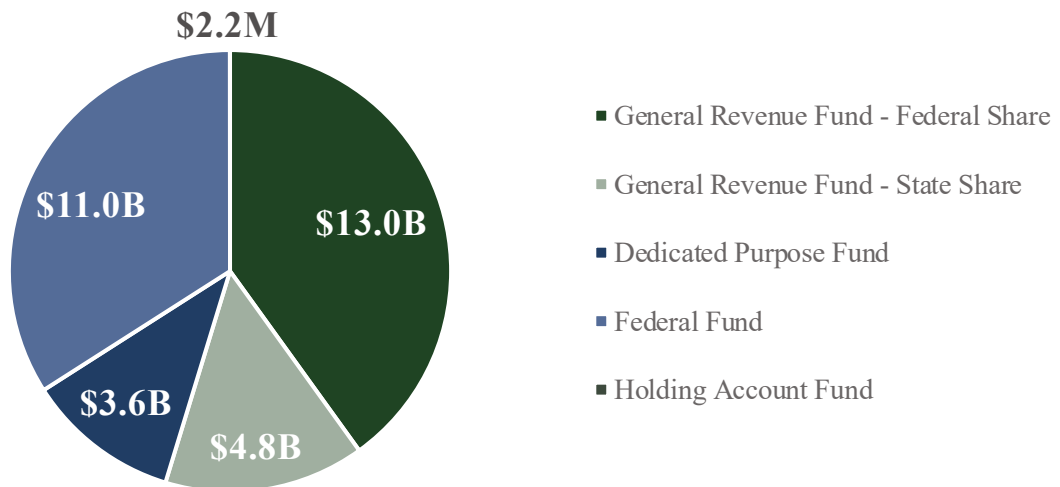


Source: Medicaid Greenbook

A portion of these funds are passed through to the county level. Federal and state revenues are allocated to counties using funding formulas.

In SFY 2023, ODM was appropriated \$32,443,000,298 for Medicaid. The largest portion of these appropriations were from the federal share of the general revenue fund, as shown below.

SFY 2023 ODM Appropriations



Source: Medicaid Greenbook

Indirect Cost Allocation

As discussed in the [Background](#) and [Recommendation 3](#), expenditures go through an allocation process that includes the use of FTEs and RMS.

The ten counties with the highest Income Maintenance cost pool expenditures receive a minimum of 2,300 observations per quarter, for a total of 9,200 annual observations. All other counties receive a minimum of 354 income maintenance observations per quarter, for a total of 1,416 annual observations.

Social Service observations are based on participating positions reported to ODJFS. The number of minimum observations is determined by the following:

- 1 to 10 participating positions: 33 observations per position
- 11 to 74 participating positions: 354 total observations
- 75 or more participating positions: 2,400 total observations

Additionally, each CDJFS can request observations above the minimum, for a maximum of five thousand total observations per quarter. This request is submitted through webRMS and approved by ODJFS. Once these observations are approved, they must be completed.

The table below shows the observation counts recorded for each task category for TCJFS and the peer average's Income Maintenance RMS. TCJFS had fewer counts across all categories.

2023 Income Maintenance Observations

Tasks	TCJFS Observations	Peer Average Observations	Difference
Projects	1059.00	1482.10	(423.10)
Administrative	25.00	43.67	(18.67)
Breaks, Leave	332.00	412.00	(80.00)
Total	1416.00	1937.77	(521.77)

Source: CFIS

The table below shows the counts recorded for each task category for TCJFS and the peer 3.38average's Social Services RMS. While TCJFS had fewer counts overall, it had a higher number of counts for administrative tasks.

2023 Social Services Observations

Tasks	TCJFS Observations	Peer Average Observations	Difference
Projects	935.00	1242.48	(307.48)
Administrative	108.00	30.67	77.33
Breaks, Leave	373.00	397.83	(24.83)
Total	1416.00	1670.98	(254.98)

Source: CFIS

TCJFS Financial Details from County System

As discussed in the [Financial Background](#), the Tuscarawas County Auditor keeps records of TCJFS’s revenues and expenditures.

