

Tax Dollars at Work

Public Spending in FY2008 for Selected Health and Social Programs in Michigan

Profile

Van Buren County

Introduction:

The current debates over spending levels for public programs underscore the importance of recognizing both the human impact of public social and health programs and the vital services they provide to low-income recipients. The citizens served by these programs range from the young through the elderly, and from families to individuals. Children are key beneficiaries of these programs either through direct services such as medical assistance, school food programs, or child care; or indirectly through payments to their families through such programs as the Family Independence Program or the Food Assistance Program. Many programs included in this report experienced increases in both the dollar value of the expenditures, and the number of people served compared to FY2007. The Food Assistance Program, Energy Assistance Program, and Medicaid Program each continued to serve well over one million persons during FY2008.

The Family Independence Program (FIP), however, experienced a dramatic decline, which is particularly alarming in view of the state's economy. Policy and administrative changes implemented during FY2007 certainly contributed to the decline. In FY2007, only 30 percent of children living at or below the poverty level were receiving FIP benefits. In FY2008, with the caseload decline, that percentage is likely considerably lower.

It is also important to note that nearly every program included in this analysis brings federal dollars to the local community, providing a return of the tax dollars paid to the federal government.

The following county profile includes public spending totals for specific categories of social and health programs and recipients for selected programs within the categories.

Definitions and Spending Categories Included in the Profile:

Recipients are those persons who actually received a service or benefit from a program; **eligibles** are those persons who were eligible, but may or may not have received a benefit. For example, a person can be eligible for Medicaid, but may or may not have a claim paid on their behalf during the fiscal year. Recipients have not been totaled for the Income Assistance Total, Work Support Total or the Grand Total due to the likelihood of duplication between and among programs.

Nutrition Services include Food Assistance Program, School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, Summer Food Program, and the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program.

Emergency Services include State Emergency Relief, including Burials, and Energy Assistance Programs, including Heat, Electric and Energy-Related Home Repairs, and Home Heating Tax Credit for tax year 2007.

Health Care Services include regular Medicaid payments, Disproportionate Share Hospital Payments, Title XIX funded mental health payments, the Title XIX component of Children's Special Health Care Services, Home Help and Personal Care Services payments, Adult Benefits Waiver Program payments, and MICHild Program payments.

Children's Services include Child Care Fund total expenditures (federal, state, and local) and Foster Care (Title IV-E funded and State Ward Board and Care).

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FISCAL YEAR 2008

Van Buren County

	<u>Expenditures*</u>	<u>Monthly Avg. Recipients/ Eligibles</u>
Income Assistance – Total	\$ 13,971,200	N/A
▶ Family Independence Program	2,250,500	1,284
▶ State Disability Assistance	256,000	68
▶ Supplemental Security Income	11,464,700	1,891 ¹
Nutrition Services	17,550,400	11,504²
Emergency Services	1,417,900	14,938³
Work Support – Total	2,725,900	N/A
▶ Child Day Care	2,094,200	634
▶ Work First and Welfare to Work	631,700	660 ⁴
Health Care Services	90,435,400	21,402¹
Children's Services	2,506,400	72⁵
TOTAL SPENDING FOR SELECTED PROGRAMS	<u>\$128,607,200</u>	N/A

*Expenditures are rounded to nearest hundred; may not total due to rounding.

¹ Reflects persons eligible.

² Due to the likely duplication among nutrition programs, only the Food Assistance Program recipients are included in this table.

³ Due to the possible duplication among emergency services programs, only the recipients of energy assistance are included in this table.

⁴ Work First participants.

⁵ Includes Foster Care (Title IV-E and State Ward Board and Care) recipients only.