Utilizing financial information from the Tuscarawas County Auditor, we can see the detailed revenues for both Public Assistance and Social Services. Examples of the County Auditor’s categorization include the following:

- **Advances from the County General:** Cash advances paid from the County General Fund that are required to be repaid by TCJFS.
- **Advances/Other:** Miscellaneous payments from the state and closeout adjustments.
- **Foster Care Prevention Grant:** Part of the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018, using Title IV-E funding for prevention services.
- **Grants-State:** Grants received from the state of Ohio.
- **Ohio Start:** Funds to cover expenses related to implementing the START program
- **Mandated Share:** Local contributions from a county’s general fund required by the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) for the administration of services.
- **County General Fund Operating Support:** Transfers made from the County General Fund to cover program expenditures not covered by state and federal revenues.
- **Inter-fund Transfers:** Transfers from Public Assistance to Social Services, or from Social Services to Public Assistance.
- **Other Receipts:** Other revenues not previously defined.

The revenues for 2019 through 2023 are shown below.

2019-2023 Public Assistance and Social Services Sources of Revenue

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Advance from County General	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$321,506	733,000
Advances/ Other	\$1,426,613	\$1,642,116	\$1,698,525	\$1,508,575	1,881,550
Foster Care Prevention Grant	\$13,623	\$19,004	\$0	\$479	\$0
Grants-State	\$7,203,528	\$7,243,969	\$6,753,045	\$7,128,339	\$7,518,341
Ohio Start	\$0	\$0	\$76,382	\$55,532	\$7,763
Other Receipts	\$53,427	\$99,529	\$14,945	\$65,441	\$79,559
Refunds	\$59,069	\$36,858	\$76,334	\$63,606	\$28,326
Reimbursements	\$1,252,362	\$1,751,163	\$2,339,234	\$2,790,515	\$2,199,624
Mandated Share	\$175,822	\$215,936	\$226,126	\$218,003	\$222,239
County General Fund Operating Support	\$2,100,000	\$2,177,241	\$2,560,644	\$3,292,596	\$3,198,211
Total Revenues (excluding Inter-fund Transfers)	\$12,284,444	\$13,185,818	\$13,745,236	\$15,444,592	\$15,868,611
Inter-fund Transfers	\$1,036,750	\$980,000	\$1,525,399	\$1,500,000	\$1,723,550
Total Revenues	\$13,321,194	\$14,165,818	\$15,270,635	\$16,944,592	\$17,592,161

Source: County Auditor Financial System

Note: Due to rounding, totals may not add up correctly.

Total revenues for TCJFS have increased from \$13,321,194 to \$17,592,161 from 2019 to 2023.

Utilizing financial information from the Tuscarawas County Auditor, we can also see the detailed expenditures for both Public Assistance and Social Services. Examples of the County Auditor’s categorization include the following:

- **Advance Repayment to County General Fund:** Repayment of advances (loans) made from the County General Fund for TCJFS.
- **Contract Services, Contracts-Services, and Purchase of Service:** Payments to those providing services to TCJFS, including marketing services.
- **Equipment:** Equipment used in the provision of Public Assistance and Social Services, including technology in the CDJFS.
- **Facilities:** Payments associated with TCJFS buildings.
- **Foster Care Services, Foster Care Prevention Grant:** Expenditures associated with the administration of foster care, including payments made for foster care placements.
- **Supplies:** Supplies for the provision of Public Assistance and Social Services programs.
- **Travel and Related Expenses:** Payments associated with the travel of TCJFS staff.
- **Inter-fund Transfers:** Transfers from Public Assistance to Social Services, or from Social Services to Public Assistance.
- **Public Assistance:** Other costs associated with the administration of TCJFS Public Assistance programs.

These expenditures for 2019 through 2023 are shown below.

2019-2023 Public Assistance and Social Services Expenditures

Expenditures	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Advance Repayment to County General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$241,130
Contract Services	\$588,346	\$1,008,993	\$1,349,433	\$1,347,266	\$1,676,203
Contracts-Services	\$99,922	\$131,456	\$135,902	\$142,973	\$166,475
Equipment	\$7,974	\$58,251	\$21,508	\$65,867	\$5,676
Facilities	\$92,533	\$71,021	\$67,824	\$80,278	\$89,705
Foster Care Prevention Grant	\$15,022	\$21,910	\$33,201	\$875	\$4,788
Foster Care Services	\$2,975,279	\$3,273,619	\$3,787,110	\$4,346,436	\$4,392,715
Insurance	\$1,217,244	\$1,260,613	\$1,280,537	\$1,447,122	\$1,584,658
Medicare	\$59,528	\$60,902	\$64,067	\$68,177	\$68,352
Other Expenses	\$106,311	\$107,020	\$117,864	\$111,005	\$132,792
OPERS	\$594,279	\$608,123	\$637,575	\$673,962	\$675,025
Public Assistance	\$36,029	\$100,400	\$36,513	\$130,334	\$84,971
Purchase of Service	\$1,898,078	\$1,724,040	\$1,662,773	\$1,716,378	\$2,015,781
Salaries	\$4,265,824	\$4,362,156	\$4,586,600	\$4,896,123	\$4,921,381
Supplies	\$63,897	\$63,849	\$53,355	\$63,695	\$60,321

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Travel and Related Expenses	\$50,796	\$17,929	\$18,161	\$31,541	\$27,782
Unemployment Compensation	\$0	\$1,363	\$0	\$0	\$0
Workers Compensation	\$32,040	\$32,413	\$27,563	\$30,466	\$27,032
Total Expenses (excluding Inter-Fund Transfers)	\$12,103,102	\$12,904,058	\$13,879,987	\$15,152,498	\$16,174,785
Inter-Fund Transfers	\$1,036,750	\$980,000	\$1,525,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,660,000
Total Expenses	\$13,139,852	\$13,884,058	\$15,404,987	\$16,652,498	\$17,834,785

Source: County Auditor Financial System

Total expenses for TCJFS have increased from \$13,139,852 to \$17,834,785 from 2019 to 2023.

Appendix D: Salaries

As discussed in the [Insurance and Salaries](#) section, we reviewed the salary schedules of TCJFS’s positions with the most staff. The top nine positions, which covered 75 percent of their total staff, were compared to local peer averages. The top 9 positions include Social Services Worker 1, 3, and 4, Social Service Supervisor, Income Maintenance Aide, Income Maintenance Worker 3, Clerical Specialist, Office Professional, and Vehicle Operator. Job descriptions between the nine TCJFS positions and local peers were used to identify comparable peer positions. This resulted in TCJFS’s Vehicle Operator position being excluded from the analysis due to no comparable peer positions and the Clerical Specialist and Office Professional positions being consolidated into one analysis due to role responsibility overlap among the peers. In total, salaries were analyzed for 7 positions, including a comparison of the salary schedule base rates for comparable positions. Results from this analysis are in the tables below.

Social Services Worker 1 Base Rate Salary Comparison

Comparison	Steps	Minimum	Maximum
TCJFS	6.0	\$16.06	\$18.54
Peer Average	7.0	\$17.78	\$23.13
Average Difference	(1.0)	(\$1.72)	(\$4.59)
Peer Median	6.0	\$18.03	\$23.85
Median Difference	0.0	(\$1.97)	(\$5.31)

Source: TCJFS and Local Peers

Social Services Worker 3 Base Rate Salary Comparison

Comparison	Steps	Minimum	Maximum
TCJFS	7	\$17.76	\$21.68
Peer Average	7	\$17.86	\$21.58
Average Difference	0	(\$0.10)	\$0.10
Peer Median	6.5	\$18.03	\$21.99
Median Difference	0.5	(\$0.27)	(\$0.31)

Source: TCJFS and Local Peers

Social Services Worker 4 Base Rate Salary Comparison

Comparison	Steps	Minimum	Maximum
TCJFS	7	\$21.13	\$27.30
Peer Average	5.8	\$23.60	\$29.09
Average Difference	1.2	(\$2.47)	(\$1.79)
Peer Median	7	\$22.98	\$30.60
Median Difference	0	(\$1.85)	(\$3.30)

Source: TCJFS and Local Peers

Social Service Supervisor Base Rate Salary Comparison

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Comparison	Steps	Minimum	Maximum
TCJFS	7.0	\$22.13	\$29.09
Peer Average	6.3	\$24.84	\$33.03
Average Difference	0.7	(\$2.71)	(\$3.94)
Peer Median	7.0	\$24.48	\$33.62
Median Difference	0.0	(\$2.35)	(\$4.53)

Source: TCJFS and Local Peers

Income Maintenance Aide 2 Base Rate Salary Comparison

Comparison	Steps	Minimum	Maximum
TCJFS	5.0	\$15.04	\$17.05
Peer Average	6.4	\$16.57	\$20.14
Average Difference	(1.4)	(\$1.53)	(\$3.09)
Peer Median	5.0	\$16.73	\$18.75
Median Difference	0.0	(\$1.69)	(\$1.70)

Source: TCJFS and Local Peers

Income Maintenance Worker 3 Base Rate Salary Comparison

Comparison	Steps	Minimum	Maximum
TCJFS	7.0	\$17.76	\$21.68
Peer Average	7.0	\$17.86	\$21.58
Average Difference	0.0	(\$0.10)	\$0.10
Peer Median	6.5	\$18.03	\$21.99
Median Difference	0.5	(\$0.27)	(\$0.31)

Source: TCJFS and Local Peers

Clerical Specialist/Office Professional Base Rate Salary Comparison

Comparison	Steps	Minimum	Maximum
TCJFS	6.0	\$15.23	\$17.76
Peer Average	6.3	\$16.10	\$19.08
Average Difference	(0.3)	(\$0.87)	(\$1.32)
Peer Median	5.5	\$16.74	\$18.53
Median Difference	0.5	(\$1.51)	(\$0.77)

Source: TCJFS and Local Peers

Overall, TCJFS's minimum and maximum base rate of pay is typically lower than both the primary peer average and median. The exceptions to this trend include Income Maintenance Worker 3's and Social Service Worker 3's comparisons to the peer averages of maximum base pay for comparable positions.

In addition to a review of how TCJFS's base rates compare to the peer average and peer median, we completed an analysis incorporating longevity. This analysis found similar results.

Appendix E: Non-Regular Labor

TCJFS's Department-wide use of non-regular labor was in-line with best practices. However, usage rates of non-regular labor in Case Management 1 and Protective divisions exceeded five percent usage in 2022 and partial-year 2023. When reviewing usage rates for these groups over time, both had peaks and valleys corresponding to departmental need. While usage rates for these groups slightly exceed best practices, these groups are faced with urgent and unpredictable tasks, and it is not unreasonable to have a slightly elevated use of non-regular labor.

Background

Non-regular labor includes contracted labor, overtime, and compensatory time. Having high rates of overtime and compensatory time suggest a potential for time-waste and inefficiencies, according to the Labor Management Institute. Having policies and procedures surrounding the use of overtime and compensatory can reduce the direct costs associated with these items, and reduce potential costs associated with turnover.

TCJFS has contracted staff, but these individuals are included in regular staffing data received from the Department. The Department monitors the use of overtime and compensatory time due to the financial impact on the organization.

Methodology

We utilized payroll reports and nonregular labor reports (including both overtime and compensatory time) to calculate what percent of total time was overtime or compensatory time, what is known as a non-regular labor usage rate. First, these calculations were made for the department as a whole for August 2020 to August 2023. Then, we identified three months where the non-regular usage rate peaked: March 2022, September 2022, and March 2023. For these three months, we calculated the non-regular labor usage rate for each division and found that three divisions had the highest rates: Case Management 1, Case Management 2, and Protective. We then calculated the monthly non-regular labor usage rate for these three groups for January 2022 through August 2023. These rates were then compared to best practices from the Labor Management Institute.

TCJFS and primary peer data included contracted staff with permanent staff, therefore contract labor was not included in this section as a separate analysis.

Analysis

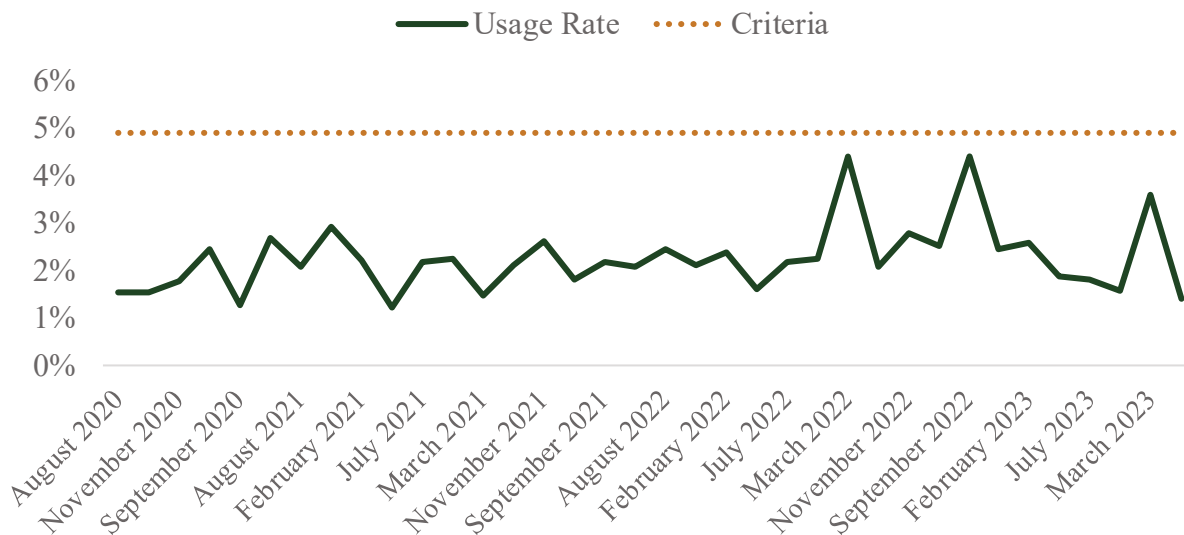
Labor Management Institute has the following categories for non-regular labor rates:

- Overtime under 4.9% is a reasonable response to fluctuating work volumes;

- Overtime between 5.0% and 7.9% is typically a result of excessive leave or scheduling practices; and,
- Overtime over 8% is typically a result of excessive leave, vacant positions, or scheduling practices.

We calculated the department non-regular usage rate from August 2020 to August 2023, shown below.

Department Usage Rate Compared to Criteria



Source: TCJFS and Labor Management Institute

Overall, the Department’s use of non-regular labor was below the maximum rate recommended by best practices. However, as shown in the graph above, there were three months where the Department’s non-regular usage rate peaked: March 2022, September 2022, and March 2023. To identify potential contributing factors, we calculated usage rates for each division for these three months. The three divisions with the highest rates are in the table below.

Highest Divisions – Peak Month Non-Regular Labor Usage Rates

Division	March 2022	September 2022	March 2023
Case Management 1	8.1%	14.4%	6.9%
Case Management 2	8.5%	7.1%	2.7%
Protective	14.4%	7.2%	8.4%

Source: TCJFS

For these three divisions, we calculated the usage rates for 2022 and for January 2023 to August 2023.

2022 and Partial-Year 2023 Usage Rates for Highest Divisions

Division	2022 Rate	2023 Rate
Case Management 1	6.4%	5.05%
Case Management 2	4.8%	1.98%
Protective	5.7%	5.46%

Source: TCJFS

As shown above, the rates for Case Management 1 and Protective were slightly above the 4.9 percent recommended by best practices, while rates for Case Management 2 followed best practices. While Case Management 1 and Protective were slightly above what best practices recommend, the rates have decreased over time and both of these groups include individuals that have unpredictable and urgent tasks. The majority of staff in these divisions have the title of Social Services Worker 1 or Social Services Worker 3. Examples of their responsibilities are included below.

Examples of Social Services Worker 1 and 3 Responsibilities

Position	Examples of Responsibilities
Social Services Worker 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists in implementing case plan and intervention plans; • Records and reports child abuse to supervisor; and • Files paperwork.
Social Services Worker 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops and implements case plans; • Handles high risk cases (abused and neglected children); and • Provides casework counseling.

Source: TCJFS

Conclusion

TCJFS's Department-wide use of non-regular labor was in-line with best practices. However, usage rates of non-regular labor in Case Management 1 and Protective divisions slightly exceeded 5.0 percent usage in 2022 and partial-year 2023. These positions have tasks such as developing and implementing case plans, recording and reporting child abuse, and handling high-risk cases. When reviewing usage rates for these groups over time, both had peaks and valleys corresponding to departmental need. While usage rates for these groups slightly exceed best practices, these groups are faced with urgent and unpredictable tasks, and it is not unreasonable to have a slightly elevated use of non-regular labor.

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



TUSCARAWAS COUNTY

AUDITOR OF STATE OF OHIO CERTIFICATION

This is a true and correct copy of the report, which is required to be filed pursuant to Section 117.26, Revised Code, and which is filed in the Office of the Ohio Auditor of State in Columbus, Ohio.



Certified for Release 7/25/2024

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